

UNIVERSITY OF PENNSYLVANIA

C R R U C S

SCHOOL OF ARTS AND SCIENCES

BLACK CHURCH OUTREACH

COMPARING HOW BLACK AND OTHER CONGREGATIONS
SERVE THEIR NEEDY NEIGHBORS

RAM A. CNAAN

ASSOCIATE PROFESSOR OF SOCIAL WORK
ASSOCIATE DIRECTOR, CRRUCS
DIRECTOR, PROGRAM FOR THE STUDY OF
ORGANIZED RELIGION AND SOCIAL WORK
UNIVERSITY OF PENNSYLVANIA

AND

STEPHANIE C. BODDIE

RESEARCH DIRECTOR, PROGRAM FOR THE STUDY OF
ORGANIZED RELIGION AND SOCIAL WORK
UNIVERSITY OF PENNSYLVANIA

CRRUCS Report 2001-1

JOHN J. DIJULIO, JR., DIRECTOR, CRRUCS

Table of Contents

Executive Summary	1
Background	4
Congregational Characteristics	6
Perception of Social Problems	9
Congregational Services	10
Targeted Services Provided by Congregations	13
Congregational Beneficiaries and Volunteers	16
Congregational Collaborations	18
Congregations and Charitable Choice	18
Congregational Finances	19
Replacement Value of Congregational Programs	21
Appendix: A Note on Methods	26
 <u>Tables</u>	
1: Examples of Services Provided by Congregations in Philadelphia	11-12
2: Beneficiaries of Congregational Services and Programs	17
3: Replacement Value of Congregational Social/Community Programs	23

Executive Summary

In this study, we report findings from 1,044 congregations in Philadelphia. This sample is representative of an estimated population of 2,000 congregations. Black congregations comprised more than half (53.4%) of the sample.

The mean of active members per congregation in our sample was 343 individuals including children. This finding suggests that 47 percent of Philadelphia's population belongs to a congregation. Non-black congregations were significantly larger (437 members) compared to black congregations (244 members).

The average income of members of non-black congregations was significantly higher than that of members of black congregations. The lower income of members of black congregations is especially important because these congregations tend to rely more heavily on offerings and pledges as sources of revenue, compared to non-black congregations.

Approximately one third (38%) of the congregations in our sample reported financial difficulties; only a small percentage (10%) reported no financial problems. More non-black congregations (43.8%) reported financial struggles than did black congregations (31.7%).

Of the clergy in our sample, approximately half (49.3%) graduated from a theological seminary. Of these, more (59%) worked in non-black congregations than in black congregations (40.5%).

The most frequently mentioned social problem affecting the community was substance abuse (85.7%), closely followed by unemployment (79.5%), drug trafficking (79.3%), public education (79%), and poverty (78.8%).

Of the 1,044 congregations in our sample, 912 congregations (87%) reported at least one community service program. The average number of programs per congregation was 2.33. For black congregations, the mean was 2.40 programs per congregation; for non-black congregations, the mean was 2.25 programs per congregation.

Only 135 congregations (12.9%) reported joint worship or prayer services with other religious groups. More non-black congregations (20.2%) reported joint worship services than did black congregations (6.5%). With regard to the development/delivery of community service programs, 368 congregations (35.2%) collaborated with other faith-based organizations; 420 congregations (40.2%) collaborated with secular organizations.

Black congregations were significantly more likely to collaborate with other religious groups in social service provision than were non-black congregations (39.4% and 30.5%, respectively).

In service to at-risk youth, more black congregations offered Big Brothers/Big Sisters/Boys-to-Men programs than did non-black congregations (7.1% and 2.3%, respectively). Similarly, more black congregations were involved in mentoring/rites of passage programs than were non-black congregations (21.9% and 6.8%, respectively).

In health services, black congregations, compared to non-black congregations, offered significantly more health education programs (18.6% and 13.7%, respectively); substance abuse programs (16.3% and 11.6%, respectively); sex education programs (10.3% and 5.8%, respectively); and sickle-cell anemia education/support programs (5.6% and 1.2%, respectively). Non-black congregations, compared to black congregations, offered more regional health programs (12.9% and 7.8%, respectively) and hosted more AA groups (17.6% and 9.8%, respectively).

In child care service, black congregations, compared to non-black congregations, offered more safe corridor programs (4.0% and 1.7%, respectively) and summer camps (41.2% and 35.3%, respectively). Non-black congregations, compared to black congregations, provided more regional nursery schools (13.3% and 8.5%, respectively).

In education services, black congregations offered significantly more adult tutoring and computer training for youth; non-black congregations offered more classes for English as a Second Language.

With regard to affirmative action, significantly more black congregations (10.5%) were involved than were non-black congregations (6%). With regard to school choice, significantly more non-black congregations (14.5%) were involved than were black congregations (5.6%).

With regard to protests/boycotts in the year preceding the study, 40 congregations (3.8%) reported participation in protests; 23 congregations (2.2%) reported participation in boycotts. While no significant differences were found regarding boycotts, more non-black congregations were involved in protests (5%) than were black congregations (2.7%).

Black congregations (5.1%) were significantly more involved in business incubation initiatives than were non-black congregations (2.7%). Findings for involvement in investment clubs were similar: 4.2 percent for black congregations; 1.2 percent for non-black congregations.

Of the 1,044 congregations in our sample, only 77 (7.4%) were familiar with Charitable Choice. Only five congregations reported forming a committee to draft a grant or contract proposal. Nevertheless, 60.2 percent of the congregations indicated their willingness to accept public money. Of these congregations, more black congregations (65.5%) reported a willingness to accept public money than did non-black congregations (54.4%).

On average, the estimated replacement value of a congregation in Philadelphia is \$9,584.10 per month or \$115,009.20 per year. For all 2000 congregations in Philadelphia, the estimated annual replacement value would be \$230,018,400. Black and non-black congregations did not differ significantly with regard to replacement value.

Background

In this report, we summarize the results of a comprehensive in-depth survey of a citywide sample of 1,044 religious congregations in Philadelphia. During the past 20 months, we collected data on membership, history, governance, budget, future plans, and social and community services for each congregation in the sample.

As described in the Appendix, we used several methods to locate congregations. These ranged from consulting denominational lists to checking the Yellow Pages and city tax records. We also asked neighborhood people and walked the streets to find congregations that may not have appeared on any list. Based on our research, we estimate that there are currently some 2,000 local religious congregations in Philadelphia. Hence, this report summarizes what we know about half of the city's congregations. Is it appropriate then to "multiply each finding by two"? Not entirely, at least not yet. Our goal is to complete a citywide census of all Philadelphia congregations. Once we have collected and analyzed all the census data, we can then determine how representative the present sample is.

In March, 2000, we published our first preliminary report. Although some findings have changed, we nevertheless believe that the sample is highly representative, at least in terms of the key findings reported here.

According to the 1998 U.S. Bureau of Census data, approximately 1.46 million people live in Philadelphia. Based on these data and the estimate of 2,000 congregations in Philadelphia, we calculate that, on average, there is one local congregation for every 730 city residents. Based on the finding from The George H. Gallup Institute in Princeton, New Jersey, that 40 to 50 percent of all citizens report membership in a religious congregation, we can further assume that, in Philadelphia, the ratio would be 290 to 365 religiously-affiliated citizens per every one local congregation — an on-target estimate borne out by our finding that the average number of members per congregation who attend services at least weekly is 257. It should be noted that this number increased to 343 when we included all active congregational members, that is, people who attend services at least once a month.

The purpose of our research was to determine how many of the congregations in our sample went beyond service to their own members by providing services to non-members in their community who needed assistance.

In this report, we summarize our preliminary findings on:

- Scope/nature of congregations' social and community outreach to needy neighbors;
- Sources of support for congregations' community service;
- Who serves/benefits from congregations' social and community programs;
- Knowledge of government policies such as Charitable Choice;
- Extent of inter-faith, ecumenical, and religious/secular partnerships; and
- Estimates of the monetary "replacement value" of congregations' programs (that is, the cost that would be incurred by the government or other parts of the civil society sector were they to provide these services).

This is the first Center for Research on Religion and Urban Civil Society (CRRUCS) report that attempts to compare two groups of congregations, black congregations and non-black congregations. Congregations remain one of the most segregated institutions in the United States. Regrettably, this is also true in Philadelphia. We found that the city's congregations are segregated according to race and ethnicity. Of the 1,044 congregations in our sample, 930 (89.6%) reported that 75 percent or more of their members belong to one racial or ethnic group. The majority of congregations in this sample were black congregations (553; 53.4%) and white congregations (272; 27%). The sample also included 47 (4.6%) Asian-American congregations and 48 (4.6%) Hispanic congregations.

For purposes of this study, we defined a black congregation as one whose membership was at least 75 percent African American. Five hundred fifty-three congregations in the sample met this definition. We compared these congregations with all other 491 congregations in the sample, regardless of their specific ethnic membership. Our goal was to assist the African American Interfaith Ministries (AAIM) in understanding the collective strength of black congregations in Philadelphia.

AAIM, founded in 1989, is a non-profit organization whose mission is to provide services that strengthen the African-American church in Metro Philadelphia and empower congregations to meet the needs of the communities from which they were built. AAIM promotes change by enhancing the critical analysis of social trends, the development of helping skills, and the implementation of strategies for effective ministry by congregations and leaders, clergy, and lay persons. AAIM is a subsidiary of Black Clergy of Philadelphia and Vicinity. AAIM is composed of 400 member churches. AAIM is currently headed by the Rev. James McJunkin, Jr., D.Min.

Congregational Characteristics

Membership

Among the 1,044 congregations in this study, membership ranged from a low of 6 to a high of 13,000 members. On average, 243 people attended at least one worship service per week per congregation. The average number of active members per congregation was 343 individuals including children. This number suggests that 47 percent of Philadelphia's population is affiliated with a congregation. Non-black congregations were significantly larger (437 members) than were black congregations (244 members). Similarly, average weekly attendance per non-black congregation was 308 members, compared to 170 per black congregation.

Membership in congregations frequently fluctuates. During the period of our study, for example, some congregations lost so many members that they ceased to exist, while others were established to serve a huge influx of new members. Of 1,044 congregations, nearly half (45.4%) reported a rise in membership over the past three years. For the same period, a third (33.6%) reported stable membership, and a fifth (21%) reported a decline in membership. These findings are indicative of the strength of Philadelphia's congregations in that they are able to attract new members/maintain membership. Non-black congregations reported a significantly greater increase in membership (50.8%) than did black congregations (39.5%). Black congregations reported more declines in membership (27.1%) than did non-black congregations (15.6%).

In today's highly mobile and transient society, many people think nothing of driving past local neighborhood stores in order to shop at their favorite mall. The same can be said for congregations. A significant number of people today are choosing to commute to congregations outside their own neighborhood for worship services. We found that, on average, 44.5 percent of members lived within a ten-block radius of a congregation; 37.5 percent lived within city limits but beyond the ten-block radius; and 18 percent lived outside city limits. Just as some non-residents come to worship in the city, some residents go outside the city to worship. In black congregations, significantly more members lived within city limits (85%). Of these, only 40 percent lived within a ten-block radius of the congregation. The remainder (15%) lived outside the city. In non-black congregations, 49 percent lived within a ten-block radius; 30 percent lived within city limits; and 21 percent lived outside city limits. In other words, black congregations attract more members from within city limits; non-black congregations attract more members from around the congregation and from outside the city. One explanation may be that many non-black congregations are Roman Catholic churches. These churches traditionally draw members from the local geographic parish.

Income

Not surprisingly, the average income of members of non-black congregations is higher than that of members of black congregations. Among black congregations, the percentage of members with an annual income of less than \$25,000 was 53.1 percent; among non-black congregations, 42.2 percent. Among non-black congregations, the percentage of members with an annual income of more than \$50,000 was 20.7 percent; among black congregations, 10.5 percent.

Years at Current Location

The average date of establishment for a Philadelphia congregation is circa 1935. Dates of establishment, however, range from as early as 1667 to as recently as 2000. Black congregations, on average, were established in the 1950s; non-black congregations in the 1920s. On average, a congregation in Philadelphia has been at its present location for 50 years. Length of stay, however, ranges from a few weeks to 323 years for congregations in the sample. Black congregations, on average, have been at the same location for 34 years; non-black congregations for 66 years. Only 176 congregations (16.6%) reported plans to relocate in the foreseeable future with no significant difference between the studied groups. This finding indicates that congregations are stable and enduring community organizations. Of the 1,044 congregations, 875 (84.5%) own their properties, again, with no significant differences between the two groups.

Building Facilities

Congregations use a wide range of buildings, many of which are in need of repair. Types of needed repair most frequently mentioned by congregations were: roofing (174; 16.7%); leaks (126; 12.1%), building stress (60; 5.7%); electrical systems (50; 4.8%); heating/cooling systems (75; 7.2%); building code compliance (35; 3.4%); and accessibility for people with disabilities (541; 51.8%). Black congregations reported more roofing problems than did non-black congregations (19.3% and 13.6%, respectively). Non-black congregations reported more problems with accessibility for people with disabilities than did black congregations (47% and 57.2%, respectively).

Annual Budget

Congregations in this study identified their annual budget within the following categories: 1) under \$50,000; 2) \$50,000-100,000; 3) \$100,001-200,000; 4) \$200,001-500,000; 5) \$500,001- 1,000,000; and 6) over \$1,000,000. Budgets of less than \$50,000 were reported by 32 percent of the congregations (37.1% of black congregations compared to 26.7% of non-black congregations). Budgets between \$50,000 and \$100,000

were reported by 24.4 percent of the congregations (23% of black congregations compared to 26.3% of non-black congregations). Additionally, 22 percent reported budgets between \$100,001 and \$200,000; 13 percent reported budgets between \$200,001 and \$500,000; 5.9 percent (4.7% of black congregations compared to 7.3% of non-black congregations) reported budgets between \$500,001 and \$1,000,000; and 2.3 percent (1.7% of black congregations compared to 3% of non-black congregations) reported budgets of more than one million dollars per year. It should be noted that these budget figures do not include building funds or school budgets.

Financial Status

For the year prior to the study, 18 percent of the congregations reported a budget surplus; 28 percent reported a budget deficit; and 54 percent reported a balanced budget with no no significant differences between the two studied groups. Congregations also characterized their financial status as strong (9.1%), sound (52.9%), or struggling (38%). Fewer black congregations (31.7%) perceived themselves to be financially struggling than did non-black congregations (43.8%). One explanation may be that many non-black congregations tended to compare themselves to their counterparts in the affluent suburbs while black clergy tended to compare themselves to other local black congregations.

Clergy

As expected, we found clergy to be the chief executive officers of congregations and key initiators of much of the service activity launched by congregations. Of the 1,044 congregations, 671 (64.3%) had at least one paid, full-time member of the clergy (67.2% of non-black congregations compared to 61.3% of black congregations). Seventy congregations (6.7%) reported two full-time paid clergy; and 58 congregations (5.6%) reported 3-9 full-time paid clergy. Two hundred eleven congregations (23.8%) reported only part-time paid clergy. The remaining congregations either had unpaid clergy employed elsewhere or were in search of new clergy. The major difference between the two studied groups is that 18.9 percent of non-black congregations have two or more full-time paid clergy as compared with only 5.8 percent of black congregations.

Only half the clergy in our sample (49.3%) graduated from a theological seminary. More clergy in non-black congregations (59%) graduated from a theological seminary than did clergy in black congregations (40.5%).

Political/Theological Views

Philadelphia congregations are politically and theologically diverse. With regard to political views, 33 percent of the congregations characterized the majority of their members as conservatives; 50.1 percent as moderates; and 16.9 percent as liberals. More non-black congregations (43.1%) reported a politically conservative majority than did black congregations (24.4%).

With regard to theological beliefs, 15.5 percent of the congregations characterized the majority of their members as fundamentalist, 39.3 percent as conservative, 35.3 percent as moderate, and 10 percent as liberal. Black congregations reported that the majority of members were at the two extreme ends of the spectrum, either most members were fundamentalists or they were liberal. Conversely, there were more non-black congregations with a majority of members who were theologically moderate or conservative. More black congregations (19.3%) reported a fundamentalist majority than did non-black congregations (11.3%). Similarly, more black congregations (11.4%) reported a theologically liberal majority than did non-black congregations (8.3%). Non-black congregations tended to be more moderate and conservative in their theological beliefs (36.1% and 44.2%, respectively) than were black congregations (34% and 35.3%, respectively).

Perception of Social Problems

We asked respondents to assess the extent to which any of 22 listed social problems existed within a 10-block radius of their congregation. More than half of the congregations reported all 22 problems as present in their community.

The most frequently mentioned social problem affecting the community was substance abuse (85.7%) closely followed by drug trafficking (79.3%). Other top ranked social problems included unemployment (79.5%), quality of public education (79%) and poverty (78.8%) indicating their inter-relatedness. Crime in general was also rated high (78.4%) followed by teen-pregnancy (75.6%), illiteracy (72%), and AIDS/HIV (70.1%). More than half of the respondents cited the following as social problems: homelessness, prostitution, lack of affordable housing, lack of affordable child care, lack of affordable health care, family violence, youth incarceration, limited employment opportunities, traffic accidents, pollution, and lack of recreation opportunities. The least pressing problem was limited transportation (33.6%) followed by gang violence (45.7%).

Regarding each social issue, significantly more black congregations assessed it to be a serious social problem around the congregation. With regard to the list of 22 such social issues, the difference between the two studied groups was more than ten percentage points and in each case more black churches assessed the issue to be a social problem. One explanation may be that more black congregations are housed in

neighborhoods where rates of unemployment and poverty are high and that black congregations are the most visible pro-social institution in their community.

Congregational Services

Of the 1,044 congregations, 912 (87%) reported at least one social program that served the community. The average number of community-serving programs per congregation was 2.33. Overall, congregations reported a sum total of 2,427 programs (often called “social ministries”). Of these, 54.6 percent were carried out by black congregations; 45.4 percent by non-black congregations. These percentages closely parallel the percentages of the two groups in our sample (black congregations, 53%; non-black congregations, 47%).

One caveat should be noted. The average of 2.33 programs per congregation must be considered an undercount because we did not collect data on more than five programs per congregation. The reason was that we did not wish to overtax the patience of respondents kind enough to submit to what was already a complex and time-consuming survey.

Our check-list of 215 possible congregation services included only those programs — whether administered formally by the congregation, on its property, or with help from the congregation — that serve children and youth, the elderly, the homeless, and needy neighbors within the community. In Table 1 (see below), we report on the types of services being provided by Philadelphia’s congregations. We have included only those programs that were carried out by at least 14 percent of the congregations. One methodological note is that the sign N.S. denotes no statistically significant difference between black and non-black congregations. Alternatively, the number of asterisks indicates the strength of the difference between the two groups.

Findings

As seen in Table 1, the key findings are: a) non-black congregations are significantly more involved in blood drives, job counseling, scout troops, inter-faith collaboration, recreational programs for seniors, and international relief; and b) black congregations are significantly more involved in mentoring/rites of passage, programs for gang members, computer training, prison ministry, and clothing closets.

The programs most frequently offered by more than a third of the congregations in each group were: food pantries, summer day camps, recreational programs for children, clothing closets, and recreational programs for teens.

Table 1
Examples of Services Provided by Congregations in Philadelphia

Percentage of Congregations Providing Service

Type of Service	Total	Black	Non-black
Drug and alcohol prevention	14.0% *	16.3%	11.6%
Neighborhood cleanup	14.1% *	16.1%	11.4%
Blood drives	14.3% ***	7.8%	21.2%
Job counseling and placement	14.4% ***	9.8%	19.3%
Street outreach to the homeless	14.4% **	17.0%	11.4%
Computer training (for youth)	14.7% **	17.4%	11.0%
Mentoring/Rites of Passage	15.0% ***	21.9%	6.8%
Health screening	15.5% (N.S.)	17.0%	13.5%
Crime watch	15.6% *	14.4%	17.6%
Parenting skills	16.1% (N.S.)	14.6%	17.2%
Health education	16.6% *	18.6%	13.7%
Scout troops	17.0% ***	12.3%	21.6%
Inter-faith collaboration	17.0% ***	12.5%	21.6%
Pre-marriage counseling	17.2% *	19.3%	14.5%
Daycare (preschool)	17.5% (N.S.)	16.6%	18.3%
Homeless shelter	18.8% *	16.1%	21.2%
Marriage encounters (retreats)	17.8% (N.S.)	17.7%	17.4%
Recreational programs for seniors	18.1% ***	13.4%	22.8%
Community bazaars/fairs	19.4% (N.S.)	17.9%	20.5%
Prison ministry	20.2% **	22.3%	16.0%
Choral groups	20.3% (N.S.)	21.2%	19.1%
After school care	20.3% (N.S.)	18.8%	21.0%

Programs for gang members	20.8% ***	26.4%	14.1%
Neighborhood associations	20.9% (N.S.)	21.3%	20.3%
Visitation/buddy program	21.4% (N.S.)	21.4%	21.4%
International relief	22.5% ***	13.2%	32.4%
Educational tutoring	23.2% (N.S.)	23.5%	22.4%
Soup kitchens	24.0% (N.S.)	24.4%	23.4%
Music performances	25.0% (N.S.)	24.4%	25.1%
Summer programs for teens	27.3% (N.S.)	28.6%	25.7%
Recreational programs for teens	35.2% (N.S.)	36.3%	33.4%
Clothing closets	33.5% **	36.5%	29.7%
Recreational program for children	35.7% (N.S.)	35.1%	35.9%
Summer day camp	38.8% *	41.2%	35.3%
Food pantries	46.6% (N.S.)	45.4%	47.9%

N.S. - not statistically significant

* $p < .05$
** $p < .01$
*** $p < .001$

Targeted Services Provided by Congregations

Given the particular foci of this report, we have highlighted data on congregational services/programs that address issues important to the work and mission of AAIM. These issues include: work with youth offenders, health care, child care, education, advocacy, and community economic development.

Work with Youth Offenders

In Philadelphia, as we learned from the work done in Littleton, Dorchester, and other major American cities, solving the problem of youth offenders is high on the public agenda. One catalyst to the increase in youth offenders is that many Philadelphia businesses have relocated outside the city and left in their wake a large black population with few job opportunities, limited access to work and diminished hope for upward mobility. Congregations are among the few pro-social forces that are working directly with Philadelphia's young people. Many congregations and their members not only serve as role models but also mentor young people in an effort to help them become responsible and productive adults.

Congregational services for at-risk youth include programs for gang members (20.8%); programs for prisoners' families (10.3%); police-clergy programs (10.2%); mentoring/Rites of Passage (15%); programs for runaways (2.4%); Big Brothers-Big Sisters/Boys-to-Men (4.8%); and work with youth offenders (3.8%). As low as this last percentage may seem, it nevertheless means that there are 30 congregations in Philadelphia actively working with youth offenders.

Of the congregations in our sample, significantly more black congregations, compared to non-black congregations, were involved with Big Brothers-Big Sisters/Boys-to-Men programs (7.1% and 2.3%, respectively); mentoring/rites of passage (21.9% and 6.8%, respectively); and police-clergy collaborations (14.5% and 5.2%, respectively). There were no significant differences between the groups regarding programs for prisoners' families, runaways, and youth offenders.

Health Care

The United States is the only advanced democracy in which many people have no health insurance and public health is often not a priority. The city's congregations are helping meet community health care needs by providing services and serving as a link between health providers/educators and the community. Congregations offer services that include regional health programs (10.3%), health screening (15.5%), health education (16.6%), drug/alcohol programs (14%), HIV/AIDS programs(11.4%), AA programs

(13.7%), sex education (8.5%), immunization (5.5%), and sickle-cell anemia education/support groups (3.6%).

Of the congregations in our sample, significantly more black congregations, compared to non-black congregations, were involved in health education (18.6% and 13.7%, respectively) and drug/alcohol programs (16.3% and 11.6%, respectively). More black congregations, compared to non-black congregations, were involved in sex education (10.3% and 5.8%, respectively) and sickle-cell anemia education/support groups (5.6% and 1.2%, respectively). Significantly more non-black congregations, compared to black congregations, were involved in regional health problems (12.9% and 7.8%, respectively) and AA programs (17.6% and 9.8%, respectively). There were no significant differences between black and non-black congregations regarding health screening, HIV/AIDS programs, and immunization.

Child Care

It is said that it takes a village to raise a child, especially today. As the number of working parents, divorces, and single working mothers grows, so does the need for reliable and dependable child care. In many ways, today's congregations have taken on the responsibility of yesterday's village by developing programs to care for children and support families. In Philadelphia, child care programs provided by congregations include daycare (17.5%); latch key programs (12.9%); nursery schools (10.8%); sites for Head Start programs (2.5%); safe corridor programs (2.9%); summer day camps (38.8%); and summer programs for teens (27.3%).

Significantly more black congregations, compared to non-black congregations, were involved in safe corridor programs (4.0% and 1.7%, respectively) and summer camps (41.2% and 35.3%, respectively).

Significantly more non-black congregations (13.3%) were involved in regional nursery schools than were black congregations (8.5%). There were no significant differences between the groups regarding day care programs, Head Start programs, latch key programs, and summer programs for teens.

Education

The failure of public education to serve the city's most vulnerable populations has led many congregations to initiate educational programs for underserved children and adults. To meet children's educational needs, 78 congregations (7.5%) operate schools on their property; 94 congregations (9%) provide tutoring; and 154 congregations (14.7%) conduct computer training classes.

To meet adults' educational needs, 129 congregations (12.4%) provide adult literacy programs; 27 congregations (12.2%) offer GED (high school equivalency) educational programs; 144 congregations (13.8%), computer training; 110 congregations (10.5%), tutoring; and 72 congregations (6%), classes for English as a Second Language.

Significantly more black congregations, compared to non-black congregations, provide tutoring for adults (12.7% and 7.9%, respectively) and computer training for youth (17.4% and 11%, respectively).

Significantly more non-black congregations, compared to black congregations, offer classes for English as a Second Language (9.1% and 4.5%, respectively) and host/run schools (12% and 3.1%, respectively). The latter finding may be due, in part, to the parochial school system operated by the Roman Catholic archdiocese and to the connections between the Friends meeting houses and the Friends schools.

There were no significant differences between the groups regarding tutoring for children, adult literacy programs, GED (high school equivalency) educational programs, and computer training for adults.

Advocacy

Congregations are islands in the sea of the city. Here, residents and fellow parishioners come together as a group to worship, and also attempt to change the world around them. The congregation is also a social and political entity that can influence public policy. The nation's congregations have an impressive history of social action and social justice culminating in the Civil Rights movement.

Philadelphia congregations are most often involved in the following advocacy initiatives: voter registration (15.8%); social justice (14.8%); poverty/welfare rights advocacy (13.4%); civil rights (11.8%); school choice (10.1%); affirmative action (8.4%); and organizing against drug trafficking (8%).

Significantly more black congregations (10.5%) were involved in affirmative action than were non-black congregations (6%). Significantly more non-black congregations (14.5%) were involved in school choice than were black congregations (5.6%). There were no significant differences between the groups regarding organizing against drug trafficking, poverty/welfare rights advocacy, civil rights, social justice, and voter registration.

Forty congregations (3.8%) reported participating in active protest in the year preceding the study and 23 congregations (2.2%) in boycotts. While no significant

differences were found for boycotts, more non-black congregations were involved in protests (5%) than were black congregations (2.7%). Some congregations involved in protests did so in response to calls by groups like Philadelphia Interfaith Action (PIA) regarding the sinking houses in the city's Logan section.

Community Economic Development

In the United States, people do not rely on the government to tell them what to do. Instead, they make their own decisions about what needs to be done. For example, when neighborhoods fall into decline, residents cannot expect public authorities to salvage them. Rebuilding a distressed neighborhood requires local initiatives that will attract businesses and develop quality housing projects. In these efforts, congregations are key players. Philadelphia's congregations, for example, are involved in job training (11.1%); recruitment of new businesses (10.2%); housing rehabilitation (9.1%); new building initiatives (6.6%); business incubation (3.9%); credit unions (3.6%); investment clubs (2.8%); and commercial ventures (2.5%).

Significantly more black congregations, compared to non-black congregations, were involved in business incubation (5.1% and 2.7%, respectively) and investment clubs (4.2% and 1.2%, respectively).

There were no significant differences between the groups regarding credit unions, job training, recruitment of new business, commercial ventures, new building initiatives, and housing rehabilitation.

Congregational Beneficiaries and Volunteers

It is widely assumed that urban congregations develop programs mainly to assist their own members, and limit their programs to those belonging to their church, synagogue, mosque, or community of faith. Wrong! The data from the 1,044 congregations we surveyed indicate that, on average, each congregation-sponsored program serves 43 members of the congregation as well as 62 non-member community residents. No significant differences were found between black and non-black congregations in this respect.

Likewise, it is often assumed that the staff of "congregation programs" consists solely of "congregation people." Wrong again! On average, the social service delivery staff per congregation consists of 15 members (paid staff and volunteers) and 9 volunteers who are non-members. This staffing mix of members and non-members encourages a civic culture that increases citizen involvement and enhances the quality of life in most communities. Although black and non-black congregations do not differ in the number of

non-member volunteers, black congregations have an average of 12 members on staff, whereas non-black congregations have 18 members.

To determine who benefits from congregation programs, we collected data on ten groups of potential beneficiaries. We also took into consideration the fact that a program could serve more than one group, as in the case of a program for young children that also served their older siblings or parents. As Table 2 (see below) indicates, the major beneficiaries of congregational services and programs are needy children and youth.

Table 2
Beneficiaries of Congregational Services and Programs

Beneficiaries	Percent of programs	Percent of Black	Percent of Non-black
Children	49.4% (N.S.)	49.1%	49.7%
Youth	43.8% *	45.6%	41.6%
Families	41.7% ***	44.7%	38.0%
People with low incomes/ poor	37.7% ***	42.9%	31.4%
Elderly	26.3% (N.S.)	27.3%	25.1%
People with disabilities	16.5% (N.S.)	17.3%	15.5%
People with addictions	17.1% ***	20.8%	12.6%
Community residents at large	48.4% ***	55.4%	39.9%

N.S. - not statistically significant

* $p < .05$

** $p < .01$

*** $p < .011$

As seen in Table 2, black congregations reported higher rates of service to each group of beneficiaries than did non-black congregations. It is possible that black congregations provide broader programs that include more than one target population, whereas non-black congregations provide specific programs that are limited to those who meet the program criteria.

Congregational Collaborations

Many congregations collaborate with other congregations, government agencies, or community organizations to provide social and community services. These collaborations often include the sharing of space, financial resources, staff, and supplies. Yet, how many congregations, particularly black congregations, collaborate with other organizations in the provision of social services?

Congregations are more inclined to “pray alone” than deliver social services alone, and they collaborate more with secular organizations than with religious organizations. For example, only 135 congregations (12.9%) reported joint worship or prayer services with other faith-based organizations, usually around major holidays. Yet almost three times that number — 368 congregations (35.2%) — reported collaborating with other faith-based organizations in the development/delivery of community service programs. And, somewhat surprisingly, even more — 420 congregations (40.2%) — reported collaborating with secular organizations in social service provision.

Many more non-black congregations (20.2%) reported joint worship with other religious groups than did black congregations (6.5%). Generally, black congregations tend to “pray alone” and adhere to their own liturgical heritage. Although more black congregations (42.8%) reported collaborations with secular organizations in social services provision than did non-black congregations (38%), the difference was not significant. However, significantly more black congregations (39.4%) collaborated with other religious organizations in social service provision than did non-black congregations (30.5%).

Congregations and Charitable Choice

Charitable Choice — Section 104 of the Personal Responsibility and Work Opportunity Reconciliation Act of 1996, better known as the federal “welfare reform” law — removed the barriers that prohibited congregations without a separate 501(c)(3) organization to contract with the government to provide social services. While the future of Charitable Choice is uncertain, due to a legal challenge filed by the American Jewish Congress in Texas on July 24, 2000, it has been a most important program policy for congregations to know and utilize.

Of the 1,044 congregations, 77 (7.4%) reported knowledge of Charitable Choice. Of these, 23 congregations (2.2%) reported considering applying for grants under its terms. Only five, however, reported having formed a committee to draft a grant or contract proposal. The only significant difference in this area is that more black congregations (3.1%) formed committees to study the issue than did non-black congregations (1.2%). (To our knowledge, as of September, 2000, the only congregation in Philadelphia, if not the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania, to apply for and receive government funding under the Charitable Choice provision was Cookman United Methodist in North Philadelphia. This congregation provides services for welfare-to-work transition.)

We explained Charitable Choice to respondents not familiar with the policy, and then asked whether their congregation would consider applying for government funds under its provisions. Six hundred twenty-nine congregations (60.2%) answered in the affirmative, indicating they viewed collaboration with public authority as an option. Significantly more black congregations (65.5%) answered positively than did non-black congregations (54.4%).

Among those who reported negatively, some gave theological reasons such as “I will not be able to speak about the Bible.” Others cited either negative experiences with government agencies or the bureaucratic demands that collaboration with the public sector would require.

Congregational Finances

On average, congregations derive approximately half (47%) of their income from offerings and a third (30%) from pledges or dues. Black congregations, compared to non-black congregations, relied more heavily on offerings (49% and 44%, respectively) and pledges (34% and 24%, respectively). The challenge for black congregations is to identify other sources of income so that they decrease their reliance on members’ contributions. On average, congregations derive approximately 12 percent of their income from sources such as special gifts, endowments, and thrift shops. As expected non-black congregations are more active in this area.

Of the 1,044 congregations, 101 congregations (9.7%) applied for funding to government offices such as the Board of Education, the Federal Emergency Management Agency, the Philadelphia Mayor’s Office, and the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania. The funds requested were for after-school programs, sports activities, summer camps, daycare centers, emergency food banks, and other services. Of the 101 congregations applying, 62 (62%) received grants ranging from \$100 to \$80,000. With regards to applying for

government funds, there were no significant differences between black and non-black congregations.

One hundred and seventy-seven (17.7%) applied for financial support to private foundations such as the Connelly Foundation, the Historical Society, the Pew Charitable Trusts, the Paul Newman Foundation, the William Penn Foundation, and Women's Way. The funds requested were for ESL (English as a Second Language) programs, hospital ministry, job training, and other services. Several congregations sought funds for building maintenance and repairs. Of the 177 congregations, 127 congregations (72%) received grants ranging from \$500 to \$150,000. With regards to applying for private foundation funds, there were no significant differences between black and non-black congregations.

Sixty-eight congregations (6.5%) applied for funding from corporations such as Bell Atlantic, Coca Cola, Core States, Franklin Mills Mall, and Prudential Insurance. The funds requested were for summer camps, tutorial programs, daycare centers, and other services. Several congregations sought funds for building maintenance and repair and equipment purchases. Of the 68 congregations, 50 (74%) received grants ranging from \$400 to \$200,000. With regards to applying for corporation funds, there were no significant differences between black and non-black congregations.

One hundred four (10.4%) applied for denominational support. The funds requested were for service support, building maintenance and repair, and clerical salaries. Of the 104 congregations, 87 (84%) received sums ranging from \$500 to \$400,000. Significantly more non-black congregations (13.6%) requested denominational help than did black congregations (6.7%). This finding may reflect the high rate of independent black congregations. There were no other significant differences between black and non-black congregations.

Congregations also receive income from approximately a quarter (24.6%) of their programs. Most of these programs are educational and include daycare centers, schools, art classes, and summer day camps for which the congregation charges a participation fee. (Fees for heavily subsidized programs are often minimal.)

Replacement Value of Congregational Programs

The findings in this report clearly show that congregations are actively engaged in service to their communities. Moreover, the data provide convincing evidence of the major role played by black congregations in caring for the needs of their neighbors: a role that is vital to the social fabric of Philadelphia. One question remains: “What is the actual financial value of their services?” In other words, how much would it cost to replace all the social and community services provided by community-serving ministries in Philadelphia and especially those of the black congregations?

The true measure of the financial value of services provided by local religious congregations in Philadelphia and other big cities is their *replacement value*. By replacement value, we do not mean solely the dollar cost incurred by congregations in running their programs. Replacement value includes how much it would cost others to provide the same level of service when they have neither a congregational property nor member volunteers at their disposal. The congregational space in which programs are held has financial value as do the work hours of clergy, members, and volunteers who provide the programs. Replacement value, therefore, includes both the direct and indirect costs to the congregation in providing its community-serving programs.

Associated Costs of Congregational Programs

Our analysis of replacement value takes into account seven costs associated with social programs provided by local congregations: 1) financial support by the congregation; 2) in-kind support (such as transportation, food, clothing, printing, telephone, and postage); 3) utilities cost (such as heating, cooling, electricity, and cleaning) for programs held on the congregation’s property; 4) estimated cost of renting equivalent space from a commercial vendor for programs held on the congregation’s property; 5) number of clergy hours; 6) number of staff hours (of program directors, secretaries, and other congregation employees); and 7) number of volunteer hours.

Assessment of Program Costs

For each program, we determined its estimated cost per month. When respondents were unable to provide an assessment of program costs, we assigned the value of zero cost. To determine the value of the time spent in providing these programs, we multiplied the number of clergy hours by \$20 and the number of staff hours by \$10. To determine the value of volunteer hours, we used the standard of \$11.58 per hour established by the Independent Sector. As previously noted, respondents were asked to report a maximum of five programs; hence, congregations with more than five programs are not fully

represented in this report. In other words, our assessment of replacement value should be regarded as a very conservative estimate.

Finally, we aggregated all program income to the congregation, both cash and in-kind, and deducted the total from the total estimated cost to obtain the total replacement value of congregation social services and programs.

As summarized in Table 3 below, we estimate that, on average, the cash support of congregations for their social ministry represents only 15 percent of the replacement value of these programs, whereas staff/volunteer hours represent 54.8 percent of the replacement value. (The wear and tear on congregation buildings should also be noted, for congregations are rarely compensated for opening their doors to multiple “non-congregation” community services and programs.)

To determine the average replacement value of the social services provided by a congregation, we multiplied the average cost per program (see Table 3) by 2.33 (the average number of programs per congregation). Because black congregations, on average, reported more programs (2.40) than did non-black congregations (2.25), we used these numbers as multipliers when determining the average cost per program and the average replacement cost for black and non-black congregations, respectively.

Table 3
Replacement Value of Congregational Social/Community Programs (N=2,439)

Source	% of programs reporting cost	Average cost per program	Average cost per congregation
Financial support by the congregation	Total: 54.6% Black: 56.6% Non-B: 52.0%	Total: \$620.21 Black: \$558.92 Non-B: \$700.07	Total: \$1,445.09 Black: \$1,341.41 Non-B: \$1,575.16
Value of in-kind support	Total: 57.9% Black: 62.4% Non-B: 52.4%	Total: \$227.83 Black: \$255.00 Non-B: \$196.33	Total: \$530.84 Black: \$612.00 Non-B: \$441.74
Value of utilities for programs	Total: 59.7% Black: 64.5% Non-B: 53.7%	Total: \$272.66 Black: \$268.36 Non-B: \$276.74	Total: \$635.30 Black: \$644.06 Non-B: \$622.67
Estimated value of program space	Total: 68.8% Black: 71.7% Non-B: 65.5%	Total: \$853.64 Black: \$768.45 Non-B: \$959.52	Total: \$1,988.98 Black: \$1,844.28 Non-B: \$2,158.92
Number of clergy hours (@ \$20/hr)	Total: 59.8% Black: 58.6% Non-B: 61.3%	Total: \$307.40 Black: \$315.60 Non-B: \$300.20	Total: \$716.24 Black: \$757.44 Non-B: \$675.45
Number of staff hours (@\$10/hr)	Total: 31.0% Black: 23.5% Non-B: 40.3%	Total: \$463.81 Black: \$412.39 Non-B: \$526.14	Total: \$1,080.68 Black: \$989.74 Non-B: \$1,183.81
Number of volunteer hours (@ \$11.58/hr)	Total: 78.6% Black: 78.6% Non-B: 78.5%	Total: \$1,485.25 Black: \$1,463.71 Non-B: \$1,519.64	Total: \$3,460.63 Black: \$3,512.90 Non-B: \$3,419.19
Total		Total: \$4,230.80 Black: \$4,042.43 Non-B: \$4,478.64	Total: \$9,857.76 Black: \$9,701.83 Non-B: \$10,076.94
Income to the congregation	Total: 9.8% Black: 9.9% Non-B: 9.7%	Total: \$117.45 Black: \$92.89 Non-B: \$147.56	Total: \$273.66 Black: \$222.94 Non-B: \$332.01
Net replacement value		Total: \$4,113.35 Black: \$3,949.54 Non-B: \$4,331.08	Total: \$9,584.10 Black: \$9,478.89 Non-B: \$9,744.93

Findings

The average replacement value of a Philadelphia congregation's community and social programs is estimated at \$9,584.10 per month. There were no significant differences between black and non-black congregations in terms of replacement value. However, Table 3 shows that non-black congregations contribute more in cash, value of space, and staff time, whereas black congregations contribute more in-kind support and clergy hours. In other words, black congregations that often represent less affluent communities compensate for their limited financial resources with in-kind and clergy support.

Based on the average replacement value of \$9,584.10 per program per month, we obtained an annual replacement value of \$115,009.20 per program per year. Given that our research to date indicates that there are some 2,000 congregations in Philadelphia, and assuming (as we do) that our sample of 1044 congregations is highly representative of the city's congregations, we estimate that the replacement value of the community-serving programs of all Philadelphia congregations is \$230,018,400 per year.

Significance

Arguably, the true replacement value of the city's community-serving ministries is more than \$230 million annually. There are four reasons why we believe this to be so. First, the programs per congregation were limited to five, and value of space, personnel, utilities, etc. were measured conservatively. Second, informal services performed by congregations such as one-time rent assistance or ad-hoc counseling, were not factored into the estimate of congregations' replacement value. Third, clergy volunteer hours spent with other community-serving organizations were not counted. Many clergy who are paid at full salary by a congregation, volunteer in hospitals, schools, police departments, community groups, and sit on civic boards, all at the expense of the congregation. Finally, according to statistical "faith factor" studies by our Penn colleague, Byron Johnson, and others, urban church-going and community-serving ministries have been linked to lower rates of young male unemployment, violence, substance abuse, and other problems. A similar finding is reported for those who live in neighborhoods with a high concentration of community-serving ministries, even though they neither participate in nor receive any services from them.

Even as we complete our census of congregations, systematic studies of the "secondary benefits" of how community-serving ministries reach needy neighbors are needed. Further empirical research into the extent and efficacy of congregations' social and community involvement will be necessary so that we may accurately determine the true replacement value of this hitherto unheralded service sector of civil society and how

best we might support and strengthen the efforts of congregations on behalf of the urban poor and for the common good.

Appendix

A Note on Methods

Because this study deals with the community-serving urban ministries of diverse religious organizations, the term *congregation*, as used here, includes all organized faith-based groups, whether church, synagogue, mosque, ashram, or other. The popular definition of congregation is limited to the notion of worship, with emphasis on the place of worship. However, the role of congregations in today's society is highly complex. Congregations vary by size, structure, denomination, political orientation, governance, theology, doctrine, and worship practices.

Our working definition of *congregation* is any organized religious group that meets the following seven criteria:

1. A cohesive group of people with a shared identity;
2. A group that meets regularly on an on-going basis;
3. A group that comes together primarily for worship and has accepted in common certain teachings, rituals, and practices;
4. A group that meets and worships at a designated place;
5. A group that gathers for worship outside the regular purposes and location of a living or work space;
6. A group with an identified religious leader; and
7. A group with an official name and formal structure that conveys its purpose and identity.

A systematic count of congregations is difficult, time-consuming, and costly for the following reasons:

- There is no single, agreed-upon definition of congregation;
- Congregations are not required to register with the IRS or any other public authority or registry;
- Congregations, like other organizations, go through stages of birth, death and even mergers;
- Many congregations are reluctant to provide any information about themselves;
- Most attempts to count congregations have been narrowly focused and made by denominations interested almost exclusively in their own members;
- Many congregations are not accessible by phone, do not respond to mailed questionnaires, and operate at limited or irregular hours.

Due to these difficulties, we currently can only estimate the number of congregations. Our list was drawn from several sources. These include the Yellow Pages; public records such as city tax office data; groups of clergy and other project advisors; denominational offices; ecumenical organizations; personal contacts; referrals from interviewed clergy; and field work by researchers who surveyed certain neighborhoods, block by block, to locate unlisted congregations. To date,

we have compiled a list of some 2,000 local religious congregations in Philadelphia. We doubt that many more are still to be found.

In-depth interviews with senior clergy or other key informants from each congregation in the list were carried out by trained interviewers. The interviewer called the congregation to schedule a face-to-face interview which was conducted on the congregation premises. No telephone interviews were allowed. An average interview lasted approximately three hours and often required more than one meeting.

The interviews consisted of three parts: 1) a General Form to collect background information about the congregation, its history, membership, financial information, staff, governing structure, and relations with the wider community; 2) an Inventory of Programs to collect information about the congregation's social services (that is, non-religious services to society) in 215 areas of possible social and community involvement as well as information concerning the formal/ informal nature of the program, where it was provided, and who was served; and 3) a Specific Program Form to collect information about the most important social service programs provided by the congregation, up to a maximum of five programs. For each program, the interviewee was asked detailed questions about the program's history, legal status, staffing, who benefits, how many times a week/month/year it was offered, and more. (Due to the length of the interview, congregations with more than five social programs were asked to choose the five "most representative of their work" and briefly describe what other services/programs they provided).

All interviewers received extensive pre- and in-project training, supervision, and oversight. They were expected to attend weekly meetings and to share with other interviewers and program staff their experiences in conducting interviews, difficulties encountered, and strategies they found useful. A favorite training strategy used in these weekly meetings was "interviewing interviewers," whereby one interviewer interviewed another interviewer with their colleagues and program staff as observers. Interviewers found this strategy useful as it generated lively discussion, enabled interviewers to learn from one another, and further standardized our interview structure and other data-gathering project protocols.