

SUMMARY REPORT

A STUDY OF THE DOWNTOWN CHURCH

by

DEPARTMENT OF METROPOLITAN MISSIONS

HOME MISSION BOARD, S.B.C.

and

CHURCH ADMINISTRATION DEPARTMENT

SUNDAY SCHOOL BOARD, S.B.C.

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INTRODUCTION

For a number of years our larger churches have requested special assistance from Southern Baptist agencies in carrying out their programs. While these large churches have many problems, there is a special group, located in the central business district of the larger cities, that face unique needs and difficulties. To serve these downtown churches better the agencies need to have some basic information about the nature, extent and intensity of their problems. It was to secure such information that the Executive Committee of the Southern Baptist Convention requested the Home Mission Board, through its Department of Metropolitan Missions, and in cooperation with the Sunday School Board, through its Department of Church Administration, to conduct this study.

The research was conducted under the direction of the Secretary of the Department of Metropolitan Missions, J.N. Evans, Jr., and Brooks Faulkner of the Church Administration Department. Also contributing to the project were the Research and Statistics Department of the Sunday School Board, S.B.C., Horace O. Kelly, Jr., Analyst; the Department of Survey and Special Studies, Home Mission Board, S.B.C., Leonard G. Irwin, Secretary; Kate Ellen Gruver, Home Mission Board, who edited most of the manuscripts; Francis DuBose, Golden Gate Baptist Seminary, who wrote the Survey of Literature; and the associational, state and Southern Baptist Convention leaders who provided valuable information on these downtown churches being studied. To these, and to many others who gave generously of their time, knowledge and guidance throughout the study, The Department of Metropolitan Missions and the Church Administration Department wish to express their deep appreciation.

PURPOSE

The purpose of this research project was to gather significant information about the downtown church and its unique problems. This information could then serve as a helpful guide in designing future procedures that would enable these churches to meet some of their basic needs.

DEFINITION

For the purposes of this study, a downtown church is defined as a church organized before 1940 and located in the central business district of a city with a population of over 100,000.

RESEARCH QUESTIONS

The following questions were submitted to be tested by the research:

1. Is the structure of the community of the downtown area radically changing?
2. Is the downtown church effectively ministering to the needs of its immediate environment?
3. Are the present church programs and program services of the downtown churches adequate in reaching and ministering to the people in the present inner-city area?
4. Will many downtown churches choose to relocate?
5. Is the income of the downtown community residents decreasing?
6. Is the downtown church meeting the challenge of the following local community problems: poverty, mobility of members, loss of neighborhood pride, crime and delinquency, health conditions, personality maladjustment?

7. Is the magnitude of the task facing the downtown church increased because of the influx of racial and language groups?
8. Is survival a major concern of the downtown church?
9. Is the downtown church heavily dependent on community agencies for services in the areas of welfare, education, social clubs, and other community activities?
10. Has the downtown church been largely ineffective in reaching persons living in high-rise apartments in the inner city?
11. Does the ministry of the downtown church show indications of selective evangelism?
12. Does the downtown church have ministry opportunities through cooperative efforts with other churches, institutions, and agencies?
13. Do many downtown churches feel a decline in their effectiveness in ministering to their people?
14. Is the primary problem facing the downtown church large numbers of members moving from the community?
15. Are the two most prominent factors that might prompt a downtown church to relocate: church members moving away from the community; and, changing economic status of the community?
16. Have downtown churches engaged in serious long-range planning?

RESEARCH PROCEDURE

Research was divided into the following areas and steps:

1. Survey of Literature on the Downtown Church--Francis DuBose
2. Socio-Economic Study of the Downtown Church Areas--Leonard Irwin

3. Personal Letters to Associational, State and Southern Baptist Convention Agency Leaders Requesting Specific Information on the Downtown Churches--Department of Metropolitan Missions
4. Survey Phase--Research and Statistics Department, Sunday School Board

A total of 114 Southern Baptist Convention churches came within the scope of the definition of a downtown church. In addition to the pastor ten leaders from each church were asked to respond to the questions asked in the survey. Ninety-three pastors responded to the survey (81.6%); seven hundred sixty-eight church leaders responded (88.3%).

The "Conclusions and Implications" section of the Report on the Downtown Church seeks to show highlights of the entire study. Relevant data concerning each Research Question has been given; conclusions have been drawn; and implications have been noted.

CONCLUSIONS AND IMPLICATIONS

RESEARCH QUESTION ONE: IS THE STRUCTURE OF THE COMMUNITY OF THE DOWNTOWN AREA RADICALLY CHANGING?

1. Contributing Data

- a. 87% of all downtown church areas studied had a higher percentage of families living in poverty than their respective metropolitan areas. (Socio-Economic Observations)
- b. 59% of the areas studied had a greater percentage of sub-standard housing than the metropolitan areas in which they are located. (S-E Observations)
- c. 65% of these areas had a median age 10 years older than the median for their respective metropolitan areas. (S-E Observations)
- d. 56% of the pastors and 51% of the leaders responded that their churches are located in a deteriorating residential district. (Survey-Research & Statistics)
- e. 49.4% of the pastors indicated a need for social work personnel and 47.3% indicated a need for special services training. (Survey-R & S)

2. CONCLUSION

The structure of the community of the downtown area is radically changing. The area to which the downtown church ministers has been affected by rapid leaps in technology, advances in socio-economic organization, population explosion, and the influx of ethnic groups. Urban renewal, expressways, and federal housing have contributed to this change. The results have been that the central business district has increasingly become the home of the lower classes: the poor

and uneducated. (See Survey of Literature by DuBose.) Also, the morally destructive forces have the ascendancy. As a result, there has been an increasing difficulty of handling an excessive daytime population because of traffic congestion, lack of adequate parking facilities and adequate transit facilities.

Although it is still the ecological center of the metropolis, the central business district has declined in its general importance in recent years, as indicated in a marked trend toward decentralization, decline in central business district retail sales, etc. (Survey of Literature)

Another strong indication of the radical change in the downtown area is the slum encirclement. Urban renewal programs have not kept pace with the ever-increasing blight. (Survey of Literature) Consequently, a "sense of community" in the downtown area is waning.

Still another indication of the radical change in the downtown area is the fact that 65% of these areas had a median age 10 years older than the median for their respective metropolitan areas. (See Socio-Economic characteristics.)

RESEARCH QUESTION TWO: IS THE DOWNTOWN CHURCH EFFECTIVELY MINISTERING TO THE NEEDS OF ITS IMMEDIATE ENVIRONMENT?

1. Contributing Data

- a. To the question of the future of the downtown church, 57% of the pastors gave some other response than "growing and definitely a permanent ministry." Of the 57%, 45%

said the downtown church was "standing still but should remain a permanent ministry." Of those pastors who feel a sense of call to the downtown ministry, the largest percentage (46.2) felt their church was "growing and definitely a permanent ministry." 41.8% of the same group felt their church was "standing still but should remain a permanent ministry." The age of the pastor fluctuated so that age could not be a determining factor in answering this question. (Survey-R & S)

- b. 57.9% of the pastors indicated either "No, except on very unusual or special occasions," or "Yes, but only on certain days," to the question: "Are your church's facilities available to the community?" (Survey-R & S)
- c. 53.7% of the churches make a definite attempt to serve an area 10 miles or more in radius. (Survey-R & S)
- d. 46.2% of the pastors responded "No" as compared to 39.8% responding "Yes" to the question: "If your church has built or remodeled in the last 10 years, was it designed primarily to help solve a problem caused by, or peculiar to, your downtown location?" (Survey-R & S)
- e. 39.8% of the pastors feel their church programs are not meeting the needs of the inner-city residents. (Survey-R & S)
- f. 78.4% of the churches do not offer family counseling; 88.2% no child care clinic; 95.6% no medical care; 96.7% no pediatric counseling; 82.4% no psychological counseling; 82.8% no ministry to Negro Baptists. (Survey-R & S)

- g. The median church membership is 1,500-2,000 members, yet the largest percentage (27.8%) of churches have only 3-4 total paid professional staff members. (Survey-R & S)
- h. 57% of the persons in the downtown areas were three years below the median education of the surrounding metropolitan area. (S-E Observations)

2. CONCLUSION

The downtown church is not effectively ministering to the needs of its immediate environment. There is a lack of adequate means of communication with ethnic groups, single persons, young married couples, retired persons, apartment dwellers, and lower socio-economic groups which have become the predominant population of the central business district. (Survey of Literature)

A void exists in downtown churches in the area of specialized ministries for inner-city residents. This is indicated by the absence of specialized ministries. (Survey-R & S)

The heavy work load of the pastor and church staff is a major factor in the inability of the downtown church to minister effectively to the needs of its immediate environment. The demands of a complex ministry call for a larger number of specialized staff members if the church is to minister both to its members and to the adjacent community. (Survey of Literature)

RESEARCH QUESTION THREE: ARE THE PRESENT CHURCH PROGRAMS AND PROGRAM SERVICES OF THE DOWNTOWN CHURCHES ADEQUATE IN REACHING AND MINISTERING TO THE PEOPLE IN THE PRESENT INNER-CITY AREA?

1. Contributing Data

- a. 52% of the pastors describe their visitation programs as unsuccessful to a marked degree. (Survey-R & S)
- b. 39.8% of the pastors feel the present programs are not meeting the needs of the inner-city residents. (Survey-R & S)
- c. In areas where adult age is 10 years older than the average for their respective metropolitan areas only 59.1% of the churches have a senior adult program. (Survey-R & S)
- d. 63.4% of the churches do not have education classes (literacy, remedial, language), yet 60% of the areas studied by the Department of Survey and Special Studies had a median education level below their respective metropolitan areas. (Survey-R & S; S-E Observations)
- e. 69.8% of the churches do not have an alcoholic or drug addiction ministry. (Survey-R & S)
- f. 37.6% of the churches do not have selected evangelism of special groups (e.g. deaf, underprivileged, Negro). (Survey-R & S)
- g. 35.4% of the churches do not have soul-winning instruction. (Survey-R & S)
- h. 49.3% of the downtown churches are not making adequate long-range plans. (Survey-R & S)

- i. 70% of the churches have a church council, but only 30% of these meet at least monthly. (Survey-R & S)
- j. 51.5% of the downtown churches do not have weekday Bible study; 63.5% do not have kindergarten; 41.9% do not have a public relations program; 71% do not have a child care clinic; 78.4% do not have family counseling service; 24.7% do not have indoor recreation. (Survey-R & S)

2. CONCLUSION

The present church programs are not adequate in reaching and ministering to the people in the present inner-city area. Church programs, program services, and administrative services are not meeting the needs and until now intensive adjustments have not been made.

Since the downtown church expects to remain a permanent ministry in the central business district, with only a small minority choosing to relocate, the downtown church will continue to conduct inadequate programs unless adjustments are made.

There is a lack of a heterogeneous curriculum which meets the needs of all residents of the downtown community.

(Survey of Literature)

The decreasing financial structure, deteriorating residential districts, and loss of neighborhood pride show clearly that the present church programs are not adequately reaching and ministering to the residents. (Survey of Literature; Survey-R & S)

Downtown churches do not utilize the available resource of a church council (only 30% of 70% of the downtown churches' church councils meet at least monthly) to plan, conduct, and evaluate church programs.

The downtown churches do not utilize some of the available programs of ministry which might lend themselves to reaching and to meeting more adequately the needs of persons in the downtown area.

RESEARCH QUESTION FOUR: WILL MANY DOWNTOWN CHURCHES CHOOSE TO RE-LOCATE?

1. Contributing Data

- a. 72.1% of the pastors responded "No, definitely not" to the question: "Do you foresee relocation as a likely topic for discussion in the foreseeable future?"
(Survey-R & S)
- b. 75.2% of the pastors and 63.3% of the leaders responded "No" to the question: "Are members dissatisfied with the present location?" (Survey-R & S)
- c. 47% of 57% of the pastors responding with some other response than "growing and definitely a permanent ministry" felt that the downtown church was "standing still but should remain a permanent ministry." (Survey-R & S)
- d. The reasons pastors gave as those frequently cited by members for moving their memberships out of the downtown church were: "Don't want to drive the distance several times a week" (84.9%) and "Inaccessibility of the church weekday activities" (74.2%). (Survey-R & S)

- e. The reasons pastors felt were most frequently cited by members for moving their memberships into the downtown churches were: "Better staffed to serve the people" (57%) and "Prefer better organization and education programs" (54.8%). (Survey-R & S)
- f. The reasons pastors felt were the strongest for members maintaining their membership in the downtown churches after their moving to the suburbs were: "Prefer better organization and education programs" (54.8%) and "Preaching ministry" (48.4%). (Survey-R & S)

2. CONCLUSION

Only a small minority of the downtown churches will relocate even though a substantial number of pastors feel the downtown church is standing still. Many members will overlook the inconvenience of the geographic location in preference to an adequate staff and better organization and education programs. However, the trend is for more of the present members to move from than to maintain their membership in the downtown church.

RESEARCH QUESTION FIVE: IS THE INCOME OF THE DOWNTOWN COMMUNITY RESIDENTS DECREASING?

1. Contributing Data

- a. 87% of all downtown church areas studied had a higher percentage of families living in poverty than their respective metropolitan areas. (S-E Observations)
- b. In 65% of the areas the degree of poverty was more than 10% higher than their respective metropolitan areas. (S-E Observations)

c. 79.6% of the pastors and 64.8% of the leaders indicated they do not have a problem of declining finances.

(Survey-R & S)

d. 35.3% of the downtown churches had total gifts last year of \$ 200,000 to \$ 399,999. (Survey-R & S)

2. CONCLUSION

The income of the downtown community residents has decreased; however, this has not created financial difficulties for the downtown church. The conclusion is that the downtown church is heavily dependent for its financial well-being on those persons who are members of the downtown church but are not residents of the downtown community.

The declining income of the downtown community residents has not created financial difficulties for the downtown church. Should the trend of members moving to suburban churches continue and if the downtown church ministers (through program and staff) to an increasing number of inner-city residents, the church will eventually experience such financial burden that it will face a crisis.

RESEARCH QUESTION SIX: IS THE DOWNTOWN CHURCH MEETING THE CHALLENGE OF THE FOLLOWING LOCAL COMMUNITY PROBLEMS?

- POVERTY
- MOBILITY OF MEMBERS
- LOSS OF NEIGHBORHOOD PRIDE
- CRIME AND DELINQUENCY
- HEALTH CONDITIONS
- PERSONALITY MALADJUSTMENT

1. Contributing Data

- a. 67.9% of the pastors indicated either "No, except on very unusual or special occasions" or "Yes, but only on certain days" to the question: "Are your church's facilities available to the community?" (Survey-R & S)
- b. 53.7% of the churches make a definite attempt to serve an area 10 miles or more in radius. (Survey-R & S)
- c. 46.2% of the pastors responded "No" as compared to 39.8% of the pastors responding "Yes" to the question: "If your church has built or remodeled in the last 10 years, was it designed primarily to help solve a problem caused by, or peculiar to, your downtown location?" (Survey-R & S)
- d. 39.8% of the pastors felt the present church programs are not meeting the needs of the community residents. (Survey-R & S)
- e. 78.4% of the churches do not offer family counseling; 88.2% do not offer a child care clinic; 95.6% offer no medical care; 96.7% offer no pediatric counseling; 82.4% offer no psychological counseling; 82.8% offer no ministry to Negro Baptists. (Survey-R & S)
- f. 45% of the pastors indicated that less than 20% of their additions had come from a one-mile radius. Over 62% stated that less than 30% had come from this radius. (Survey-R & S)

2. CONCLUSION

The downtown church is not meeting the challenge of the problems of poverty, mobility of members, loss of neighborhood

pride, crime and delinquency, health conditions, and personality maladjustment. The fact that the downtown church is not meeting the challenge of these problems is indicated in that these problems continue to exist and to increase in intensity and scope.

RESEARCH QUESTION SEVEN: IS THE MAGNITUDE OF THE TASK FACING THE DOWNTOWN CHURCH INCREASED BECAUSE OF THE INFLUX OF RACIAL AND LANGUAGE GROUPS?

1. Contributing Data

- a. 78% of the areas have a lower percentage of non-white than their metropolitan areas and only sixteen per cent have a 10% higher percentage. (S-E Observations)
- b. 26.9% of the churches felt growth of surrounding Negro community was a problem. (Survey-R & S)
- c. 82.8% of churches do not have a ministry to Negro Baptists. (Survey-R & S)

2. CONCLUSION

The problem of the influx of racial and language group structures is of great concern; however, the problem of class structure is of even greater concern. The magnitude of the task facing the downtown church is increased because of the attitudes that a problem exists (26.9%), and because 82.8% of the churches do not have a ministry to Negro Baptists. We may conclude that the maximum of the downtown churches trying to reach the Negro population is 17.2%. We may also conclude that this percentage would be true of churches trying to reach language groups as well.

The fact that 82.8% of the downtown churches do not have a ministry to Negro Baptists indicates that many downtown churches are practicing selective evangelism. This means they are choosing selected groups toward whom they concentrate their efforts in evangelism.

RESEARCH QUESTION EIGHT: IS SURVIVAL A MAJOR CONCERN OF THE DOWNTOWN CHURCH?

1. Contributing Data

- a. Over 50% of the churches have not remodeled or built within the last six years. (Survey-R & S)
- b. Over 48% of the pastors indicated that a "lack of having a specialized ministry. . .for downtown residents" was a problem. (Survey-R & S)
- c. 62% of the pastors indicated that it was a problem to maintain a regular church-wide visitation program. (Survey-R & S)
- d. 49.4% of the pastors indicated a need for help for personnel for social work; while 40.9% did not feel help was needed. (Survey-R & S)
- e. 47.3% of the pastors felt a need for training for specialized services. (Survey-R & S)
- f. 41.9% of the pastors felt a need for curriculum materials from Convention agencies. (Survey-R & S)
- g. 33.3% of the pastors felt a need for administrative materials from Convention agencies. (Survey-R & S)
- h. 41.9% of the pastors felt a need for field service assistance. Among the types of help asked for were clinics and

workshops on: Weekday ministries, apartment house ministries, Negro work, visitation, deaf ministries, language ministries, survey, financial programs, analysis of needs of downtown churches, conferences for pastors, staff.

(Survey-R & S)

2. CONCLUSION

Survival is a major concern of the downtown church. The indication of needs for help shows the needs are not presently being met by the downtown churches. Trained personnel for social work, training for specialized service, curriculum materials, administrative materials, and field services helps are some of the more prominent needs of these churches if their ministry is to become more effective.

Welfare, education, social clubs, and other community activities are performing many of the ministries which a downtown church might more naturally render if it is to "serve" the downtown community.

The problem of maintaining a regular church-wide visitation program indicates that the burden of survival rests too heavily on the pastor and church staff. The pastor and church staff must maintain too much of the responsibility for evangelism and ministry. This contributes to the dilemma of the heavy work load of the pastor and church staff which could be alleviated if other members would assume proportionate measures of responsibility. When downtown churches have more people visiting, the same downtown churches show more baptisms.

We may conclude that a problem which causes survival to be a major concern is the lack of high motivation. Church members need to be motivated to assume the responsibilities which must be theirs if the church is to have an effective and continuing ministry.

RESEARCH QUESTION NINE: IS THE DOWNTOWN CHURCH HEAVILY DEPENDENT ON COMMUNITY AGENCIES FOR SERVICES IN THE AREAS OF WELFARE, EDUCATION, SOCIAL CLUBS, AND OTHER COMMUNITY ACTIVITIES?

1. Contributing Data
 - a. The largest percentage of churches do not offer these programs. (Survey-R & S)
 - b. 49% of the pastors indicated a need for social work personnel and 47.3% indicated a need for special services training. (Survey-R & S)

2. CONCLUSION

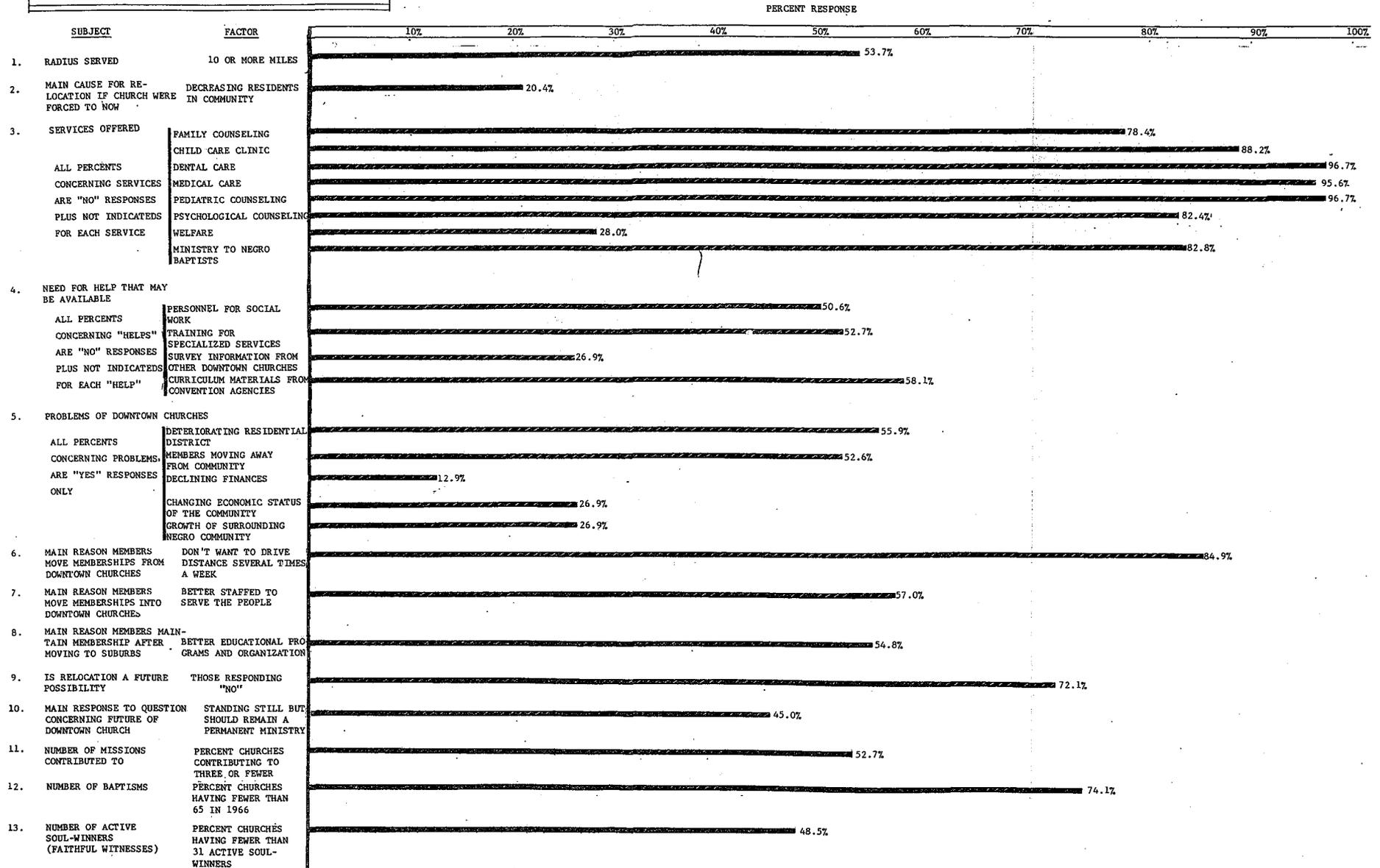
Presuming that services in the area of welfare, education, social clubs, and community activities are needed, the church is not meeting these needs. The absence of these services coupled with the fact that they are needed means the downtown church is heavily dependent on government and secular agencies to meet these needs.

RESEARCH QUESTION TEN: HAS THE DOWNTOWN CHURCH BEEN LARGELY INEFFECTIVE IN REACHING PERSONS LIVING IN HIGH-RISE APARTMENTS IN THE INNER CITY?

1. Contributing Data
 - a. 41.9% of the pastors indicated they have difficulty visiting in high-rise apartments. (Survey-R & S)

UNLESS OTHERWISE INDICATED, THE HIGHEST PERCENTAGE GIVEN IN RESPONSE TO A QUESTION WILL BE GRAPHICALLY ILLUSTRATED. IN EACH CASE THE READER IS CAUTIONED TO STUDY THE SUBJECT AND FACTOR TO BE ABLE TO PROPERLY INTERPRET THE PERCENTAGE LISTED.

PROFILE - DOWNTOWN CHURCHES *



* ALL DATA PRESENTED IN THIS PROFILE CAME FROM THE SURVEY RESPONSES

- b. 40% of the pastors indicated that the church programs are not meeting the needs of the residents--hence, they are not communicating. (Survey-R & S)
- c. 50% of the pastors stated they had fewer than 30 members who actively and regularly attempt to lead others to an acceptance of Christ. (Survey-R & S)

2. CONCLUSION

The data shows that the downtown church faces difficulties in ministering to persons in high-rise apartments:

- (1) too few members participate in visitation;
- (2) difficulty of visiting privileges in high-rise apartments;
- (3) church programs do not meet the needs of those who live in these apartments (single young people, older married people, young married couples, widows, the separated, etc.).

RESEARCH QUESTION ELEVEN: DOES THE MINISTRY OF THE DOWNTOWN CHURCH SHOW INDICATIONS OF SELECTIVE EVANGELISM?

1. Contributing Data

- a. 27% of the churches indicated that the growth of the Negro community is a realistic problem (Survey-R & S)
- b. 83% of the pastors either did not respond or responded negatively to the question of whether they conducted any kind of a Negro ministry in or by their churches.
(Survey-R & S)
- c. 75% of the pastors felt that their churches attempt to serve a radius of seven miles or more. This indicates a lack of a concentrated geographic area for ministry.
(Survey-R & S)

- d. 48.4% of the pastors (11.8% not responding) indicated that the lack of having a specialized ministry to downtown groups was an existing problem. (Survey-R & S)
- e. 39.8% of the pastors feel the present programs are not meeting the needs of adjacent community residents. (Survey-R & S)
- f. 40.9% of the churches do not have a senior adult program; 63.4% of the churches do not have education classes (literacy, remedial, language). (Survey-R & S)

2. CONCLUSION

The ministry of the downtown church shows indications of selective evangelism. According to the Socio-Economic study the greatest transition now taking place in most downtown areas is not in race structure but in class structure. In addition to this, pastors and leaders feel the growth of the Negro community is a realistic problem which shows they are not prepared to make an evangelistic thrust toward this community. The lack of specialized ministry to downtown groups means the existence of the church rests on those who live outside the area of these needs. The church does not suffer financial difficulties; therefore, the church is reaching those who do not fall under the description of economic difficulties.

39.8% of the pastors feel the programs are not meeting the needs of the local community residents, yet one of the reasons most frequently cited by members for moving their memberships into the downtown church was that they "prefer

better organization and education programs." 54.8% of those responding felt this was the second most frequently cited reason. Therefore, the programs are meeting the needs of persons other than local community residents. This would indicate selective evangelism.

40.9% of the churches do not have a senior adult program, although 65% of the areas studied have a median age 10 years older than the median for their respective metropolitan areas. This would indicate selective evangelism to persons other than senior adults.

45% of the pastors indicated that less than 20% of their membership additions came from a one-mile radius of the church building. 62% stated that less than 30% came from this radius. It would seem that the local geographic community is being neglected while the church's evangelistic thrust is extended to other areas and people.

RESEARCH QUESTION TWELVE: DOES THE DOWNTOWN CHURCH HAVE MINISTRY OPPORTUNITIES THROUGH COOPERATIVE EFFORTS WITH OTHER CHURCHES, INSTITUTIONS, AND AGENCIES?

1. Contributing Data
 - a. An average of 60% of the pastors do not feel a need for any of the following types of assistance: financial, local government agencies, administrative materials from Convention agencies. (Survey-R & S)
 - b. The mean and median percentages for joint participation in 17 of 25 possible activities with other churches was 45.98% and 46.2% respectively. (Survey-R & S)

- c. 78.4% of the churches do not offer a service of family counseling, yet most cities of 100,000 population or over offer this service. (Survey-R & S)
- d. 88.2% of the churches do not offer a child care clinic, yet many cities offer this service through some type of welfare organization. (Survey-R & S)
- e. 95.6% of the churches do not offer pediatric counseling and 96.7% of the churches do not offer psychological counseling, yet these services are available in most cities of 100,000 population or over. (Survey-R & S)

2. CONCLUSION

The downtown church does have many ministry opportunities through cooperative efforts with other churches, institutions, and agencies. A few churches are cooperatively and effectively pooling their resources in providing needed community services, but the avenue of ministry through such cooperative efforts is wide open.

More of the churches are learning of the availability of community resources provided by various agencies and institutions and are engaging in a program of referral.

In many of the specific areas where the churches indicate a need for help are to be found opportunity for cooperative ministries: personnel for social work, training for specialized services, survey information from other downtown churches, curriculum materials, and field service assistance.

RESEARCH QUESTION THIRTEEN: DO MANY DOWNTOWN CHURCHES FEEL A DECLINE
IN THEIR EFFECTIVENESS IN MINISTERING TO THEIR PEOPLE?

1. Contributing Data

a. More than 50% of the downtown churches had 49 or less baptisms during 1966. (The median church membership is 1,500-2,000; therefore, the ratio is more than 30 to 1.)

(Survey-R & S)

b. 73.3% of the downtown churches sponsor from one to ten missions. 26.7% sponsor more than ten missions. (Survey-

R & S)

c. 37% of the downtown churches have discussed relocation.

(Survey-R & S)

d. 52.6% of the churches feel members moving away from the community is a major problem. (Survey-R & S)

e. Of the 57% of the pastors who gave some other response than "growing and definitely a permanent ministry," 45% said the downtown church was "standing still but should remain a permanent ministry." (Survey-R & S)

f. 50% of the churches utilize long-range planning for five years or more. Over 33% do not plan beyond a 24 months' period. (Survey-R & S)

2. CONCLUSION

Many downtown churches have felt a decline in their effectiveness in ministering to their people.

Baptism ratio is 30 to 1, which is high compared to the 1950's and early 1960's. The fact that 73.3% of the downtown churches sponsor from one to ten missions indicates that the

effort to minister through this avenue has not been as effective as the churches would have liked.

Decline is also indicated through the number of churches which have discussed relocation.

Pastors and church leaders feel the downtown church is standing still but should remain a permanent ministry. This also indicates a decline in effectiveness.

Most churches that are aggressive and optimistic project their future planning for five years or more. The lack of such long-range planning gives evidence that there is some doubt about the present and future effectiveness of the ministry of the church.

RESEARCH QUESTION FOURTEEN: IS THE PRIMARY PROBLEM FACING THE DOWNTOWN CHURCH LARGE NUMBERS OF MEMBERS MOVING FROM THE COMMUNITY?

1. Contributing Data
 - a. The problem ranked most often by the largest percentage of the pastors was "large numbers of members moving from the community." (Survey-R & S)
 - b. The largest percentage of pastors ranked the same problem, "large numbers of members moving from the community," as the second most severe problem they face. (Survey-R & S)

2. CONCLUSION

A primary problem facing the downtown church is large numbers of members moving from the community.

RESEARCH QUESTION FIFTEEN: ARE THE TWO MOST PROMINENT FACTORS THAT MIGHT PROMPT A DOWNTOWN CHURCH TO RELOCATE:

CHURCH MEMBERS MOVING AWAY FROM THE COMMUNITY

CHANGING ECONOMIC STATUS OF THE COMMUNITY?

1. Contributing Data

- a. The reason most frequently ranked as the number "1" reason by most pastors should their church be forced to consider relocation was "decreasing number of residents in the community" (20.4%). (Survey-R & S)
- b. The next reason most frequently ranked number "1" was "church members moving away from the community." (Survey-R & S)
- c. "Changing economic status of the community" was ranked by only 5.4% of the pastors as the number "1" problem. (Survey-R & S)

2. CONCLUSION

Decreasing number of residents in the community and church members moving away from the community are the most prominent factor which might prompt a downtown church to relocate.

Changing economic status of the community can be rejected as the second most prominent reason.

RESEARCH QUESTION SIXTEEN: HAVE DOWNTOWN CHURCHES ENGAGED IN SERIOUS LONG-RANGE PLANNING?

1. Contributing Data

- a. 24% of the churches do not have long-range planning beyond a 24-month period of time. (Survey-R & S)
- b. 38.6% of the long-range planning committees have an elected layman as chairman. (Survey-R & S)
- c. 35% of the pastors did not respond at all to the question of chairmanship. (Survey-R & S)
- d. 32% of the churches did not indicate they did any long-range planning. (Survey-R & S)

- e. Downtown churches are not using systematic methods of keeping long-range plans up to date. 44.1% use periodic meeting of committee; 26.7% use evaluation by the church council; 38.7% use evaluation by pastor or church staff. (Survey-R & S)

2. CONCLUSION

Downtown churches have used long-range planning only sparingly. Since long-range planning may be defined as planning from three to ten years, most churches have not made serious long-range plans. The caliber of long-range planning could be improved and strengthened.

The churches which have selected specific areas in which to make long-range plans have selected the most appropriate areas for getting at the problems of the downtown church. For example, 48.4% of these churches chose "increase in the church's ministry in the community and world," and 47.3% chose "increase in the church's ability to do its work."

IMPLICATIONS FROM THE STUDY OF THE DOWNTOWN CHURCH

The following implications have been drawn from the conclusions. The conclusions were based upon the contributing data provided in answer to the research questions.

1. Objective

The Downtown Church must define anew the nature and objective of its being and its purpose for existence in the downtown area of the city. If it is a valid assumption that a church has a responsibility to minister to the needs of the geographical community in which its building is located, then this responsibility should be stated in terms of definite objectives.

2. Training

a. The downtown church should:

- (1) Train members in the meaning and significance of the objectives and reasons for existence of the church in the downtown area. The responsibilities for ministry to the downtown area should be a vital part of this training.
- (2) Enlist and train members in methods of reaching and ministering to persons in high-rise apartments.
- (3) Enlist and train members in programs designed to reach and minister to language groups and illiterate persons.
- (4) Train members to conduct programs designed to minister to senior adults, young marrieds, single adults.
- (5) Enlist and train members to conduct programs offering community problem services. These might

include pediatric counseling, personal hygiene, trade school, budget counseling, alcoholic and drug addiction rehabilitation, juvenile rehabilitation, psychiatric and psychological helps, family counseling, recreation, and child care.

(6) Train members in ways to overcome barriers (physical, social and mental) that hinder communication with persons of different class, race, or socio-economic level.

b. The responsible agencies should train leaders of the downtown church:

(1) In effective methods of communication.

(2) In ways and means of conducting programs of ministry to language groups, senior adults, young marrieds, single adults, illiterates, juvenile delinquents, alcoholics, drug addicts, disturbed persons, child care, family counseling, recreation, and other community problems.

(3) In long-range planning.

(4) In intensive pastoral counseling designed to meet the needs of the downtown community problems.

3. Facilities

a. Downtown churches should make a more deliberate effort to provide facilities for activities and services which meet the needs of the downtown community.

b. Downtown churches should erect, remodel or acquire buildings suitable for ministry to the local community.

- c. Downtown churches should cooperate with responsible institutions and agencies in providing services to the local community.

4. Referral

- a. Downtown churches need a program of communication and referral with agencies and institutions which serve in the areas of welfare, education, rehabilitation, recreation, and community activities.
- b. Downtown churches need a program of communication and referral with a competent psychiatrist, welfare representative, psychologist, family counseling officer, physician, lawyer, and trained personnel in rehabilitation of alcoholics, addicts, and law violators. Periodic communication should be established and conducted.

5. Curriculum and Materials

Responsible agencies should provide adequate curriculum and materials which would assist the downtown church leaders in ministering to the unique problems of the downtown community.

6. Field Services

- a. Responsible agencies should provide field services to downtown churches which would assist in long-range planning, training for conducting programs which would meet community needs, and services to community problem groups.
- b. Responsible agencies should provide field services to downtown churches which would assist leaders in adapting

programs, program services, and administrative services to meet needs created by the unique problems of the downtown community.

- c. Responsible agencies should provide field services to downtown churches which would assist in the effective use of planning, conducting, and evaluating groups such as church councils, church officers, and church committees.
- d. Responsible agencies should provide field services to downtown churches which would enlist and train the deacons in ministering to the unique problems of the downtown church.

7. Finances

- a. Downtown churches should cooperate in providing and maintaining services to meet downtown community problems. Some examples are: half-way houses, apartment chaplains, unwed mothers' homes, food and shelter provisions.
- b. Responsible agencies should provide financial support for apartment ministries, directors of rescue missions, half-way houses, etc.

8. Strategy

Downtown churches need a strategy for a renewed and revitalized ministry adapted to meet the unique and peculiar needs of persons and groups in the downtown community. This strategy should allow for adjustments in membership which may result from church members moving away from the local

community. It should also allow for adjustments in finances which may result from adjustments in membership. It should be aimed at reaching all persons of all class, race, and socio-economic structures. It should concentrate more on the particular "area" of the downtown community rather than a particular "people." This strategy should concentrate on a much smaller radius than is presently being considered by downtown churches. It should allow for a totally new attitude toward a changing membership or its possibility. It should recognize the possibility of a socio-economic decline in the downtown community and seek to increase the church's effectiveness in that community. This strategy should lead in taking definite steps to identify with the downtown community and improve the waning sense of "community."

9. Further Research

- a. This research study should be followed by a study of the Established Neighborhood church, or the church in the next outlying area beyond the downtown, or central business district. The purpose of this study would be to discover the unique problems of the church in a transitional neighborhood and how these problems relate to the unique problems of the Downtown Church. The study should be conducted for the reason that many downtown churches and neighborhood churches need a clearer understanding of their particular and cooperative responsibility for ministry to the inner core of the city. This study would discover how the neighborhood church sees

itself and its reason for existence, and then compare such with that of the downtown church.

- b. Further research should also include a study of the Suburban Church and the relationships of its unique ministry to the downtown and neighborhood churches. The purpose of this study would be to discover how the Suburban Church sees itself and its reason for existence; to compare these criteria with those of the Downtown and the Neighborhood Church; and to suggest clearer areas of responsibility for each so that a more effective and cooperative ministry by all three types of churches may be developed.
- c. Further research might well include a study of the effectiveness of the "ministry approach" used by churches in reaching the peoples of their downtown, neighborhood and suburban areas. It has been assumed that such approach is effective, but substantiating data is needed. Questions to be answered in this study would include: What ministries are being provided? Why and when were they begun? Whom do they serve? What staff and facilities are needed? How is financing provided? What visible results have been observed?