

RESEARCH REPORT

A PUBLICATION OF RESEARCH, HOME MISSION BOARD, SBC

*A Large Convention of Small Churches:
Analysis of the Distributions of
Southern Baptist Churches*

Phillip B. Jones

***A Large Convention of Small Churches:
Analysis of the Distributions of
Southern Baptist Churches***

Phillip B. Jones

October 1996

Planning and Finance Section

Ernest Kelley, Executive Vice President

Research Division

Phil Jones, Director

Marilynn Kelly, administrative secretary/editorial assistant

770/410-6576

Program Research Department

Steve Whitten, Director

Bob Rennie, Associate Director

Pam Mitchell, secretary/research assistant

770/410-6583

Planning and Services Research Department

Richie Stanley, Director

Connie Anthony, secretary/research assistant

Carolyn Hillmon, research assistant/graphics

Paulette Villarreal, research assistant/programmer analyst

770/410-6581

Acknowledgments

A number of people have contributed significantly to the development of this report. Paulette Villarreal has performed much of the computer analysis in this report. Paulette's predecessor, Julie McKelvy, also spent many hours at a computer deriving percentiles found in an earlier edition of this report. Marilyn Kelly edited and styled the report. Richie Stanley, Steve Whitten, and Bob Rennie read the report and offered numerous suggestions.

Foreword

This report is an update of a 1988 report, *Analysis of the Distributions of Southern Baptist Churches for Selected Uniform Church Letter Items, 1972-1987*. The earlier report had an extensive appendix containing every 10th percentile for every variable studied for every year from 1972 to 1987. A similar database of statistics underlies this report, however, most all of this detailed data has been relegated to a separate report, *Distributions of Southern Baptist Churches Based on Annual Church Profile and Uniform Church Letter Data, 1972-1995*. This companion report is in reality just a technical appendix. Those interested in the companion document should contact the Research Division, Home Mission Board for a copy.

There have been some changes in the data collection process for Southern Baptists over the past couple of years. Beginning in 1994, the annual collection of data from churches became known as the Annual Church Profile. Prior to 1994 it was referred to as the Uniform Church Letter. There are some inconsistencies in the data that are attributable to the change in collection process. In most instances, the items are directly comparable, in a few instances some items have been changed significantly and are noted in the text. In my estimation, some of the biggest problems relate more to the increased non response or increased incomplete response of churches to the Annual Church Profile. Efforts were made in preparing the report to compensate for some of the missing data in 1994. While problems still exist in comparing 1994 and 1995 data with earlier years, generally the trends noted are longer term trends and not dependent on just the data for the past two years.

List of Tables

<i>Table</i>	<i>Page</i>
1 Distribution of Churches by Total Members, 1995.....	3
2 Distribution of Churches by Total Members and Distribution of Total Members by Size of Church, 1995	4
3 Median Profile of a Typical Southern Baptist Church, 1995	5
4 Distribution of Churches by Resident Members, 1995	6
5 Distribution of Churches by Total Baptisms, 1995	8
6 Distribution of Churches by Baptism Rate per 100 Resident Members, 1995	8
7 Distribution of Churches by Morning Worship Service Attendance, 1995	11
8 Distribution of Churches by Sunday School Enrollment, 1995	11
9 Distribution of Churches by Average Weekly Sunday School Attendance, 1995	13
10 Distribution of Churches by Discipleship Training Enrollment, 1995	14
11 Distribution of Churches by Woman's Missionary Union Enrollment, 1995	15
12 Distribution of Churches by Brotherhood Enrollment, 1995	16
13 Distribution of Churches by Tithes and Offerings, 1995	17
14 Distribution of Churches by Undesignated Receipts and Designated Receipts, 1995	18
15 Distribution of Churches by Total Local Expenditures and Total Mission Expenditures, 1995	20
16 Distribution of Churches by Gifts to the Cooperative Program, Gifts to Associational Missions, and the Annie Armstrong Easter Offering, 1995	21
17 Distribution of Churches by Percentage of Undesignated Receipts Given to the Cooperative Program, 1995	22
18 Distribution of Selected Annual Church Profile Items, 1995 (Appendix).....	25

List of Figures

<i>Figure</i>		<i>Page</i>
1	Frequency Distribution of Churches by Size (Total Members), 1995	2
2	Median Resident Members, 1972–1995.....	7
3	Median Baptisms, 1972–1995.....	9
4	Median Baptism Rate per 100 Resident Members, 1972–1995.....	9
5	Median Sunday School Enrollment, 1972–1995.....	12
6	Median Average Weekly Sunday School Attendance, 1972–1995	13
7	Median Discipleship Training (Church Training) Enrollment (Participation), 1972–1995.....	14
8	Median Woman’s Missionary Union Enrollment, 1972–1995	16
9	Median Tithes and Offerings, Adjusted for Inflation, 1972–1995.....	18
10	Median Undesignated Receipts, Adjusted for Inflation, 1982–1995	19
11	Median Designated Receipts, Adjusted for Inflation, 1982–1995	19
12	Median Cooperative Program Gifts, Adjusted for Inflation, 1972–1995	22

Executive Summary

There are more than 40,000 churches in the Southern Baptist Convention (SBC). They are spread throughout the United States and exhibit considerable diversity in size, location, racial/ethnic composition, worship styles, music, programs, ministries, availability of resources, and needs. While diverse, there is similarity among the majority of Southern Baptist churches. This report highlights the central tendency of Southern Baptist churches as well as the differences among them.

The typical Southern Baptist Convention church is 67 years old, predominantly white, and located in a rural area of the South. It has 233 total members of which 168 are resident members. It is barely growing in total membership having increased by 1 member from 1994 to 1995—a 0.6 percent increase. The current pastor has been at the church from 3 to 4 years. The church has 70 people in a Sunday morning worship service, reported 5 baptisms and 5 other additions during the 1994–95 church year; has 98 persons enrolled in Sunday School with 55 in attendance on an “average” Sunday; and has slightly more than \$50,000 discretionary income (undesignated gifts) of which it sends 7.0 percent to the Cooperative Program and 2.4 percent to its local association.

This picture of a typical Southern Baptist church is a compilation of median statistics derived from information supplied by more than 36,500 churches on the 1995 Annual Church Profile. The median is the point which divides the distribution of churches into two equal parts. When derived for the distribution of churches based on total members, the median size church in the SBC has 233 total members. This is the middle where half of all SBC churches are larger or equal in size and half are smaller or equal in size. Based on the medians derived for a number of church characteristics, a detailed profile is developed for the “typical” Southern Baptist church and included in table 3 of the report.

In addition to the description of the median church, the report examines the wider distribution of churches and changes in the medians over time. The text includes the following observations:

- While the majority of churches are small, the majority of Southern Baptists are members of large churches. As an example, 70 percent of all SBC churches have 400 or fewer members; however, 70 percent of all Southern Baptists belong to churches with 400 or more members. Another striking example is that the smallest 40 percent of all SBC churches comprise only 10 percent of the total membership in the SBC.
- A decline in the median resident members for all SBC churches since 1986 is noted, however, analysis shows this is not an unfavorable trend since the decline is due to the influx of new, smaller churches into the Convention. However, the typical older church, those in existence in 1986, has grown only slightly over the past decade. Given the propensity of Southern Baptist churches not to remove members from their rolls, it is likely that most churches are declining in active membership.
- In 1995, there were 6,703 churches reporting zero or no baptisms for the year—18.4 percent of reporting churches. Ninety percent of SBC churches reported 23 or fewer baptisms. The top 10 percent of all churches that reported 23 or more baptisms accounted for just under half (45%) of the total baptisms reported for the year. For the most part, these are large churches with a median size of 920 total members. The SBC is dependent upon the top performing churches in baptisms to supply the bulk of baptisms reported each year.
- Sunday morning is the primary time Southern Baptists gather for worship. For the past six years, churches have been asked on the ACP for their Sunday morning worship service(s) attendance on the last Sunday of the associational year, sometimes called the church year.

While not a weekly average, it does provide some measure of worship service attendance for SBC churches. Ninety percent had 250 or fewer in attendance. Combined with the statistic that 90 percent of all churches report 209 or fewer average weekly Sunday School attendance, they illustrate that large churches are not the norm in SBC life.

- There are declines (sometimes substantial declines) over time in median baptisms, baptism rates per 100 resident members, Sunday School enrollment and attendance, Discipleship Training enrollment, and WMU enrollment, some of which extend back into the 1970s. These declines for the last decade are mostly attributable to the declines in the medians of older established churches in the Convention (those more than 10 years old) as opposed to being caused by the addition of new churches to the Convention. In particular, the baptism rate would have declined even further if not for the starting of new churches in the Convention.
- There were substantial increases in receipts and expenditures as measured in current dollars, but in some cases after controlling for inflation, increases were minimal. For example, median tithes and offerings increased just 14 percent from 1972 to 1995 after adjustment for inflation. Total mission expenditures generally fared better over time reflecting the missions mindedness of the typical SBC church.
- During the past decade most of the financial medians declined after adjustments for inflation. This means that the typical church has less in the way of financial resources to carry on its local ministry and support missions. In particular, the decline in gifts to the Cooperative Program was considerably greater than for other financial variables examined. The median church is gradually giving less of its discretionary funds to the Cooperative Program.

Conclusions

- While diverse, there is considerable commonality among the majority of Southern Baptist churches—they tend to be small.
- The typical church in the SBC appears to be barely growing, but is in decline. Most of the variables discussed in the text suggest that there have been considerable declines in some of the major programs and emphases of Southern Baptist churches. Even financial data which are generally increasing, show signs of decrease when controlled for inflation over the past decade.
- While large, growing churches receive most of the attention and are viewed as models of success, most churches find themselves in circumstances not conducive to that type of growth. In planning programs and materials, denominational leaders should consider whether they are easily implemented by the majority of churches which may be limited by financial and people resources.
- Convention totals are, to a large degree, dependent upon the contribution of large churches. They are home to the majority of members, they provide a disproportionate share of SBC baptisms each year, and they provide a disproportionate share of financial resources. Nonetheless, despite their size and contribution, they are still atypical.
- The year 1986 was pivotal for Southern Baptist churches. This year began the decline in a number of median statistics—especially financial statistics. There is no definitive explanation for this phenomenon. It is not clear whether this trend will eventually be lagged by decline at the Convention level or whether growth in a small segment of churches will offset decline for a majority of churches.

Introduction

There are more than 40,000 churches in the Southern Baptist Convention (SBC).¹ They are spread throughout the United States and exhibit considerable diversity in size, location, racial/ethnic composition, worship styles, music, programs, ministries, availability of resources and needs. While diverse, there is considerable commonality among the majority of Southern Baptist churches. This report highlights the central tendency of Southern Baptist churches as well as the differences among them.

The primary unit of analysis is the local church, although reference will be made to Convention totals or to other congregational expressions known as church-type missions.² The source of information is the Annual Church Profile (ACP), a yearly questionnaire completed by most churches and church-type missions in the SBC.³ Computerized data are available for individual churches from 1972 through the most recent reporting period in the fall of 1995.

A couple of descriptive statistics are used in this report to summarize the large quantity of data and make them more comprehensible. One of these statistics is a median and the other is a percentile. Definitions, examples and the purpose of each of these measures are given below.

Often hundreds or thousands of pieces of information are distilled to one overall score, usually a *mean* (also known as the average) or less commonly a *median* (the middle point). For the Convention, the average size church has 413 total members.⁴ The median size church is 233 total members.⁵

These two measures of central tendency are not equal because the distribution of Southern Baptist churches with regard to church size is not symmetric. Figure 1 illustrates this characteristic of Southern Baptist churches. In this frequency distribution of churches by size of church, the bulk of churches group on the smaller end of the distribution. After the size category of 51 to 100, the number of churches in each progressively larger category gets continually smaller until there are relatively few churches in the very large church size categories. In this non-symmetrical distribution, the mean (average) is not a good measure of central tendency. The average size church has 413 members, yet the above distribution shows that more than half of all Southern Baptist churches have fewer than 250 members. The problem is that the mean is "skewed" upward because of the disproportionate weight of a small number of extremely large churches when averaged with many small churches. In this distribution, only 29 percent of all Southern Baptist churches have at least 413 total members, which argues against using the mean to describe a typical Southern Baptist church.

¹ There have been several "official counts" released for 1995. The first count, released in February 1996, was 40,120. The count was later revised downward by the Sunday School Board, SBC to 40,087. Using the same database of churches and missions for 1995, the Home Mission Board has revised the count to 40,097.

² Based on reports of state convention Directors of Missions to the Home Mission Board, there were 5,685 church-type missions in 1995. These congregations offer both worship services and Bible study, and are generally in the formative stages of becoming independently constituted churches. Combined churches and church-type missions claim 15.6 million Southern Baptist members.

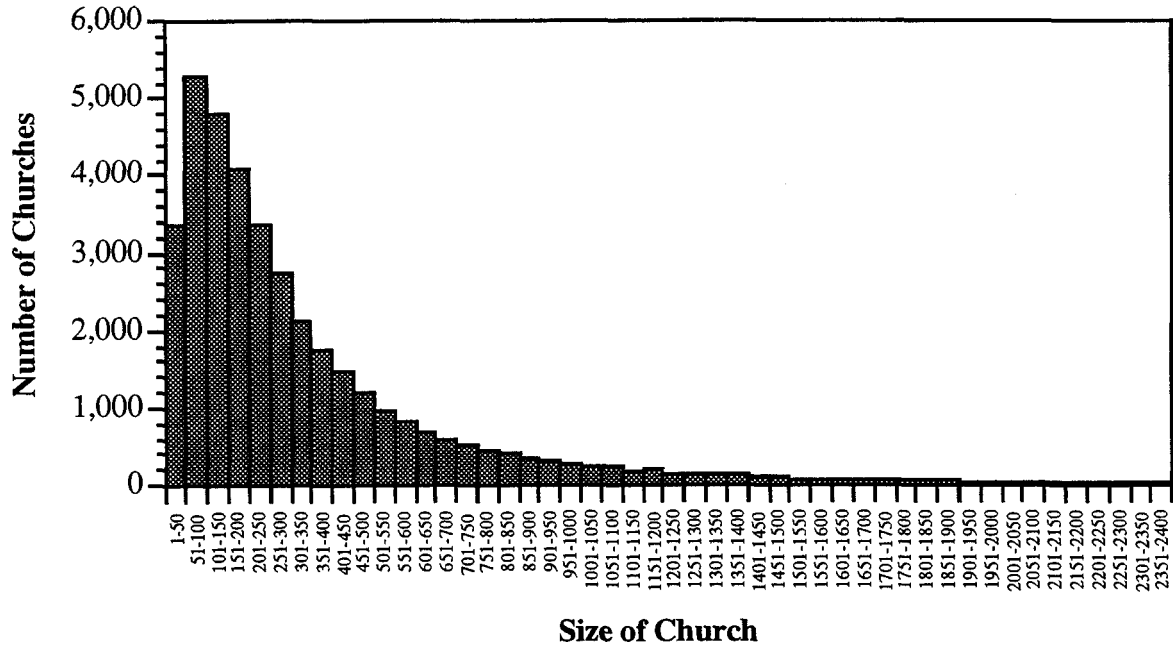
³ Prior to 1994, the Annual Church Profile was known as the Uniform Church Letter (UCL).

⁴ The average is based on 36,156 churches reporting 14,923,163 total members in 1995. Church-type missions and non-reporting churches are not included in this calculation.

⁵ The median is based on the same 36,156 churches as the mean.

Figure 1

Frequency Distribution of Churches by Size (Total Members), 1995⁶



A more appropriate measure of central tendency in this example and for most of the ACP data used in this report, is the median statistic. The median is the point which divides a distribution into two equal parts. In our example above, the median size church in the SBC has 233 total members. This is the middle where half of all SBC churches are larger or equal in size and half are smaller or equal in size. If only one measure is used to describe the “typical” church in the Convention, the median statistic of 233 members is the best one to use.⁷

While very useful, a measure of central tendency does not depict range or variability of data. In the example being used, there is a tremendous range in the size of Southern Baptist churches, from 1 to 28,003 members. *Percentiles* are used to describe the variability of distributions in this report. Seven percentiles are derived for each variable considered. These selected percentiles taken together provide a rich understanding of the manner in which churches vary in their reported data. At the same time, they provide a comprehensible reduction of a large amount of information.

Percentiles are conceptually very simple and the example which follows will explain the use of percentiles in this report. Table 1 shows the distribution of churches in the Southern Baptist Convention (SBC) based on total members for the year 1995.⁸

⁶ This is not a complete frequency distribution, if it were a true representation the x-axis would extend past 28,000.

⁷ There are times when the median statistic is not appropriate. It does not have all the nice mathematical properties of a mean and thus cannot be used in many calculations.

⁸ The distribution is based on data provided by 36,156 churches reporting total membership on the 1995 Annual Church Profile.

Table 1

Distribution of Churches by Total Members, 1995

Percentile	Members
100th (Maximum)	28,003
90th	886
75th	461
50th (Median)	233
25th	117
10th	59
0th (Minimum)	1

The 100th and 0th percentiles represent the extremes of the distribution—the maximum and minimum scores reported. There was one church with 28,003 total members and there were several churches that reported only 1 member. These two numbers establish the range for the distribution of all Southern Baptist churches—a range of 28,002 members from the smallest to the largest church.

The 90th percentile is that size along the distribution of Southern Baptist churches where 90 percent of SBC churches have a membership that is less than or equal to it while 10 percent have a membership greater than or equal to it. In this case, 90 percent of SBC churches have a total membership in 1995 of 886 or fewer members. Conversely, 10 percent of SBC churches had 886 or more members. Specifically, the 90th percentile is that point along the distribution that divides the top 10 percent of churches from the bottom 90 percent. At the other end of the distribution, the 10th percentile indicates that 10 percent of churches have 59 or fewer members while 90 percent have 59 members or more.

The 75th percentile indicates that 75 percent of SBC churches have 461 or fewer members. Conversely, 25 percent of SBC churches have 461 or more members. The 50th percentile is that size along the distribution of churches that divides it into two equal parts. The 50th percentile is the median statistic that was introduced above. Each of the percentiles listed in table 1 can be interpreted in a similar manner.

Percentiles can be compared for interpretation. By subtracting the 10th percentile from the 90th percentile, the observation can be made that 80 percent of SBC churches range from 59 to 886 total members. One of the more common measures is to subtract the 25th percentile from the 75th percentile.⁹ By doing so, the observation can be made that half of all churches, which are in the middle of the distribution, range from 117 to 461 members.

The percentiles listed above are not the only ones that can be compiled. The 96th or the 47th percentile also could have been derived. In order to illustrate as fully as possible the distribution of churches with a minimum number of data points, only seven percentiles are listed in table 1. This same approach to representing data distributions is used in the remainder of this report.

One cautionary note needs to be made concerning statistics in this report. This report examines the distributions of churches and not the distribution of members. The

⁹ The actual difference, in this case 344, is known as the interquartile range.

distinction is a subtle but important one because they are much different distributions. The two distributions are illustrated in table 2.

Table 2

Distribution of Churches by Total Members and Distribution of Total Members by Size of Church, 1995

Percentile	Churches by Size of Church	Total Members by Size of Church
100th	28,003	28,003
90th	886	3,141
75th	461	1,561
50th	233	721
25th	117	346
10th	59	188
0th	1	1

Based on the 50th percentile, half of all churches have 233 or fewer members. On the other hand, half of all members are in churches with 721 or more members. While not based directly on this table, another comparison is that while 70 percent of all churches have 400 or fewer members, 70 percent of all members are in churches of 400 or more in size.¹⁰ While there are many smaller churches, the bulk of SBC membership is in larger churches. Thus, the distributions of churches and members look very different. This report will focus on the distributions of churches.

Table 18 (in the Appendix) contains percentile distributions for 26 different items from the 1995 ACP. It includes distributions for membership, baptisms, other additions, Sunday School, missions organizations, music, receipts and expenditures. A companion document, *Distributions of Southern Baptist Churches Based on Annual Church Profile and Uniform Church Letter Data, 1972-1995* replicates information in the appendix for earlier years.

It is possible to use the companion document to examine changes in the distributions of a particular variable, for example total baptisms, over the 24 year time span. However, caution should be exercised in the interpretation of these changes since these are snapshots of the entire distribution of churches and not changes in individual churches. Discussion in the following sections will illustrate some of the difficulties in interpretation of changes over time for distributions.

Median Profile of a Southern Baptist Church

In order to provide an overview for the remainder of the text, a composite profile is developed in table 3 for a "typical" Southern Baptist church in 1995 from the medians (50th percentiles) in table 18. This profile is hypothetical in that each of these medians has been derived independently and no single church can be found with these exact characteristics.

¹⁰ Also not taken directly from this table, another illustration is that the combined membership of the smallest 40 percent of the SBC's churches account for only 10 percent of Convention membership.

Table 3

Median Profile of a Typical Southern Baptist Church,
1995

Total Members	233
Net Change in Total Members, 94-95	1
Percent Change in Total Members, 94-95	0.6 %
Resident Members	168
AM Worship Service Attendance ¹¹	70
Baptisms	5
Baptism Rate Per 100 Resident Members	2.5
Year Organized	1928
Other Additions ¹²	5
Year Pastor Came	1992
Sunday School Enrollment	98
Average Weekly Sunday School Attendance	55
Discipleship Training Enrollment	15
WMU Enrollment	13
Brotherhood Enrollment	2
Music Enrollment	26
Total Receipts	\$61,646
Tithes and Offerings	\$59,160
Undesignated Gifts	\$50,787
Designated Gifts	\$6,171
Total Local Expenditures	\$46,024
Total Mission Expenditures	\$7,477
Cooperative Program	\$2,935
Associational Missions Gifts	\$1,200
Annie Armstrong Easter Offering	\$350
Lottie Moon Christmas Offering	\$561
Percentage of Undesignated Gifts to Cooperative Program	7.0 %
Percentage of Undesignated Gifts to Association	2.4 %

The typical SBC church is 67 years old, has 233 total members, 168 resident members, 70 people in a Sunday morning worship service, 98 persons enrolled in Sunday School with 55 in attendance on an "average" Sunday, reported 5 baptisms and 5 other additions during the 1994-95 church year, and has slightly more than \$50,000 discretionary income of which it sends 7.0 percent to the Cooperative Program and 2.4 percent to its association. It is barely growing in total membership, having increased by 1 member

¹¹ Technically this is the "Number of persons in Sunday morning worship service(s) on last Sunday of associational year," which was September 24, 1995 for most churches.

¹² This is the number of people who became members of a church by means other than baptism. These are generally transfers from other Southern Baptist churches.

from 1994 to 1995—a 0.6 percent increase.¹³ Not included in the table is the fact that the typical Southern Baptist church is located in a rural area in the South.¹⁴

The data in table 3 picture a typical church at the end of the 1995 church year.¹⁵ The next several sections highlight the wider distributions of, and examine the changes in, the median church during the past 24 years.

Church Size

As illustrated above, the typical church in the SBC is not a large church—in 1995 the median church had 233 total members and 168 resident members. Resident members are those who live close enough to their church to attend. In addition to resident membership, total membership includes non-resident members who at one time joined the church but have since moved away, but have not transferred their membership. While resident members are close enough to attend, some of them may no longer participate in their church. However, *resident* membership is more representative of the active membership of a particular church than is *total* membership. Thus, this section will examine resident membership in more detail. In the median church, 76 percent of total members are resident members.¹⁶

Table 4
Distribution of Churches by Resident Members, 1995

Percentile	Members
100th (Maximum)	18,494
90th	623
75th	334
50th (Median)	168
25th	82
10th	43
0th (Minimum)	1

The distribution of churches based on resident members is included in table 4. Seventy-five percent of SBC churches have 334 or fewer resident members. Note that half of all churches, in the middle of the distribution, range from 82 to 334 resident members. This underscores the fact that the majority of SBC churches are small.

At the top end of the distribution, only 10 percent of churches have 623 or more resident members. In the Convention there are only 1,535 churches (4.2%) with 1,000 or more resident members. There are only 376 churches (1.0%) with 2,000 or more resident members. Similarly, there are 2,971 churches (8.2%) that have 1,000 or more total members, and 826 (2.3%) with 2,000 or more total members. These very large churches in the Convention are atypical, representing a small segment of churches.

¹³ There are 35,512 churches that reported total membership in both 1994 and 1995. From 1994 to 1995, 53.4 percent of these churches grew by 1 or more members, 8.6 percent reported no change, and 38.0 percent reported a decline of 1 or more members.

¹⁴ Eighty percent of Southern Baptist churches are located in the South (defined as a census region) and 59 percent of all churches are in rural areas (less than 2,500 people).

¹⁵ The reporting year, known as the church year, runs from October 1 through September 30 for most SBC churches.

¹⁶ This percentage was derived independently of the median resident members and median total members listed in table 3.

Figure 2
Median Resident Members, 1972–1995

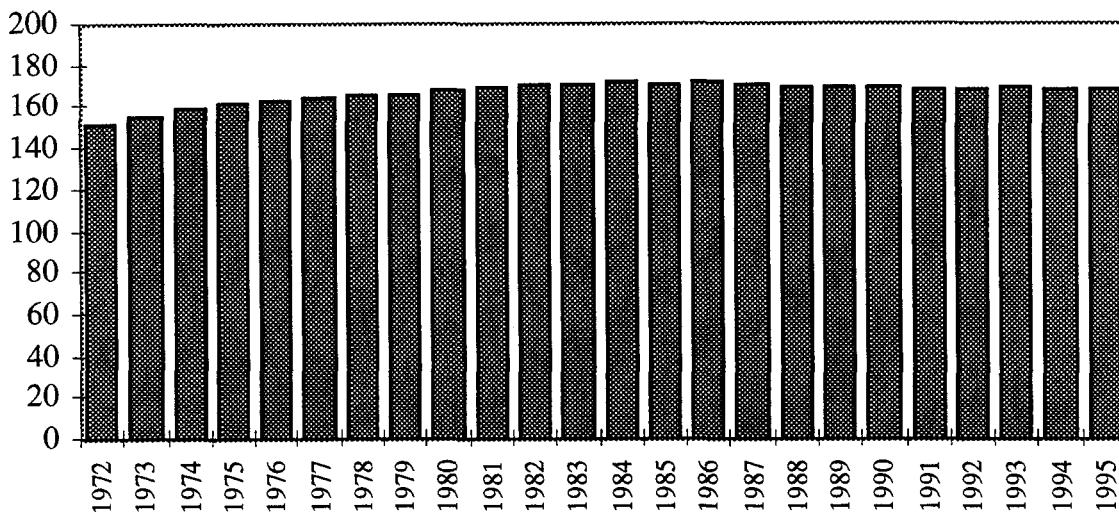


Figure 2 shows the change in median resident membership for the years 1972 to 1995. The median size church grew from 152 resident members in 1972, to 172 members in 1984. The median resident membership peaked again in 1986 at 172 members. Since 1986 there has been a decline in resident members to the present level of 168. Medians of large distributions do not change quickly, so the loss of four members is significant.

The change in the median over time must be interpreted cautiously because churches are added and dropped, and sometimes churches don't report data for a particular year. Analysis of churches in existence in both 1986 and 1995 shows that the median resident membership increased from 182 to 183.¹⁷ Thus, the decline in median resident members since 1986 is due to the influx of new, smaller churches into the Convention, which forced the median for all churches, both new and old, downward. The decline in the typical Southern Baptist church is relatively good news since it is due to the addition of new churches to Convention rolls rather than the decline in existing churches.¹⁸

Even though the median resident members for churches in existence in both 1986 and 1995 has increased, an increase of 1 member for a 10 year period indicates very slow growth. Further analysis of the churches in existence for both these years shows that 51 percent grew by 1 or more resident members from 1986 to 1995, 1 percent remained the

¹⁷ These statistics are based on 31,813 churches that were in existence in both years, were currently reporting in each year, and reported resident membership greater than zero each year.

¹⁸ In 1995 there were 4,576 new churches that were not part of the Southern Baptist Convention in 1986. Of these churches only 3,591 reported resident membership for 1995 and were included in the derivation of the median for all churches. The median size of just these new churches in 1995 was 70 resident members. There were 1,595 churches dropped from Convention rolls from 1986 to 1995. Only 1,195 of these dropped churches were included in the derivation of the overall median resident members for 1986. These, too, were small churches with a median size of 57 resident members. There was another group of 2,174 churches, which were a part of Convention rolls in both years, that reported membership in 1986 but did not have a current report of membership in 1995. Thus, they were included in the 1986 derivation of the overall median but not the 1995 derivation. These churches were also smaller with a median size of 110 resident members. Examining all of these factors affecting the median resident members for both years, it is concluded that the influx of new, smaller churches into the Convention forced the median downward over the past decade.

same, and 48 percent declined by 1 or more members.¹⁹ Given Southern Baptist churches propensity to maintain members on the rolls of their churches (even when these members are no longer active), there is concern that the majority of churches in existence in both years may be declining in active membership.

Baptisms

Table 5 illustrates the distribution of churches by the number of baptisms reported in 1995.²⁰ Half of all SBC churches reported 5 or fewer for the 1994–95 church year. There were 6,703 churches reporting zero or no baptisms for the year—18.4 percent of reporting churches. (This is why the 10th percentile is 0.) Note that 90 percent of SBC churches reported 23 or fewer baptisms.

Table 5
Distribution of Churches by Total Baptisms, 1995

Percentile	Baptisms
100th (Maximum)	1,313
90th	23
75th	11
50th (Median)	5
25th	1
10th	0
0th (Minimum)	0

In 1995 the top 10 percent of all churches that reported 23 or more baptisms accounted for 176,559 baptisms, just under half (45%) of the total reported for the year. For the most part, these are large churches. The median size church among this top 10 percent in baptisms is 920 total members.

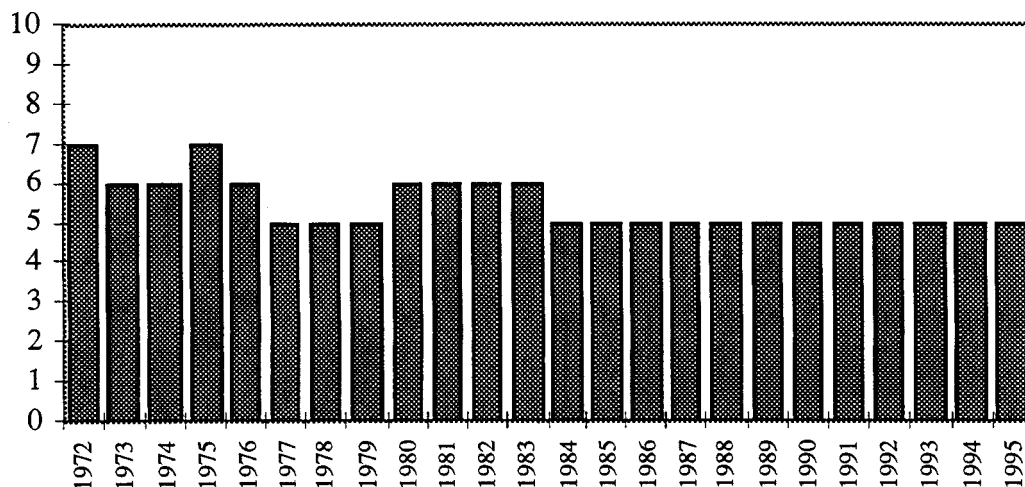
In 1995 only 235 churches (0.6%) reported 100 or more baptisms, however, they accounted for 12 percent of the total reported. In comparison, in 1975 there were 261 churches that reported 100 or more baptisms, and the top 10 percent of the churches also accounted for 45 percent of the total baptisms reported for that year. The SBC is dependent upon the top performing churches in baptisms to supply the bulk of baptisms reported each year.

Figure 3 graphs total baptisms for the median church for the past 24 years. During this time span there has been a decline of two baptisms, a significant decrease. However, median baptisms have held constant at 5 since 1984. A charting of other percentiles over time (not included in this report) more clearly and dramatically shows the overall decline in the entire distribution of churches based on baptisms from 1972 to 1984. Since 1984 the entire distribution appears to have stabilized.

¹⁹ The median net growth in resident members from 1986 to 1995 for churches in existence and reporting in both years is 1 resident member, and the median percentage increase is 0.7. Note that these median changes are derived independently of the median resident members for each year.

²⁰ This table is based on 36,506 churches reporting data for the 94–95 church year.

Figure 3
Median Baptisms, 1972–1995

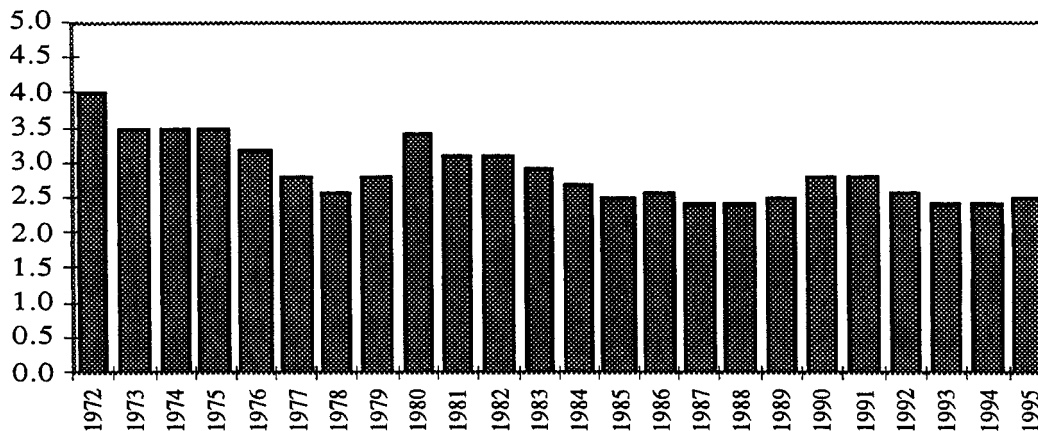


The charting of every 10th percentile over time reveals there are occasional sharp upward or downward movements reflected in most of the percentiles for a specific year. The uniformity suggests that factors that affect baptisms affect most SBC churches regardless of the number of baptisms they report. Possibly there are external factors affecting baptisms over which churches have little control.

Baptism Rate

To a large extent, number of baptisms is dependent upon size of church. To control for church size, the baptism rate per 100 resident members is calculated for each church. The median rate in 1995 was 2.5 baptisms per 100 resident members. Figure 4 charts the median from 1972 through 1995. During the past 24 years there has been an overall decline in the baptism rate. This decline has been manifested in a “roller coaster” pattern.” There was considerable decline from 1972 through 1978. Then in 1979 and 1980 there were significant increases. A second decline occurred from 1980 through 1988. The next three years recorded moderate increases. In 1993 and 1994, the rate duplicated a record low and then bounced upward slightly in 1995.

Figure 4
Median Baptism Rate per 100 Resident Members, 1972–1995



The overall decline cannot be attributed to the adding of new churches into the Convention since new churches generally have higher baptism rates than older churches. In fact, small new congregations generally have the highest baptism rates in the SBC.²¹ The baptism rate would have declined even further if not for the starting of churches in the Convention. The baptism rate for older established churches, those in existence in both 1986 and 1995, declined from 2.6 to 2.4.²²

Table 6 lists the percentile distribution of churches based on baptism rate per 100 resident members. Baptism rate is usually a function of size of church and age of church. Generally, as a church gets older its baptism rate declines. At the same time, the baptism rate declines as a church gets larger.

Table 6
Distribution of Churches by Baptism Rate per 100 Resident Members,
1995

Percentile	Baptism Rate
100th (Maximum)	... ²³
90th	9.3
75th	5.1
50th (Median)	2.5
25th	0.9
10th	0.0
0th (Minimum)	0.0

Sunday Morning Worship Service Attendance

Sunday morning is the primary time Southern Baptists gather for worship. For the past six years, churches have been asked on the ACP for their Sunday morning worship service(s) attendance on the last Sunday of the associational year, sometimes called the church year. For most churches this is the last Sunday in September. While not a weekly average, it does provide some measure of worship service attendance for SBC churches. The distribution of worship service attendance is listed in table 7.

²¹ These statements are based on unpublished tables where the baptism rate is computed for all churches grouped into size and age categories.

²² Even though the decline in the baptism rate extends back to 1972, the time frame of 1986 to 1995 is used to be consistent in tracking the changes in older established churches for a number of variables in this report. This time period was chosen because 1986 is the last year that median resident members peaked, and it represents a good cutoff to distinguish new churches from older established churches.

²³ The maximum score for this variable and several near it appears to be errors.

Table 7
Distribution of Churches by Morning Worship Service Attendance,
1995

Percentile	Attendance
100th (Maximum)	22,317
90th	250
75th	138
50th (Median)	70
25th	35
10th	13
0th (Minimum)	0

The typical Southern Baptist church had 70 people in attendance at the worship service for the last Sunday in the associational year in 1995. Half of all churches, in the middle of the distribution, had from 35 to 135 in attendance. Ninety percent had 250 or fewer in attendance. Again, these statistics illustrate that large churches are not the norm in SBC life.

There have been year to year variations in the median worship service attendance in the past six years but it seems to oscillate around 70. There are not enough consistent data to establish a trend.

Sunday School

The percentile distribution of Sunday School enrollment is listed in table 8. The typical Southern Baptist church has 98 people enrolled in Sunday School. Half of all churches, in the middle of the distribution, range from 50 to 209 enrollees. Ninety percent of all churches have 460 or fewer enrolled. It is helpful to understand that Convention-wide, one-third of Sunday School enrollment is comprised of persons under age 18.

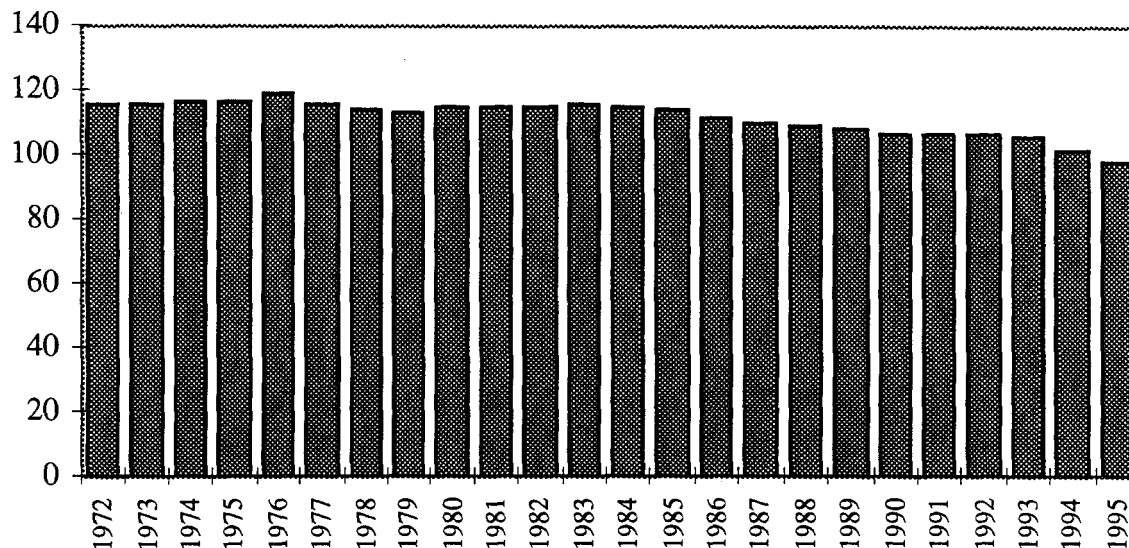
Table 8
Distribution of Churches by Sunday School Enrollment, 1995

Percentile	Sunday School Enrollment
100th (Maximum)	21,880
90th	460
75th	209
50th (Median)	98
25th	50
10th	27
0th (Minimum)	0

Figure 5 shows the change in median Sunday School enrollment over time. Median Sunday School enrollment peaked in 1976 at 119 members. While there have been minor ups and downs, there has been fairly consistent and substantial decline since 1976. While not included in this report, an examination of the trend of other percentiles shows that the decline is evident throughout the entire distribution of churches. Note that in 1995 the median fell below 100 for the first time.

This decline in the median Sunday School enrollment for all churches is also present for the churches that were in existence in both 1986 and 1995.²⁴ The median Sunday School enrollment declined from 120 in 1986 to 106 in 1995 for these established churches. The addition of new churches into the Convention has contributed little to the decline of Sunday School enrollment. Further analysis reveals that the effect of new churches on the median enrollment in 1995 is offset by the effect of churches dropped from Convention rolls since 1986, and churches reporting in 1986 yet not reporting in 1995.

Figure 5
Median Sunday School Enrollment, 1972–1995



Average Weekly Sunday School Attendance

In addition to Sunday School enrollment, SBC churches report the average weekly Sunday School attendance for the year. The percentile distribution for average attendance is listed in table 9. The typical Southern Baptist church has 55 people in attendance in Sunday School on an average Sunday. Half of all churches, in the middle of the distribution, range from 30 to 108 in attendance. Note that 90 percent of churches have 209 or fewer in attendance on an average Sunday.

²⁴ Even though the decline in Sunday School enrollment began in 1976, the time frame of 1986 to 1995 is used to be consistent in tracking the changes in established churches for a number of variables in this report. From 1986 to 1995, the median church in existence in both years, lost 10 Sunday School enrollees or 11 percent of enrollment. These changes during the decade have been calculated independently from the median Sunday School enrollment of 120 in 1986 and 106 in 1995.

Table 9

Distribution of Churches by Average Weekly Sunday School Attendance, 1995

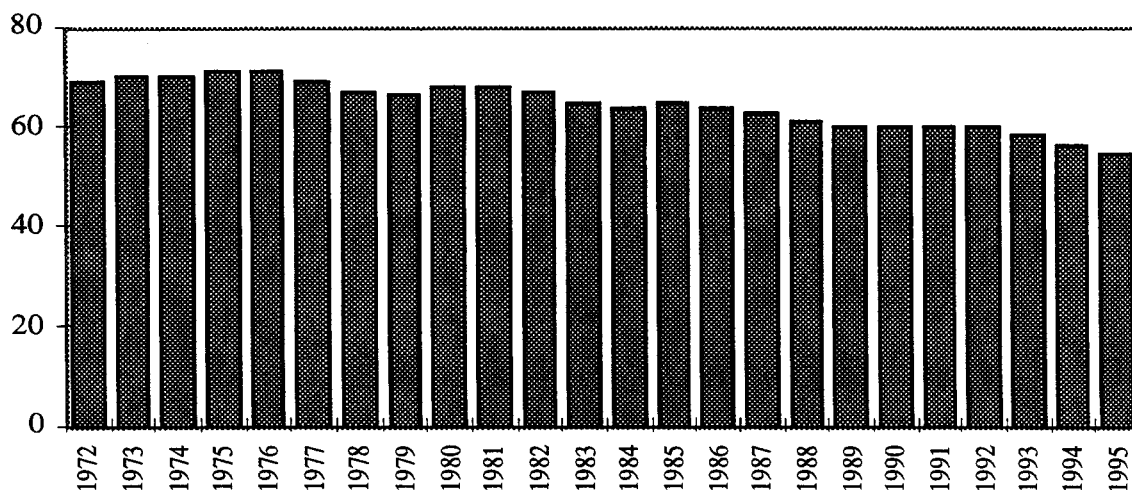
Percentile	Sunday School Attendance
100th (Maximum)	9,064
90th	209
75th	108
50th (Median)	55
25th	30
10th	15
0th (Minimum)	0

The median average weekly Sunday School attendance over time is displayed in figure 6. The chart shows the same general pattern of decline as in Sunday School enrollment. Attendance peaked in 1976 with 71 persons in attendance on an average Sunday. While there have been minor year to year variations, average attendance continued to decline through 1995. From 1976 to 1995 there was a decline of 23 percent in the number of people who attend Sunday School on an average Sunday in the typical SBC church.

This decline in the median for all churches is also present for the churches that were in existence in both 1986 and 1995. The median average weekly Sunday School attendance declined from 68 in 1986 to 60 in 1995 for these established churches.²⁵ Thus, most of the decline for all churches is due to the decline in older established churches—although new churches have contributed a little to the overall decline.

Figure 6

Median Average Weekly Sunday School Attendance, 1972–1995



²⁵ The median church in existence in both 1986 and 1995, declined 7 average weekly Sunday School attendees during the decade or 13 percent of attendance. Note that these two median changes have been calculated independently from the median average weekly Sunday School enrollment for the year 1986 and the year 1995.

Discipleship Training

Table 10 shows that the typical church has 15 people enrolled in Discipleship Training. The reason the enrollment is so low is that 15,616 churches report no enrollment for this program—43 percent of all reporting churches. (This is why the 0th through the 25th percentile show zero enrollment.) The median of 15 enrolled is computed for all reporting churches. When only those churches with a Discipleship Training program are considered, the median jumps up to 51 people. It is very important to distinguish the distribution on which a median is based.

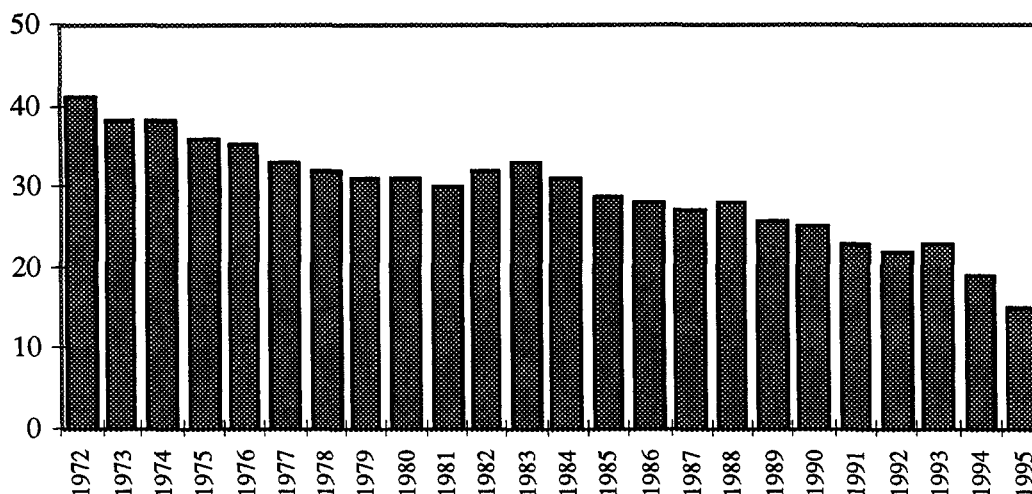
Table 10
Distribution of Churches by Discipleship Training Enrollment, 1995

Percentile	Discipleship Training Enrollment
100th (Maximum)	7,702
90th	135
75th	48
50th (Median)	15
25th	0
10th	0
0th (Minimum)	0

A chart of the median over time is included in figure 7. Substantial changes have been made in the definition of Discipleship Training during this time period. Earlier, the program was known as Church Training. In later years, Discipleship Training figures have included both ongoing enrollment and short term participation. (In 1995, short term participation is not included.) Strictly speaking, the data are not comparable from year to year. However, this graphic has been included to demonstrate the overall downward trend in this program which has traditionally been targeted for Sunday evenings in SBC churches. The downward trend is characteristic of churches in existence in 1986 and in 1995; thus, it is not caused by the addition of new churches into the Convention during the past decade.

Figure 7

Median Discipleship Training (Church Training) Enrollment (Participation), 1972–1995



Woman's Missionary Union

The current distribution of churches based on Woman's Missionary Union (WMU) enrollment is included in table 11. Enrollment figures include Mission Friends, Girls in Action, Acteens, Baptist Young Women, and Baptist Women. The typical church has 13 people enrolled in WMU. As with Discipleship Training, there are a substantial number of churches without this program—35 percent of reporting churches do not have a WMU. (Note that this is the distribution for all churches regardless of whether or not they have a WMU.) In contrast, the median size WMU has 27 persons enrolled. This figure is derived from only those churches reporting WMU membership.

Table 11

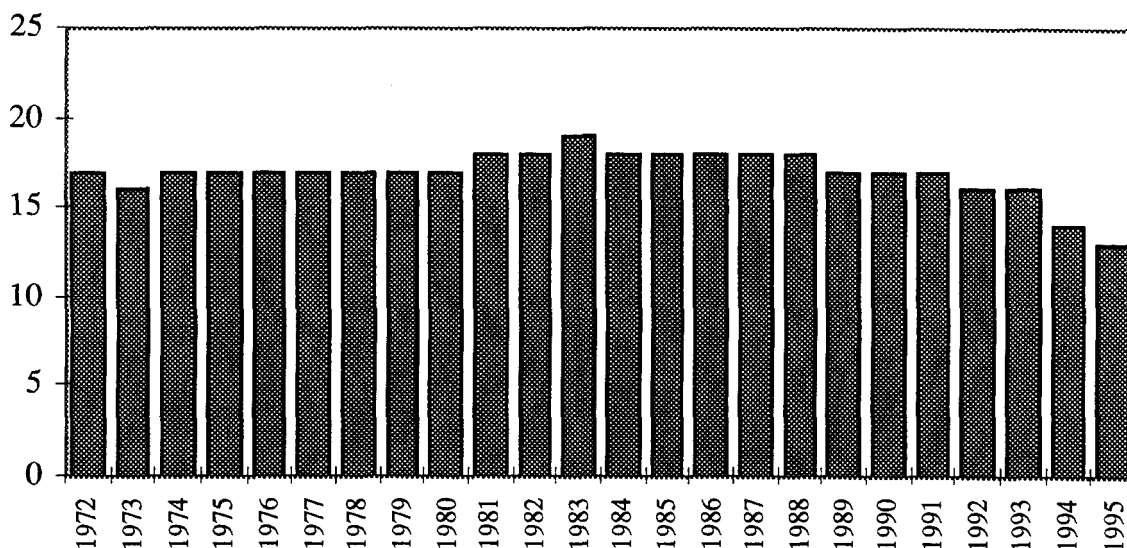
Distribution of Churches by Woman's Missionary Union Enrollment, 1995

Percentile	Woman's Missionary Union Enrollment
100th (Maximum)	4,482
90th	71
75th	37
50th (Median)	13
25th	0
10th	0
0th (Minimum)	0

The longer trend for the median church's WMU enrollment is included in figure 8. There has been a decline in the median WMU enrollment during the past 12 years. Examining the dataset of churches in existence in both 1986 and 1995, the median WMU enrollment declined from 20 to 15. Thus, the decline in the overall median is explained by the decline in older established churches and is not due to the addition of new churches to the Convention.

Because there were major changes in the collection of denominational statistics during the past two years, the sharp drop in enrollment during that time is suspicious. This could be affected by whether or not churches give complete reports. In 1993, 31 percent of reporting churches did not report any WMU membership. In 1994 that percentage rose to 32 percent, while in 1995 it was 35 percent. It cannot be determined precisely whether this increase is due to a greater proportion of churches no longer having a WMU program or whether a greater proportion of churches are giving incomplete reports. However, the data should be consistent prior to 1994, and there were declines in the median WMU from 1983 to 1993.

Figure 8
Median Woman's Missionary Union Enrollment, 1972-1995



Brotherhood

The typical church had 2 people enrolled in Brotherhood in 1995.²⁶ (See table 12.) This number is so low because almost as many churches did not report Brotherhood membership as did—49 percent of reporting churches reported zero or failed to report enrollment, while 51 percent reported 1 or more enrolled. In contrast, the median size Brotherhood enrollment for churches that do have a Brotherhood program is 23.

Table 12
Distribution of Churches by Brotherhood Enrollment, 1995

Percentile	Brotherhood Enrollment
100th (Maximum)	7,106
90th	52
75th	23
50th (Median)	2
25th	0
10th	0
0th (Minimum)	0

A chart is not included that shows Brotherhood enrollment over time. Prior to 1982, more churches did not report brotherhood enrollment than did. From 1990 through 1994, Brotherhood figures included both enrollment and participation. In 1995, enrollment was again separated from participation. Enrollment figures for 1986 and 1995 show declines in the median enrollment over the past decade. Some of the decline can be explained by

²⁶ This does not include participation figures for 1995 and does not include EZRA enrollment.

the addition of new churches into the Convention, however, most of the decline has occurred in the median Brotherhood enrollment of older established churches. While enrollment in traditional activities has declined, it does need to be noted that Brotherhood has broadened its program and emphasis in recent years considerably beyond enrollment in traditional activities.

Tithes and Offerings

Table 13 displays the distribution of tithes and offerings for Southern Baptist churches. In 1995, the typical Southern Baptist church received \$59,160 in tithes and offerings. Note that 75 percent of SBC churches received \$137,163 or less.

Table 13

Distribution of Churches by Tithes and Offerings, 1995

Percentile	Tithes and Offerings
100th (Maximum)	\$16,090,776
90th	320,058
75th	137,163
50th (Median)	59,160
25th	25,433
10th	9,094
0th (Minimum)	0

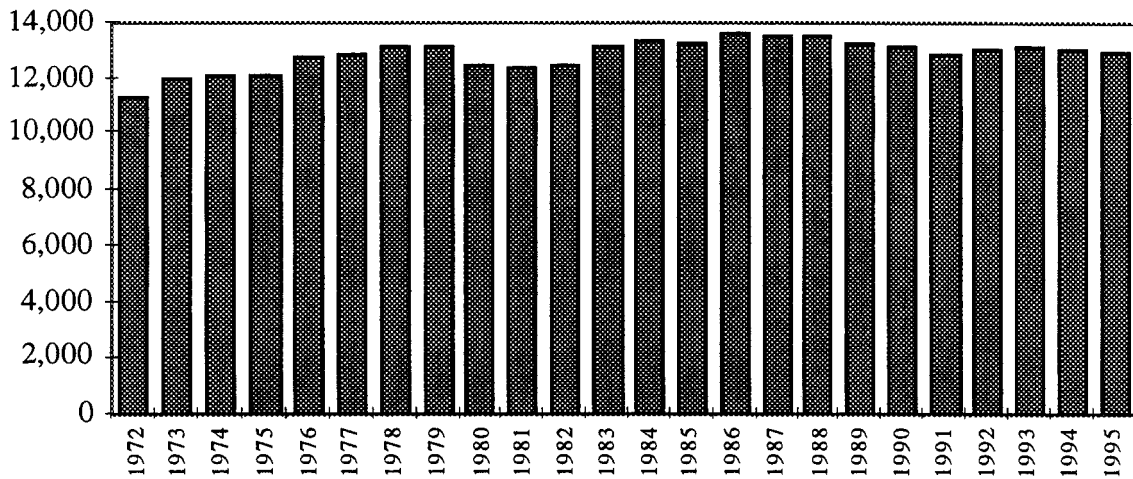
The median has risen sharply over the years from \$14,243 in 1972—a 315 percent increase. However, most of the increase can be attributed to inflation. Using a deflation factor to compare 1972 and 1995 figures in constant dollars, the real increase from 1972 to 1995 was just 14 percent.²⁷

Figure 9 plots the median tithes and offerings, adjusted for inflation. In purchasing power, the median tithes and offerings increased from 1972 through 1979. In 1980 and 1981 there were declines followed by substantial increases from 1982 through 1986. Since 1986 there has been an overall decrease in the adjusted median tithes and offerings. In purchasing power, the typical church received 5 percent less in tithes and offerings in 1995 as compared with 1986. Because of the effects of inflation, increases in financial data in current dollars can be deceptive.

The median tithes and offerings for churches in existence in both 1986 and 1995 declined by 3 percent after adjustments for inflation. Thus most of the overall decline can be explained by the decline experienced by older established churches. Still, a significant portion of the decline can be explained by the addition of newer smaller churches to the Convention.

²⁷ Current dollars are converted into 1967 constant dollars using the average annual Consumer Price Index.

Figure 9
 Median Tithes and Offerings, Adjusted for Inflation, 1972-1995
 (1967 Constant Dollars)



Undesignated and Designated Receipts

Only since 1982 have churches reported their tithes and offerings in component parts of designated and undesignated gifts. In 1995 the typical church reported \$50,787 in undesignated gifts and \$6,171 as designated gifts.²⁸ Undesignated gifts represent discretionary funds available to a church, which means the typical church has less than \$51,000 to support staff, pay for building and utilities, and fund programs and ministries.

Designated receipts are those funds that are given and earmarked for some specific purpose, usually mission causes outside the church. A church generally has no discretion over how these funds are spent and just acts as a conduit for their distribution. Table 14 lists the percentiles from the distributions of churches based on undesignated and designated receipts.

Table 14

Distribution of Churches by Undesignated Receipts and Designated Receipts, 1995

Percentile	Undesignated Receipts	Designated Receipts
100th (Maximum)	\$ 13,417,571	\$ 8,614,457
90th	257,271	61,982
75th	113,814	20,989
50th (Median)	50,787	6,171
25th	21,983	1,369
10th	7,451	0
0th (Minimum)	0	0

²⁸ The median undesignated receipts and median designated gifts will not equal to the median tithes and offerings because they are derived independently.

Figures 10 and 11 chart the yearly median undesignated and designated receipts after adjustments to compensate for inflation. Like total tithes and offerings, the medians for these two variables increased from 1982 to 1986 and have decreased since 1986. Adjusted undesignated receipts have declined by 5 percent, while adjusted designated receipts have declined by 8 percent. The decline in adjusted median undesignated and adjusted median designated receipts is evident among older churches (those in existence in both 1986 and 1995). The declines are 3 percent and 6 percent respectively. Thus most of the decline in the overall medians is due to the decline in the medians for older established churches; however, as with other financial figures the addition of new churches to the Southern Baptist Convention does have a significant impact on the downward movement of monetary figures during the past decade.

Figure 10

Median Undesignated Receipts, Adjusted for Inflation, 1982–1995
(1967 Constant Dollars)

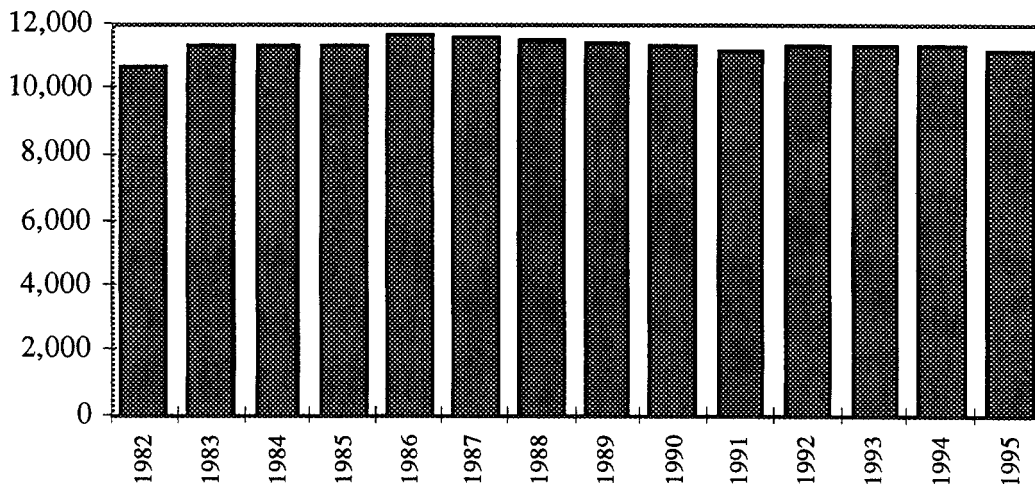
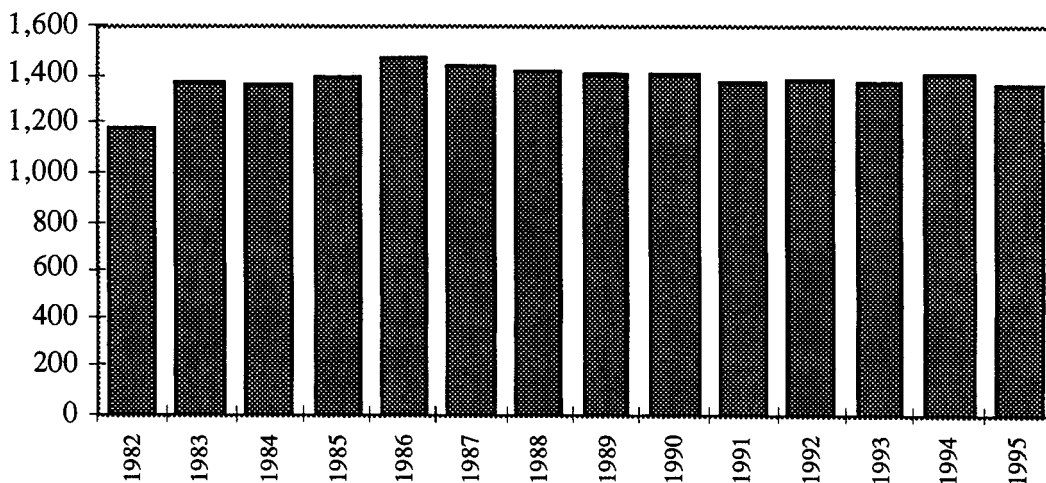


Figure 11

Median Designated Receipts, Adjusted for Inflation, 1982–1995
(1967 Constant Dollars)



Local and Mission Expenditures

In 1995 the median SBC church reported \$46,024 in total local expenditures. Furthermore, it reported \$7,477 in total mission expenditures. Table 15 profiles the distributions for these two variables.

Table 15

Distribution of Churches by Total Local Expenditures and Total Mission Expenditures, 1995

Percentile	Total Local Expenditures	Total Mission Expenditures
100th (Maximum)	\$47,029,200	20,631,37
90th	260,005	\$47,728
75th	107,830	19,809
50th (Median)	46,024	7,477
25th	19,290	2,549
10th	6,849	530
0th (Minimum)	0	0

These figures, as most monetary figures, have increased greatly since 1972. However, when the median total local expenditures is compared for the years 1972 and 1995 in constant dollars, almost all the increase can be attributed to inflation—there was only a 3 percent increase in constant dollars for the entire time period. This means that the typical church in the Convention has had minimal additional funds to expand its ministry and program in its local setting. Even though most of the growth in median total mission expenditures was also due to inflation, after the effects of inflation were filtered out there was still a 38 percent real increase in missions expenditures by the typical church. This underscores the missions mindedness of the typical SBC church.

When the yearly medians, adjusted for inflation, are examined, the same pattern emerges as for other adjusted financial medians. From 1972 to 1986 there were overall increases in the medians. From 1986 through 1995 there were overall decreases in the medians. Since 1986, the adjusted median total local expenditures has decreased by 8 percent and the adjusted median total mission expenditures has decreased by 9 percent. Decline is present, even controlling for the influence of new churches added to the Convention during the previous decade. Both the adjusted median total local expenditures and adjusted median total mission expenditures for churches in existence in 1986 and 1995 declined by 6 percent during the past decade.

Cooperative Program Gifts, Association Mission Gifts, and the Annie Armstrong Easter Offering

Distributions for three specific components of missions expenditures are listed in table 16. The median church gave \$2,935 to the Cooperative Program,²⁹ \$1,200 to their local Baptist association, and \$350 to the Annie Armstrong Easter Offering for Home

²⁹ In 1995 there were 4,564 churches that turned in an Annual Church Profile and either reported zero or failed to report any contribution to the Cooperative Program—this represents 13 percent of all reporting churches. The number seems high, given that support of the Cooperative Program is one of the defining characteristics of a Southern Baptist church. This percentage has usually been closer to 9.5 in previous years.

Missions.³⁰ All three of these medians have increased substantially over the years. After the effects of inflation are controlled, the median gifts to the Cooperative Program increased by 25 percent from 1972 to 1995. The median associational mission gifts, in constant dollars, have increased by 81 percent. Median gifts for the Annie Armstrong Easter Offering for Home Missions is not available prior to 1978. However, from 1978 to 1995, the median Annie Armstrong Easter Offering, after adjustment for inflation, increased by 40 percent.

Table 16

Distribution of Churches by Gifts to the Cooperative Program, Gifts to Associational Missions, and the Annie Armstrong Easter Offering, 1995

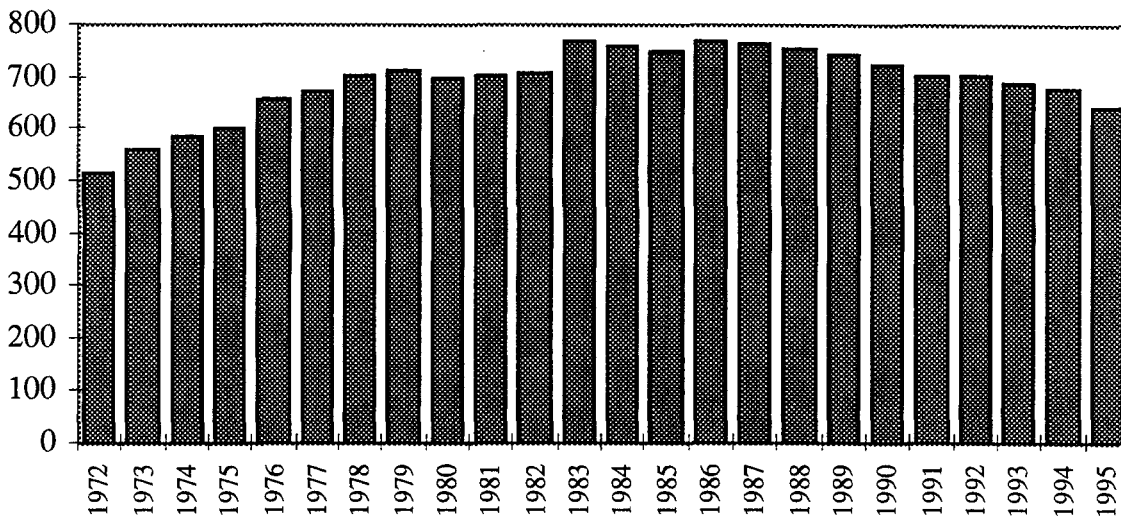
Percentile	Cooperative Program	Associational Mission Gifts	Annie Armstrong Easter Offering
100th (Maximum)	\$6,220,277	\$527,249	\$86,582
90th	24,916	6,205	2,450
75th	9,400	2,970	1,035
50th (Median)	2,935	1,200	350
25th	688	351	25
10th	0	0	0
0th (Minimum)	0	0	0

Even though there was a real increase of 25 percent in the median Cooperative Program gifts from 1972 to 1995, this growth occurred from 1972 to 1986 (see figure 12). Since 1986, the adjusted median gifts to the Cooperative Program has declined by 17 percent. This decline is greater than for the deflated median for any other financial variable examined in this report for this time period. In particular, it is much more substantial than the 5 percent decline in undesignated receipts. Most of this decline is attributable to the decline in the adjusted median Cooperative Program gifts for churches in existence in both 1986 and 1995. The adjusted median gifts to the Cooperative Program decreased by 14 percent for these older established churches. A small portion of the decline can be attributed to the addition of new smaller churches into the Convention.

³⁰ The median gifts to the Lottie Moon Christmas Offering for Foreign Missions is \$561. Percentiles for this variable are included in the Appendix. This variable is not tracked over time and is not included in the discussion of mission expenditures.

Figure 12

Median Cooperative Program Gifts, Adjusted for Inflation, 1972–1995
(1967 Constant Dollars)



The distribution in table 17 examines more closely the relationship of gifts to the Cooperative Program and church receipts. Generally, churches will allocate a portion of their undesignated receipts to the Cooperative Program. Therefore, Cooperative Program gifts as a percentage of undesignated receipts is examined.

Table 17

Distribution of Churches by Percentage of Undesignated Receipts
Given to the Cooperative Program, 1995

Percentile	Cooperative Program as a Percentage of Undesignated Receipts
100th (Maximum)	...
90th	13.4
75th	10.1
50th (Median)	7.0
25th	3.2
10th	0.5
0th (Minimum)	0.0

The median church in the Convention gives 7 percent of its undesignated receipts to the Cooperative Program. Note that only 30 percent of SBC churches give 10 percent or more, while 30 percent of the churches give about 4 percent or less.

The median percentage Cooperative Program to undesignated gifts has gradually decreased since 1987 from a high of 7.8 percent to the current 7.0 percent. Thus, the typical church has gradually given less of its discretionary funds to the Cooperative Program in more recent years. This helps to explain why the median Cooperative Program gifts, adjusted for inflation, has declined more since 1986 than median tithes and offerings or median undesignated receipts. Nearly all the decline is attributable to older

established churches, although the addition of newer churches has had a minor downward effect.³¹

The yearly patterns for median associational gifts, after adjustments for inflation, are similar to other financial figures. The adjusted median associational gifts peaked in 1987 and 1988, and there has been modest decline since that time. Overall, the adjusted median associational gifts in 1995 is down 3 percent since 1986. Unlike other financial figures, most of the decline is due to the influx of new churches into the Convention, but even the adjusted median for older established churches is down 1 percent since 1986.

The adjusted median for the Annie Armstrong Easter Offering for Home Missions did not peak until 1990, then peaked again in 1992. Comparing 1995 data with 1986 data, as done with other financial variables, the adjusted median for 1995 is 1 percent less than in 1986. All of this decrease is due to the addition of new churches to the Convention. The adjusted median derived for churches in existence in both 1986 and 1995 increased by 4 percent.

Conclusion

While diverse, there is considerable commonality among the majority of Southern Baptist churches—they tend to be small. Seventy-five percent have 334 or fewer resident members, 90 percent have 250 or fewer in worship on Sunday morning, 90 percent have fewer than 210 in Sunday School attendance on an average Sunday, and half have less than \$60,000 dollars to pay for building, pastoral salary, program, ministry and support missions. All of this underscores the fact that most Southern Baptist churches are small.

Although the typical church in the SBC appears to be barely growing, it is, in fact, in decline. Most of the variables discussed in the text suggests that there have been considerable declines in some of the major programs and emphases of Southern Baptist churches. Even financial data, which are generally increasing, show signs of decrease when controlled for inflation over the past decade.

While large, growing churches receive most of the attention and are viewed as models of success, most churches find themselves in circumstances not conducive to that type of growth. In planning programs and materials, denominational leaders should consider whether they are easily implemented by the majority of churches which may be limited by financial and people resources. A good approach would be to design multiple programs or materials that are customized for different size churches in a variety of contexts.

This is not to demean the importance of large churches in the Convention. In fact, the Convention is to a large degree dependent upon the contributions of large churches. Large churches are home to the majority of members, they provide a disproportionate share of SBC baptisms each year; and they provide a disproportionate share of financial resources. Nonetheless, in spite of their size and contribution, they are still atypical.

The year 1986 seems to be a pivotal year for Southern Baptist churches. This year began the decline in a number of median statistics—especially the financial statistics. There is no definitive explanation for this phenomenon. It is not clear whether this trend will eventually be lagged by decline at the Convention level or whether growth in a small segment of churches will offset decline for a majority of churches. The decline does cause concern for the health of the majority of Southern Baptist churches.

³¹ Using the standard time frame for comparison, the median Cooperative Program gifts as a percentage of undesignated receipts declined from 8 percent to 7.3 percent from 1986 to 1995 for churches in existence in both years.

APPENDIX

Table 18

Distribution of Selected Annual Church Profile Items, 1995^a

Percentile	Year ^b Organized	Total ^c Members	Resident ^d Members	Total Baptisms	Other Additions	Total Sunday School Enrollment	Average Weekly Sunday School Attendance
100 th (Maximum)	1995	28,003	18,494	1,313	1,042	21,880	9,064
90 th	1982	886	623	23	28	460	209
75 th	1960	461	334	11	13	209	108
50 th (Median)	1928	233	168	5	5	98	55
25 th	1886	117	82	1	2	50	30
10 th	1851	59	43	0	0	27	15
0 (Minimum)	1682	1	1	0	0	0	0
Number of churches not reporting, or reporting zero	1,288	350	614	6,703	6,717	796	1,029

a Based on 36,506 churches with current status codes.

b Based on 35,218 churches reporting date of organization.

c Based on 36,156 churches reporting total membership.

d Based on 35,892 churches reporting resident membership.

e Discipleship Training and Brotherhood include only enrollment and not participation.

f Based on 34,236 churches with non-zero undesignated receipts.

g Not available

h Number of persons in Sunday morning worship service(s) on last Sunday of associational year. For most churches this would be September 24, 1995.

i Based on 31,565 churches reporting date pastor came. Valid responses were restricted to 1975 through 1995.

Table 18—continued

Percentile	Discipleship ^e Training	Woman's Missionary Union	Brotherhood ^e	Music Enrollment	Tithes & Offerings	Total Receipts	Undesignated Gifts
100 th (Maximum)	7,702	4,482	7,106	3,115	\$16,090,776	\$25,087,436	\$13,417,571
90 th	135	71	52	113	320,058	335,751	257,271
75 th	60	37	23	56	137,163	141,573	113,814
50 th (Median)	15	13	2	26	59,160	61,646	50,787
25 th	0	0	0	8	25,433	27,143	21,983
10 th	0	0	0	0	9,094	11,000	7,451
0 (Minimum)	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Number of churches not reporting, or reporting zero	15,616	12,598	17,985	6,789	2,024	1,634	2,270

Table 18—continued

Percentile	Designated Gifts	Total Local Expenditures	Cooperative Program	Associational Mission Gifts	Total Mission Expenditures	Annie Armstrong Easter Offering
100 th (Maximum)	\$8,614,457	\$47,029,200	\$6,220,277	\$527,249	\$51,500,505	\$86,582
90 th	61,982	260,005	24,916	6,205	47,728	2,450
75 th	20,989	107,830	9,400	2,970	19,809	1,035
50 th (Median)	6,171	46,024	2,935	1,200	7,477	350
25 th	1,369	19,290	688	351	2,549	25
10 th	0	6,849	0	0	530	0
0 (Minimum)	0	0	0	0	0	0
Number of churches not reporting, or reporting zero	4,346	2,017	4,564	5,058	2,097	8,863

Table 18—continued

Percentile	Lotte Moon Christmas Offering	Percent Undesignated to		Baptism Rate per 100 Resident Members	A.M. Worship ^h Attendance 9/24/95	Year ⁱ Pastor Came
		Cooperative ^f Program	Association ^f			
100 th (Maximum)	\$242,943	... ^g	... ^g	... ^g	22,317	1995
90 th	4,866	13.4	5.2	9.3	250	1995
75 th	1,810	10.1	3.9	5.1	138	1994
50 th (Median)	561	7.0	2.4	2.5	70	1991
25 th	100	3.2	1.1	0.9	35	1987
10 th	0	0.5	0.1	0.0	13	1980
0 (Minimum)	0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0	... ^g
∞ Number of churches not reporting, or reporting zero	7,080	5,176	5,635	6,911	2,866	...