

FACTS about Local and Global Mission Programs and Giving
A Report of UCC Results from the FACT Study
Marjorie H. Royle, Ph.D.
Clay Pots Research
November, 2011

INTRODUCTION

This report is one in a series describing the UCC in 2010 using the findings of two major interdenominational and interfaith studies, the Faith Communities Together (FACT) and the US Congregational Life Surveys (CLS). Congregations of the United Church of Christ participated in both studies first in 2000 and 2001 and again in 2008-2010. Both surveys asked congregational leaders to report whether their congregations engaged in a large variety of community ministries or missions. In addition, the FACT 2010 asked a series of questions about how congregations are involved in world missions as well as how they allocate their mission money and efforts. This report presents findings from leaders' responses to those questions. Other reports have presented findings on congregational vitality¹ and non-seminary-trained pastors.² Future reports will summarize findings on other topics, such as information about church finances and clergy, comparisons with other denominations, and changes in UCC congregations in the last ten years.

A random sample of over 1200 congregations was invited to participate in the 2010 FACT surveys, with congregations of non-European backgrounds oversampled so that these smaller subgroups would have enough participants for meaningful analysis. The response rate overall was 51%, with somewhat lower rates among the smallest churches and churches of non-European backgrounds, and higher rates among churches in the Great Plains Region. Congregations that had lost members over the past 5 years were no more or less likely to participate than those that had gained members. Overall, the sample of 641 congregations appears to be a good representation of the denomination at large.

The FACT survey findings are supplemented by findings from the administration in 2008 of the Congregational Life Surveys to 9377 laity and 138 clergy from 143 UCC congregations as part of a larger interdenominational study. This project examined a more limited number of congregations in depth, with participating congregations submitting a congregational program profile along with surveys from the pastor and from all worshipers attending church on a particular Sunday morning. Because of the effort involved, only 28% of the congregations that were invited chose to participate, although almost all of those who agreed to participate completed the surveys. Participating congregations did not differ significantly from the denomination as a whole in size, location, race/ethnicity, or whether they were growing or declining.

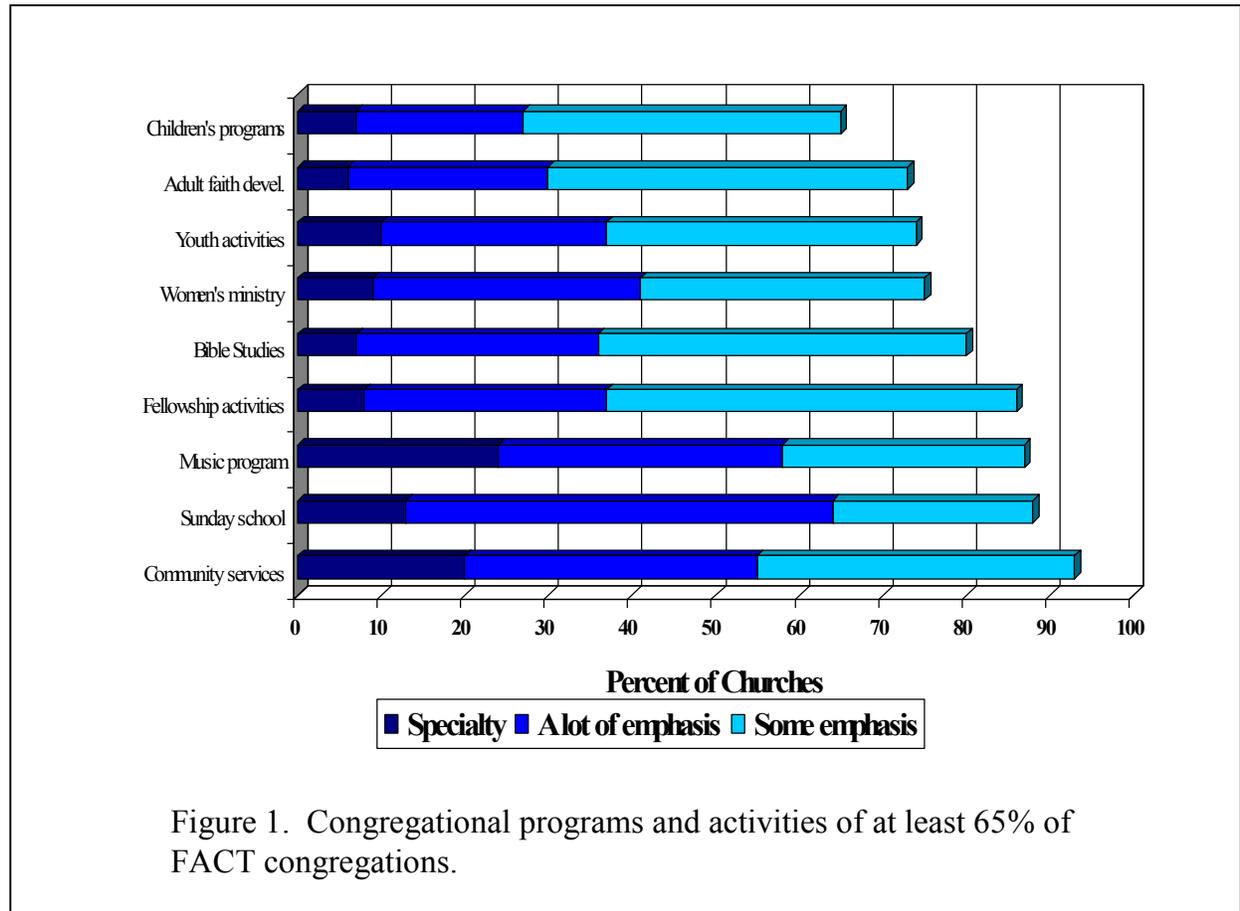
¹ How Vital Are We? May, 2011, Available as a pdf download from <http://www.ucc.org/evangelism/pdfs/How-Vital-Are-We-4.pdf>, or by emailing ClayPots@optonline.net.

² FACTS about Non-Seminary-Trained Pastors. March, 2011. Available as a pdf download from <http://www.ucc.org/evangelism/pdfs/FACTS-About-NST-Clergy.pdf>, or by emailing ClayPots@optonline.net.

LOCAL MISSION - COMMUNITY PROGRAMS

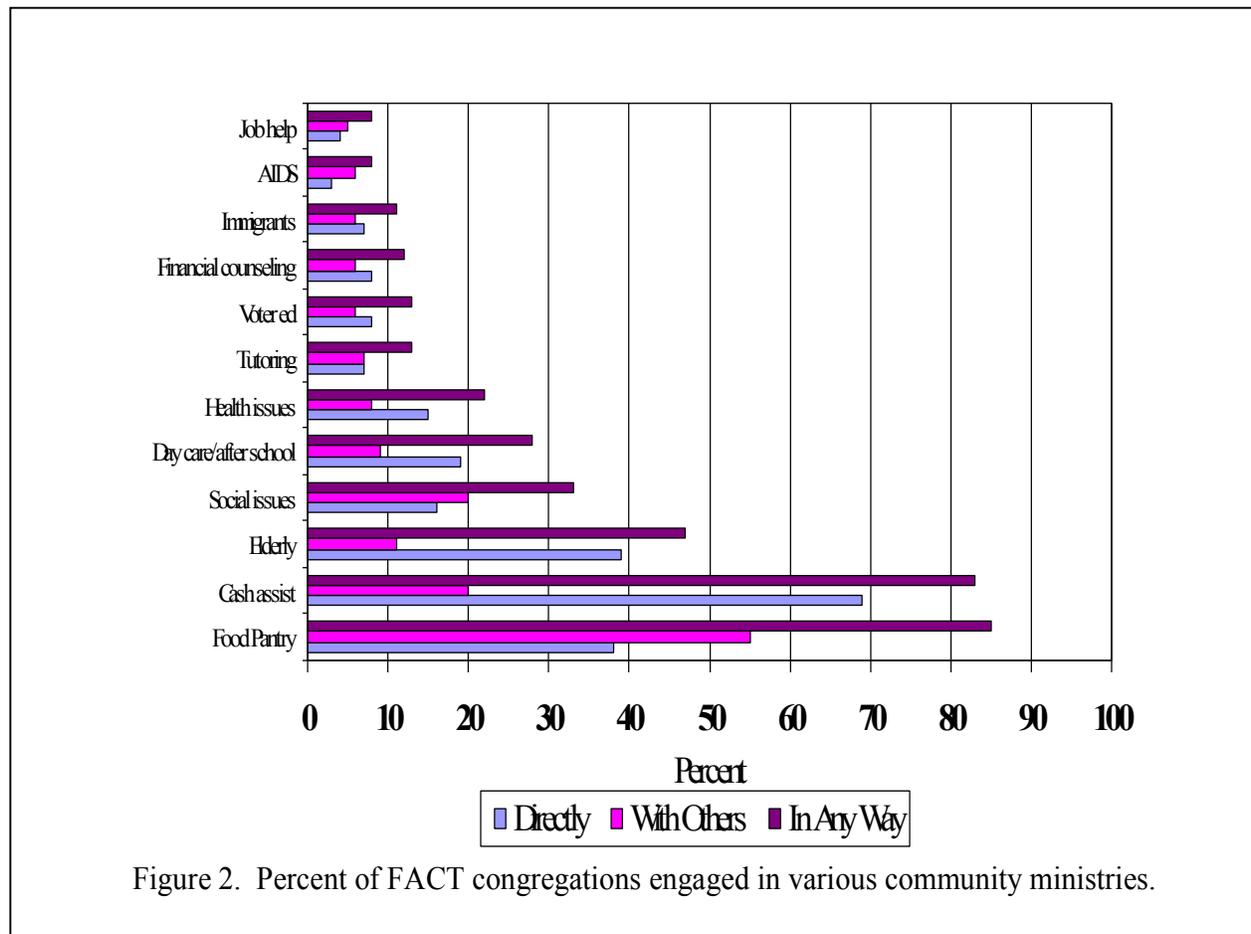
Types of Programs - FACT

UCC congregations often consider themselves to be community-minded. Thus, indications in both the FACT and the CLS of involvement in a variety of community-service programs is not surprising. On the FACT survey, almost all congregations reported that they provide community services in some way, with 20% saying they are a specialty of the congregation, 35% saying they give them a lot of emphasis, 38% give some emphasis to them and only 6% report no involvement (See the bottom bar of Figure 1, which displays the most common congregational programs and activities.). **No other program on the list of congregational programs or activities was done by more congregations (than community-service programs).** Even Sunday Schools and music programs had more congregations NOT having them, at 12% and 13% respectively, although they were more likely to have congregations say they gave them a lot of emphasis or that the activity was a specialty. Of course, for some of these congregations, the involvement may be quite minimal, such as an occasional collection for a food pantry.



As the items in Figure 2 illustrate, providing food and cash assistance are the two most common community ministries, provided by 85% and 83% of all congregations, respectively.

Food was provided directly by 38%, and with another group by 55%, while cash assistance was offered directly by 69% of all congregations, and with another group by 20%, with some congregations providing assistance both ways. Elderly or home-bound programs were the next



most common, with nearly half of all congregations, 48% providing them, 39% directly and 11% with another group. Community organizing, or organized social issue advocacy was next (social issues on the graph) with a third of all congregations doing it, 16% directly and 20% with another group. Day care, pre-school, or before or after-school programs were offered by 28%, and health education, clinics, or a parish nurse offered by 22%. Participation was much less for other programs, with only 8% offering job placement, job training, or employment counseling, or AIDS ministries. Congregations were more likely to have a food pantry or soup kitchen in cooperation with another group (55%) than to have it on their own (38%). Similarly, 20% did community organizing or other social issue advocacy in partnership with others, while 16% did it directly, 5% did job placement or counseling in partnership, 4% directly, and 6% did AIDS ministry in partnership and 3% directly. For all other services, the percentage doing the service directly was higher than that in partnership.

Congregations vary in how many of these programs they have. Only 2% (13 congregations) report providing none of them, either directly or together with others, with most of these being very small congregations. Nine percent, most of them small, report having no

programs themselves, but doing some with others, and 31% report that they do not cooperate with other organizations on any of these programs. Most congregations report having just a few programs, with a mean of 2.3 and a median of 2 programs that they do directly and a mean of 1.6 and a median of one program that they do together with another congregation or group. A few congregations report having many programs. Two large congregations report that they provide all of them directly while three others report that they provide nine or more in cooperation with others.

Congregational size was the biggest factor in the number of community ministries a congregation offered directly, as can be seen in Figure 3. The smallest congregations were least likely to partner with others to offer community ministries, beyond which size did not seem to matter very much.

Congregations from different racial/ethnic backgrounds differed significantly in the number of programs they offered, as can be seen in Figure 4. African-American, Hispanic, Pacific Islander and multi-

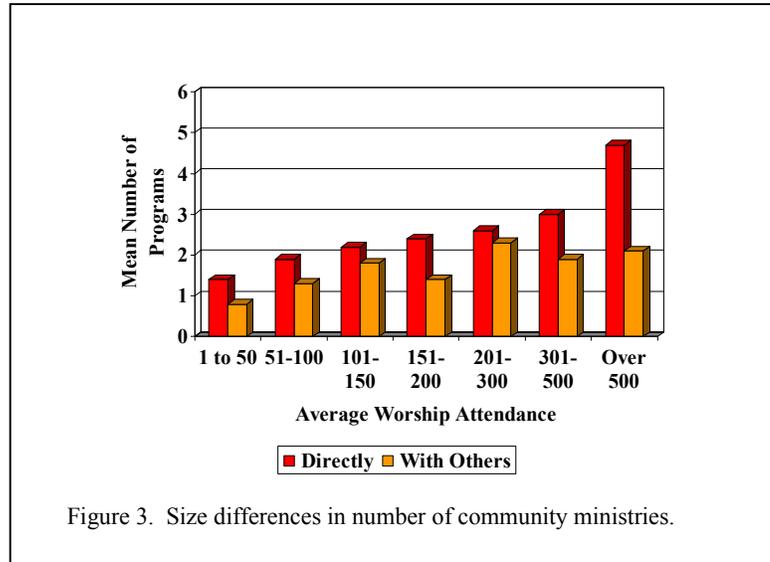


Figure 3. Size differences in number of community ministries.

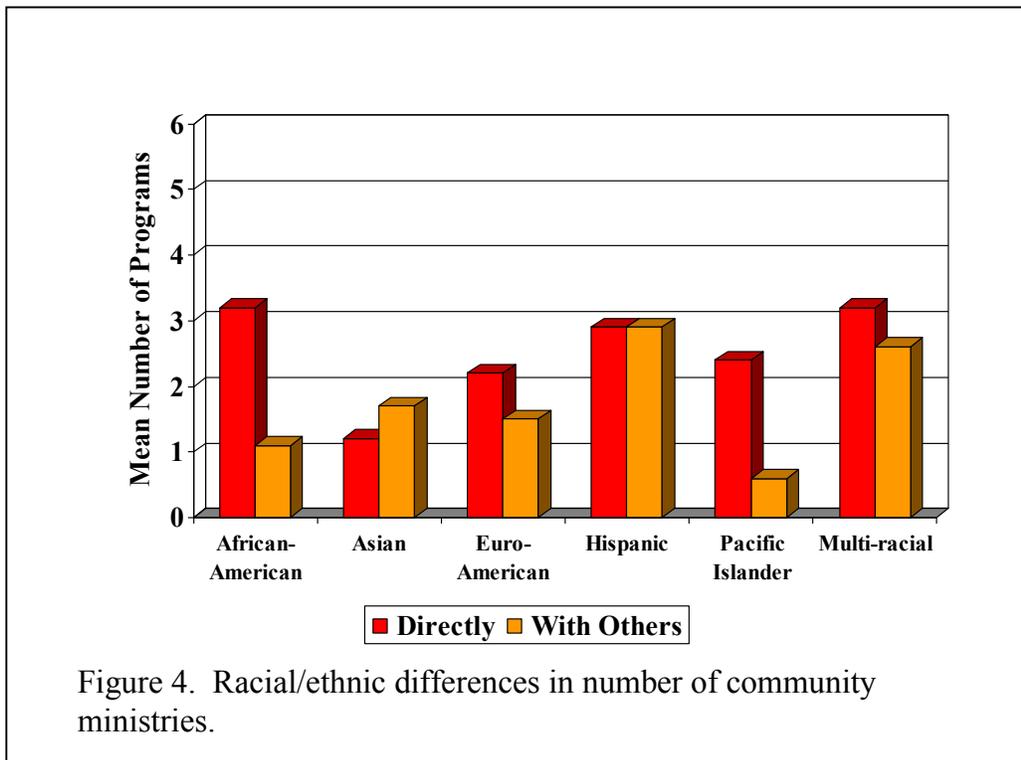


Figure 4. Racial/ethnic differences in number of community ministries.

racial congregations (congregations that are composed of two or more racial/ethnic groups with at least 10% from the non-majority group) offered more programs themselves than Euro-American congregations did, and Asian congregations offered fewer.

However, Hispanic, multi-racial and Asian congregations were more likely than Euro-American congregations to partner with others to offer programs, African-American and Pacific Islanders less likely. Churches located in rural areas or small towns offered fewer programs than those in towns, cities and suburbs. Those in rural areas or new suburbs were less likely to offer programs with others, those in older suburbs or older areas of large cities more likely, probably because relationships between congregations were more established in older areas. Congregations in the Western and New England Regions offered the most programs directly, while those in the Plains offered the least.-

Involvement in community ministries also was related to being theologically liberal. Congregations with leaders who described them as theologically very liberal offered the most programs, both directly and with others, with those described as liberal next highest. Theologically moderate and conservative congregations were about the same in the number of programs offered. Congregations that became Open and Affirming of people of different sexual orientations (ONA) in the first years of the ONA program (before 1993) offered the most programs. Those that became ONA more recently offered fewer programs, while those that have not become ONA offered the fewest programs.

The community ministries were grouped into five categories – food and cash assistance, financial and job training, elder and health programs, childcare and tutoring, and advocacy activities, including community organizing, voter registration or education, AIDS and immigrant/migrant ministries. These categories were developed by means of a factor analysis that suggested that congregations having one ministry in the category were more likely to have another.

Several congregational characteristics were related to offering most or all of these types of community ministries. The likelihood of having programs in each of these areas increased with size of congregation, for example. Also, congregations that had participated in Vitality Training were more likely to have programs in all these ministry areas. Vital, growing congregations were most likely to have programs in each of these categories, and vital congregations that were stable or declining were next most likely, with congregations that rated themselves as not vital having fewer programs, whether or not they were growing.

Advocacy ministries (community organizing, voter registration or education, AIDS and immigrant/migrant ministries) differed the most by congregational characteristics. The characteristic most predictive of whether a congregation had one or more of these ministries was race/ethnicity. Hispanic congregations were much more likely to have most of these ministries than congregations of other racial/ethnic backgrounds, as can be seen in Table 1 below. Multi-racial congregations and very liberal congregations were next with 1.8 and 1.7 ministries, respectively, African-American with 1.2 and all other racial/ethnic groups about 0.5 ministries

Table 1
 Congregational Participation in Various Advocacy Ministries by
 Racial/ethnic Group and Theological Liberalism

Group	Number of Churches	Organizing		Voting		Immigration		AIDS/HIV		Mean Number of advocacy ministries
		Direct	W/ others	Direct	W/ others	Direct	W/ others	Direct	W/ others	
African-American	25	28%	24%	44%	12%	4%	0%	4%	8%	1.2
Asian	10	11%	22%	0%	22%	0%	11%	0%	0%	0.6
Euro-American	522	13%	18%	5%	3%	4%	5%	2%	4%	0.5
Hispanic	8	57%	71%	14%	43%	43%	57%	0%	43%	2.9
Pacific Islander	16	12%	12%	6%	0%	19%	6%	12%	0%	0.7
Multi-racial	54	33%	37%	28%	22%	0%	16%	9%	24%	1.8
Very Liberal (any race)	70	33%	43%	17%	13%	13%	14%	9%	26%	1.7

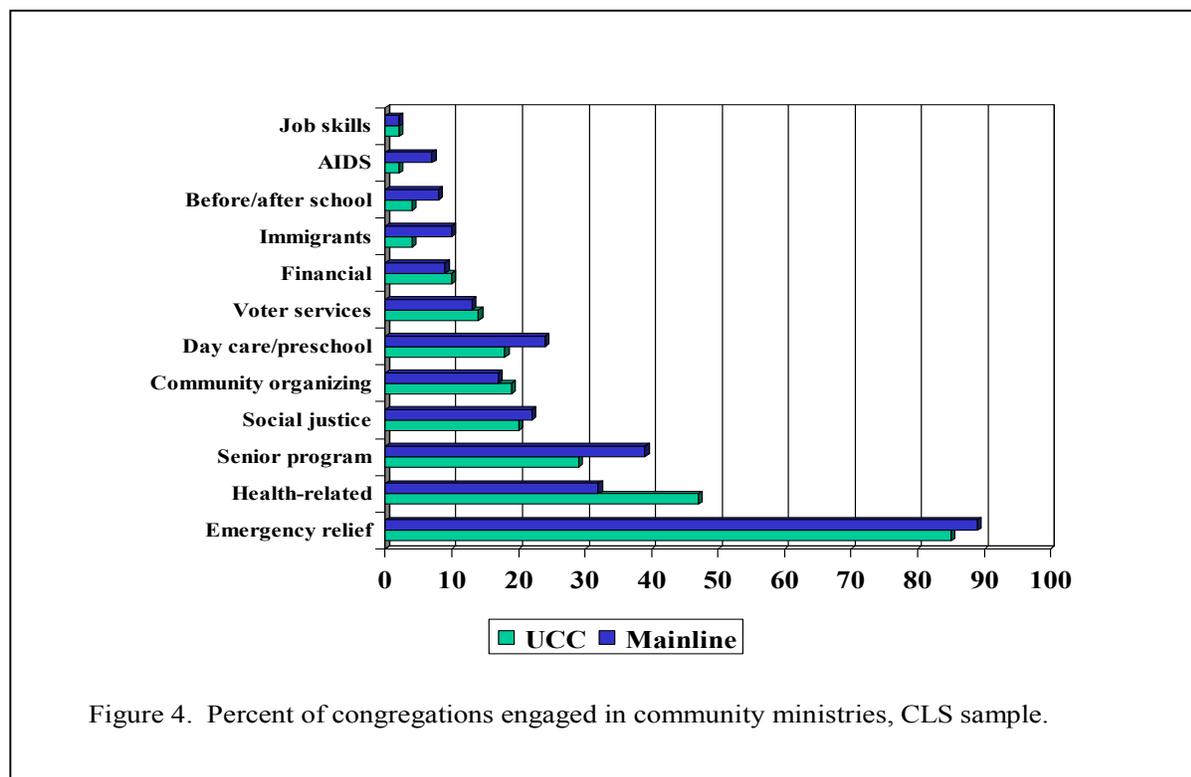
However, another factor was nearly as important, the rating of how theologically liberal the members are. Very liberal congregations were most likely to be involved in advocacy ministries, with involvement decreasing through those described as theologically conservative. Theologically very conservative congregations were more involved, however, about the same as moderate congregations. This liberal-conservative pattern was similar for involvement in tutoring and childcare ministries.

Involvement in other ministries differed by race/ethnicity, as well, with different groups involved in different ministries, although differences were smaller than for advocacy ministries. African-American, Hispanic, and multi-racial congregations were most likely to be involved in financial and job training, Euro-American and multi-racial congregations were most likely to supply food and cash assistance, and multi-racial, African-American and Euro-American congregations were most likely to have health programs or ones for the elderly.

Involvement in different types of ministries differed by region as well, although differences were statistically significant but not large. Advocacy programs were most common in the Western Region and least common in the Plains Region. Financial and job training was most common in the Southern, Great Lakes, and Plains Regions and least common in the West and New England. Tutoring and childcare were most common in the West and least in the South.

Types of Programs - CLS

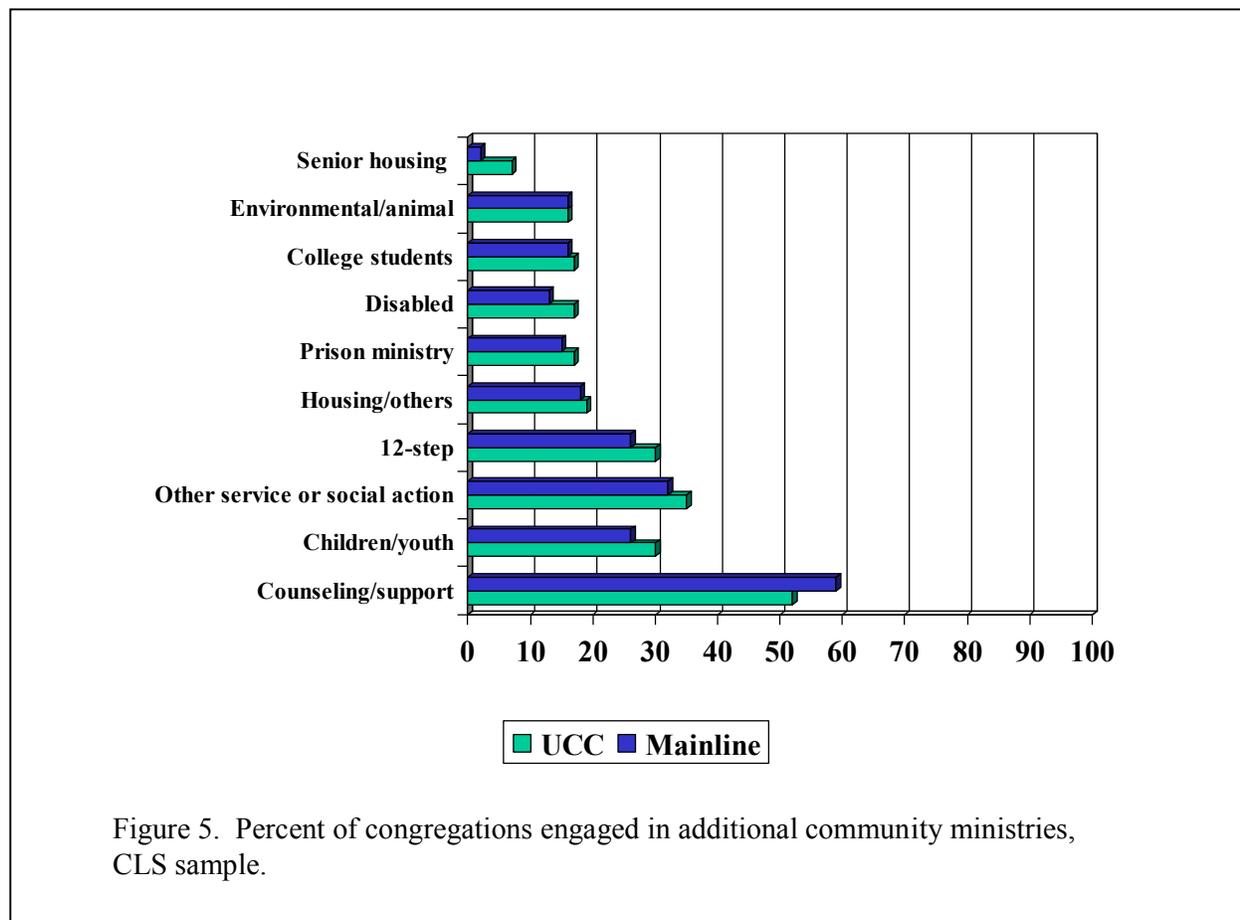
Responses from the 2008 Congregational Life Surveys were similar. On the CLS, many congregations reported being involved in social service or community activities in the last 12 months as well, as can be seen in Figures 4 and 5. The CLS, however, does not distinguish between providing the services directly or with another group. Figure 4 presents CLS responses on items that are similar to those in the FACT, while Figure 5 presents responses to questions that were on the CLS and not on the FACT. Comparing Figure 4 to Figure 1, the same types of activities head the list, although with somewhat different descriptions. The most common is emergency relief or material assistance, with 85% of UCC congregations reporting doing so, an identical percentage to that on the FACT, when both FACT categories are combined. Health-related programs and activities were next with 47% reporting it. This is higher than the FACT, on which only 22% reported having health-related programs. However, some of what were reported on the FACT as programs for the elderly or home-bound (47%) may have been health-related. Where the CLS had two categories and the FACT had one, for community organizing



and social justice activities, and nursery/day care and before and after school programs, the CLS showed smaller percentages doing each one. When these numbers were combined, on the CLS 26% of congregations were involved in organizing and/or social issues and 20% had day care and/or before and after-school care, percentages that were a little lower but still fairly comparable to those of the FACT. Other programs were similar in the two samples, with 10 to 15% involved in voter services and financial counseling and under 10% of congregations involved in HIV/AIDS, immigrant issues, or employment counseling/job training.

Over half of UCC congregations (52%) reported having some types of counseling or support groups, such as marriage or bereavement counseling, parenting programs, or women’s groups. About 30% have 12-step programs such as Alcoholics Anonymous, and programs for children and youth such as Scouting, literacy or sports, or other service or social action programs. About 15% have programs in a variety of other areas including prison ministry, work with the disabled, college students, or housing ministries, as well as animal welfare or environmental activities.

Larger congregations were more likely to have a variety of programs, and most of the programs listed in the CLS were significantly more common in larger congregations. For some, however, the difference in size of congregation was small and not statistically significant. These tended to be one of two kinds of programs. Size of congregation was not significant for most programs that work with disenfranchised populations, such as prison ministry, care for persons with disabilities, immigrant support activities, financial literacy programs, and activities for the unemployed. The exception to this was HIV/AIDS ministries, which were provided only by two large congregations in the sample. Size was also not significant for social change programs such as community organizing, political or social justice, and voter registration. Size also was not significant for participation in animal welfare or environmental activities.



Comparisons with Other Denominations

Contrary to the belief that UCC congregations are particularly community-minded, findings from both the FACT and the CLS surveys suggest that, in general, UCC congregations are quite similar to those of other mainline denominations in their community ministries.

Figures 4 and 5 show that in the CLS, the participation rate in 2008 was slightly lower than for other mainline congregations. UCC congregations in this sample were smaller than other mainline congregations, with a median average worship attendance of 72 as compared to 90, and 36% of UCC congregations having an average attendance of under 50 as compared to 14% among mainline Protestants. When the results for UCC congregations were weighted to be comparable in size to the sample of mainline congregations, results were very similar, with a few exceptions. UCC congregations were more likely to have housing both for seniors and other groups, 12-step recovery programs, and health-related programs and less likely to have other senior programs or assistance, counseling and support groups, programs for children and youth such as Scouting, programs for persons with HIV/AIDS, immigrant support activities, and before or after-school programs. Differences are small, however, and may be due to the small sample of congregations involved in the CLS.

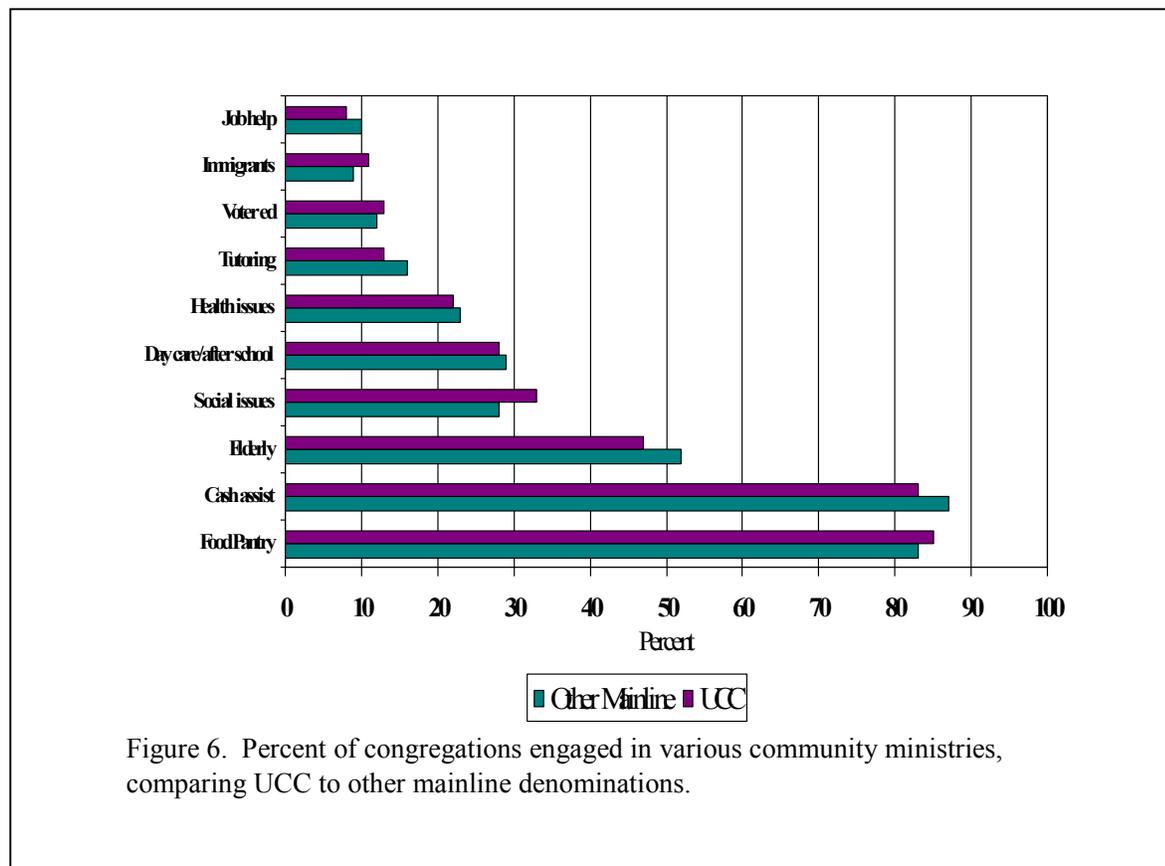


Figure 6. Percent of congregations engaged in various community ministries, comparing UCC to other mainline denominations.

When the involvement of UCC congregations in community ministries was compared to that of congregations in other mainline denominations (see Figure 6), results were very similar

across denominations. As in the CLS, fewer UCC congregations than those of other mainline denominations reported having most ministries, but differences were very small, in the range of 2 to 5%. Differences in congregational size were unlikely to have explained these differences, because in the FACT sample, UCC congregations were only slightly smaller, with a median average attendance of 70 as compared to 73 for other mainline congregations. UCC congregations were more likely to provide aid to immigrants, voter education programs, social issues advocacy activities, and food pantries, some of the areas with the largest differences between congregations.

Changes since 2000

How does community involvement compare with that of 10 years ago? Because the same or similar questions were asked in FACT 2000, responses from the two surveys can be compared. In Figure 7, comparing congregational involvement in community ministries between the two time periods (2000 & 2010), congregations appear to have become less involved in most community ministries. In 2010, congregations reported more involvement only in providing cash assistance and in being involved in community organizing or social issues (a question that was worded differently in 2000), in all other services, congregations were less involved in 2010 than they were in 2000.

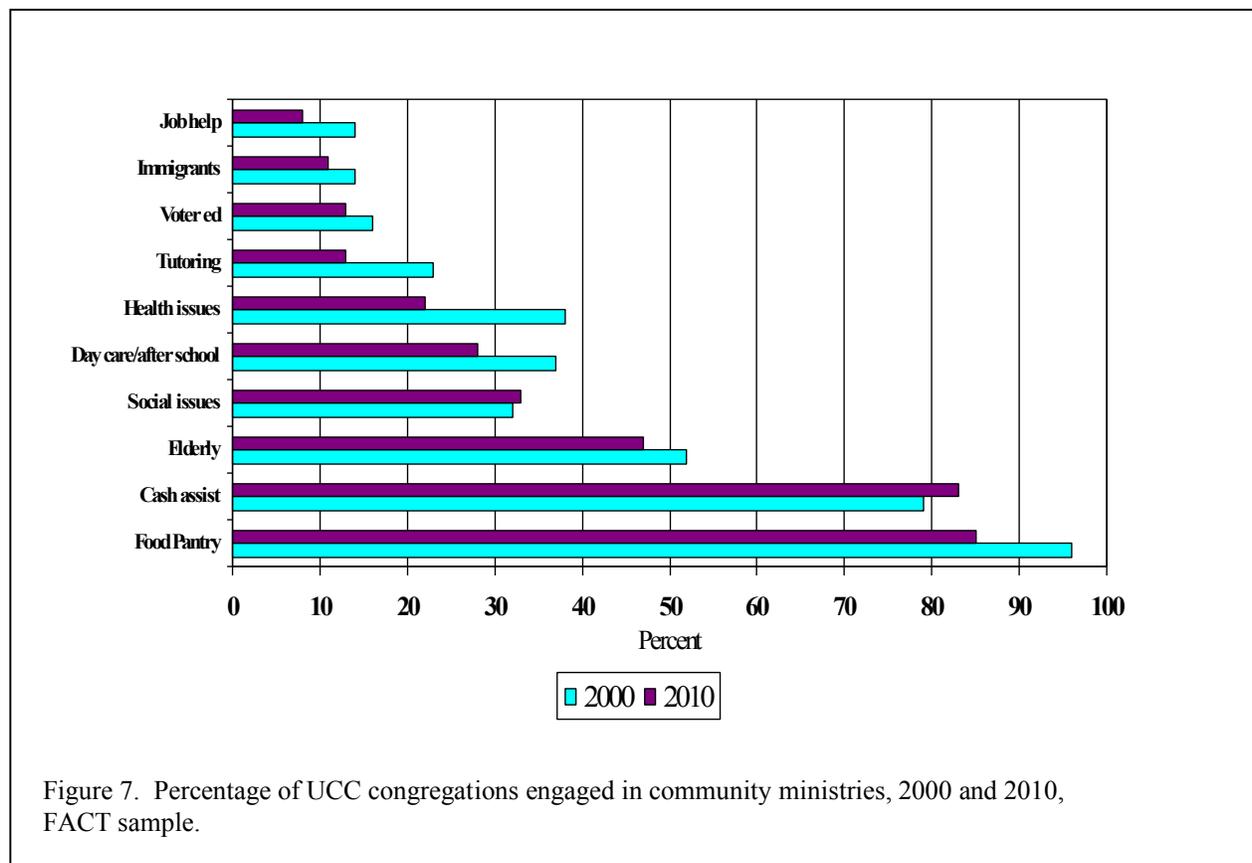


Figure 7. Percentage of UCC congregations engaged in community ministries, 2000 and 2010, FACT sample.

This was both because fewer congregations were conducting programs themselves, and also because fewer were offering them in cooperation with other congregations. Providing food assistance in partnership with other congregations decreased from 69% to 55% of congregations, and cooperative cash assistance dropped from 35% to 20%, while joint programs for the elderly dropped from 31% to 11%. To some extent, congregations seemed to be picking up the slack, with provision of cash assistance directly increasing from 65% to 69%, and having programs for the elderly directly increasing from 33% to 39% from 2000 to 2010.

However, the samples in the two time periods were not equivalent. The 2010 sample contains a higher percentage of smaller congregations, which generally are less involved in community ministries, as well as a larger number of African-American and Hispanic congregations, which generally are more involved than Euro-American congregations in community ministries.

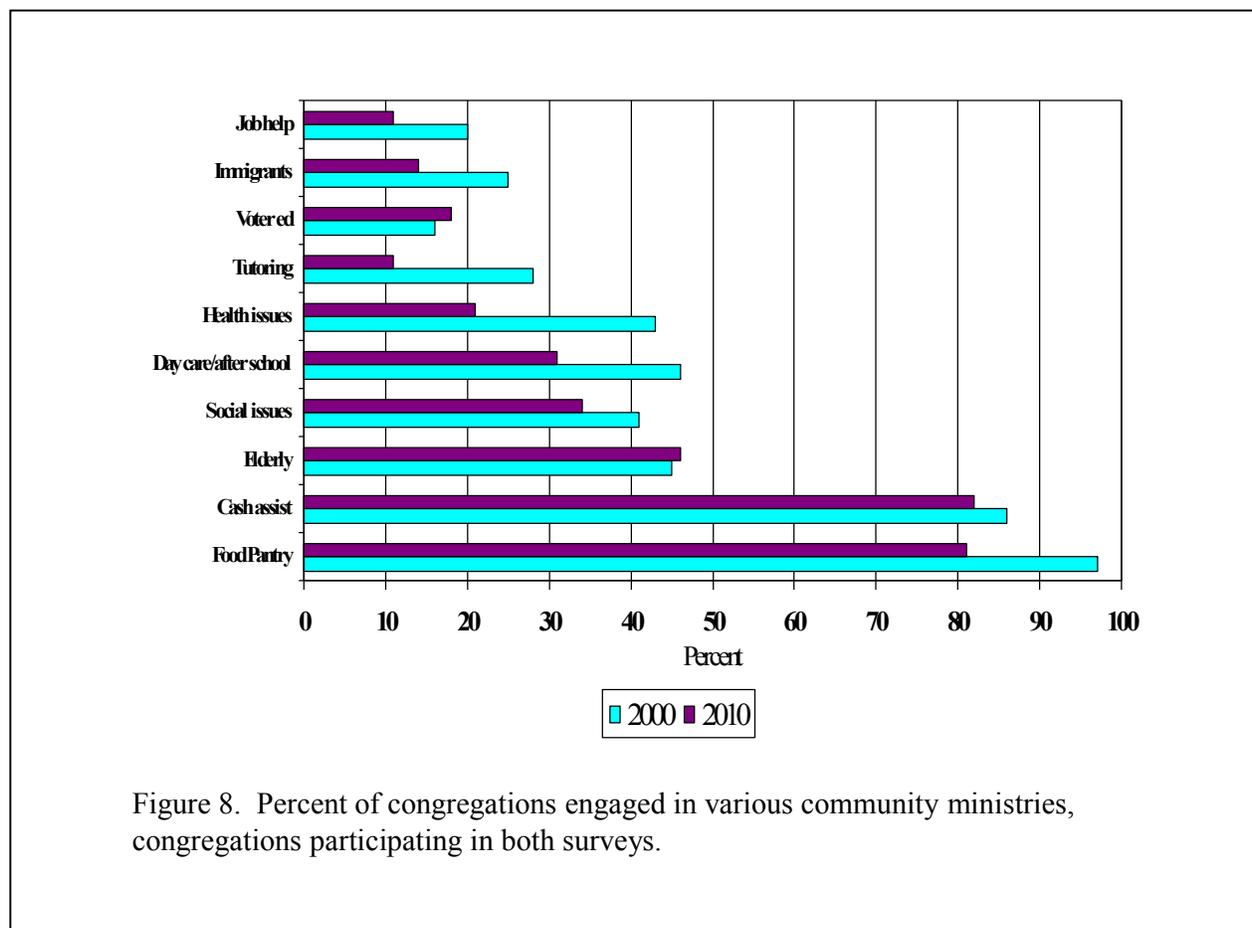


Figure 8. Percent of congregations engaged in various community ministries, congregations participating in both surveys.

When only the 99 congregations that participated in the FACT survey during both time periods were examined, this decrease in involvement remained, however, as can be seen in Figure 8. For these congregations, from 2000 to 2010 only voter education increased slightly from 16% to 18%, as did programs for the elderly from 45% to 46%. Again, involvement decreased for both direct provision of services and for cooperative efforts. One likely explanation for this decrease in community activities is that the size of these congregations

decreased greatly. For example, in 2000, only 4% of the congregations had fewer than 25 at Sunday worship; by 2010 that percentage had more than doubled, with 9% of congregations having fewer than 25 in attendance. In 2000, 8% had between 25 and 50 in attendance; by 2010, this had increased to 26%. When congregations of 150 or more were examined, voter education had increased, day care and tutoring were about the same, while other programs had decreased over the decade. However, the percentages of these larger congregations providing services **directly** were about the same in 2010 as they were in 2000. The decrease in congregations providing them in partnership with others caused the overall decrease. As congregations drop below 50 in attendance, they appear to not be able to sustain their direct involvement in community ministries. In addition, even the larger congregations partner less with others to provide services than they did 10 years ago.

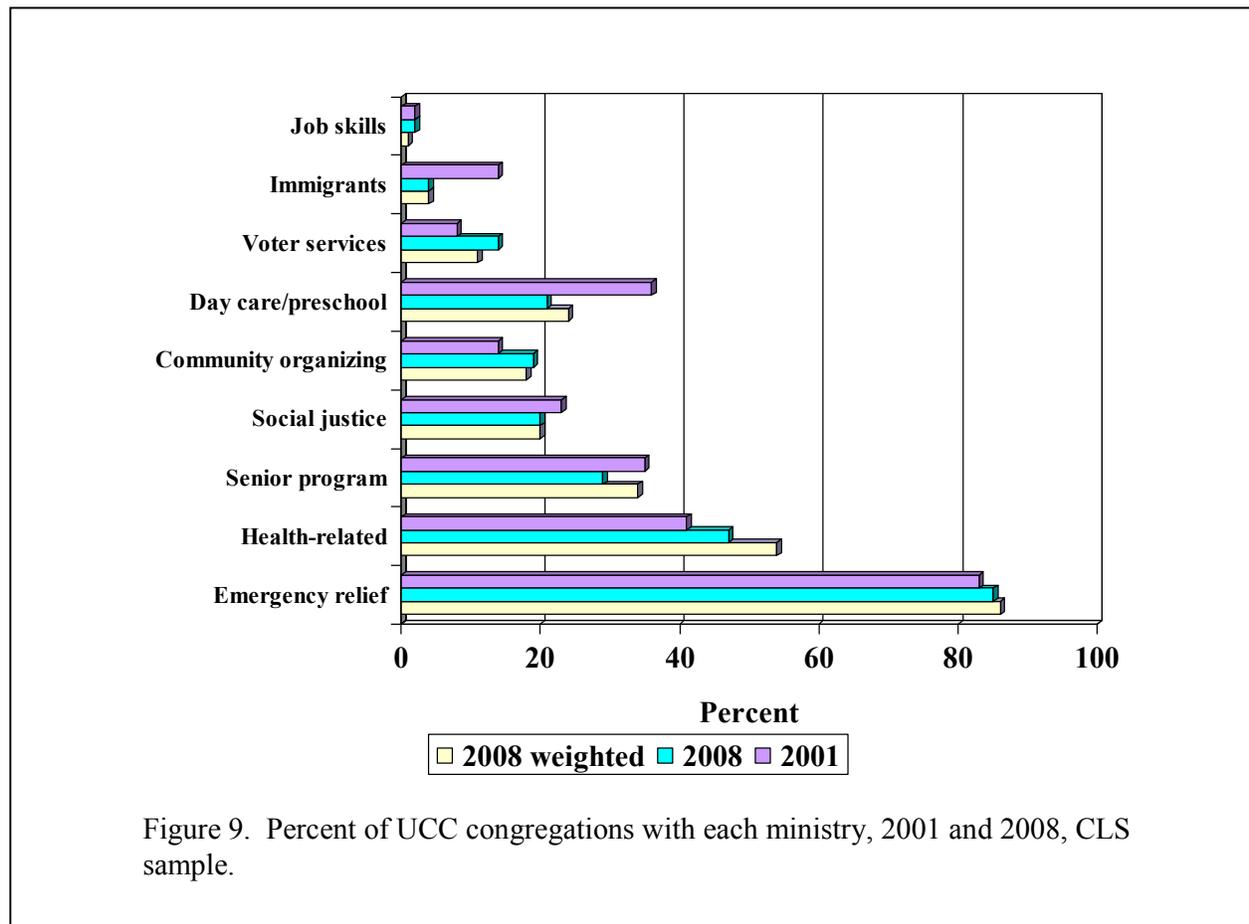
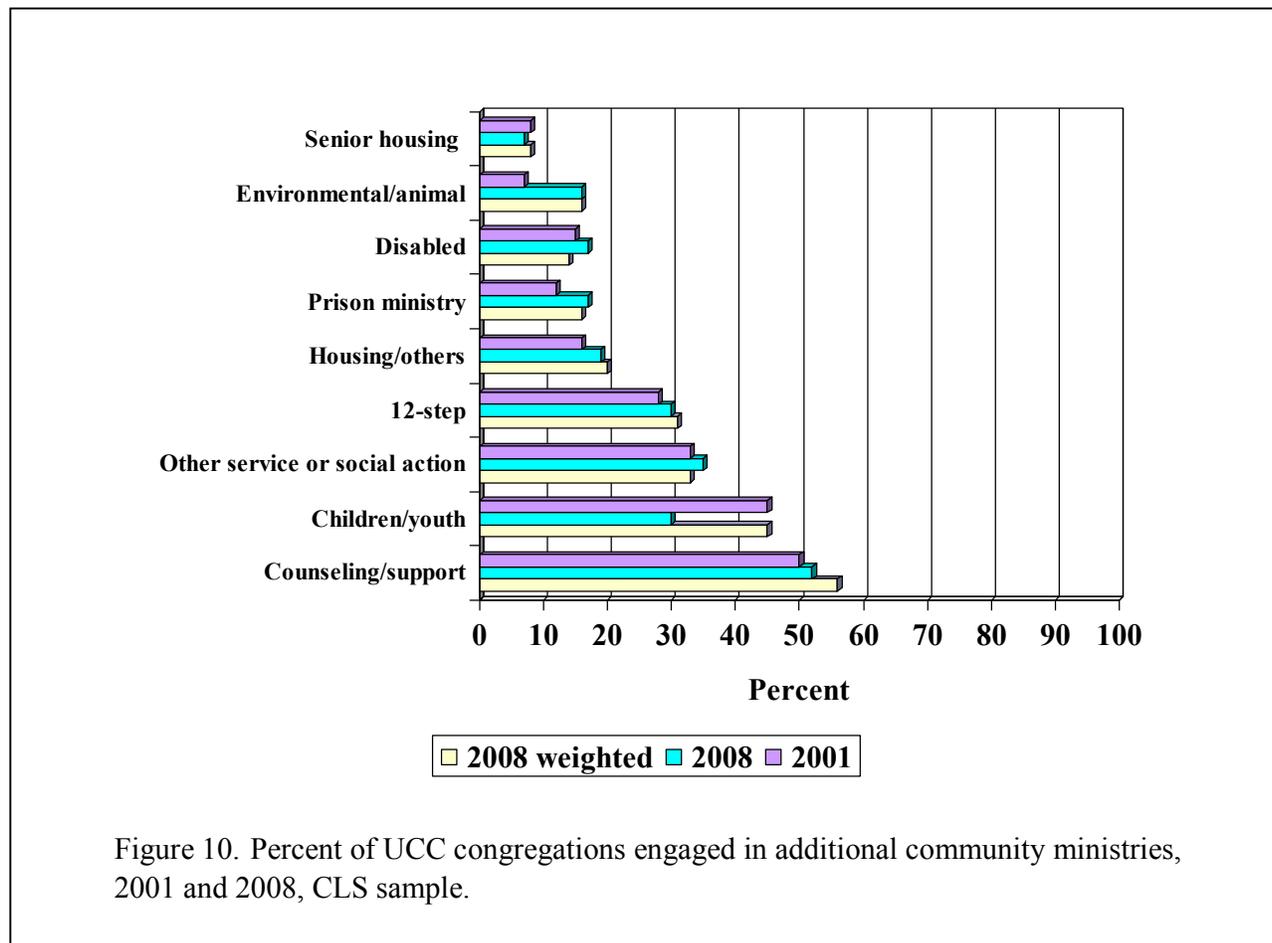


Figure 9. Percent of UCC congregations with each ministry, 2001 and 2008, CLS sample.

The CLS provides a somewhat different picture of change from 2001 to 2008, as can be seen in Figures 9 and 10. When all mainline Protestant denominations were examined, the CLS analysis found that congregations increased their social service or community activities from 2001 to 2008. In the two UCC samples, however, differences were small and could have been the result of sampling differences. Some items increased a few percent, others decreased. Health related activities increased from 41 to 47%, voter registration increased from 8 to 14%, probably because of the 2008 election, prison ministry increased from 12 to 17% and animal

welfare or environmental activities increased from 7 to 16%, probably due to the increased awareness of global warming. However, immigrant support activities decreased from 14% to 4%, programs for children and youth such as Scouting decreased from 45 to 38%, and senior programs decreased from 35% to 29%.

The congregations in the 2008 sample were significantly smaller than those in the 2001 sample, however, with a median attendance of 72, compared to 105. When the responses from 2008 were weighted by size of congregation, most were similar to or higher than the percentages of congregations offering each community ministry in 2001. This suggests that most of the small decreases in having various community ministries were due to decreasing congregational size.



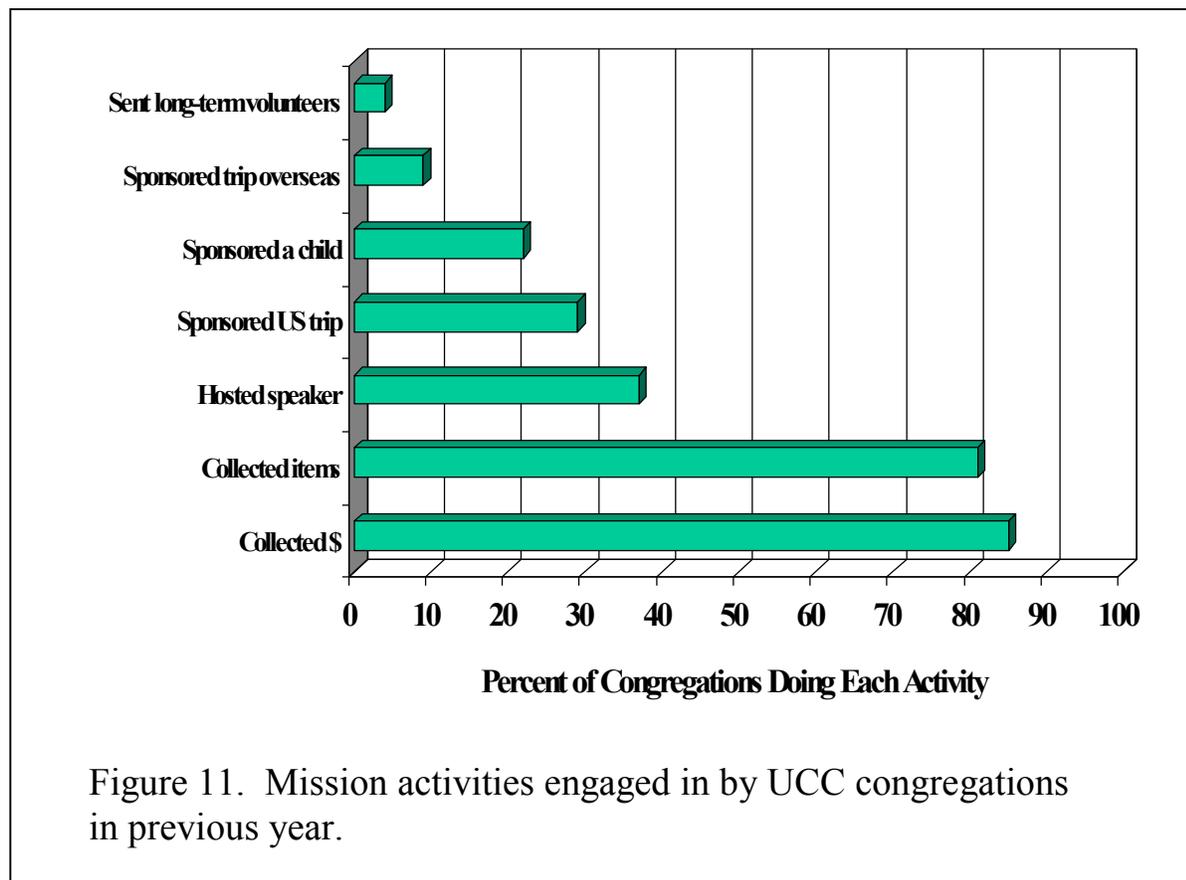
Some of the reason why community ministries decreased over the decade in the FACT sample but not in the CLS may be due to differences in the two samples. In the 2010 FACT sample, 35% of the congregations had 50 or fewer people attending worship, while in the 2008 CLS sample, 31% of congregations had 50 or fewer in attendance. These smaller churches are where most of the decrease occurred in the FACT sample. Also, because the CLS involved multiple surveys on the part of members and pastor, congregations that participated in it may have been more active and motivated than those in the FACT surveys, which required less work.

These congregations may also have been more active and motivated to continue doing ministry in the community.

Although decreasing congregational size explains the difference in the decade in number of community ministries, the fact remains that fewer community ministries are being offered by UCC congregations than were offered a decade ago.

GLOBAL MISSIONS

Sociologist Robert Wuthnow, in his recent book *Boundless Faith: The Global Outreach of American Churches*,³ argues that world mission activity has not decreased in recent times, but has actually increased but in different ways than in previous generations. To understand more about how UCC congregations are participating in world mission, a series of questions were added to the FACT. As Wuthnow found in his interdenominational survey, UCC congregations are involved in a wide variety of mission activities, from hosting a mission speaker (37%) to sending members on mission projects of more than three months duration (4%) (see Figure 11).



³ Wuthnow, Robert. *Boundless Faith: The Global Outreach of American Churches*. Berkeley: University of California Press, 2009.

The most common mission activity reported on the FACT was collecting money for special mission projects in the US or other countries, (in addition to denominational special offerings such as One Great Hour of Sharing or Neighbors in Need), done by 85% of congregations. Nearly as many, 81%, have collected items for distribution to the needy. From there, the involvement drops considerably. However, 29% sponsored a short-term work camp or mission trip in the US and 9% sponsored one in another country, a large percentage for some major undertakings.

Six percent of congregations reported that they had not done any of these activities during the previous year, as can be seen in Figure 12. The mean number was 2.6 activities, the median 3. Only one congregation (0.2%) reported doing them all. Some, of course, may have done some of these activities multiple times, such as a mission-of-the-month project where different items or offerings are collected each month.

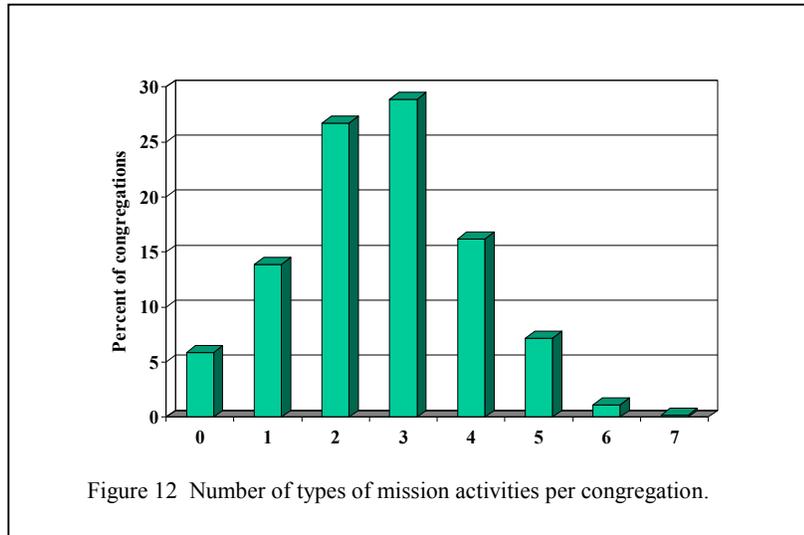


Figure 12 Number of types of mission activities per congregation.

World mission activity differed by congregational demographic factors, as did participation in community ministries, although in somewhat different ways. Congregational size was still the most important factor, with larger congregations being involved in a greater number of these activities. **In contrast to involvement in community activities, which was higher among African-American and Hispanic congregations, European-American congregations reported participation in a greater number of these activities than did other congregations. Theologically liberal congregations, those in New England (the birthplace of the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions), and those that were growing in attendance all reported greater participation, as well.** However, vital congregations that were not growing were as high in mission activities as those who were vital and growing (2.9 and 2.8 activities respectively).

The list of mission activities included in the FACT survey included different types of activities, including educational ones such as hosting a mission speaker, relatively easy ones such as collecting money or supplies for people in need, and major undertakings, such as sponsoring an overseas mission trip. While congregations of every size and racial/ethnic group were involved in each activity, some groups were more likely to do some activities than others, as can be seen in Table 2 below. For example, Asian congregations were more likely than those of other racial/ethnic groups to sponsor a child or host a speaker. Multi-racial congregations

were more likely than other groups to do most activities except sponsoring a child. Pacific Islander congregations, while less likely to collect supplies, were more likely than all except multi-racial congregations to sponsor a mission trip in another country.

Table 2
 Congregational Participation in Various World Mission Activities
 By Racial/ethnic Group

Group	Number of Churches	Long-term Volunteers	Trips Overseas	Trips in US	Sponsored Child	Collected money	Collected Supplies	Hosted Speaker	Mean Number of Activities	% Budget to Mission
African-American	25	4%	4%	4%	4%	72%	56%	16%	1.6	9.8%
Asian	10	0%	0%	0%	22%	56%	67%	67%	1.9	10.0%
Euro-American	522	4%	9%	31%	24%	86%	84%	36%	2.7	8.3%
Hispanic	8	0%	0%	12%	12%	88%	62%	25%	2.0	6.4%
Pacific Islander	16	6%	12%	19%	0%	81%	50%	31%	2.0	9.2%
Multi-racial	54	10%	14%	32%	14%	88%	80%	60%	2.8	9.7%

The CLS also asked whether the congregation had sent people to provide assistance to people in need both in the US and overseas. Of the participating UCC congregations, 46% reported sending people to assist in the US, 24% sent people overseas, and 51% did neither. These numbers, while larger than those from the FACT study, are very similar to those for mainline Protestants in general of, 44%, 31%, and 49%, respectively. Perhaps congregations in the FACT study that felt the impact of the recession were less likely to plan and take mission trips than CLS congregations that participated in 2008. In addition, the CLS had fewer very small congregations and, because of the effort involved in participating in that survey, may have been more active congregations than those in the FACT. Finally, the wording of the questions was somewhat different, so that CLS congregations could have sent people on trips that were sponsored by other groups.

These findings are generally comparable to Wuthnow's from his interdenominational study of members' mission involvement. In his survey, 84% of mainline Protestant respondents said that their church had held a collection to raise money for an overseas hunger or relief program, and 43% of respondents said their parish had a mission speaker. Because these are surveys of individuals, not congregations, and members from larger congregations are more likely to be selected for random surveys and large congregations were more likely to take such an offering, these numbers are an overestimate, probably by about 10%. They do suggest that UCC congregations are similar to other mainline denominations in this area.

In the CLS, both sending teams to other parts of the US and to other countries increased significantly with congregational size. Neither political nor theological stance affected the likelihood that congregations would send mission teams. *Although congregations with increasing or stable financial bases were significantly more likely to send mission teams, over 10% of those with declining or threatening financial situations sent mission teams as well.*

FUNDING AND CHOOSING MISSION WORK

On the FACT survey, congregations were asked to report the total amount of their church budget for the previous year, and then the percentage they spent in various categories, including “the percentage given to mission and benevolences (including assessments).” For the UCC, this amount would include all of Our Church’s Wider Mission (OCWM) giving, both Basic Support and the four Special Mission Offerings, as well as benevolent giving through other channels and direct support of locally-originated mission activities.

Ideally, the person who completed the survey would have used the previous year’s financial reports to obtain the total budget amount, as well as amounts budgeted in each category, and then calculate the percentage in each. More likely, the percentages in each category were estimated. *The higher bars in the 5%, 10%, 15% and 20% categories of Figure 13 suggest that congregations use the concept of the tithe (or half tithe or double tithe) to plan, or at least to report, their mission giving.*

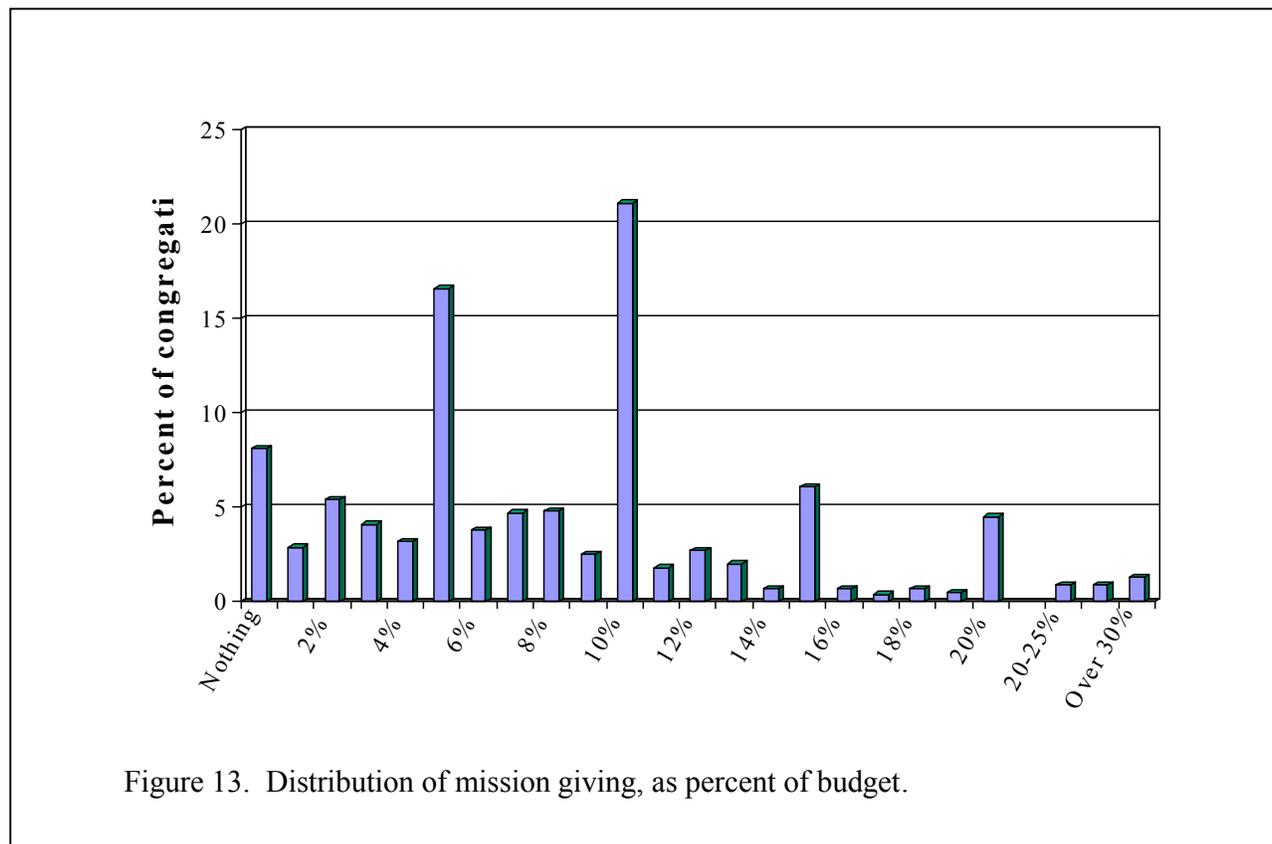
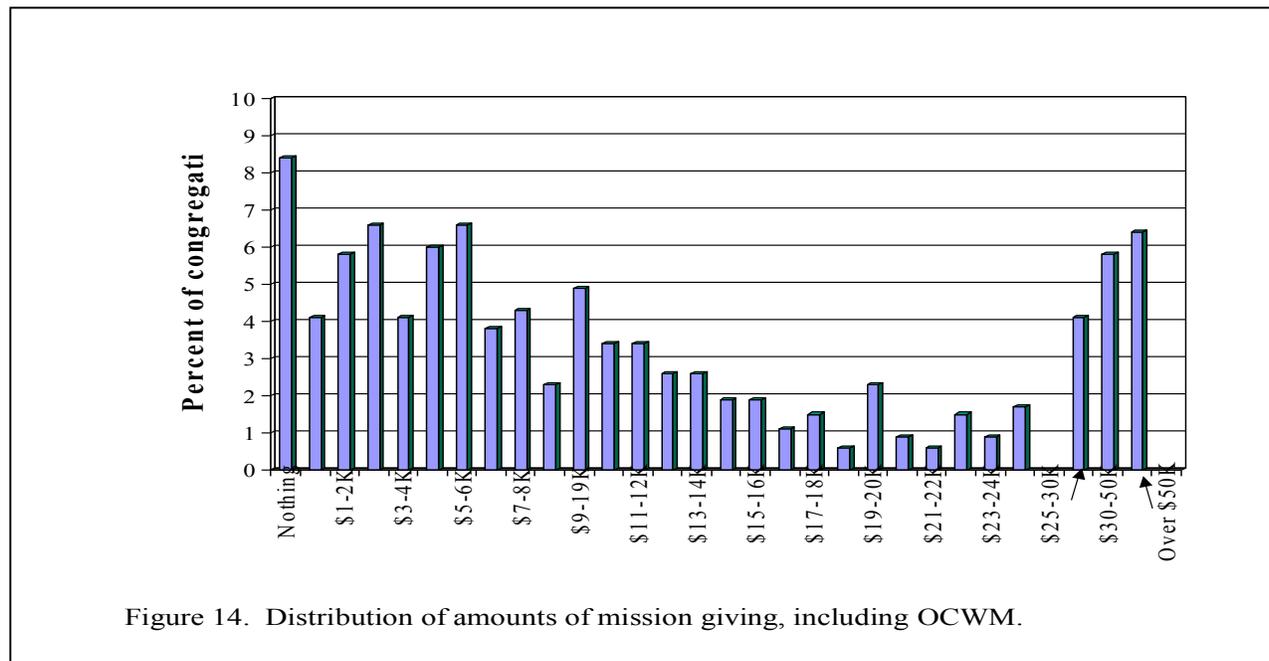


Figure 13. Distribution of mission giving, as percent of budget.

Many conferences encourage their churches to tithe to the Basic Support portion of OCWM. If all mission giving is included, and not just OCWM, the survey percentages show that over 21% of churches in the sample meet this goal, while another 23% exceed it. About 17% designate 5% of their budget for causes beyond the local congregation. For all participating churches, the mean percentage designated for missions was 9% while the median was 8%.

Unfortunately, 8% report giving nothing to those in need outside their local congregation. Some of these churches may not be giving themselves credit for every way they are involved in mission, however. For example, in the questions on community involvement shown in Figure 2 above, about 8% of those who reported giving cash assistance directly and 10% who gave such assistance together with another group also reported that the percentage of their budget going to mission was zero. While some mission giving may be funded through special collections outside the church's budget process, other churches may have neglected to include such charitable gifts as mission giving when they completed the budget questions. If these were included, the percentage of congregations that give nothing to those in need outside their local congregation would drop at least to 4%.

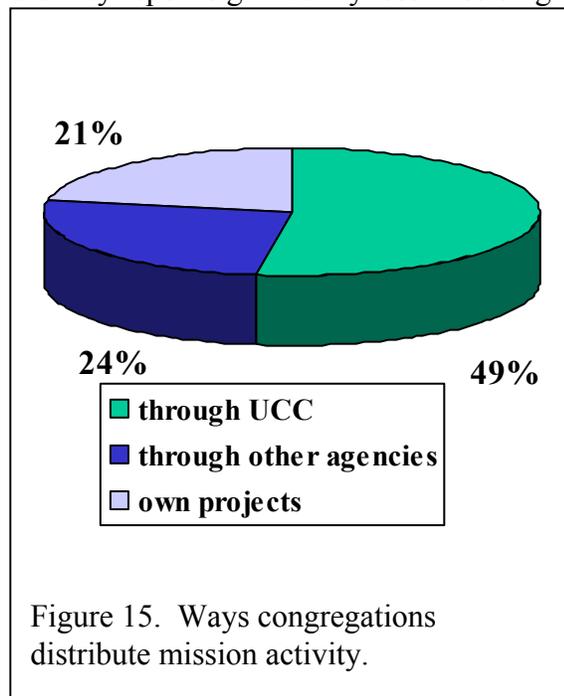
The percentages given to mission then were applied to the total budget to calculate a total amount of funds given to mission. These numbers differ from official denominational statistics because they are based on estimates of percentages, rather than official numbers from Yearbook reports. The mean amount given to benevolences and mission, including OCWM, was \$18,434, while the median was \$8,200. This disparity is due to particularly large gifts on the part of a few large congregations. Figure 14 shows the range of giving. While the majority of contributions were under \$10,000, over 16% of congregations gave more than \$25,000 to missions, some of them considerably more.



Both the amount and the percentage of a budget that was given to mission increased with church size, although the differences in percentage were not statistically significant. Congregations reporting greater financial difficulties gave significantly less. African-American, Asian, and multi-racial congregations reported that they give about 10% of their budgets to mission, while Hispanic, Pacific-Islander and Euro-American congregations give less (See Table 2 above). Vital, growing congregations gave the most to mission, at 9.1%, while vital congregations that were not growing gave nearly as much, 8.9%. Non-vital growing congregations gave less, 8.7%, and congregations that were neither vital nor growing gave considerably less, 7.1%. The theological perspective of the congregation did not affect the percentage given.

Congregational conflict was related to mission giving. Respondents were asked whether their church had experienced several different types of conflict, as well as whether the conflict was serious enough to result in people withholding money or leaving the church as a result. Churches that had experienced conflict over budgets, worship, facility use, the leader’s style, or the leader’s or a member’s personal behavior gave less to mission than did congregations without such conflict, and the differences were largest for those congregations in conflict over the leader’s style or the leader’s or members’ behaviors.

Surprisingly, churches that reported conflict over denominational actions did NOT give a significantly smaller percentage to mission than others. Only when the conflict resulted in people giving less money to the church in response to a denominational conflict (20 churches) did they report significantly less mission giving.



Most specific mission activities were not significantly related to the percentage of the church budget given to mission. Congregations that hosted a mission speaker and those who held a mission trip within the US did give significantly more, however. Also, congregations that had participated in a lot of mission activities reported that a higher proportion of their budgets went to mission giving than did those who participated in just a few.

On the FACT survey, congregations were asked how they distributed their mission activity, including money, in three categories, denominational channels, other agencies such as Heifer Project, World Vision or Rotary International, or self-developed projects. The mean percentages given to each category are displayed in Figure 15. Responses varied widely,

and did not always add to 100%. Some congregations (5%) only worked through the denomination, while 10% did nothing through the denomination. Similarly, 22% gave nothing through other agencies, while 1% only gave or participated through other agencies. Finally, 21%

reported no self-developed projects that were not associated with the denomination or another agency, while 2% put all their effort and money through such projects.

Larger congregations, with more money and resources to donate, were somewhat more likely than smaller ones to give through other agencies and on their own projects, although differences, though significant, were not large. Congregations founded since 1975 were far more likely than others to distribute mission resources through self-initiated projects. Congregations with a higher proportion of adults aged 35-49, rather than seniors, were much more likely to pursue self-initiated projects. This may be because such projects require energy and hands-on involvement that may be more plentiful in congregations with younger members. It also may reflect generational differences in wanting personal contact and control over projects, rather than trusting the institution to make the right decisions.

The congregation's relationship with the denomination affected mission giving, but in a complex way. Congregations that were the most involved with the denomination (the top 21%) and those that were not involved at all (the bottom 2%) gave the highest percentages to mission, while involvement seemed to make little difference for those in the middle. They also distributed their mission money and time differently. Those least involved with the UCC gave less than 20% of resources through UCC channels, with the remainder through other organizations or through self-directed projects, while those who were most involved gave more than half their resources through the UCC. The percentage of mission resources given to self-initiated projects did not differ significantly by the strength of denominational ties. This finding supports Wuthnow's suggestion that self-initiated projects may be the result of internal ties within the congregation, rather than lack of support for denominational programs.

How do home and foreign mission interests relate? Do some congregations concentrate their care for others within their own communities, while others prefer to give at a distance? Do non-UCC projects siphon efforts and funds away from UCC projects? Although these questions cannot be answered without knowing much more about the situations in which congregations choose projects, the FACT surveys provide some clues.

On the FACT survey, correlations between different types of mission and community service programs were small and usually positive, controlling for the size of the congregation. That is, a congregation that had a lot of community programs was somewhat more likely than others to also have been active in mission beyond the local community. On the CLS, congregations that send people or groups to provide assistance to people in need in another part of the US were significantly more likely to do so in other countries as well. In fact, of the 24% of congregations sending people to other countries, nearly all (88%) also sent people to other parts of the US. No evidence was found to suggest that congregations' local and global ministries compete with each other for mission dollars. Instead, congregations that are involved in mission in one location are more likely to be involved in mission in other areas as well.

SUMMARY

UCC congregations are involved in mission activities, both at home and abroad. In their communities, almost all UCC congregations (all but 6%) report that they offer community service activities, more than those that have choirs and Sunday Schools. The most common of these are providing food or cash assistance, either directly or in cooperation with another group, reported by 85% and 83% of all congregations, respectively. Programs for the elderly are next most common, with 48% providing them. On average, congregations say they provide two programs directly and one in cooperation with others.

Larger congregations offer more programs than others, and generally are more likely to offer each of the different kinds of programs. Generally, African-American and Hispanic congregations and those in cities and suburbs are more likely to offer community programs than Euro-American and rural and small-town congregations.

When UCC congregations are compared with those of other mainline denominations, they offer fewer programs. However, this difference disappears when they are compared with congregations that are similar in size.

As the size of UCC congregations has decreased over the last decade, the numbers of programs offered has also decreased, particularly among congregations with fewer than 50 in attendance. Also, over the last decade, cooperation with other groups to offer programs has decreased for congregations of all sizes.

UCC congregations report being involved in mission activities across the nation and the globe as well. Most (85%) report giving money for special needs other than their gifts through UCC special offerings, and 81% report collecting tangible items for people in need. Over a third report having had a mission speaker or program in the past year. Also, on the FACT surveys, 29% sponsored a short-term work camp or mission trip in the US and 9% sponsored one in another country in the past year. In the CLS sample, 46% reported sending people to assist in the US, 24% sent people overseas, even higher percentages.

Nearly half of all FACT congregations (44%) say that they give 10% or more of their total budget to benevolences, including OCWM, while 8% report giving nothing. Over 16% of congregations gave more than \$25,000 to missions, some of them considerably more.

Larger congregations are more likely to engage in a variety of wider mission activities than smaller ones, and Euro-American congregations are more likely than African-American and Hispanic congregations to do so. Giving to OCWM and other mission activities increases with congregational size in both amount and percentage, although percentage differences are not large. Congregations reporting greater financial difficulties give significantly less. In general, the newest congregations and African-American, Asian, Pacific Islander and multi-racial congregations give a higher percentage of their budget to mission than Euro-American and Hispanic ones.

Congregations that reported significant conflict gave less to missions than others. However, the types of conflict that most affected giving were conflicts over the pastor's style or the pastor's or a leader's personal behavior, not conflicts over denominational actions.

Congregations distribute their money and mission activity in many ways. On average, about half is through denominational channels, a quarter is through other organizations, and slightly less than a quarter is through self-initiated projects. Most congregations say they are involved in two or three ways, with larger ones more likely to give through other agencies or through self-developed projects. Those least involved with the UCC give less than 20% of resources through UCC channels, with the remainder through other organizations or through self-directed projects, while those who are most involved give more than half their resources through the UCC. The percentage of mission resources given to self-initiated projects, however, is not related to the strength of denominational ties.

While some congregations may emphasize community ministries and others world missions, in general, local and world ministries do not seem to compete for a congregation's resources. Congregations that were involved in one type of mission were more likely to be involved in another, as well.