

Fall 2013

THE UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST: A STATISTICAL PROFILE

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**UNITED CHURCH
OF CHRIST**



The United Church of Christ is an evolving movement of people and institutions across location and time. This profile provides a general statistical overview of the state of the denomination and offers a closer look at church location, size, membership, ministerial demographics, and overall income and expenses. Information is drawn primarily from data reported to the national offices annually for the production of the UCC Yearbook.

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UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST CONGREGATIONAL LOCATIONS

At the end of 2012, there were 5,154 active congregations of the United Church of Christ with a total of 998,906 members. Churches and members were concentrated largely in the Midwestern / Northern states of Illinois, Ohio, Pennsylvania, and Wisconsin and the New England states of Connecticut and Massachusetts with 53% of membership in these six states alone.

Figure 1 illustrates the distribution of UCC churches throughout the United States as of 2010. A 2013 detailed list of congregations and membership statistics by Conference can be found in the 2013 UCC Yearbook, p. 692.

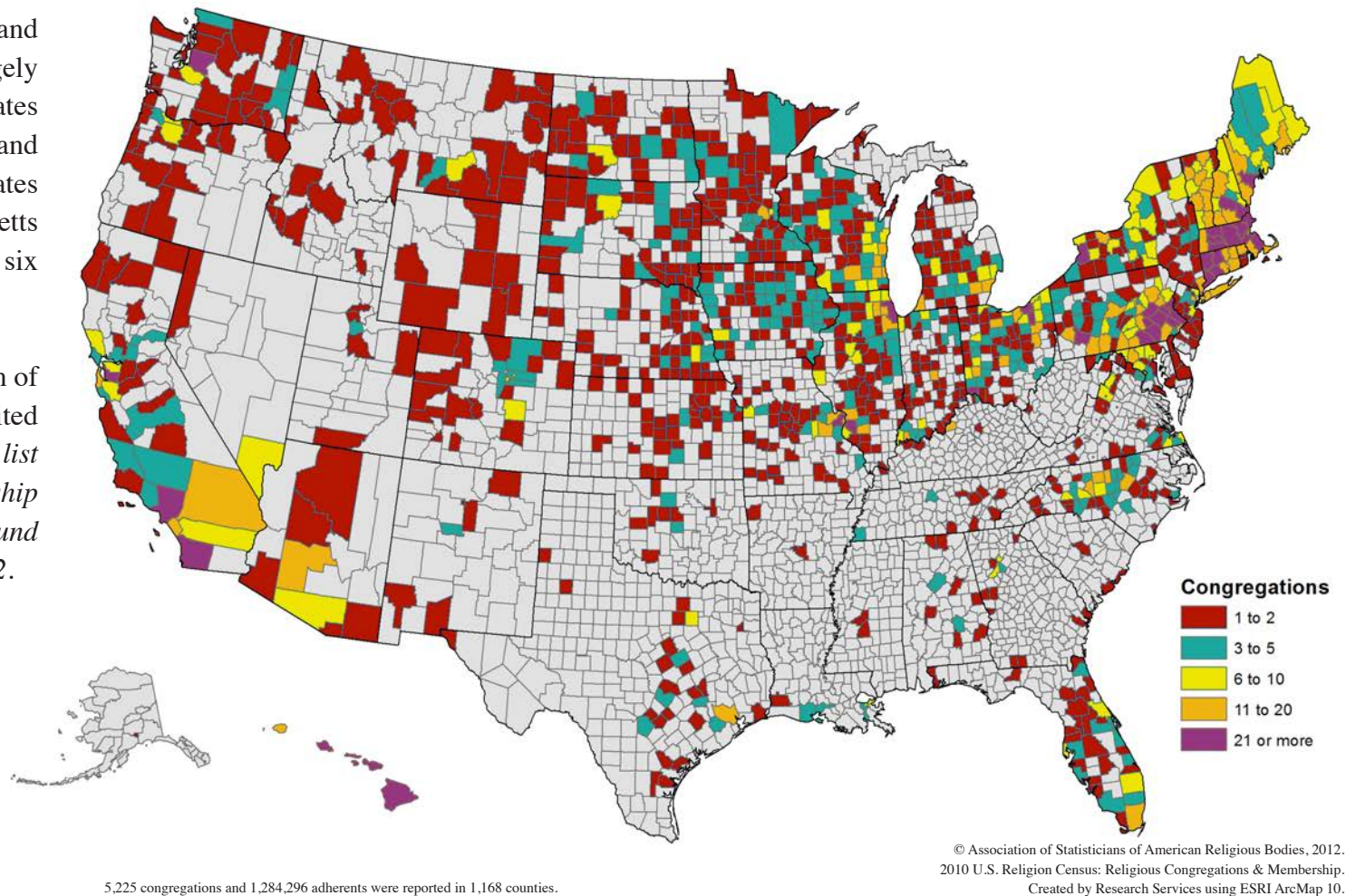
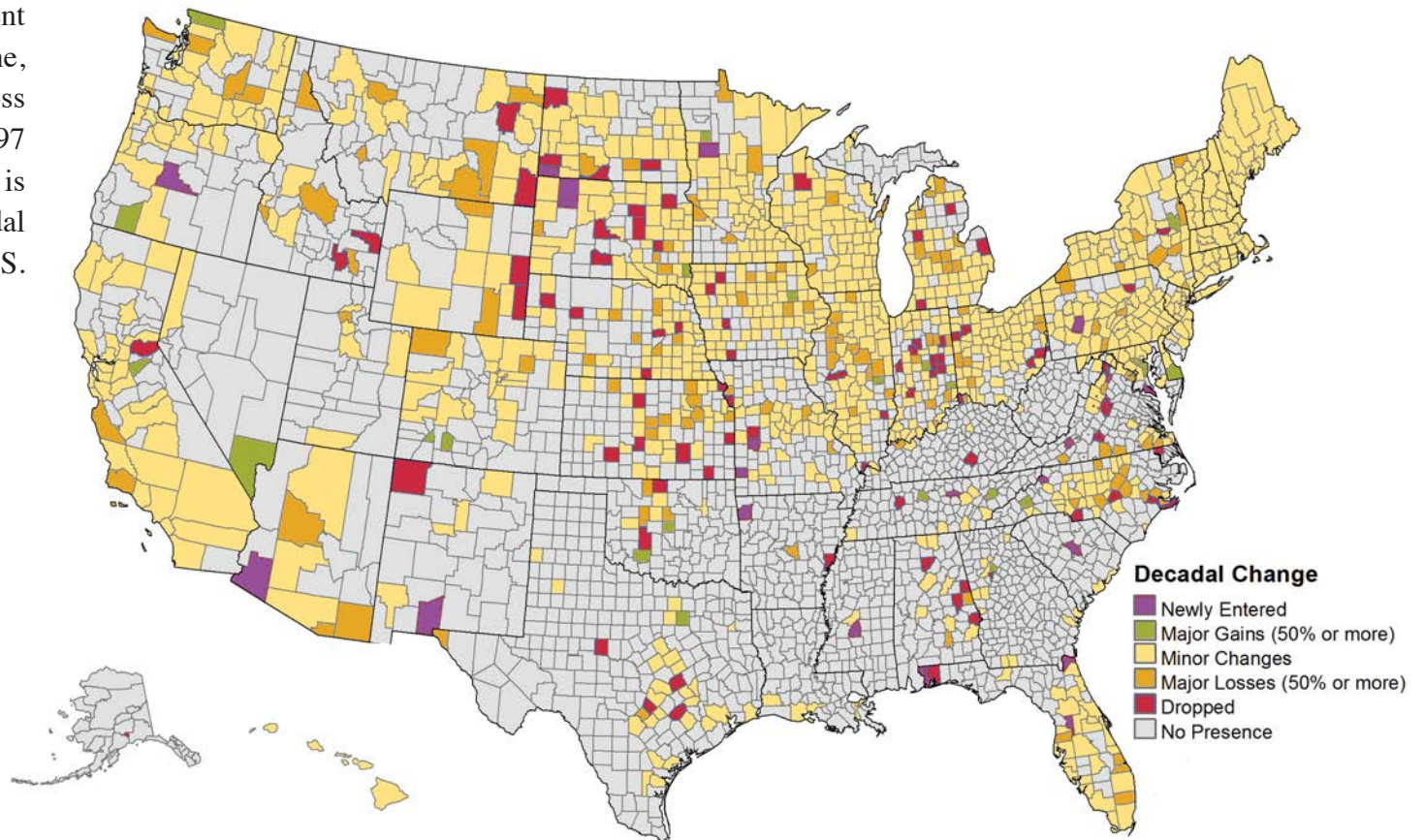


FIGURE 1. Location of United Church of Christ Congregations in the U.S. (2010)

UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST DECADAL CHANGE OF CONGREGATIONS AND MEMBERSHIP

Similar to other mainline Protestant denominations, the UCC experienced a decrease in the number of congregations and members in recent decades. From 2000 to 2010 alone, the UCC encountered a net loss of 696 congregations and 318,897 members. Figure 2 (to the right) is an illustration of the overall decadal change for each county in the U.S. from 2000 to 2010.



24 counties reported in 2010 but not in 2000.
86 counties reported in 2000 but not in 2010.

© Association of Statisticians of American Religious Bodies, 2012.
2010 U.S. Religion Census: Religious Congregations & Membership.
Created by Research Services using ESRI ArcMap 10.0

FIGURE 2. United Church of Christ Change in Adherents (2000 to 2010)

UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST CONGREGATIONS ADDED AND REMOVED

From 2006 through 2012, 630 congregations (11%) were removed from denominational records. A concentrated loss of churches occurred in 2006 and 2007 (302 congregations, 48% of all removed in 2006-2012), partially resulting from a 2005 General Synod resolution regarding same-sex marriage and the withdrawal of the Puerto Rico Conference from the UCC.

Congregational decline slowed in recent years, however. In 2006 and 2007, the UCC experienced a loss of 2.9 congregations per week on average; but in 2008 through 2012, only 1.3 churches were eliminated from denominational records per week on average.

In total, 150 congregations received standing and were added to the UCC during this same period. This gain decreased the total loss of churches over this time period by 8%. On average, a new congregation (a church that was planted, affiliated, or merged with another congregation) was added every 2.5 weeks.

It is interesting to note that congregations organized from 2000 to 2012 experienced growth in the last five year period (2007-2012) at an average of 6 new members per congregation. Churches organized in any time period prior to 2000 experienced a net decline in membership within the same five-year period, at a total average rate of 20 members per congregation.

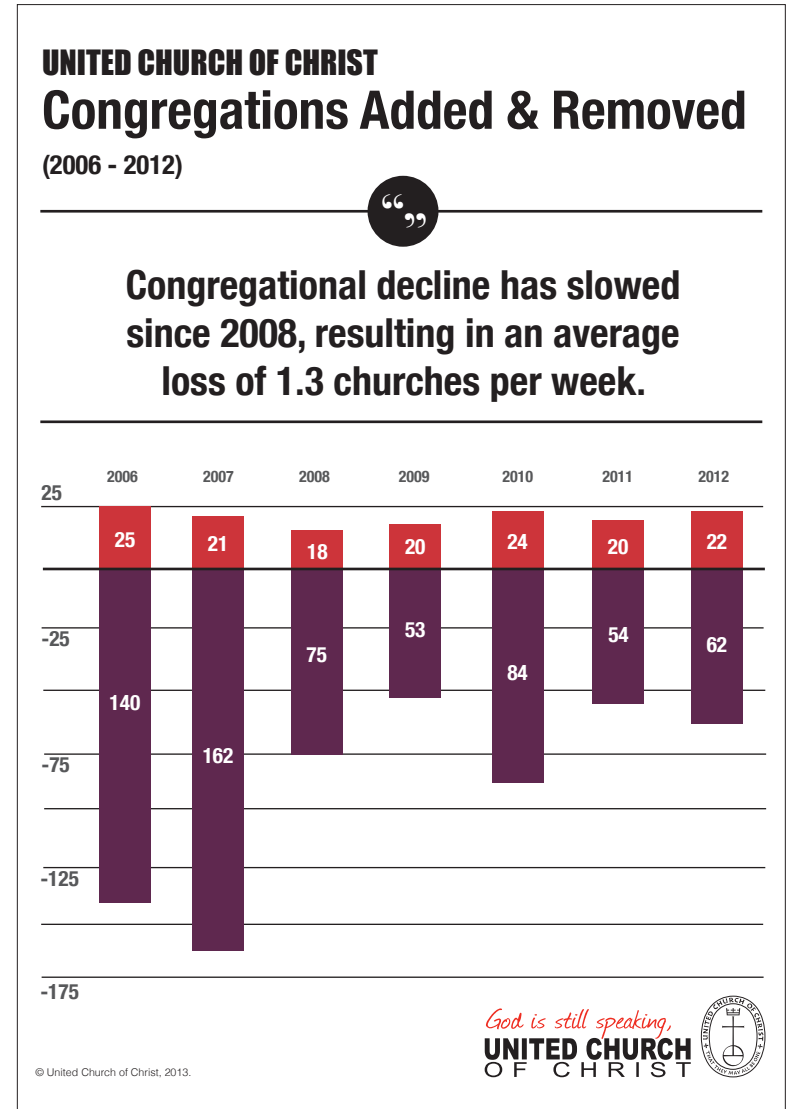


FIGURE 3. UCC Congregations Added & Removed (2006-2012)

UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST CONGREGATIONS BY RACIAL/ETHNIC SELF-IDENTIFICATION

A significant majority (88.2%) of congregations in the UCC self-identify as White/Euro-American (meaning that most members of a congregation belong to that particular racial/ethnic group). Over the last decade, the number of White/Euro-American congregations declined by 2.8%; and African American and Hispanic congregations both decreased by 0.5%. The number of Bi-Racial / Multi-Racial and Asian / Pacific Islander congregations experienced the greatest growth (both by 1.6%), followed by Native American congregations by 0.4%.

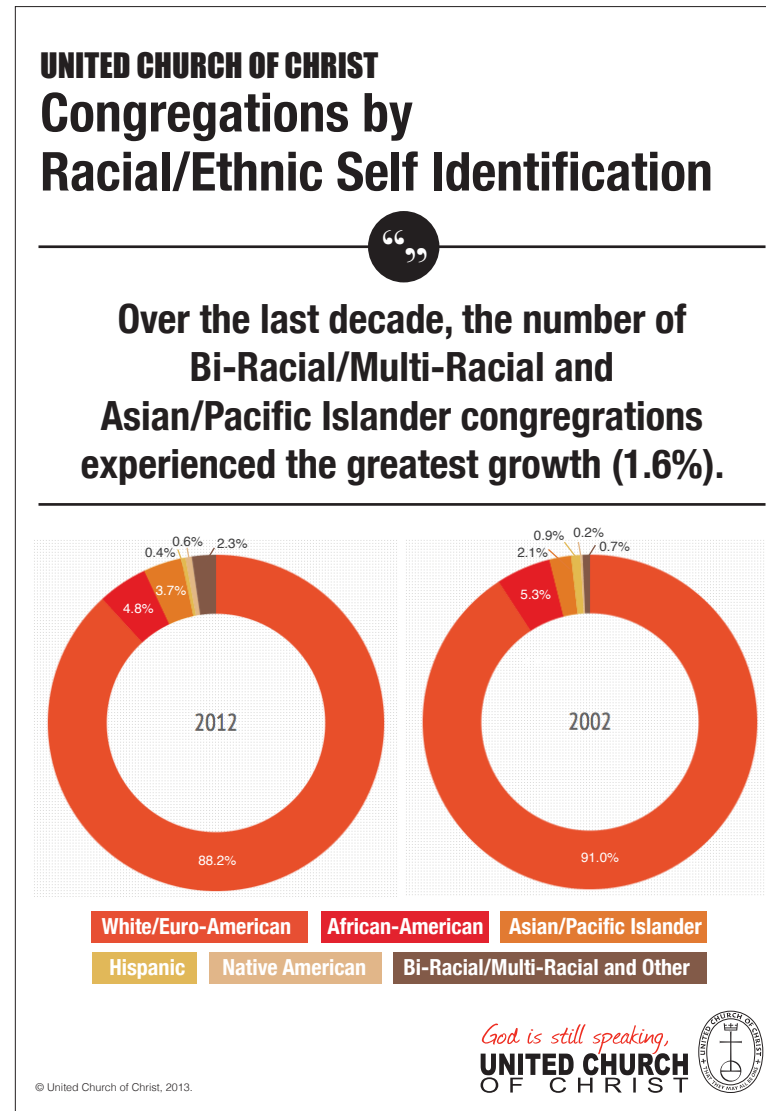


FIGURE 4. UCC Congregations by Racial/Ethnic Self Identification

UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST CONGREGATIONS BY DATE OF ORGANIZATION

While the UCC has only been in existence since 1957, many of its congregations were founded by predecessor denominations. Nearly seven in ten churches (69.1%) were organized before 1900. Two in ten congregations (21.3%) were organized between 1900 and 1969, and nearly one in ten (9.6%) were organized in the last 32 years.

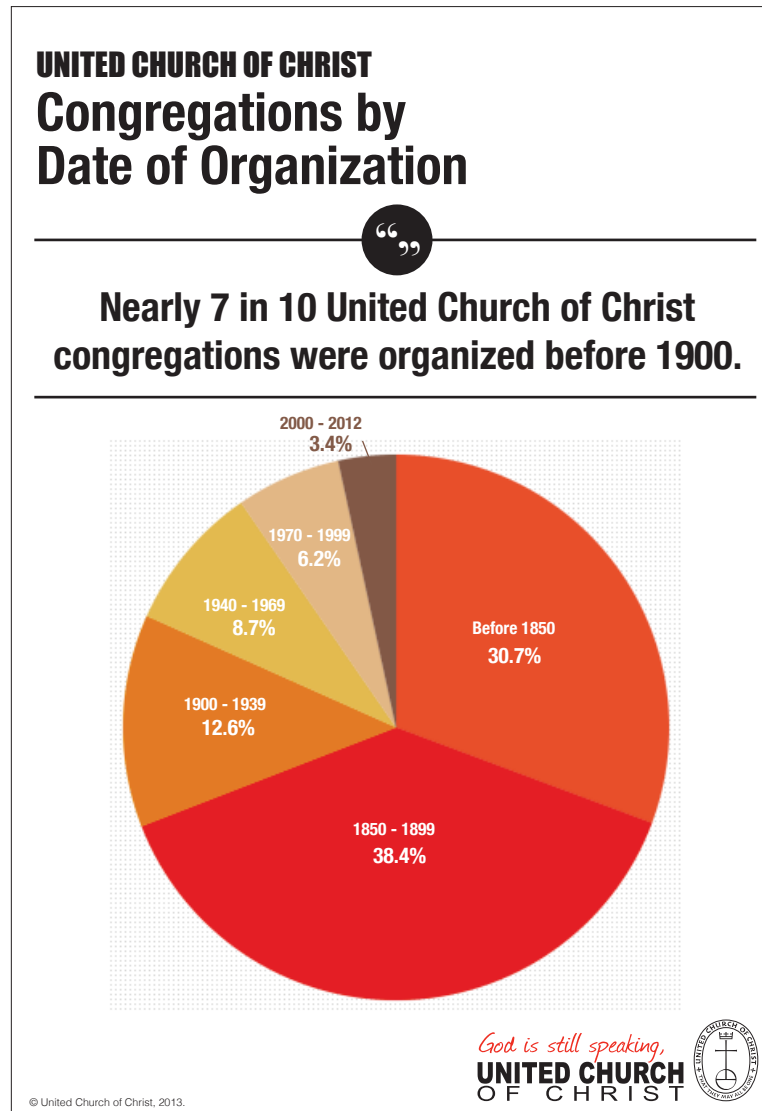


FIGURE 5. UCC Congregations by Date of Organization

UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST CONGREGATION SIZE BY MEMBERSHIP

One-third (30.2%) of all UCC members belonged to congregations of 201-400 members, and this figure did not change significantly over the past decade. However, an increased percentage of UCC individuals held membership in smaller churches (200 members or less) over the last decade. This was due, in part, to overall congregational and membership decline within the denomination.

As a result, the number of smaller membership UCC congregations increased over the last ten years. Four in ten congregations (41.1%) reported a membership of 100 or less, compared with 35.0% a decade ago. Congregations with 101-200 members also increased in the last decade, from 25.8% to 27.1%.

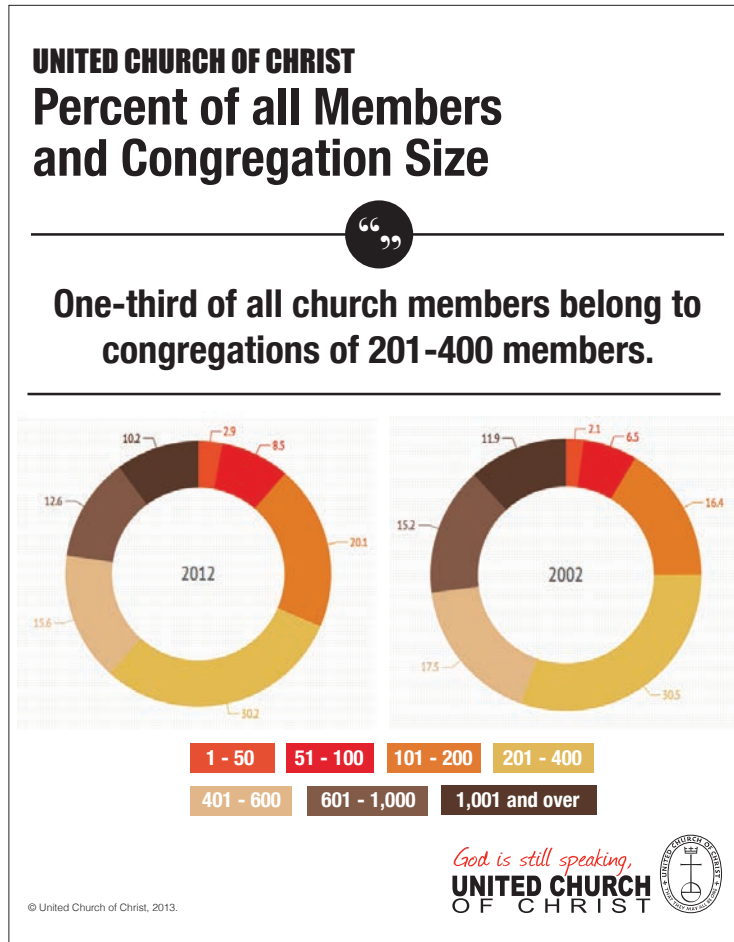


FIGURE 6. Percent of All UCC Members

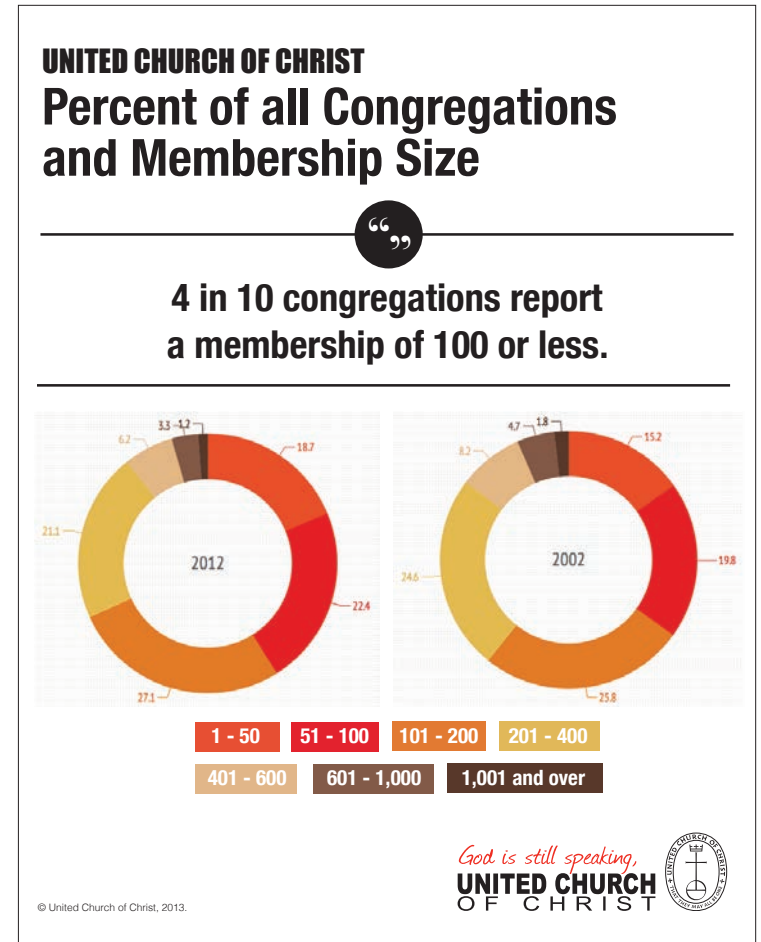


FIGURE 7. Percent of All UCC Congregations

UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST CONGREGATIONS BY WORSHIP SIZE AND DESIGNATIONS

When considering worship attendance figures rather than membership size, greater numbers of congregations were also categorized as smaller churches. Seven in ten churches in the UCC (70.4%) had a weekly worship attendance of 1-100 individuals in 2012, compared to 62.8% in 2002. Only the percentage of congregations with a worship attendance of 1-50 increased over this time period (+9.7%).

In the last five and a half years, there was a 32.6% increase in the number of Open and Affirming (ONA) congregations in the United Church of Christ. As of fall 2013, 1,068 churches were designated as ONA, which constituted 20.7% of all current UCC churches. In comparison, at the end of 2007, 720 churches (13.4% of all UCC churches at the time) were ONA. On average, congregations organized after 1939 (34.2%) became designated as ONA more frequently than churches organized before 1940

(18.2%). In addition, 923 churches were designated as Still Speaking (17.9% of all UCC churches). Still Speaking congregations were over five times more likely to be ONA churches than non-Still Speaking congregations.

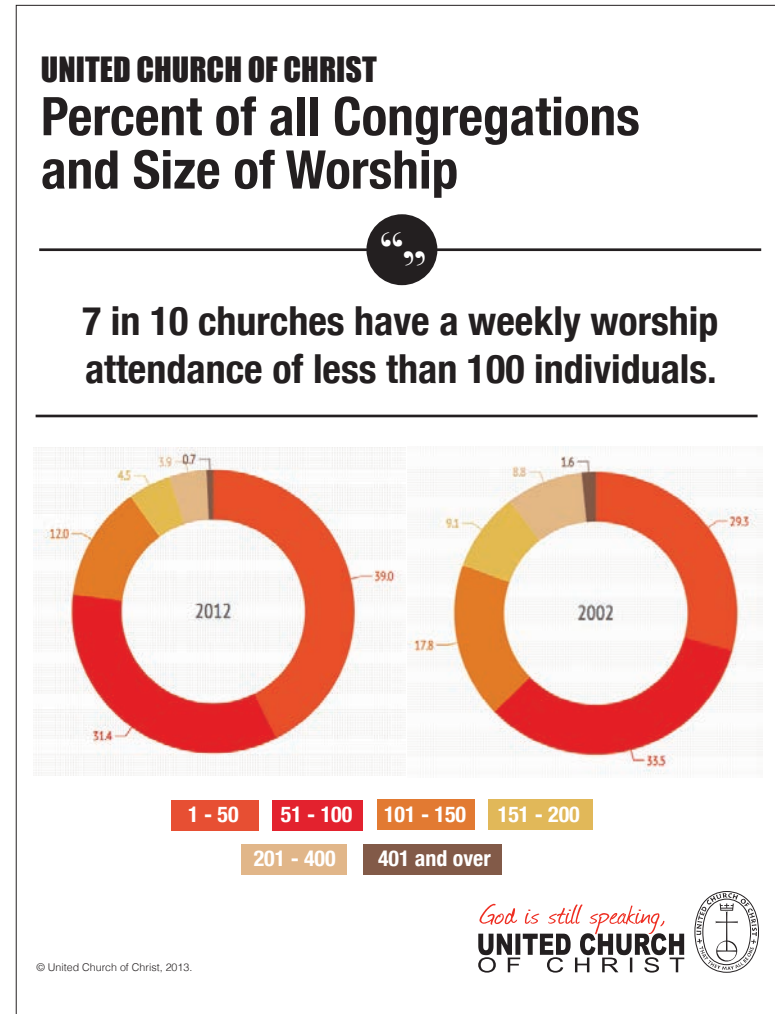


FIGURE 8. Percent of UCC Congregations by Size of Worship Attendance

UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST ACTIVE, AUTHORIZED MINISTERS

As of August 31, 2013, there were a total of 7,578 active, authorized ministers in the United Church of Christ (ordained, licensed, commissioned, dual standing, ministerial partner standing, and Congregational Christian Church). Ordained ministers were the largest percentage of active ministers reported (82.5%), and licensed ministers comprised the second largest group of authorized ministers (9.0%).



FIGURE 9. Active, Authorized UCC Ministers

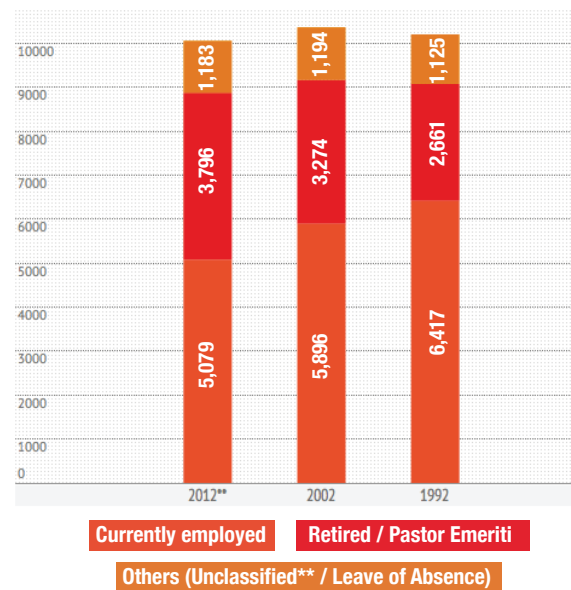
UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST ORDAINED MINISTERS

At the end of 2012, 10,058 ordained ministers in full standing were reported, including retired ministers and Pastor Emeriti. Of those 10,058 ordained ministers, 1,183 (11.8%) of them were unclassified (ministers who did not hold a position at the time of Yearbook production or whose position had not been reported at that time) or were on a leave of absence.

From 1992 to 2012, ordained ministers decreased in number by a net total of 145 (-1.4%). While numbers of currently employed ministers decreased significantly in the last two decades (-20.9%), numbers of unclassified / leave of absence ordained ministers increased slightly in the same time period (+5.1%).

UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST Summary of Ministers by General Classification*

Numbers of currently employed ministers
have decreased by 20.9% since 1992.



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*Note that the current 2013 number of ordained ministers (6,250) and the December 31, 2012 Yearbook figure for ordained ministers (5,079 + 1,183 = 6,262) differs by a count of 12, which signifies the addition of ordained ministers between December 31, 2012 and August 31, 2013.

**For a detailed listing of figures for specific ministry categories, consult the 2013 Yearbook "Summary of United Church of Christ Ministers in Full Standing by Classification," p. 695.

FIGURE 10. Summary of UCC Ministers by General Classification**

UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST ACTIVE, NON-RETIRED MINISTERS BY AGE

Statistical information regarding authorized ministers in the denomination reflected an increasingly aging population. When all active authorized ministers were considered, almost half were age 60 and over and one third were 50-59, making 80.7% of all active ministers 50 and above. When measuring changes over time, the number of pastors and co-pastors under 60 decreased in the last decade, while pastors and co-pastors 60 and over increased significantly (18.1%).

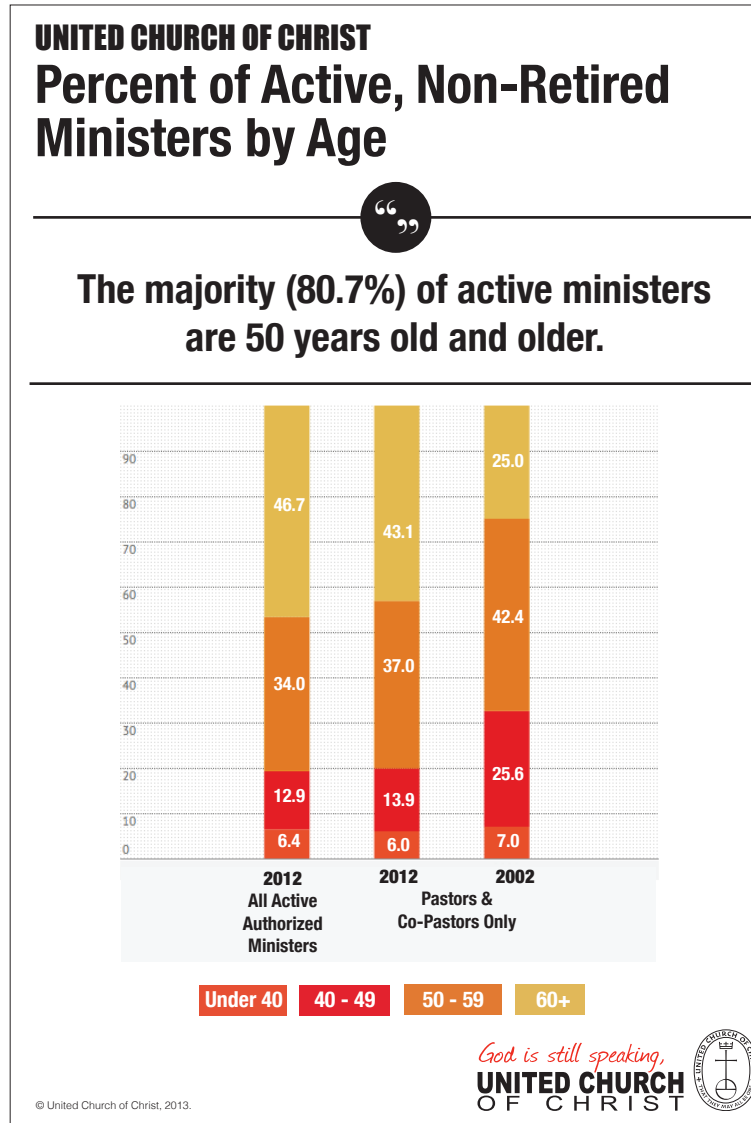


FIGURE 11. Percent of Active, Non-Retired Authorized Ministers by Age (%)

UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST ACTIVE, NON-RETIRED MINISTERS BY GENDER

Approximately 53.7% of authorized ministers in the United Church of Christ were male, and 46.3% were female. There were more male ministers than female ministers within each authorization category, except for commissioned ministers, of which there were 3.5 times the number of females compared to males. Eight male ministers possessed standing in the Congregational Christian Church only.

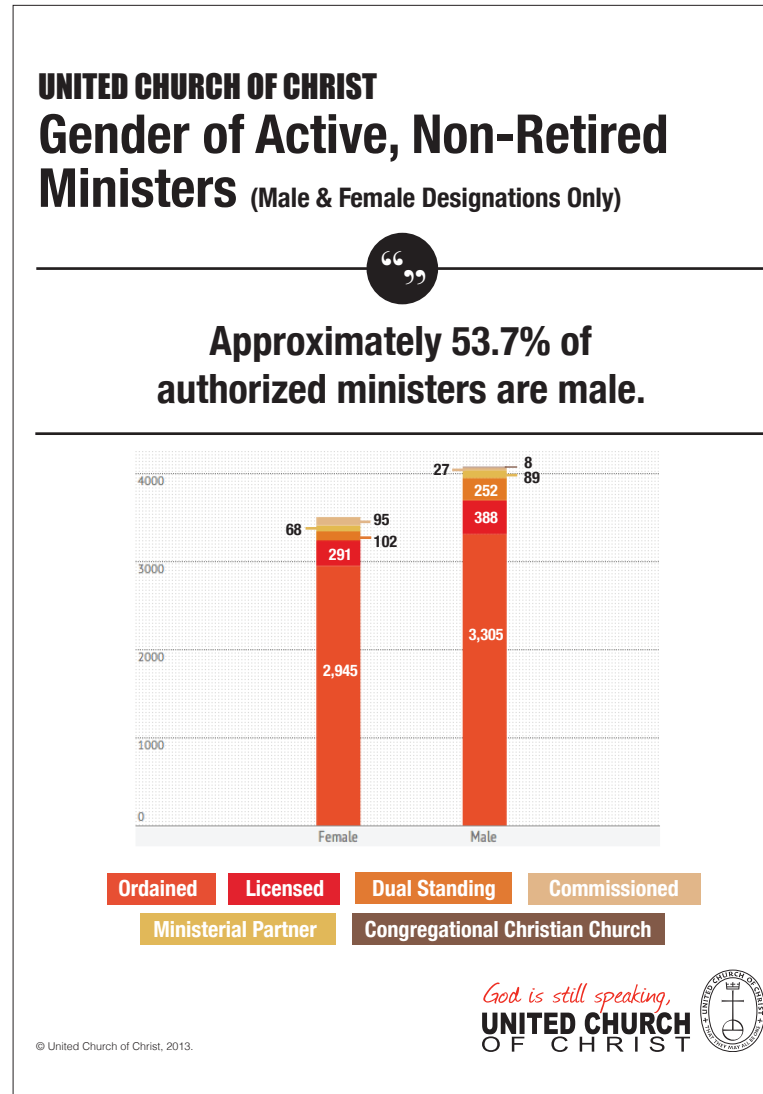


FIGURE 12. Gender of Active, Non-Retired UCC Ministers

UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST FEMALE MINISTERS

The number of active, ordained female ministers increased significantly over the last decade, from 27.1% in 2002 to 46.3% in 2012. Over one-third (35.5%) of all church pastors were female, compared with over one-fourth (26.8%) ten years ago. A majority (53.4%) of co-pastors was female, almost two thirds (64.4%) were associate / assistant pastors, and 48.0% were interim / supply pastors.

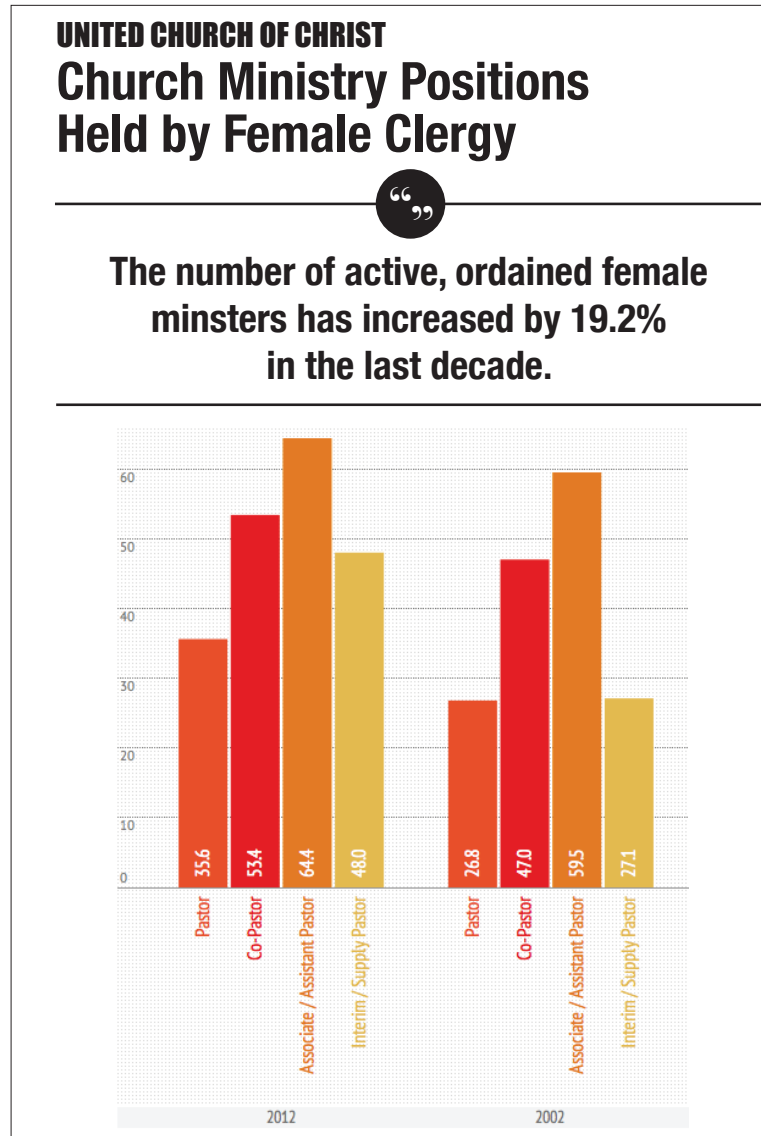


FIGURE 13. Percentage Comparison of Church Ministry Positions Held by Female Clergy (2012 and 2002)

UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST RECEIPTS AND EXPENDITURES

Receipts in the United Church of Christ decreased from \$941,553,540 to \$912,804,952 in a period of four years (December 31, 2008 to December 31, 2012), which represented a 3.0% decrease. (For this same time period, general inflation rose 6.6%.) Current local expenses decreased 1.4%, total mission support decreased 15.1%, and capital expenses decreased 12.2%.

	2012	2011	2010	2009	2008
Current Local Expenses	\$ 808,288,492	\$ 816,999,755	\$ 821,826,306	\$ 821,796,426	\$ 820,191,430
Total Mission Support	60,886,340	67,741,866	70,331,870	67,251,200	71,683,884
Capital Expenses	43,630,120	50,082,489	45,842,346	39,590,799	49,678,226
TOTAL	\$ 912,804,952	\$ 934,824,110	\$ 938,000,522	\$ 928,638,425	\$ 941,553,540

FIGURE 14. Total Expenditures

UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST TOTAL MISSION SUPPORT

There were also changes in the way that congregations spent their mission dollars, with the greatest decrease evidenced in national basic support over the last four years (-19.4%). Special support decreased 16.5%, conference basic support decreased 16.0%, and other gifts decreased 12.2% in the same time period.

	2012	2011	2010	2009	2008
Other Gifts	\$ 24,417,929	\$ 27,924,495	\$ 27,054,890	\$ 25,947,073	\$ 27,824,768
Special Support	12,722,624	15,363,487	17,803,785	14,773,621	15,241,515
Conference Basic	16,797,058	17,313,931	17,894,837	18,316,233	19,997,173
National Basic Support	6,948,729	7,139,953	7,578,358	8,214,273	8,620,428
TOTAL	\$ 60,886,340	\$ 67,741,866	\$ 70,331,870	\$ 67,251,200	\$ 71,683,884

FIGURE 15. Total Mission Support

DISTRIBUTION OF THE UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST DOLLAR

In the last nine years, the distribution of the church dollar experienced some noticeable shifts. Current local expenses increased \$.05 (+6.0%). Capital expenses decreased \$.03 (-37.5%), other gifts remained the same at \$.03, special support decreased \$.01 (-50.0%), conference basic support remained the same at \$.02, and national basic support decreased to less than \$.01 of the church dollar.

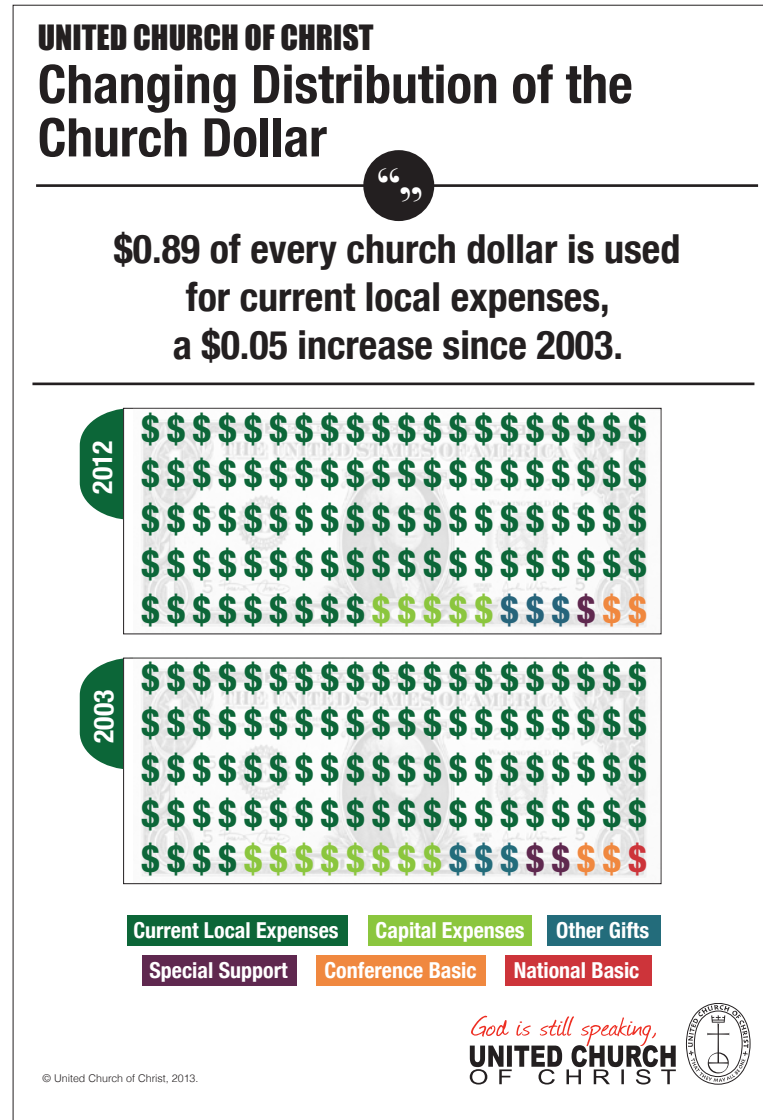


FIGURE 16. Changing Distribution of the Church Dollar