PLACE IN RETURN BOX
to remove this checkout from your record.
TO AVOID FINES return on or before date due.

DATE DUE	DATE DUE	DATE DUE
APR 14 1999 (JC) 498769	120501	
July 19, 2000		
JAN 23 2001		
JAN 15 2002		
DEC 0 5 2003 02 02 06		

CHURCHES AS A RESOURCE FOR HUMAN SERVICES
AND SOCIAL CAPITAL DEVELOPMENT:
A SURVEY OF THE WEST MICHIGAN CONFERENCE
OF THE UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

By

Susan Elizabeth Grettenberger

A DISSERTATION

Submitted to
Michigan State University
in partial fulfillment of the requirements
for the degree of

DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY

College of Social Science

1997

ABSTRACT

CHURCHES AS A RESOURCE FOR HUMAN SERVICES AND SOCIAL CAPITAL DEVELOPMENT: A SURVEY OF THE WEST MICHIGAN CONFERENCE OF THE UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

By

Susan Grettenberger

The past 17 years have seen an important restructuring of public policies concerning care of the needy, with emphasis on returning responsibility for their care to their communities. Faith-based institutions have been identified as sources of needed services. Concurrently, a public discussion regarding the importance of social capital in democratic society has emerged. Social capital is seen as a source of citizen civic involvement. The role of religious congregations in contributing to both human services for the needy and social capital in communities is examined. Here, social capital was assumed to be developed through associational activities and hence, it results from any of the activities which the congregations produced for persons in their communities.

A mail survey of the 441 churches of the West Michigan Conference of The United Methodist Church, using a self-administered questionnaire, resulted in a response of 257 useable replies. This conference is largely comprised of small towns and rural areas, which was reflected in the sample demographics.

The majority of services provided are emergency and concrete services. Nearly all of

the responding congregations (96.5%) indicated that they would be able to increase

activities to others at least minimally, with a few indicating that they could increase

activities considerably. A regression analysis which sought to identify predictive

characteristics showed size of community and health of the church to be mildly predictive

of current activities.

Churches seemed most able and willing to increase services to children, youth, and

senior citizens. However, there are currently limited community-based activities for these

populations, particularly for children and youth. This suggests that the churches lack

needed resources to implement such programs without additional external assistance.

There were populations, generally stigmatized, which the congregations were

reluctant to serve, with the largest finding for gay and lesbian persons (40%). In addition,

welfare recipients were identified by only 12.8% of all churches as a possible priority

population for increased services.

Thus these religious congregations are a possible source of additional human

services and social capital for specific populations. However, their resources are limited

and they are not equally willing to initiate programs for all populations.

To Edith B. Grettenberger, who would have been so proud that her granddaughter completed a doctorate by asking questions about the Church and whose gentle curiosity and intellect encouraged us all to excel.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Many people contributed to this study and supported me as I worked on completing this final product. I am deeply appreciative to all those who have been involved in this process. First, my thanks to my committee: Vic Whiteman, who chaired my dissertation committee, John Herrick, who chaired my guidance committee, Margaret Nielsen, Mark Wilson, and Vince Hoffman. Thank you especially to Rena Harold, chair of the doctoral program, who was unflaggingly supportive during my doctoral years.

I offer my deep thanks to my family, especially my partner, Mary Boudreau, MSW, and my parents, the Rev. George and Diane Grettenberger, who have for five years offered support and intellectual stimulation. Thanks, too, to my sister and brothers: Charlotte Fitzgerald and John Grettenberger, for reviewing my writing, and the Rev. Louis Grettenberger for his thoughts regarding the church's work in this area.

I must also thank the leaders and clergy of the United Methodist Church in the West Michigan Annual Conference. They responded to the survey quickly and enthusiastically, encouraging me and expressing personal interest in the findings of this study. I hope this work will be of use to them as they nurture the churches in their trust. Finally, my appreciation is also owed to The Aspen Institute's Nonprofit Sector Research Fund, which funded this research, and to Ed Queen for opening doors for me.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

LIST OF TABLES

LIST OF FIGURES

CHAPTER 1

Introduction

Since the beginning of the Reagan administration at the start of the 1980's, there have been continuing cuts in federal, and subsequently, state funding for human services. Concurrently, there has been considerable change in the way services are provided, with ongoing shifts toward more localized administration of programs and considerable interest in increasing the role of faith-based organizations in providing human services. Most recently radical changes in the scope of welfare have followed the same general trends: reduction of funding and devolution of program administration. While debate continues about the relative merits and implications of devolution, including for welfare, it appears certain that for the foreseeable future the trend will be toward decentralized service provision and experimentation with transfer of services to religious organizations, among others.

Yet, insufficient empirical evidence exists concerning the current work of religious congregations or concerning their capacity to expand their work in social ministries. There is a dearth of research concerning the place of religion in American society, of religious institutions in the nonprofit sector, and of the potential for collaboration between social work and religious institutions (Cnaan and Wineburg, 1996; Hall, 1990). In fact, a special issue of <u>Review of Religious Research</u> was devoted to discussion of the neglect of this area by researchers (Smith, 1983; Little, 1983; Morris, 1983; Bickel and Picard, 1983; Moberg, 1983).

Religious communities, and more specifically, the faith communities of the Judeo-

Christian traditions, are understood by many to have played a critical function in community building maintaining a common moral cohesion or shared values (Gardner, 1996), offering moral leadership (Leonard, 1976; Roof and McKinney, 1987), and creating the tremendous voluntary structure which exists in the United States (Leonard, 1988). The presence of Protestant Christianity and its institutions in particular, is intertwined with the development of democratic society in the U.S. (Hammond, 1983). Modern, professional social work, has its roots in religious institutions and obtained much early leadership from religious leaders, such as Rev. Gurteen who founded the first American Charity Organization Society (COS). Finally, there is reason to believe that much of the volunteering and charitable giving in the United States is directly related to religious motivations or at least to participation in religious organizations (Hodgkinson, Weitzman, Crutchfield, Heffron, and Kirsch, 1996).

Yet social work practitioners have tended to neglect the role of religiously based organizations in service provision (Cnann and Wineburg, 1996) and researchers of the voluntary sector have generally shied away from inclusion of faith-based organizations in knowledge building. Governments at both the state and federal levels have been divesting human services by cutting budgets, decentralizing provision of services, and passing through funding for services to local levels. Churches in particular are being asked to assume a role in community service provision. Thus, at a time when churches are being asked to absorb considerable new work, there is inadequate understanding of the implications of such a reorganization of the way human services will be provided. In particular, there is inadequate knowledge of the amount and nature of work already being

done within religious congregations and what more capacity or willingness they have to expand that work.

Finally, the implications of church involvement with respect to developing social capital have not been considered. Assuming that social capital is critical to the health of democratic societies, an assumption which will be discussed further, the role of churches in developing social capital through provision of services may be as important as their role in actually providing direct services.

This dissertation is a study of the current work of a specific Christian denomination, the United Methodist Church in West Michigan. Portions of the study are descriptive, while the remainder seeks to develop an understanding of the factors which influence willingness and capacity of churches to provide beyond their local congregations as well as their potential in developing social capital. Specifically, this study seeks to answer several questions which follow concerning the existing role of churches in providing and their potential to expand social ministry:

●To what extent are churches engaging in activities that build social capital?

●With what likelihood do churches report their ability to expand social capital development activities?

●What characteristics of churches incline them toward greater social capital development activities in their local communities?

●What social capital development efforts in churches relate to youth? To what extent are churches indicating a preference for work with children and youth?

● Are there specific populations which are more or less likely to be offered social

capital development opportunities?

Implications and applications for social workers will be presented, relevance to policy will be suggested, and directions for future research will be discussed. In addition, the implications for churches as agents of social capital development will be discussed.

The literature review which follows points to the lack of research on this topic and defines the scope of religious activity in the U.S. with respect to human services. This paper argues for the necessity of more empirical knowledge to assist policy decision makers concerning appropriate roles and capacities of religious congregations, to provide practitioners with sound knowledge about the work which churches can do in order to improve collaborations, and to provide a basis for further inquiry regarding the contributions and potential of religious institutions in providing human services. Of necessity, discussion related to the mission and theology of churches follows. This discussion is critical, not as a means of advocating for a particular theological or organizational perspective, but rather as a means of presenting the varieties of and context within which U.S. religious congregations, particularly Protestant churches, function as human service providers and developers of social capital.

Definitions

To begin, it is necessary to define the terms to be used with reference to religious entities in the U.S. The United States of America has historically been a Christian culture and a Protestant one at that. The re-emergence of faith-communities in public dialogue as

a potential resource in community has occurred at a time when there is increasing religious

diversity in the United States. Recognizing that there are many faith traditions, the terms

"faith-based" and "religious congregation or organization" are used inclusively to refer to

groups (Christian, Islamic, Jewish, Buddhist or other) whose primary mission relates to

their faith-base rather than their activities per se. However, the term "churches" will

generally be used within this paper, as the subjects of this study are congregations of a

Christian denomination and much of the research which has been completed relates

specifically to Christian churches. Where appropriate, the more inclusive terminology will

be used.

It is also necessary to understand the variety of human service-providing

organizations which are defined as religious. Religious congregations often provide

services directly; however, there are numerous separately incorporated nonprofit

organizations providing human services which have affiliations with the religious

organizations, either local congregations or denominations. An essential distinction may

be in the differences between their organizational missions, with religious congregations

having a primary mission of providing religious services and the separate agencies having a

primary focus of providing other types of services, although those may have a religious

overtone. Even this way of conceptualizing the distinctions is not always useful, as with

the Salvation Army which has a dual mission of providing both religious and social

services simultaneously.

Where separate organizations exist, the extent of the affiliation between the

religious institutions and their service providing organizations may range from an historical

one, which currently carries little influence, to direct and sole governance of the nonprofit service provider by the denomination or religious institution. These distinctions are important in both research and dissemination efforts for several reasons. First, the capacities of the two entities may be quite different. Additionally, to the extent that religious congregations begin to directly provide services which their affiliated agencies are also providing, funding and other support by the churches for the affiliated agencies is almost certain to drop, to say nothing of competition between the two entities for the same dollars from external funders.

Cnaan (1996, 5-6) has drawn on his own work and that of others to consolidate religiously-affiliated social services, and by implication their primary organizational base, into six types:

1. Local congregational welfare program, which includes direct involvement of the congregation and its physical plant in the service. Food pantries and free meeting space for 12-Step meetings are common examples of these.

2. Services provided by interfaith agencies such as ecumenical coalitions.

3. Services of sectarian agencies which are officially affiliated with a religious denomination, receive funding through some type of denominational mechanism, and have representatives from the denomination, often a majority, on their Board of Directors.

4. National projects which are under religious auspices. Habitat for Humanity is one of the most obvious.

5. Para-denominational advocacy and relief organizations, which are not affiliated with a particular denomination, but which are influenced by and frequently have

connections with local congregations. While many of these are international, there are some which are locally operated and supported. Bread For the World is given as an example of a larger scale para-denominational organization.

      6. Religiously-affiliated international organizations.

In addition, two other concepts, social exchange and social capital, are constructs which are relevant to the theoretical context of this study. Social exchange theory seeks to answer questions of why individuals are willing to assist others who are in need. Blau (1964), one of the early proponents of social exchange theory, describes social exchange as related to an end which can only be accomplished through interaction between people. Social capital has been defined by Putnam, (1995a, 67) as those "features of social organization such as networks, norms, and social trust that facilitate coordination and cooperation for mutual benefit" or, in other words, social capital facilitates social exchange. Putnam, who tied social capital to the "health" of civic society, is responsible for having popularized the notion of social capital, which Coleman developed (1990, 1988). However, there is disagreement among authors concerning how to understand social capital and its application to the current state of civic America. Discussions of definitional differences and operational problems will be presented in the section on social capital below.

Historical context

The historical relationships between church, government and social work in the United States are complex and often misunderstood. While many seem to believe that

religion is utterly distinct from both social work and state functions, there has long been a direct relationships between religious institutions and both of the other two entities. In particular, the role they have played with respect to addressing those who are in need in the United States is important here.

American Christian churches have been intricately involved in social welfare throughout their existence. In fact, the tradition of the Christian church since earliest times has been to provide assistance to those in need (Conrad, 1980; Johnson, 1930). Sometimes it was as an institution virtually removed from the norms of the culture in which it found itself. Sometimes it could be found working hand in hand with the state (Hinson, 1988). In addition, religion, politics, and the government were intricately linked in the United States, with formalized relationships between church and state modeled after the Anglican church's relationship with the government in England (Hall, 1994). The emergence of the vast array of voluntary organizations in the U.S. which concerned themselves with the collective good was the result, in part, of successful efforts to disestablish churches, of removal of churches themselves from the public dole, making the churches themselves voluntary organizations. It was also a result of the conscious efforts of men like Leonard Bacon and Lyman Beecher to restructure the nature of religious organizations. Their work redefined the structure of society, creating a place for voluntary organizations, which were to form both an alternative to and also a significant partner with the state in many arenas (Hall, 1994). The role of religious organizations in that relationship was complex and dynamic, and it still is. As Manthey (1989, 105) points out:

"Clearly, then, the early beginnings of secularization were present in the State Boards and the Charity Organizations Societies. However, it is equally true that religion continued to play a major role as the ideological value base and rationale for social welfare policy".

More specifically concerning the link between social welfare and religion, social work itself has its roots in Christian churches' efforts to assist those in need within society.[1] At the turn of the century, with social work evolving, settlement houses being built, and continued immigration combined with industrialization to change the social face of America, the church's role in reaching out to the poor was also being actively explored (Judson, 1907). Many early and very influential social workers were influenced by their religious convictions: Jane Addams; Dutton Scudder, who founded Revington St. Settlement House; Josephene Shaw Lowell, who was Commissioner of the N.Y. State Board of Charities from 1826 - 1889; and Robert Woods, founder of Andover House, to name a few. Many of the early organizations, such as the YMCA, the YWCA, and the Boy Scouts, were founded on Christian principals or were explicitly identified as Christian (Manthey, 1989). However, as Manthey points out, organizations such as the Charity Organization Societies, even as they were being founded on Christian principles, were often a response to what was perceived as the churches' inability to adequately address the social problems of the times.

As one moves through the literature of the twentieth century regarding social work

---

1 For an excellent discussion of the complex relationship between religious organizations, particularly Protestant churches, and the profession of social work, see Barbara Jean Manthey's 1989 dissertation Social work, religion and the church: Policy implications. The University of Texas at Austin.

vis-a-vis religion, it seems that while much changed, for example, reduction of sexism and paternalism in the actual writing, much remains the same.

An entire issue of the1907 <u>Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science</u> was devoted to discussion of the responsibility of the Christian church in social work, focusing on the churches' relationship with labor and response to socialism (Cochran, 1907; Stelzle, 1907), the specific work being done within denominations (Kerby, 1907), the relationship between Christian churches and settlement houses (Evans, T., 1907; Simkhovitch, 1907), collaborative (ecumenical) work in a specific community (Evans, D. 1907, Farwell, 1907), social work in the Black (Negro) churches (Wright, 1907), and issues of accountability and efficiency regarding the churches' involvement in social work (Allen, 1907, Carstens, 1907, Mangold, 1907). The partisanship of the authors makes clear the institutional and personal importance of the Christian church, a subjectivity not currently found within official academe, but one being expressed with equal fervor at present by many others as the public discourse continues about who should help the poor and how.

In 1915, what was then the Methodist Episcopal Church published a study book for adult church school (Ward, 1915). Its author was a professor in Boston University School of Theology's social service curriculum, Boston University being one of the universities affiliated with the denomination. Ward, undoubtedly reflecting the official position of the church at the time, addressed the church's mandate to serve those in poverty. One interesting point he makes is to distinguish between being in poverty (those who had little but received no relief) and destitution (those who had even less and were

desperately in need of immediate assistance). While he implies some sense of blame of the individual, his writing mainly avoids judgment for those in poverty, focusing on the urgency for church members to feel personally responsible for working to end poverty and, more specifically, on the need for churches to work toward improved working conditions. Workers needed higher wages and shorter hours but were entitled to workers compensation and disability. At one point, Ward (1915) suggests that the great social sin of the time was the income gap between the rich and the poor. While not addressing the current values of the church, it gives some indication of the way that faith communities may be a source of values, which may be different than those of the remainder of society.

One clear issue which dominates this little study book is the extent to which liquor is believed to be the cause of many of the existing social problems, including poverty. He evokes scripture as the basis for suggesting that (1) Christians had a duty to offer immediate relief; (2) they should have a systematic and efficient plan for relief; and (3) local churches needed to develop their own plans for this relief (Ward, 1915). Clearly, though the focus is somewhat different than that of the current era, the denomination was actively seeking to understand its appropriate role in acting on the social problems of the time, and to challenge individual members through their local congregations and personally to address issues of both immediate symptoms and causes of poverty. It is not known what success these educational efforts had, although certainly the work of the Women's Christian Temperance Union and the Anti-Saloon League, in which the Methodist Episcopal Church was very active, played a considerable role in the passage of prohibition.

In the thirties, a different type of document shows that this tendency continued to be evident. F.E. Johnson (1930), in a report to the Federal Council of Churches (comprised of the Protestant denominations) as the Great Depression was beginning, described the state of social welfare service provision by the churches. He raised such questions as the appropriate role of the churches with respect to the state, an issue which pre-dates Johnson's writing and continues to this day. It is clear from Johnson's report that one of the major social concerns not only of the Methodist Episcopal Church but of all the major Protestant churches during the earlier part of the century was working conditions for the laborer.

Johnson continued many of the earlier themes, suggesting that the rich were getting richer, while whatever gains made by the poor were coming much more slowly. His report expressed concern regarding the health of downtown churches, describing them as "like a stranded ship which has been beached by the outgoing tide (35)", and described efforts to assist immigrants as having limited success. He also warned that churches were essentially becoming too status quo, too concerned with their own comfort, and losing their social focus, even as he described the efforts to that point of churches in developing hospitals, orphanages, homes for the aging, settlement houses and programs such as Goodwill Industries. The services being offered, however, were limited in scope and had limited resources. Thus it appears that there was a simultaneous hopefulness about the member denominations' work to that point and concern regarding the future effectiveness of the church on what appeared primarily to be urban problems. Also, Johnson (1930) clearly points to the strength of the church in rural areas and the great needs in those

locales which the church would seek to address.

One of the next periods of transition with respect to social welfare occurred with the New Deal Era and then World War II. Thus in its March, 1948 issue, The Annals of the American Academy again tackled the place of religion and its institutions in addressing social problems. Furfey (1948) defined the role of the institutional churches as being in three areas: social thought, social action and social work. He expressly discusses the parallels and similarities between the work being done by sectarian and secular organizations, suggesting that the manner of service delivery was often indistinguishable, with trained social workers able to comfortably move between the two types of organizations. He goes further, pointing out that Protestant influences had shaped social work, which then secularized, and that he saw the trend reversing at that point, with some number of churches beginning to establish case work programs. Manthey (1989), describes churches of that time as having even further lost ground in their efforts to address social problems, being unable to effectively address the increased demand placed on charitable institutions by industrialization and continued immigration.

In the mid-1950's a series of lectures concerning the state of social work and religion were presented through the auspices of The Jewish Theological Seminary's Institute for Religious and Social Studies. Several authors described the extensive efforts underway at that time by Protestants (Pepper, 1956), Catholics (O'Grady, 1956), and Jews (Landesman, 1956). In a statement which minimally reflects an ideal standard, Pepper says "Social work and social welfare services will be a major concern of the Christian churches as long as we live in a free society....(27)". There is limited

description of any actual local congregational efforts. Also in the series, Johnson, Butler, Cary, and Morrison (1956) discuss what appears to be a constant issue, that of the appropriate relationship between church and state, including the amount of religious influence which was appropriate in state funded, religiously run programs.

Coughlin (1964) reflected on the relationship between church and state in addressing social welfare just as the texture of American society was being torn by the struggle for Civil Rights and the Vietnam War, and just as War on Poverty was being launched. Generally at that time, it appears that many, particularly Protestants, viewed the appropriate role of the churches as one of advocacy in improving the governmental response to poverty and social needs. Included in that was the view that churches should take the initiative in developing pilot programs for which the government would then assume responsibility for full implementation or replication. Thus the prevailing understanding at that point concerning the roles of churches was as social welfare innovators, not as primary providers, the role seen as appropriately belonging to the government.

One issue which Coughlin raises is the role of churches in social control. He suggests that "social control is written into the very nature of religion (11)." Interestingly, social work and certainly government have been important sources of social control although government has had the most overt role in that goal, one which many in society believe it is currently failing. One could make an argument that current efforts to return service provision to the churches is partly a result of dissatisfaction with the government's efforts at social control, rather than necessarily concern regarding the effectiveness of the

government in providing assistance to persons in poverty. This raises cautions regarding the potential ways in which churches may choose to implement services, as they may elect to use their new-found role to implement social control measures. This is not to imply that society should not have concern for social control; rather, it is intended to raise a concern regarding the possibility of churches imposing their values on others as a means of achieving their own versions of appropriate social behavior.

Thus, it is clear in reviewing even briefly the history of the role of churches that there is a long-standing, if fluctuating, relationship between the church and the government with respect to the provision of services to improve social welfare. The appropriate nature of that relationship, including the exact role of churches with respect to social services and social policy, has been debated for the better part of the past century with a new incarnation of that relationship unfolding at present.

Political context

Still this mood in the country has resulted in a change in the balance between federal government, state government, nonprofit organizations, and religiously affiliated organizations. Since the beginning of the 1980's, when Ronald Reagan assumed office as president of the United States, a restructuring of the size and role of the federal government, and in many places, of state government has been underway. Much of this restructuring involves reducing funding of human services with the remainder demonstrated in shifting responsibility for decision making and service administration from federal to state or even municipal levels. Nelson (1983) describes the early efforts of the

Reagan administration to force the religious community into assuming primary responsibility for the poor and describes the major Protestant denominations as "flatly reject(ing) the Reagan ploy. They see it as a political set-up, not an ethical or religious challenge.... Clearly, churches in the United States do not believe Reagan's suggestion that should [sic] or could take primary responsibility for meeting all the needs of the poor .... Nonetheless, it seems that Reagan's extreme proposition has prompted many churches to realize they should and could do more in certain areas than they have in the past. Therefore, the church leaders say 'yes' to appropriately increasing their voluntary responsibilities (92-93)". Thus, early in the 1980's the major Protestant churches began to develop ways of having a role in addressing the needs of the certain populations or particular problem areas without committing to taking on primary responsibility for the overall task of addressing poverty. The churches at various points have responded to the calls from Presidents or Congress to become the providers of service to the needy. However, there has not been any visible effort on the part of politicians to engage in meaningful dialogue with the religious institutions concerning their willingness and capacity to take on the large task being sent their way.

During this time period, many prominent people have taken on the many programs developed during the previous two decades as part of the War on Poverty, alleging that the government had become hopelessly mired in a system which was too expensive, ineffective, dependency-producing, and abused by its recipients.[2] Interestingly, but not surprisingly, this sentiment is not new. Keith-Lucas, a professor of social work at

University of North Carolina at the time, opened his 1962 book <u>The Church and Social</u>

<u>Welfare</u> with the following: "Many an honest Christian is troubled by the welfare picture

as he sees it (emphasis added) in America today. He sees vast, expensive tax-supported

programs, some of which are undoubtedly necessarily, but some of which appear to him to

maintain people in idleness and some even to put a premium on shiftlessness or immorality

(5)". Further, "much has been written and said lately about the 'failings' of (the welfare)

system. It has been accused of fostering dependence. Cases have been cited of families

who have been on relief for three generations (38)." It seems likely that there have

always been people opposed to the system of governmental assistance which was being

developed throughout much of this century. However, the balance of political power

dictated the decisions regarding the level of that assistance at any given point in time.

Most recently, the 1996 election which shifted control of the U.S. Congress to the

Republicans after decades of Congressional dominance by the Democratic party lead to

sweeping changes in the ways in which people in the U.S. who have needs, particularly the

poor, are assisted. The Personal Responsibility and Work Opportunity Reconciliation Act

of 1996 (commonly referred to as Welfare Reform) is the latest such legislative at the

Congressional level. One provision of this act, Section 4104 - Charitable Choice

Provision, opens the way for faith-based organizations to provide services more directly.

Specifically:

> "Under the federal TANF block grant (replaces AFDC), if states contract with any
>
> non-governmental organization of agency, the state must open the competition for

---

2 See, for example, Charles Murray's 1984 book <u>Losing Ground: American Social Policy, 1950-1980</u>.

delivery of services to all groups, including faith-based organizations. When and if a faith-based organization assumes a role of service delivery via the government, whether through contracts of vouchers, the faith-based organization is not required to change its internal structure of religious character. The religious service provider may not discriminate against a beneficiary of assistance. In addition, the Establishment Clause of the U.S. Constitution still applies, therefore, the faith-based organization may not proselytize or have sectarian worship. This applies only to federal funds. (Amey, undated)."

As Stanley Carlson-Thies (1996) points out, there are opportunities in this new approach but also the potential for difficulties with interpretation. He suggests that the entire purpose of allowing faith-based organizations into the welfare fray is to draw on the potential creativity and strength of these institutions in an effort to assist families who are in poverty. Thus, even before the passage of Welfare Reform, efforts were underway to enlist the support of religious congregations in working directly with the poor as individual states began to make substantive changes in the criteria for receiving welfare benefits. However, the considerable rhetoric about making recipients work and public statements often made about the links of teen pregnancy and welfare, for example, suggest that a part of the motivation for shifting responsibility for welfare efforts to the religious community may have to do with a desire for more social control in association with assistance to those in poverty.

What this most recent piece of devolution fails to take into account, however, is that this trend toward returning needs to the community levels has been occurring for the

NY: Basic Books.

better part of two decades now. The first of the major cuts in social service funding

occurred during the earliest part of the Reagan administration. In addition, there have

been other types of cuts at the state levels, such as the elimination of general assistance in

Michigan under Governor Engler, a cut which overnight removed thousands of adults

from public assistance rolls at the beginning of the 1990's. Logic would suggest that if

religious congregations and denominations had the capacity and willingness to respond,

they have begun doing so already. Hence, one can assume that some portion of their

original ability to respond has already been utilized. It seems critical to investigate the

extent of capacity and willingness which the religions congregations have to be involved in

non-religious activities.

Social work and religious organizations

The ambivalent relationship between social work and formal religion has been

evaluated by several authors. For a variety of reasons, some philosophical and some

related to rivalry (Louwenberg, 1988; Manthey, 1989), social work has generally

neglected the role of religion and churches in its conceptualization, curriculum, research,

and, undoubtedly, practice (Cnaan and Wineburg, 1996; Manthey, 1989). A few social

work professionals and educators have sought to bridge the two, specifically from a

Christian perspective, through formation of Christian social worker groups or publications

which have sought to encourage more integration of the two (for example, Richmond

Garland, 1994 and Keith-Lucas, 1962). However, on whole, the divide between

professional social workers and religious congregations has remained.

There is a bias by many professional helpers that using informal helping systems is an inferior intervention. Thus, for many professionals the provision of services using churches, particularly if minimally trained volunteers are used, is not a preferred option in service delivery. In addition the discomfort of many social workers with what they perceive as the bias of churches leads them to ignore organized religion as a resource (Sheridan, Wilmer, and Atcheson, 1994), although that reticence does not extend to requesting funding from churches who are often a significant source of funding for social service agencies (Wineburg, 1996). Louwenberg (1988) suggested that "stereotypes about religious have lead some social workers into active opposition to religion. For most social workers, this situation has resulted in an indifference and a lack of concern for all things religious, especially with respect to their professional practice (11)." He further points out that not all clergy are friendly toward social workers either, based on their orientation toward the spiritual as opposed to the concrete. Still, social workers recognize the importance of informal social support networks in the lives of clients. As one of the professional groups often involved in developing and brokering services and programs, social workers need to consider the potential of churches more carefully.

The resources available from churches are varied. Wineburg's (1996) study of the extent of resources available from religious congregations is quite detailed concerning the types of resources. These included congregational *volunteer* support, ranging from board leadership to administrative to direct services to support and custodial efforts. *Financial aid*, both in cash and in-kind contributions, is another form of support. Virtually anyone who has ever attended a religious congregation in the U.S. is likely to be familiar with

holiday food drives or the efforts to collect or make needed goods for some organization in town. The use of *congregational facilities* is another commonly offered resource for nonprofits, as many faith communities have very utilitarian buildings which are otherwise underutilized during the week. The fourth type Wineburg presents is the actual development of *programs run directly* by the congregations. The range of these is virtually unlimited. There is little if any research on which of these congregations presently feel most able to increase. That is part of what this dissertation seeks to answer. However, it seems likely that social workers who are reticent to collaborate with religious congregations are more likely to ask for concrete help in the form of funding or other donations, as these allow the social worker to maintain control of the helping interaction.

The above classification concerns itself primarily with the ways in which religious congregations can support other institutions which are delivering services. The final type can be considered as similar; it is the construction of specialized services to address a need. There is one other resource which is not expressly considered in the four categorizations. That is the informal assistance which is available through the existing structures of the congregations themselves. This resource is essentially the social capital which already exists within congregations and which can be made available to others as they need it.

Specht (1986) in an evaluation of the interface between social work practice and social exchange or social networks listed 25 articles in the preceding ten years which addressed issues of social support. This illustrates the considerable attention given in the literature to ways in which social workers could strengthen the social networks of persons

in need who were requesting assistance from or had been sent to seek assistance from the social worker. Specht also points to the research which suggests that persons with weak social networks and who lack social support are more likely to have poor health, physically and emotionally. While it is not clear whether poor health is a cause or an effect, there certainly is reason to believe that if people have needs, it is important for them to be able to access resources to meet those needs. Specht suggests that for those who do not have an accessible social (informal) network, professionals will fill that gap with a formal helping system which will become the social network. Whether this actual occurs is subject to speculation.

The question is whether it might be more appropriate and more productive for society and the individuals involved to have informal helping networks, such as religious congregations, become the social networks. As suggested above, many churches are already strong networks. The separation of church and society has carried in many ways into the methods of helping professions. This has tended to discourage professionals from relying on churches to provide those networks for individuals they identify, unless the individuals identify an existing relationship with the religious institution. Thus, an existing resource which does not necessarily require additional development has been neglected. Even if the answer to the above is 'yes, religious congregations should be considerably more involved', the question remains as to the extent to which they are willing and able to serve as developers of social capital.

CHAPTER 2

Literature Review

Social Exchange

In considering the entire question of how a society attempts to respond to its members who are in need, it is also necessary to consider why there would even be such an effort. It seems necessary to first theorize concerning the reasons that individuals assist others, which social exchange theory seeks to do. Blau (1964) indicates that the motivation of the participants in the exchange may not particularly matter. It is the outcome of and impact of the exchange which are important. Thus the participants would be prompted to the exchange either by the anticipation of immediate rewards or by motives which are more diffuse. However, by definition, social exchange theory suggests that people need assistance from others, at least some of the time, to have their needs met. This implies that social exchange is a necessary element of society.

Two elements of social exchange theory have potentially important implications in understanding the dynamics of helping as a formal social enterprise. First, unreciprocated exchange inherently leads to a differentiation of power, with the person who gives attaining some increment of power over the recipient (Blau, 1964). Intuitively, this seems true, as any person who has felt obligated to another for unreciprocated help will attest. It seems reasonable to assume that the more A needs what B has to offer and the more frequently that A receives something from B, the more power B, who controls the needed services or goods, will acquire. The idea of unreciprocated giving is institutionalized in the profession of social work. A portion of social work training is devoted to appropriate

use of the power which one has as a professional helper/giver. Interestingly, within social work, power is seen as being derived from one's role (i.e. from having expertise). In some senses, although not explicitly stated as such, clients are seen as being vulnerable because they are in need. That is, the power differential is interpreted as being located in the need of the client, rather than necessarily in the helping act of the social worker, or as social capital theory will suggest below, in the relationship itself.

Within this interpretation, attempts by service recipients (clients) to reciprocate are viewed as gestures which would potentially increase the *professional*'s power, rather than being understood as attempts by the client to equalize power between himself and the worker. That is, the client is in need and must therefore rely on the professional to get his/her needs met. Often, these needs are material good needs, and if the power differential is seen by the professional as based in the need of the client, then giving anything away would be seen as extenting the period of time the client is needy. Such attempts to reciprocate are rejected (in a professional way, of course), leaving the power differentials intact. However, rejection of client's attempts to reciprocate, aside from being rejections of the client's cultural obligations, may sabotage the attempts of persons receiving assistance to equalize the power differential between themselves and the helper by reciprocating. Yet, from a different perspective, it seems clear that professional social workers recognize the issues of reciprocity, and understand that if there is a gift from a client, then they are in some way obligated to the client. Psycho-social approaches to the appropriate boundaries between professionals and clients are frequently applied and have an appropriate place in limiting the professional's obligation to clients. Yet, these issues

of reciprocity in social exchange, even in formal helping relationships, appear to have important implications about the nature of relationships which are developed between those in need within our society and those who assist them in getting what they need. It raises questions about whether there are ways to assist those who have needs, particularly those who are already disadvantaged, in a way which potentially builds toward equality with others who are more advantaged, including those in helping roles.

For some, the rewards for their acts will come not from the recipient, but from social peers. Thus people may give to those in need in order to secure social approval, particularly from those whose opinions they value (Blau, 1964). Ironically, when social approval is the anticipated reward, there may additionally be an expectation of reciprocity from those who are recipients. This may be in more social situations, such as a dinner for friends or the boss, and the reciprocity might be a simple "thank you" or it could be the expectation of a return invitation to dinner later from the other person. However this, too, has implications for the person in society who is in need and who is forced to secure assistance from others.

The obvious implication is that there is a double-bind in our society for persons in need. On the one hand, being in a position of need is likely to create a power differential which leaves a recipient in debt, to some extent or another, to the person who has assisted her. Mechanisms are in place within professional helping settings to reduce spontaneous attempts by clients to reciprocate, but also which reduce the likelihood that the helper will demand reciprocity. Of course, this is not a guarantee, as the periodic allegations of sexual misconduct made against therapists demonstrates. On the other hand, there is a

tendency on the part of the helpers, regardless of their level of professional training, to want appreciation or reciprocity of some sort. Curiously, professional helpers appear to have recognized the value of reciprocity, and often have policies which obligate clients to pay some monetary compensation for the services received while simultaneously having policies which prohibit workers from accepting voluntarily offered gifts. Literally, such compensation goes directly to the organization rather than the person to whom the recipient feels a debt or toward whom she feels a desire to reciprocate. It is entirely possible that the net result of the exchange, structured as it is by the organization, is that recipients still perceive the power differential of the relationship while having to compensate the agency. On the other hand, it may in fact serve its purpose, to some extent, of alleviating the experience of unreciprocated giving for both the helper and the recipient while limiting the potential of those who are helping to abuse their power.

The implications for provision of services through churches are somewhat unclear. Certainly one possible result, if the above assertions are indeed valid, is that churches might formalize the reciprocity or use the power inequality of the relationships in different ways, such as the soup kitchen which obligates persons eating a meal to attend a brief church service as a condition of receiving the meal. Another possibility is that volunteers would need to be trained thoroughly to ensure that personal reciprocity is not demanded or expected when it is inappropriate. Churches could, however, be more flexible than social service providers and certainly more than governmental agencies in allowing persons who are recipients of goods or services to assist with helping others or helping the church in a way which reduce recipients to indebtedness to their service providers.

However, the concept of social exchange assumes that all people have something to exchange. While this may be true in the broadest sense, unless helping organizations are willing to value that which recipients have to offer in exchange, it may never be possible for equity to exist between the helpers and recipients. As suggested above, this does mean that churches may be in a unique position, should they choose to exercise their discretion, of enhancing the equity relationship between themselves and the recipients of assistance. The churches may, by their nature, value different goods that people have to offer, including intangible goods such as their presence at activities, their motives, and even their willingness to allow others to assist them. One thing which churches may have in common with some professional helpers is that often the only compensation they need is for the person who has received assistance to benefit from the assistance. Further, as will be further discussed below, churches recognize indirect exchange and value it as much as or more than direct exchange.

On the other hand, even though reciprocity may leave individuals indebted to another, there is no assurance that in their time of need the other person will be able or willing to assist them in the needed way (Uehara, 1990). This points to the need for more formalized ways of assuring that those in need are able to secure needed help when they are in crisis. As suggested earlier, perhaps churches are one avenue for providing more reciprocal exchanges, and there is evidence that they do provide such an environment for person who are members already (Ellison and George, 1994).

In a somewhat different vein, the points discussed above raise other questions. For instance, how does the idea of reciprocity affect views by society of those in need? Are

recipients of goods and services who are appreciative seen as being more worthy than those who do not show appreciation? If so, will they sometimes be afforded more help than others based on that perception? Are moral judgments or arbitrary decisions about whom to serve related to issues of reciprocity? Does the power differential between recipients and helpers affect the equality of services provided, particularly in a setting such as a church where there is no assurance of policies regarding equal access to services, policies which are institutionalized by public service providers? Finally, harkening back to an earlier point, given the power differentials, might there be an incentive on the part of some churches to use their position as service providers to implement social control with recipients? It is not clear that there are adequate mechanisms for implementing standards for the provision of congregationally run programs. This lack of monitoring, except in the case of programs which are licensed or funded by government, is one of their potential strengths, allowing for considerable creativity, but the implications of unequal exchanges within the helping relationship present some very real challenges to administration of services.

Exchange and its limitations for motivating alturism

Homans (1958) discussed social exchange from another important perspective. He first suggested that all interaction between people is, to some extent, an exchange of goods, whether of material or non-material. This could include specific material goods and services, of course, but would include a broad range of non-material goods as well: sense of well-being, appreciation, sense of belonging and so on. The twist Homans adds is

to consider social exchange from the perspective of behavior psychology, too. He incorporates the elements of aversive stimulation, satiation, extinction and cost in considering individual decisions to engage in social exchange. These offer a different way of conceptualizing the mechanisms of helping. Applied to the realm of volunteer organizations, such as churches, these concepts begin to raise questions about the potential of churches in addressing the array of problems which the federal and state governments are dropping back into communities to be solved. These various ideas may be applied to either an individual or an organization. However, since the individual is the primary unit of the organization anyway, discussion will be limited to that unit. Essentially, the behavior of individual members will determine the behavior and decisions of an organization itself, including those of a church.

As Homans applies these concepts, aversive stimulation refers to the various costs incurred by the helper. Presumably, there are also rewards or benefits. However, if the aversive stimulation is great enough, the helping behavior will stop. Rational choice theory conveys the same concepts, suggesting that if the costs continue to outweigh the benefits, there will be a point when a person will choose to remove herself. For example, if the person being helped does not reciprocate or is hostile, that cost to a professional helper who is paid might still be less than the benefit of her pay. However, the cost to the volunteer might be considerably in excess of any benefits, leading them to quit volunteering. Another type of cost might be the inability of the church member to use the church on a regular basis due to the presence of helping programs. If, as discussed below, church members see the church facilities as primarily for their personal or church group's

use, this would certainly factor in as a cost for many members. Homans also suggests that fatigue is a cost. It is likely to be particularly true for volunteers who also work in paid jobs that fatigue is a tremendous cost which influences decisions about volunteering. From a slightly different perspective, one has simply to read any number of recent news articles to hear about the issue of donor fatigue, implied to be emotional fatigue in the face of trying to help too many people with too little success. Thus, decisions to give of personal goods, including money and material objects, as well as non-material goods, such as time and compassion, hinge on the individual gaining some return or benefit without too much cost.

Satiation is also a factor in this theoretical perspective, as those who give may satiate in the rewards for their efforts (Blau, 1964). Thus, even when an activity is initially very rewarding, whether in terms of appreciation from those helped, or in social approval, there is a point, from a behavioral perspective, at which the person giving or helping will discontinue doing so because he is satiated with the rewards. Without external motivations which create conditions obligating the person to apply themselves more (a positive reward, such as a check for helping or an aversive reward, such as going to jail if they don't help), most individuals will not continue to help within a given area indefinitely. Thus, for a program in a volunteer organization to be successful on a long term basis, there needs to be a large number of persons from which to periodically draw new volunteers as current volunteers discontinue their efforts. This may also hold for issues of fund raising for such organizations, in that often people's giving efforts satiate, too.

The implication of this is that the larger the organization, the more successful it

will be in maintaining its programs, and potentially in having multiple programs. This is true partly because of the potential of getting volunteers to rotate through different programs. It also suggests that running programs with primarily volunteers may be very difficult, for recruitment and training of volunteers for different programs is a time consuming endeavor. The combination of these caveats raises serious questions about the ability of religious congregations to offer services in a way which is comprehensive enough to adequately meet the needs of all persons within communities.

Indirect exchange

The work of Euhara (1990) provides a useful way of approaching some of the difficulties described with respect to reciprocity. She describes what she labels indirect exchange, which may also be thought of as circular exchange. That is, rather than direct reciprocity between two individuals, there is a chain of giving or doing for another. Thus, person A does for or gives to person B, who in turn does for person C. Then person C gives to person A. Although the linkage is not made directly between every person, the linkage is present and recipients may indeed be aware of all the connections. On the other hand, they may not be aware. A recent story by John Schneider in the <u>Lansing State Journal</u> illustrates indirect exchange. A woman with small children took her children to eat. She went reluctantly, but decided the benefits of not cooking outweighed the costs of the meal and of having to get her children together to go. When she tried to pay her bill, the server told her another patron of the restaurant had seen her alone with her well-behaved children, and wanted to help her out by buying her family's dinner. The woman was touched and felt a need to reciprocate. So, she in turn paid for the groceries of the

woman in line behind her the next time she was at the grocery store. We don't know whether that woman also felt a need to reciprocate, but stories abound of such chain reactions of giving, or conversely of pay-backs for negative experiences! The obvious time sequence of this story points to a difficulty with circular exchange: there is a sequence of events in which there is a spontaneous desire to assist another. The persons helped are not necessarily obligated in any way to assist and any one of the recipients may elect to break the sequence of exchanges. This concept, however, is in many ways the foundation of the social capital theory which follows. It assumes that trust either exists or develops between people, leading to an overall tendency of people who give to believe that the non-binding interaction will lead to a similar act of assistance in the future when they need assistance. Further, the assistance might not necessarily come from the original recipient.

One interesting way to think about indirect exchange is in the context of the concept of Pareto efficiency. To oversimplify the concept, a Pareto optimal point is achieved in a market economy when every person's preference for available goods is maximized, given the available resources. This occurs because there are people with goods for which others have a greater preference than they do themselves and vice versa. There are also people who are willing to exchange goods which they have, even though they may not be better off, because they will also not be worse off. If true, then the implication is that there can be altruism which, while not totally cost free to the individuals involved, can be at "discounted cost" and which results in an overall improvement for society. Functionally, the effect is that of barter, if all the parties are knowingly engaged

in a direct exchange. In other cases, there may not be exchange as such, but a person with something which has no value to them may be willing to donate it to another in need, if they are aware of the need. For example, a person with a crib in the attic might choose to give it to a family with an infant. In those cases, the cost which may prevent the exchange is that of getting the information which is required to know that an individual has something for which another would be willing to exchange. However, would be little disincentive to exchange. One very realistic role of religious congregations is in the various networks where information is passed regularly, reducing the cost of that information to nearly nothing.

To illustrate the Pareto effect more completely, consider the following scenario. There may be a person who has many unneeded goods, including good used clothing and furniture, but needs to have some plumbing work done on his house. Another person has skill to do plumbing, but doesn't need clothes or furniture. However, she lacks time to do needed yard work and external house work. A third person needs furniture and has lots of extra time and likes doing outside work. There can be an indirect exchange among these three people. More importantly, each will apparently be better off than they are at present, having given something which they themselves have in relative excess for something that they need. Thus, exchange need not always involve reduction in one's position with respect to needed or desired goods. To state the obvious, two goods which may be readily exchanged are money and time.

Social Capital

One way which such exchange can be facilitated is through the development of social capital. This study concerns itself with the willingness and capacity of religious congregations to assist persons in community through voluntary and other actions. As suggested earlier, the impetus for assuring some minimal protection to members of U.S. society was initially derived in part from Judeo-Christian tradition, specifically as it related to values regarding the intrinsic worth of individuals. However, there is another, perhaps equally important reason why some members of society believe it is important to enhance the well-being of other members of that society. That is, the overall welfare of a society is understood by some as being related to the welfare of its individual members. For some the well-being of individuals is seen as important because in some diffuse sense, all of society benefits from having members who are reasonably content. Moreover, recent theorists, such as Putnam (1993, 1995a, 1995b), have suggested that democratic societies are healthiest when civil society exists in abundance and that social capital is the ingredient which leads to civil society (Verba, Scholzman, and Brady, 1995). Thus, there are two distinct yet related aspects of social capital theory which are relevant to this paper. One has to do with the ways in which the individual members of society are afforded opportunities to develop adequate social capital to assure that their needs are met, and the second has to do with the extent to which sufficient social capital is generated in a society to assure that the needs of society itself are met in terms of citizen participation.

In many ways, the concept of social capital is central to understanding the place of individuals through personal contributions and volunteering and of voluntary organizations

such as religious congregations in civic and civil society. Social capital has been defined as those "features of social organization such as networks, norms, and social trust that facilitate coordination and cooperation for mutual benefit" (Putnam, 1995a, 67) or, in other words, as facilitating social exchange. Social exchange, then, can also be inferred to be the main active ingredient of social capital, the element which allows for coordination and cooperation to occur. This suggests that the presence of individual social exchange, trust, and reciprocity are intrinsically related to the development of social capital. In addition, Putnam believes that voluntary organizations and associations are the primary social structures which facilitate the development of social capital of the sort which leads to civic involvement. Individuals comprise the voluntary organizations and thus participate in or contribute to the social exchange which occurs within voluntary organizations, including religious congregations. This in turn leads to participation in civic activities.

A note should be made that, while the discussion of social capital in this paper is more focused, social capital should be understood as undergirding all social exchange. This would include not only the interactions of persons in voluntary organizations and in civic involvement, but necessarily all interactions in society which require interpersonal exchanges, such as business negotiations. While there are some caveats which pertain to the interactions of large institutions with each other, a point which will be discussed, social capital and social trust may be understood as potentially present in and developed in any functioning social environment. Thus, the function of social capital theory is to explore the validity and extent of social exchange, to explain the causal relationships between the

development of social capital in various types of settings and to understand the relationship between healthy societies and the connections between its citizens.

Social capital, as it is currently being discussed, is a fairly recent concept, although certainly there has been intuitive understanding of some of the features of social capital for a long time. Coleman (1988, 1990) presents a thorough discussion of social capital within a larger context of social theory. Putnam, however, widely popularized the concept with what is generally recognized as a solid empirical study presented in <u>Making Democracy Work: Civic Traditions In Modern Italy</u> (1993) and later in an article, "Bowling Alone" (1995a), which analyzed U.S. trends in social capital and civic involvement. Thus, much of the focus of recent debate has concerned itself with the questions raised by Putnam: (1) Is social capital declining?; and (2) Is there a decline in civic involvement in the United States. However, while Putnam's conclusion that there have been concurrent declines in the two has been accepted in some quarters, there is not consensus that his attribution of causal direction and factors, i.e. declining social capital is leading to reduced civic involvement on the part of Americans, is correctly reasoned or even that there has actually been a decline in these two areas of social interaction. These points will be elaborated below.

An additional area of inquiry has been little discussed in the literature. That is, what is or would be the impact of any decline in social capital on voluntary association involvement in producing collective goods? In other words, assuming there is a connection between social capital, people's ability to get this done, and their membership in voluntary organizations, are there enough people with requisite skills available to serve

as needed volunteers? This implies questions regarding the ability of religious congregations to address the needs now before them as a result of devolution. It is not unreasonable to theorize that there is a spiraling cycle of development for social capital, one in which the presence of social capital leads to the development of further social capital. Such a model is proposed by Weiss (1996). Conversely, a diminishment of social capital will further decrease the overall stock of social capital in time. Briefly stated, if participation in voluntary associations including religious congregations, along with resultant social capital are declining, there may not be sufficient social capital in religious congregations to address the needs to which they are being asked to respond. However, in order to discuss these questions, it is necessary to further clarify the concept of social capital, including defining and operationalizing of the concept, and presenting the various arguments concerning the validity of Putnam's claims regarding the state of social capital and civic involvement in the United States.

To begin, Putnam throughout his writing draws a causal relationship between social capital and the civil involvement of a citizenry (1993, 1995a, 1995b, 1996). Thus social capital is presented as a primary source of the citizen participation on which democracy is built. This social capital is formed through the interactions people have in voluntary associations of all kinds. Finally, he concludes that both social capital and hence, civic society in the U.S. are in decline. Many have seemingly accepted his definitions and conclusions, in some cases simplifying them as they applied them, in other cases elaborating the theory Putnam presents. Some have suggested that Putnam's definitions and assumptions need to be reexamined (Berman, 1997; Foley and Edwards,

1997; Kenworthy, 1997; Minkoff, 1997) and others, that his explanations regarding causality and the impact of the apparent decline in social capital may not be adequate or accurate (Heying, 1997; Kenworthy, 1997).

Definitions and operationalization

Social capital, while intriguing, and intuitively a very useful conceptualization, has been under-theorized by many authors, making research and discussion difficult (Foley and Edwards, 1997; Levi, 1996). Putnam identifies characteristics of social capital, but some feel his definition makes social capital difficult to measure. For example, Foley and Edwards' (1997, 560) state that Putnam "operationalize(s) social capital, nonetheless, in the most general terms as strongly correlated to membership in voluntary organizations". That is, Putnam fails to define any concrete qualities of social capital, instead relying primarily on people's associational characteristics to assume the presence of social capital. They go on to point out that the measures which are available seem to be driving the way social capital is understood, which is clearly a backwards approach to conceptualization.

In addition to the operational issues, one must consider the actual nature of social capital. Unlike physical capital of various sorts, social capital does not belong to the individual. Rather, as Coleman (1990, 302) points out it resides *in* the relationships between people, rather than being possessed by them. And thus social capital is essentially the potential for individuals to get their needs met, not necessarily the actual occurrence of so doing (Weiss, 1996, 21). As Coleman (1990, 302) aptly notes, social capital which may be useful in one setting may not be in another. It may be productive or it may not,

but it has the potential for productivity.

Physical and financial capital generally exist in relatively fixed amounts and are redistributed through market or equity programs between various individuals in a society. If one person has more, it is generally at the expense of other. If one has less, it is usually to the benefit of another. Welfare benefits transfer tangible benefits from one set of people to another set. So, while individuals may thus be advantaged or disadvantaged, in an absolute sense, under normal conditions society does not gain or lose much financial and physical capital. Social capital, on the other hand, is not present in a fixed quantity. If social capital is lost to an individual, it is lost to all of society. It is not fungible in the way that physical capital is, and unfortunately, cannot usually be given to another. Thus, it must be built on an ongoing basis in the relationships people have. This lends urgency to generating ongoing attention to the development of social capital, if one assumes that the existence of social capital has value to a society. However, given that capital of all forms, by definition, facilitates productive activity, its value does seem implicit (Coleman, 1990, 304).

So, then what constitutes social capital? Putnam (1995b) has essentially identified norms along with networks and social trust in his definition, but does not clearly distinguish between them operationally in his discussion. Further, Putnam suggests a link between people's membership in groups or organizations and their willingness to trust, with the act of joining believed to precede the presence of trust, rather than trust being the motivation for joining (Brehm and Rahn, 1995). Putnam discusses social trust as a salient measure of social capital but does not suggest a measure for social trust. He also implies

that participation in a variety of voluntary organizations is a measure of social capital.

Newton (1997) attempts to clarify the definition by differentiating three defining areas of social capital: norms and values, networks, and consequences, all of which except consequences Putnam also included. Newton points out that these are quite different types of variables in terms of operationalization, and there should really be considered separately from each other, something Putnam fails to do. Newton's summary of norms is that they include trust and values positing social capital with having stabilizing qualities in society. Also, they are subjective and intangible, making them less than amenable to empirical discovery. Networks are more easily measurable, being both objective and observable.

The rationale for why social capital exists in participatory activities relates to reciprocity, trust, and social exchange. The level or trustworthiness of the environment influences the willingness of individuals to do for each other. Part of that trust stems from the likelihood that persons who owe others will return the assistance. The social norms of voluntary memberships organization, particularly religious ones, require in many cases either concrete or symbolic gestures of commitment. For example, membership vows in the United Methodist Church include a commitment to "uphold (the church) with your prayers, your presence, your gifts, and you service", vows which are then echoed by the congregation as part of the ritual (United Methodist Church, 1989, 48). In addition, social norms make explicit in the theology of the church expectations of reciprocity, including indirect reciprocity. Indeed, directives to do for others even without the expectation of reciprocity may be found throughout the Bible (see Matt 25:31-46 and James 2:14-18). In

Matt 6:40 Jesus exhorts his followers not only to give their coat, but if asked for a coat to also give their cloak! This certainly is not a quid pro quo approach to helping others. This creates a more trustworthy environment, where it is understood that members will continue to be available to honor social commitments, and that the norms of the organization suggest that such reciprocity will be offered. In fact, there is some evidence that persons involved in religious congregations perceive themselves as having both greater amounts and higher quality of social capital than do persons who do not participate in religious congregations (Ellison and George, 1994).

Consequences, which can be understood as the products to which Coleman refers, are the final potential measure of social capital. However, it is more appropriate to defer the concept of consequences to future research rather than attempting to include them in the definitions of social capital, given the limited research of social capital to this point (Newton, 1997).

One of the presumed products of social capital, civic society, figures prominently in discussions of social capital and also merits definition. Putnam (1996, 34) defined civic engagement as "people's connections with the life of their communities, not only with politics." He describes participation in collective political functions as a measure of civic involvement, including attendance at a rally, attending a public local meeting, or working with a political party as variables related to social capital. He also, however, used measures such as voting and newspaper reading (1995a, 1996).

Much of this discussion assumes that social capital accrues benefits primarily to the persons directly involved in exchange. However, Coleman (1988) makes an important

point concerning the public goods aspect of social capital. As has been discussed, when social capital is lost by one person, it is lost to all of society since it resides in relationships. As a result, if one person is willing to engage in intensive social capital development, others will benefit. In the example Coleman gives, a mom invests considerable time in a school. The relationships which she generates on behalf of her own child benefit all the children in her child's classroom and possibly at the school. The mother and her child only realize a portion of the benefits of her efforts, leaving the remainder as a public good. However, the mother's decision to withdraw from her volunteer activity, as a result of a job or move, withdraws social capital from all the children at the school who had benefited. As Coleman points out, the family itself may actually improve its position financially or otherwise and may regain comparable social capital elsewhere. However, the school does not improve and will actually be disadvantaged by the loss of social capital. This analogy of public goods and social capital also applies to the role of religious congregations in their communities.

Ultimately it is difficult, given the current state of the art, to directly measure social capital. In order to measure the social capital which exists within communities essentially proxy measures must be used, the most viable and accepted of those being participation in voluntary and political activities. These measures seem to be accepted by and in some cases have been used by a number of researchers (e.g. Newton, 1997; Weiss, 1996; Youniss, McLellan, and Yates, 1997). In spite of the limitations, they seem adequate in that they are intuitively sound. While it is difficult to determine the quantity or quality of trust which is generated by interactions in voluntary organizations and associations, it is

clear when interactions which are believed to contribute to the development of social

capital are present. It is then possible to infer that there is more social capital present than

there would be in the absence of such participation. One can even infer some amount of

trust between members of the interaction, on average, for if it were totally lacking they

would likely chose not to continue participation. In addition, it seems obvious that civic

involvement, if defined by involvement in face-to-face political participation of any sort, is

itself not only a possible product of social capital, but also a source.

Decline or not?

Putnam (1996) offers considerable evidence which he interprets as a drop in social

capital, but there is far from agreement from others concerning his interpretations.

According to Putnam, social trust measures, based on the General Social Survey across

the previous two decades (1996), show a steady decline. The organizations which Putnam

(1995a, 1996) identifies also show a precipitous drop in membership between the 1960's

and the 1990's. Greeley (1997b) contests Putnam's methodology, arguing that

volunteering is actually increasing across age cohorts. His analysis of the European Value

Studies of 1981 and 1991 finds that the younger cohorts, when compared to older cohorts

volunteer activity when they were the same age, are actually volunteering more. Given an

understanding of participation, not necessarily membership per se as important in the

development of social capital, Greeley's point seems reasonable.

Putnam's original article makes the point about reducing involvement in organized

associational activity by pointing out that even though more Americans than ever are

bowling (up 10%), the number of people bowling in leagues has dropped (down 40%), implying as his title suggests, that people are bowling alone (1995a). Yet this single analogy also allows a counter argument to his claims that social capital development opportunities are dropping. Ammerman (1996) suggests that people are still bowling together; they may simply be bowling in social or family groups rather than leagues. This argument is equally plausible, as people may be unwilling or unable to make the commitment to regular league play and select other less formal structures of gathering. Lemann (1996) takes a different tack, pointing to the surge in new or different types of organizations which are replacing the more traditional ones which Putnam used as measures. In a clever twist on the sports league analogy, he points out that the number of U.S. Youth Soccer members has gone from 127,000 to 2.4 million in the two decades on which Putnam focuses.

Lemann thus raises the question of whether Putnam is simply utilizing antiquated associations to measure voluntary associational behavior, leading to an underestimation of people's current associational behavior. Minkoff (1997) takes similar questions of social trust and associational trends even further than Lemann by suggesting that a form of organizations which Putnam has discredited, national social movements such as the Sierra Club, do have an active role in social capital development and civic involvement. Social movement organizations have been characterized as, among several things, having national leadership which is removed from membership in communities, and as being comprised of members who are often solely financial contributors, thus lacking any investment in or interaction within the organization. Yet these same organizations often have extensive

grassroots or community-based structures which provide the local infrastructure needed to mobilize memberships. Further, these organizations often have local chapters which engage in local activities, clear fitting under the associational definitions which Putnam makes (Minkoff, 1997).

One aspect of national organizations which has interesting implications for local groups, including religious congregations, is the creation of "symbolic communities" (Cornell, 1996). Within symbolic communities, there are three dimensions along which the groups are defined: interests, institution, and culture. In considering religious denominations, one such as the United Methodist Church appears very strong in the institutional and culture dimensions. The dimension of interests is probably moderately strong, given the relative diversity (with respect to SES of members) in the United Methodist Church, its wide regional distribution, and the fairly individualistic approach to personal theology. Thus, it seems reasonable to view religious denominations as potentially being a fairly strong symbolic community, even as they function primarily as face-to-face communities (local congregations).

Modern technologies, including the Internet, allow individuals who are disconnected generally from society by distance or by social factors to connect with each other through an interest which they share, creating a different type of symbolic community (Minkoff, 1997). A particular advantage of this means of connection is the ability of persons who are isolated in their places of residence, for example, gays/lesbians or persons who are deaf, to become linked to others with whom they share an identity (Minkoff, 1997). It certainly is a credible argument that persons affiliated in this way

would develop additional social capital and could increase their civic involvement as a result. This raises interesting questions about the potential use by organizations, even those such as the United Methodist Church which have many local structures, of such technology as a means of engaging persons who are isolated and unwilling or unable to access the local structures.

As an example of such an effort, a computer AIDS ministry (CAM) was developed and is maintained through the web site of the denomination's General Board of Global Ministries.[3] The implications of this form of engagement as a source of social capital development remains to be explored, but its potential looks promising. Technology such as Internet dialogue venues offers the potential for persons who would otherwise not engage with voluntary organizations the opportunity to become a part of a symbolic community without having to first trust. One reason is that the medium allows a level of anonymity until a person chooses to be more disclosing. Further, persons thus engaged could begin to feel a sense of identification with the institution which sponsors the technology approaches, perhaps beginning to consider face-to-face participation, which in turn would encourage reciprocity. It is equally possible that social capital which is abstractly developed in the sense suggested by Minkoff's (1997) social movement theory, would translate into civic involvement in equally abstract ways, such as through civic

---

3 The CAM Web Site is found at http//gbgm-umc.org/CAM/ or through the General Board's home page, which can be found by searching key words umc and gbgm. The gbgm site is a resource for considerable information regarding social and other ministries of the denomination, but additionally, provides free access to all local churches for development of home pages for their local congregations. There are other United Methodist Web sites, not necessarily tied to the gbgm, which identify local churches with ministries to persons living with AIDS. It is also possible to identify and dialogue with churches who identify themselves as reconciling congregations, welcoming and accepting of persons who identify as gay or lesbian. Any number of other specialized ministries or outreach efforts may also be found.

participation via the same medium. Thus, the social capital of this kind might lead to a different looking product, but one potentially just as beneficial in some aspects of civic America.

One disadvantage of technology use in developing social capital is the possible lack of access which persons with lower income or more limited educational experience, such as youth in inner city school systems. Portney and Berry (1997) raise just such concerns, suggesting that theorists have failed to consider the social capital and civic involvement trends for the lower-income and inner city residents, or to distinguish between persons in the majority and minority. If churches are to be one of places where the significant social capital development is to occur, then it is important to consider whether there are populations, defined by race, economic group, or other characteristic such as welfare status or sexual orientation, who are being excluded or neglected from social capital development to some greater extent than others. Use of Internet technology, for example, would clearly exclude some populations at present. However, one of the opportunities for local congregations is to be in the forefront of assisting persons who lack such access to gain it.

Given all these somewhat contradictory analyses of the state of social capital, it is difficult to say across the board that social capital is declining. Nor is there conclusive evidence that it is stable or growing. A very fundamental question which is raised, in fact, is what the appropriate baseline ought to be for social capital. There are interesting and sometimes convincing arguments about the state of social capital, but it is not certain what

amount or what types of social capital are needed in society for its members' social welfare to be adequately cared for.

The other issue, as presented by Putnam, is the positive relationship between social capital of and the level of civic participation by citizens of a country, which ultimately affects the strength of the democracy itself. Putnam (1995b) points to the decline in civic participation through a variety of measures he identifies as related and to trends of declining participation across the board in organizations (down about 25%), including churches, and in informal socializing (down about half) between 1965 and 1985. There are also indications that there has been a dramatic drop (about one third) in social trust since 1974.

Putnam's arguments, although well presented and empirically driven, cannot be accepted at face value, however. His original discussion of the place of social capital in the success of a society was based on research completed in Italy, and while his research appears generally solid, he makes inadequately substantiated assumptions about factors such as the link between associational patterns within communities, economic success of those communities, and the civic involvement of the communities (Quigley, 1996). Kenworthy (1997) theorizes that social trust is not, as described by Putnam, always necessary for economic cooperation, for example if there are institutional arrangements which encourage such cooperation. He suggests instead that "trust, then, appears to be a helpful but not a necessary precondition for economically beneficial cooperative behavior (649)." In some cases then, social capital may exist without trust being present, as long as structured settings allow people to act on the networks which they have established.

The various arguments being made that social capital is not on the decline imply that the products of social capital, such as civic society, must also not be on the decline, although most authors do not expressly make that claim. Verba, Schlozman, and Brady (1995) in their widely cited study found in <u>Voice and Equality: Civic Voluntarism in American Politics</u>, described mixed indicators regarding the participation of citizens in political process. For example, voting clearly declined between 1967 and 1987 while contact with public officials at all levels of government are way up. They interpret these trends as reflective, not necessarily of a decline in participation, but rather of shifts in how institutional mechanisms function which have lead to changes in the forms of civic involvement. Further, measures of political participation alone are inadequate indicators of civic involvement.

Causality factors and predictive relationships

Understanding causal relationships between social phenomenon is often difficult, but critical to explore when one is seeking to address areas perceived to be problematic. The general model is that participation in voluntary organizations produces, among other things, social capital for the participants. This social capital, in turn, leads to a higher rate of participation in civic society, both through volunteering to assist others and through participation in the political democratic process. Early voluntary associational activity is seen as being the starting point for social capital development.

In the case of social capital, there are two areas which merit examination, both of which have only theoretical causal relationships suggested at this time. For the purposes

of this section, it is accepted that there is a decline in some aspects of social capital and in the variables specified by Putnam as related to civic participation. The first question is, what is causing any decline in social capital? The second question is whether declining social capital or some other factor is prompting a decline in civic involvement in the United States. In both cases, the assumption is that there may be a decline in the commodity, an assumption about which there is clearly not agreement.

Putnam (1995b) proposes a variety of possible explanations for the decline he perceives in social capital, but discounts all of them. Among the explanations which he claims to eliminate are the changing role of women (working women actually volunteer/belong to organizations more than housewives), broken marriages (there may be some effect, but happily marrieds are joining less, too), increasing mobility of families (it has not really increased), and education (overall education has increased and there are declines in every educational group). The most probable culprit, as he sees it, is the incredible encroachment of television on U.S. culture. The differences in social capital and civic involvement seem sharply divided between the older generation which was raised without television, and the following generations which have shown a steady increase in television watching and steady decrease in joining organizations and in civic participation. There has long been a myth of rugged individualism in the United States. A somewhat whimsical analogy to Putnam's analysis is perhaps that what the real Wild West did not do to make the myth a truth, re-runs of shows such as John Wayne westerns may be accomplishing. However, Putnam's analysis is far from universally accepted.

One study sought to test Putnam's hypothesis about television by analyzing the

amount of political involvement as a function of types of television programs watched (Norris, 1996). This study suggests that it is not television per se which is related to political participation but that it is the type of television which is watched. Norris also found, reanalyzing factors similar to those identified by Putnam, that when other variables are controlled, education is the most consistent predictor of various types of activism.

Pildes (1996) presented another perspective on social capital. Rather than focusing on individual involvement in voluntary organizations, Pildes sought to partially explain declines in social capital as the unintended consequences of public policy on social capital. He argues that public policy is often developed in an attempt to institutionalize or strengthen social norms of helping or informal policing, with the effect of actually creating barriers to the continuance of those norms. In the process, social capital is destroyed. Social norms, strengthened by social capital, influence and enhance the enforcement of existing laws. For example, often the presence of social capital, encouraged by the physical space in communities, leads neighbors to speak to each other and to spend considerable time mingling outside. Zoning regulations designed to enhance public safety by creating less dense communities make it more difficult for neighbors to mingle and relationships are diminished. As a result, neighbors are less involved with each other and public safety worsens.

Carol Rose (1996) goes a step further, specifying a model in which social capital leads to social norms. These in turn frame the moral and cultural infrastructure of communities. The implication is that social capital is the raw material which is used to build healthy communities. It seems reasonable that churches, as community based

organizations with an environment which fosters socialization, could be critical in the maintenance of social capital. Further, the diversity between churches combined with their relative ubiquitousness creates numerous opportunities for people to be involved.

Heying (1997) also offers another structural explanation for the decline in social capital, based on his analysis of the civic elites in Atlanta in 1931, 1961, and 1991. He proposes that part of the decline in certain types of participation, such as membership on boards of voluntary organizations and community leadership posts, results from changes in the economic structure of the United States. This economic restructuring has changed the local picture of business in most communities, as local companies which were run or owned by the local elite have been bought by national companies. The managers who are placed in leadership positions within the communities subsequently are not locals, as the past CEOs were, nor do they have the authority that the previous CEOs had to utilize company resources for the betterment of the community. Finally, they simply do not have the commitment to the community which the prior elites had had. As a result, they do not offer civic leadership in a meaningful way. One can hypothesize that another result of the economic transformation of corporations is a reduced tendency on the part of the managers of local branches to encourage employees' involvement in civic activities.

The point Heying makes is that while Putnam has accounted for individual factors one by one in his analysis, he fails to put them together in a larger analysis of the change in social structure. Heying analyzes a very specific aspect of that change - the place of "home-grown" elites in communities - but his conceptualization raises other questions about structural changes in society. The pace of change, wrought by technology and

radical restructuring in global political and economic arenas, along with the realignment of wealth in the U.S. may well be responsible for a change in how people perceive the world and their ability to have an impact.

Yet there is another factor which is alluded to by many of the theorists without being accounted for in many of their models. Level of education is identified as the most universal predictor of voluntary association involvement and civic involvement (Brady, Verba, and Schlozman, 1995; Newton, 1997). It may be more appropriate to include the role of social capital in ensuring educational success or of school participation in social capital development, rather than focusing primarily on voluntar∙ ∙ ganizations and to include educational level in any multi-factor analysis of predictors of civic involvement.

In addition, viewing participation in voluntary organizations as the starting point for understanding social capital seems inadequate, although important. While such participation may in fact be a predictor of civic involvement, for example, it is not an adequate model if one is attempting to determine effective means of building social capital across a community, or with those who are most deficit. If one utilizes the most basic definition of social capital, that of social networks which facilitate mutual satisfaction of needs, then the fundamental source of social capital for most is the family (Newton, 1997). The focus on voluntary associations is limiting. There seems to have been no empirical examination of possible connections between the family's reservoir of social capital, the likelihood of involvement by its members in voluntary associations, and subsequent social capital or civic participation. It is not known whether a person who has existing social capital benefits more from additional social capital activities than someone who does not,

or if perhaps, they simply might have greater access to additional social capital development opportunities. It seems possible that they would. In a related vein, it is also not known whether persons who have a limited amount of social capital are able to take advantage of social capital development opportunities without instruction. Again, it seems very possible that the form in which such social capital is made available will affect the ability of the person to develop it.

To return to the analogy with financial capital, one truism which is often expressed is that it takes money to make money. Unless one begins with a store of funds (financial capital), it is difficult to have anything to invest. This is similar to the idea of social exchange and the limits of reciprocity, as persons who are disadvantaged may find it difficult to improve their position, having very little to offer in exchange for that which they need or want. Thus those with limited social capital may have little to offer initially. However, one study which examined issues of income with respect to social capital found that persons who were poorest often have more social capital, most of it in friendship networks, than many people who were more affluent (Boisjoly, Duncan, and Hofferth, 1995). It is possible, nonetheless, that the poor still are disadvantaged with respect to social capital, with their perceptions of access proportionate to their existing position. While they are able to get their basic needs met their resources are themselves limited in what they have to offer. This suggestion does not denigrate the social capital which is available, but simply points out that if it is all found within the restricted boundaries of friendship networks, there are limitations to what the social capital can offer, even if it is proportionately a fair amount. Again, where necessary, religious congregations may be in

a unique position to help people identify intangible offerings which they may exchange with others, and to offer an environment conducive to that exchange.

However, there is one more dynamic which is not accounted for with respect to models of social capital development, one which can again be illustrated with the analogy of financial capital. Persons who have too little money to meet their own needs are unable to save money as an investment. Instead they are forced to spend all that they have, often before they have it. In addition, when they do receive more than they need, lacking understanding of and being unpracticed in the art of investment, they often spend all that they have rather than judiciously investing their excess. The same may occur with social capital. If there is a sudden abundance of social capital, which in this scenario is a resource for a person with very little to get his physical needs met, there may be a tendency of the person to spend all the social capital which is made available. Part of the definition of social capital is that it is used to mutual benefit. Persons who have had little social capital available may have little skill in investing social capital or in the mutual benefit aspects of social capital, leading them to "spend it all". Once it is spent, it may be difficult for them to be resupplied in the same setting, if they have exhausted their social capital credit.

Social capital and civic involvement of its holders

Social capital is seen by many as being critical to the success of representative government, and implicitly, to the success of all society under that government. In the early 1800's, political and religious leaders (generally the same people), struggled to

define the political structures and norms of the United States, including issues of separation of church and state. Some early leaders of apparently considerable influence, such as Leonard Bacon and Lyman Beecher, understood a successful free society as needing to have institutions which promoted interaction and action on the part of its citizens (Hall, 1994). Trust and informal governance or enforcement of social norms in addition to the formal laws of the society seem integral to the cohesion of a democratic society. Social capital, although unnamed as such, was assumed to enhance both the formal and the informal structures of society, although as Putnam (1995a) points out, the precise benefits of social capital are yet to be clearly defined. This caveat is important, for although some of the possible benefits of social capital are enticing, there is not firm evidence regarding its role in society, or even its definition. Levi (1996) in a critique of Putnam's Making Democracy Work asserts that he has not made a case for the connections between social capital and civic involvement. Newton (1997) almost bitingly questions why voluntary organizations are held in such high esteem with respect to social capital development. He points out that family, and even educational level, are far more influential in the development of civic involvement. Clearly, even as research such as this present study examine the potential places and ways in which social capital can be developed, more research is needed on the precise effects of social capital when it is present.

Putnam believes that social capital is a key resource which determines the civic health of a society. Newton (1997) elaborates the mechanisms by which social capital is presumed to develop into civic involvement:

"Social capital is a subjective phenomenon composed of a range of

values and attitudes of citizens that influence or determine how they relate

to each other. Particularly important are attitudes and values relating to

trust and reciprocity because these are crucial for social and political

stability and cooperation. ...social capital focuses on those cultural values

and attitudes that predispose citizens to cooperate trust, understand each

other.... Therefore, social capital is important because it constitutes a force

that helps bind people together by transforming individuals from self-

seeking and egocentric calculators, with little social conscience or sense of

mutual obligation, into members of a community with shared interest,

shared assumptions about social relations and a sense of the common good

(575-576)."

Implications

If Putnam's analysis of social capital and its link to both trust and civic

involvement are correct, then there are profound implications for the ongoing political

press to get churches and other local nonprofits to take on the task of working with

persons who are in need. First, there may not be enough people to serve as volunteers or

supporters of the organizations which are expected to provide services for those who are

in need, because they do not belong to the organizations. That is, social capital may be

limited within the organizations themselves. The impact on funding potential is also

suspect then, if solely from the perspective that more members will mean more

contributors. In fact, there are data, to be discussed later in this paper, suggesting declining membership and participation in many denominations. The difference between simply holding membership or attending as compared to participating in an organizations may be important, although difficult to discuss in more than a theoretical sense. That is, social capital has to do with the establishment of relationships between people, with creation of networks, neither of which may occur if one simply holds membership. Joining, which is the requisite to trust, seems to suggests active participation rather than just nominal membership (Putnam, 1995b). The issue of charitable contributions will also be further discussed in a later section, particularly in light of the established link between volunteering and contributions (Hodgkinson, Weitzman, Abrahams, Crutchfield, and Stevenson, 1996).

The other implication, however, is that there is a need for churches and other organizations to work at the development of social capital. The call has been for churches to assist the needy. If one accepts the concept that society is strengthened by the presence of lots of social capital, and conversely weakened by its decline, then there should be some purposeful effort to build social capital, even though it is usually generated as a coincidental by-product of social interaction (Coleman, 1988). There is good reason to consider that churches, the most ubiquitous of all nonprofit organizations, are even more critically needed in the area of social capital development than in provision of human services alone. The religious function of congregations is certainly their primary concern, but as they are called to greater involvement in the response to persons in community rather simply in providing religious services to members, this distinction between social

capital and concrete services needs to be understood. The unique nature of religious congregations ought to be understood and utilized for unique purposes, given the presence of so many other nonprofit and voluntary organizations in the United States.

Even if Putnam's assertion that social capital is essential to the well being of democratic society or his overall analysis that social capital is declining is wrong, it still seems critical for organizations such as religious congregations to be involved in activities which will increase social capital across communities. It will been argued in a later section that an excess of social capital, even in organizations which have fundamentally positive goals, may be detrimental to society if they are driven by dissatisfaction with society or are primarily self serving (Berman, 1997). In order to maintain social cohesion in the face of such potential fragmentation, larger mediating structures, such as those of government, are ne. d. However, it is clear that there is a some portion of U.S. citizens who have lost traditional access to the social capital they need personally, although the dynamics of that loss are still being explored and the extent of that loss is not fully documented. Religious congregations are accessible to persons in all areas, including rural areas which may have very few other voluntary organizations available due to sparse population. Urban areas tend to breed negative social capital in the form of street gangs (one hesitates to describe them as youth gangs, as members are often adults), while similar organizations in rural areas emerge as militia. However, for a variety of reasons, much of the emphasis of policy has been on urban areas. The value structures which religious congregations may be able to impart and their widespread accessibility suggest them as potentially good sources of alternative social capital.

Gardner (1996) describes families and communities as the sources of shared values and ethical systems in society, with religious organizations serving as one of the intermediary types of organizations in communities which support and develop what others call social capital, along with assuring the presence of freedom in society. He points to communities as a rich source of the motivation of members to acting in extraordinary ways. He goes further, pointing out that for a variety of reasons, communities are breaking down, and that there needs to be an effort through the preservers, family and communities, to counter the breakdown. Since the traditionally overlapping areas of work, school, church, and neighborhood have ceased to overlap, those which remain must be strongly engaged in the process of developing and preserving those elements which constitute strong communities. Religious congregations seem one of the remaining viable places for that engagement to occur (Gardner, 1996).

Other more contemporary ways of developing social capital need to be understood, including by religious organizations. The positive and negative aspects of the Internet and computer technology as resources for churches to engage in social ministry are being explored in some quarters of the Christian community. The Other Side, a progressive Christian periodical, devoted its May/June, 1997 issue to discussion of role of technology in religion. Egan (1997) describes an innovative program, a collaboration of a variety of non-profit and for-profit organizations, which is teaching computer and particularly Internet skills to persons in low-income, inner-city Philadelphia neighborhoods. The program includes free access to the Internet for participants. It is clear that there is interaction, hence social capital developing. The cycle of interactions

appears to be this: teachers and mentors taught teens, who in turn formed a collective to themselves teach the computer skills and increase technology access in their neighborhood. Their use of the Internet further expands their social capital. "The Internet demands interaction" and "As they learn, they teach: their friends, teachers, and families"(29). Symbolic communities are available to them through the Internet, but their engagement with their mentors and with Internet also gives them social capital and prompts them to develop social capital, along with human capital with others in their geographic community as well.

Social capital development in youth and children

Arguably children and youth may be the population whose social capital development is most critical, although it is not the purpose of this paper to present extensive developmental theory regarding values and attitudes. Gardner (1996) refers to the fairly recent surge in street gangs as evidence of the need for social capital, with youth who are seeking networks and social engagement through the structures which are available to them. As Putnman (1995b) points out, these are negative social capital structures. Weiss (1996) also suggests that many youth currently do not have adequate access to acceptable forms of social capital development opportunities, and points out that the General Social Survey, which is a frequent data source of social capital measures, does not include youth under 18. Thus the state of social capital for youth is more difficult to infer than is that of adults (which is itself far from conclusive).

Youniss, McLellan and Yates (1997) found that youth who are more engaged in

voluntary associational activities are more likely to be involved in voluntary memberships organizations as adults. They point out that many programs for youth emphasize civic involvement and service to others. This lends support to the idea that organizations such as churches should actively seek to develop meaningful activities for youth..

Findings which show education as a consistent predictor of civic involvement are also relevant to increasing social capital among youth (Norris,1996; Brady, Verba and Schlozman, 1995). It may be that one critical function of social capital development for children and youth is that of assuring at-risk youth succeed educationally, which will have the added benefit to society of increasing their later civic involvement. The direct benefits of educational success are a given.

Yates and Youniss (1996) have developed a model which seeks to explain the impact of voluntary action on adolescent identity formation. Their study, which evaluated written reflections of youth concerning volunteer experiences in a soup kitchen, suggested the experience encouraged youth to be increasingly able to reflect on external meanings. That is, they were transcendent in their thinking concerning their situation compared to that of the others (recipients). While the descriptive design precluded drawing conclusions, their work suggests that such volunteer opportunities changes the social conscience of youth in some way.

Hagan, MacMillan, and Wheaton (1996) examined another potential factor in the development of social capital on children, the impact of family mobility. While Putnam (1996b) states that there is no more mobility than existed in the past, mobility is present and frequent moves disrupt social networks. In addition, Hagan and his associates point

out that due to the shifting economic climate of the past two decades, the reasons for mobility are more likely to be perceived negatively by the persons forced to move or with uncertainty (as these are unwanted changes), compared to the economic period preceding this one. What they found was that for families who moved frequently there was considerable disruption in community networks and connections. From the opposite perspective, Sampson (1988) found that there were positive relationships between length of residence in a community and individual friendship ties, between attachment to community and level of participation in social activities. All of these are likely sources of social capital. Thus it is reasonable to infer that when there are moves, there is less social capital, probably for all family members, but especially for children in the family. The disruption of family ties, a primary source of social capital, appears to be another factor in decreasing social capital (Boisjoly, Duncan, and Hofferth, 1995). In addition there was in the Hagan, MacMillan and Wheaton study a finding that children's educational achievement decreased. Putnam (1995a) has noted the strong positive relationship between educational achievement and the amount of social capital as well as civic involvement of individuals. Thus, these children appear very vulnerable to educational and social capital deficits as adults.

Hagan, McMillan and Wheaton (1996) found that parental involvement was a factor in offsetting losses in social capital of their children. Coleman (1988)'s findings suggest that their ability to offset those losses for their children may be limited, perhaps by their own inability to generate new social capital when they move. He analyzed the effects of parental mobility on educational attainment of youth, as measured by drop-out rates,

suggesting that parental social capital is decreased for mobile parents. Coleman found, using data from the 1985 and 1986 data sets of the *High School and Beyond* survey, that families that never moved had an 11.8% drop-out rate between grades 10 and 12, 16.7% if there was one move, and 23.1% if there were two moves. The analysis included other variables, such as familial socioeconomic status in a multiple regression, but this variable was the strongest in overall effect. Thus, these children appear very vulnerable to social capital deficits as adults.

The impressions of this author are that there is a subset of mobile families which is very impoverished and is mobile within, rather than between, towns due to lack of personal financial resources for housing which may be at the greatest risk of social capital disruption. That is, they move frequently from neighborhood to neighborhood. One repercussion of such mobility is school disruption. While it is difficult to establish a clear relationship between poverty and mobility, a review of the mobility and subsidized lunch program rates in elementary schools in Lansing, Michigan does serve as an indicator. Mobility is defined as the percentage of students who came or left during the school year and figures reported here were part of a series on the Lansing schools by the Lansing State Journal (1997). In 1996-97, the schools which have the lowest mobility rates (MR) also have the lowest rates of subsidized lunch programs (LP). Attwood and Averill had rates of 16.8% (MR):33.3% (LP) and 22.5% (MR):37% (LP) respectively. The schools with the highest rates of mobility had the highest participation rates in lunch programs. Bingham had an MR of 57.6% with 90% LP, Grand River had 72.1% MR with 81.2% (LP), and Walnut Street had 71.2% MR with 81.0% (LP). The obvious exception was

Holmes Street School, an magnet school for language, culture, and communication arts, which had 24.6% MR with 82.3% (LP), suggesting that there are conditions which can offset school disruption.

These numbers are in no way intended to be a statistical analysis, as there are varying patterns in the mid-range schools and this is simply impressionistic. Further, there are high rates of mobility for all schools, regardless of the lunch program participation. Only four schools of the 35 have mobility rates less than 20% while ten schools have mobility rates over 50% Lansing State Journal, 1997). The point remains the same: access to social capital is impaired by mobility and there appears to be very high mobility for children in this community.

Thus, the possible role of religious congregations in initiating the development of social capital with these families, whom Hagan, McMilland and Wheaton (1996) characterize as relatively isolated in their communities and whom Coleman (1988) describes as having lost social capital, seems potentially critical. It is not clear, however, whether most churches have the skills
or the interest in reaching out to this population. One encouraging finding is that families in very poor neighborhoods reported more access to social capital than others, apparently in friendship networks (Boisjoly, Duncan, and Hofferth, 1995).

The potential of using technology tools, including the Internet may have particular potential for young people. They may already be learning computer technology through school, but may lack access, which could be provided through religious congregations or others.

Religious congregations as social capital development agents

Uehara (1990) points out that one of the interests of social exchange theorists is the relationship between the exchange and the solidarity of the group. She suggests that a number of theorists assume that obligation, trust, and cooperation are products of the exchange and are created between the exchanges. These in turn lead to solidarity of the group which is the source of these products. If one accepts that these are elements of the exchange process, then formalizing community based networks, i.e. through use of churches and volunteers, to assist those in need within our society has intriguing possibilities. Certainly, this seems to suggest that the process of social exchange, to the extent that there is equality and reciprocity is important to the development of social capital.

The potential and real roles of religious congregations in providing social capital to youth is an important one. Coleman (1988) points to the significant positive relationship between religious participation and school completion. The effects remain even when attendance at parochial schools is controlled for. He suggests this as an indication of the critical importance of community based forms of social capital, and religious congregations are the most easily accessed and pervasively available community organization available to youth, regardless of their socio-economic status or type of locale. It is also interesting to incorporate Uehara's observations about exchange and the solidarity of the group. In a time when many youth are achieving solidarity with groups rich in negative social capital, the youth groups of religious organizations may form an

opportunity for them to achieve group solidarity - seemingly a particularly critical need for adolescents - through a structure which provides values and social capital which is intergenerational. It seems probable that these benefits would accrue even if the activities of the youth groups are not overtly religious.

Unfortunately, there are two possible pitfalls of seeking to achieve true social exchange which occurs without power differentials. One involves the potential preference of the religious congregations (or rather, the individuals who comprise churches) to have power in order to manipulate the recipients into more socially desirable behavior or behavior more consistent with that valued by the church. This does not really involve exchange in the above sense. The other possible pitfall is that reciprocity will become a goal.

With respect to the first point, it is clear that many people needing assistance engage in behaviors or have lifestyles which are not condoned by most religious congregations. Thus, it may be difficult for those congregations to provide needed services to those persons without attempting to manipulate the person's behavior. For example, persons with HIV/AIDS are often gay men or persons who have used drugs, groups of people whose lifestyle is condemned by many churches. An undergraduate student reported in a social work class taught by the author that her church had taken in a man with AIDS, but it was okay because he had renounced his past sin. It was clear that removing himself from his gay lifestyle was virtually a condition of receiving assistance from the church as he was dying.

To address the second issue, one of the ways that reciprocity might be expected by

religious congregations is in attendance at and support for the congregation. While there are benefits to giving opportunities to beneficiaries of assistance or even to encouraging reciprocity, involuntary participation in religious activities as a condition for receipt of other services is in many ways a contradiction of social work values. At the very least, it is inappropriate because there are individuals who are actively involved in their own religious activities, but who need services which are only available through a particular other religious organization. Their religious preferences merit respect.

This is in no way to suggest that integration of religion into the services offered is inappropriate in all instances, but rather to suggest that there needs to be caution shown in that area. It has been suggested that one of the possible values of involving churches in provision of services, which also develops social capital, is that the churches may offer a value system which is socially and individually desirable. In most cases, the religious aspects and the values are imbedded in each other. To the extent that this is true, it is critical from a social work perspective that people be allowed to voluntarily participate in those aspects of the services which are religious in nature on a voluntary basis. To borrow from the 12-Step tradition, those aspects of the service delivery should be based on attraction, not on obligation or even recruitment.

Social capital: Positive and Negative Aspects

Much has been made of the positive effects of social capital. The negative effects, in much of the literature, have been little discussed. Rather, the general approach seems to be based on an assumption that the existence of larger quantities of positive capital is

better, while less is worse. Two questions exist regarding positive and negative aspects of social capital. One is whether the nature of social capital is positive or negative. The other is whether the presence of social capital is positive or negative. Coleman (1988, 98) does not attribute either to social capital, defining in neutral terms, and suggesting that the same social capital may be useful in one situation, vis a vis accomplishing goals, and not useful or even harmful in another, where it does not facilitate completion of goals.

Putnam (1995b) acknowledges the existence of negative social capital, illustrating it in such a way as to suggest that the existence of negativity in social capital is related to the type of organization in which it is found. Thus, activities or groups which reflect positive social values are positive, and those which are inconsistent with the general social norms or expectations, such as street gangs, are negative. Groups such as militias and the KKK, then, would be viewed as generators of negative social capital.

This raises concerns about the need to understand what types of groups or even formal organizations are the source of social capital development, particularly among youth. There are many organizations which are clearly seen by the vast majority of society as acceptable, whereas some are clearly seen by the same majority as negative. Thus there is a difference in desirability between the social capital of youth gangs versus that developed through youth clubs run by the YMCA. This points out the potential importance of context within which social capital develops. Specifically, it suggests the importance of organizations which reflect appropriate goals serving as the context for developing social capital. Even churches, which are widely acceptable places for social capital development, may be viewed negatively if one is in disagreement with the doctrine

or teachings of a particular church. That is, the goals toward which the group works may be viewed as negative by others. A church group which actively works in opposition to abortion may be viewed as a negative source of social capital by a pro-choice parent.

One might make an argument, however, that the sheer importance of social capital, i.e. of building of social connections and trust, outweighs the disadvantage of having social capital developed within or facilitated by organizations with whom one might have disagreements, provided that the values of those organizations are within tolerance levels. For example, a Catholic school might be an acceptable environment for a Protestant's child, while a street gang probably would not be. Many people seem to recognize the importance of social capital, and depending on their access to resources, seem willing to engage in satisficing behavior with respect to their decisions to seek development of social capital for themselves or their children. There is an element of "something is better than nothing" thinking in satisficing. Thus, churches might be accepted as sources of services even though the resultant social capital is not viewed as completely positive by the persons who receive it. The social capital which is offered participants as a result of services by churches may not be viewed as useful, as it may only be available for a very limited purpose, such as getting food. Intuitively, personal income would seem to be an important factor in determining the ability of any given person or family to secure their preferences with respect to the source of social capital or of having to resort to satisficing. Persons with more limited income likely have fewer options with respect to where they can seek social capital: money can buy connections as well as services.

There is a broader potential problem with the creation of even considerable

positive social capital, however. The nature of social capital is the development of ties which facilitated people's pursuit of goals, often goals which are self-serving. It is almost inevitable that the goals of some groups will conflict with the goals of others, creating conflict and factionalism (Berman, 1997, Foley and Edwards, 1997). The more social capital which exists, the more potential there is for conflicting groups to use it to attain control at the expense of other groups, in order to achieve their goals and for them to have the means for aggressive pursuit of those goals. Some have suggested that this could actually lead to social capital as politically disruptive or socially conflictive force, rather than as a foundation for constructive participation in democratic processes and social cooperation. Foley and Edwards (1997) point out that social capital is not a replacement for political systems, as some politicians who espouse devolution, and even some theorists, seem to believe. Rather, there is a need for overarching political institutions which resolve or manage the conflicts and also assure the pursuit of collective, not just individual interests (Minkoff, 1997). Functionally, while civil society may be encouraged by the presence of strong positive social capital, political systems which are representative and able to support governance must still exist to maintain stable democracies, in part by providing the mechanisms which control the goal pursuit of those who have sufficient social capital to detract from the well-being of those who have less (Diamond, 1994; Levi, 1996). Therefore, the role of religious congregations in providing social capital ought be seen as a collaboration with governmental entities rather than, as some politicians seem to be suggesting, a replacement for them.

Not surprisingly, even Internet forms of social capital development can lead to

either positive or negative social capital. Two recent incidents illustrate negative applications. In one, groups of fans from rival soccer teams in Europe used the Internet to arrange the time and place for a physical altercation related to their soccer rivalries. In another, there was an Internet posting recruiting for gangs. While this later was found to be a hoax, the possibility of using the Internet in this way is very real. In a more positive example, periodically stories appear in the news of a group which first organized on the Internet, subsequently deciding to meet, periodically to develop face-to-face relationships.

Reciprocity and social capital

Reciprocity, which has already been discussed somewhat, is an important aspect of social capital. Reciprocity can be either specific/local or generalized. Essentially, there can either be immediate, one-on-one exchange or a more diffused connection between the time and the people in the exchange. This is similar to Uehara's concept of indirect exchange. In either conceptualization, people who have assisted others accrue a "social debt". Understood in this way, social capital is a form of collateral (Pildes, 1996) in which trust and relationships allow people to get their needs met over time.

The idea of reciprocity seems important to this discussion of social capital for two reasons. First, there is the potential for a considerable chain effect in exchanges occurring within large networks, which could lead to the development of large amounts of social capital. Exchange on a one-to-one basis assumes that the two individuals involved in the exchange have mutually acceptable goods to exchange. It is often not the case that individuals can meet each other's preferences. Even within the context of a relationship

such as spousal dyad or a parent-child dyad, individuals are not able to accommodate all of each other's preferences (as anyone in such a dyad will gladly illustrate!). Thus, the availability of extended networks within which there are chains of exchange, whether formal or informal, makes it much more likely that there will be development of adequate social capital.

A related issue is the fact that there are some people who may never have the potential or ability, whether due to personal or economic limitations, to ever reciprocate in a way which will be sufficient to prompt any exchange, if the primary motive of the original giver is to achieve reciprocity. In addition, the civic participation of some person in any society will of necessity be limited to that person's human potential. If those in society who do not have the means to offer reciprocity or who do not have to ability to make much impact through political participation, then the values of society will determine what the relative worth of those persons is. Religious congregations are one of the places where potentially social capital may be made available to persons who have limited reciprocal or civic potential, as the values of the congregations will not necessarily hinge on the return which those persons will make to them (individually or organizationally). Reciprocity will be offered between those members who do have the ability to engage in reciprocal behavior, or equality of reciprocity will be judged based on relative ability rather than some absolute measure. Thus, the individual in the local church who is mentally handicapped and who always needs a ride will be given a ride without the expectation that he will ever give a ride or other compensation back. Further, the efforts he makes to assist with activities at the church, even when they are not productive in accomplishing the

project goal, are credited as reciprocal efforts because they are intended as such by the individual. Nelson (1983) pointed, for example, to a trend in Protestant church policy (c. 1980) of integrating persons who had mental retardation into the life of local congregations.

Second, religious congregations and similar organizations offer a ready environment within which to develop social capital, as other sources or contexts of social capital, such as accessible neighborhoods, have disappeared. Religious congregations may actively encourage people to join or may recruit people into volunteering (Independent Sector, 1988). Furthermore, they are organizations whose primary social goal is the development of social networks. They are organizations which highly value reciprocity. Gardner (1996) describes one of the needed steps in restrengthening communities as based on shared tasks. Congregations seem logical places in which there can be increased numbers of activities which involve shared tasks. The use of congregational members to provide services to the community's members who are in need could have the dual effect of building community within the membership and between the members and the larger community.

One potentially important factor with respect to the involvement of religious congregations is suggested by Gardner (1996). Caring, trust and teamwork are essentially to building community and to the development of social capital. Gardner identifies the first step to building those elements as assuring that the process is inclusive. Persons in "outsider" groups or minority groups need to feel that they belong. There is a risk that religious congregations may be places where persons from some groups do not feel

welcome and accepted. To the extent that they do not, religious congregations are handicapped in their potential role of building social capital, and hence, in strengthening community. However, congregations may or may not be interested in overcoming that particular barrier.

The role of religious congregations in social capital development

What, then, is the place of religious congregations in social capital development? Part of that question is whether it makes any difference where and how the social capital is developed. Does it matter whether there is a value context within which social capital develops (Foley and Edwards, 1997)? Theories which posit that social capital simply emerges from participation in associational activities fail to account for or provide any guidance to questions of what the most beneficial types of social capital are and of how to produce them. Two related issues have been discussed with respect to the effects of having large stores of social capital in society. One is the tendency, as social capital assets increase, for there to be increases in the amount of conflict which exists in society. While conflict is not inherently detrimental to democratic social structures, and in fact may be one of the elements which undergirds democracy, there is still a need for mediating influences or structures to resolve conflicts as they emerge. The other is the tendency of individuals to associate with others, often like themselves in some set of characteristics, for the purpose of pursuing or advancing their individual interests in that interest area. The combination of these two tendencies, increased conflict and pursuit of individual interests with like persons, could easily be at the expense of the collective good of society

unless a third factor, there is also incorporation of a specific set of values which encourages use of social capital for the collective good. All this suggests that it does matter where and how social capital is developed, as values of the group and its members influence how the social capital is used.

It is suggested here that religious congregations offer the integration of a set of values which are generally accepted as positive in this culture. As has been discussed, historically social unity in the United States has existed in part because the Protestant mainline churches offered a similar set of values, allowing larger society to function within a relatively common foundation upon which to make decisions as a society. Increasing religious plurality in the U.S. and separation of church and state have challenged those historical ties. However, the key point here is that there are values which are commonly accepted within not just the Protestant Christian denominations but across the major religions in the U.S., so that while the denominations may disagree quite sharply about specific issues, there are values which are commonly accepted as appropriate. Thus, it seems very reasonable to suggest that churches are a very acceptable place to produce social capital, particularly when that social capital is in a form which can be utilized to meet the needs of individuals within the communities.

The other argument for social capital development and exercise of social capital in churches (keeping in mind that it is something to be used, not something which can be simply stored) is that churches are likely to have the motivation to do it. Most economic models of altruism assume that the individual engaged in a behavior which benefits others is doing so with some expectation of benefit. Essentially, there is the expectation of

exchange, whether direct or not. While this may true generally, there is a different

expectation in Christian theology. Christian scriptures include an imperative to assist

those in need, regardless of one's own benefit, and sometimes, even if there is a substantial

cost to self, up to and including death if necessary.[4] The only form of reciprocity lies in an

potential ultimate reward in the afterlife by God. Thus, for many individuals who engage

in social exchange due to their personal religious beliefs, there is little or no expectation of

reciprocity at the present time, if ever. Certainly, this produces a different type of social

capital, for if people are willing to engage with others expressly for the purpose of

assisting others in getting their needs met, there are different opportunities. And frankly,

this leaves open the potential for a much more hopeful society. The religious

congregation can offer for the person who is in need not only a response to a concrete

need but also an avenue to social integration and social capital (Harris, 1994).

Ammerman (1996) recognizes that there is a difference, and suggests that religious

congregations are appropriate places for such development. She proposes that religious

congregations are places which create types of social capital which include moral and

spiritual dimensions. She points to societal expectations that religious congregations are

or will be places where there is a sense of belonging and trust, as with other voluntary

organizations, but with the added expectation from society that the congregations

themselves have a moral standing which exceeds that of other organizations. In addition,

religious congregations offer pre-existing symbols, rituals, and stories which help coalesce

participants, but which also give additional eternal meaning - the values and moral context

---

4 Matthew 17:25 For whoever would save his life will lose it, and whoever loses his life for my sake will

- to the civic work in which congregations and their members engage in society (Wood,

1997). Tacitly and sometimes explicitly, religious congregations have been recognized as

being sources of positive social capital. The following story, on the heels of devastating

floods in the Plains states this spring of 1997 illustrates many of the above points

regarding the potential benefits of social capital development in churches:

"The Rev. Steve Loan of Winter Harbor, Maine, wrote to the Rev.

James Persons, pastor of Wesley United Methodist Church, Grand Forks,

North Dakota, 'We are sending this letter along with the cash collected ...

to let you know who we are and to tell you how God has worked in our

lives.'

Loan told how Gouldsboro, a 34-member church on his Schoodic

Circuit[5], closed last November when worship attendance dropped to three.

Loan was persuaded to hold Easter services, however, and 11 people

came. Then came news about the Red River flooding and finally the Grand

Forks disaster. 'We realized we could do something event though we were

small in size'... Members contacted UMCOR[6], got a supply list and began

collecting; soon the other churches on the circuit... joined the effort.

They got larger stores such as the local Wal-Mart to act as

collections points; sent letters to 32 area churches; involved community

---

find it.
5 United Methodist appointments, when churches are small, may include a number of churches, called
circuits from the time when pastors rode on horseback preach to a circuit of as many as 15 local churches.
This circuit appears to have three churches.
6 UMCOR is the United Methodist Committee on Relief, which among other responsibilities, coordinates
all relief efforts, locally, nationally,or globally.

groups, a 4-H and local grammar schools.

'The day care section of a local nursing home held a car wash and collected $69', Loan wrote. 'It was a great sight to see them sitting in their wheel chairs spraying cars while the nurses scrubbed the cars.'

For four weeks cash and supplies came in from these little United Methodist churches.. Gouldsboro members contact Service Master headquarters; because of their efforts 23 Service Master distributors around the nation each contributed $200 worth of supplies. The final project was a Bean Supper....

'We are sending 23 cartons of supplies from the UMCOR list of needs... [and] a check for $600 for you to use as you see fit. These come with our love and hopes that life will return to normal for you as soon as possible.' UPS shipped the cartons to Grand Forks free of charge.

Is that the end of what Pastor Loan called the 'Maine to Midwest' connection? He wrote, 'While we started this project as a way to help others, we have been greatly blessed by the Lord in the process. Our little church has come alive again. We have had as many as 35 at worship, two baptisms, and five people signed up to join.'

The Gouldsboro, Maine, congregations said they want to stay in touch with Wesley Church as a sister congregation (Fisher, 1997)."

This vignette illustrates the potential place of religious congregations in developing social capital, the effectiveness of strong social capital, some of the benefits of such

capital, and the effect of having this capital in churches with respect to altruistic behavior. First, the issue of motivation in helping others. This account does not address the question of motive, but simply states that the congregation, which had not met apparently even at Christmas did gather for Easter which can be considered the highest holy day for Christians. At that time some member or members of the congregations decided that there should be an effort to assist those in need due to a natural disaster. Those in need were located at a great distance, as this congregation is in Maine and the one in need is in North Dakota. Thus, it is improbable that the Maine congregation, unsure even of its future existence, engaged in this act of altruism with any expectation of reciprocity - at the time of their decision, their congregation had been functionally closed for five months. The only possible reciprocity was very indirect, either insurance against being left to suffer in the event that they themselves should suffer a similar misfortune in the future or some reward in the afterlife. It is worth considering that the religiously-based values of the congregation, that they should give to others in need, lead them to assist without thought for their own return.

Second, the Gouldsboro church had greatly reduced membership and participation of those who remained. While it is not possible to be sure, there appears to have been quite limited social capital, except that there was social capital within the connections between the circuit churches and the pastor had some store of social capital from the denominationally-based connections in which all United Methodist ministers are imbedded. It is obvious that a great deal of social capital was generated in the efforts they made to secure relief supplies for another congregations with whom they had only symbolic

connections. In fact, the connections which were formed with the congregation in North Dakota appears to be a form of social capital such as that described by Minkoff (1997) in her description of social movements.

Social capital appears to have been formed throughout the communities of the Schoodic Circuit, starting with the Gouldsboro community. That congregation clearly involved other individuals, forming connections strong enough to prompt people to actually begin to affiliate with them, some through attendance and others through the more formal rituals of baptism and membership in the church. Social capital involving the other churches in the Circuit appeared to be developed as they joined the effort. And certainly, social capital was developed for others, as the United Methodist congregations involved 32 other area churches, a 4-H club, other community groups, and school children. Even the local nursing home got involved. Contacts were necessary between the various groups as shared efforts and coordination built social capital, which is now available for other purposes to all the participants in this highly successful effort to address the needs of others. Presumably some of the social capital which was developed will be preserved, as evidenced by the revitalization of the congregation which initiated the effort.

In addition to the social capital formed within what are primarily voluntary organizations, there was also social capital development which involved for-profits entities. These minimally included businesses such as Wal-Mart who donated space for collection points, as well as others, UPS and Service Master, whose contributions and possibly social capital connections were made at regional levels. Thus, the levels at which social capital were developed appear extraordinary, given that the efforts began in a

congregations where no more than 11 people (those who met on that Easter Sunday and their pastor) were the originators of this effort which resulted in 23 cartons of supplies and donations of over $5000 to assist persons whom the helpers had never met. This single example illustrates how even a small religious congregation can be the catalyst for generating multiple levels of social capital, and how the religious congregations existing social capital and shared values can be the basis for further development of social capital. It also shows how a congregation, even a very small one, can be instrumental in generating needed resources to address a social problem.

One final point which is critical to address is the issue of diversity as it relates to the involvement of religious congregations in development of social capital or provision of services of any type. While many types of voluntary organizations have been the domain of upper- or middle- income persons, religious organizations are comprised of persons from different economic strata. In a general sense, many organizations are organized around the homogeneity of the members. Congregations are places where the usual defining characteristics are not pursued, although they may be self-selecting within specific denominations. Voluntary organizations are places where civic capital - the leadership skills needed for political participation - are developed (Ammerman, 1996). Social capital and civic capital are linked, being products of the structures which allow democratic society to function effectively. Since the development of social and civic capital is available to all persons through them, congregations provide an expanded source of capital as compared to other voluntary organizations. However, social capital is also a tool which allows individuals to get their needs met.

The potential role of religious congregations for both these roles, given the accessibility to all communities, is quite promising. For example, the creation of many African-American churches was the result, in part, of the need for social capital in that community (and the denial of access to that social capital from the white members of churches), and those churches continue to be effective sources of social capital (Hall-Russell, and Kasberg, 1996). The African-American churches' engagement in economic development work within communities is an indicator of the social capital potential of religious congregations for persons in lower-income communities. For example, First AME in south-central Los Angeles secured a one million dollar grant from Disney Corporation following the unrest which followed the Rodney King verdict. Further, it has developed, with Disney's support, a program placing young African-American youth from that inner-city community at DisneyLand as employees (Whitlock, 1997). This type of social capital development might not happen without the credibility and the commitment of the church. It also illustrates the potential of churches in social capital development for youth.

The potential role of religious congregations in bridging the usual boundaries which exclude people based on characteristics can also be seen in the story of the Gouldsboro church. While ethnic/racial boundaries may not be bridged (this is in Maine, after all, where there may not be much racial diversity to bridge), it is evident that the efforts of this congregation crosses generational boundaries, for example, as grammar schools and nursing homes became part of the relief effort.

The success of community organizing efforts in inner cities, efforts which are

church-based, show the potential for religious congregations to be the source of social

capital which directly links low income families to the political process in an effective way

(Wood, 1997). Wood notes the differential in the interpersonal trust present within

different congregations, suggesting the inappropriateness of assuming that religious

congregations are always available sources of this form of social capital. However, the

value structure of religious congregations (i.e. the theological roots and teaching of most

religious congregations) would seem to predispose them to more effort at building trust

among members than might occur in other voluntary associations whose primary goal is

more limited, such as would be true of bowling leagues. This could be an important

element, in combination with the ability of churches to cross social strata, in developing

trust.

There is also another model, that of churches which have expressly committed to

community building, not necessarily within their own congregations but in the

neighborhood in which they are located. Staral (1995) describes a Lutheran church in

Wisconsin which purposefully shifted its approach to the community, broadening its

definition of 'the church' to include persons who resided in the surrounding neighborhood

but who did not attend church functions per se. The church developed what they labeled

peer ministers to "serve as a further link between the church and the community (133)", or

in other words, to develop social capital for the neighborhood.

Levi (1997), drawing on the work of Hardin (1993) and David (1985)[7,] describes a

cycle of distrust. Those who have learned to distrust, presumably whose who are

marginalized or disadvantaged, fail to realize the benefits of trust. Those who trust continue to realize the benefits of that trust with two effects. First, their trust is reinforced and the gap, politically and economically, between those who trust and those who do not widens. Secondly, this widening gap reinforces the distrust of those who are at the margins already. With their potential to reach those in society who do not trust, religious congregations have the potential for involving persons currently disengaged from political participation by building trust and social capital with them. This begs the issue, however, of whether churches are willing and able to actually engage persons who have been marginalized. This questions will be addressed by the present study, as it examines the tendency of United Methodist Churches to respond to the needs of specific populations, those which are marginalized and those which are less so, along with groups such as welfare recipients about whom there is considerable ambivalence.8

Finally, religious congregations seem an appropriate place to encourage the pursuit of social capital development because they seem to produce it. The link between religious participation and both volunteering and individual contributions has been established quite clearly (Independent Sector, 1988; Greeley, 1997), and is discussed in detail in other sections. However, the sheer effectiveness of religious congregations in generating volunteering and financial support for both the congregations themselves and other voluntary organizations suggests that they are appropriate places for the development of

---

7 Hardin, R (1993). The street level epistemology of trust, Politics & Society, 21, 505-29 and David, P. (1985). Clio and the economics of QWERTY. American Economic Review, 75, 332-7.
8 It is interesting to note that such ambivalence, which reflects social attitudes regarding addressing poverty and social problems, is not new. This is evident in comments by Ward (1915), who suggested that an attitude of contempt must be replaced by an attitude of sympathy. He described the debate about

social capital. Again, this does not address the issue of what the capacity of religious congregations is in actually increasing their work in this area.

The limits of willingness or ability to help

One argument being made here is that there is both a tendency on the part of churches to assist others for reasons unique to their religious nature and a tendency to be constrained about who to help and for how long to help them. Two approaches will be suggested as to factors which might limit the participation of churches in helping behavior, one theoretical and the other practical. Social exchange theory explains factors related to tendency to assist others, given an environment and norms which lead to a belief that there will be reciprocity from some part of the social network. Social exchange theory also suggests some explanations for why people might discontinue to engage in the exchange relationship. One additional area has been suggested as well, that persons who are socially stigmatized, presumably by their behavior, are less likely to be the beneficiaries of altruistic behavior. While there are not doubt a variety of ways to explain the differential altruistic behavior, Schneider and Ingram (1993) have offered a very useful model. They propose that there are two dimensions along which people are judged by others as potential recipients of altruism. One is essentially their social acceptance level by others and the other is the amount of social power which they have. People who are seen positively along both dimensions will receive the most favorable treatment, and persons who are seen as negative in both dimensions will be least likely to receive assistance. In

---

whether a person on relief should be going to see a movie. (Ward clearly felt they should.) This is not so

this model, altruism can be understood as the willingness to assist, not necessarily the need

of the person for assistance, since those with most power often are well-equipped

financially to provide for themselves. Those who are seen as positive/positive are unlikely

to receive much assistance from voluntary organizations for that reason.

Within the negative/negative dimension, one would find persons who are most

stigmatized in society: prostitutes, prisoners, gays/lesbians, drug addicts and persons with

HIV/AIDS who fit any of these previous groups. A look at this grouping makes clear that

all these groups may be viewed as responsible for their own condition through engagement

in one or more stigmatized behaviors. There is likely to be far less altruism and therefore

far less inclination to target people for assistance if they fall in this category, in part

because of aversion to their behavior and in part because they are perceived as having

caused their own problems. This is reflected in comments such as those which the author

has overheard, for example, at displays of the AIDS quilt, "I feel worst about the children

because they are innocent victims." The implication is that they are somehow exempt

from judgments because they are not responsible for the disease. Thus, persons who fall

within these groups are likely to be under-served.

Those who have power (positive) but who are to be viewed negatively are also not

likely to be the recipients of much altruism, although more that the negative/negatives. In

this group one might find persons who have power, such as politicians, but about whom

others have negative opinions in general. This might also include persons who are rich, as

they are often viewed negatively (even when, or perhaps because other people wish they

---

far from current debates about welfare recipients should have cable TV service.

could be rich).

While there is reason to believe that some churches will be more inclined to target persons in the negative/negative group, it seems more probable that with limited resources, even churches will tend to prefer to offer available resources to populations which are viewed as more acceptable. Given the orientation of Christian churches, in particular, to serve "the e and the mild" it seems probable that the populations which churches would be most inclined to assist are those who are viewed positively but who have little power. These populations would include women, children, youth, and senior citizens, or persons experiencing problems such hunger and domestic violence. This tendency to select populations based on the amount of social stigma with which they are associated may be actually more prevalent among religious congregations, as what may be personal opinions and social norms in the general population are potentially a deeply held component of an entire moral/religious belief system for church members. As suggested elsewhere, if one is a member of a stigmatized population, the conditions for receiving assistance may include renouncing and abandoning stigmatized behaviors or membership in a stigmatized group.

The other, pragmatic issues related to expansion of services by religious congregations have been suggested elsewhere. The restructuring of the social welfare system in the United States has been in progress for approximately 17 years as of this writing. It is simply not realistic to believe that there is infinite capacity of the local religious congregations to expand their services. Wineburg (1994), in a detailed analysis of the relationships between social service providers and religious congregations in

Greensboro, North Carolina, describes the extensive expansion of church support for existing social service providers, both secular and faith-based. He points out that Catholic Charities alone in the U.S. had an increase of 700% in volunteers during the Reagan/Bush years. Greensboro experienced a huge increase in resources made available by congregations to local agencies, pointing out for instance that 69% of the organizations receiving church funds first got them during those years. Wineburg states, "There is no doubt that the religious community can expand its service efforts. It is simply wrong to assume that it has an unlimited capacity to expand (51)."

Summary of social capital issues

Social capital is clearly a useful and provocative concept, one which lends itself to research and discussion of current trends in participation in voluntary associations, including religious congregations, and of trends in civic involvement. Putnam has done credible work in presenting a beginning framework for conceptualizing social capital and its link to civic involvement. However, it is clear that there are difficulties in the way he operationalizes social capital and in the causal relationships which he describes. Still, the concepts he presents and which others have debated and developed are a useful framework for this study.

Several ideas suggest themselves here. First, while it is difficult to tease out the exact causal relationships between them, social capital, educational achievement, volunteering, and civic responsibility appear to be linked. The direction of causality seems to be that social capital, often that found in families but also that added in communities, is

important in encouraging educational success. Education, in turn, appears to be a strong predictor of civic involvement. In addition, participation in voluntary organizations appears to contribute to social capital, and subsequently, to civic participation, particularly for youth. Thus social capital contributes to civic involvement directly and indirectly. These several relationships leave open in the possibility of a spurious correlation, such as educational background of the parents as the cause of educational achievement, voluntary participation, and adult civic involvement of youth. However, there are indications that this is not the case. For example, McAdam's (1988) work compared the later civic service activity, values and activism of people who participated in Mississippi Freedom Summer activities to those of who were supposed to go but weren't able to do so. The former were considerably higher rating in all the categories, suggesting that they were influenced directly by their participation.

Although the precise relationship between social capital and civil capital is not yet fully researched, there appears to be sufficient evidence of the existence of a relationship between the two to merit the working assumption that one way to increase people's civic activity is through participation in voluntary associations. Volunteering with others, for example in a religious congregation, is one way to expand those associations. Depending on the specific activity or structure of their involvement, there may well be social capital for the participants (otherwise called service recipients or clients) as well. This would suggest that the structure of any programs offered ought to be developed for the purpose, in addition to any primary goals, of providing social capital development opportunities.

The other issue of relevance is that although operationalizing social capital is

difficult, the most reliable measures at present seem to be the amount of participation in voluntary organizations in which people engage. While this is a proxy, the assumption is that where there are opportunities for people to build networks with one another , particularly when the purpose of the interaction is to facilitate one person getting his or her needs met, then the interaction will lead to an increase in social capital. Thus increased opportunities within congregations for involvement by non-affiliated persons in programs will have the potential of increasing social capital for two groups of persons. First, the congregations' members who participate in the planning and implementation of the programs will increase their own social capital. Second, to the extent that programs are structured to involve interaction between providers and participants, it can be assumed that some participants will also develop additional social capital.

In addition to the value of social capital with respect to civic involvement, it is critical to the ability of individuals and families in getting their various needs met. Thus, social capital is an important resource to have as broadly distributed as possible across a community. As more formal sources of support for families, the so called social safety net, are reduced, the presence of social capital in the form of informal sources of that support become increasingly important. The role of religious congregations in developing that social capital needs to be better understood and measured.

Those points lead to one final issue given the purposes of this study. That is, if there has been a decline in membership and participation in mainstream Protestant churches, and this paper will offer evidence that there has been, is there adequate social capital within the congregation, and specifically within the United Methodist Church of

West Michigan, to allow them to focus efforts on building social capital and offering services within their communities. Do the churches themselves have the capacity to engage in activities which have the potential to develop social capital in their communities?

Theological perspectives

While it is outside the scope or purposes of this paper to present a fully articulated theological description of Christian churches, or specifically the United Methodist Church, it seems critical to understand the ways in which religious values of the provider may affect decisions about whether to provide human services and the method of delivery of any services. The fundamental source of theological understanding, the Bible, offers a number of directives concerning assisting those in need. For example, Matthew 25:31-46 is perhaps most frequently referenced as Jesus directed his followers to feed the hungry, give water to the thirsty, welcome the stranger, clothe the naked, and visit those in prison. Luke 10:25-37 tells the story of the Good Samaritan, a story familiar to many. Jesus tells his followers that they should love their neighbor as themselves. He then tells the story of a man accosted and robbed who is first ignored by fellow Jews and then assisted by a stranger, one who first binds his wounds, then takes him to an inn and pays for his lodging and care there. One of the significant elements of that parable is the fact that the stranger who assists the Jewish man left to die by his robbers is a gentile, a person with whom the man would not have associated. Essentially, the first point of this parable is that people should help those in need, without expectation of reciprocity; the second point of this

parable relates to diversity and racism. These represent just a sampling of the general directives in scripture regarding the appropriate role of Christians in assisting those in need, particularly the poor. However, these type of scriptures represent only a portion of the scriptures. This section will elaborate on the theological orientations which influence which scriptural texts are emphasized and how they are interpreted.

Certainly the theological context within which any human services are supported or provided by the religious congregation is a key element in the structure of programs provided, in any eligibility criteria for recipients or/and in the purposes of any service provided, as well as a potentially key determinant in what, if any, services are provided at all. As an example, services to a gay person with AIDS by a church which views homosexuality as a sin ("an abomination") may be contingent upon renunciation by that person of homosexual behavior or relationships. Or, in a different type of example, the pro-life stance of the Catholic Church leads to policies in Catholic Charities against discussing abortion as an option with clients, even if the client comes to the agency seeking counseling or assistance regarding pregnancy termination.

Thus, although Christian churches have a common base of sacred writings and, one can argue common historical roots, the variations between denominations or congregations can be astonishing. It is unclear that policy makers distinguish these differences, or if they do, that they understand their relevance to policy development. Yet these differences between congregations and denominations could profoundly affect both willingness to engage in service provision and the manner is which such services are provided. For example, different denominations have different individual giving patterns

(Donahue, 1994; Hoge and Yang, 1994; Hoge, Zech, McNamara, and Donahue, 1996), with some emphasizing tithing and others not. The Catholic church is commonly known to have a considerably lower per capita giving record than do the Protestant churches (Greeley and McManus, 1987; Hoge, 1994; Hoge and Yang, 1994). Institutional structures determine where decisions are made concerning the types of programs which will be offered and how the funding will be delivered. At a very basic level, the structure of any hierarchy will affect the balance of control between any hierarchy and the local congregations. Much of the basis for these differences is directly attributable to differences in theology.

At the risk of oversimplification, two general themes form the base for theology in Christian churches. One way to understand the theological differences between churches is in the balance between these two themes, "good works" on the one hand and emphasis on relationship with God (salvation) on the other. Thus, the theological spectrum within which Christian churches fall can be conceptualized as a continuum. At one extreme is a theology which understands acceptance of Christ as the sole means of achieving salvation, leading to an emphasis on evangelism for the purpose of leading people to religious experience. To the extent that services are provided, they are likely to be an ancillary to overtly religious efforts, sometimes used as a means of getting non-affiliated persons to participate in the religious activities of the church. Further, physical suffering and poverty may even be seen as positives, ways of achieving greater unity with God. This can even be seen in the attitudes of Mother Teresa, recently deceased, who focused on assisting those in abject poverty to be comfortable in death, rather than seeking to change the

institutional sources of poverty. One news story of her death quoted her, when she was asked what should be done about poverty, as saying something to the effect of "I don't know. I am trying to achieve poverty." At the other extreme, doing good for others is viewed as the means to salvation and recruitment of others to the religious organization is not a priority.

Hoge, Zech, McNamara, and Donahue's study (1996, 217) of giving in five U.S. Christian denominations utilized a question concerning congregational theological tendencies, with the answers suggesting one way of defining the differences in theological context: (1) Helping others commit their lives to Christ. Personal morality and social actions are secondary to this; (2) Helping to change unjust and oppressive social structures or to alleviate human misery. Whether or not this helps people accept Jesus as Savior is not the primary concern; (3) Following the life and teachings of Jesus as the basis for spiritual growth and personal fulfillment; (4) Faithfully participating in the tradition and sacraments of the Church. Other concerns are secondary to maintaining the historical integrity and continuity of the faith. This framework illustrates the differences between theological perspectives. The first and last of these reflect theological positions in which attending to the physical and social needs of others is less important than addressing spiritual needs, resulting in churches which are probably less likely to actively engage in social ministry. The second and third answers reflect theological understandings which seem more likely to lead members or local congregations to engage in social ministries.

In another characterization, Nelson (1983, 118-119) described church theological

styles as

"(1) evangelical - characterized, with a focus on the central importance of recognition of individual and collective sinfulness and the necessity of reconciliation to God through Jesus Christ, and a life of varied witnessing to the Gospel and its good news.

(2) fundamental - characterized by particular and complete acceptance and affirmation of the inerrancy of the Bible and a personal dedication of life to Jesus Christ as Savior and Lord.

(3) liberal - characterized by a diverse focus on reform and progress in the church as he body of Christ on earth, tolerance for diversity, and a continual questioning of Biblical interpretations, the mission of the church, worship forms, theological principles and Christian lifestyles.

(4) Traditional - characterized by affirmation of and practice of an inherited faith and beliefs, with an emphasis on leading a good Christian life and teachings of Jesus Christ, and consistent with the tradition of the denomination."

Johnson (1930), in a summary which is much more succinct, suggests there are really two major tendencies of Christian churches, either an emphasis of the individual process, which orients the work of the church toward some future ideal (presumably in the afterlife) or the redemption of the world as a whole, from which then, the destiny of the individual is inseparable. Using any of these frameworks for understanding the theological stance of a denomination points to the fact that there will be central tendencies of churches to be in the world tending to all needs of persons, spiritual and physical, or to be more concerned with the spiritual aspects of their well-being, with little or less concern for their

physical needs. This description presents churches in a way which may imply coldness or hardness on the part of some. It is not intended in that sense. Rather, it is important that some churches or denominations will be disinclined to engage in activities related to non-spiritual needs as these are seen as secondary. The resources of individual members could be applied to these problems, but institutional resources would not.

Keith-Lucas (1962) who sought to merge social work and religion takes the more pragmatic approach of describing the positions which result from these different theological reference points. He suggested that the Christian church was confused about its appropriate role with respect to serving the tangible needs of those in the world, then proceeded to list and refute several of the positions. For example, some believed in noninvolvement and felt that the church should simply be involved in spiritual concerns. Keith-Lucas flatly rejected this position. He also dismissed the theologically different idea, that the church should be involved in social welfare efforts solely for humanitarian reasons, as being no different than the approach of a secular nonprofit.

What research is available on religions and their social involvement confirms that differences between denominations do exist. Wilson and Janoski (1995) summarize research on differences between denominations and point to the fact that liberal congregations are twice as likely to be more socially active than conservatives. Wuthnow (1991) found that there are differences between Catholics and Protestant churches in charitable giving and other social services. Methodists twice as likely (15%) as Southern Baptists to give high priority to causes which would benefit the community. (Wilson and Janoski, 1995) In other areas, there are not differences, such as in the tendency of

Catholics to volunteer compared to Protestants (1997b).

As an example of that, a recent conversation by the author with an acquaintance regarding her church membership provided the following information: The church, which is a nondenominational, has attendance of over 2,000 people each weekend. The social ministry of the church is quite limited, although the church has what appear to be quite creative efforts, such as a meal before and a cappuccino and ice cream time following worship on Friday nights. The mission money of the church is almost entirely devoted to funding missionaries who are overseas. The sole local effort is the financial support for a local crisis pregnancy center, which is usually a euphemism for a clinic which is intended to divert young women from having abortions by offering a range of supportive services. The church funds approximately ¼ of the annual budget of the clinic. This church most likely could be characterized under the Hoge, Zech, McNamara and Donahue (1992) criteria as primarily focused on (1) helping others commit their lives to Christ.

This is in contrast to the Glide Memorial United Methodist Church, a mega-church in San Francisco which has 39 community based programs ranging from emergency services to support for persons living with AIDS and recovering from substance abuse to job related training. It is even involved in condom distribution as part of its AIDS prevention work. The expectation at Glide is that members will volunteer (Miller, 1997). In addition, the church, as a United Methodist church, would also pay its annual apportionment to the denominational infrastructure and system of social ministries based on its membership of 6,400.

Wineburg (1994) looks at these differences in a more systematic way. He uses

Roozen, McKinney, and Carroll's (1984) typologies of civic mission and activist orientation of churches in describing efforts of primarily mainline Protestant and Catholic churches in Greensboro to respond in their community within the 1980's and into the 1990's. He presents evidence of differences in willingness and type of involvement of the different churches with a more civic orientation. He also asserts that nationally it was the mainline denominations, as opposed to the religious right which fomented much of the change which occurred, who actually sought to increase services for those cut off by changes in governmental programs. He characterized these local congregations as moving from a civic orientation, in which the institution itself supports the status quo and is non-confrontational, to an activist orientation in which the congregation is oriented toward incorporation of social action into the life of the congregation for the purpose of achieving a more just and humane society. The United Methodist Church is one of the denominations which was participating in this transformational process in Greensboro. He points to the involvement of the Black ministers in the area in the process as a key to the transformation, an important point given the context of African-American theology and the history of activism by the African-American churches along with the not infrequent functional segregation which still exists between white and black communities across the United States.

The United Methodist Church perspective has been generally described as a moderate (Roof and McKinney, 1987; Wilson and Janoski, 1995) or somewhat conservative church (Hall, 1994). It is probably best understood as being a mixture of the second and third Hoge, Zech, McNamara and Donahue (1992) criteria with perhaps more

emphasis on the third 'following the life and teachings of Jesus as the basis for spiritual growth and personal fulfillment'. Thus one should live out not just the spiritual, but also the action aspects of the teachings.

While the nuances of the United Methodist Church's theological positions are necessarily too extensive to be adequately explicated in this dissertation, there is a certain consistency across time in its understanding that institutionally and individually it has a responsibility to the poor. Ward's (1915) study guide regarding the church's response to poverty poses such questions for the lay person studying the topic as "What is the net contribution to society of the rich women who work in social welfare and yet consume luxuries? (66)" and "In some states the idle poor are jailed for vagrancy. Why should not the idle rich have the same treatment? (70)" He contests the logic of what we would now call trickle down economics, stating that those who consume, waste. The example he gives is of the man with six cars who can only drive one. His capital is tied up in the five cars he cannot drive. He could have hired five men for the cost of those cars, allowing each of them to earn enough to buy a car, with the same effect on the overall economy. Clearly, the theology of the then Methodist Episcopal Church over three quarters of a century ago was that people should live out the teachings of the New Testament in very concrete ways, not being content with merely addressing the needs of their souls. The theological base of the denomination is substantively the same to this day, as can be seen in the various positions found in the Book of Resolutions of The United Methodist Church on AIDS, the environment, poverty, sexual assault, racism, and housing, to topics name just a few of the dozens of resolutions (The United Methodist Church, 1996).

Research and Religious organizations

Research on the place of religious organizations in the nonprofit sector has been less

than comprehensive, suggesting answers to only a few of the current questions about the

capacity of the sacred institutions to involve themselves in providing or supporting

services to meet the types and magnitude of needs which are being sent to them by

politicians at the federal and state levels. Further, data which are available have limitations

in terms of understanding both the state of religious organizations and the ways in which

they are working on community problems.

Hall (1997a) points to the methodological problems inherent to studying church

based organizations. Definitional problems about which organizations ought be

considered religious and issues of institutional/structural differences between

denominations are two of the larger problems. Jeavons (1993) understands organizations

to be in a continuum of "religiosity", with purely religious on one end and clearly secular

on the other. In between are organizations which are a mixture of the two dimensions -

they are religious in some aspects and secular in others. For example, the franchise

religious organizations, while being supported financially by a particular denomination,

carrying the denominational affiliation in their name, and perhaps reflecting particular

moral or value positions of the affiliated denomination in their provision of services,

generally provide social services which may be superficially indistinguishable from those of

their non-affiliated counterparts. Smaller local organizations might have a clear religious

focus to the provision of services. Nonetheless, the religious context, as Jeavons suggests,

likely affects many parts of the organization, including who seeks services from it and who provides them, as well as how the organization functions.

Jeavons (1993) proposes using the following criteria for identification of religious organizations: 1) sacerdotal primary purposes and activities; 2) identification of themselves as religious given commitment to fields of work which are "typically and appropriately associated with religious endeavors"; 3) participants, resources, products or services and decision-making processes which are primarily religious in nature; 4) participation in networks of organizations in which religion plays a major part.

Even, however, when organizations are clearly defined as religious, the structural differences between them can confound efforts to compare different denominations and religious institutions. Minimally, the hierarchical arrangement of the denominations vary. Hall (1997a) describes a range of religious organizations. These could be free-standing congregations, with a variety of incorporation status and franchise form organizations, with a range from monarchical rule to loosely-coupled denominational bodies. Structural differences impact directly on the amount of local congregation decision-making which can be done, including about acceptable forms and types of services to provide, as well as on the degree of homogeneity of theological guidance between congregations and the demands placed on the local congregations from some centralized authority concerning local and denominational. Thus, for example, meaningful comparisons of non-denominational (hence, nonaffiliated) churches with structurally integrated churches such as United Methodists or Catholics are difficult. The loci of control in the denominations and the potential places where volunteers and funding could be used vary tremendously

from one local congregation to another. Thus, asking questions at a local congregational level across denominations, as Hodgkinson , et al. (1992) have done, may introduce bias with respect to those churches where the local level is not primary. It is, for example, impossible to adequately track and compare funding when the sources of reporting may not control the expenditures and may not have access to the required information. Surveying just one denomination, such as the United Methodist Church, allows a control for this variable.

Finally, there is a difference between services offered by affiliated organizations which are supported by contributions of local congregations and services provided within the structure of the local congregations itself. The variations between different denominations, including free standing congregations, mean that the amount of support which can be accounted for directly by the local congregation will vary considerable. One result is that local churches in denominations such as the United Methodist Church, in which much of the funding provided by local congregations is administered by the denominational structure, will under-report the work they are supporting, even potentially in their own local communities.

The United Methodist Church

The United Methodist Church (UMC) is one of the large mainline Protestant denominations in the United States, and like many, has been in decline for the past three to four decades (Hoge and Roozen, 1979; Ronsvalle and Ronsvalle, 1996; Roof and McKinney, 1987). As of 1996 there were 8,611,902 members located in 36,771 organized churches, a mean of 234 persons per congregation (General Board of Global

Ministries, 1997). However, the mean is skewed by the larger churches, as the majority of congregations are relatively small. There are 1200 congregations over 1,000, over half of which have memberships between 1,000 and 1,500:

- 81 churches have memberships over 3,000

- 181 churches have memberships of 2,000- 2,999

- 248 have memberships of 1,500 - 1,999

- 690 have memberships of 1,000 - 1,499 (Gilbert, 1997).

In addition, as the second largest Protestant denomination in the United States, it is arguably the most representative Protestant denomination geographically. Until the fairly recent decline of rural congregations, the United Methodist Church reportedly had at least one church in every county in the U.S. (Wood and Bloch, 1995). The denomination has membership across economic lines, although certainly the largest share of members is middle class (Roof and McKinney, 1987).

The UMC is a structured, hierarchical denomination, well-earning the name Methodist. From the local church level up, the next level of structure is the district, within which several dozen churches are under the oversight of a district superintendent. Districts are clustered into an annual conference, which has a bishop overseeing its operations, pastoral appointments, etc. Bishops do not have absolute power, although they do have authority vested by the denomination's polity making body to enforce and adjudicate some matters. There are six districts in the West Michigan Conference, probably an average number.

An annual conference is a legislating entity, with one meeting of the whole each

year in which one voting lay person from each local congregation and all clergy of the

conference make decisions regarding polity and, more generally, regarding program

priorities for the year. For example, two program (mission) priorities of the West

Michigan Conference are support for alleviation of hunger, with a 1998 goal of raising $14

per member for hunger projects, and with the Haiti Methodist church designated as a

partner conference, a 1997 goal of raising $100,000 toward the lunches of the children in

Methodist run schools in Haiti. All legislative decisions of the Annual Conferences are

subject to the polity developed by the General Conference, a quadrennial meeting of

representatives from all the United Methodist conferences.

The denomination is comprised of 72 annual conferences which are the charges of

50 elected bishops. Thus each conference has a mean membership of 119,600 in 510 local

churches. The range in size of annual conferences is from approximately 4,000 in Alaska

and 17,800 in New Hampshire to 350,000 and 343,500 in Virginia and Florida

respectively.

The West Michigan annual conference of the UMC, the focus of this study, has a

membership of 78,530 in 441 local congregations which range in size from 11 to 1536

(West Michigan Annual Conference, 1996). Only four local churches have membership of

1,000 - 1,999 with another 12 in the 600 - 999 range (Alsgaard, 1997), while over 300 are

under 200 members (West Michigan Annual Conference, 1996).

The ethnic/racial composition of the denomination reflects in many ways

the denomination's history of Northern European influence and the long-term effects of

segregation: African Americans compose only 3.7% of the denomination's membership, well below their proportion of the general population. The West Michigan conference follows the pattern of under-representation in terms of numbers for various populations. Specifically, there is only one congregation in the conference which is predominately African-American, with a conference total of 375 African Americans/Black (.5 %), 132 Hispanics (.16%), 270 Asian Americans (.34 %), 13 Pacific Islanders. There are 267 Native Americans (.16 %) with seven churches identified as predominately Native American. Korean and Vietnamese congregations are also being supported as developing congregations in urban areas. This demographic skew has considerable implications for the findings, implications which will be discussed as one of the limitations of this study. However, this obvious lack of diversity within the United Methodist Church is also reflective of other mainline denominations, and undoubtedly has implications for the ways in which churches in this denomination as well as demographically similar mainline denominations can provide effective social ministries and social capital development across diverse communities. This will also be discussed further in the dissertation.

The structure of this denomination is quite important with respect to two aspects of this study. First, the structure of an organization is itself a source of social capital for members and participants (Coleman, 1990, 304). It is a resource to persons who are seeking to volunteer, with considerable consulting capacity, in the case of the United Methodist Church and many other mainline denominations. There are often denominationally sponsored events which provide networking opportunities as well as the needed social support which encourages volunteers to continue with their efforts. The

Holy Boldness Convocation, in San Francisco in November, 1997, is an example of this type of social capital development. The Convocation is being held to encourage urban ministries initiatives, and is being co-sponsored by Glide UMC of San Francisco, a 6,400 church whose extensive social ministries make it the San Francisco's largest provider of social services (Miller, 1997). Approximately 1,500 persons are expected to attend. These types of events will provide participants with extensive personal social capital opportunities in addition to teaching them how to develop social capital opportunities within their local urban churches.

Another denominational event provides participants with a similar environment. Every four years there is a gathering of the United Methodist Women which draws thousands of women to discuss the role of their local women's groups in social ministry as well as providing support and networking opportunities for them to engage with others who are doing similar work in their communities. Within both of these setting, the use of technology will be part of the event itself and will be among the optional workshops which are available to participants. Thus, as these examples illustrate, a strong denominational organizational hierarchy, if it is creative, can be a venue for social capital development through face-to-face interactions, development of a symbolic community, both literally and virtually, and teaching of skills which will enhance the ability of church members to serve as volunteers who add social capital to their own communities. In addition, the structure, by offering education and materials regarding designated ministries such as hunger and lunches for Haiti school children, is able to focus efforts and likely increase the amount of contributions which are made for those initiatives. To state the obvious, this focusing of

effort then excludes other potential initiatives, including those which may be the priority of the government.

The other way in which social structure is relevant to this study is that the United Methodist Church, as a denomination, by virtue of its extensive mission efforts, has a number of programs at the denominational level. Many of these are human services, which are funded by local churches through denominational funds transferred from the local congregations through apportionments or given directly to the individual projects by the local churches. The United Methodist Church as a denomination is engaged in a global effort to provide services for persons in need, such as education, hunger amelioration, emergency (disaster) services, and health.

These may be at the general denominational level, such as the effort to raise $25 million for the construction from the ground up of a new university in Africa, to conference initiatives such as a recent capital campaign which aimed to raise $5 million for the renovation and maintenance of church run summer camps in the West Michigan Conference. Many of these efforts have as a by-product the building of social capital, but they also create competition for the leadership, time, and money of church members who might otherwise be expending those resources on local projects. This is not to suggest that one effort should be viewed more favorably than another, but rather to point out that the denomination is already actively engaged in a variety of social ministries through the denominational structures and that the resources of local church members are divided, as is true for many of the mainline Protestant denominations. Thus, it is very probably a fallacy to expect that the denominations have large untapped resources available for new

programs, even thought theoretically those resources are available (Steinberg, 1996).

Volunteers and the Nonprofit Sector

Volunteers are an integral part of the nonprofit sector and must be considered within any discussion which relates to the capacity of the nonprofit sector to human services. In addition, there appears to be a relationship between religious participation and the amount of volunteering (Hodgkinson, et al., 1996b; Hoge, 1994), and there are denominational differences in levels of volunteering (Hoge and Yang, 1994). Hodgkinson, et al. (1996b) state that 93 million Americans, or almost 49% of the adults volunteered an average of 4.2 hours per week in 1995. Three-quarters of the time was spent in formal volunteering, with the remainder spent assisting friends and neighbors informally. This represents the equivalent of 9.23 million full-time employees, certainly not an insignificant amount of time in unpaid help! At least a quarter of those reporting volunteer activity are doing so in a religious organization. Further, those who report attending religious services weekly give more and volunteer more than others (Hodgkinson, et al., 1996b).

However, Hodgkinson, et al. (1996b) also point out that this represents a decrease in volunteering since 1989 and interpret the decline as being a function of fear that the economy might worsen. That is, those who were worried about their money in the future were less likely to volunteer, and also likely to contribute a smaller share of their household income to nonprofits. While overall the economy was not worsening, radical changes in the structure of the large corporations, including mergers and downsizing, reduced both job security and often compensation packages for tens of thousands of

employees. While Hodgkinson, et al. (1996b) are not able to clearly pin causal relationships between the economy and volunteering, the underlying instability of individual job status may in fact contribute to reluctance or inability to volunteer. In addition, it may be that people's perception that they themselves are in need may influence their decisions to withhold their time from others in some cases.

Tomlinson and Wilson (1997), in a study of volunteering in Michigan, report that 41% of those surveyed (N=975) volunteered . In this study, persons who were affiliated with either the Catholic church or a Protestant church volunteered considerably more (49% and 41% respectively) than those who did not report religious affiliation (23%). This is consistent with the findings measured by others (Hodgkinsona., et al., 1996) which suggest that persons who are religiously affiliated tend to volunteer more than those who are not. There are also cultural norms which support volunteering. For example, Hall-Russell and Kasberg (1997) reported on the volunteering and other forms of philanthropy in the African-American community in the Midwest and pointed to strong networks of informal support offered by African-Americans, often offered to persons who are from outside their immediate social community (i.e. non-African Americans).

Religious Congregations: Role Within the Nonprofit Sector

Understanding of the nonprofit sector can arguably be addressed at three levels: economic impact, organizational functioning and type, and place of the individuals with respect to specific parts of the sector. Economic impact relates to the size of the sector in employment, expenditures, funding sources, income transfer and welfare of society. It

may also include taxation issues, ranging from impact of individual taxation on contributions to nonprofits to loss of taxable property and income. Finally, economic impact analyzes the tensions between nonprofit and for profit activities, including comparative questions of efficiency and effectiveness of the two sectors. Issues of equity are also implicit, although perhaps they receive less attention. The second level organizational functioning and type relates to defining who benefits from the particular organization in question and what the structure of the organization is. Finally, the place of the individual is concerned with the extent of involvement of the individual in supporting particular types of services or organizations or the sector in general, with financial contributions, volunteering, and in some cases attendance.

While there has been some research which defines the role of nonprofits on the economy, social structure, and welfare of citizens, it has been sparse. Much of it has sought to define the place of religious institutions, along with their affiliated service providing arms, such as Catholic Charities, Salvation Army, Lutheran Social Services and many others, in meeting the needs in U.S. communities. The diversity of organizational types supported by religious institutions has already been partially discussed, but is considerable: colleges, hospitals, social service agencies, child welfare agencies, economic development programs, youth clubs, arts and cultural centers, and housing initiatives, to name a few. These religiously affiliated agencies and programs have been the primary focus of research, with considerably less on the human service work and role of religious congregations and denominations.

It seems probable that there is a combination of factors influencing this trend in

research. First, the reticence of researchers to explore religious organizations is likely

rooted in concerns about academic careers based on the apparent lack of interest and

respect of peers for the study of this areas. Another probable reason has to do with the

reticence of religious organizations to be studied. Informal discussion of nonprofit

researchers concerning study of churches often includes frustration about the difficulty in

gaining the trust and cooperation of local congregations when they are needed as the

sources of data. Finally, data which are available often do not lend themselves to

separated analysis of religious congregations and their affiliated organizations, even for

those researchers who have an interest in so doing. Human service providing agencies

which are separately incorporated are required to report to the IRS, hence making data

concerning these organizations more accessible. However, it is generally impossible to

ascertain the extent of religious affiliation through general reports of organizations. These

sorts of difficulties are reflected in studies such as The State of Nonprofit Michigan 1994

which documents and analyzes many aspects of the nonprofit sector in Michigan, but does

not include religious congregations in the analysis (Wilson, 1995). The apparent reason is

that the source of the data used did not include these organizations.

Perhaps as a result of the paucity of objective information regarding the work of

religious congregations, common perceptions of religious institutions are frequently based

on what any given person thinks they ought to be, ideas which are often virtual myths, or

are generalizations based on individual experiences a person has had within a church or

religious organization. These perceptions range from expectations of great charity by

churches to considerable cynicism about the willingness of churches to have any

meaningful impact on those in need. It seems more reasonable to approach the relationship between members and their religious organizations - their reasons for attending and participating, their expectations about personal gain from participation, their motivations and willingness to give contributions and to volunteer for their congregations and to assist others - as at best complex and difficult to understand. Yet, if religious congregations are to make any contribution to the welfare of the greater community and if social workers, politicians, and others making decisions about the how to achieve improved social welfare in society are to be effective in this new era of devolution, it is essential that the role and capacity of religious congregations be understood.

Jeff Biddle (1992) has suggested that religious congregations are both mutual benefit organizations and philanthropic organizations, estimating that about 70 percent of the expenditures support **mutual benefit activities**. It is, therefore, reasonable to view most religious organizations as primarily concerned with the production of **"club services"**, in the form of worship, educational programs, social and personal growth opportunities for members, and secondarily concerned with provision of philanthropic activities, which includes social service/basic assistance programs. Wolpert (1993) distinguishes the type of services offered by nonprofits somewhat differently, describing amenity services and equity based services. Amenities refer to services such as the arts and culture, health, and education. Equity services are more related to transfer of goods and redistribution of income from the wealthier to the poor. Relating this back to Biddle's characterization above, churches appear to provide a heavy proportion of amenity or club services, with a more limited amount of equity services or philanthropic activities.

114

Assuming this to be true, it can be hypothesized that churches and denominations which

are losing membership and thus their base for financial support may be less able or less

motivated to engage in philanthropic activities. Simply put, churches which are struggling

for members are more likely to make club benefits, or maintaining their own church

activities and buildings a priority over benevolence giving and volunteering. This point

will be further addressed in a later section of this paper. Further, although as b, et al.

(1996) point out over one quarter of all those reporting volunteer activity do so in

religious organizations, the type of work done by the volunteers may be oriented strictly to

programs within the organization itself, with members deriving all the benefits.

Nonetheless, this still leaves open the possibility that they might be able to offer their

buildings for use by other groups or work cooperatively in other ways.

Individual Charitable Contributions in the United States

Studies by a variety of persons have sought to document trends in charitable giving

in the United States across time, between economic classes, between persons who are

religiously affiliated and those who are not, and within that last group, between persons of

different denominational affiliations. The findings are difficult to compare because of

differences in methodology and differences in measurement tools. However, data from all

sources seem to indicate that although Americans continue to strongly support voluntary

organizations, particularly religious organizations, in the U.S. with time and money, there

is a decline in the overall propensity to make charitable contributions (Hodgkinson, et al.,

1996; Hoge, Zech, McNamara, and Donahue, 1996). From 1921 to the 1990's there was

a mean increase in income of 250%, from $4,000 to $14,000 in 1967 constant dollars.

However, as an example, in one group of denominations representing almost 30 percent of

the Protestant churches, contributions as a percentage of income have dropped from 3.0%

in the late 1950'sto 2.5%, in the early 1990's (Ronsvalle and Ronsvalle, 1996).

Hodgkinson, et al. (1996b) describe a picture which is not encouraging with

respect to the trends in household charitable contributions to various concerns across the

nonprofit sector. The percentage of adults reporting contributions to charitable

organizations dropped from 81 in 1987 to 70 in 1991. Further, average wages have

declined in constant dollars since the 1970's, with gains only for the wealthiest 20 percent

of the population, particularly the upper one percent (Wolff, 1995). Combining this

information with that regarding the overall increase in mean income since the 1950's, it is

likely that all persons were improving up until the 1970's but that overall, it is the wealthy

who have increased their income consistently. This shift from an overall affluence to

improvement primarily for those who are wealthier can be seen in the data which show

that by the mid-1990's, the gap between the wealthiest and the poorest 20% of the

population was the widest it had been since sometime before 1947 (Rosen, 1995, 153). It

seems logical that people who have less than before might have less ability to help others.

However, as was already pointed out, the wealthiest, who have apparently gotten more,

are giving less than previously.

Wolpert (1993) points to other trends which suggest an even more grim picture for

those who are poorest in the U.S., and thus arguably most in need of assistance from

other. Wopert analyzed giving trends by region, using variables such as political leanings,

region, and type of recipient nonprofits for comparison. One of Wolpert's troubling, but not so surprising, findings is that while there are locales where people tend to be more generous, their generosity is considerably more targeted to amenity services than to equity-based social services. What is somewhat surprising is that amenity support tends to be increasing in politically and culturally liberal regions where per capita income is increasing. Thus, in the areas where conventional wisdom would predict more donations to equity-based programs, increased capacity to give is encouraging contributions to programs from which the donors themselves can benefit. The analysis by Hodgkinson, et al. (1996a) support Wolpert's claims that there is a shift toward amenity services. They point to a decrease in funding to religious organizations (although some of those services are also amenity services) from 52 to 45 percent between 1985 and 1994. Contributions to health and human services also declined slightly, while volunteering and giving to arts and cultural organizations increased substantially between 1987 and 1993 (Hodgkinson, et al., 1996b). Overall, per capita contributions edged up between 1964 and 1993, from approximately $210 to $290 in 1987 constant dollars.

An additional factor is that contributions as a share of funding for operations of nonprofits, including those which are religiously affiliated, had dropped from over half of total budget in the 1960's to about a quarter by the early 1990's. Generally this has been the result of increased reliance by the non-profits on governmental funding. Thus, offsetting government cuts would require a considerable increase in levels of private contributions, increases which have not been previously seen. In fact, as noted, there has been a leveling of contributions to nonprofits from 1986 through 1993, likely a result in

part of tax changes accompanying the funding cuts of the 1980's (Hodgkinson, et al.,

1996b). There are a variety of reasons to believe that tax cuts, regardless of their

concurrence with social service funding cuts, will only result in small proportionate

increases in charitable contributions, even though on the surface there is great capacity for

individuals to increase their charitable contributions.[9]

The above findings suggest doubts about the willingness of the general population

to support new services (albeit ones which have been transferred from the government) in

their communities. One might logically hope, given that contributions to churches are

consistently stronger than contributions to the remaining nonprofits (Hodgkinson, et al.,

1996a), that persons affiliated with religious congregations might be somewhat more

willing to increase contributions. However, Ronsvalle and Ronsvalle (1996) are not

encouraging with respect to that hope, as their study suggests church giving in general is

following a trend similar to that of the general population. Respondents in their survey of

denominational and local leaders in a variety of Christian churches identified shifts in the

mentality of their constituencies, as churches members viewed giving as fee-for-service,

approaching their church membership with a consumer mentality. This is reflected, for

example, in the fact that the vast majority of both pastors and regional officials (91% and

94% respectively) viewed parishioners as demanding a higher level of comfort from their

congregations than previous generations had (39). The implications for giving to services

---

9 Richard Steinberg (1996) offers an excellent summary and discussion of economic theory and research concerning predicted behavior of individuals in response to various changes in social service funding and taxation in "Can individual donations replace cutbacks in federal social-welfare spending? In Burlingame, D.F., Diaz, W.A., Ilchman, W.F. and Associates. Capacity for Change? The Nonprofit World in the Age of Devolution. Indianapolis: Indiana University Center on Philanthropy.

for those in need, particularly the poor, are that there will be a limited willingness to increase giving.

One side note which is troubling is that since 1993 there has been a shift in who had highest giving as a proportion of income. Up to 1993, persons with incomes under $10,000 consistently gave the largest contributions, as a percentage of their income, compared to other income groups (Hodgkinson, et al., 1996b). There are two aspects of this which are of concern. The first is that the change seems to confirm that that group is suffering economically, reducing its ability to give. The other troubling possibility is that the upper income persons have been less willing than the very poor to share their wealth to assist those most in need. While there is an implicit value judgment in stating that this trend is troubling, it is difficult to argue that persons with incomes below $10,000 are giving from a surplus of their income. Rather, it is clear they are giving from what they need themselves, perhaps because they perceived other as being even worse off than themselves. On the other hand, shifts in where contributions are going seem to suggest that the wealthy are giving to support amenities which likely benefit them directly, such as Public Radio/T.V. and arts/cultural programs which have suffered funding cuts along with human services (Wolpert, 1993).

Wolpert (1993) makes one more point which deserves mention. Most of the efforts to decentralize services have come from the politically conservative, who have suggested with confidence that services would be funded and provided more efficiently at the local level with support from the communities. However, regional differences, some described above, suggest that those regions where contributions increased were also more

liberal than others. Wolpert implies that political arguments for the decentralization were in some ways disingenuous. They reflect perhaps not so much a philosophy that people should be served locally as a belief that local communities should be able to fund their preferences for services, even if those preferences are for reduced services. That is, conservative politicians perceive that their constituencies have, and perhaps even themselves have, a preference to reduce funding for services rather than a preference to shift responsibility to the local level where it can be administered more effectively. In fact, even Arianna Huffington (1997), a conservative, has expressed concern regarding whether fellow conservatives are actually concerned about the welfare of the poor, pointing to some specific incidents in which they have dismissed or ridiculed efforts to help the needy through the types of efforts they purport to support, such as the 1997 presidents' volunteerism summit which sought to increase voluntary action. The implications of this with respect to churches is unclear, except that churches are comprised of people from the community and also tend to be somewhat homogenous in membership. This raises questions about whether the task of addressing particular problems is more likely to be taken on by only particular churches, such as churches composed of more liberal persons. Data are not clear on this issue, but it is one which merits investigation.

While not included directly in any of the literature reviewed for this paper, the role of church participation in encouraging contributions to the remainder of the nonprofit sector merits additional research as well. Much material is available describing how to induce people to part with their money for any number of purposes deemed important by others. Nonprofit organizations use methods ranging from personal contacts to mail

solicitations with enclosed gifts (how many address labels does one household really need?) to the seemingly endless telemarketing solicitations now in vogue. Nonprofit organizations often utilize professional fund raising professionals to assist their efforts. With such effort on the part on organizations other than churches, one might anticipate they would receive the bulk of contributions. Yet statistics show that religious organizations receive funding from over half of all people making charitable contributing, and that over 60 percent of all contributions made go to religious institutions. In part this is a function of the number of people who belong to churches. However, contributing a portion of one's income or sharing part of one's wealth with others, particularly with those who have less, is also a part of the value system of most religions. The standard in Christian churches is that a tithe, or one tenth of one's income, should be given away. While it is obvious, given the per capita statistics on giving (Hodgkinson, et al., 1996b) that even in churches this is not the average, it does seem that churches create a social norm regarding contributions which is toward greater equity than that prevalent in the general culture. Thus, it seems likely that the proportion of people participating in churches impacts the amount of money being contributed across all of society. However, there are considerable denominational differences between individual contributions as a percentage of income and as per capita averages (Hoge, Zech, McNamara, and Donahue, 1996). The most clearly documented differences are between the Roman Catholic church and Protestant denominations as a group, but there are differences between Protestant denominations as well (Hoge, Zech, McNamara, and Donahue, 1996; Zaleski and Zech, 1994). One must question whether these differences point to differentials in the ability

and willingness of different Christian denominations to step into the gaps in human services being created by devolution and reductions in governmental funding for human services. There has been a limited amount of work on contributions of Jewish persons, either as individuals or through synagogues, and virtually none on persons or organizations of other faiths. Given the difficulties of documenting and understanding the Christian experience, these other faiths will be left to other researchers. However, they are important to at least acknowledge as the variations in religious priorities of different faiths and denominations will influence the work which they are willing to undertake.

Churches: Activities Outside Traditional Religious Functions

In spite of their primary function of providing religious services, religious congregations in the United States have been and continue to be actively involved in a number of non-religious activities. There are two general ways in which they engage in these activities, either by doing the activities themselves or by supporting others in their efforts to provide needed services to others. Ammerman (1996) describes religious congregations as being a key source in the voluntary sector of "the material infrastructure of gymnasiums and kitchens and telephones and vans (which are) a critical part of the social capital contributed to society (8)." She further reflects that U.S. culture views helping as a religious virtue and expects helping activities from religious organizations. In a study conducted with approximately 300 congregations in nine cities, 88% of congregational members surveyed felt that helping the needy is very important or essential

to Christian life, and 92% believed that such service is very important or essential to the ministry of their congregation.

It is clear that churches and their affiliated organizations are active in addressing many of the problems which exist in society, including problems having to do with equity or redistribution of wealth, individual crises, and community social problems. For example, Wineburg (1994) reports having read over 300 news accounts from 1982 through 1992 of religious involvement in social services. One of the areas in which the Christian churches of the United States have been very involved is in services to children, having been the primary provider of such services until the Social Security Act of 1935 made the government the major player (Richmond Garland, 1994). The United Methodist Church's Women's Division (part of the Board of Global Ministries) developed the United Methodist Women's Campaign for Children in an effort to encourage women in local churches to work to improve the lives of children in their local communities.[10]

Within this section two areas related to the activities are examined. One is the attitudes of churches about helping and about potential changes in the amount of work they might do. The other is a description of both the scope of and a sample of churches' activities, either at the local or denominational level, which address community problems. Again, this latter area may include either church-sponsored activities or support for activities offered by others.

Nationally, there has been some documentation specifically about faith-based social services such as the Salvation Army, Catholic Social Services, and Lutheran Social

Services. However consistent information regarding what role churches play in meeting the various human service needs of community persons is sparse or fugitive. In some cases, such as The United Methodist Church, some types of information are gathered by denominational agencies. However, this information is often not readily available to other service providers, researchers and policy planners.

The most comprehensive survey available at present is that of the Independent Sector (Hodgkinson, et al., 1992). 727 religious congregations were surveyed. Congregations provided information regarding membership, program activities, employees, volunteers, and revenues and expenditures. These congregations estimated that the hours worked by volunteers and paid staff beyond the religious activities of the church were distributed as follows: education (14 percent), human services (8 percent), health (8 percent), arts and culture (2 percent), public and societal benefits, environment and international activities (1 percent each) and other activities (4 percent). Thus, 40 percent of all time worked in churches is estimated to go to these other activities.

Of the respondents, 92 percent of all congregations were involved in human services and welfare, with nearly 75 percent reporting youth programs. Ninety percent reported at least one program in health. Other areas reported by at least 50 percent of the congregations were international (significantly overseas relief), programs for public or societal benefit, pro-life or pro-choice activities, and arts and culture. However, it is not indicated to what extent the programs in these congregations serve persons outside the membership of their own congregation (Hodgkinson, et al.,1992).

---

10 United Methodist Women's Campaign for Children. The Women's Division, General Board of Global

One of the predictors of the number of programs in which a congregation would be involved is the size of a congregation, with larger congregations doing more (Hodgkinson, et al., 1992). This finding is also true with respect to direct service provision for specific populations, such as persons with mental retardation (Nelson, 1983).

Many churches do have extensive programs to assist their own members. By far the most extensive social service network offered for members of any denominations is that of the Mormon church. These services are funded by the considerable contributions which are expected of all members (Carlson, 1992). Other congregations have less formal or extensive structures for responding to needs of members, but do so regularly. It is common practice, for example, to have a network of families in a congregation who supply meals to persons who have experienced a death or who are suffering some familial crisis. Loss of housing due to fire or other concrete needs of members may be met with an organized effort to secure the needed funds or items from other members. Harris (1994) describes both mutual aid in churches and informal care offered through an organized framework as means for addressing needs of members.

This distinction between serving one's own congregation versus serving the larger community is critical in evaluating the potential and willingness of churches to step into the gaps being created by shifts in services since the 1980's, as many persons in need may have little or no affiliation with religious congregations. Further, as Wolpert (1993) points out, the social and wealth segregation which has occurred in the United States leaves communities, and hence their community-based congregations, with unequal resources.

Ministries, The United Methodist Church, 475 Riverside Drive, New York, NY 10115-0050.

The religious congregations in less affluent communities, mirroring their communities, will have fewer resources with which to meet greater need. An indicator of the degree to which congregations are running programs which benefit persons outside their congregations is the presence of separately incorporated programs. The area in which the most congregations had separately incorporated programs was education (4.6 pecent), with arts and culture second (3.3 percent). These are, as Wolpert describes them, amenity services which may or may not benefit the community at large. Human services/welfare programs were only separately incorporated in 1.2 percent of the congregations. Interestingly, Olsen, et al. (1988) in their study of inner city churches in Chicago found that if the membership of the church was either all community or all non-community, as opposed to a mixture, the number of programs sponsored declined.

Of particular interest in this study is the response of local congregations to the reduction in social services associated with retrenchment. Wineburg (1996) described at length the extent of religious congregational involvement in support for local social service organizations. One of the most telling statistics he offered was the increased support for the Greensboro Urban Ministry, an interfaith agency, allowing an expansion from 6 staff at the beginning of the Reagan administration to a staff of 47 and a 1.3 million dollar budget in the mid-1990's.

Other studies have examined the particular activities of local churches in particular areas. Thomas, Quinn, Billingsley, and Calswell (1994) analyzed Black churches' involvement in the provision of social and health services in communities. The study produced evidence of both participation in volunteer run programs addressing basic human

needs, counseling and education (67%) as well as substantial collaboration with secular

providers (71%). In this study, churches from the Methodist tradition tended to be more

involved in outreach when compared to Baptist and Pentecostal churches, illustrating the

presence of differences between denominations. Not surprisingly, churches which owned

their own buildings were much more likely to be involved in outreach efforts. Mares

(1994) describes housing development efforts of a coalition of churches in Los Angeles.

Olsen, et al. (1988) looked at the feasibility of involving churches in collaboration

with health providers. They believed that the communities where churches might play the

most important role in this area were the inner city areas where the poorest persons tend

to live and where preventive health care is most lacking. Their rationale was that the

churches are key social institutions which people trust more than they do other

institutions. This description is a variation on Putnam's (1995a) observations about

people developing trust as a result of having joined organizations. That is, people develop

trust in the organizations to which they belong, and thus are more willing to seek

assistance in those places. In addition to the evaluating the possibility of collaborating

with a health care provider, the churches identified their existing programs. Nearly half

had food pantries and a third provided a clothing bank for persons in the community. Size

of the congregation was a factor in the number of programs which were offered, with

larger churches (over 500 members) offering more programs. As for program expansion,

many indicated a willingness to do more in the area of health advocacy and collaboration.

One problem area which churches are tackling is drug abuse. Different approaches

are being taken, illustrating how the churches can be flexible in addressing community

problems. Several of these were described in <u>Christianity Today</u> (Lawton, 1991), a national publication with a readership that would likely draw ideas for use in their own congregations. In Washington, D.C., the Council of Bishops for the United Methodist Church assigned a bishop to work with local churches on development of a strategy to fight drug abuse which involved intensive outreach to both young people and adults. Lawton (1991) describes seven other programs from across denominations which are taking a variety of approaches to the problem of substance abuse. Vinankulu (1990) also describes efforts underway in churches and denominations to address the substance abuse and crime related to drug trafficking in communities. Strategies range from substance abuse counseling to buying the houses being used by drug dealers. There are also limited examples, such as the Bridging the Gap program which is based in the School of Allied Health at the University of Texas, which seek to develop working relationships between other helping professions and religious communities (Turner, 1995). This substance abuse educational project was developed when a survey revealed that a community of 62,000 in Texas had no programs based in any church for substance abusing persons and their families. In another health related collaboration, a hospital in the Hollywood, California area worked to develop a collaboration with other churches in providing preventive medicine and health screenings which were particularly targeted at the poor (Turner, 1995). Churches were seen as being particularly valuable in this effort because of the number of immigrants in the community whose cultures and languages might not have been adequately represented in the formal health care system. Another area identified as

one which churches need to become involved in, and in which there have been some

efforts, is HIV/AIDS (South, 1992).

Dudley and Van Eck (1992) evaluated the attitudes of churches and their

involvement in social action and social ministries. They found that church location was

more important than size with respect to the attitudes of churches towards social justice

work, with urban churches more supportive of church involvement and social justice

work, regardless of size. They also distinguished types of church approaches to social

ministry. *Sanctuary* involved education and church members; *civic* was a mixture of

education and activism with focus on both members and the community; and *activist* was

an emphasis on external or community work. African-American Churches, and the

Churches of the Brethren were significantly more liberal on social issues and working for

justice than other denominations. In general, they found the mainline churches to be fairly

committed to social justice. While this is a somewhat different issue from actual provision

of or direct support for human services, it seems likely that those committed to social

justice would also have concern for and willingness to help the poor and others in need.

One seemingly important consideration with respect to the role of churches is the

place of African-American and other ethnic/minority churches in working in communities.

While many studies do not distinguish churches by ethnicity, but rather by denomination, it

seems important to consider the probability that there is a different understanding,

particularly in the African-American church, than there is in predominately White churches

about the church's role in meeting needs in the community.

There is literature regarding the historical relationship of the church to the Black

community, the church being one of the few institutions on which Black people could count for support and in which they were accorded the right to develop and exercise leadership skills (Johnson, 1980). This relationship is likely to still be true in many communities, or there may in some cases be language issues for individuals which the church is able to mediate. Further, African-American churches are extensive resources of social welfare and social activism in their communities (Johnson, 1980). Reports, such as that of the National Congress of Black Churches that 42 percent of their member churches are already doing some type of anti-drug program (Lawton, 1990), certainly suggest that the Black churches may be well ahead of the rest of the churches in their responses to the communities they serve. Chang, Williams, Griffith, and Young (1994) describe the African-American churches in New Haven, Connecticut as including a vast array of services, including "education, substance abuse, child abuse, parenting, domestic violence, job training/unemployment, adoption/foster care, homeless shelters, soup kitchens, youth programs, elderly program, long-term illness, AIDS, food and clothing distribution, counseling, spiritual outreach, day care, recreation, social and political activism, finances, and various volunteer programs (93)", programs financed almost exclusively with church funding. Harding (1992) points to findings across all churches that they identify drugs, crime, and unemployment as major problems in their communities, and yet fewer that five percent of those same churches had programs addressing any of these problems. One area in which African-American churches have been active is in economic development and related programs, as evidenced by programs such as that of First AME in Los Angeles (Whitlock, 1997) . White mainline churches,

often serving persons who have relatively more privilege in society, are less likely to need those types of supports from their religious congregations. A recent Michigan study exploring questions related to the activities of religious congregations in communities with a large concentration Black residents document extensive community program involvement (81%), and some involvement (28%) in economic development (Jackson, Schweitzer, Cato, and Blake, 1997).

Thus, there do appear to be interesting and productive programs being developed and run through individual churches or in collaborative efforts which are ecumenical or interdisciplinary. Those programs appear to tap the unique qualities of churches in responding to community need. Yet there is also evidence that at a local church level there is an unevenness in the extent to which churches are attempting to support or administer programs directly. Perhaps the most appropriate role for religious congregations, in many cases, is to serve either as a supplement to governmental services or to offer the personal contact and caring, often resulting is social capital development, which is not necessarily available from professional or governmental social service providers (Nelson, 1983).

Barriers to Expansion or Implementation of Social Ministries by Churches

When considering the potential of churches to expand their social ministries, it should be remembered that there is a difference between the potential for individual members to increase their benevolent activities as compared to an increase in the potential of churches or other voluntary organizations to which they belong increasing activities. Clearly there are compelling reasons to believe that churches are committed to what might

be called social ministries and are potentially interested in expanding their work or the number of programs which they support. However, to put this very simply, the politicians who seek to involve religious congregations in social ministries have not asked them whether they either are willing or have the capacity to create programs to replace those which have been eliminated by the government. There certainly are indicators that they do not have the capacity. In the early 1980's, Nelson (1983) sought to assess the ability and willingness of Protestant denominations to engage in direct services to persons with mental retardation, a population which is not highly stigmatized. She concluded that the most frequent role (70% of 250 respondents) was in a social mainstreamer role, which was basically just identifying and being friendly or supportive of persons who were identified as MR. This is much akin to social capital development for basic emotional needs. The limited cost and skill level required may have predisposed churches to offer this support. Some churches were also providing direct social services. With respect to the capacity of churches to offer services, Nelson suggested generally that the most viable role of churches is as a secondary support, rather than as a primary provider, as the churches do not have the financial resources or the apparent willingness to engage in extensive social services. Of course, Nelson's study was conducted on a specific population's needs. One might infer that if the willingness or capacity is found lacking for a specific population/problem area because of limited resources, the churches certainly could not comprehensively address the breadth of other needs which exist effectively and comprehensively.

Taken within the context of the political reality of the past 17 years, there is also a

logic to suggesting that local congregations might not have extensive unused resources at this point. The churches have been targeted since the early 1980's to provide emergency services, social services and social capital type programs for their communities. It has been estimated that there are 300,000 churches in the U.S. with average budgets of about $125,000 and average membership of about 180. In order to fully offset in dollars the amount of funding which has been eliminated from tax based funding for human services, on average the local churches would have to double their annual budgets, an obviously unrealistic expectation (Wineburg, 1997). Further, if one considers that there are substantial numbers of people who do not attend religious congregations, but that the bulk of contributions made are made to religious congregations by attendees, there is no likelihood that churches will receive assistance from non-attendees in funding these additional services. This scenario leaves the church members shouldering an impossible burden.

In addition, there are also barriers which exist. Respondents to the survey completed by Olson et al. (1988) identified lack of volunteers, lack of funds, lack of time to manage programs, lack of interest by the congregation, and lack of cooperation or technical support from government agencies as primary barriers. While they specifically were asking concerning health related programs, it is logical to think that these would likely be barriers for other program areas as well.

With respect to funding, one area which is not raised directly in the literature, but which might affect the ability of local congregations to directly fund programs within their own churches, is their relationship with and commitment to their own faith-based human

service organizations. The majority of mainline denominations have established separately incorporated 501(c)(3) organizations which operate social service programs. These are often agencies which provide services across communities in specific program areas, such as child welfare or which provide a range of services in communities which are impoverished. Many churches are already supporting these free-standing organizations, whether by direct contribution, through denominational assessments or both. They may feel they are already doing their part to provide services by supporting this professionally administered work.

In addition, these agencies, along with other social service agencies, have relied heavily on governmental funding since the mid-1960's or even earlier. Cuts in funding for human services which began in earnest in the early 1980's have included cuts to these organizations, a fact which some find encouraging and others find troubling.11 It is assumed that as these organizations have had to absorb the loss of grants and contracts which funded their programs, they may need additional support, including funds, from the affiliated churches. These requests would have to be met by members of local churches through increased contributions or reduction in their own local efforts to address needs. Given the choice between having impact through the effort of running a program compared to contributing to an existing program, many churches would doubtless opt to contribute to the existing program, particularly if it is seen as being in an area of greater need and if it is viewed as being an organization doing good work.

---

11 See, for example, W. Tucker (1995). Sweet charity. The American Spectator, February, 38-41. His article is subtitled "The shocking story of nonprofits feeding at the trough at your expense".

As implied in some of the studies above, questions of size of congregations in combination with declining membership seems relevant when discussing the capacity of churches to offer services. Although Dudley and Van Eck's findings (1992) suggest that size is not a factor in commitment specifically to social justice programs, size may be a barrier in the implementation of actual programs. If nothing else, one could reasonably assume that churches which have a smaller membership will also have smaller physical plants, and thus, less flexibility in developing programs. In addition, the generally more limited resources could mean the church would have difficulty in meeting the various requirements which now exist for licensure of day care programs (for any of a number of populations), building accessibility, and kitchens which serve food to the public. The tendency of churches which are larger to engage in more programs seems to support Dudley and Van Eck (Hodgkinson, et al., 1992; Nelson, 1983). On the other hand, Sullivan (1985) points out that free riding may be more of a problem for larger congregations. That is, individual members feel less individual responsibility for personally contributing to and volunteering for the programs of the church, while still being able to receive the benefits/services of the church themselves because of the contributions of others. These contradictory tendencies, if they hold true, suggest that the larger churches may be able to increase their work more than smaller churches, but that the difference compared to smaller churches will not be proportionate to their larger membership.

For example, The United Methodist Church nationally is a denomination of small congregations, with handfuls of larger churches in urban areas and in small cities where the U.M. Church is one of the pillar churches. This can be seen in the West Michigan

Conference, which has an average of about 180 members per congregation. The declining membership across the denomination and across the West Michigan Conference may make it difficult for many churches to compensate for losses in donor-members. Since 1968, the membership of the West Michigan Conference has dropped from 105,000 to under 80,000, a loss of over 20% of its membership. It is understood within the Conference that many churches, including large ones, are struggling to support operation and maintenance budgets, i.e. paying pastors' and other staff salaries, upkeep of buildings, and basic ministries or club services of the church. The costs include the payment of apportionments, which fund the various programs of the district, conference and general denomination. It also appears that the membership of churches is steadily graying, with many members in retirement and outside their communities for substantial parts of the winter. Therefore, there have not been increases in per capita giving that have been adequate to offset losses of donor-members.

One additional barrier has already been identified. Differences, sometimes profound ones, in the theological understandings that different churches have concerning morality associated with various issues, may create uneven provision of services and may influence the criteria for receiving services which create gaps in who will be served. Such examples are substance abuse, prostitution, and gay lifestyle (vis a vis working persons who are HIV+ or at high risk of HIV infection). Alcoholics are viewed with varying degrees of tolerance or condemnation, depending on the church's theology regarding the morality of alcohol consumption, while prostitution is fairly universally condemned. The issue of homosexuality is so divisive within denominations, much less between them, that

the potential for conflict seems self-explanatory. Another example is differences in understandings of marriage and relationships between husband and wife which make it difficult to address domestic violence in congregations. These differences can make it very difficult to develop collaborations or even develop interest between congregations, which would potentially pool resources and allow broader based community initiatives (South, 1992; Turner, 1995). It is also, as discussed elsewhere, a barrier with respect to people being willing to seek services and support from helping organizations, especially from religious congregations.

Regional Differences

One factor which must be considered in attempting to understand the place and potential of the churches, aside from theological differences which distinguish them, is the general differences which exist across different regions of the country. To the extent that there are regional differences, even local congregations of specific denominations will tend to reflect the region in which they are located. In addition, it seems probable that the distribution of denominations which are represented in the community will reflect theologically the general tendencies of the community. Communities which are more conservative will tend to have more theologically conservative churches representation. Conversely, areas which are less conservative will tend to have fewer or smaller theologically conservatively churches.

Wolpert (1993) ranked a number of cities on per capita giving to a select set of national funds and United Way and provided a conservative index score for the city based

on the voting of the U.S. representative for the area. Two Michigan cities which were ranked were Detroit and Grand Rapids. Detroit, of course, is a major metropolitan area and is the largest city in Michigan. Grand Rapids, while not nearly the size of Detroit, is the largest metropolitan area in the West Michigan Conference, where this study was conducted. Grand Rapids, on the side of the state which is commonly viewed as a particularly conservative area, ranked very high on the conservative indicator, sixth of 86 cities. Kent County, in which it is located, has a distribution of Catholics (33.4%), United Methodist (4.3%) and a combined total of Reformed Church of America (RCA) and Christian Reformed (24.8%) (Bradley, Green, Jones, Lynn, and NcNeil, 1992). These latter two are conservative, traditional denominations compared to the United Methodist Church.

Detroit, viewed as a far less conservative area, ranked as 70th of 86. As might be expected, the distribution of Catholics (56.9%), United Methodist (1.8%) and the CRC/Christian Reformed Churches (.2%) is very different (Bradley, Green, Jones, Lynn, and NcNeil, 1992). The Reformed Church in Michigan is concentrated on the west side of the state, reflecting the conservative nature of the west side of the state and affecting the types of services which are likely to be provided by the church community as a whole in the communities where it dominates.

Not surprisingly there are discernible differences between regions of the country with respect to participation in churches. Stump (1984, 1986) sought to analyze participation in churches generally and across different denominations. His work was done partly to investigate whether homogenization of regions was occurring as more

people moved between areas of the country. His analysis, primarily of White Protestant and Catholic churches, found that cultural differences do exist and are reflected in religious diversity across regions.

There are also regional difference within denominations, although this appears to be a very limited area of study. Johnson (1980) found that the activities of African-American churches were different in Savannah, Georgia than in Boston, a southern and a northern region, with churches in Boston more involved in social welfare activities, while the southern churches of Savannah were more engaged in social action. In addition, however, the income levels of the church families in these two regions was quite different. The Savannah churches appeared to have considerably lower income on whole, although Johnson qualified this finding substantially, given his inability to make general comparisons of the economics in the two regions. Either factor (church and regional economic status) could influence the role of churches in both service provision and social capital development. Differences in the political power and thus role of Black residents in the two communities, partly a function of the larger size of the black community in Savannah, may also be contributing factors.

Funding Potential of Churches

Having stated the above, what is the capacity of churches to raise contributions for needed services? Nonprofits are frequently believed to be an alternative to government funded programs, yet it is well-documented that private nonprofits, including those which are religiously affiliated, were and continue to be heavily subsidized by governmental

funding (Netting, 1982; Salamon, 1987). This reality was even acknowledged by the popular media, as illustrated by a report in US News and World Report on the eve of the 1996 Republican take-over of Congress which discussed how extensively service by faith-based organizations were funded by governmental sources. Wineburg (1997) estimated that, assuming there are 300,000 religious congregations in the U.S. which averaged 180 members and a budget of $125,000, each congregation would need on average to double its budget. Thus, the assumption that nonprofits in general will fill the gaps left by government cuts is a fallacy; the cuts have and will result in a reduction in human services provided by nonprofits.

Wolpert (1993), who sought to document the impact of the decentralization efforts associated with the New Federalism, points out that in the nonprofit sectors of health, education, social services, and arts and culture, the range of income from charitable contributions from an average as low as 4% for health agencies, to arts and culture at the high end with 35%. The remainder of the income for these organizations is from fees, dues, and government grants, as well as endowment income. Figures are not given distinguishing those organizations which have fees or dues and endowments. It seems likely that educational institutions, primarily of higher education, hospitals, and arts/cultural organizations, are most likely to have both sources of income than are social services organizations. Social service organizations tend to have a clientele without the needed wealth to endow an organization, regardless of their affinity for the organization.

Religious institutions, on the other hand, are supported primarily by private contributions, with 93% of donations coming from private contributions (Weisbrod,

1988). In fact, it has been estimated that approximately half of all private donations in the United States, or just over $22 billion in 1980, go to religious organizations (Rudney, 1981 cited in Rudney, 1987). The National Council of Churches of Christ in the U.S. (Bedell, 1993) reported that member churches, excluding the Roman Catholic Church, received total contributions of just over $17 billion, and further reported that nearly 19% of those contributions, or $3.2 billion, was given for benevolence, suggesting that churches are contributing to assistance for others. The per capita annual giving for all denominations combined is $384.03. The United Methodist Church accounted for just over $3 billion of the total giving, with a per capita rate of $389.53, just over that national average.

Given the scale of reductions in funding at the state and federal level for assistance to the neediest persons, it is difficult to see how contributions to the nonprofit sector, including churches, could possibly increase sufficiently to provide the level of services to an adequate level in the private nonprofit sector. In fact, Wolpert (1993) indicates that services, particularly those related to income transfer and equity, have not been picked up in the local sectors at the rate they were cut at the federal level.

More specifically, comparison of the status of churches from 1973 to 1993 points to trends in church membership and contributions which suggest that the ability of the churches to increase support for benevolence is also probably very limited. In 1971/1972, 42 bodies reported membership of 42,204,281, with 19.3% of giving going to benevolence (Jacquet, 1973). In 1991/1992, 36 churches reported membership of 40,358,175, with 18.75% in benevolence giving (Bedell, 1993).

It is difficult to draw conclusions from these data since the drop in number of reporting bodies and reported memberships could be the result of denominations withdrawing memberships in the National Council of Churches or simply of their failure to report. However, there is evidence of a decline overall in the mainline denominations since the 1960's. The decline was clear enough by the late1970's to prompt concern from observers (Dudley, 1979; Roozen and Carroll, 1979). Subsequently, the trends have continued for the mainline denominations, while other nondenominational churches, often those which are more conservative, have been showing increases in membership (Roof and McKinney, 1987; Trueheart, 1996). Many of the newest, fastest growing congregations are the mega-churches, which may have over 10,000 attendees during a week. Trueheart (1996) analyzes their impact in two ways. They represent over 50% of all attendees, while the churches themselves (somewhere around 400 churches at that time) represent only twelve percent of all Protestant congregations. In the remaining Protestant churches, about half have under 75 congregants. Given the density of attendees which results from these churches the resources of the participants, to the extent that they can be tapped, are concentrated in very specific locations. Many of these churches, such as Willow Creek in Illinois, are located in the outskirts of metro areas where there is the land available to build the sorts of physical plants needed for such large endeavors. Parking alone for such large crowds presents a challenge. Thus, these churches are tending to congregate people, their resources and facilities away from the areas of poverty where the needs may be greatest. The exception to this is the African-American mega churches, such as the AME church which houses Renaissance in the inner city of L.A. (Whitlock, 1997).

Several sources provide information about the United Methodist Church, a fairly typical mainline denomination and the denomination being studied here. There were 10,509,198 members reported in 1970 (Jacquet, 1973) and 8,611,902 members in 1995 (United Methodist statistics), a loss of 18% of the membership over this period of time. Further, if one considers the membership of the UMC since the 1940's, the decline is more pronounced. In 1947, the Methodist and Evangelical United Brethren (which combined in 1968 to form the United Methodist Church) had a total membership of 9,135,247 (Yearbook of American Churches, 1948). Roozen and Carroll's (1979) analysis of the UMC's membership between 1950 and 1978 showed an increase through the mid-60's with a steady decline in membership since that time. The decline continues, accompanied by what is commonly referred to as the "graying of the denomination". This trend has been visible for several decades in the mainline denominations (Dudley, 1979). It is common knowledge in the UMC that there are many "snowbirds" in Northern churches. The size of UMC Conferences such as Florida and Virginia, which at 343,445 and 347,741 respectively are the largest in the denomination, supports the idea that there is considerable movement of retired UMC members to warmer climates, members who sometimes split their time between their retirement homes and their original homes (United Methodist statistics).

The percentage of church contributions reported as benevolence increased from 16.7% in 1970 (Jacquet, 1973) to 21.89% in 1991 (Bedell, 1993). These data can be combined with inflation adjusted data to provide more depth to the picture. Jacquet and Jones (1991) evaluated per-capita giving from 1961 to 1989, adjusted for inflation with

1967 as the bench mark. The period which seems most relevant to this study is the 1980's, during which their analysis showed that giving edged up, increasing from $86.47 in 1980 to $107.62 in 1967 dollars. This total increase was about the same for this 10 year period as the increase for the previous 20 year increase. However, if one looks at real dollars, the increases from year to year equal about $10-$20 per capita, which is not enough to have any real impact in service levels.

Ronsvalle and Ronsvalle (1996) discussed trends from 1968 to 1989, and pointed to a decline in church member giving as a percentage of their income. Further, the study indicated that churches were spending less on work outside the church than on work inside the church. One conclusion was that there is untapped potential within churches which, if tapped, could have considerable impact on the poor. This may be the case, but there has not been much real research about what the level of that potential is, or about whether the potential is really in funding as opposed to volunteering or making physical resources more available. And, even if the resources are available, it is unclear that they are available for these services. Further, church leaders themselves continue to express concern about the ability of their churches to provide a safety net for the poor. Recently, for example, a group of high ranking officials from Michigan Protestant denominations, the Roman Catholic church, and the Michigan Board of Rabbis called upon the state of Michigan to provide that safety net, suggesting that religious congregations do not have the capacity to do as much as they are being asked to do (Hughes, 1997).

The possibility of loss of mission

There appears to have been considerable discussion in some quarters, such as at the political level, about whether or not religious congregations are potentially a better source of social service funding. However, little attention has been given to the question of impact on this sector, the churches themselves, if it substantively increases its involvement in providing services. It seems clear that there is not likely to be a large infusion of funding from the congregations themselves, given the limitations discussed above. This means that securing funding for any new programs would require churches to pursue funding from secular sources, including the government itself.

Sherman (1995) and Hall (1997b) have both pointed out that religious organizations risk a loss of their mission, that of being faith-based, if they enter the ring to compete with other service providing organizations for funding of new programs. This concern regarding mission is an old yet ongoing one. Judson (1907) in issuing his call to the churches to become more involved in ministering to the whole person suggested that there needed to be limitations, lest the social concerns of the community take all the ministers' time away from the religious concerns of the church.. Donald S. Howard, then a former dean of a school of social work, suggested to the National Council of Churches that: "When the church diverts its limited money, personnel and attention to things that are generally enough accepted that government funds are available for them, will it have sufficient funds for its unique responsibility? I doubt it " (1959). If congregations recognize this as a legitimate concern, they may be influenced about how to proceed with

their development of additional services. One possible outcome is to limit their involvement with external funding sources, particularly government.

Summary of issues

Thus, there are several key points which are relevant to this study. First, the work of religious congregations has been largely ignored by social workers and much neglected by researchers of the non-profit sector. With the notable exception of the Hodgkinson, et al. (1992) study, there have not been broad-based studies documenting the social welfare work of congregations. The remaining studies which have been completed focus on specific municipalities or the work of individual congregations. Thus, there is limited knowledge regarding what churches within denominations or specific geographic areas are actually doing. Research which documents the extent and type of work, along with the populations served and the type of resources which churches have available, is needed by social workers to assist them in their collaboration efforts with churches as a community resource.

Second, the capacity and willingness of religious congregations to expand services to persons within their own communities is not known, and possessing both willingness and capacity are prerequisites if they are to increase their involvement. Alone, neither is a sufficient condition for increased involvement in providing services within their communities. The reduction in federal funding and devolution of service provision began over sixteen years ago, so one could reasonably speculate that many religious congregations which had the capacity and willingness to do so have already increased the work they are doing. In some cases, perhaps many, they are already functioning nearly at

capacity. Thus current capacity *to expand* may be limited. This will include building use, as buildings of very willing congregations may be heavily used already. The extent of their current ability to expand needs to be identified.

Third, the capacity and willingness of individuals to contribute to and volunteer for equity services appears to be decreasing. As individuals are the source of those resources for religious congregations, this negative trend may be reflected in congregational capacity and willingness. This may be mediated by the moral imperatives or values of the religious organizations. Buildings, on the other hand, are often the product of earlier generations' contributions, and depending on the current state of their physical plants, costs of donating building space may be quite minimal. Thus, in churches with the lowest capacity and willingness, buildings may be the most available resource.

Fourth, a large stock of social capital is believed by many to be both a critical resource in functioning democratic society and a possibly endangered commodity at present, at least for some populations. Voluntary organizations are hypothesized by some to be a key source of social capital in the U.S., with religious congregations constituting the bulk of voluntary organizations. Thus, increasing the social ministry of religious congregations could be important for reasons other than simply the improvement of social condition of the poor. This type of work on the part of religious congregations has implications for the health of the entire social structure. Gardner (1996) points to the need to build trust as part of the development of community. He emphasizes the need to include persons who are minorities or are otherwise outside the ranks of privilege. Thus, analysis of the data from this survey, given the demographics of the conference, must

consider the implications of social capital development amongst persons who are disenfranchized or part of stigmatized groups. The willingness of the congregations to work with particular populations, whether defined by individual characteristics such as sexual orientation or by area of need, such as those needing income assistance (welfare recipients), is an important area of analysis.

Summary of purpose

Part of the survey is exploratory, as it seeks to document what United Methodist churches are already doing in their communities. This includes both changes they have seen in needs in their communities and changes they have made in response to those needs. This study will attempt to document the willingness/capacity of local congregations to address human need in their communities.

In addition, it seeks to understand the potential of local congregations in the development of social capital within their communities. Social capital, as previously discussed, is still an under-theorized and under-researched concept. However, most authors have operationalized the concept as the social ties and networks which are developed between people. Further, the assumption has been that participation in and especially membership in voluntary associations is one of the means by which people develop social capital. Thus, for the purposes of this study, the primary measure of social capital development potential will be the existence of programs at churches which are participatory, with the assumption that social capital will be available to participants. This is true for those who volunteer and for those who are active participants. The study will distinguish between church building use and funding compared to volunteering and

program implementation. These latter areas are more likely to increase social capital for church members, as well as to provide the opportunities for service recipients to reciprocate, further expanding their social capital.

CHAPTER 3

Research Design and Methodology

Objective of the study

There are many questions about what ability churches have to increase their work in non-religious services for their communities, both those which meet direct needs and those which contribute social capital to individuals. Many people, including those developing public policy, seem to believe that the churches are an optimal source of social capital and concrete support within communities. This study seeks to document the current extent of such work by the local churches of The United Methodist Church in West Michigan and to explore its ability to do more with respect to both those parameters.

Questions

With that objective in mind, the following questions were asked with respect to the churches:

1. To what extent are churches engaging in activities that build social capital?

2. With what likelihood do churches report of their ability to expand social capital development activities?

3. What characteristics of churches incline them toward greater social capital development activities in their local communities?

4. What social capital development efforts in churches relate to youth? To what extent are churches indicating a preference for work with children and youth?

5. Are there specific populations which are more or less likely to be offered social capital

development opportunities? It was believed that the churches would express less inclination to assist stigmatized populations, such as persons with AIDS, ex-prisoners, migrants, and welfare recipients and more willingness to assist less stigmatized populations, such as children, youth, victims of domestic violence, and senior citizens.

One additional area of inquiry, which is exploratory, is the extent to which services are primarily for members. Provision of services to members is certainly an important function for local religious congregations to have and such services contribute to general welfare of the community, reducing the pressure on other service sources in the community. However, to the extent that congregations are the primary providers of any one type of service within the community, those who are not congregants will be functionally excluded from those services offered only to members of the congregation. This area evaluates the question of excluded populations from a different perspective.

Design

This study was conducted using a mail survey which was sent to all the pastors serving congregations in the West Michigan conference of the United Methodist Church. The instrument was developed specifically for this study, utilizing the Sage Survey Kit for guidance concerning construction of the survey (Fink, 1995a, 1995b, 1995c). (See Appendix A for a copy of the questionnaire.) The content of the instrument was developed with input from West Michigan Conference program staff and clergy. Parts of the instrument yield information which is similar to that of the Independent Sector in its national survey of churches, but both the instrument itself and the method of

administration was different (Hodgkinson, et al., 1992). Information which was available from that study provide background as to what the trends have been in church activity.

The purpose of the instrument was to gather data concerning the current and future efforts of local congregations on two major dimensions. The first was actual service delivery; the other was social capital potential, which required the use of proxy measures. With respect to the former, the purpose was to document what services and activities the churches are currently engaged in and where they believe their potential to expand lies. This information gives direction to social workers about the specific areas and ways in which churches might be able to collaborate with them.

The other dimension, social capital, was deemed important from two perspectives. First, the possible link between social capital, voluntary associations, and adult civic involvement, although not well empirically demonstrated, suggests the value of identifying sources of social capital. In addition, in the face of ongoing devolution and outright cuts in services for the poor by governmental sources, it seemed critical to assess how people will be able to get needed assistance from other sources. Given that social capital is by definition the presence of the personal connections which facilitate getting one's needs met, and given that churches are both assumed to be and to some extent shown to be sources of social capital (Ellison and George, 1994), it seemed important to begin to understand more about the contributions of churches to social capital in their communities.

Early in the development process, the concept for the instrument itself was discussed with the program director of the West Michigan conference, a clergy person, and other church officials. The director was already well acquainted with the overall

project, having offered input and support for the initial proposal for funding. Other

persons with responsibilities which were relevant to the project (i.e chairpersons of

relevant conference boards) were approached for input, but failed to respond and

therefore did not give input. However, additional input was secured from individual local

pastors throughout the development of the instrument. After the initial draft of the

instrument was developed, it was given to the conference program director and to several

United Methodist clergy for review and input. They made suggestions regarding

additional responses under a number of questions, but generally agreed with the structure

of the questionnaire. When the questions and survey structure had been finalized, the

survey was given to the typesetter for preparation for the computer scanning.

Once the survey was ready for printing, several non-United Methodist ministers in

the local areas piloted the survey. The questions they had with respect to the instrument

all related to information which was United Methodist specific, but otherwise, they

reported that the survey's instructions and questions were clear.

The survey is comprised of four sections. A brief introductory section includes the

question where pastors were asked to "vote" for the mission project to which they wanted

their two dollar contribution sent. The second section focuses on work camps, which are

short-term volunteer projects. Analysis of current work camp activity is generally

excluded from this dissertation and will be analyzed in a separate publication. The third

section is the listing of 58 possible activities in which churches might be engaged. It asks

respondents to indicate each project in which their church is engaged by the level of

involvement: building use only, collaborative in their building, collaborative elsewhere,

and direct sponsor. This section also asks what types of facilities are available in the responding church.

The fourth section is the only one expressly intended for the pastor to complete and is designated clearly as such. This section uses a seven point Likert scale for eight questions concerning church response to need in the past two years and their estimate of ability to respond in the next two years. The range of response options in the scale are from *considerable decrease* to *considerable increase*. Two additional questions are asked concerning the church's willingness to respond to specific populations and problem areas.

In the remainder of the pastors' section there are questions about the relative health of the congregation and objective information about church demographics: size, attendance, budget, community size, and church location. For this sample, congregation budget, attendance, and size were reviewed to assure that figures given were completed and consistent with those reported to the conference for the end of the specified year (1995).

In addition to the survey instrument, three items were included in the principal mailing. First was a letter explaining briefly the intent of the survey. Secondly, there was a personal letter from the West Michigan Council director encouraging ministers to complete the survey. Finally, there was an envelope with enough first class postage to pay for the return of as many surveys as that minister/church had received. Efforts were made to avoid mailing the survey during important times in the church's liturgical year. Finally, a reminder card was sent to all ministers whose surveys had yet to be returned by the

deadline. Based on pre-tests, it was estimated that on average the survey would take 15-20 minutes to complete.

Measurement of social capital

Social capital is simple, yet somewhat elusive. As has been shown, social capital is a broad concept whose measures have not been uniformly defined. However, the fundamental concept offered by Coleman (1988) and Putnam (1955b) identified the relationships between people as being the source of social capital. Thus, activities which create new relationships between people inevitably create some quantity of social capital. Putnam, in particular, focused on the creation of social capital as linked to people's participation in voluntary associations. Foley and Edwards (1997) on the other hand, are dissatisfied with such vague definitions, which make measurement difficult or imprecise. Yet while their critique of Putnam is useful in other ways, it does not offer alternative measures for social capital at the street level. In summary, while there are criticisms of using proxy measures for social capital, such as participation in voluntary activities, as being inadequate, validated alternatives are not readily available.

Social capital has been discussed as being relevant, minimally, at two levels. First, it is important for individuals in having the potential for getting their personal needs met. Secondly, it is important for a democratic society, if it is to function adequately, to have as large a percentage of citizens as possible endowed with adequate social capital to work toward collective goals, presumably ones which will strengthen civil society. Although the link between these two benefits of social capital is not explicit in many discussions, it seems a matter of common sense that for individuals to work toward collective goals, they

must first achieve their personal goals.

There are two fundamental ways to approach the measurement of social capital. One is to attempt to measure the potential which individual people see in their personal relationships. The other is to accept the theory that social capital is developed through and present in voluntary associational activity and to measure the amount of that activity. This study does the latter, as it is a methodology which allows for a different, broad assessment of the churches in contributing social capital in their communities. Although this caveat is expressed throughout this paper, it seems important to emphasize that this measure does not document the presence of social capital. Rather, the development of social capital is assumed, but it was not measured or quantified in the various activities measured by this study.

The role of participation in voluntary associations, such as churches, has been suggested in much of the literature as an important possible sources of social capital. Religious congregations, the focus of this study, seem to be places where either form of social capital might be developed and even actualized. They generally have moral directives to meet peoples needs while also, in many cases, offering an organizational structure which would allow for the development of collective purposes or goals. The importance of identifying services which are directed to the community is that these are the activities which bring non-members of the congregation into the church for associational activities, even if it is as recipients of services.

The role of religious congregations seems critical in the development of social capital for persons in poverty. While it can be argued that social capital is needed by all

persons and that social capital is required for civil collective action, market transactions can in some cases be substituted for social capital in allowing individuals to meet their individual or even collective goals. Thus having money reduces the need for some kinds of social capital. Certainly, there are needs, such as the need for emotional support, which cannot easily be met through market transactions. However, even that is potentially purchased from a therapist. For those who lack adequate financial capital, social capital is needed even to eat.

In summary, while there are difficulties with using proxy measures of participation for the measurement of social capital, there are also logical arguments for inferring the development of social capital using proxies such as the presence of voluntary activities. Use of proxy measures does require that caution be exercised to not overstate the findings. Social capital would be measured for this study by assessing the church sponsored opportunities for participation in non-religious activities with voluntary associational features. Literally, this involved counting the actual activities in which churches reported being involved. As discussed above, *building use only* activities were considered separately in the analysis, with the local church congregation as the unit of analysis. Activities in which the churches were actually engaged in providing services were the focus of analysis, and it was further assumed that social capital development was potentially as high or higher for church members involved in the interaction as it was for the actual service recipients or program participants.

Due to the multiple purposes of the survey and the anticipated limitations of respondents' time, the survey was not structured to permit assessment of the amount of

volunteering or level of interaction between the volunteers and recipients or of the actual amount of social capital generated by any particular activity. Adding such detail would have reduced the number of questionnaires returned. All activities in which the congregation was directly engaged can be seen as "social capital producing" for both recipients and church members. Activities were simply counted for each church, with each church receiving a raw count of actual activities. Thus, the count was assumed to be a proxy for the production of social capital, without being able to infer the level of social capital generated.

It is impossible to say with certainty how much or what quality of social capital was produced by each local congregation nor to measure the number of persons whose access to social capital improved. In order to determine that, a much more complex instrument would be needed, minimally assessing the number of participants in each activity and the amount of interaction between them. Further, an ideal measure would involve surveying of the individual recipients of social capital to assess the increase in their potential to get their needs met in the future. This depth was not pursued as it would have made the survey impossibly long or would have required a completely different research design. Still, it is assumed that the interactions are by definition producing social capital. The needs of some persons are being met, and relationships are inevitably built which offer some potential for meeting future needs. Therefore, it was decided to weight each activity equally.

The other measure for the social capital potential of churches was their anticipated likelihood to increase volunteering and new programs, as estimated by the pastors. The

remaining two questions in that set, concerning the church's potential to increase funding and building use, were not analyzed individually for social capital potential because these are not believed to be resources which directly involve the congregations in social capital producing activities, although providing a facility certainly supports its production by others. Responses to all four questions were included in the composite score or *potential to increase resources score* for each church's overall support for social capital producing activities for the community.

This approach to measurement of social capital, even though it seems the best option in this study, is a proxy. Therefore, the findings must be treated with appropriate caution. It cannot be stated with certainty that social capital increased as a result of the activities which these churches are carrying out or that it will increase as a result of future increases in non-religious activities. This particular measure does not offer definitive evidence of the presence of social capital, although its existence can be inferred with reasonable certainty through the measures used.

Both the face validity and the content validity of the measures of current social capital (the inventory section of the survey) are believed to be good, given that the section counts actual activities in which the churches are engaged and by this definition capital is produced by the activities.

Reliability problems in how churches reported their activities were identified. These problems were visible in two ways. First, churches reported multiple involvement levels in some activities. That is, they indicated that they were engaged in a given activity

in more than one way, such as directly sponsoring their own food bank[12] and cooperatively working with a food bank at another location. It could not be determined whether the churches were involved in two distinct versions of the same activity or whether the instructions were misunderstood. In the above example, the church might actually run an onsite food pantry and independent of that, provide funding or volunteers to a separate food bank in the community. However, it might also interact with the larger food bank primarily for the purpose of maintaining its own food pantry, reporting that as collaboration. It had been anticipated that the latter scenario would result in a single answer, but when it did not, it was unclear what the multiple responses meant.

Secondly, there were some churches which appeared to have reported a level of activity which seemed inappropriate for that particular activity. For example, 15 churches reported that they were direct sponsors of blood drives. While they may have been the sponsors of the blood drive in the eyes of the community, this classification was not consistent with the instructions. In another example, 37 churches hosted 12- step meetings, but an additional 12 churches indicated that they were involved in collaboration or direct sponsorship of 12-Step meetings. While it is conceivable that there is some collaboration between a church and a 12-Step meeting, the general structure of such programs is antithetical to collaboration in the form of anything other than using a facility owned by another. Thus, a blood drive could have been specified as a cooperative effort, but never a directly sponsored activity, and a 12-step meeting should have been "hosting

---

12 A food bank is actually the central organization which collects bulk food and distributes it to the smaller food pantries commonly run by churches. However, in practice, many if not most of the churches call their activity a food bank and that is how it was listed on the survey.

only". These inconsistencies raised concerns regarding the reliability of the response categories, although not about whether churches were actually involved in activities that they reported.

The multiple levels of involvement threatened to create an overestimation of the actual social capital development activities of churches and the apparent misclassification of the type of involvement could potentially have distorted the summary of how extensive the churches' involvement was in social capital producing activities. Given these twin concerns, the analysis erred on the side of the conservative, reporting the involvement in any given activity only once for each church, regardless of the number of levels actually reported. This was done by creating a composite variable which was used to count the number of total activities in which each individual church was involved. The variable was derived by collapsing the three response categories of collaboration and direct sponsorship into a single count, regardless of whether the church had checked one or more than one of the three categories. The "host only" response category was not included in this variable.

Sample

The survey was mailed to all 441 churches of the West Michigan Conference of the United Methodist Church, of which 258 were returned. Two churches had recently closed, and their surveys were returned by the Postal Service, giving a response rate of open churches of 58.8%. The actual number of surveys distributed was slightly larger, as the district superintendents got a "complimentary copy" to assure that they were aware of the survey. In addition, due to the fact that the mailing list did not consistently reflect all

of the circuits, some pastors apparently received too many surveys for the number of churches in their charge. Four of the college ministries, Wesley Foundations, received the survey and three were returned. These do not represent churches as such, even though they are ministries which function much like a religious congregation. Therefore, they were excluded from this present analysis. Finally, there are several churches which are the host sites for distinct social service-providing organizations which began as local congregation programs and have developed into urban ministries supported by other local United Methodist churches as well as by denominational mission structures. The pastors of two of these churches inquired concerning how to report their activities, and they were sent additional surveys on which to report the total activities of these other organizations which they support. Only one of these additional surveys was returned, and it, too, is excluded from this analysis. However, the church which began and housed the organization reported the activities which it supports in this organization as it would others. Because of cooperation from church officials and the organizational structure of The United Methodist Church, the mailing had few errors.

Several decision parameters of this sample are particularly important: denomination, sampling strategy, and geographic selectivity. This particular sample was chosen for several reasons. While there was interest in being able to generalize findings to other regions and denominations, it also seemed important to be able to isolate differences which occurred as a result of church size, health, and location, thus requiring controls for the other factors. Homogeneity of the denominational affiliation of the churches in the sample will help control for differences in responses which could have resulted from

variations in denominational emphases on the role of local churches with respect to community services. Second, all the churches in a given United Methodist conference are under the same leadership, receive the same core materials with respect to mission priorities, and have access to the same materials and resources from the denomination for development of any projects or programs which they attempt. This conference is located entirely within the same state, controlling for regional differences as well. Third, it was decided to survey the entire population rather than using a random or representative sample as it was anticipated that a large return could be secured, reducing the variability of a small sample which might not be representative of the overall general population. This seemed important for this group of churches, as there is a small percentage of large churches which seemed key to understanding the overall role of the church.

Finally, this denomination was chosen because of my affiliation with it and my understanding of the denominational structure, as well as my personal connections to many of the clergy. These factors were presumed to be ones which would encourage participation by increasing the credibility of the overall study. Based on subsequent personal comments made to me by clergy and lay persons who responded to the survey, it appears that this did in fact contribute to the response rate. It is clear that that did not induce cooperation in all cases. Some individuals who are well known to me have seen me several times, acknowledged that they have yet to complete the survey while expressing what appears to be a hope that "it is probably too late to turn it in, isn't it...." A possible negative consequences of this "insider" status is the possibility that some individuals might not have returned the questionnaire out of concern of being known or

judged, or possibly out of fears concerning confidentiality.

One of the usual challenges of conducting surveys of local church congregations is the reticence of congregations to disclose information about their activities, particularly about funding and budgets. The United Methodist Church's extensive denominational infrastructure, known formally as the connectional system, facilitates identification of pastors by church assignment and enhances the likelihood of response to a survey of this sort. Churches are clustered by districts of between 40 and 80 churches, with six districts clustered into the West Michigan Conference. Conferences fall under the leadership and authority of an elected bishop, whose authority is far from absolute. Thus, support from the bishop was not deemed critical for the success of the survey. There are other designated clergy leaders as well, including superintendents for each of the six districts and a council director who functions as a program director for the entire conference. It was assumed that support from any of the clergy leaders would increase the response rate for the survey. In fact, the council director voluntarily furnished a personalized letter on conference letterhead encouraging cooperation with the survey.

Another probable factor in favorable response rates is that all churches provide annual reports of membership, average attendance, total budget, and a number of other statistics which relate to the internal and external work of the church. Thus, some of the information which was sought for this study, primarily regarding demographics, was available from existing reports. This allows both for greater accuracy, as missing information can be inserted. Further, it was hoped that the practice ministers have with reporting their local churches activities would leave them inclined to complete another

report (i.e. the survey instrument). Finally, a monetary incentive, in the form of a $2 contribution per responding church to a United Methodist-sponsored mission project, which was personally paid (versus being paid with grant money), was offered. While this is clearly not adequate compensation for the time spent, it was hope that it would be recognized as a good-faith effort. Also, it seemed obvious that the cumulative effect of a good response to the survey would be a substantial contribution to each of the two activities.

Notification of subjects

Several means of publicizing the survey were used. A news article in the United Methodist weekly for Michigan, the <u>Michigan Christian Advocate</u>, described the research fellowship award which funded the study and briefly described the survey which would be mailed. This article appeared approximately 6 weeks before the survey was actually received by the churches. Pastors who personally spoke with me or who e-mailed to acknowledge their receipt of the lead letter were asked to encourage any colleagues to complete the survey, which some agreed to do. In addition, a flyer was distributed to attendees at the Annual Conference approximately three months after the survey was distributed, as it was clear from talking with ministers that there were still persons who were willing to complete their surveys, but were uncertain whether it was too late to complete them.

Tracking

The survey number was recorded for each church in order to facilitate identification of the surveys when mailing reminders and correction of any problems with mailings. For example, some churches had representatives call to confirm that their surveys had arrived, and it was possible to respond to them. In addition, this number made it possible to identify the church for purposes of confirming or completing basic demographic information concerning respondents.

Data compilation

Returned surveys were reviewed for errors in the completion of answers provided by the subjects. Generally corrections will be restricted to readability problems, for example when pen rather than pencil was utilized. However accuracy of the demographic information provided was reviewed for three variables: size of congregation, average attendance, and annual budget based on the figures which were submitted to the Annual Conference for the year ending December 1, 1995 (West Michigan Annual Conference, 1996). Subjects had been asked to provide this information as a convenience, as reports from the congregations themselves are available from the Conference on each of these variables. All data was compiled utilizing a computer scanner. However, missing data on responses where it had been reviewed and corrected suggests that even with the corrections, there were some readability problems in the scanning process.

CHAPTER 4

RESULTS

This chapter describes the response to the survey, including the numbers of surveys returned and the demographics of the responding churches. In addition, it will presents the study's findings in the following order:

(1). To what extent are churches engaging in activities that build social capital?

(2). With what likelihood do churches report their ability to expand social capital development activities?

(3). What characteristics of churches incline them toward greater social capital development activities in their local communities?

(4). What social capital development efforts in churches relate to youth? To what extent are churches indicating a preference for work with children and youth?

(5). Are there specific populations which are more or less likely to be offered social capital development opportunities? It was anticipated that stigmatized populations, such as persons with AIDS, ex-prisoners, migrants, welfare recipients would be less likely than more socially accepted populations, such as children, youth, and senior citizens to be populations which the churches indicate they are inclined to serve more.

Who responded

There were 257 useable questionnaires returned. In the West Michigan conference there are a few churches which are predominately or exclusively churches comprised of

ethnic or racial minority congregants. There were no questions on the survey identifying

these churches, as it is possible to manually identify them. There were respondents from

some of these local churches; however, there are so few ethnic/minority churches in the

conference that it did not seem appropriate to do a separate analysis as it would have

identified them. This decision was based on both concerns regarding confidentiality and

the inability to generalize anything meaningful about them because there are so few. An

additional mailing of the survey to United Methodist churches in the remainder of the

state, which includes the cities of Flint, Saginaw, and Detroit, has been undertaken. It is

hoped that analysis of that larger data set will allow comparison of churches based on

these characteristics.

Characteristics of the churches

Churches were asked to report their membership, average attendance and budget

as of the end of 1995, the most recent report which was available in print at the time of the

survey. They were also asked to describe their church location and congregational health

(called status in the survey) of their church. For some characteristics, the totals shown

will not correspond exactly from one table to the next, depending on what number of

churches completed the questions in a particular table. However, the numbers shift only

slightly with the discrepancies, and missing data do not appear numerous enough to bias

the findings.

- Size of congregation (Average attendance) (Table 4.1). The mean membership of the

churches, not shown in Table 4.1, was 219, higher than the conference mean of

Table 4.1 - Distribution of 1995 church attendance

Average church attendance

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	No members	1	.4	.4	.4
	Between 1 and 25 members	15	5.8	6.2	6.6
	Between 26 and 50 members	48	18.7	19.8	26.3
	Between 51 and 75 members	42	16.3	17.3	43.6
	Between 76 and 100 members	33	12.8	13.6	57.2
	Between 101 and 125 members	21	8.2	8.6	65.8
	Between 126 and 150 members	23	8.9	9.5	75.3
	Between 151 and 175 members	11	4.3	4.5	79.8
	Between 176 and 200 members	9	3.5	3.7	83.5
	Between 201 and 300 members	22	8.6	9.1	92.6
	Between 301 and 400 members	13	5.1	5.3	97.9
	Between 401 and 500 members	3	1.2	1.2	99.2
	Between 501 and 600 members	1	.4	.4	99.6
	Between 1101 and 1200 members	1	.4	.4	100.0
	Total	243	94.6	100.0	
Missing	System Missing	14	5.4		
	Total	14	5.4		
Total		257	100.0		

approximately 180. While the sample is skewed, with a higher mean membership than that of the general population in the conference, this is due to having received responses from the largest churches in the conference. Although the larger churches are hence over-reported in the sample compared to the conference in general, the preponderance of small churches and the relatively small number of large congregations in the conference makes this response preferable to an exact matching of the proportions of the conference church size. It makes it possible to determine what the activities of these larger churches are. It is not felt that the skew affects the analysis. The most important point is that there are not proportionately as many larger congregations in the conference as are found in the survey.

• Size of community (Table 4.2). The survey asked where the responding church is physically located. The vast majority are in small communities, which was expected since the west side of Michigan is p   .rily small communities. 62 churches (24.1%) reported being in communities of 1,000-4,999, 54 churches (21.0%) reported being in communities smaller than 1,000, and 55 churches (21.4%) are not located in a town. Thus, two-thirds of the churches in this sample reported their location as being in a small community (under 5,000) or not in a town. In some cases open country churches may serve the residents of a town, having built new buildings away from the nearest municipality; however, in most cases, they likely are churches serving rural areas and small towns.

In the West Michigan Conference, there are only a few larger cities. There are no cities over 1 million, although two respondents indicated their communities were over 1 million. This points to the difficulty of establishing reliability, even on basic demographic information. On the other hand, the metro area of the largest city does exceed 1 million,

Table 4.2 - Distribution of community size

Size of community

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Church is not located in a town	55	21.4	22.2	22.2
	Smaller than 1,000	54	21.0	21.8	44.0
	1,000 to 4,999	62	24.1	25.0	69.0
	5,000 to 9,999	15	5.8	6.0	75.0
	10,000 to 24,999	15	5.8	6.0	81.0
	25,000 to 49,900	10	3.9	4.0	85.1
	50,000 to 99,999	19	7.4	7.7	92.7
	100,000 to 999,000	16	6.2	6.5	99.2
	1,000,000 or larger	2	.8	.8	100.0
	Total	248	96.5	100.0	
Missing	System Missing	9	3.5		
	Total	9	3.5		
Total		257	100.0		

and the assumption is that generally, the reported size of a community is indicative of actual size of the community, even if the estimates of size are somewhat incorrect. This is supported by the fact that one church reporting a community over 1 million was suburban and the other was on the outskirts of the city. Nine (n=9; 3.5%) responses were missing.

• Distribution of churches by attendance across communities (Table 4.3). Although it is typical to utilize church membership as a measure of church size, church attendance was used here unless otherwise specified. This was done because it is believed that this measure would more effectively capture the strength of the congregation. Some congregations have large memberships but proportionately low attendance. Others, such as those new churches which have yet to be chartered would show zero members but they do report average attendance. Also, some churches' attendance is quite disproportionate, in either direction, from membership counts, so that attendance is believed to be a better measure of the actual participatory strength of the congregation. Because these figures are reported using a standard format to the conference each year, they were deemed to be fairly reliable.

As can be seen in Table 4.3, there is no pattern of where the churches with larger average attendance are located. They are distributed across large and small communities. However, the smallest churches do tend to be clustered in smaller towns and open country. Again, this is expected as much of the conference is quite rural with disbursed populations. In addition, smaller churches in communities large enough to have more than one United Methodist Church have the option of combining very small churches with another church, allowing members to retain denominational affiliation. This option is not

Table 4.3 - 1995 church attendance as a function of community size

Size of community	Average church attendance												Total
	Between 1 and 25 members	Between 26 and 50 members	Between 51 and 75 members	Between 76 and 100 members	Between 101 and 125 members	Between 126 and 150 members	Between 151 and 175 members	Between 176 and 200 members	Between 201 and 300 members	Between 301 and 400 members	Between 401 and 500 members	Between 501 and 600 members	
Church is not located in a town	6	22	11	6	1	3		2	2				53
Smaller than 1,000	9	16	14	5	4	1	1		1				51
1,000 to 4,999		6	8	12	11	8	5	4	2	4			60
5,000 to 9,999		1			2	4	2	2	3	1			15
10,000 to 24,999			4	2		2			2	4			14
25,000 to 49,900				1		2	1	1	1	1	1		8
50,000 to 99,999			3	3		2	2		6				16
100,000 to 999,999			1	4	1				4	3	1	1	15
1,000,000 or larger									1		1		2
Total	15	45	41	33	19	22	11	9	22	13	3	1	234

present in a small community, discouraging the closing of small churches. Thus, there are

no churches with average attendance of 50 or less in communities over 10,000, while there

are 60 in communities smaller than 10,000. Attendance, particularly in these smaller

communities, should not be equated with the vitality or health of the congregation as much

as an indicator of the number of people available to contribute resources to social capital

development and offer forms of assistance to persons in the community.

On the other hand, the 60 churches in communities of 1,000 - 4,999 have

considerable range in average attendance. In these smaller communities, there are four

churches with average attendance of 301-400, representing a large percentage of the total

community. Even the many churches found in communities smaller than 1,000 have

proportionately large attendance, suggesting churches with the active participation of a

substantial proportion of the community. While these numbers do not capture the

proportions with complete accuracy, given that many rural church members may not

actually live in the community itself, it hints that churches in small communities may

actually have proportionately more ability to meet needs in their communities than their

counterparts of equal size in large urban areas.

• Annual budget (Figure 4.1). The annual budgets of all churches are available in the

1995 Conference Journal of the West Michigan Conference. Therefore, all reports were

checked for accuracy. An array of financial information is available from the Journal on

contributions in various categories, including benevolences. Two figures are regularly

reported for churches: the operating budget and the budget which includes both operating

and building expenditures for the year. The latter figure was used for reference, as it more

Figure 4.1 Budget

Budget size (in thousands of dollars)

Number of
churches
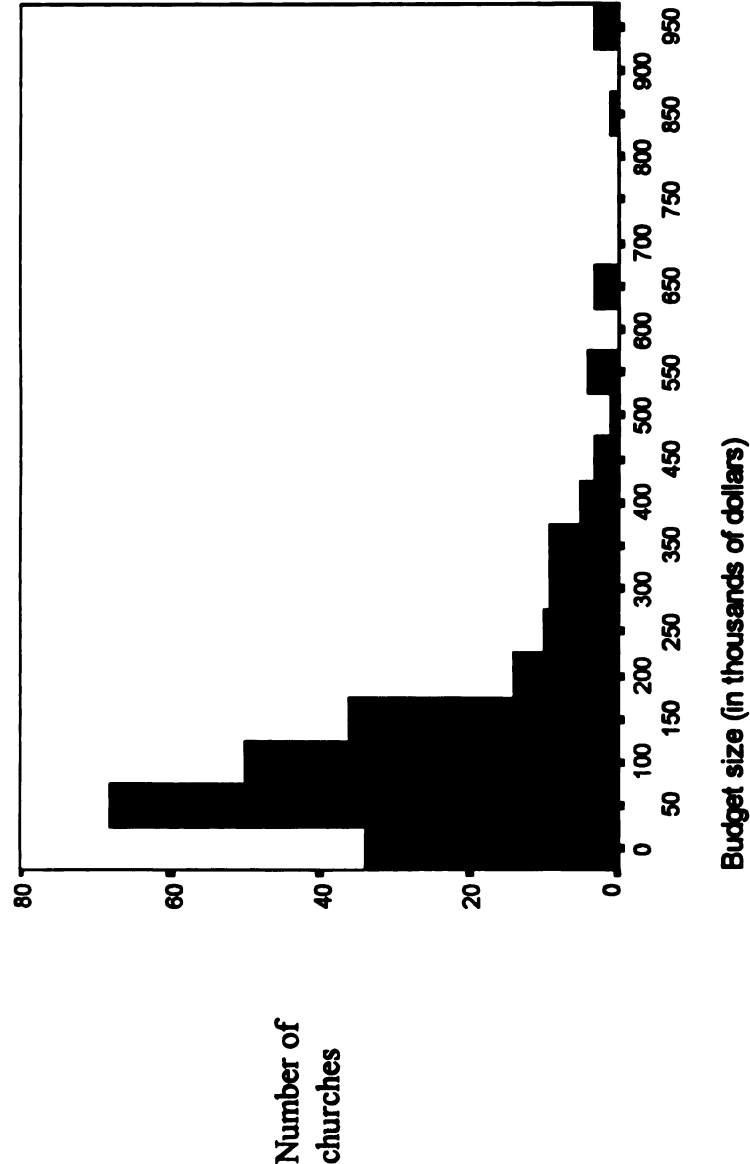
Statistics

		Mean	Median
N			
Valid	Missing		
250	7	145092.8	90848

accurately represents the amount of money each church raised in 1995. Seven responses were missing from this category, suggesting a problem with the computer scanning, as any missing responses were written in by the researchers.

The mean for annual budgets (n=251) was $145,093, and the median was $90,848. Again, the mean was skewed upward by the reporting of the largest churches in the conference, but the median gives a more accurate indication of the budget size of the local churches. One hundred twenty five (125) churches reported budgets under $91,000. All churches are mandated to provide a minimum salary and benefits to pastors, included the conference insurance plan, housing (for which there are minimum standards), travel, and retirement. Minimally, the costs of the minister's package is about $37,000, if the church owns the pastor's home outright13. Smaller churches which share a pastor also share salary expenses. In addition, all United Methodist churches are expected to pay an apportionment to support denominational activities. For a smaller church (attendance of 75), this may be as little as $7,000, while for the largest church in the conference, it is over $120,000. The remaining income of the church is available for expenses of the building and for all programs of the church, including any which are offered to the community.

The size of the budgets of the churches is important context when looking at their ability to increase funding. First, the current portion of the budget which is discretionary is probably somewhat limited, as much of each church's income is devoted to running the church and its religious activities. Secondly, when churches report a proportionate ability

---

13 This figure is estimated based on the minimum salary for probationary members with one dependent. Salary minimums are available from district or conference offices and are determined by the Annual Conference.

to increase funding, it must be considered in relationship to the existing budget. In a church which has a budget of $91,000 or less, as half of these churches do, an increase of $9,000 would represent nearly a ten percent increase in the overall budget. While this would be a substantial increase in funding proportionate to the resources of the church, it is enough to do only a limited amount of expansion of activity, particularly if paid staff are involved.

- Location of church (Tables 4.4 and 4.5). Respondents were asked to indicate all that applied from the following list: downtown of the community, transitional neighborhood, outskirts of the city or town, suburban community (i.e. immediately adjoining a larger town or city), open country, residential area, and commercial area. 88 churches (34.1%) are located downtown in their communities (Table 4.4), not surprising as United Methodist churches in Michigan were often founded around the time the communities themselves were founded. These numbers vary slightly across tables due to missing responses on some questions. 96 churches (37.2%) in total were reported as downtown churches. The largest churches tend to be found in downtown or suburban areas. However, even some of the smallest churches are downtown, as 14 churches with attendance of fewer than 50 are located downtown. Many of the remaining smallest churches are found in open country.

In Table 4.5, the distribution of churches in location types is shown as a function of community size. The trends in where churches are located, with distribution in each category essentially proportionate to the distribution of churches across different sized communities generally. Few churches are in commercial areas, although 59 (23%) are in

Table 4.4 - Distribution of church attendance by location

	Downtown in the community	Transitional neighborhood	Outskirts of the city or town	Suburban community	Open country	Residential area	Commercial area	Total
No members				1		1		2
Between 1 and 25 members	4		1	1	6	4		16
Between 26 and 50 members	10	1	6	2	24	9	1	53
Between 51 and 75 members	10	5	5	1	14	12	2	49
Between 76 and 100 members	10	6	6	1	10	7	1	41
Between 101 and 125 members	11		3		3	7	3	27
Between 126 and 150 members	12	1	3	3	2	6	2	29
Between 151 and 175 members	9		1			1	1	12
Between 176 and 200 members	2	2		3	2	2		11
Between 201 and 300 members	10	1	4	8	2	8	7	40
Between 301 and 400 members	7	1	1	4		1		14
Between 401 and 500 members	2			1				3
Between 501 and 600 members			1					1
Between 1101 and 1200 members	1							1
Total	88	17	31	25	63	58	17	299

Table 4.5 - Distribution of churches by community size and location

	Downtown in the community	Transitional neighborhood	Outskirts of the city or town	Suburban community	Open country	Residential area	Commercial area	Total
1,000,000 or larger			1	1				2
100,000 to 999,000	4	5	2	5		3	2	21
50,000 to 99,999	6	3	5	4		5	2	25
25,000 to 49,900	3	2	3	5	1	3	1	18
10,000 to 24,999	6	2	3	3		2	1	17
5,000 to 9,999	12	2	2	1		4	3	24
1,000 to 4,999	38	2	8	3	4	18	6	79
Smaller than 1,000	23	1	1	2	13	17	1	58
Church is not located in a town	1		7	1	47	7	1	64
Total	93	17	32	25	65	59	17	308

residential areas.

One area where there appears to be a trend is in churches located in transitional neighborhoods. 17 churches (6.6%) were identified as being in transitional areas. Transitional could reflect a number of changes in neighborhoods but suggests that the church is dealing with some form of change in its environment which is potentially affecting the church itself. A transitional neighborhood is often a euphemism understood to mean changing demographics, reflecting a decline in the economic status of the residents. If that is the meaning for these respondents, then this response might also reflect increasing needs in the community. Eight of these 17 churches are in communities of over 50,000. That is, 47% of the churches in transitional neighborhood are in these larger communities, although they represent less than 13% of the sample. However, 12 churches in transitional areas report average attendance of less than 100 (Table 4.4). The churches in transitional neighborhoods are small churches, and many of them are located in larger cities. Yet, only three churches in communities over 50,000 report themselves as being in jeopardy (Table 4.6). Six churches in these larger cities are struggling, although it is not clear that it is these same churches which are in transitional neighborhoods. Nonetheless, it seems possible that these churches may need proportionately more resources than churches in other locations.

Thirty two of the responding churches (12%) are on the outskirts of town. Those living in the city or town who do not have transportation may have limited access to activities at the church on the outskirts. Twenty five churches (10.1%) defined their location as suburban, while 65 (25.6%) are located in open country. This latter figure,

Table 4.6 - Distribution by community size and health of church

	healthy and growing	healthy and stable membership	healthy and getting smaller	struggling	in transition, but stable	in jeopardy	Total
1,000,000 or larger	1	1					2
100,000 to 999,000	10	2				2	16
50,000 to 99,999	7	6	1	4		1	19
25,000 to 49,900	4	2	2	2			10
10,000 to 24,999	5	5		3		1	14
5,000 to 9,999	5	6	2	2	1		16
1,000 to 4,999	24	21	3	4	9	1	62
Smaller than 1,000	11	13	2	17	5	4	52
Church is not located in a town	24	14	3	7	3	2	53
Total	91	70	13	41	18	11	244

Table 4.7 - Distribution of attendance and health of church

	healthy and growing	healthy and stable membership	healthy and getting smaller	struggling	in transition, but stable	in jeopardy	Total
No members	1						1
Between 1 and 25 members	1	2	2	4		5	14
Between 26 and 50 members	8	16	2	12	4	1	43
Between 51 and 75 members	16	12		9	3	2	42
Between 76 and 100 members	17	5	1	5	2	2	32
Between 101 and 125 members	3	6	3	4	5		21
Between 126 and 150 members	10	8	2	1	1		22
Between 151 and 175 members	2	6		2	1		11
Between 176 and 200 members	5	3				1	9
Between 201 and 300 members	12	4	1	4	1		22
Between 301 and 400 members	11	1		1			13
Between 401 and 500 members	1	1	1				3
Between 501 and 600 members	1						1
Between 1101 and 1200 members		1					1
Total	88	65	12	42	17	11	235

which is even higher than the 55 churches (21.3%) which indicated they are not located in

a town, implies that there are large numbers of churches which are very rural. A drive

around the rural areas of Michigan highlights the importance of these open country

churches as resources in their communities. People are widely disbursed, and there are

often few towns where there are buildings with meeting spaces. Therefore, the churches

and schools are the primary building resources, and churches are probably a primary

source of social structure in many rural communities. They are often very small churches

which may have a critical role in their areas. However, the difficulties for people in rural

areas accessing activities at their local church are probably even greater for churches in

open country than for churches on the outskirts of town. Because this group of responses

was not mutually exclusive, it is not possible to report missing responses.

Churches were also asked to indicate if they were in residential or commercial areas.

7.4% (n=19) were commercial and 23.6% (n=61) were residential. Since respondents

were asked to check all that applied from this entire section, it is difficult to account for

the remaining 70% of the churches. While open country churches may be in farm areas,

which is neither residential or commercial, there are obviously missing responses. The

downtown churches alone (34.1%) represent more than the combined responses (31.0%)

of commercial and residential even though it seems that they should have indicated one of

these.

- Church status (Table 4.6 and 4.7). The purpose of this question was to get estimates

about the relative health of each church. Health of a congregation is distinct from its

strength. Health might be thought of as a church's long term viability, of its tendency

toward maintaining strength as a congregation. Its viability is related to factors such as the demographic changes in the immediate neighborhood of the church which might affect the congregation's long term ability to replace lost members and the satisfaction of its current members with the organization. A congregation's strength is related to its current resources. Thus a church which is currently strong may not be healthy. These distinctions can be thought of analogously: a person who smokes and is overweight is experiencing some difficulty breathing and may not be able to do quite as much as she did previously. Although she may still be strong, her health appears to be compromised, both because there are symptoms suggesting health problems and because of factors which are strongly associated with declining health. Hence her health could be defined compromised, even though she is still strong. The converse, limited strength and good health, is also a possibility, of course.

Response options for the question on church health were intended to be ordinal and were treated as such in the analysis. In the piloting of the instrument, respondents' comments suggested that they viewed response categories as ordinal. Response options were (1) healthy and growing, n=91 (36.1%); (2) healthy and stable, n=70 (28.7%); (3) healthy and getting smaller, n=13 (5.3%); (4) struggling somewhat financially and with membership, n= 42 (17.2%); (5) in transition but stable, n=18 (7.4%); and (6) in jeopardy, struggling to survive, n=11 (4.7%). Nine (3.7%) responses were missing. Thus, 70% of the churches responding reported that they were currently healthy, while only 4.7% viewed themselves as being in immediate jeopardy. The remaining respondents, slightly over one quarter, appeared to have concerns regarding the health of their

congregations, but do not view their churches as being in immediate danger.

The potential for bias in responses regarding church health should be considered. While the surveys are confidential, it is possible that pastors could be concerned with presenting their congregations in the best possible light to outsiders. They may also give biased responses due to their own desire to have a well-functioning church. An addition question is whether church health affected which churches returned the survey. The churches most in jeopardy may have the fewest discretionary resources with which to complete the survey or to report on the survey. On the other hand, those churches might have responded, wanting to show what they are doing. Therefore, it can only be suggested that these distributions be viewed cautiously.

One other point should be made with respect to a church's perception of its health. There are churches as large as 301 - 400 in average attendance who indicated they are struggling somewhat, and churches only slightly smaller which stated their congregation is in transition, although stable (Table 4.7). This contrasts with churches of membership of 1-25 which rated themselves as healthy. To an onlooker, this may seem incongruous. However, many historically large United Methodist Churches, often those in larger cities, have experienced precipitous drops in membership and attendance. While their average attendance still appears quite strong, some churches now have an average attendance of less than a quarter of what they had in their prime years. In addition, their current membership is often comprised of many retirees. Thus, the health of the congregation is very important to consider even while it is difficult to interpret. Further, it is not always a function of size. In the context of this study, a church's health may have more

implications for the sustainability of its efforts than it does for its current potential to initiate them.

Question 1 Current social capital-developing activities

The first question considered was "To what extent are churches engaging in activities that build social capital?" The data suggest that nearly all churches are engaged in social capital building for their communities, through a wide range of non-religious activities, and that a fairly large percentage are involved in a wide variety of activities. However in general, services are concentrated in emergency and concrete service types, with other reported activities scattered in smaller percentages across the many remaining services.

The discussion of social exchange makes reference to the incidence of reciprocity and the connection between reciprocity and social capital. One consideration in the social capital production of local congregations is that they participate in social capital development at multiple levels by creating opportunities for reciprocity. By making resources available for others to use, even if the church is never directly involved, the activities become a source of social capital. Those activities are included in this analysis in only a limited way but are an important contribution churches make to their communities. The other point is that there are two social capital beneficiaries of these church-based activities. The obvious is the so-called service recipient. For a variety of reasons, it is important to make social capital available to persons who are less advantaged in communities. However, the other inevitable beneficiaries of the social capital production

are the members of the congregations who participate as volunteers and planners of activities. Thus, the sheer presence of activities in churches, even if there are not immediately demonstrable effects on the community's needy, are valuable and develop social capital. It also points to the importance of creating opportunities for persons who have sought assistance from the church to participate in community based activities of the church, should they choose, as it provides additional social capital for them.

Table 4.8 presents the responses to each activity. In the instrument, there were a total of ten groups of activities on which to report, with 58 activities total, and an "other" category under each group, giving ten more response categories (Section 3 of the questionnaire) for a total of 68. Table 4.8 is arrayed in the same order as the survey. A raw count of services was generated for each activity (Table 4.8) along with a cumulative count for congregations (Figures 4.2 and 4.3) in order to give a sense of the extent of current social capital development.

Those who only hosted the activities are shown in the second column of Table 4.8. The direct sponsor column shows all the churches which reported only one response of collaboration or direct sponsorship. The number of churches who reported more than one type of direct involvement is reported for each activity in the Multiple Response column of Table 4.8. This shows the possible extent of underreporting of activities given this method of counting. However, it also clarifies the raw number of churches involved in each specific activity. Reporting the multiple replies in raw counts would have inflated the number of churches, by implying a larger number of churches involved in each level of activity than actually exists. In essence, the method used limits the error across churches

while undoubtedly incurring it at the individual church level for a given activity, the latter error seeming more acceptable given the goals of this study.

Figure 4.2 shows the distribution of the number of total activities supported directly by the church, either alone or in collaboration with another provider. The largest clustering is found between three and seven services, with a median of seven activities. With the range from zero to seven total services accounting for approximately 50% of the churches, with the remaining half of the churches ranging from seven to 35 activities.

Ten of the churches (3.9%) did not report direct involvement in any activities. Thus there is a small segment of this sample which is not involved indirect support for activities which included the community. The largest numbers of reports in a category are between three and seven direct activities. Beyond ten, the number of churches drops sharply, with only 15 (5.8%) of the churches reporting more than 20 activities.

The activities in which West Michigan United Methodist local churches are most involved at present are concrete and emergency services, such as food pantry/bank (79.1% of the churches), emergency funds (56.3%) clothing banks (51.5%), soup kitchens (27.6%), furniture distribution (21.7%), emergency shelter programs (17.5%), Habitat for Humanity (45.0%), fund raising for victims of crime or fire (40.7%) or for persons with health problems (32.5%), and CROP walks (78.3%). CROP walks are community wide hunger relief fund-raisers, sponsored by Church World Service, held throughout Michigan each year. Habitat for Humanity, a program to build affordable housing for low income families, is of particular interest. A volunteer intensive program which requires hundreds

Table 4.8 - Number of churches by activity

	Single responses						Multiple responses	
	No response		Host only		Direct sponsor		Multiple responses	
Emergency Services	F	% of all responses	F	% of all responses	F	% of all responses	F	%
Food bank	52	20.2	2	0.8	177	68.6	27	10.5
Clothing bank	124	48.1	1	0.4	126	48.8	7	2.7
Furniture/ appliance distribution	202	78.3	0	0.0	54	20.9	2	0.8
Emergency fund administered by the church	96	37.2	14	5.4	134	51.9	14	5.4
Emergency shelter program	205	79.5	8	3.1	44	17.1	1	0.4
Community gardening/surplus produce distribution	245	95.0	1	0.4	12	4.7	0	0.0
Meals for homeless/poor (soup kitchen)	185	71.7	2	0.8	67	26.0	4	1.6
Meals for senior citizen (meals on wheels)	202	78.3	10	3.9	45	17.4	1	0.4
Refugee resettlement	249	96.5	0	0.0	9	3.5	0	0.0
Other (specify)	244	94.6	3	1.2	11	4.3	0	0.0

Table 4.8 - Number of churches by activity (continued)

| | | Single responses | | | | | | Multiple responses | |
		No response F	% of all responses	Host only F	% of all responses	Direct sponsor F	% of all responses	Multiple responses F	%
Fund raising for others	For victims of fire or crime	152	58.9	1	0.4	100	38.8	5	1.9
	For person/family with health problems	171	66.3	3	1.2	77	29.8	7	2.7
	CROP	54	20.9	2	0.8	188	72.9	14	5.4
	Events for nonprofits in community	153	59.3	28	10.9	70	27.1	7	2.7
	Other (specify)	243	94.2	2	0.8	13	5.0	0	0.0
Housing/community work efforts	Habitat for Hummanity (in your community)	140	54.3	2	0.8	108	41.9	8	3.1
	Other community work projects (in your community)	190	73.6	7	2.7	58	22.5	3	1.2
	Highway or river clean-up sponsors	217	84.1	2	0.8	38	14.7	1	0.4
	Other (specify)	251	97.3	1	0.4	6	2.3	0	0.0

Table 4.8 - Number of churches by activity (continued)

	Single responses		Host only		Direct sponsor		Multiple responses	
	No response F	% of all responses	F	% of all responses	F	% of all responses	Multiple responses F	%
Self-help/support groups								
Twelve step meetings (AA, Alanon, etc.)	208	80.6	37	14.3	12	4.7	1	0.4
Other substance abuse groups	242	93.8	10	3.9	6	2.3	0	0.0
TOPS, Weight Watchers, etc.	211	81.8	38	14.7	7	2.7	2	0.8
Grief support groups	219	84.9	10	3.9	25	9.7	4	1.6
Divorce support groups	238	92.3	2	0.8	17	6.6	1	0.4
AIDS groups or ministries	247	95.7	3	1.2	8	3.1	0	0.0
Other health related activities/groups	208	80.6	28	10.9	22	8.5	0	0.0
Parent groups	204	79.1	20	7.8	34	13.2	0	0.0
Domestic violence	226	87.6	8	3.1	24	9.3	0	0.0
Other (specify)	228	88.4	22	8.5	4	1.6	4	1.6

Table 4.8 - Number of churches by activity (continued)

		Single responses		Host only		Direct sponsor		Multiple responses	
		No response F	% of all responses	F	% of all responses	F	% of all responses	Multiple responses F	%
Health	Health Clinic	236	91.5	11	4.3	10	3.9	1	0.4
	Blood pressure screening	222	86.1	17	6.6	18	7.0	1	0.4
	Migrant clinic	254	98.5	1	0.4	3	1.2	0	0.0
	Parish nurse	241	93.4	5	1.9	12	4.7	0	0.0
	Blood drives	175	67.8	18	7.0	60	23.3	5	1.9
	Health fair	246	95.4	5	1.9	7	2.7	0	0.0
	Other (please specify)	253	98.1	3	1.2	2	0.8	0	0.0
Outreach/programs for youth	Pre-school programs	213	82.6	23	8.9	18	7.0	4	1.6
	After school or other program for elementary children	219	84.9	6	2.3	30	11.6	3	1.2
	Sports programs for under 18 year olds	239	92.6	2	0.8	15	5.8	2	0.8
	Boy Scouts	163	63.2	29	11.2	59	22.9	7	2.7
	Girl Scouts	189	73.3	37	14.3	28	10.9	4	1.6
	Teen Center	238	92.3	0	0.0	17	6.6	3	1.2
	Other (specify)	224	86.8	18	7.0	13	5.0	3	1.2

Table 4.8 - Number of churches by activity (continued)

		Single responses						Multiple responses	
		No response		Host only		Direct sponsor		Multiple responses	
		F	% of all responses	F	% of all responses	F	% of all responses	F	%
Economic Development Programs									
	Job placement	250	96.9	2	0.8	6	2.3	0	0.0
	Job training	253	98.1	0	0.0	5	1.9	0	0.0
	Credit Union	254	98.5	0	0.0	4	1.6	0	0.0
	Community Reinvestment Corp	258	100.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0
	Retail Development	258	100.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0
	Entreprenurial training	255	98.8	1	0.4	2	0.8	0	0.0
	Investment groups/ Training	254	98.5	3	1.2	1	0.4	0	0.0
	Other (specify)	253	98.1	1	0.4	4	1.6	0	0.0
Cultural/other community efforts									
	Community classes	227	88.0	16	6.2	14	5.4	1	0.4
	Art displays	237	91.9	5	1.9	16	6.2	0	0.0
	Other special displays, such as the AIDS quilt	248	96.1	3	1.2	7	2.7	0	0.0
	Musical concerts	176	68.2	15	5.8	58	22.5	9	3.5
	Theater productions	236	91.5	3	1.2	17	6.6	2	0.8
	Dances	244	94.6	2	0.8	12	4.7	0	0.0
	Other (specify)	245	95.0	6	2.3	5	1.9	2	0.8

Table 4.8 - Number of churches by activity (continued)

| | Single responses | | | | | | Multiple responses | |
| | No response | | Host only | | Direct sponsor | | Multiple responses | |
	F	% of all responses	F	% of all responses	F	% of all responses	F	%
Social action activities open to public								
Racism workshops	244	94.6	0	0.0	11	4.3	3	1.2
Peace workshops	245	95.0	1	0.4	10	3.9	2	0.8
Other (specify)	246	95.4	1	0.4	10	3.9	1	0.4
Other								
Prison ministry	214	83.0	1	0.4	43	16.7	0	0.0
Post-release program for prisoners	252	97.7	1	0.4	4	1.6	1	0.4
Legal assistance	255	98.8	0	0.0	3	1.2	0	0.0
Income tax assistance	249	96.5	3	1.2	6	2.3	0	0.0
GED	257	99.6	0	0.0	1	0.4	0	0.0
Recycling project outside the church itself	235	91.1	2	0.8	21	8.1	0	0.0

Figure 4.2 Distribution of services
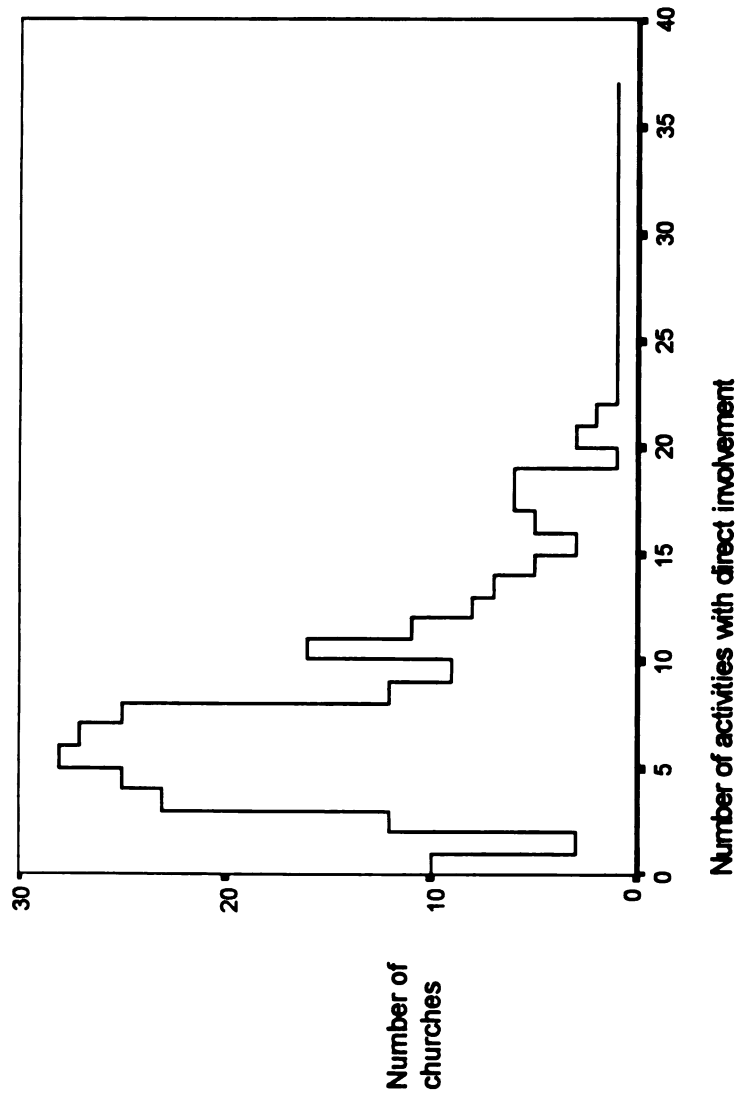
Statistics

N		Mean	Median
Valid	Missing	8.3	7
257	0		

Figure 4.3 - Cummulative distribution of services
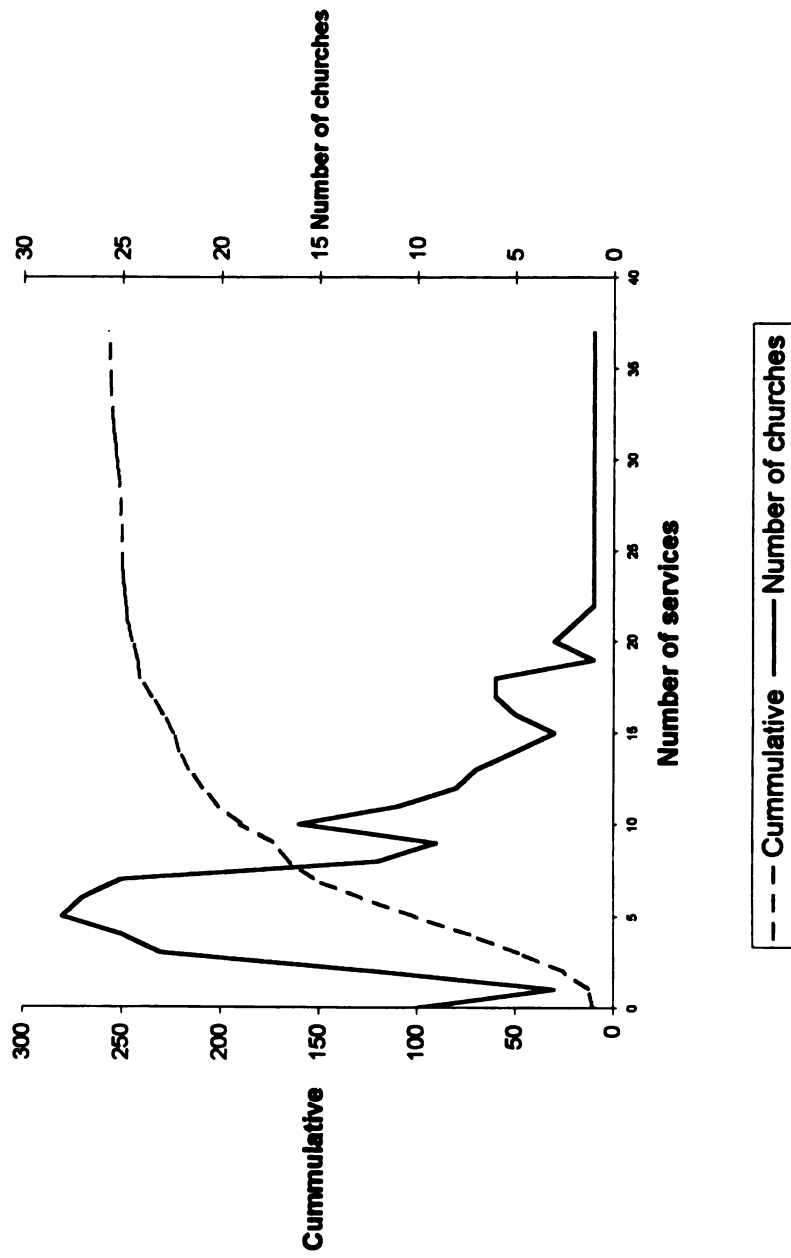
of hours of sweat equity from prospective owners, Habitat has the potential for creating considerable social capital for all those involved.

Beyond concrete and emergency services, there are only a handful of activities which were reported by a larger number of churches. Nearly 30% of the churches reported having assisted a nonprofit organization with fund-raising events in the previous year. Other categories which had response rate higher than 20% included Blood Drives (25.2%), community work projects other than Habitat for Humanity (23.7%), musical concerts (26%), and Boy Scouts (25.6%). The responses to activities for youth and children will be discussed in detail below. Thus, few activities other than emergency and concrete services are supported directly by these United Methodist churches with any consistency, as there is at best modest participation reported for the remaining activities. In light of these figures, it seems fair to say that although it is difficult to predict exactly what services, beyond concrete ones, will be available at a given church, nearly all churches are involved in a some level of social capital producing activities.

The sole exception was the very limited response to the economic development activities listed. For all eight activities listed under economic development, there was a total of seven positive responses. This was not a surprise, given that these are predominately middle-class, white churches. It is important to note this lack of services, as social capital which can be used for economic improvement is critical for disadvantaged communities. While it is surely possible to use social capital developed through other connections for economic uses, directly targeting economic development may be the more efficient means of achieving that form of social capital. These findings point to an

important social capital area for the disadvantaged in which the West Michigan United Methodist Churches appears to be lacking.

There are two categories of activities which were omitted from the possible response options: technology and education. The advising clergy did not identify either of these areas for inclusion, while they did include other relatively new activities such having a parish nurse, implying that if there are technology programs in churches, they are unaware of them. However, technology is increasing, as some churches in the West Michigan Conference now have Web Pages, at times developed since the survey was administered. The author is unaware of any computer-based programs and none were indicated by respondents. It is nonetheless possible that there are church-based computer technology programs in the conference.

Educationally focused programs were also not expressly identified in the listed activities. There are some indications of educationally focused programs in the write in section. There were no more than five in any one areas, but they included tutoring, GED for teen parents, and literacy programs. It is not known how many may have been missed due to this omission, but it seems unlikely that the numbers are large.

One of the concerns regarding the recent call by public officials for increased church activities in the non-religious arena, is that few seem to have taken into account the possibility that churches may have begun responded in the 1980's to emerging needs in their communities. It was unrealistic to ask pastors to make reliable estimates of the changes over the past 16 years . However, reliable responses did seem possible for questions concerning the past two years. Therefore, the survey sought to identify the

amount of change in both requests for assistance and in response to that change within the past two years. For each question, the seven point Likert scale responses ranged from *considerable decrease* to *no change* to *considerable increase*. These numbers are given in Tables 4.9, 4.10, 4.11, and 4.12.

Pastors were asked to respond separately for membership and for non-members. Small to considerable increases in requests for assistance by non-members were reported by 58.5% of the churches (n=151), while 70.5% (n=182) reported response to non-member needs. Results for changes in requests for assistance by non-members are found in Table 4.9 and response to requests by non-member is found in Table 4.10. For members, 40.7% (n=105) reported an increase in requests (Table 4.11). Again amount of response was greater than amount of requests, as 50.8% (n=131) reported some level of increased response to members' needs (Table 4.12). So, for both members and non-members the amount of response reported was greater than the requests which were received.

Some increase in assistance on the part of the churches had been anticipated given the ongoing cuts in funding for social services, including emergency services. It was not anticipated that the churches' response would be greater than the need with which they were presented. Reliability cannot be assured for these responses, giving less confidence to the findings. At least three explanations are possible for the disparity between requests and response. One is that the pastors are biased in their recall as a function of time or as a result of "euphoric recall". That is, they remember their churches responses as having been better than they actually were. They also may simply recall their own responses

Tables 4.9-4.12

Table 4.9 - Need identified for non-members, past two years

	Changes in direct requests by nonmembers	
	F	% of Total
Decrease	13	5.0
No change	89	34.5
Increase	151	58.5

Table 4.10 - Response to non-members, past two years

	Changes in response to needs of nonmembers	
	F	% of Total
Decrease	5	1.9
No change	68	26.4
Increase	182	70.5

Table 4.11 - Need identified for members, past two years

	Changes in direct requests by members	
	F	% of Total
Decrease	12	4.7
No change	139	53.9
Increase	105	40.7

Table 4.12 - Response to members, past two years

	Changes in response to needs of members	
	F	% of Total
Decrease	4	1.6
No change	119	46.1
Increase	131	50.8

better than they do the requests. The other explanation is that churches had simply made an increased effort to respond to the needs of the community somewhat independently of the actual requests.

The reliability and accuracy of such subjective reports do need to be questioned for all the questions which ask the pastors' perceptions their congregations' attitudes. Gilovich (1997) describes with humor and considerable detail, the tendency toward selective and biased recall of events by observers. The likelihood of bias suggests the need for caution in interpreting these numbers. Pastors who wish to represent their churches and by implication their own leadership positively could over-report the church's role in the community. On the other hand, lapsed time might lead to faulty recall and under-reporting. There is not, though, any reason to believe that such bias would be more likely on one set of questions that another. Thus, there is no rationale for predicting a single dominant type of bias. Correction of this error would require a sophisticated design for evaluating just these questions. In lieu of that, it is assumed that there is bias in the responses, but that its direction cannot be determined. In addition, the size of the sample, which is quite large, gives more confidence in the results. Still, the findings and interpretations should be viewed with less confidence that if it had been possible to establish the reliability of the responses through an established method, such as a retest. Internal reliability tests, such as a split half were not appropriate because the individual questions were measuring different sources of social capital production potential, and thus were not comparable. It was assumed that some questions would result in different answers by the same church because its ability to increase volunteering, for example, does

not necessarily mean the church has an ability to increase subsidized building use.

With these cautions in mind, it appears that this group of churches has increased its services during the past two years in response to greater need. While this survey provides no evidence of the direction of change prior to these two years, it is plausible that the trend reflected may be part of a longer term trend to increase services in the churches as governmental services have been cut. One pastor of a downtown church in a small community, in a personal conversation, stated that when general assistance was eliminated, his church's food pantry was "wiped out". It was able to compensate, restocking the food pantry and keeping it stocked. However, his perception is that families, rather than coming in occasionally, are now counting on the food pantry on a monthly basis. The church is providing more food each month to keep the pantry stocked. This may be typical of how churches have already increased their response to need. The services reported those increased within the past two years include many responses concerning increased support for food redistribution programs and emergency assistance efforts.

One comment in a survey raised an issue which merits inclusion. A pastor pointed out, seemingly in some frustration with the questionnaire, that many members of his or her congregation were volunteering on their own outside the church. This survey was expressly developed to identify church sponsored activities. Earlier studies, notably the work of the Independent Sector (Hodgkinson, et al, 1992; Hodgkinson, et al, 1996b), point to the positive connection between participation in religious congregations and volunteering. It was recognized that it was not possible for the survey to get reliable

estimates from the one or two people completing it regarding the volunteering and other charitable contributions being made individually by church members. The contributions of those individual efforts outside the local congregation are profound and should not be forgotten.

Question 2 **With what likelihood do churches report of their ability to expand social capital development activities?**

The second question was "With what likelihood do churches report their ability to expand social capital development activities?" Nearly all the churches (n=246, 96.5%) indicated some level of ability to increase the resources they made available to the community (Table 4.13). The range was considerable. In addition, the responses were scattered across the four resources areas of volunteering, funding, subsidized building use, and direct programming.

Pastors completed four questions (Appendix, Section 4, Questions 5-8) in which they estimated their congregations' willingness and capacity to expand their involvement in community based activities. The responses were again rated on the seven point scale Likert ranging from *considerable decrease* to *no change* to *considerable increase*. Responses are shown in Table 4.13 and Figure 4.4.

Two of the four questions were deemed to be related more directly to social capital development, those concerning volunteering (Q# 6) and additional involvement in direct programming (Q# 8). Funding and making buildings more available, while they will lead to increased social capital, do not directly involve the church or its members in social capital development unless they are increased in conjunction with actual provision of

Table 4.13 - Anticipated ability to change response

Potential to increase resources score

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent	Reversed Cumulative Percent	Non-positive Cumulative Percent	Positive Cumulative Percent
Decrease	-7	1	0.4	0.4	0.4	100.0	100.0	
	-6	1	0.4	0.4	0.8	99.6	88.9	
	-3	1	0.4	0.4	1.2	99.2	77.8	
	-2	1	0.4	0.4	1.6	98.8	66.7	
	-1	3	1.2	1.2	2.7	98.4	55.6	
No change	0	2	0.8	0.8	3.5	97.3	22.2	
	1	16	6.2	6.3	9.8	96.5		6.5
	2	13	5.1	5.1	14.9	90.2		11.8
	3	22	8.6	8.6	23.5	85.1		20.7
	4	47	18.3	18.4	42.0	76.5		39.8
	5	36	14.0	14.1	56.1	58.0		54.5
	6	44	17.1	17.3	73.3	43.9		72.4
	7	24	9.3	9.4	82.7	26.7		82.1
	8	25	9.7	9.8	92.5	17.3		92.3
	9	11	4.3	4.3	96.9	7.5		96.7
	10	3	1.2	1.2	98.0	3.1		98.0
	11	3	1.2	1.2	99.2	2.0		99.2
Increase	12	2	0.8	0.8	100.0	0.8		100.0
	Total	255	99.2	100.0				
Missing	System	2	0.8					
	Total	2	0.8					
Total		257	100.0					

services by the congregation. Responses to those questions were not individually analyzed.

In Table 4.14 and Figure 4.5 the distribution of scores for volunteer potential is shown. 86.3% (n= 220) of the pastors reported their congregations had some ability or willingness to increase volunteering, if encouraged. 3 responses were missing. 41.1% pastors believed their church's potential increase would be small, 37.6% believed that their churches could be induced to increase their volunteering a moderate amount, and 6.6% felt their churches could increase their volunteering considerably.

In Table 4.15 and Figure 4.6, the results for increasing programs are reported. With four responses missing, 81.1% (n=206) of the pastors reported a potential to increase the number of programs for which the church would be the primary provider. 57.9% of respondents foresaw a small increase, 20.5% a moderate increase, and 2.8% a considerable increase. It was anticipated that replies in this areas would reflect the smallest potential as it requires the greatest resources and that tendency was found in the responses.

In previous surveys of religious congregations, churches have tended to report an intention of increasing their work, regardless of their current level of non-religious services (Hodgkinson, et al., 1992). While this survey asked their potential to do more, it is possible that in the case of both that study and this one, responses reflect a wish to do more rather than a likelihood of actually doing more.

Combined with the findings discussed in the first question concerning how much churches have already increased their response to need, there are indications that the

205

Figure 4.4 Composite score by church size

Average church attendance
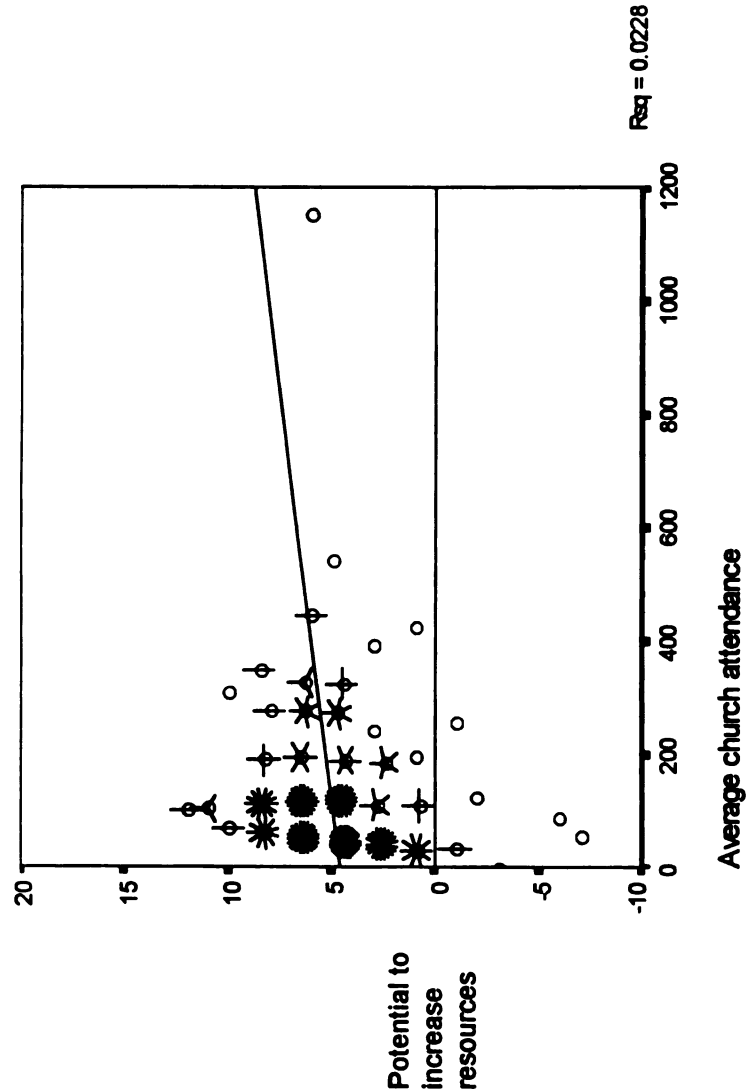
Key: Circle represents one church, each ray represents an additional church

Statistics

	N		Mean	Median
	Valid	Missing		
	255	2	5.0	5

Rsq = 0.0228

Table 4.14 - Anticipated ability to change volunteering

Potential to increase volunteering

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent	Reversed Cumulative Percent	Non-positive Cumulative Percent	Positive Cumulative Percent
Valid							
Considerable decreasae	1	0.4	0.4	0.4	100.0	100.0	
Small decrease	3	1.2	1.2	1.6	99.6	97.1	
No change	31	12.1	12.2	13.8	98.4	88.6	
Small increase	105	40.9	41.3	55.1	86.2		47.9
Moderate increase	97	37.7	38.2	93.3	44.9		92.2
Considerable increase	17	6.6	6.7	100.0	6.7		100.0
Total	254	98.8	100.0				
Missing							
System Missing	3	1.2					
Total	3	1.2					
Total	257	100.0					

Figure 4.5 Change in volunteering by church size
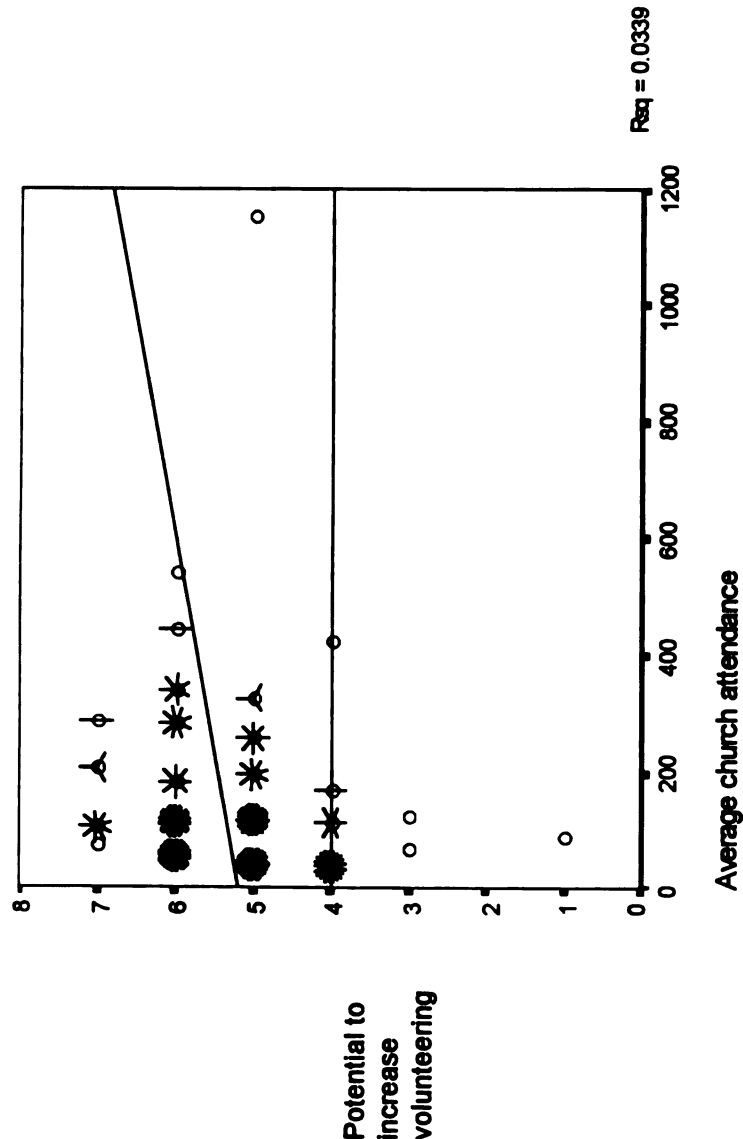
Potential to
increase
volunteering

Average church attendance

Rsq = 0.0339

Key: Circle represents one church, each ray represents an additional church

Statistics

N

Valid   Missing   Mean   Median

254   3   5.354331   5

Table 4.15 – Anticipated ability to change direct programs

Potential to increase church run programs

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent	Reversed Cumulative Percent	Non-positive Cumulative Percent	Positive Cumulative Percent
Valid	Small decrease	3	1.2	1.2	1.2	100.0	100.0	
	No change	45	17.5	17.8	19.0	98.8	93.8	
	Small increase	146	56.8	57.7	76.7	81.0		71.2
	Moderate increase	52	20.2	20.6	97.2	23.3		96.6
	Considerable increase	7	2.7	2.8	100.0	2.8		100.0
	Total	253	98.4	100.0				
Missing	System Missing	4	1.6					
	Total	4	1.6					
Total		257	100.0					

ability of congregations to engage in additional non-religious activities is at best moderate. Churches appear interested in engaging more in social capital activities, yet seem to already have expanded and do not have unlimited ability to do more.

In order to better assess the churches' ability to increase their activities across areas, a composite score was developed from their responses to the four questions. The responses used the seven point Likert scale. A numerical value was assigned to each response, as shown below, and then all the individual scores were added to create one composite score:

- •Considerable decrease   -3
- •Moderate decrease   -2
- •Small decrease   -1
- •No change   0
- •Small increase   +1
- •Moderate increase   +2
- •Considerable increase   +3

As there were four questions, the range of possible scores was from -12 to +12, with a score of 0 (zero) representing no change. A positive overall score represented potential increase in resources and/or activities, while a negative score indicated an overall ability to decrease response. The number of churches for each summary score is shown in Table 4.13 and depicted by church size in Figure 4.3. The overall score was also used as a dependent variable in the regression model developed in the next section, Question 3, where it is referred to as the *potential to increase resources*.

Figure 4.6 Potential to increase church run programs by church size

Average church attendance

Key: Circle represents one church, each ray represents an additional church

Statistics

			Mean	Median
N				
Valid	Missing		5.1	5
253	4			

Req = 0.0267
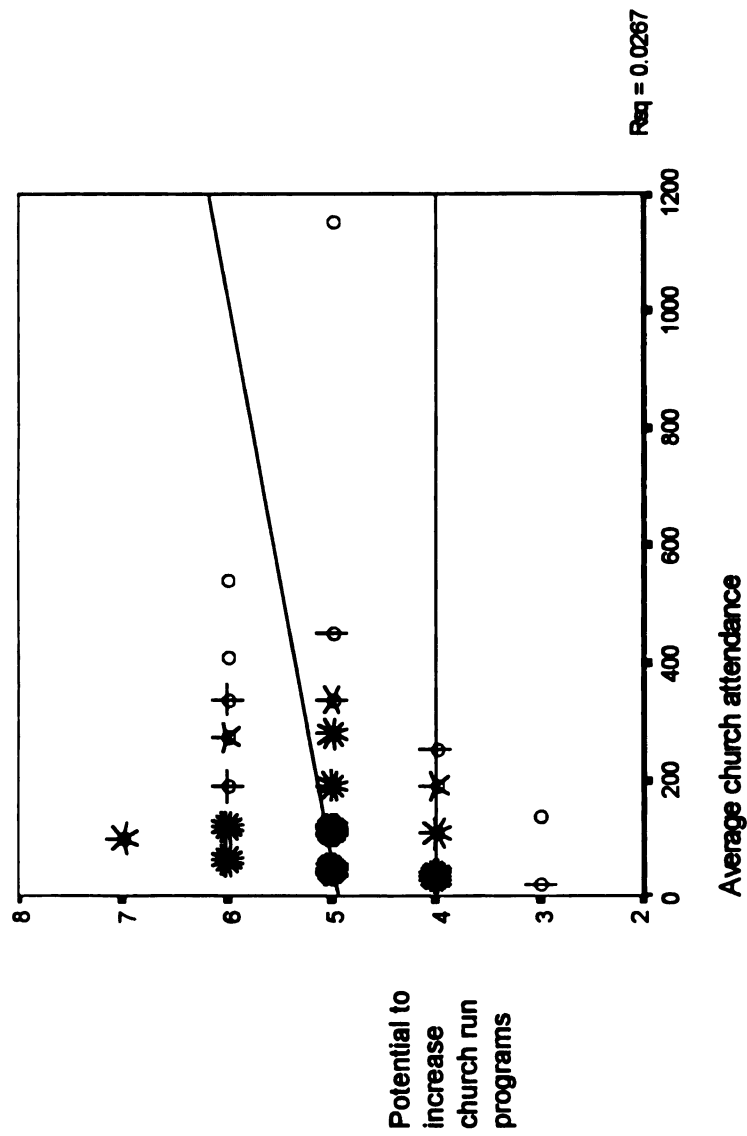
Only 3.5% (n=9) churches indicated no ability to increase their work or probable decrease. The remaining churches indicated at least a small ability to increase their efforts in one area. About 20% (n=51) had scores between one and three, with an additional 69% (n=176) with scores of four to eight. The remaining 6.5% (n=19) composite scores of nine to 12. As these scores could be the sum of any combination of responses, it is instructive to consider these scores in the context of *considerable increase* responses for the individual items. For each of the questions, the potential for *considerable increase* was as follows: building use was largest, at 10.6% (n=27), contributions and volunteering were close to the same, at 7.1% (n=18) and 6.7% (n=17), and new programs directly run by the church was very limited, at 2.8% (n=7). The 19 churches reporting more than an eight point cumulative score must have reported *considerable increase* in one or more categories. This leaves few responses of *considerable increase* from the remaining churches.

Thus, with a few notable exceptions, the churches reported an ability to increase their resource investment in their communities as small to moderate amount. Additionally, a large proportion of the churches report the potential to increase resources in two or more areas, although not a large amount.

One difficulty with interpreting the findings in this section of questions, on both the individual and the composite scores, is the imprecise measure used. Aside from reliability problems with estimates, the response categories are proportionate to the size of the church or its current activities. Estimates of small, moderate, and considerable were used rather than more precise measures such as estimates of percentages or numbers of change.

The reliability of percentage estimates would likely have not been any better, and estimating numbers seemed inappropriate as a response for questions such as potential increase in building use. Therefore, it is important to recognize individual responses as proportionate to the size of that church and its current level of activities.

Question 3 **What characteristics of churches incline them toward greater social capital development activities in their local communities?**

In order to assess this, it was necessary to identify relevant characteristics of churches and to identify appropriate measures of social capital which would permit comparison of the churches.

Two previously described scores, a count of current activities with direct involvement and perceived potential to increase resources, were used as outcome measures of the overall involvement of churches in social capital development activities for their communities. A count of the activities in which each church had direct involvement, *number of activities with direct involvement*, was used for measurement of the churches' current social capital activities. *Potential for future involvement* used the composite score derived from responses to the four questions regarding potential (See Appendix A, Section 4, Q# 5-8). The derivation of this score is discussed above in Question 2. In addition, the scores for *potential to increase volunteering* and *potential to increase church run programs* were examined separately as outcome variables in the analysis.

The characteristics which were believed most likely to influence social capital activities in local churches were *average church attendance*, an indicator of the overall

strength of the congregation and of the number of possible volunteers, *size of community*,

and the *health of the church*. This last variable was a measure of the organizational health

of the church. *Budget* was also assumed to be a predictor but was expected to be a

function of size of the congregation: the more members there are, the more money the

church is likely to generate. The correlation value for attendance and budget was high,

.656 , leading to the exclusion of budget in the regression model.

One outlying case, a church whose attendance was recorded as over 1100 in the

data set, was excluded from the correlation values. Review of the figures (West Michigan

Annual Conference, 1996) to determine the average attendance for the largest church in

the conference showed it to be considerably lower than this. Figures 4.5 and 4.6, which

include that church, illustrate its relationship to and effect on the regression line. It was

certain that this attendance figure was incorrect and having a pronounced effect on the

analysis. Therefore, it was removed. Its removal strengthened the correlation values. It

was not removed from the regression because church size was not used as a variable.

A two-tailed Pearson correlation was run on these variables and the outcome

variables, with the results shown in Table 4.16. One outlying attendance score previously

identified was deleted from this analysis, as it would have had an impact on a number of

the correlation values, and it was clearly an error.

Note that *health* of the churches, a variable for which responses were deemed to

be ordinal, was included in the Pearson correlation. Spearman's Rho was run first, and

then those results were compared to those in the Pearson's correlation where the data

were treated as interval. The values were so similar that it seemed acceptable to include

health in the Pearson's correlation, even though it is technically an ordinal value.

Significance levels are shown in the Table 4.16 for all variables. A number of the relationships were significant, although the correlation scores were not very large in any of them. For the *number of activities with direct involvement* by each church, *average attendance* has the largest correlation (r = .357), then *size of community* (r=.297), *church health* (r = .207), and *budget* (r = .208). All of these correlation values are significant at the .01 level.

The correlation values with *number of activities with direct involvement* are all quite small, limiting their predictive value. However, they do suggest that larger churches and churches in larger communities are somewhat more likely to have more activities than are smaller churches or those in smaller communities. In addition, greater health of the church is mildly predictive of more social capital producing activities.

Correlation scores for the other outcome variable, *potential to increase resources* for activities, do not show comparable levels of significance. For the *potential to increase resources* score, the correlations with *average attendance* (r = .167), and *with health* (r = .177), both significant at .01, were mildly predictive. However, in spite of having adequate significance, these values are so low that they have limited practical value in determining what characteristics of churches predict their tendency to increase their social capital activities. In generally, the likelihood of churches to report having a *potential to increase their resources* is distributed across churches regardless of attendance, community size, or health. This finding was not unexpected. As explained earlier, 96.5% of the churches reported an ability to increase some dimension of their resources. In

Table 4.16 - Correlation matrix of church demographics and services

Pearson Correlation

	Valid number of direct sponsor	Potential to increase volunteering	Potential to increase church run programs	Potential to increase resources score	Average church attendance	Size of community	Church health	Budget size
Valid number of direct sponsor	1.000	0.172 **	0.139 *	0.164 **	0.357 **	0.297 **	0.207 **	0.208 **
Potential to increase volunteering	0.172 **	1.000	0.532 **	0.734 **	0.243 **	0.115	0.226 **	0.134 *
Potential to increase church run programs	0.139 *	0.532 **	1.000	0.739 **	0.204 **	0.137 *	0.264 **	0.098
Potential to increase resources score	0.164 **	0.734 **	0.739 **	1.000	0.167 **	0.045	0.177 **	0.124
Average church attendance	0.357 **	0.243 **	0.204 **	0.167 **	1.000	0.557 **	0.273 **	0.656 **
Size of community	0.297 **	0.115	0.137 *	0.045	0.557 **	1.000	0.077	0.421 **
Church health	0.207 **	0.226 **	0.264 **	0.177 **	0.273 **	0.077	1.000	0.192 **
Budget size	0.208 **	0.134 *	0.098	0.124	0.656 **	0.421 **	0.192 **	1.000

** Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).
* Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

Table 4.16 - Correlation matrix of church demographics and services (continued)

Sig. (2-tailed)

	Valid number of direct sponsor	Potential to increase volunteering	Potential to increase church run programs	Potential to increase resources score	Average church attendance	Size of community	Church health	Budget size
Valid number of direct sponsor	.	0.006	0.027	0.009	0.000	0.000	0.001	0.001
Potential to increase volunteering	0.006	.	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.071	0.000	0.036
Potential to increase church run programs	0.027	0.000	.	0.000	0.002	0.031	0.000	0.128
Potential to increase resources score	0.009	0.000	0.000	.	0.009	0.481	0.005	0.052
Average church attendance	0.000	0.000	0.002	0.009	.	0.000	0.000	0.000
Size of community	0.000	0.071	0.031	0.481	0.000	.	0.230	0.000
Church health	0.001	0.000	0.000	0.005	0.000	0.230	.	0.003
Budget size	0.001	0.036	0.128	0.052	0.000	0.000	0.003	.

217

Table 4.16 - Correlation matrix of church demographics and services (continued)

N

	Valid number of direct sponsor	Potential to increase volunteering	Potential to increase church run programs	Potential to increase resources score	Average church attendance	Size of community	Church health	Budget size
Valid number of direct sponsor	256	253	252	254	242	248	248	249
Potential to increase volunteering	253	253	251	253	239	247	246	246
Potential to increase church run programs	252	251	252	252	238	246	245	245
Potential to increase resources score	254	253	252	254	240	247	247	247
Average church attendance	242	239	238	240	242	234	234	238
Size of community	248	247	246	247	234	248	243	241
Church health	248	246	245	247	234	243	248	241
Budget size	249	246	245	247	238	241	241	249

addition, this self-report is a subjective estimate of a potential future behavior. The purpose of the question was to determine potential in order to identify where the possible resources might be and how much churches could expand. The possible bias is that, given there is no cost to the churches in reporting that they have potential to increase their work, there is an over-reporting of their likelihood.

Potential to increase volunteering was correlated with both *average attendance* (r=.243) and *church health* (r=.226), both significant at .01. *Potential to increase church run programs* also correlated with *attendance* (r=.204) and *church health* (r=.264), with a very small but significant correlation with community size (r=.137). As with the other summary scores, these are not large values, but they do offer some information concerning contributing factors.

A regression model was developed in an effort to explain the variance in current activity levels. The *potential to increase resources* score was not used as an outcome variable in the regression model because the correlation values with any of the independent variables were so weak, although two were statistically significant. Nor was volunteering included, because of decisions explained below concerning which independent variables to include in the regression. However, a regression was run for *potential to increase church run programs*, which had stronger correlation values, and for number of *direct sponsored programs* (See Tables 4.17 and 4.18 for these values).

The relevant contributing variables considered for the model were average attendance, budget, size of community, and health of the congregation. *Average attendance* and *budget size* were substantially correlated (r=.656) as anticipated. It is

assumed that the causal direction is from *average attendance* to *budget*. Therefore, *budget* was excluded from the model. In addition, *size of community* and *average attendance* were also found to be correlated ($r=.557$) as were budget and size of community ($r=.421$). These collinear relationships created difficulties with the modeling for the regression which was performed. Therefore, the correlation values of *size of community* and *average attendance* with the remaining variable, *health* of the church were compared. Here, *attendance* was significantly correlated (.273), while the correlation of *church health* with *community size* has a value of .077, which has not significant. Therefore, the independent variables used in the regression were *size of community* and *health of the church*.

In the regression for *number of current activities*, an R of .369 was obtained (F = 18.884, df = 2/240, P = .000). The beta value for size of community was .299 and for church health was .194. So, *size of community* appears to be the best predictor of *number of activities*. It is possible that this is related to a "small town phenomenon" in which services are offered informally because the stores of social capital are greater. Thus, organized activities to address some needs might be less required. However, there also may be more demands placed on churches in larger communities.

In terms of potential to increase church run programs, an R of .273 was obtained (F = 9.615, df = 2/238, P = .000). The beta value for size of community was .099 and for church health was .248. Thus there were differences in how much of the variance was explained by these two variables for these two different outcome variables. This is logical as the current activities could be cooperative with others, something all churches might be

Table 4.17 - Regression model for number of activities with direct involvement

Model Summary[a,b]

Model	Variables Entered	Variables Removed	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	Church health, Size of communit y[c,d]	.	.369	.136	.129	5.9915

a. Dependent Variable: Number of activities with direct involvement

b. Method: Enter

c. Independent Variables: (Constant), Church health, Size of community

d. All requested variables entered.

ANOVA[a]

Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	1355.790	2	677.895	18.884	.000[b]
	Residual	8615.395	240	35.897		
	Total	9971.185	242			

a. Dependent Variable: Number of activities with direct involvement

b. Independent Variables: (Constant), Church health, Size of community

Coefficients[a]

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients B	Unstandardized Coefficients Std. Error	Standardized Coefficients Beta	t	Sig.
1	(Constant)	1.772	1.316		1.346	.179
	Size of community	.872	.175	.299	4.971	.000
	Church health	.815	.253	.194	3.218	.001

a. Dependent Variable: Number of activities with direct involvement

Table 4.18 - Regression model for potential to increase church run programs

Model Summary[a,b]

Model	Variables Entered	Removed	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	Church health, Size of communit y[c,d]	.	.273	.075	.067	.69

a. Dependent Variable: Potential to increase church run programs

b. Method: Enter

c. Independent Variables: (Constant), Church health, Size of community

d. All requested variables entered.

ANOVA[a]

Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	9.170	2	4.585	9.615	.000[b]
	Residual	113.486	238	.477		
	Total	122.656	240			

a. Dependent Variable: Potential to increase church run programs

b. Independent Variables: (Constant), Church health, Size of community

Coefficients[a]

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients B	Std. Error	Standardized Coefficients Beta	t	Sig.
1	(Constant)	4.437	.152		29.150	.000
	Size of community	3.241E-02	.020	.099	1.584	.115
	Church health	.116	.029	.248	3.960	.000

a. Dependent Variable: Potential to increase church run programs

able to offer, while directly run programs required considerable investment of resources, which might be more difficult for the church which is less healthy and needing resources for itself.

Question 4   What social capital development efforts in churches relate to youth? To what extent are churches indicating a preference for work with children and youth?

The potential of the churches as social capital developers for youth and children is measured in two places. First, there is a section in the inventory section which specifies activities for children and youth. Second, the section on populations for which the church is willing to increase its activities includes children and youth as possible responses. Results from this section suggest that a large percentage of churches are interested in increasing their efforts on behalf of youth and children.

The first part, the section on current activities, included responses of *pre-school programs, after school or other programs for elementary children, sports programs for under 18 years olds, Boy Scouts* and *Girl Scouts, teen center* and *other*. The responses to these are found in Table 4.19 This list of activities was not comprehensive of all activities which could be held for youth. For example, there are groups similar to Boy and Girl Scouts, such as Camp Fire Girls and 4-H. It was anticipated that these would be reported, having been suggested by the categories which were given. In addition, the other categories which were provided were more general. There were churches which wrote in other activities, which are counted as other.

The churches reported the following activities: pre-school programs (8.6%, n=22),

after school or other programs for elementary children (12.8%, n=33), sports programs for under 18 years olds (6.6%, n=17), Boy Scouts (25.6%, n=66) and Girl Scouts (12.5%, n=32), teen center (7.8%, n=20) and other (6.2%, n=16). A count of other indicates one church, not necessarily only one activity per church. Clearly, the most prevalent activity in this area is Boy Scouts. In addition, 29 of the churches (11.2%) were making their buildings available to others for Boy Scouts and 37 of the churches (14.3%) were doing the same for Girls Scouts, suggesting that Scouting is a fairly important type of activity in communities. Boy Scouts in particular is an logical activity for churches, as it religiously based in its activities. Some churches, although it was not significant numbers, listed additional activities for youth. Although no one activity had more than five write-in responses, activities which were expansions within the past two years included tutoring, supporting a local school, high school completion for teen parents, 4-H clubs, literacy, a summer roller hockey league, music lessons or programs, and after school programs. Thus, many of the recent increases were activities for children and youth.

Using the second measure (Table 4.20), children and youth are clearly two of the three populations which churches are considerably more inclined to serve, at 51.4% (n=95) and 38.9% (n=72) respectively. If churches which indicated more than three answers are included (these being technically invalid responses), the rates increase to 59.3% (n=150) for children and 50.4% (n=130) for youth. It was assumed that there was overlap between these two categories, with some churches reporting willingness to increase both services for children and for youth. This was, in fact, the case when the responses were sorted for overlap. 23% (n=60) reported willingness just for increasing

Table 4.19 - Number of churches by activity detail for youth

Outreach/programs for youth	Single responses						Multiple responses	
	No response		Host only		Direct sponsor		Multiple responses	
	F	% of all responses	F	% of all responses	F	% of all responses	F	%
Pre-school programs	213	82.6	23	8.9	18	7.0	4	1.6
After school or other program for elementary children	219	84.9	6	2.3	30	11.6	3	1.2
Sports programs for under 18 year olds	239	92.6	2	0.8	15	5.8	2	0.8
Boy Scouts	163	63.2	29	11.2	59	22.9	7	2.7
Girl Scouts	189	73.3	37	14.3	28	10.9	4	1.6
Teen Center	238	92.3	0	0.0	17	6.6	3	1.2
Other (specify)	224	86.8	18	7.0	13	5.0	3	1.2

efforts with children, 14% (n=37) reported willingness to increase activities for youth, and 36% (n=93) reported willingness to increase activities for both. The combined total of these categories is 190 churches, a total of 74% of all responding churches.

A distinction was made between children and youth in the survey because it was assumed that they would, for developmental reasons, have separate programs, and in an effort to prompt respondents to think more broadly. However, the concerns of society seem to be more generally focused on those under 18 years of age, minors who are still in their formative years. For that reason, children and youth are conceptualized as being in a continuum, with support or services for either age group leading to healthier, better functioning adults. Social capital for either children or youth will affect educational success and subsequent adult decisions regarding civic involvement. 74% churches reported a potential for increasing work with children and or youth, which seems to show an overwhelming preference for working with that population. Senior citizens, the only other population of any substance at 41.6% of valid and 49.6% of total responses, is far behind children and youth although still a substantial priority. In addition, education, while only selected by 16.8% of the respondents, ranked fifth out of 18 categories and is generally considered an area which would benefit children and youth. This probably is an additional reflection of interest in working with children and youth.

Churches show a clear preference for working with children and youth compared to any other population. The only other population which approaches their ratings is senior citizens, at 41.6%. When comparing the churches' current activities with their potential involvement, there is a distinct discrepancy between the two, with far more

apparent willingness expressed than actual services reported. It should be remembered that the survey explicitly focuses on community activities, not accounting for the many activities which benefit youth and children associated with the congregation. Thus, it appears that churches are currently involved in social capital development for children and youth from the community in a fairly limited way. Many churches appear to be doing nothing which would develop social capital for youth and children in the community.

Comparing the number of churches which are working with youth and children (Table 4.19) now and the number expressing possible ability to increase services to youth (Table 4.20), it is clear that considerably more churches are interested in working with youth and children than are currently finding it possible to do so. They appear to recognize a critical need for youth and children to have access to social capital, but perhaps do not know how to develop programs for youth. They also may not have the resources at present to develop such programs without external collaborators.

Question 5 **Are there specific populations which are more or less likely to be offered social capital development opportunities?**

This question sought to identify whether there was any differences in the tendency of these churches to engage social capital development opportunities for those in their communities who are stigmatized, by virtue of behavior or personal characteristics, and those who are not. Stigmatized populations are an area of particular interest in this study. Religious institutions such as The United Methodist Church are imbedded in the fabric of society in the United States. Hence, individuals who acquire social capital through these

churches are linked to institutions which are amongst the least stigmatized in society. Functionally, social capital from churches may tend to reduce the stigma of those who possess it. However, the moral positions of churches may be a contributing factor in the stigmatization of the same individuals. As has been discussed, renunciation of the behavior or even personal attributes which prompted the stigmatization may be a condition of a church's willingness to offer social capital. There is a reluctance in some cases to offer social capital to individuals who are viewed negatively, as there may be a perception that having social capital, particularly from an institution such as a religious congregation, could allow the person receiving it to use that social capital for purposes of which the congregation disapproves. This reluctance stems from a recognition that offering social capital is a form of destigmatizing. The problem for society if this occurs is that all individuals will seek to get their needs met, and in lieu of getting social capital from a positive source, will secure it from persons who are engaged in activities which are socially disruptive. Thus, persons who are already stigmatized, for whatever reason, are pushed to further marginalization.

Two questions on the survey sought to identify whether the churches were more likely to increase social capital generating services to specific populations or problem areas. Both asked regarding the potential increase in services and provided identical lists from which to select up to three from the list. The questions were:

(1) What specific problem areas or groups of people *in your community* do you believe your congregation would be receptive to working with more than they are at present? Please indicate up to three items below.

(2) What specific problem areas or groups of people *in your community* do you believe your congregation would be unable or unwilling to work with more than they are at present? Please indicate up to three items below.

The categories of populations and problem areas were intended to be somewhat representative, not inclusive. For example, emergency services and arts/cultural activities were not included. The purpose of the question was to identify any gaps in who the congregations would be willing to assist, and it was designed to suggest tendencies toward exclusion and inclusion, rather than to comprehensively describe the actual activities in which churches might be willing to increase their engagement. It had been speculated that there would be differences in the propensity of churches toward different populations or persons with particular problems, particularly with respect to those which are stigmatized because of their behavior or social status.

The responses to this question were sorted in two ways, as 68 respondents, over one quarter, failed to follow the instructions requesting that they select up to three responses, instead checking more than three. These various numbers are shown in Table 4.20. In order to secure a more valid measure of the priority areas, churches which selected more than three response were excluded from Column 1 of "Valid Responses", but are shown in the second column "All responses" which shows the areas in which churches are more likely to increase their work. This was not done for the question concerning excluded populations, shown in column 3 "unwilling or unable", as there were no churches which selected more than three.

However, by implication, those areas *not* selected in the preference question, even

229

Table 4.20 - Receptiveness to increases in activities by population/area

	Receptive Valid responses		All responses		Unable or unwilling Valid responses	
	N	Percent of	N	Percent or total	N	Percent of valid
Receptive to increase-children	95	51.4	153	59.3	1	0.5
Receptive to increase-senior citizens	77	41.6	128	49.6	0	0.0
Receptive to increase-youth	72	38.9	130	50.4	0	0.0
Receptive to increase-hunger	46	24.9	92	35.7	1	0.5
Receptive to increase-education	31	16.8	67	26.0	0	0.0
Receptive to increase-housing	21	11.4	47	18.2	2	1.1
Receptive to increase-divorced persons	19	10.3	59	22.9	0	0.0
Receptive to increase-I am unaware of any particular area(s)	16	8.6	17	6.6	56	30.3
Receptive to increase-domestic violence	16	8.6	47	18.2	4	2.2
Receptive to increase-welfare recipients	15	8.1	33	12.8	7	3.8
Receptive to increase-women	14	7.6	46	17.8	0	0.0
Receptive to increase-substance abuse	9	4.9	33	12.8	7	3.8
Receptive to increase-other	6	3.2	9	3.5	0	0.0
Receptive to increase-None	5	2.7	5	1.9	31	16.8
Receptive to increase-persons with AIDS	5	2.7	14	5.4	31	16.8
Receptive to increase-minority persons	5	2.7	22	8.5	5	2.7
Receptive to increase-peace and justice	5	2.7	21	8.1	3	1.6
Receptive to increase-migrants	4	2.2	13	5.0	9	4.9
Receptive to increase-ex-prisoners	2	1.1	17	6.6	29	15.7
Receptive to increase-refugees	2	1.1	6	2.3	8	4.3
Receptive to increase-gay/lesbian persons	2	1.1	13	5.0	74	40.0

if they are not excluded in the second question, were ones for which social capital opportunities will be expressly made available. Given that some churches indicated willingness for over half of the populations/areas which were given as options, their omission of the remaining areas or populations seemed telling. Put another way, they appeared to have included everyone that their church was receptive to serving more. So, even if they did not overtly identify anyone in the "unwilling or unable" category, their failure to include a populations/problem areas in their willingness response implies functional exclusion. This effect seems even stronger if the respondents selected many areas. Thus, the entire list of all responses on the willingness question is presented as a further indication of what the tendencies were for exclusion There are some very visible trends with respect both to populations the churches are inclined to serve and those which they are likely to be unwilling to serve. The numbers which follow are from Table 4.20, valid responses. As described above, children were the most frequently identified population for whom churches were interested in increasing services (51.6%, n=98), with senior citizens (41.6%, n=79) and youth (38.9%, n=74) next. Below these three, there is divergence. Hunger initiatives are next (24.9%) with education (16.8%), divorced persons (10.3%), and housing (11.4%) in double digits. The remaining categories had limited responses, but all categories were indicated by someone.

The trends regarding who churches were unable or unwilling to serve are also clearly visible. Gay/lesbian persons were reported by 40.0% of pastors as being a probably excluded or neglected population and persons with AIDS at 16.8% and ex-prisoners at 15.7%. No remaining category had more than a 4.9% response rate, and

there was "one" or "no" church who indicated an unwillingness or inability to increase

work in the following areas: children, youth, women, senior citizens, divorced persons,

hunger, and education.

It is important to note that although these populations are ones which some

churches are reluctant to target, there are other church currently involved in services to

each of them. Forty-three churches (16.7%) are working in prison ministries. However,

this question asked regarding potential to increase work with ex-prisoners while the

current activities is work with current prisoners, different populations. Unfortunately, the

questionnaire was not designed to include both groups in both questions, making exact

comparison impossible. It might be speculated, however, that there is less concern about

working with prisoners who are incarcerated than with those who have been released. A

few churches, (3.1%, n=8) are engaged in AIDS ministries at present, and although the

questionnaire data do not reflect this, there are churches within the West Michigan

Conference who are either designated as Reconciling Congregations or are working on

becoming one. A Reconciling Congregation is one which has agreed to be supportive and

open to openly homosexual persons. Thus, it is impossible to make a blanket statement

about all churches concerning any one stigmatized population. This apparent tendency

should be taken seriously, however, particularly since there may be an underreporting on

this particular question.

It is difficult to interpret with these findings any certainty. The easiest explanation

is a literal one, that these churches are unwilling to serve populations which are

stigmatized because the disapprove of their behavior or because they fear them. While this

is possible, it is also possible that they simply do not perceive that there are any persons representing these populations represented in their communities. This may be particularly true for the churches in smallest communities. They also may feel ill-prepared to address the needs of persons with HIV/AIDS or persons who are ex-prisoners. It should be considered that the churches may be willing to work with individuals from one of these populations who approach them for assistance, as compared to planning a program specifically for that population. Still, the comments of pastors on some of the questionnaires, such as "I am sorry to have to say this, but I think it is true" and "The church is divided about this issue", suggest that there is an actual reluctance on the part of some number of churches to be proactive in reaching out to persons from the identified populations. The difference between the response rate for gays and lesbians (40%) compared to persons with AIDS (16.8%) and ex-prisoners (15.7%) further suggests that prejudice is a factor in the response. While there may be prejudice about all these groups, as well as fear of them, the numbers may reflect the extent of prejudice and judgment toward the different groups.

In both questions, the option was given of either "None" or "I am unaware of any particular areas". In the willingness question, only 11.3% of all respondents reported "none" or "unaware of any", whereas for the unable/unwilling question, 47.1% indicated "none" or "unaware of any". Thus, churches either have more inclination toward specific populations and problems than they have against specific populations, or their pastors are more willing to identify the areas in which they are willing to do work than they are to indicate areas in which they are unwilling, given that the latter answers may suggest an

indictment of the church's attitude toward portions of the community.

The response to the two sets of answers, when they are considered together, suggests that there is a trend toward offering programs which might provide social capital to more socially desirable populations and away from those which are less desirable or who are more controversial. There is a strong trend toward services with youth, children, and senior citizens. Senior citizens are a logical population for this denomination to identify as an area of potential increase in services, given its aging membership.

The responses regarding welfare recipients seemed particularly important, as this survey was mailed in the time period between when federal welfare reform was enacted, but before it was implemented. Churches were being identified in federal and state public discourse as one of the institutional settings in communities who would need to assist in the providing assistance, both tangible and in return to work initiatives, for current welfare recipients. Among other specifics, churches were being asked to serve as community sites for individuals on welfare who would need to fulfill a minimal obligation in order to stay on welfare. In addition, it seems reasonable that if welfare recipients are to achieve those goals set forth for them by public policy, it is essential that there be considerable social capital made available to them. The responses to these two questions were seen as an indicator of the local churches' likely response to that call from public officials. It has already been noted that in Michigan, state level officials for a number of faiths were expressing reservations about the ability of religious congregations to respond to the anticipated level of need (Hughes, 1997).

In reviewing the combined answers, it does not appear that welfare recipients will

receive much direct support from United Methodist churches in West Michigan. Although

few churches (3.8%, n=7) indicated an unwillingness to work with welfare recipients, only

12.8% (n=33) of all pastors, including those who checked off extra responses, said this

was a potential area of expanded. Of the 68 churches who indicated numerous

areas/populations for possible expansion of services, only 26.5% (18) selected welfare

recipients. Since nearly ¾ of the congregations responding are in small communities

(under 5,000) or open country, one cannot help but wonder what extent of resources,

including churches, are available to assist welfare recipients having to cope with a new set

of expectations.

Limitations of this study

The most obvious limitation of this study is the extent to which it will be possible

to generalize findings to the general population of religious congregations. It is a survey of

only one denomination in a single state. There are potential differences between the

United Methodist Church and other denominations in several dimensions. First, regional

differences exist, even within the United Methodist Church itself. Second, the ethnic-

minority church representation in the sample, while it is somewhat less diverse than that of

the denomination which itself is non-reflective of much of the country. The UMC is a

nearly exclusively northern European denomination. While this is very reflective of the

ethnic/racial composition of many of the rural areas and smaller communities in which the

responding churches are found, it is not reflective of large metropolitan urban areas and

even of many rural parts of the United States. Thus caution should be exercised in

applying these findings to similar areas. Third, there are differences in the socio-economic

status (SES) of the membership of denominations. Typically, the United Methodist

Church membership is middle-class, neither elite nor impoverished (Roof and McKinney,

1987).

Theologically, the United Methodist Church tends to be more progressive than

many denominations, but still somewhat conservative (restrictive) on the more

controversial issues in society, including abortion, homosexuality, alcohol (given the long

association of Methodists with temperance activities), and gambling. Thus, it is **less**

willing than the more liberal Protestant churches (Episcopalians, Presbyterians, United

Church of Christ) and Jews but much more open to dialogue and social ministry activities

than more conservative denominations such as the Assemblies of God, Southern Baptist,

and similar denominations. On most social-moral issues, the United Methodist Church

and the other moderate Protestants tend to be very much at the mean, along with the

Roman Catholic Church, while Black Protestants tend to be more conservative and

Conservative Protestants are to the most conservative (Roof and McKinney, 1987, 224).

Summary of social capital findings

In summary, the following were found for the questions which were asked about

the social capital potential of the United Methodist Churches of the West Michigan

Conference.

1. To what extent are churches engaging in activities that build social capital? The

concentration of such activities is in the areas of concrete and emergency services. This is

consistent with the findings of Hodgkinson, et al. (1992) regarding the types of services

offered by religious congregations. These activities do not have the type of voluntary associational qualities for persons from the community who seek assistance from the church as they do for the church persons who are involved in providing the assistance, so the social capital which is developed for community persons may be less useful than that developed by the church members who assist with these programs. On the other hand, the social capital benefits of these activities might be greater with religious congregational sponsorship of the programs than it is when services are offered in other settings, particularly if there is the opportunity for persons who are assisted to participate in voluntary activities, not necessarily religious in nature, with the congregation. It is not clear from the study, however, to what extent that occurs and if it does, what differences there might be in the social capital which is available in religious congregations of different denominations or denominations. Additional research is needed to evaluate the social capital which develops though these particular types of activities. Given the variety of other programs offered by these churches, it is not possible to say that the United Methodist Churches in this state are consistent supporters of a particular social capital producing activity.

2. *With what likelihood do churches report of their ability to expand social capital development activities?* These churches generally report some ability to provide additional resources for activities which would produce more social capital. This ability is not unlimited and for many of the churches is modest. However, there are some churches which have extensive ability to increase, apparently across all dimensions of resources.

3. *What characteristics of churches incline them toward greater social capital*

development activities in their local communities? There are significant findings for characteristics which incline these United Methodist churches toward greater social capital development, but none of the findings are strong. The strongest findings are that larger churches and those in larger communities are somewhat more inclined to already be offering services. There is an even smaller tendency of local churches which are larger and of those which are healthier to state that they have the potential to increase the resources they can make available for those activities. Finally, the relative health of the congregation is positively correlated with their reported potential to increase directly run programs. That is, healthier churches are somewhat more likely to report being able to increase their direct work in programs, those in which the church's involvement in producing social capital is probably greatest. None of these effects are strongly predictive of where resource might be located in United Methodist Churches.

4. *What social capital development efforts in churches relate to youth and children?* To what extent do churches indicate a preference for work with children and youth? These two populations combined are the overwhelmingly preference for the churches future expansion of activities. Yet, there is a limited amount of current activity in these same churches for community youth and children. There are obviously barriers to providing services for children and youth, barriers which this survey did not attempt to identify. However, this response, with 74% of the churches indicating interest in these populations, appears to be the strongest finding of the study. Although the discrepancy between current activity and willingness to service population cannot be adequately explained here, it appears that churches are very willing to work with children and youth, if the barriers

can be resolved.

5. *Are there specific populations which are more or less likely to be offered social capital development opportunities?* Churches appear to have distinct tendencies toward children, youth, and senior citizens and away from more stigmatized populations, such as homosexual persons, ex-prisoners, and persons living with AIDS. Welfare recipients, one of the populations which public officials seem to believe churches will assist, are also not a population which churches seem particularly inclined to serve. Thus, it appears that the judgments or prejudices which churches hold influence the extent to which they are willing to actively invest resources to assist people. This does not necessary suggest that they will turn away specific individuals seeking assistance. However, it does mean that these churches are not likely to be a consistent source of assistance to stigmatized populations, preferring instead to assist populations such as children and youth.

CHAPTER 5

Summary and Conclusions

The United Methodist Church in context - what of the other denominations?

The discussion of the budgetary limitations of the United Methodist churches in this survey suggested that there are serious limitations in how much funding they can contribute to additional, non-religious activities in their communities. Theologically, The United Methodist Church has been shown to be moderate, although its positions on the role of the church in social action and community are extensive. There is considerable support within the denomination for non-religiously focused activities. However, at the local church level, there appears to be some hesitation about serving stigmatized populations.

The historically more affluent and more liberal churches, such as the United Church of Christ, the Presbyterian Church, and the Episcopalian Church, are likely to have somewhat more resources locally and to be less hesitant locally to work with stigmatized populations. Other churches which are historically more conservative socially and theologically are likely to be more reluctant that the United Methodist church to devote considerable resource to non-religious activities or to serving stigmatized populations. It seems probable that all the denominations would be inclined to the two areas in which the United Methodist churches demonstrated the greatest willingness: emergency and concrete services and work with children and youth.

A notable exception to these generalizations is that the historically Black churches, while they may be more conservative than the United Methodist churches in some

respects, are more likely to be willing to become further involved in activities pertaining to economic development in their communities.

Application issues: How can social workers collaborate with churches?

Churches are currently active in their communities and indicate some ability to do more than they currently are. Social workers, the consummate resource brokers and collaborators, must be certain that they understand, utilize, and assist the religious congregations in their communities which are willing to be involved in activities serving their communities. Richmond Garland (1994) points out that in order for social workers to collaborate effectively in providing services to children they need to recognize that the church is a unique setting for services. Her discussion implies that professionals who are currently working in religiously affiliated organizations need to "own" that association, interpreting to others the place of their organizations rather than minimizing in an effort to assure that their professionalism and that of their organizations is recognized. She also points out that the context of the church itself is theological and that the two settings have different languages - they need to learn to communicate with each other. Jeavons (1994) makes a similar point, presenting the chapter "I will show you my faith by what I do" which discusses much of that context.

The discrepancy between the current programs and the stated potential and willingness of the churches, particularly regarding services to youth and children, hints that the churches lack the skills or the ability to "go it alone" with youth. They also may be unaware of how to find and involved the youth and children most in need of social capital

opportunities. Social workers should consider making available to churches the planning, training, and administrative skills which they have to assist the churches in developing need programs. In addition, social workers should develop the requisite skills to be effective in the faith-based environment, as described in the next section.

What social workers should know about religion and working with churches

Social workers have tended to avoid working with religious congregations, and to some extent, working with religious institutions of other kinds, for a variety of reasons. Garland, Bailey, Huffman-Nevins, and Stewart (1990) found that social workers tend to refer clients to churches for concrete needs: food, clothes, financial assistance. The are disinclined to refer for counseling, even when they are aware of the presence of those services at the churches. Social workers must first identify and understand their own religious understandings and biases, but then move beyond those to a professional orientation of assessing the religiously based resources in their community (Loewenberg, 1988). "Social work goals and strategies frequently are selected on the basis of their compatibility with a worker's ideology or values rather than in terms of the demands of the problem or the needs of the client (Loewenberg, 1988, 51). Ethical and competent practice demands that workers be very clear about the effects of their own bias in making decisions related to their practice. This ought to include a careful appraisal of the relationship between their own religious belief and values and forms their practice takes. Given the strong potential for local religious congregations to serve as sources of social capital and given the fact that many of those served by social workers are likely to be in need of that very resource, it behooves social workers to explore how to effectively

engage the local congregations of their communities in activities which would benefit their mutual constituencies.

Practical issues also suggest themselves: type of resources most likely available, populations with which the churches are most likely to work, and the expectations local congregations have regarding the nature of their relationship with persons receiving assistance are among the most important.

First, this study suggests that the resources of local congregations are likely to be limited. The areas in which United Methodist churches are most likely to be willing to work are those seen as impacting children, youth, or women. It seems somewhat contradictory that welfare was not selected by more churches, since welfare almost exclusively benefits women and children. Yet Schneider and Ingram's (1993) conceptualization of target populations offers insight into this seeming contradiction. While women and children generally are viewed positively, in spite of having little power, welfare recipients have even less power and are viewed negatively in general. Persons who are on welfare are often portrayed as promiscuous, lazy, and selfish. Thus, there may be less inclination to assist that group, in spite of any Biblical directives which might appear to include them.

The nature of the resource available also will influence the nature of the collaboration. Social workers, often administrators for their organizations, may think in terms of funding from churches as the most viable resource. Certainly all nonprofits are in need of funding in this era of devolution, which often deflects clients to local service provision without deflecting proportionate amounts of money. However, this is not the

resource which is most readily available in many churches. 40.7% of the churches in this study indicated an ability to increase financial contributions only a small amount, with another nearly equal number (41.2%) suggesting an ability to increase contributions a moderate amount. This does not imply a huge increase in funding to others for provision of services to those losing services via devolution.

When considering which congregations might be receptive to work with particular populations or problem areas, practitioners must make the effort to learn about the specific churches in their communities. Directly discussing with the pastors or key leaders what the theology and approach of that congregation is regarding a particular problem will assist the social work professional in gauging whether the congregation will provide services or is able to collaborate in a way which is consistent with social work values. The values of particular concern are those which emphasis non-judgmental provision of services in a way which allows for self-determination.

Understanding the considerable differences which may exist between congregations of the same denominations, including United Methodist themselves, gives guidance to the practitioner in knowing where to seek assistance with what types of issues. Within the same community there may be churches with very different tendencies. The issue of homosexuality, which along with abortion and euthanasia, is one the hottest current theological topics (Loewenberg, 1988, Wood and Bloch, 1995), best illustrates the wide differences which can exist. There are currently two organized movements within the United Methodist Church, the Transforming and the Reconciling movements. The former is essentially one which views homosexuality as inconsistent with Christian

morality; the latter is one which actively seeks to be inclusive of persons who identify as homosexual. Within the greater Lansing, Michigan area, there are churches identified with each of these movements. Asking the leadership of the congregations directly what their approach would be to the referral of a person for some form of assistance if they were identified as gay would inform the social worker of the nature of the relationship which the local congregation would envision with that person. Given the potential role of congregations in social capital development, this is a critical issue. While it may be irrelevant whether a person is gay when he or she is simply requesting a one time food assistance, it is likely to be very relevant when an individual needs ongoing services which put him/her into regular contact with the local congregation's members and pastor. Even though the scope of this paper has not permitted examination of the amount of social capital which is available through single contact activities compared to other ongoing activities, one of the points made earlier is that participation in the activities is a potential point of entree into participation in the church. The apparent prejudice suggested by these findings would seem a deterrent to any but the most highly motivated or secure persons, making it improbable that persons who could benefit from the social capital available within the congregation itself would become members of the church.

Education of Social Workers

The Council on Social Work Education (CSWE) is beginning to place more emphasis on curriculum development related to religion (Sheridan, Bullis, Adcock, Berlin, and Miller, 1992; Sheridan, Wilmer, and Atcheson, 1994). This revisiting of curriculum

must include individual practice issues of religious diversity and spiritual needs of clients

(Canda, 1988). Social work education must also address religious organizations as

practice partners, an area which is not visible yet in the discussion. However, many

currently practicing social workers have received very limited education regarding variants

of religion, in spite of the emphasis on diversity which pervades schools of social work.

Therefore, continuing education for professional social workers must also include

opportunities for them to examine their own biases toward religious organizations and

congregations as service providers, and to develop skills in working with them. In

addition to needing to understand their individual clients better, social workers need to

understand the differences between institutions with whom they will work in the

community. Churches have tended to be skeptical about social workers in many cases

(Marty, 1980) as a result of historical differences in goals and struggles for influence in

society, as well as ongoing disagreements between the values of the two over

controversial moral/social issues such as abortion. This is in spite of the great similarities

of the two in other value areas, such as a fundamental philosophical commitment to the

poor and disenfranchised (Marty, 1980). Marty speaks of the paradox of the United

States having become simultaneously more secular and more religious. Social workers

need formal skills which will help them negotiate that duality. Finally, social workers may

well find themselves working more frequently in jobs which are directly tied to religious

institutions, including congregations, and must learn how to negotiate the religious

environment in which they may find themselves working. A standardized curriculum for

social work education and an organized effort by the profession to better educate current

practitioners is needed.

Social capital conceptualizations issues

Social capital, though it has caught the attention of many, is still under-conceptualized (Foley and Edwards, 1997). While it is in some ways easy to grasp the concept on first look, its sheer simplicity renders it practically meaningless if it is used without elaboration and has been discussed here, makes measurement difficult. Social capital has been defined as the presence of relationship connections which have the potential for allowing people to get their needs met. The assumptions which seem implicit in many discussions is that availability of social capital translates into its use and that having the potential is the tantamount to having one's needs met, a guarantee of sorts. Yet, there are clearly other factors which influence social success and civic participation, with the most obvious being education (Brady, Verba, and Schlozman, 1995; Greeley, 1997). The discussion of social capital suggested that there may be a need for people who have previously had limited social capital in a small number of settings to learn how to effectively use social capital. It seems only logical that social capital within families, for example, would differ from that in a setting such as work, school, or a voluntary association such as a religious congregation, even when two settings offer the potential for addressing the same needs. Further development of the concept is needed, accounting for different types of social capital and including additional factors, such as those influencing whether a persons will be able to effectively use the potential available to them in the appropriate situations in the future.

Implications for future research

Two general areas for future research suggest themselves. This study has identified some current and potential directions in which churches report being willing to engage in non-religious activities in their communities. There has also been a discussion of the current state of understanding of social capital, including some of the disagreements about definitions and measurement of social capital.

A portion of this study related to the churches' willingness to increase their work in social capital producing activities during the next two years. Willingness was explored in the areas of volunteering, funding, subsidized building use, and direct provision of services by the churches. Nearly all the churches indicated willingness to increase in some area. However, it is not clear what would be required for their willingness to translate into actual increase in their activities. That is, it is not known whether these churches will act on their willingness and what support, whether from denominational sources or community-based sources such as social workers, is needed to encourage them. In addition, the churches have indicated a strong preference for children, youth, and senior citizens. A follow-up study in two years to evaluate what changes have occurred in their activities, what populations have been served, and what factors have contributed to their abilities to increase activities would be instructive. The latter could also be investigated with the current churches which reported having increased services during the past two years.

These conceptual limitations of social capital suggest another area of further research. It is relatively easy and seemingly reasonable to make the assumption that social

capital which would not otherwise exist develops as a result of the contacts generated within voluntary associations. However, there follows a question which has considerable implications for populations who have not had previous access to those relationships and the resultant social capital. Are there mechanisms, in addition to social capital itself, which are needed for people to be able to actually utilize the social capital which is available to them?

As has been discussed at length, additional research is needed to determine the validity of suggested measures of social capital. Participation in voluntary organizations, here churches, has been theorized as a measure of social capital development, with the assumption that if there is participation, then social capital will be available to participants. This study has accepted that assumption, testing the extent of voluntary programs offered by churches and of their willingness and capacity to provide those activities. Research is needed to (1) measure the presence of the specific characteristics of relationships thus formed; (2) measure the actual products of those relationships; and (3) test what mechanisms in voluntary associations actually lead to social capital and which do not. This should be done for a variety of associational and voluntary organizations to determine whether or not there is a difference in the amount or quality of social capital developed given the nature of the organizations, such as religious, political, or purely social.

Related to this, research is needed to examine multiple factors and directionality of influence for the generation of social capital and civic involvement. Some possible areas of inquiry include clarifying the causal relationships between family social capital assets, educational success, voluntary associational behavior of family members, and subsequent

individual social capital reserves.

In particular, however, the effects of social capital on society need to be examined. While it is generally believed that social capital is necessary and hence, beneficial to society, it is unclear what the general parameters are between positive and negative types and quantities of social capital. What types of organizations promote social capital which has positive effects? Negative? The place of values in social capital development is a particularly critical question which has been under-theorized and under-researched. Development of social capital in the context of religious congregations compared to other voluntary organizations needs to be explored. Particular attention ought to be paid to the place of values in this developmental process. With respect to the link of social capital and values to civic involvement, one area should be of particular interest, given concerns such as those of Berman (1997), of the potential for social capital to be used for purposes which are divisive, and of Minkoff (1997) concerning the need for mediating forces. For example, does development of social capital in religious congregations lead to greater civic involvement which is productive to the collective good and which is cooperative as compared to such development in other settings?

Whatever other areas are investigated, a fundamental question remains: if social capital is needed, what amount of social capital is adequate for individuals and for society to be healthy? Nobody appears to have sought to answer this question for civic involvement, although the probable link between civic involvement and social capital has been discussed considerably. This question needs to be explored broadly, with respect to individual social welfare and with cross-disciplinary approaches to the relationships

between social capital, civic involvement, and educational achievement.

Other areas which need further investigation are also suggested. As has been discussed in several places, social workers will increasingly be expected to develop cooperative relationships and programs with local religious congregations. This might include either referral of clients or actual development of programs in and with congregations. Understanding the context in which clients will receive services is important, and in addition to assuring they are better educated regarding religion, it is also incumbent upon social workers to be able to identify the specific context of a particular religious congregation. Among other issues, it is ethically responsible for social workers to know whether or not persons referred to religious congregations for services will receive those services in a way which is consistent with social work values. In order for social workers to be able to quickly assess the theological orientations of the local congregations in their communities, simple assessment tools need to be developed. These should be instruments, much like the quick assessment tools used with individual clients, which would allow practitioners to reliably evaluate the overall theological orientation of a given congregation and to appraise the tendencies of congregations toward specific levels of acceptance or non-acceptance of stigmatized behaviors and populations.

In addition, there is a need to develop assessment tools and training which would assist social workers in evaluating the resources which are available from particular congregations. While social workers received considerable training in assessing the needs of clients at multiple levels of intervention, little effort is made to train social workers in the art of resource identification and assessment. Thus, they lack the needed skills for

understanding religious organizations and are not generally activists in development of non-traditional resources.

Policy Issues

A considerable motivation for this research was the current political climate, as many people are pointing to churches as primary institutions for resolving flaws in the welfare system and for solving social problems. Lack of adequate social capital has been identified as one possible social problems, and churches for a variety of reasons already discussed may be appropriate places to seek to develop that asset. However, the findings of this study suggest that policy makers should be more cautious and more focused than they have been in what they ask of the churches. This is true for the populations to be served, the types of programs which churches are expected to offer, and the amount of resources which the churches have available to expand their non-religious activities in their own communities.

Many of the churches in this study are already very active in their communities, and nearly all the churches indicated some inclination to do more for persons in need within their communities. However, the services most commonly offered by these United Methodist churches are immediate and remedial in nature. Services which provided longer term support and solutions for persons in communities were not consistently offered. For example, affordable day care is recognized by many people as a key service for women who are being expected to hold jobs. Yet only 22 churches (8.7%) are involved in pre-school programs directly, with an additional 23 allowing their buildings to be used by

others for this purpose. This is a combined total of only 17.4% for the two programs, and it does not indicate how many days a week these services are offered. After-school programs, which serve the dual function of providing latchkey children with supervision so that parents may work and of providing additional support and social capital for the children, were only reported by 33 (12.7%) churches, although additional programs were indicated by some of the churches for other types of programs for children and youth. These programs are very resource intensive, and churches seem to be indicating that they have not had the ability to involve themselves so extensively in these activities, in spite of considerable interest in working with children.

The lack of involvement in economic development, while it is not representative of all denominations (Jackson, Schweitzer, Cato, and Blake, 1997), is another potential drawback of reliance of churches for key services to people, particularly in light of the focus on church involvement in welfare reform. The social capital needed for economic success is not available to welfare recipients, and these churches so little inclination to expand activities which will improve the social capital of these persons. While the presence of other denominations in larger cities may account for some faith-based services in this area, the preponderance of this sample and the majority of Michigan is rural. Therefore, many smaller towns and rural areas, if churches are relied on to provide the required work programs for welfare recipients, may not have adequate services.

Churches do indicate considerable willingness to work with youth and children, although those services are not for the most part currently being offered. Given that they also appear to have a limited amount of resources with which to develop new programs, a

more appropriate target of any government funding for faith-based services might be working with these populations. These could include after-school programs for children whose mothers are newly in the work force, educational programs for youth and children to enhance their probability of school success, sponsorship of volunteer programs to support in-school activities, day care for pre-school children, and youth clubs for older children. All of these program types have the potential for increasing social capital, for the youth and children and their parents as well. In addition, incentives or seed money to develop church-based community improvement projects similar to AmeriServe for youth which generate not only social capital for youth but also social capital for others and civic skills for the youth ought to be considered.

Counterpoints

A fundamental set of assumptions have been explicitly made in the course of this dissertation concerning the state of relationships within communities, causality of certain apparent phenomenon in civic society and the appropriate roles of churches and social workers in resolving those perceived problems. These conceptualizations, however attractive, are at least partially inadequate in addressing the most significant problems in the United States at present. It merits consideration that focusing too much attention on the issue of social capital, a commodity which is rooted in the day-to-day interactions of individual people, distracts from solutions which focus on systemic sources of social problems.

Lemann (1996) counters Putnam's assertion that social capital has been on the

decline. He further disagrees with Putnam's assertion that there has been decline in civic involvement, seeing the civic health of the country as also relatively intact. He proposes rather that "the overwhelming social and moral problem in American life is instead the disastrous condition of poor neighborhoods, almost all of which are in cities....(26)". He suggests that the problems may be too large to be addressed or solved solely within the community. Certainly when comparing the resources of urban communities, even their churches are probably inadequate in addressing the scope of the problems which exist. "The difficulty with (a government-based) program is that it is politically inconvenient. It would involve, by contemporary standards, far too much action on the part of the government, with the benefits far too skewed towards blacks. The model of an entire United States severely distressed in a way that is beyond the power of government to correct is more comforting (26)." Thus, one should consider that, although social capital is a useful and interesting approach, it must not become an exclusionary one. It is, in many ways, simply an important conceptual tool for social workers and churches seeking to remediate social problems and needs in their communities.

One additional counterpoint to this entire discussion of the role of churches and other faith-based organizations working with the needy in their communities is essential. Churches should be challenged to consider what the broader purpose for their work is, and whether a part of the work ought to be working to change the conditions of the poor, rather than continuing to provide immediate assistance which fails to interrupt the social institutions which perpetuate poverty in the United States.

A brief point was made in the literature review about the possibility that churches

are being enlisted to work with the poor partly in an effort to achieve social control of the poor through another institutional venue. It is subjective to state that this is a part of the motivation for this latest iteration of social service provision, but it makes sense that it may be true. As Berman (1997) points out, when groups with competing goals both (or all) acquire considerable social capital, there is the potential for factionalism. This competition can lead to a divisive and explosive social environment, as has occurred throughout the world of late. It can also, with societal controls for resolving such conflicts, lead to change which is beneficial to society as a whole.

Breton (1992), using liberation theology as a rationale, makes a convincing argument that work with the poor must include the understanding that their condition includes oppression and exclusion from participation in community. From Breton's perspective, lack of community and political participation is a function of exclusion, not simply of disinterest or lack of skills. Her discussion points to a possible reluctance on the part of social workers to let go of some of the power derived from their professional/expert status. A parallel struggle may be present in religious congregations, which on the one hand are challenged by liberation theologians and others to respond differently to the poor, but who on the other may be unwilling to relinquish their status as the moral authorities. "I see reaching out as a process of 're-franchising', whereby the poor and oppressed reclaim their right to be truly participating members of their communities" (Breton, 1992, p. 257). Accepting this conceptualization would change the approach of social workers and church people addressing the social capital needs of the poor. Potentially, it also implies, given the economic structure of this society, a need to

assist the poor in developing financial capital in addition to social capital. Finally, it implies the need to enhance opportunities for the poor to develop social capital with each other, where autonomy about decision-making regarding how to use that social capital exists. To the extent that social capital lies primarily in relationships between the poor and those who control resources, including religious congregations, those with resources and attendant power will be able to utilize that social capital to exercise control over those who are poor. Christian churches and social workers alike have a values which give lip service to liberation of the oppressed or self-determination. They would do well to consider how the social capital developing structures enhance or detract from oppression and self-determination.

Haiti and Bolivia

The responses to one question in the survey have not been discussed. The second question of the survey was not formally a part of the data set. Question number two, on the first page, asked respondents to choose where their two dollar incentive should be contributed. The two options were either the Conference priority fund for lunches for students at the Methodist run schools in Haiti or purchase of a building for a youth center in Santa Cruz, Bolivia, a project of West Michigan sponsored agricultural missionaries. The contribution was not part of the project budget, but was a personal contribution. The responses favored the Haiti project nearly 170-67, with 21 missing responses.

Response to this question was interesting in several respects. First, the incentive appears to have made a personal difference to the pastors who responded. One pastor, in

a personal conversation with me, said that he could not recall having every been compensated for filling out a survey before. The other, who spoke with me at the 1997 meeting of the annual conference, said that he felt that question was "A stroke of genius" in getting people to respond. While it is not clear that the pastors would have neglected the survey otherwise, they did apparently view the contribution as compensation, even though they did not themselves benefit from it and even though two dollars was certainly not adequate compensation for the amount of time they must have invested in the survey. This in some ways suggests the way in which social capital works in the church. They appeared to have felt gratification about having facilitated, through their cooperation with the survey, a benefit to persons in another country.

The other interesting aspect of the responses is the number of persons who selected Haiti rather than the Bolivia project. The lunch program in Haiti has been a priority of the Michigan Area for three years, as the United Methodist church in the entire state has made a "covenant relationship" with the church in Haiti. There has been considerable publicity regarding the priority, especially concerning funding the lunch program, which had a goal of $100,000 for this year. The very strong response to the Haiti program, even though the missionary couple in Bolivia are known to and financially supported by many churches in the conference, suggests that efforts of the conference to educate members concerning particularly program and mission priorities have an influence on decisions churches make concerning how to direct their resources.

The strength of the response to hunger, such as the 78.3% (n=202) participation in CROP walks, and the ranking of hunger as the four most likely area in which churches

could increase their support, suggest a similar effect. However, even if these is true, it may not hold true for stigmatized populations. This is an area which merits research, to identify what the effects are of denominational influence on non-religious program support.

A possible strategy for social work/religious congregation collaboration

The tendency identified above of churches to focus on efforts about which they are better educated and the need for social workers to assure that services are offered in a way which is consistent with social work values suggests a strategy for utilizing the faith-based resources of a given community. Collaboration amongst social service providers has been one of the virtual buzzwords of devolution. Further, this study is suggesting that churches and social workers ought to collaborate to develop appropriate services in their communities. One approach to effectively developing ties between religious congregations and professional social service programs might utilize a unique model of collaboration.

The model involves recognition of the following points:

- If in fact congregations are more effectively engaged when they are familiar with the projects or the need areas, *education about particular needs* of community members and the needs of the organizations seeking to assist them would tend to increase the extent to which resources are made available to support existing efforts.

- The theological orientation of churches influences their willingness to work with particular populations and their style of service provision when they do offer services.

Therefore, social workers must understand the theological perspectives of the congregations, including non-Christian congregations, in their communities. This may involve direct exploration of the perspectives of individual local congregations.

- There are a given number of religious congregations, nonprofits, and persons in need within the community. The number and resources of the first two is, in the short-term, fairly fixed although the number of persons in need can fluctuate quite quickly if some circumstance in the community changes, such as the occurrence of a natural disaster or the closing of a factory. Given that the voluntary organizations are supported by the people who may be suddenly in need, depending on the scale of the circumstances, the capacity of the organizations to respond may drop as need increases.

- Even though there is a theoretically large capacity to increase funding and volunteering in communities, the practical reality of the capacity/willingness of local congregations suggested by this study is that there is at best a small to moderate ability of congregations to increase resource availability of any type. While the limitations of making definitive statements about general population of religious congregations are clear, there is also no evidence from other denominations that there is large untapped potential which congregations as groups are willing to actualize.

- Though not empirically demonstrated, there are indications that congregations respond to education and encouragement to support a select number of priority areas, such as the Haiti project and hunger. It may be that isolating a few areas to address in the local community and addressing them comprehensively through one or a few congregations would increase the level of resources of all types made available -

funding, volunteering, building use, and even programs run by the church. This focus

on particular needs might also increase the level of expertise on the part of the local

congregations in working with that particular problem area or population, improving

the quality of services which would be offered. Ronsvalle and Ronsvalle (1996),

referring to a report of the United Methodist Church's General Council on Finance

and Administration (1992), state that when asked whether people would rather give to

specific causes than to a general budget, 98% of the respondents, who were

denominational leaders, agreed.

- The last two points imply that there is demand across the community which must be

  addressed, if it is to be at all, by organizations competing for limited resources. While

  this seems blatantly obvious on the surface, the rhetoric in public discourse often

  implies something quite contrary to this. It implies that there are unlimited, or at least

  very large, untapped resources which are easily accessible to communities.

- Churches are very viable sources of new social capital. This social capital is

  potentially available to both individuals in the community who are currently in need

  and also to the social workers and others who are seeking to ameliorate those needs.

  This social capital is very limited for social workers in the context of religious

  congregations, as skilled as they are at acquiring it in other contexts. They do not

  need to be members of congregations to use them to develop social capital for use in

  their professional work. They do need to understand the settings and to respect those

  who are members of the congregations as such. This is highly consistent with social

  work values, but it has not been consistently exercised in religious settings by social

workers. Further, the implications of indirect social exchange and reciprocity are that to the extent that social workers are willing and able to assist persons affiliated with the congregations, there is likely to be a willingness on the part of the congregation to assist the social worker in addressing the needs of others.

It seems almost redundant to suggest that with respect to persons in need, development of social capital is very important, and it is clear that churches have the potential for developing substantial social capital for persons in need. Further, the setting of the congregation, a participatory rather than service oriented voluntary organization, lends itself to doing that in a way that social service providers, including the social workers, cannot always do.

Given these points, one possible strategy or model, particularly in smaller communities, is a collaboration between social workers representing various agencies in a given community and the leadership of the religious congregations in that community. The goal of the collaboration would be to identify "best matches" between nonprofits and religious congregations, matches which would set the agenda for who would work intensively with whom. That is, specific congregations and local nonprofits would be matched as partners. This would not limit the local congregations from assisting others, but would increase the access and planning between the partners, essentially functioning as a social capital development mechanism for the churches and the social workers. This form of collaboration has particular merit with respect to religious and social work collaborations because it would allow social workers to utilize congregations for cooperative projects with a minimal amount of conflict regarding values and ideology.

The resource needs of human service providing organizations and other nonprofits (such as arts organizations) would be identified, as would the underutilized resource potential of each religious congregation. Further, the theological orientations and interests of the local congregations could be assessed in order to determine which needs might best be matched with which churches, allowing active input on the part of both the social workers and the churches. In addition, it would allow the congregations to explore for themselves the appropriate services and programs in which they should be involved, given their understanding of their mission imperatives. Churches already receive solicitations from any number of local and other organizations with requests for assistance. However, the frequent lack of relationship between social service providers who request support for their programs and the churches from whom they seek assistance limits the interaction. Further, there is not an existing mechanism for "sorting" and prioritizing the needs across the community.

Having established these partner relationships, a coordinated plan for addressing the creation of programs and education could be developed between the social workers and the religious congregation. If the assumptions concerning the role of education in generating support for missions are correct, then developing a partnership which allows individual members of a congregation to understand and select among several ways to support activities will increase that support.

Conclusions

The objective of this study was to assess whether the United Methodist Churches of West Michigan were in a position to increase the amount of support they give to human

services and their contributions to social capital within their communities. The evidence is that their current work is focused in specific areas, and that there is a segment of churches which seem willing and potentially able to expand some aspect of their support for or direct involvement in services sufficiently to impact their communities.

Nearly all churches indicated some ability to increase the amount of collaborative or direct work they do in their communities. This means that they are potentially good resources for social workers and others seeking additional support for programs already being offered or in development, provided that the types of resources sought are ones which the particular United Methodist Church in their community or neighborhood has available. With respect to volunteering, both short-term projects involving several people and longer term volunteering opportunities by individuals are possible options. In considering between seeking assistance from the many denominations across the community, it is suggested that identify specific local congregations whose theological orientation lends itself to the particular cause is an important consideration.

However, there are limitations to the amount of work in which local United Methodist congregations are likely to engage. The resources simply do not seem to be extensive enough to warrant an expectation that local congregations by themselves will be able to provide a safety net for the poor through emergency services. Secondly, there are clearly defined populations with which the local congregations seem more inclined to work and particular populations with which the churches seem very disinclined to work. In particular, welfare recipients were only identified explicitly by a very small minority of churches as a population which was a high priority. With such a small response from local

congregations so soon after the initial passage of the Welfare Reform of 1996, it seems

prudent for policy makers to reconsider the assumption that churches will be a substantial

resource in addressing the needs of people who have been welfare recipients.

APPENDIX

Churches as a Community Resource
and
Source of Funding for Human Services

.

Please return survey and direct any questions to:

Susan Grettenberger
226 Baker Hall
School of Social Work
E. Lansing, MI   48824
517-372-4146
gretten2@pilot.msu.edu

You indicate your voluntary agreement to
participate by completing and returning
this questionnaire

PLEASE USE A #2 PENCIL TO COMPLETE THIS SURVEY. FOR EACH ANSWER, EITHER FILL IN THE BUBBLE BY THE APPROPRIATE ANSWER OR WRITE IN THE ANSWER, AS INDICATED.

1. Title of person completing Section 1-3:

    O Pastor

    O Lay leader

    O Administrative Board/COM chair

    O UMW president

    O Secretary/administrative assistant

    > Please have the pastor complete Section 4 regardless of who else has completed the other sections. Thank you.

2. While it is not possible for me to compensate each of the churches who participate in the survey, I am committed to the work and mission of the church. Therefore, I will personally contribute $2 per returned survey, up to $500. In addition, an anonymous contributor from the West Michigan Conference has offered to match the $2 per church contribution for all additional participating churches. However, I would like your input in deciding which project should receive the money. Please vote for one of the projects designated below. You will be notified in the final report of how much money was contributed to each project. Both projects are Advance Specials.

    O Haiti hot lunch program. This is the second year that the West Michigan Conference has sponsored this project. The goal is to provide all the lunches for all the children in the Methodist run schools in Haiti. Cost of each meal is 8 cents, and the 1996-97 goal is $100,000.

    O Purchase of a youth center in Santa Cruz, Bolivia. Through the work of Walt and Sue Henry, U.M. missionaries who have served in Bolivia for 25 years, two West Michigan work camps have assisted in the construction of a new church building for the Nueva Vida Methodist Church in Santa Cruz. Now, the church is attempting to raise $30,000 to purchase a building which would serve as the center for a new ministry to street youth and children.

Section 1: Work Camps

DESCRIBE ANY WORK CAMPS MEMBERS OF YOUR CHURCH PARTICIPATED IN DURING 1996. LOCAL HABITAT FOR HUMANITY AND OTHER COMMUNITY PROJECTS, SUCH AS HIGHWAY CLEAN-UP, ARE LISTED SEPARATELY. PLEASE USE #2 PENCIL TO FILL IN THE BUBBLE BY YOUR ANSWER.

Nobody from our church participated in a work camp during 1996 __O__ (Skip to question #15 below)

Work Camp #1 location

3. Please indicate whatever best describes where the work camp was done.
   - O Our community
   - O Inside our district
   - O Elsewhere in Michigan
   - O Another state
   - O Another country

4. Check which one applies to the type of work site:
   - O Church camp
   - O Local church
   - O Mission project
   - O Habitat for Humanity (not local)
   - O Disaster location
   - O None of the above

5. How many people participated?

0	0
1	1
2	2
3	3
4	4
5	5
6	6
7	7
8	8
9	9

6. Who participated? (Check all that apply):
   - O local church members
   - O other United Methodists
   - O other people

7. What best describes the age range of the participants?
   - O youth and their leaders only
   - O adult only
   - O family/inter-generational

8. What type of work was done? (Check all that apply):
   - O Church construction
   - O House construction (other than local Habitat for Humanity, which is listed elsewhere)
   - O Other construction
   - O Help with religious programs
   - O Help with health programs
   - O Help with educational programs
   - O Help with migrant programs
   - O Help with recreational programs
   - O Other. Please describe _____

Work Camp #2

Work Camp #2 location (If there was no #2 Work Camp, skip to Question 15 below).

9. Please indicate whatever best describes where the work camp was done.
    ○ Our community
    ○ Inside our district
    ○ Elsewhere in Michigan
    ○ Another state
    ○ Another country

10. Check which one applies to the type of work site:
    ○ Church camp
    ○ Local church
    ○ Mission project
    ○ Habitat for Humanity (not local)
    ○ Disaster location
    ○ None of the above

11. How many people participated?

12. Who participated? (Check all that apply):
    ○ local church members
    ○ other United Methodists
    ○ other people

13. What best describes the age range of the participants?
    ○ youth and their leaders only
    ○ adult only
    ○ family/inter-generational

14. What type of work was done? (Check all that apply):
    ○ Church construction
    ○ House construction (other than local Habitat for Humanity, which is listed elsewhere)
    ○ Other construction
    ○ Help with religious programs
    ○ Help with health programs
    ○ Help with educational programs
    ○ Help with migrant programs
    ○ Help with recreational programs
    ○ Other. Please describe _____

15. Do you think your church would consider increasing participation in work camps?
    ○ yes
    ○ no

16. Would having outside help with set-up or joint participation with other churches encourage more work camps?
    ○ yes
    ○ no

SECTION 2: Services inventory
Instructions

IN THE FOLLOWING SECTION, PLEASE REVIEW EACH ITEM. FOR EVERY ACTIVITY WHICH YOUR CHURCH SUPPORTS OR ACTUALLY RUNS, PLEASE INDICATE YOUR CHURCH'S LEVEL OF INVOLVEMENT.* This section is specifically intended to identify programs within your community, not programs which you might fund or support in other parts of the state or outside the state. The levels of involvement include:

*If your church is not involved in an activity, leave it blank.

Hosting the activity or program by allowing another group to use the church's facilities. Please indicate all activities which take place in your building.

Cooperative program run with another organization. The church is involved in more than just assisting with funding. There may be volunteers, assistance with planning, etc. Indicate whether the program is housed in the church building or in a non-church facility (elsewhere). If there are both types of sites, mark "church".

Direct sponsorship by the church (These are programs which the church runs by itself, even if there are non-church people who help with the actual project. A soup kitchen which is part of the church's program is an example.)

Please fill in the bubble to the far right if the activity is basically only serving church members.

It is important that this inventory be as complete as possible. Therefore it might be helpful to have more than one person who knows the church's activities well review Section 2.

USE #2 PENCIL TO FILL IN THE BUBBLES

SECTION 2: Services inventory

	Host Program (···· ʻding only)	Cooperative Program at church / elsewhere		Direct Sponsor	Basically serves just church members

Emergency Services

Food bank	O	O	O	O	O
Clothing bank	O	O	O	O	O
Furniture/appliance distribution	O	O	O	O	O
Emergency fund administered by the church	O	O	O	O	O
Emergency shelter program	O	O	O	O	O
Community gardening/surplus produce distribution	O	O	O	O	O
Meals for homeless/poor (soup kitchens)	O	O	O	O	O
Meals for senior citizens (meals on wheels)	O	O	O	O	O
Refugee resettlement	O	O	O	O	O
Other (specify) _____	O	O	O	O	O

_____

Fund raising for others

For victims of fire or crime	O	O	O	O	O
For person/family with health problems	O	O	O	O	O
CROP	O	O	O	O	O
Events for nonprofits in community	O	O	O	O	O
Other (specify) _____	O	O	O	O	O

_____

Housing/community work efforts

Habitat for Humanity (in your community)	O	O	O	O	O
Other community work projects (in your community)	O	O	O	O	O
Highway or river clean-up sponsors	O	O	O	O	O
Other (specify)_____	O	O	O	O	O

_____

Self-help/support groups

Twelve step meetings (AA, Alanon, etc.)	O	O	O	O	O
Other substance abuse groups	O	O	O	O	O
TOPS, Weight Watchers, etc.	O	O	O	O	O
Grief support groups	O	O	O	O	O
Divorce support groups	O	O	O	O	O
AIDS groups or ministries	O	O	O	O	O
Other health related activities/groups	O	O	O	O	O
Parent groups	O	O	O	O	O
Domestic violence	O	O	O	O	O
Other (specify) _____	O	O	O	O	O

_____

	Host Program (building only)	Cooperative Program at church / elsewhere		Direct Sponsor	Basically serves just church members

Health

Health Clinic	O	O	O	O	O
Blood pressure screening	O	O	O	O	O
Migrant clinic	O	O	O	O	O
Parish nurse	O	O	O	O	O
Blood drives	O	O	O	O	O
Health fair	O	O	O	O	O
Other (specify)	O	O	O	O	O

Outreach/programs for youth

Pre-school programs	O	O	O	O	O
After school or other program for elementary children	O	O	O	O	O
Sports programs for under 18 year olds	O	O	O	O	O
Boy Scouts	O	O	O	O	O
Girls Scouts	O	O	O	O	O
Teen Center	O	O	O	O	O
Other (specify)_____	O	O	O	O	O

Economic Development Programs

Job placement	O	O	O	O	O
Job training	O	O	O	O	O
Credit Union	O	O	O	O	O
Community Reinvestment Corp.	O	O	O	O	O
Retail Development	O	O	O	O	O
Entrepreneurial training	O	O	O	O	O
Investment groups/Training	O	O	O	O	O
Other (specify)	O	O	O	O	O

Cultural/other community efforts

Community classes	O	O	O	O	O
Art displays	O	O	O	O	O
Other special displays, such as the AIDS quilt	O	O	O	O	O
Musical concerts	O	O	O	O	O
Theater productions	O	O	O	O	O
Dances	O	O	O	O	O
Other (specify)_____	O	O	O	O	O

	Host Program (building only)	Cooperative Program at church / elsewhere		Direct Sponsor	Basically serves just church members
Social action activities open to public					
Racism workshops	O	O	O	O	O
Peace workshops	O	O	O	O	O
Other (specify)_____	O	O	O	O	O

_____

	Host Program (building only)	Cooperative Program at church / elsewhere		Direct Sponsor	Basically serves just church members
Other					
Prison ministry	O	O	O	O	O
Post-release program for prisoners	O	O	O	O	O
Legal assistance	O	O	O	O	O
Income tax assistance	O	O	O	O	O
GED	O	O	O	O	O
Recycling project outside the church itself	O	O	O	O	O

What local groups (separate from the list just completed) receive funding from the church, through regular budget, UMW, UMM, or special offerings? (include amount if it is known.)

		Yes	No
_____	Food Bank/hunger projects (including soup kitchens)	O	O
_____	Domestic Violence Shelter or	O	O
_____	Homeless program	O	O
_____	Habitat for Humanity	O	O
_____	Social service agencies	O	O
_____	Youth programs	O	O
_____	Substance abuse programs	O	O
_____	Other (describe) _____	O	O
_____	Other (describe) _____	O	O
_____	Other (describe) _____	O	O
_____	Other (describe) _____	O	O
_____	Other (describe) _____	O	O

Please describe anything else about what your church is doing in your community which you think is important:

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

Section 3: Facilities

Indicate which facilities are available in your building(s):

<table>
<thead>
<tr><th></th><th>Yes</th><th>No</th></tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr><td>Our church owns no building</td><td>O</td><td>O</td></tr>
<tr><td>Licensed kitchen</td><td>O</td><td>O</td></tr>
<tr><td>Licensed day care facilities</td><td>O</td><td>O</td></tr>
<tr><td>Auditorium or other room which is appropriate for productions or lectures (other than sanctuary)</td><td>O</td><td>O</td></tr>
<tr><td>Large meeting room</td><td>O</td><td>O</td></tr>
<tr><td>Classrooms for smaller group meetings</td><td>O</td><td>O</td></tr>
<tr><td>Gymnasium</td><td>O</td><td>O</td></tr>
<tr><td>Barrier free meeting rooms/accessible building</td><td>O</td><td>O</td></tr>
<tr><td>Showers</td><td>O</td><td>O</td></tr>
<tr><td>Audio/visual equipment</td><td>O</td><td>O</td></tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Other (describe) _____

_____

_____

7. In the next two years, to what extent do you believe your congregation could, if encouraged, **increase the use of your building** at minimal or no cost for programs run by nonprofit organizations or other community based groups?

Considerable decrease	Moderate decrease	Small decrease	No Change	Small Increase	Moderate Increase	Considerable Increase
①	②	③	④	⑤	⑥	⑦

8. In the next two years, to what extent do you believe your congregation could, if encouraged, **increase the number of programs run directly by your church**?

Considerable decrease	Moderate decrease	Small decrease	No Change	Small Increase	Moderate Increase	Considerable Increase
①	②	③	④	⑤	⑥	⑦

9. Which specific problem areas or groups of people *in your community* do you believe your congregation would be receptive to working with more than they are at present? Please indicate up to three items below:

- ○ None
- ○ I am unaware of any particular area(s)
- ○ children
- ○ youth
- ○ women
- ○ senior citizens
- ○ divorced persons
- ○ ex-prisoners
- ○ migrants
- ○ refugees
- ○ persons with AIDS
- ○ welfare recipients
- ○ minority persons
- ○ gay/lesbian persons
- ○ hunger
- ○ substance abuse
- ○ domestic violence
- ○ education
- ○ housing
- ○ peace and justice
- ○ other (please list)_____

10. Which specific problem areas or groups of people *in your community* do you believe your congregations would be unable or unwilling to work with more than they are at present? Please indicate up to three items below:

- ○ None
- ○ I am unaware of any particular area(s)
- ○ children
- ○ youth
- ○ women
- ○ senior citizens
- ○ divorced persons
- ○ ex-prisoners
- ○ migrants
- ○ refugees
- ○ persons with AIDS
- ○ welfare recipients
- ○ minority persons
- ○ gay/lesbian persons
- ○ hunger
- ○ substance abuse
- ○ domestic violence
- ○ education
- ○ housing
- ○ peace and justice
- ○ other (please list)_____

11. Does your church receive any grants or other direct support from local, state, or federal government sources?

Yes ◯ No◯

12. If yes, what type of funding or support do you receive? Check all that apply:

_____ Direct grants; How much money? ➡️
_____ Donation of supplies
_____ Food for distribution to needy
_____ Staff for programs are paid by the state or city

13. Location of church (check all that apply)
◯ downtown of the community
◯ transitional neighborhood
◯ outskirts of the city or town
◯ suburban community (i.e immediately adjoining a larger town or city)
◯ open country
◯ residential area
◯ commercial area

14. Type of community in which your church is physically located
◯ City of 1.000,000 or larger
◯ City of 100,000 - 999,000
◯ City of 50,000 - 99,999
◯ City of 25,000 - 49,900
◯ City of 10,000 - 24,999
◯ City of 5,000 - 9,999
◯ Town of 1,000 - 4,999
◯ Town smaller than 1,000
◯ Church is not located in a town

15. How would you describe the current status of your church
◯ healthy and growing
◯ healthy and stable membership
◯ healthy and getting smaller
◯ struggling somewhat financially and with membership
◯ in transition, but stable
◯ in jeopardy, struggling to survive

16. How many members did your church report at the end of 1995?

11

17. What was the average attendance reported for 1995?

```
⓪⓪⓪⓪⓪⓪⓪⓪⓪
①①①①①①①①①
②②②②②②②②②
③③③③③③③③③
④④④④④④④④④
⑤⑤⑤⑤⑤⑤⑤⑤⑤
⑥⑥⑥⑥⑥⑥⑥⑥⑥
⑦⑦⑦⑦⑦⑦⑦⑦⑦
⑧⑧⑧⑧⑧⑧⑧⑧⑧
⑨⑨⑨⑨⑨⑨⑨⑨⑨
```

18. What was the total amount of money taken in by your church in 1995?

```
⓪⓪⓪⓪⓪⓪⓪⓪⓪
①①①①①①①①①
②②②②②②②②②
③③③③③③③③③
④④④④④④④④④
⑤⑤⑤⑤⑤⑤⑤⑤⑤
⑥⑥⑥⑥⑥⑥⑥⑥⑥
⑦⑦⑦⑦⑦⑦⑦⑦⑦
⑧⑧⑧⑧⑧⑧⑧⑧⑧
⑨⑨⑨⑨⑨⑨⑨⑨⑨
```

19. If there are, in the past two years, specific areas where your church has developed or expanded programs/ministry to the community in response to perceived need, please describe below:

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

20. Are there any additional comments you'd like to make?

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

BIBLIOGRAPHY

BIBLIOGRAPHY

Abbott, S.D., Garland, D.R., Huffman-Nevins, A., & Stewart, J.B. (1990). Social workers' views of local churches as service providers: Impressions from an exploratory study. Social Work and Christianity, 17, 7-16.

Alsgaard, E. (1997). Michigan Area clergywomen hit 'stained glass ceiling', too. Michigan Christian Advocate, p. 1.

Allen, W.H. (1907). Efficiency in religious work. The Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science, XXX, 539-544.

Ammerman, N.T. (February 26, 1996). Bowling together: Congregations and the American civic order. Seventeenth Annual University Lecture in Religion. Arizona State University, Department of Religious Studies.

Arney, R. (Undated). Welfare reform summary. World Vision.

Bedell, K., & Jones, A.M. (Eds.). (1992). Yearbook of American and Canadian Churches (1992). Nashville: Abington Press.

Berman, S. (1997). Civil society and political institutionalization. American Behavioral Scientist, 40, 562-574.

Biddle, J.E. (1992). Religious organizations. In Clotfelter, C.T. (Ed.). Who benefits from the nonprofit sector? Chicago: The University of Chicago Press.

Blau, J.R., Land, K.C., & Deane, G. (1991). Religious participation, religious diversity, and social conditions. PONPO Working paper No. 162. Institution for Social and Policy Studies. Yale University.

Blau, P.M. (1964). Exchange and power in social life. New York: John Wiley and Sons, Inc.

Boisjoly, J., Duncan, G.J., & Hofferth, S. (1995). Access to social capital. Journal of Family Issues, 16, 609-31.

Boyer, P. (1978). Building character among the urban poor. Urban masses and moral order in America: 1820-1920. In Colby, R.C. (1989) Social welfare policy. Chicago: Dorsey Press. (113-134).

Bradley, M.B., Green, N.M., Jones, D.E., Lynn, M., & McNeil, L. (1992). Churches and Church Membership in the United States 1990. Atlanta, GA: Glenmary Research Center.

Brady, H.E., Verba, S., & Schlozman, K.L. (1995). Beyond SES: A resource model for political participation. American Political Science Review, 89, 271-294.

Brehm, J., & Rahn, W. (1995, unpublished). An audit of the deficit in social capital. Durham, N.C.: Duke University. In Putnam, R.D. (1995b). Tuning in, tuning out: The strange disappearance of social capital in America. PS: Political Science and Politics, 28, 664-683.

Breton, N. (1992). Liberation theology, group work, and the right of the poor and oppressed to participate in the life of community. Social Work with Groups, 15, 257-269.

Canda, E.R. (1988). Spirituality, religious diversity, and social work practice. Social Casework, 69, 238-247.

Carlson-Thiel, S. (September 2, 1996). Filling in the blanks. Capital commentary. Center for Peace and Justice. PO Box 48368. Washington, DC 20002-0368.

Cartens, C.C. (1907). The Salvation Army - A criticism. The Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science, XXX, 545-556.

Center for Public Justice (1997). A guide to charitable choice: The rules of Section 104 of the 1996 federal welfare law governing state cooperation with faith-based social-service providers. Annandale, Virginia: The Center for Public Justice.

Chapman, A.R. (1991). Faith, power, and politics: Political ministry in mainline churches. New York: The Pilgrim Press.

Chang, P.M.Y., Williams, D.R., Griffin, E.E.H., & Young, J. (1994). Church-agency relationships in the Black community. Nonprofit and voluntary sector quarterly, 23, 91-105.

Church giving continues to decline. (1991, November 11). Christianity Today, 35(13), 49.

Clotfelter, C.T. (1992). The distributional consequences of nonprofit activities. In Clotfelter, C.T. (Ed.). Who benefits from the nonprofit sector?. Chicago: The University of Chicago Press.

Cochran, J.W. (1907). The church and the working man. The Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science, XXX, 441-455.

Coleman, J.S. (1990). Foundations of social theory. Cambridge, MA: The Belknap Press.

Coleman, J.S. (1988). Social capital in the creation of human capital. American Journal of Sociology, 94(Supp), 95-120.

Conrad, A.P. (1980). Social ministry in the early church: An integral component of the Christian community. Social Thought, 6(2), 41-51.

Cormode, D.S. (1994). Review essay: Religion and the nonprofit sector. Nonprofit and voluntary sector quarterly, 23, 171-182.

Coughlin, B.J. (1965). Church and state in social welfare. New York: Columbia University Press.

Cnaan, R.A., & Anrofell, L. (1994). Mapping volunteer activity. Nonprofit and voluntary sector quarterly, 23, 335-351.

Cnaan, R.A., Kasternakis, A., & Wineburg, R.J. (1993). Religious people, religious congregations, and volunteerism in human services: Is there a link? Nonprofit and voluntary sector quarterly, 22, 33-51.

Cnaan, R.A., & Wineburg, R.J. (1996). Social work and the role of the religious community in social service provision. Unpublished. University of North Carolina, Greensboro.

Donahue, M.J. (1994). Correlates of religious giving in six Protestant denominations. Review of Religious Research, 36, 149-157.

Dudley, C.S. (Ed.). (1983). Yearbook of American and Canadian Churches: 1983. Nashville: Abington Press.

Dudley, C.S. (Ed.). (1979). Where have all our people gone? New choices for old churches. New York: The Pilgrim Press.

Dudley, C.S., & Van Eck, T. (Eds.). (1992). Social ideology and community ministries: Implications from church membership surveys. In K. Bedel & A..M. Jones. (Eds.). Yearbook of American and Canadian Churches: 1992. Nashville: Abington Press.

Egan, Meg. (1997). Busting it open: Free internet access is empowering low-income communities. The Other Side, 33(3), 28-29.

Esbeck, C.H. (1996). The regulation of religious organizations as recipients of governmental assistance. Washington, D.C.: The Center for Public Justice.

Evans, D. (1907). The social work of church in a factory town. The Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science, XXX, 503-508.

Evans, T.S. (1907). The Christian settlement. The Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science, XXX, 483-489.

Diamond, L. (1994). Rethinking civil society: Toward democratic consolidation. Journal of Democracy, 5(3), 4-17.

Edwards, B. and Foley, M.W. (1997) Social capital and the political economy of our discontent. American Behavioral Scientist, 40, 669-678.

Ellison, C. G., & George, L.K. (1994). Religious involvement, social ties, and social support in a southeastern community. Journal for the scientific study of religion, 33, 46-61.

Farwell, P.T. (1907). The social work of a suburban church. The Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science, XXX, 496-502.

Fink, A. (1995a). How to Ask Survey Questions. Thousand Oaks: Sage Publications.

Fink, A. (1995b). How to Design Surveys. Thousand Oaks: Sage Publications.

Fink, A. (1995c). The Survey Handbook. Thousand Oaks: Sage Publications.

Fisher, D. (1997, July 28). Helping Dakotas disaster victims brings Maine church back to life. Michigan Christian Advocate. p. 7.

Foley, M.W. and Edwards, B. (1997). Editors' introduction. American Behavioral Scientist, 40, 550-561.

Foley, M.W. and Edwards, B. (1996). The paradox of civil society. Journal of Democracy, 7, 38-52.

Furfey, P.H. (1948) The churches and social problems. The Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science, XXX, 101-109.

Gardner, J.W. (1996). Building community. Washington, DC: Independent Sector.

Garland, D.R., & Bailey, P. L. (1990). Effective work with religious organizations by social workers in other settings. Social Work and Christianity, 17(2), 79-95.

General Council on Finance and Administration. (1993-1994). Summary report on the Annual Conference listening project. United Methodist Church.

Gilbert, K. (1997, July 28). United Methodist clergy women hit 'stained glass ceiling'. Michigan Christian Advocate, July 28, p.1.

Gilovich, T. (1997). Some systematic biases of everyday judgment. Skeptical Inquirer, 21(2), 31-35.

Greeley, A. (1997). Coleman revisited: Religious structures as a source of social capital. American Behavioral Scientist, 40, 587-594.

Greeley, A. (1997). The strange reappearance of civic America: Religion and volunteering. (Third draft). At Http://www.agreeley.com/articles/civic/html.

Greeley, A. & McManus, W. (1987). Catholic contributions: Sociology and policy. Chicago: Thomas More Press.

Hagan, J., MacMillan, R., & Wheaton, B. (1996). New kid in town: Social capital and the life course effects of migration of children. American Sociological Review, 62, 368-385.

Hammond, P.E. (1983). In search of a Protestant twentieth century: American religion and power since 1900. Review of Religious Research, 24, 281-293.

Hall, P.D. (April, 1997a). The emerging context of service delivery. Paper presented at Civil Roles of Local Religious Organizations Wingspread Conference, Racine, Wisconsin.

Hall, P. D. (March, 1997b). Apples and oranges: Organizational dilemmas in assessing the place or religion in the organizational universe. Presented at the Independent Sector Spring Research Forum. Alexandria, Virginia.

Hall, P.D. (1994). Religion and the origin of voluntary associations in the United States. PONPO Working paper No. 213. Institution for Social and Policy Studies. Yale University.

Hall, P.D. (1990). The history of religious philanthropy in America. In R. Wuthnow, V.A. Hodgkinson, and Associates. (1990). Faith and philanthropy in America: Exploring the role of religion in America's voluntary sector. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass Publishers.

Hall-Russell, C., & Kasberg, R.H. (1996). African American traditions of giving and serving: A Midwest perspective. Indianapolis, Indiana: Indiana University Center on Philanthropy.

Harding, V. (1992). Churchz N the hood: The shape of urban ministry toward the 21st century. Christianity and Crisis, 52,379-381.

Harris, M. (1994). Quiet care: Welfare work and religious congregations. Journal of Social Policy, 24(1), 53-71.

Heying, C.H., (1997). Civic elites and corporate delocalization: An alternative explanation for declining civic engagement. American Behavioral Scientist, 40, 657-668.

Hinson, E.G. (1988). The historical involvement of the church in social ministries and social action. Review and Expositor, 84, 233-242.

Hodgkinson, V.A., Weitzman, M.S., Kirsch, A.D., Noga, S.M., & Gorski, H.A. (1992). From Belief to Commitment: The Community Service Activities and Finances of Religious Congregations in the United States. (1993 Edition). Washington, DC: Independent Sector.

Hodgkinson, V.A., Weitzman, M.S., Abrahams, J.A., Crutchfield, E.A., & Stevenson, D.R. (1996a). Nonprofit Almanac 1996-1997: Dimensions of the Independent Sector. (5th ed.). San Francisco: Jossey-Bass Publishers.

Hodgkinson, V.A., Weitzman, M.S., Crutchfield, E.A., Heffron, A.J., & Kirsch, A.D. (1996b). Giving and volunteering in the United States. (1996 Edition). Washington, DC: Independent Sector.

Hoge, D.R. (1994). Introduction: The problem of understanding church giving. Review of Religious Research, 36, 101-110.

Hoge, D.R., & Roozen, D.A. (1979). Research on factors influencing church commitment. In Hoge & Roozen. Understanding church growth and decline: 1950-1978. New York: The Pilgrim Press.

Hoge, D.R., & Roozen, D.A. (1979) Understanding church growth and decline: 1950-1978. New York: The Pilgrim Press.

Hoge, D.R., Zech, C., McNamara, P., & Donahue, M.J. (1996). Money matters: Personal giving in American churches. Louisville, Kentucky: Westminster John Knox Press.

Hoge, D.R., & Yang, F. (1994). Determinants of religious giving in American denominations: Data from two nationwide surveys. Review of Religious Research, 36, 123-148.

Homans, G.C. (1958). Social behavior as exchange. American Journal of Sociology, 63: 597-606.

Howard, D.S. (April 2, 1959). Letter to the director of the Department of Social Welfare of the National Council of the Churches of Christ in the U.S.A. In Coughlin, B.J. (1965). Church and state in social welfare. New York: Columbia University Press. (23).

Huffington, A. (1997). A damning moment. U.S. News and World Report, 122(19), 30.

Hughes, J. (June 18, 1997). Churches call on state to aid in social welfare. Lansing State Journal. Sec. B. p.3. col.4.

Jackson, M.C., Schweitzer, J.H., Cato, M.T., and Blake, R.N. (1997). Faith-based institutions' community and economic development programs service Black communities in Michigan. E. Lansing, MI: Michigan State University Urban Affairs Program.

Jacquet, C.H. (Ed.). (1973). Effects of inflation on per capita giving. Yearbook of American and Canadian Churches (1973). Nashville: Abington Press.

Jacquet, C.H., & Jones, A.M. (Eds.). (1991). Effects of inflation on per capita giving. Yearbook of American and Canadian Churches (1991). Nashville: Abington Press.

Jeavons, T.H. (1994). Stewardship revisited: Secular and sacred views of governance and management. Nonprofit and voluntary sector quarterly, 23, 107-122.

Jeavons, T.H. (1993). Identifying characteristics of 'religious' organizations. PONPO Working paper No. 197. Institution for Social and Policy Studies. Yale University.

Jenks, C. (1987). Who gives to what? In Powell, W. (Ed.). The Nonprofit Sector. New Haven: Yale University Press.

Johnson, A. (1948). The respective roles of governmental and voluntarily supported social work. Social service review, XXII, 298-311.

Johnson, F.E. (1956). Religion and social work. New York: Harper and Brothers.

Johnson, F.E. (1930). The social work of the churches. New York: Federal Council of the Churches of Christ in America.

Johnson, F.E., Butler, E.B., Cary, C.P., and Morrison, R. (1956). State aid for religious social work. In F.E. Johnson (1956). Religion and social work. New York: Harper and Brothers.

Johnson, O.S. (1980). The social welfare role of the Black church. Dissertation. Brandeis University, the Florence Heller Graduate School for Advanced Studies in Social Welfare.

Jones, T.K. (1991). Agenda for recession. Christianity Today, 35, 22.

Judson, E. (1907). The church in its social aspects. The Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science, XXX, 429-440.

Keith-Lucas, A. (1962). The church and social welfare. Philadelphia: The Westminster Press.

Kenworthy, L. (1997). Civic engagement, social capital, and economic cooperation. American Behavioral Scientist, 40, 645-656.

Kerby, W.J. (1907). Social work of the Catholic church in America. The Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science, XXX, 473-482.

Landesman, A.F. (1956). Jewish social work today. In F.E Johnson. Religion and social work. New York: Harper and Brothers.

Lansing State Journal. (September 21, 1997). Measuring Lansing schools. Lansing State Journal. 9A.

Lawton, K.A. (1991). Churches enlist in drug war. Christianity Today, 35, 44-46.

Leonard, B.J. (1988). The modern church and social action. Review and Expositor, 85, 243-254.

Leonard, B.J. (1978). Church and culture: A moral dilemma. Review and Expositor, 73, 141-147.

Lemann, N. (1996). Kicking in groups. The Atlantic Monthly, 277, 22-26.
Levi, M. (1996). Social and unsocial capital: A review essay of Robert Putnam's Making Democracy Work. Politics & Society, 24, 45-55.

Little, D. (1983). Response to D.H. Smith's paper on contemporary voluntary action research. Review of Religious Research, 24, 305-307.

Loewenberg, F.M. (1988). Religion and social work practice: Practice in contemporary American society. New York: Columbia University Press.

Mangold, G.B. (1907). The church and philanthropy. The Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science, XXX, 522-538.

Manthey, B.J. (1989). Social work, religion and the church: Policy implications. Dissertation. The University of Texas at Austin.

Mares, A.S. (1994). Housing and the church. Nonprofit and voluntary sector quarterly, 23, 139-157.

Marty, M. (1979). Foreword. In D.R. Hoge and D.A. Roozen. Understanding church growth and decline: 1950-1978. New York: The Pilgrim Press.

Marty, M. (1980). Social service: Godly and Godless. Social Service Review, 54, 463-481.

Miller, K. (1997). A church for the twenty-first century. Life, April, 42-55.

Minkoff, D.C. (1997). Producing social capital: National social movements and civil society. American Behavioral Scientist, 40, 606-619.

Moberg, D.O. (1983). Compartmentalization and parochialism in religious and voluntary action research. Review of Religious Research, 24, 318-321.

Morris, O.D. (1983). A research director's perspective on the issue of neglect of churches in voluntary action research. Review of Religious Research, 24, 308-311.

Morris, R. (1986). Rethinking social welfare: Why care for the stranger? New York: Longman.

Nelson, (1983). The local church as a resource for persons with mental retardation living in the community: A study of emerging roles and service patterns. Dissertation. Brandeis University.

Nelson, L.D. (1976). The impact of devotionalism and attendance on ordinary and emergency helping behavior. Journal for the Scientific Study of Religion, 15, 47-59.

Netting, F.E. (1982). Secular and religious funding of church-related agencies. Social Service Review, 58, 404-420.

Newton, K. (1997). Social capital and democracy. American Behavioral Scientist, 40, 575-586.

Norris, P. (1996). Does television erode social capital? A reply to Putnam. PS: Political Science & Politics, 29, 474-479.

O,Grady, J. (1956). Catholic charities in the US - Background and present outlook. In F.E. Johnson. (1956). Religion and social work. New York: Harper and Brothers.

Olsen, L.M., Reis, J., Murphy, L., & Gehm, J.H. (1988). The religious community as a partner in health care. Journal of Community Health, 13, 249-257.

Olson, D., & V.A., Caddell, D. (1994). Generous congregations, generous givers: Congregational contexts that stimulate individual giving. Review of Religious Research, 36, 168-180.

Pepper, A. R. (1956). Protestant social work today. In F.E. Johnson (1956). Religion and social work. New York: Harper and Brothers.

Pildes, R.H. (1996). The destruction of social capital. University of Pennsylvania Law Review, 144, 2055-2077.

Portney, K.E., & Berry, J..M. (1997). Mobilizing minority communities: Social capital and participation in urban neighborhoods. American Behavioral Scientist, 40, 632-644.

Putnam, R.D. (1993). Making democracy work: Civic traditions in modern Italy. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press.

Putnam, R.D. (1995a). Bowling alone. Journal of Democracy, 6, 65-78.

Putnam, R.D. (1995b). Tuning in, tuning out: The strange disappearance of social capital in America. PS: Political Science and Politics, 28, 664-683.

Quigley, K.F.F. (1993). Human bonds and social capital. Orbis, 40, 333-341.

Reece, W.S. (1979). Charitable contributions: New evidence on household behavior. The American Economic Review, 69, 142-151.

Richmond Garland, D.S. (1994). Church agencies: Caring for children and families in crisis. United States of American: Child Welfare League of America.

Ronsvalle, J., & Ronsvalle, S. (1996). Behind the stained glass windows: Money dynamics and the church. Grand Rapids, Michigan: Baker Book House.

Roof, W.C. (1978). Community and commitment: Religious plausibility in a liberal Protestant church. New York: Elsevier.

Roof, W.C., & McKinney, W. (1987). American mainline religion: Its changing shape and future. New Brunswick: Rutgers University Press.

Roozen, D.A., & Carroll, J.W. (1979). Recent trends in church membership and participation. In Hoge and Roozen. Understanding church growth and decline: 1950-1978. New York: The Pilgrim Press.

Roozen, D.A., McKinney, W., & Carroll, J (1984). Varieties of religious presence: Mission in public life. New York: Pilgrim Press. In R.J. Wineburg (1994). A longitudinal case study of religious congregations in local human services. Nonprofit and voluntary sector quarterly, 23, 159-169.

Rose, C. (1996). Propter honoris respectum: Property as the keystone right? Notre Dame Law Review, 71, 142-44. In Putnam, R.D. (1995b). Tuning in, tuning out: The strange disappearance of social capital in America. PS: Political Science and Politics, 28, 664-683.

Rosen, H.S. (1995). Public Finance. (4th ed.). Chicago: Irwin.

Rudney, G. (1987). The scope and dimensions of nonprofit activity. In W.W. Powell (Ed.). The nonprofit sector: A research handbook (pp. 55-64). New Haven: Yale University Press.

Salamon, L.M. (1987). Partners in public service: The scope and theory of government-nonprofit relations. In W.W. Powell (Ed.). The nonprofit sector: A research handbook (pp. 95-117). New Haven: Yale University Press.

Sampson, R.J. (1988). Local friendship ties and community attachment in mass society: A multilevel systemic model. American Sociological Review, 53, 766-779.

Schneider, A. & Ingram, H. (1993). Social construction of target populations: Implications for politics and policy. American Political Science Review, 87, 334-347.

Sheridan, M.J., Bullis, R.K., Adcock, C.R., Berlin, S.D., & Miller, P.C. (1992). Practitioners' personal and professional attitudes toward religion and spirituality: Issues for education and practice. Journal of Social Work Education, 28, 190-203.

Sheridan, M.J., Wilmer, C.M., & Atcheson, L. (1994) Inclusion of content on religion and spirituality in the social work curriculum: A study of faculty views. Journal of Social Work Education, 30, 363-376.

Sherman, A. L. (1995). Cross purposes: Will conservative welfare reform corrupt religious charities? Policy Review, 7, 58.

Simkhovitch, M.K. (1907). The settlement's relation to religion. The Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science, XXX, 490-495.

Smith, D.H. (1983). Churches are generally ignored in contemporary voluntary action research: Causes and results. Review of Religious Research, 24, 295-303.

South, K. (1992). Churches and AIDS: Problem and solution. Christianity and Crisis, 52, 297-298.

Specht, H. (1986). Social support, social networks, social exchange, and social work practice. Social Service Review, 60, 218-240.

Steinberg, R. (1996). Can individual donations replace cutbacks in federal social-welfare spending? In Burlingame, D.F., Diaz, W.A., Ilchman, W.F., & Associates. Capacity for Change? The Nonprofit World in the Age of Devolution. Indianapolis: Indiana University Center on Philanthropy.

Staral, J.M. (1995). Signs of hope and struggle: Action research in a racially-mixed central city church. Dissertation. The University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee.

Stelzle, C. (1907). Presbyterian department of church and labor. The Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science, XXX, 456-460.

Stump, R.W. (1984). Regional divergence in religious affiliation in the United States. Sociological analysis, 45, 283-299.

Stump, R.W. (1986). Regional variations in the determinants of religious participation. Review of Religious Research, 27, 208-225.

Sullivan, D.H. (1985). Simultaneous determination of church contributions and church attendance. Economic Inquiry, 26, 309-320.

Thomas, S.B., Quinn, S.C., Billingsley, A., & Caldwell, C. (1994). The characteristics of northern black churches with community health outreach programs. American Journal of Public Health, 84, 575-579.

Tomlinson, M.E., & Wilson, M.I. (1997). Helping others: A profile of Michigan volunteers. Briefing paper N. 97-22. E. Lansing, MI: Michigan State University, Institute for Public Policy & Social Research.

Truehart, C. (1996). Welcome to the next church. The Atlantic Monthly, 278 (August), 37-58.

Turner, N. (1995). Bridging the gap: Addressing alcohol and drug addiction from a community health perspective. American Journal of Public Health, 85, 870-872.

Turner, S. (1995). Putting faith in religion and medicine. Hospital and Health Networks, 69, 22-23.

Uehara, E. (1990). Dual exchange, social networks, and informal social support. American Journal of Sociology, 96, 521-554.

United Methodist Church (1989). United Methodist Hymnal. United States of America: The United Methodist Publishing House.

United Methodist Church. (1996). United Methodist Church structure: statistics. 1996 United Methodist General Conference Web page.

United Methodist Church. (1996). The book of resolutions of The United Methodist Church. Nashville, Tennessee: The United Methodist Publishing House.

Vilanskulu, S.J. (1990). Churches uniting against drugs. The Christian Century, 107, 1052-1053.

Ward, H.F. (1915). Poverty and wealth. New York: The Methodist Book Concern.

West Michigan Annual Conference. (1996). Minutes of the West Michigan Annual Conference of the United Methodist Church. 28th Session. Volume 44. No. 1-B.

Weisbrod, B.A. (1988). The nonprofit economy. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.

Weiss, D.A. (1996). Towards a theory on the formation of social capital. Dissertation. University of Minnesota.

Whitlock, M. (April, 1997). Opening comments at Civic Roles of Local Religious Organizations Wingspread Conference, Racine, Wisconsin.

Wilson, J.Q. (1993). In loco parentis: Helping children when families fail them. The Brookings Review, 11(4), 12-15.

Wilson, M. (Ed.). (1995). The state of nonprofit Michigan 1994. E. Lansing, Michigan: Michigan State University.

Wilson, J., & Janoski, T. (1995). The contribution of religion to volunteer work. Sociology of Religion, 56, 137-152.

Wineburg, R.J. (1994). A longitudinal case study of religious congregations in local human services. Nonprofit and Voluntary Sector Quarterly, 23, 159-169.

Wineburg, R.J. (1996). An investigation of religious support of public and private agencies in one community in an era of retrenchment. Journal of Community Practice, 3(2), 35-55.

Wineburg, R.J. (April, 1997). What can faith-based organizations do? Not do? Paper presented at Civil Roles of Local Religious Organizations Wingspread Conference, Racine, Wisconsin.

Wolff, E.N. (1995). Top heavy: A study of the increasing inequality of wealth in America. New York: The Twentieth Century Fund Press. In V.A. Hodgkinson, M.S. Weitzman, J.A. Abrahams, E.A., Crutchfield, and D.R. Stevenson (1996). Nonprofit Almanac 1996-1997: Dimensions of the Independent Sector. (5th Edition). San Francisco: Jossey-Bass Publishers.

Wolpert, J. (1993). Patterns of generosity in America: Who's holding the safety net? New York: The Twentieth Century Fund Press.

Wood, R. L. (1997). Social capital and political culture: God meets politics in the inner city. American Behavioral Scientist, 40, 595-605.

Wood, J.R., & Bloch, J.P. (1995). The role of church assemblies in building a civil society: The case of the United Methodist General Conference's debate on homosexuality. Sociology of Religion, 56(2), 121-136.

Wright, R.R., (1907). Social work and influence on the Negro church. The Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science, XXX, 509-521.

Wuthnow, R. (1991). Acts of compassion. Princeton, New Jersey: Princeton University Press.

Wuthnow, R., Hodgkinson, V.A., & Associates. (1990). Faith and philanthropy in America: Exploring the role of religion in America's voluntary sector. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass Publishers.

Yates, M., & Youniss, J. (1996). Community service and political-moral identity in adolescents. Journal of research on adolescence, 6, 271-284.

Youniss, J., McLellan, J.A., & Yates, M. (1997). What we know about engendering civic identity. American Behavioral Scientist, 40, 620-631.

Zaleski, P.A., & Zech, C.E. (1994). Economic and attitudinal factors in Catholic and Protestant religious giving. Review of Religious Research, 36, 158-167.

Zaleski, P.A., & Zech, C.E. (1992). Determinants of contributions to religious organizations: Free riding and other factors. <u>American Journal of Economics and Sociology, 51</u>, 459-472.