

Congregational Strengths and Subsequent Numerical Growth Among Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) Congregations

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Abstract: What kinds of mainline Protestant congregations grow numerically in this era of shrinking mainline denominations? A number of recent cross-sectional studies have pointed to factors related to numerical growth in congregational membership. This study uses time-series data to find out what factors at one point in time predict net membership growth at a later point in time. The study combines responses from surveys of congregational worshipers and leaders (from a random sample of 523 Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) congregations whose worshipers and leaders took the U.S. Congregational Life Survey in early 2001) with congregational membership data for 2000 and 2005. Results point to a large fraction of older adult worshipers as a factor in retarding membership growth and shared leadership practices and prioritization of children's and youth ministries as factors in promoting growth.

Introduction

What kinds of mainline Protestant congregations grow in this era of shrinking mainline denominations? Cross-sectional research has suggested which kinds of U.S. congregations, in general, grow. These are congregations with heavy congregational involvement, prioritization of children's and youth ministries, younger worshipers, intentional outreach to potential new members, suburban location, less conflict, and contemporary worship style.¹ Yet not many mainline Protestant congregations are growing. During the past five years total membership and average weekly worship attendance have declined in at least eight mainline denominations. Since 2000, only a quarter of congregations in the nation's third largest mainline denomination, the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.), have experienced net numerical growth in membership. What more can time-series analysis tell us about which PC(USA) congregations *have* grown?

Sample

The research reported here draws primarily from responses of 47,708 worshipers age 15 or older from 523 sampled PC(USA) congregations. Worshipers who completed the 56-question U.S. Congregational Life Survey in April 2001 were among the 300,000 worshipers in more than 2,000 U.S. congregations affiliated with various Christian denominations and other faiths who took the survey.² The PC(USA)'s Research Services staff assembled the PC(USA) sample studied in this research through stratified random sampling that made the sample representative of PC(USA) congregations: (1) of different sizes; (2) from different regions of the country; and (3) with different racial-ethnic compositions.³

The research also draws on: (1) responses by leaders of those sampled congregations to questions in two U.S. Congregational Life Survey key informant surveys; (2) membership data that PC(USA) congregational leaders provide each year to denominational offices; and (3) Census 2000 data from the U.S. Census Bureau Web site at <http://www.census.gov>.

¹ Carl S. Dudley and David A. Roozen, *Faith Communities Today: A Report on Research in the United States Today* (Hartford, CT: Hartford Institute for Religious Research, Hartford Seminary, 2001), 26-30, at <http://fact.hartsem.edu/research/fact2000/researchreport.html>; Cynthia Woolever and Deborah Bruce, *Beyond the Ordinary: 10 Strengths of U.S. Congregations* (Louisville, KY: Westminster John Knox Press, 2004), 113-16; Kirk Hadaway, "Correlates of Growth: Findings from FACT 2005," unpublished PowerPoint presentation. Cross-sectional analysis also shows that fast-growing PC(USA) congregations are also those that were founded more recently and feature large memberships and more theologically conservative, affluent, college educated worshipers who see a good match between their pastors and their congregations. Deborah Bruce and Cynthia Woolever, *U.S. Congregational Life Survey: Fast Growing Presbyterian Churches* (Louisville, KY: Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) Research Services, 2002).

² For more information on the U.S. Congregational Life Survey, see <http://www.uscongregations.org>.

³ For more information on the worshipers in this sample, see Cynthia Woolever and Deborah Bruce, *A Field Guide to Presbyterian Congregations: Who's Going Where and Why* (Louisville, KY: Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) Research Services, 2002).

Leaders of a quarter of the 2,015 PC(USA) congregations in the original sample (27%) agreed to participate in the U.S. Congregational Life Survey. Most of these congregations (93%) did in fact return completed surveys.

Data Analysis

The first two tables present descriptive statistics that give the percentages of sampled PC(USA) congregations that fall in each category of the independent variables, presented as dichotomous or categorical variables. The values for the independent variables are for 2000 or early 2001, unless otherwise indicated. Most of these independent variables previous research has identified as factors in growth. Tables 3, 4, and 5 divide the sampled congregations between those that experienced net numerical growth in membership between 2001 and 2005 and those that did not. A quarter of the congregations (24%) grew between 2000 and 2005. These tables cross-tabulate data about whether the congregations grew with their 2000-2001 values for the various independent variables.⁴

Tables 6, 7, and 8 show the results of logistic regression analyses predicting whether or not sampled congregations grew between 2000 and 2005. Whenever possible, these logistic regression analyses deploy interval-level variables as independent variables. Values for four variables remain dichotomous, by necessity. Three logistic regression analyses were completed. The first logistic regression analysis deploys as independent variables congregational scores on the ten congregational strengths. All but one of the strengths are constructs calculated as mean averages from responses to three or more of the questions on the U.S. Congregational Life Survey worshiper survey.⁵ The second logistic regression analysis deploys values for eleven other independent variables that use responses to the U.S. Congregational Life Survey worshiper and key informant surveys, data from denominational offices, and Census 2000 data. The third logistic regression deploys as independent variables congregational scores on selected congregational strengths and values for other selected independent variables (thirteen variables total).

Criteria for selection of independent variables in these second two logistic regression analyses include: (1) variables most consistently seen as growth factors in previous

⁴ For example, responses to one of the U.S. Congregational Life Survey key informant surveys indicated whether or not a congregation's pastor in early 2001, if any, was female. So this variable was already dichotomous. A question from the U.S. Congregational Life Survey worshiper survey, on the other hand, asked worshipers to categorize their households' incomes into any one of six household income categories. These responses were aggregated and transformed into values for a variable that indicated what percentage of congregations' worshipers were part of households with incomes of \$75,000 or greater. For the descriptive statistics and cross-tabulations, congregations were divided into those in which more than half of worshipers were in these \$75,000-or-greater-household-income households and those that were not.

⁵ Congregational scores on the Welcoming New Worshipers congregational strength derive from responses to a single question in the worshiper survey. For more information on the construction of all of the strengths, see Cynthia Woolever and Deborah Bruce, *Beyond the Ordinary: 10 Strengths of U.S. Congregations* (Louisville, KY: Westminster John Knox Press, 2004).

research; (2) variables whose values vary with growth in other data analysis that is part of this project (Table 3-5's cross-tabulations and correlation matrices not shown); and (3) variables whose values are *not* highly correlated with each other (as evident in the cross-tabulations and in correlation matrices not shown).

Results

The results in Table 3 show that the percentage of worshipers age 65 or older is the dominant worshiper characteristic linked with whether or not congregations have experienced net membership growth. One in five congregations with more than half of their worshipers age 65 or older in early 2001 (18%) grew between 2000 and 2005. A third of those with smaller proportions of older adults among their worshipers (32%) grew.

Whether congregations grew was also linked with two other characteristics of congregation's worshipers, but preponderance of these characteristics was linked in turn with percentage of older adult worshipers. Congregations whose worshipers were more than 70% married except separated were disproportionately *not* those congregations with half or more older adult worshipers. Congregations whose worshipers were more than half those who had attended at their congregations for ten years or more *were* disproportionately those with half or more older adult worshipers. A worshiper characteristic associated with a larger fraction of older adult worshipers (attendance for ten years or more) was associated with *less* growth; a worshiper characteristic associated with a smaller fraction of older adult worshipers (marriage) was associated with *more* growth. Congregations whose worshipers were more than 70% married grew disproportionately. Congregations with more than half of their worshipers having attended at those congregations ten years or more disproportionately did *not* grow.

Table 4 results show that larger proportions of congregations that had grown between 1995 and 2000 than of congregations that had not grown grew between 2000 and 2005. The rich keep getting richer. A larger proportion of congregations in which more than 90 percent of worshipers said that there was a good match between their pastors and their congregations than of other congregations also grew. Ministers' popularity leads to growth.

Previous research with the U.S. Congregational Life Survey's interfaith random sample suggests that congregations with spiritual growth, evangelistic, and/or community action/community service orientations do *not* grow. The cross-tabulations of results with sampled PC(USA) congregations in Table 5 yield no such negative associations. Larger proportions of congregations that scored above the 50th percentile on half a dozen of the ten congregations strengths in early 2001 than of those that did not grow. Congregations with scores above the 50th percentile on prioritization of children's and youth ministries, on community action/community service orientation, and/or on shared leadership practices disproportionately grew.

The starkest difference from the previous U.S. Congregational Life Survey research is that community action- and community service-oriented PC(USA) congregations disproportionately grew, while the community action-oriented congregations from the interfaith sample disproportionately did *not* grow.

Table 6 shows the results of the logistic regression analysis with all of the congregational strengths as independent variables. The only statistically significant relationships were between prioritization of children's and youth ministries in early 2001 and whether or not congregations grew between 2000 and 2005 and between shared leadership practices in early 2001 and whether or not congregations grew between 2000 and 2005.

Worshippers in congregations with shared leadership practices disproportionately see the pastor and congregation as well matched and believe that the pastor and lay leadership pay attention to worshippers' ideas and help worshippers develop their talents in service to the congregation. Worshippers in congregations with high scores on prioritizing children's and youth ministries have children less than 18 years old who live with them and attend worship with them, rank children's and youth ministries as key congregation priorities, and evaluate existing children's and youth ministries positively.

Table 7 shows the results of the logistic regression analysis with the other independent variables. The dominant variable from the cross-tabulations again appeared to be the lone variable (other than the two congregational strengths variables in the previous logistic regression analysis) whose values were associated with whether or not congregations grew. Congregations with large percentages of worshippers age 65 or older in their congregations in early 2001 disproportionately grew between 2000 and 2005.

Some specialists in logistic regression analysis suggest reducing, for exploratory analysis, the minimum level of statistical significance from .05 to .1.⁶ By this standard, the values of three other independent variables and whether or not congregations grew would be related. Congregations that experienced conflicts that split the congregation and/or drove away the pastor and/or other people disproportionately did *not* grow. Congregations in which more than 90% of worshippers saw a good match between the pastor and congregation disproportionately grew. And congregations located in suburban communities disproportionately did *not* grow. The mild association between suburban location and a lack of growth may signify that, once researchers have accounted for the impact of prioritization of children's and youth ministries, percentage of older adult worshippers, and shared leadership practices, the suburban advantage has turned into a disadvantage. It may also reflect a different, less subjective definition of suburban location. Other surveys have asked congregational leaders to classify the congregation's location in various categories, whereas we adapted U.S. Census Bureau categorization based on the congregation's address.

The final logistic regression analysis whose results Table 8 outlines pointed to two U.S. Congregational Life Survey congregational strengths as the best predictors of whether or not congregations grew. Shared leadership practices and prioritization of children's and

⁶ Scott Menard, *Applied Logistic Regression Analysis*, 2d ed. (Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage, 2001), 66.

youth ministries were again associated with congregations that grew. Backward elimination of independent variables, until only four independent variables remain, produced a third independent variable negatively associated with growth: percentage of older adult worshipers.

The proportional reduction in error for all three of these logistic regression analyses was relatively modest. The final analysis, which included most of the strengths and other independent variables, produced the largest proportional reduction in error. The logistic regression analyses also exhibit moderate predictive efficiency, with nearly four in five cases classified correctly.

Discussion

In general, our analysis of a range of possible growth factors, measured mainly in 2000 and early 2001, and how well they predicted whether or not sampled PC(USA) congregations grew between 2000 and 2005 highlighted the effects of three factors: percentage of worshipers who were older adults, prioritization of children's and youth ministries, and shared leadership practices. These findings are somewhat at odds with previous research. Why did our findings differ from others' findings? In particular, why did we find fewer factors (not congregational size, congregational involvement, intentional outreach to potential new members, contemporary worship style, theological conservatism, or worshiper affluence and schooling) making a statistically significant impact on whether or not congregations grew?⁷ And why did our analysis, on the whole, predict growth based on those two particular congregational strengths (shared leadership practices and prioritization of children's and youth ministries)?

First, this analysis used a different procedure than many other statistical analysis of congregational growth. Information about congregation was gathered in 2000 and early 2001 and then used to try to predict whether the congregation grew between 2000 and 2005, according to information supplied separately by congregational leaders. In this way, the analysis truly tried to predict whether congregations would grow based on information provided several years *before* growth was measured. This differentiates this study from others, in which congregational leaders were asked about net membership change in previous years. It should come as no surprise that an analysis of what kinds of congregations grow *subsequently* might produce somewhat different results than an analysis of what kinds of congregations have *already been growing*.

A second difference flows from the first difference. Previous research has relied on congregational leaders to provide, retrospectively, membership data going back five or more years. For construction of the dependent variable values, this analysis relied on

⁷ The impact of contemporary worship style—operationalized in this analysis as the use of drums or electric guitar in worship—is not easy to assess, since congregations that use drums or electric guitar were very disproportionately those *without* large percentages of older adult worshipers. Nevertheless, even without percentage of older adults included, logistic regression analysis did *not* show worship use of drums or electric guitar as helping account for whether or not congregations grew.

membership data that congregational leaders provide each year to denominational officials. These data, while not perfect, may nevertheless may be less subject to the vagaries of receding memories and shoddy record-keeping.

Third, this analysis is of a sampled PC(USA) congregations only. Although a previous study looked at fast-growing PC(USA) congregations, most studies have studied a wide array of congregations from different Christian denominations and non-Christian faiths. Perhaps factors that spur—or retard—growth among U.S. congregations *in general* (for example, community action/community service orientation retarding growth) do not do so among PC(USA) congregations *in particular*. From the vantage point of recent PC(USA) General Assemblies, PC(USA) congregations appear to be very diverse. From the point of view of congregational growth, however, PC(USA) congregations may not be that different from each other, compared with the general population of U.S. congregations. This lack of diversity among PC(USA) congregations may help account for the small number of factors that appeared in this analysis to spur growth.

Fourth, this analysis used definitions for some variables different from those used in some previous research. Mentioned above was the use of U.S. Census Bureau categorization to designate congregations as in suburban locations. This analysis also used worshipers' response to two detailed theology questions, instead of congregational leaders' general characterization of congregations' theology, to determine whether congregations were considered theologically conservative. Even if this definitional innovation produces more valid results, it may nevertheless help differentiate these results from those from previous studies.

Further research might include: (1) the incorporation of additional data on the communities around congregations; (2) additional time-series analysis with congregations in other denominations or all congregations; (3) the incorporation of measures of congregational vitality other than net numerical growth in membership; and (4) qualitative congregational case studies. No doubt larger forces not amenable to investigation by comparison among congregations within a single denomination, such as differential fertility, the changing racial and ethnic composition of the U.S. population, declining community involvement, and social conflict, also affect *denominational* growth and vitality. Researchers, Presbyterians, other mainline Protestants, and other people of faith ought to continue investigating factors affecting the growth and vitality of both congregations and denominations.

Table 1
Descriptive Statistics for Sampled PC(USA) Congregations:
Worshiper Characteristics

Percentage of Congregations with . . .

More Than 40% of Worshipers Age 65 or Older	55%
More Than 60% of Worshipers Women.....	69%
More Than Half of Worshipers with 4-Year College Degrees.....	34%
More Than 70% of Worshipers Married.....	47%
More Than 60% of Worshipers with Spouses or Partners also in Worship.....	25%
More Than 95% of Worshipers White.....	36%
More Than 3% of Worshipers Foreign-Born.....	34%
More Than Half of Worshipers in Households with Household Incomes of \$75,000 or More	37%
More Than Half of Worshipers Lived with Own Children Less Than Age 18	38%
More Than 2% of Worshipers First-Time Visitors.....	32%
More Than Half of Worshipers Who Had Attended for 10 Years or More.....	72%
More Than a Quarter of Worshipers Who Believed the Bible Is Literally the Word of God.....	41%
More Than Half of Worshipers Who Believed that All Religions Help People Find Ultimate Truth	56%
More Than 40% of Worshipers Who Had Attended Presbyterian Congregations Prior to Their Current Congregations	39%
More Than Half of Worshipers Who Gave 5% or More of Their Incomes to the Congregation.....	67%

Table 2
Descriptive Statistics for Sampled PC(USA) Congregations: Other Statistics

Percentage of Congregations . . .

Net Membership Growth:

With Net Membership Growth, 2000-2005	24%
With Net Membership Growth, 1995-2000	35%

Congregational Size in 2000:

With 100 or Fewer Members in 2000	32%
With Between 101 and 350 Members in 2000.....	49%
With Between 351 and 800 in 2000.....	15%
With 801 or More Members in 2000	4%

Year Organized:

Organized in 1900 or Earlier.....	62%
Organized Between 1901 and 1945	14%
Organized Between 1946 and 1975	17%
Organized in 1976 or Later	8%

Other Variables:

With a Woman Pastor	17%
With a Pastor Age 40 or Younger	12%
With New Member Integration Procedures	18%
With Worship Use of Drums or Electric Guitar	13%
With Worship Use of Visual Projection Equipment.....	9%
With a Conflict that Split the Congregation and/or Drove the Pastor and/or Other People Away Between 1996 and 2001 According to the Leader.....	32%
With More Than 90% of Worshipers Who Saw a Good Pastor-Congregation Match	46%
Located in the Sun Belt (in a Southern or Western State)	47%
Located in a Metropolitan Area	60%
Located in a Suburban Area.....	43%

Table 3
Percentage of Sampled Congregations Whose Worshipers Exhibited Various
Characteristics and That Experienced Net Numerical Growth in Membership
Between 2000 and 2005

	Percentage of Congregations That Grew
Age ***	
Congregations with More Than 40% of Worshipers Age 65 or Older	18%
Congregations with 40% or Less of Worshipers Age 65 or Older	32%
Gender	
Congregations with More Than 60% of Worshipers Women	22%
Congregations with 60% or Less of Worshipers Women.....	29%
Schooling	
Congregations with More Than Half of Worshipers with 4-Year College Degrees...	24%
Congregations with Half or Less of Worshipers with 4-Year College Degrees.....	21%
Marital Status ***	
Congregations with More Than 70% of Worshipers Married Except Separated	31%
Congregations with 70% or Less of Worshipers Married Except Separated.....	17%
Spouse or Partner in Worship	
Congregations with More Than 60% of Worshipers with Spouses or Partners Also There in Worship.....	28%
Congregations with 60% or Less of Worshipers with Spouses or Partners Also There in Worship.....	22%
Race-Ethnicity	
Congregations with More Than 95% of Worshipers White	26%
Congregations with 95% or Less of Worshipers White.....	23%
Nativity	
Congregations with More Than 3% of Worshipers Foreign-Born	20%
Congregations with 3% or Less of Worshipers Foreign-Born.....	26%
Household Income	
Congregations with More Than Half of Worshipers in Households with Household Incomes of \$75,000 or More	28%
Congregations with Half or Less of Worshipers in Households with Household Incomes of \$75,000 or More	22%

Children at Home

Congregations with More Than Half of Worshipers Who Lived in 2001 with Their Own Children Less Than Age 18.....	27%
Congregations with Half or Less of Worshipers Who Lived in 2001 with Their Own Children Less Than Age 18.....	22%

First-Time Visitors

Congregations with More Than 2% of Worshipers First-Time Visitors	26%
Congregations with 2% or Less of Worshipers First-Time Visitors.....	23%

Long-Time Attendees **

Congregations with More Than Half of Worshipers Who Had Attended for 10 Years or More	20%
Congregations with Half or Less of Worshipers Who Had Attended for 10 Years or More	34%

Biblical Literalism

Congregations with More Than a Quarter of Worshipers Who Believed the Bible Is Literally the Word of God.....	21%
Congregations with a Quarter or Less of Worshipers Who Believed the Bible Is Literally the Word of God.....	26%

Religious Universalism

Congregations with More Than Half of Worshipers Who Believed that All Religions Help People Find Ultimate Truth	24%
Congregations with Half or Less of Worshipers Who Believed that All Religions Help People Find Ultimate Truth	23%

Presbyterian Heritage

Congregations with More Than 40% of Worshipers Who Had Previously Attended Another Presbyterian Congregation or Congregations	27%
Congregations with 40% or Less of Worshipers Who Had Previously Attended Another Presbyterian Congregation or Congregations	22%

Tithing

Congregations with More Than Half of Worshipers Who Gave 5% or More of Their Incomes to the Congregation.....	23%
Congregations with Half or Less of Worshipers Who Gave 5% or More of Their Incomes to the Congregation.....	26%

* p < .05; ** p < .01; *** p < .001

Table 4
Percentage of Sampled Congregations That Have Exhibited Various Characteristics
and That Experienced Net Numerical Growth in Membership
Between 2000 and 2005

	Percentage of Congregations That Grew
Previous Membership Growth **	
Congregations with 1995-2000 Net Membership Growth.....	31%
Congregations with No 1995-2000 Net Membership Growth.....	20%
Congregational Size in 2000	
Congregations with 100 or Fewer Members.....	27%
Congregations with 101-350 Members.....	19%
Congregations with 351-800 Members.....	27%
Congregations with 801 or More Members.....	40%
Year Organized	
Congregations Organized in 1900 or Earlier.....	23%
Congregations Organized Between 1901 and 1945.....	32%
Congregations Organized Between 1946 and 1975.....	17%
Congregations Organized in 1976 or Later.....	23%
Gender of Pastor	
Congregations with a Woman Pastor.....	21%
Congregations with a Man Pastor.....	24%
Age of Pastor	
Congregations with a Pastor Age 40 or Younger.....	24%
Congregations with a Pastor Older Than Age 40.....	23%
Intentional Outreach to Potential New Members	
Congregations with New Member Integration Procedures.....	26%
Congregations with No New Member Integration Procedures.....	23%
Worship Music	
Congregations with Worship Use of Drums or Electric Guitar.....	27%
Congregations with No Worship Use of Drums or Electric Guitar.....	23%
Worship Technology	
Congregations with Worship Use of Visual Projection Equipment.....	26%
Congregations with No Worship Use of Visual Projection Equipment.....	24%

Conflict

Congregations with Conflict that Split the Congregation and/or Drove the Pastor and/or Other People Away Between 1996 and 2001 According to the Leader.....	19%
Congregations with No Conflict that Split the Congregation and/or Drove the Pastor and/or Other People Away Between 1996 and 2001 According to Leader.....	26%

Pastor-Congregation Match ***

Congregations with More than 90% of Worshipers Who Saw Good Pastor-Congregation Match	31%
Congregations with 90% or Less of Worshipers Who Saw Good Pastor-Congregation Match	18%

Region

Congregations Located in the Sun Belt (in a Southern or Western State)...	24%
Congregations Located in the Rust Belt (in a Northeastern or Midwestern State)	23%

Metropolitan Location

Congregations Located in a Metropolitan Area.....	23%
Congregations Not Located in a Metropolitan Area.....	25%

Suburban Location

Congregations Located in a Suburban Area	21%
Congregations Not Located in a Suburban Area	26%

* p < .05; ** p < .01; *** p < .001

Table 5
Percentage of Congregations That Have Achieved Various Congregational Strength
Scores and That Experienced Net Numerical Growth in Membership
Between 2000 and 2005

	Percentage of Congregations That Grew
Growing Spirituality	
Congregations that Scored Above the 50th Percentile on Growing Spirituality	22%
Congregations that Scored at the 50th Percentile or Below on Growing Spirituality.....	25%
Meaningful Worship *	
Congregations that Scored Above the 50th Percentile on Meaningful Worship	28%
Congregations that Scored at the 50th Percentile or Below on Meaningful Worship.....	20%
Participating in the Congregation	
Congregations that Scored Above the 50th Percentile in Participating on the Congregation.....	21%
Congregations that Scored at the 50th Percentile or Below on Participating in the Congregation.....	26%
Having a Sense of Belonging	
Congregations that Scored Above the 50th Percentile on Having a Sense of Belonging.....	26%
Congregations that Scored at the 50th Percentile or Below on Sense of Belonging.....	22%
Caring for Young People **	
Congregations that Scored Above the 50th Percentile on Caring for Young People.....	29%
Congregations that Scored at the 50th Percentile or Below on Caring for Young People.....	18%
Focusing on the Community **	
Congregations that Scored Above the 50th Percentile on Focusing on the Community	29%
Congregations that Scored at the 50th Percentile or Below on Focusing on the Community	19%
Sharing Faith	
Congregations that Scored Above the 50th Percentile on Sharing Faith.....	24%
Congregations that Scored at the 50th Percentile or Below on Sharing Faith.....	24%

Welcoming New Worshipers ***

Congregations that Scored Above the 50th Percentile on Welcoming New Worshipers.....	31%
Congregations that Scored at the 50th Percentile or Below on Welcoming New Worshipers.....	16%

Empowering Leadership ***

Congregations that Scored Above the 50th Percentile on Empowering Leadership.....	32%
Congregations that Scored at the 50th Percentile or Below on Empowering Leadership.....	16%

Looking to the Future *

Congregations that Scored Above the 50th Percentile on Looking to the Future ..	50%
Congregations that Scored at the 50th Percentile or Below on Looking to the Future	48%

* p < .05; ** p < .01; *** p < .001

Table 6
Results of Logistic Regression Analysis
with Congregational Strength Scores as Independent Variables and
Whether or Not the Congregation Experienced Net Numerical Growth in
Membership Between 2000 and 2005 as the Dependent Variable

Independent Variable	Exponentiated Coefficient	Statistical Significance
Growing Spirituality .....	.97	—
Meaningful Worship .....	.99	—
Participating in the Congregation .....	.99	—
Having a Sense of Belonging.....	.98	—
Caring for Young People	1.03	*
Focusing on the Community	1.03	—
Sharing Faith.....	1.03	—
Welcoming New Worshipers.....	1.02	—
Empowering Leadership	1.03	*
Looking to the Future.....	1.01	—
Nagelkerke R ² .....	.118	
Model Chi-square (df)	40.43 (10)	***
Percentage of Cases Correctly Classified	78%	

* p < .05; ** p < .01; *** p < .001

Table 7
Results of Logistic Regression Analysis with Other Variables
as Independent Variables and Whether or Not the Congregation
Experienced Net Numerical Growth in Membership Between 2000 and 2005
as the Dependent Variable

Independent Variable	Exponentiated Coefficient	Statistical Significance
Percentage of Worshipers Age 65 or Older .....	.97	***
Percentage of Worshipers in Households with Household Incomes of \$75,000 or More.....	1.01	—
Percentage of Worshipers Who Believed that All Religions Help People Find Ultimate Truth	1.01	—
1995-2000 Net Membership Change	1.01	—
Congregational Size in 2000 .....	.87	—
Year Organized	1.0	—
New Member Integration Procedures	1.46	—
Worship Use of Drums or Electric Guitar .....	.95	—
Conflict that Split the Congregation and/or Drove the Pastor and/or Other People Away Between 1996 and 2001 According to Leader.....	.65	—
Percentage of Worshipers Who Saw a Good Pastor-Congregation Match	1.01	—
Suburban Location .....	.67	—
Nagelkerke R ² .....	.098	
Model Chi-square (df)	33.879 (11)	***
Percentage of Cases Correctly Classified	78.8%	

* p < .05; ** p < .01; *** p < .001

Table 8
Results of Logistic Regression Analysis with Congregational Strength Scores and Other Variables as Independent Variables and Whether or Not the Congregation Experienced Net Numerical Growth in Membership Between 2000 and 2005 as the Dependent Variable

Independent Variable	Exponentiated Coefficient	Statistical Significance
Growing Spirituality .....	.99	—
Participating in the Congregation .....	.97	—
Caring for Young People	1.03	*
Focusing on the Community	1.03	—
Empowering Leadership	1.02	*
Percentage of Worshipers Age 65 or Older .....	.98	—
Percentage of Worshipers Who Believed that All Religions Help People Find Ultimate Truth	1.0	—
1995-2000 Net Membership Change	1.0	—
Congregational Size in 2000 .....	.75	—
Year Organized	1.0	—
Worship Use of Drums or Electric Guitar .....	.89	—
Conflict that Split the Congregation and/or Drove the Pastor and/or Other People Away Between 1996 and 2001 According to Leader .....	.74	—
Suburban Location .....	.67	—
Nagelkerke R ² .....	.138	
Model Chi-square (df)	47.842 (13)	***
Percentage of Cases Correctly Classified	78.2%	

* p < .05; ** p < .01; *** p < .001