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The Rural Church in Missouri

MELVIN W. SNEED AND DOUGLAS ENSMINGER

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ABSTRACT

This is the report of a quantitative study of the rural church in Missouri. Data from 3,000 rural churches are used to show the general status of the church. Graphic method has been used freely in presentation. The rural area is divided into seven classifications on the basis of population. These divisions range from the open country up to places having 1,500-2,500 population. The emphasis of the study is on the comparison of church status when classified according to population. Thus church size, frequency of services, attendance, ministerial tenure, and other factors pertaining to status are presented for each of the population divisions as well as for the rural area as a whole. The rural church is pictured, in general, as being small which in turn makes for infrequent services, low-salaried pastors and various contingent difficulties. A villageward trend in membership is noted which seems to have been intensified by the recent financial emergency. Indications of rural attitude toward the community church are presented and the study concludes with a general summary of statistical information.

ACKNOWLEDGMENT

Appreciation is extended to Hon. Wallace Crossley, Director of the Missouri Relief and Reconstruction Commission, for authorization to publish the accompanying materials, to Dr. Carl Agee, Dean of the Missouri Bible College, for assistance in the preparation of the original schedules and for final critical reading, and to Dr. E. L. Morgan for counsel and direction in the preparation of the manuscript.

The Rural Church in Missouri*

MELVIN W. SNEED AND DOUGLAS ENSMINGER

PRELIMINARY STATEMENT

Purpose.—The purpose of this study is to ascertain some of the conditions and circumstances surrounding the church of the small town and open country in Missouri, particularly with reference to possible trends in its present development.

It is intended to provide a source of information for the use of community leaders especially those who are particularly interested in the development of the rural church. It may also serve as a means of information to those who are less aware of the relatively wide-spread existence of certain rural church problems.

Scope.—The inquiry was extended to a sample of some three thousand white protestant churches¹ well distributed over the state in all counties except Butler, Ste. Genevieve, Jackson, and St. Louis. The sample included from 15 to 40 churches per county.

The physical equipment of the church, its membership, its services, its finances, and its leadership are the major divisions of the study.

The data are interpreted in a quantitative manner. No attempt has been made to offer solutions to a number of problems which appear.

Procedure.—The study was a part of a Civil Works Service Project on social resources and services in the state which was authorized by the Missouri Relief and Reconstruction Commission in the spring of 1934.

With a state director in charge the data were gathered by one college graduate in each county who was eligible for Civil Works Service.

As far as was possible these county interviewers were assembled in groups for instruction in order that there might be uniformity in procedure. Where this was impossible instructions were given by mail.

Questionnaires concerning the church were furnished by the county interviewers to ministers or other church officials. Where these officials were not available the data were secured from well informed members of the congregation.

All reference to names, denominations and places has been omitted since the study pertains to the rural church without regard to denomination, leadership or locality.

*The materials upon which this publication is based were gathered as part of a Federal Civil Works Service Project, which was planned by E. L. Morgan, Professor of Rural Sociology. The gathering of the data was in charge of Mr. Douglas Ensminger, a graduate student in this University, and a staff of county interviewers. The classification, tabulation, interpretation, and graphic presentation were made by Mr. Melvin W. Snead, graduate assistant in the Department of Rural Sociology.

¹Since the factors here considered do not appear common to churches of all denominations, the inquiry was limited to white protestant churches.

Definition of Terms.—The use of the term "class" refers to a division of the rural population² for purposes of comparison and analysis, into seven classifications:

- Class I—The open country
- Class II—Places up to 200 population
- Class III—Places having 200- 400 population
- Class IV—Places having 400- 600 population
- Class V—Places having 600-1,000 population
- Class VI—Places having 1,000-1,500 population
- Class VII—Places having 1,500-2,500 population

These population divisions are referred to throughout the presentation and in most cases, for the sake of brevity, they have been alluded to as: Class I, Class VII, etc. For this reason it will be well for the reader to bear in mind the population of these divisions.

When it is said that membership (for example) increased as population increased or as density of population increased, it is inferred that the population divisions be negotiated upward, that is, from places having a given population to places having a greater population. Averages and various other computations have been made in most instances for each of the population divisions as well as for the total rural area.

When reference is made to the total rural area it should be construed to mean all of the churches in the rural area without regard to the seven population divisions. Other definitions deemed necessary have been made as the occasion arose. An appendix has been included for those who are unfamiliar with elementary statistics³ which provides an explanation of terms that have been used during the course of the presentation.

I.—MEMBERSHIP

The Size of the Rural Church.—Membership data were reported from 2,590 churches in the total rural area. These include the total number of members on church rolls. Due to the inadequacy of church records, in many instances, only an approximation of the membership was obtained. As a consequence of this the data do not provide information on the extent of active membership.⁴ This fact should be borne in mind when consideration is given the average memberships presented below. They include all members whether active, inactive, or non-resident.

²U. S. Census classification (less than 2,500 population).

³See page 71.

⁴For churches in 21 counties in the U. S. (1930) 18.9 per cent of the members were inactive and 13.2 per cent were non-resident but still retained active membership. (Brunner, E. DeS. and Kolb, J. H., *Rural Social Trends*, McGraw-Hill Book Company, 1933, p. 219).

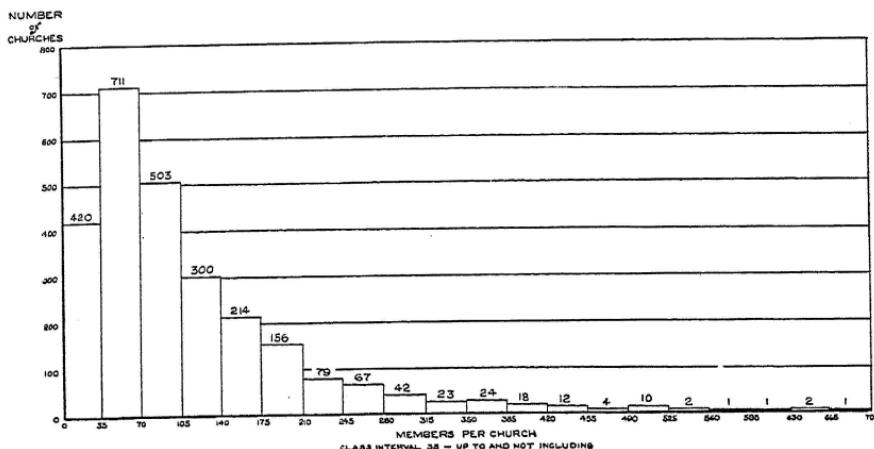


Fig. 1.—Distribution of Churches According to Size.

An aggregate membership of 275,480 persons was reported from these 2,590 rural churches; the memberships are presented in a frequency distribution⁵ (Fig. 1). The arithmetic average⁶ of the memberships for the total rural area was 107.12 members⁷, the median⁸ 81.41 members and the mode⁹ 54.07 members. The arithmetic average in this instance is increased by the presence of relatively a few extreme observations; therefore, the median and mode are more typical representatives of the average membership of the rural church in Missouri. The modal group¹⁰ contains 711 of the 2,590 memberships reported. The memberships ranged from 3 to 697 members with one-fourth of the total number of observations occurring below the first quartile¹¹ (46.20 members) and with one-fourth of the observations falling above the third quartile (141.39 members).

Upon division of the rural area into seven population classifications¹² the average church membership for Class I (the open country) was 81.42 members in contrast to an average of 199.74 members that characterized the churches in Class VII of the rural population divisions. Class II churches displayed the smallest average membership (77.47 members) while the average number of members per church in Class III increased to 90.88. Likewise the average membership for churches in Class IV was

⁵Appendix, page 71. ⁶Appendix, page 72.

⁷In Virginia, 1926, the rural white church had an average membership of 109 while in 18 counties there was an average of 75 or less and in 39 counties there was an average membership of 100 or less—Hamilton and Garnett, *The Role of the Church in Rural Community Life in Virginia*, Bulletin 267, Agricultural Experiment Station, 1929, p. 30.

⁸Appendix, page 72. ⁹Appendix, page 72. ¹⁰Appendix, page 72. ¹¹Appendix, page 73.

¹²Page 6.

119.50. Class V churches averaged 150.83 members and Class VI churches afforded a still larger average of 156.22 members.¹³

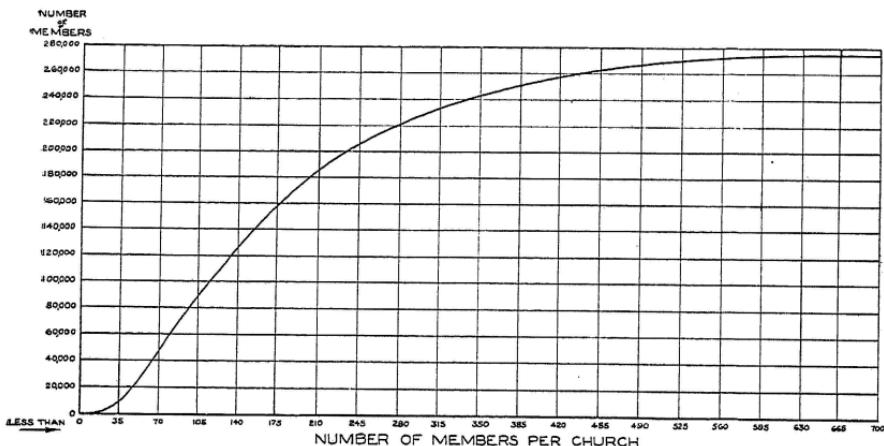


Fig. 2.—Distribution of Church Members on the Basis of Church Size.

A distribution of the total number of members reported is presented in a cumulative frequency curve¹⁴ (Fig. 2). The total frequency of 275,480 members is represented by the highest point on the curve. Thus when churches having a membership up to approximately 155 members have been included in the cumulative frequency approximately one half of the total number of members reported have been accounted for. After the curve has accumulated the memberships of all the churches having no more than 210 members it gradually tapers off.

It is perhaps significant to note that in Class I of the rural divisions 20.88 per cent of the churches had less than 35 members, 54.47 per cent had less than 70 members while only 1.13 per cent had more than 350 members. In Class VII 19.21 per cent of the churches were larger than 350 members, 23.65 per cent had less than 70 members and 5.91 per cent had less than 35 members.

The distribution of church memberships is further shown by Fig. 3, which denotes the percentage of the total number of members reported that were accounted for by churches of a given size. Also, the percentage of the total number of churches reported that were characterized by a given number of members is shown. Thus 16.22 per cent of the total number of churches that were reported from the total area had less than 35 members but these same churches accounted for only 3.40 per cent of the total number of members reported. Then as the size of the church increases this relationship tends to reverse itself. The significant feature

¹³Data from 179 counties in the U. S. showed an average of 194 members in "town churches", 108 members in "village churches" and 72 members in "country churches" (Morse, H. N., and Brunner, E. De.S., The Town and Country Church in the U. S., George H. Doran Company, 1923, p. 57).

¹⁴Appendix, page 71.

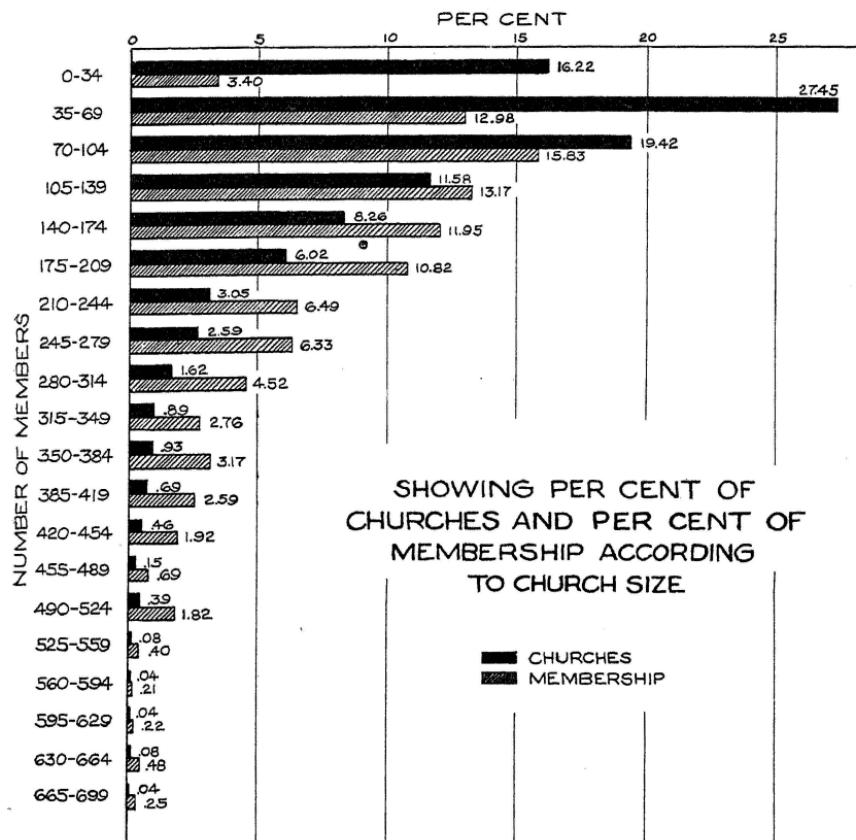


Fig. 3.—Percentage of Churches and Percentage of Membership According to Church Size.

of the distribution is the indication that 43.67 per cent of the churches had less than 70 members and 63.09 per cent had less than 105 members.

This seems to indicate a surprisingly large number of small churches, many of which would appear still smaller if only active memberships had been included in the data. The larger portion of small churches were reported from Class I and Class II of the population divisions, these two divisions accounted for 64.36 per cent of the churches that had less than 70 members.

Composition of Rural Church Membership.—During the course of the study information pertaining to the general composition of the church membership was sought. Again, inadequacy of church records created a condition that proved to be of no small consequence in securing dependable data. It was with difficulty that information was obtained on the

total membership and in most instances not even an estimate could be secured pertaining to the distribution of membership by sex.

In view of the small sample of apparently accurate information that was received regarding the composition of church memberships by sex it appears that about 43 per cent of the membership is male and that the male membership has increased slightly in proportion to female membership during the period 1920 to 1934. Likewise adequate information was not obtained that would provide a reliable estimate of the age of church members but it may be noted that from the reports received it was indicated that about 90 per cent of the membership was over 13 years of age. Thus approximately 10 per cent of the membership is composed of children under 13 years of age. The business occupations of rural church members were typical of the rural area with farming and small business enterprises being predominant.

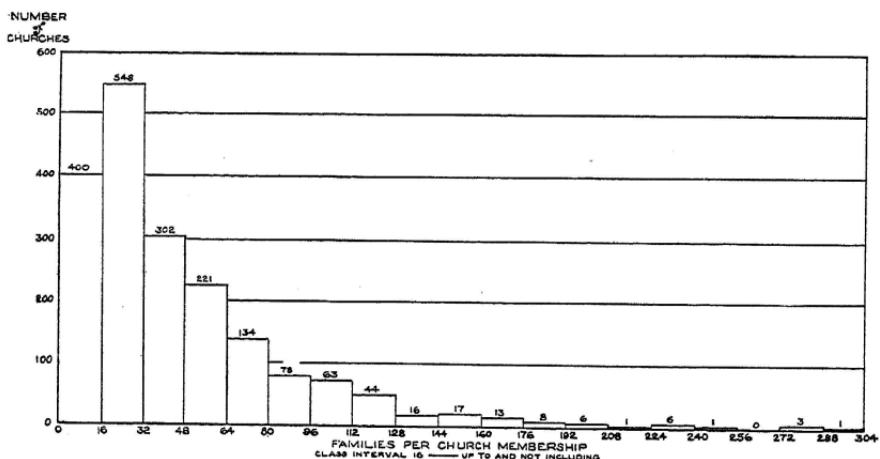


Fig. 4.—Distribution of Families Represented in Church Membership.

The Number of Families Represented in Rural Church Membership.

—Reports on the number of families represented in the church membership were received from 1,862 churches. A frequency distribution of the families reported is presented in Fig. 4. The arithmetic average for the total rural area was 43.82 families per church, the median, 31.50 families and the mode, 22.88 families. The number of families per church membership ranged from two to 293 families with one-fourth of the memberships having fewer than 17.91 families while one-fourth had more than 58.61 families. Within the seven population classes the number of families per church changes as population and the size of church membership changes. Class VII shows an average of 88.69 families per church while Class II, with an average of 30.69 families, had the smallest family representation. The averages for the other rural classes were: Class I,

32.72 families; Class III, 40.39 families; Class IV, 46.88 families; Class V, 64.15 families; and Class VI, 62.60 families.

For the total rural area, the average size church family consists of 2.39 persons. For the population divisions Class VII had the smallest average with 2.24 persons while Class IV displayed the largest with 2.55 persons. Class I church families averaged 2.49 persons; Class II, 2.52 persons; Class III, 2.25 persons; Class V, 2.35 persons, and Class VI, 2.49 persons. It is significant that there is little difference between these averages as population changes. This instance may be, in part at least, accounted for by the absence of an appreciable number of young people from church memberships.

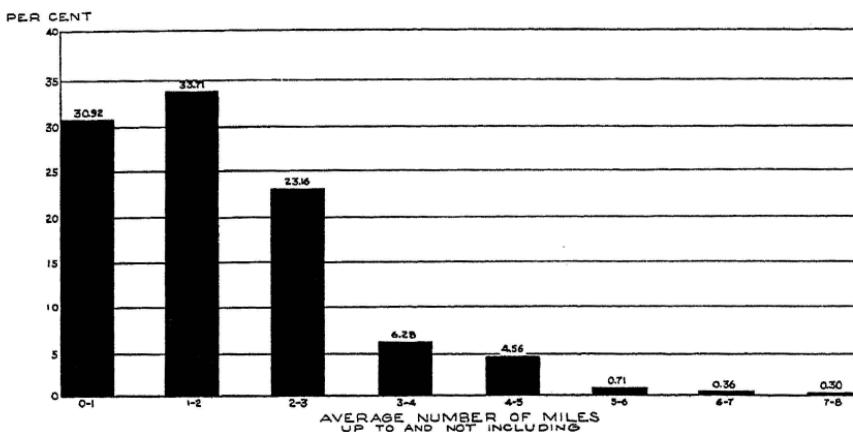


Fig. 5.—Percentage of Churches Reporting Average Distance of Membership from Church.

The Average Distance from Home to Church.—The average distance that separates the rural church member's home from the church was reported by 1,688 churches. The distances ranged from one-eighth mile to 8 miles. Figure 5 shows the percentage of churches that reported a given average distance. The largest percentage (33.71 per cent) of the churches reported an average distance of over one mile up to and including two miles. Of the 1,688 churches reporting 23.16 per cent gave an average of two miles while 30.92 per cent reported that their members resided, on the average, a distance no greater than one mile from the church. As an additional rough measure of the distances rural church members travel in order to attend services in their churches, averages of the distances reported are included. The average¹⁵ for the total rural area was 2.08 miles. It should be noted in this instance that such a value is actually an average of averages. It is not an average taken from a compilation of the distances that individual church mem-

¹⁵Simple ungrouped average.

bers reside from their churches but it is an average of the average distances as reported from the various churches. In like manner the averages for the seven population divisions are as follows: Churches in Class I averaged 2.44 miles; Class II churches averaged 2.27 miles; Class III, 1.95 miles; Class IV, 1.72 miles; Class V, 1.46 miles; Class VI, 1.55 miles; and Class VII, 1.50 miles.

Granting that the averages presented above are only approximate measures¹⁶ of the distance from home to church the conclusion that for the most part there is an over-abundance of rural churches, particularly in Class I, appears to be warranted. For the total rural area 64.63 per cent of the churches reported that on the average their members lived no more than two miles from church while 87.80 per cent reported an average distance not exceeding three miles. In Class I (the open country) 54.30 per cent of the churches denoted an average no greater than two miles and church members residing in Class II lived no more distant than an average of two miles in 61.25 per cent of the churches. There was little difference between the population divisions in the percentage of churches that reported an average distance of no more than three miles. There was 84.54 per cent reported under this distance in Class I, 86.72 per cent in Class II and 89.58 per cent in Class VII.

Recent Trends in Rural Church Membership.—Membership data for the years 1920, 1929, and 1934 were received from 1,035 churches. Since many of the churches afforded no adequate system of records the memberships in many cases were arrived at by estimation. Approximately one-half of the churches that provided information for each of the three years had some record upon which the memberships reported were based. The remaining memberships were estimated by those reporting where they were familiar with the church in question or the estimate was obtained from a church official or some member of the congregation. The particular years for which membership data were requested were intended not only to provide some indication of the general change in rural church membership but also to show something of the effect that the present "depression" may have had on the status of rural church membership. Therefore the memberships reported for 1929 were considered as representative of the church membership before the "depression" and the reports for the year 1934 were considered as representative of the church membership status after four years of "depression".

For the total area the average¹⁷ membership of the rural church increased from 111.56 members in 1920 to an average of 113.05 members in 1929. In 1934 the average membership had increased to 117.66

¹⁶An average distance of 2.6 miles from home to church was found for the central division of the U. S. by Florence E. Ward (*The Farm Woman's Problems*, U. S. Dept. of Agriculture Circular 148, 1920).

¹⁷Simple ungrouped average.

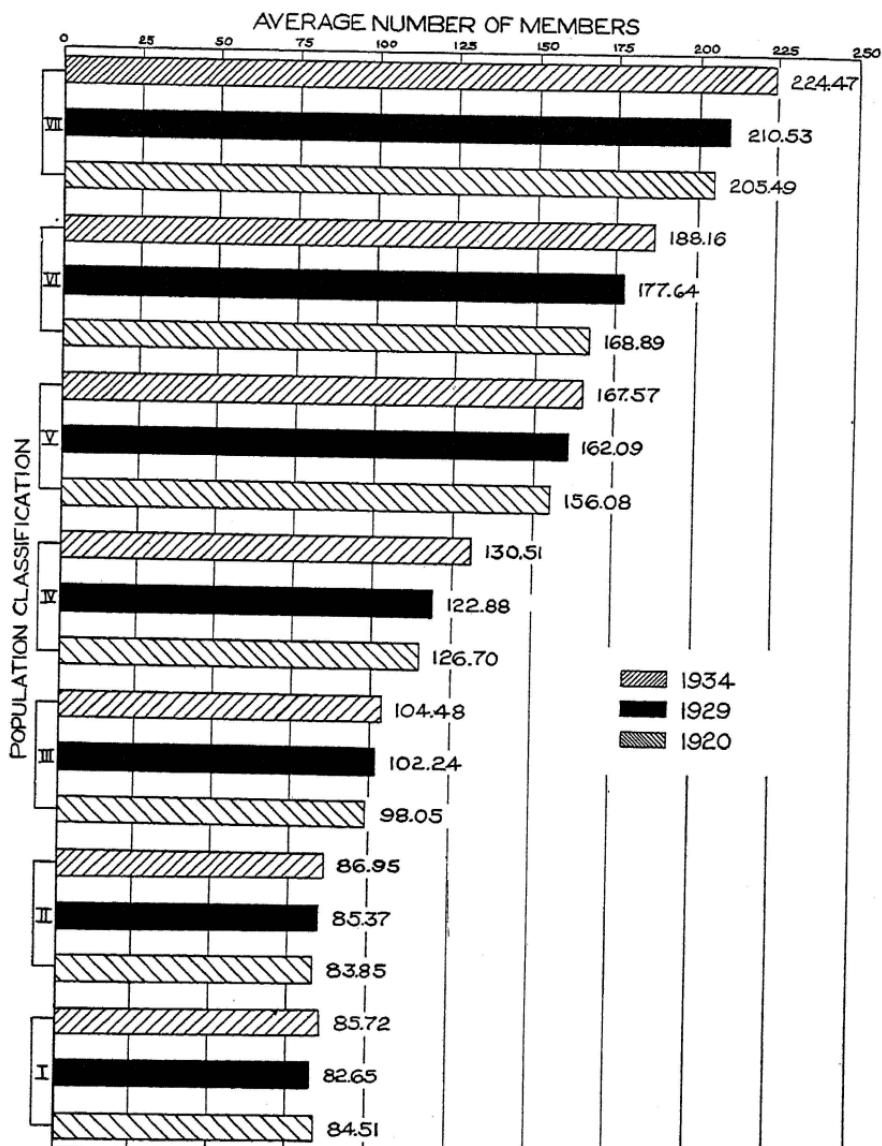
members. It must be pointed out in this instance that this latter average is not comparable to the average of 107.11 members per church that was presented above as the arithmetic average of church memberships. The average rural church membership of 107.11 members was derived from the reports received from 2,590 churches while the average of 117.66 members was obtained from only those churches that offered information for each of the three years denoted above. For the most part the churches that provided all the desired information were more stable and had larger memberships, therefore the average membership exceeded the previous average. The averages used in this instance are presented for the sake of comparison and are not intended to be construed as representatives of the typical church membership.

Likewise for comparison the average church membership for the years 1920, 1929, and 1934 are presented for the churches within the seven divisions of the rural population (Fig. 6). Each of the rural divisions evidenced an increase in average membership for 1934 over that in 1920 and with the exception of churches in Class I and Class IV an increase in the average membership for 1929 over 1920 was evidenced.¹⁸ Appreciable gain in average membership was not shown by churches in the four less populous rural divisions but in Class V, continuing through Class VII, substantial increase was shown. The average membership of churches in Class I remained about the same for both periods with an increase of only 1.21 members in 1934 over 1920. Likewise an increase of only 3.10 members was shown in the average membership of churches in Class II. Average membership showed the greatest increase in Classes VI and VII with increases of 19.27 members and 18.98 members respectively. This increase for churches in the larger population divisions seems to indicate for the most part a villageward trend on the part of church members from the more sparsely settled divisions. In some instances the average membership has been enhanced due to more intensive evangelistic activities within the area served. It is pointed out in this connection that the population of rural incorporated places in Missouri having a population of 1,000-2,500 (Comprising Classes VI and VII) decreased 3.1 per cent for the decennial census period ending in 1930.¹⁹ Inasmuch as the major portion of places of this size from which churches were reported were incorporated the fact of a villageward trend in church membership is still more evident. It seems reasonable that no change has occurred since 1930 which would greatly alter the assumption of a villageward trend. The rural-farm population in Missouri decreased 8.2 per cent for the ten-year period²⁰

¹⁸For 21 counties studied in the U. S. (1930) it was found that average membership for white Protestant Churches had increased in 1930 over 1920 in every region. Village churches had increased from 108 to 128 members and country churches had increased from 72 to 77 members (Brunner and Kolb, op. cit., p. 217).

¹⁹U. S. Census, 1930.

²⁰Ibid.



*SIMPLE UNGROUPED AVERAGE
▲MEMBERSHIP AS OF APRIL, 1934

Fig. 6.—Average Number of Members per Church for the Years 1920, 1929 and 1934 Classified on the Basis of Population.

while the average church membership in open-country churches had only increased by 1.21 members in 1934 after a decrease of 1.86 members in 1929. This increase may be accounted for in part by the observation that some churches in this area have been abandoned and some have united with others. Therefore various church memberships which tended

to influence the total average in 1920 do not appear in the 1934 average and some memberships, increased by union with certain other churches, appear in the 1934 average whereas they were absent from the 1920 average. The census report also shows that rural non-farm population as a whole increased 8.5 per cent during the census period, therefore a large part of the church memberships from the population divisions other than Classes I, VI and VII was reported from localities which showed an increase in population—except the incorporated places under 1,000 population. In the same census report it is further shown that these latter places lost 0.9 per cent in population during the period. It appears that the small increase that occurred in the average membership of churches in the intermediate divisions of the rural population classification could be in part, at least, attributed to increases in population. Undoubtedly a portion of the drift in church membership from the open country found its way to parishes of the smaller villages but for the most part it seems that the churches located in places with a population of 1,000-2,500 benefitted the most from this evident tendency.

It may be that this villageward trend of rural church membership has been intensified by the present economic depression. Some evidence with which to uphold this supposition is found in the fact that the average membership of churches in Class VII had only increased 5.04 members in 1929 over the 1920 average while the average for 1934 revealed an increase of 13.94 members per church over that of 1929. Thus an increase is revealed through the latter five years of the period since 1920 that more than doubled the increase shown over the previous ten years. In Class VI the average membership had increased 8.75 members in 1929 over 1920 and the average membership for 1934 was greater by 10.52 members than the average for 1929. This tendency may be evidence of the results of depression—closed churches, again, perhaps it is the voicing of dissatisfaction on the part of some church members who demand more regular services from better equipped churches. It should be recalled that the present "depression" beginning in 1930 was not a new phenomena to the rural area; it only served to intensify the already existing agricultural depression. Each has had its direct effect upon the present status of the rural church.

The percentage change in the total church memberships reported is shown in Fig. 7. The change in 1929 over 1920, in 1934 over 1929, and in 1934 over 1920 is shown for each of the rural population divisions and for the total rural area. The total membership of churches in Class VI increased 5.19 per cent in 1929 over 1920 to account for the largest percentage increase reported from the rural population divisions. During the same period the total membership in Classes I and IV decreased by 2.21 per cent and 3.01 per cent respectively. The apparent

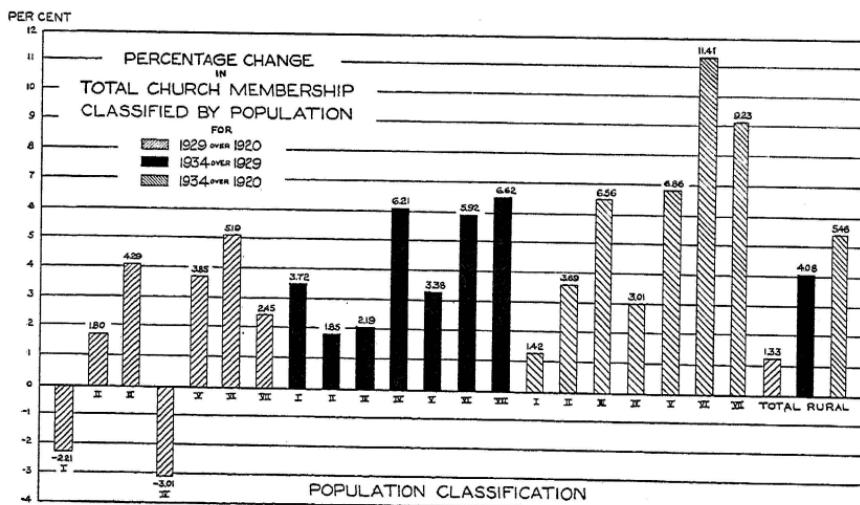


Fig. 7.—Percentage Change in Total Church Membership Classified by Population.

irregularity in the percentage change evidenced in Class IV (that of a 3.01 per cent decline) seems to be largely accounted for by the fact that a few relatively large churches in this division reported comparatively very heavy losses in total membership. In the year 1934, over 1929, these churches regained a large portion of the loss that accrued in the previous interval (1929 over 1920). The largest percentage (6.62 per cent) gain in total membership for the year 1934 over 1929 was shown by churches in Class VII while church membership in Class II evidenced the least gain (1.85 per cent). For the entire period (1934 over 1920) church membership in Class VI showed the largest percentage increase with a gain of 11.41 per cent while the total membership in Class I showed an increase of 1.42 per cent which was the smallest percentage increase. For the total rural area the total membership increased only 1.33 per cent for the period 1929 over 1920.

In 1934, over 1929, the total rural membership increased 4.08 per cent and for the entire period 1934, over 1920, there was an increase of 5.46 per cent. The percentage change should not be confused with change in average church membership. The former is representative of the net change in the total membership of all churches that were reported from the total rural area or from a given rural division. The average membership is a typical value that is offered to represent the membership, on the average, of a single church. Likewise when the percentage change is considered it should be remembered, as previously noted under the above consideration of the average church memberships, that the memberships represented are from those churches that offered

TABLE 1.—TOTAL MEMBERSHIP OF CHURCHES REPORTING FOR 1920, 1929, 1934 CLASSIFIED ACCORDING TO INCREASES AND DECREASES ON THE BASIS OF POPULATION.

Population Classification	Memberships Decreasing in 1929 over 1920			Memberships Increasing in 1929 over 1920			Memberships Decreasing in 1934 over 1920			Memberships Increasing in 1934 over 1920		
	Mem. 1920	Mem. 1929	% Decrease	Mem. 1920	Mem. 1929	% Increase	Mem. 1929	Mem. 1934	% Decrease	Mem. 1929	Mem. 1934	% Increase
I	12,917	9,155	-29.12	11,408	14,585	27.85	9,706	7,353	-24.24	13,403	16,717	24.72
II	8,449	6,675	-21.00	9,731	11,856	21.84	7,929	6,274	-20.87	9,945	11,967	20.33
III	6,569	5,316	-19.07	5,936	7,813	31.62	4,803	3,496	-27.21	7,880	9,523	20.85
IV	7,007	5,492	-21.62	4,947	6,069	22.68	4,109	3,472	-15.50	7,451	8,874	19.10
V	5,900	4,768	-19.19	6,203	7,864	26.78	5,305	4,498	-15.21	7,033	8,322	18.33
VI	4,505	3,761	-16.51	6,627	7,984	20.48	4,833	4,083	-15.58	6,529	8,015	22.76
VII	7,070	6,006	-15.05	8,289	9,751	17.64	5,443	4,755	-12.64	9,904	11,693	18.06
Total Rural	52,417	41,173	-21.45	53,141	65,922	24.05	42,128	33,931	-19.46	62,145	75,111	20.86

information for each of the years 1920, 1929, and 1934. It is nevertheless significant, recognizing an upward bias in the memberships represented, that the total membership did increase. This increase being, for the most part, accounted for by churches in Class VI and VII of the population division.

Thus far only the net changes in total membership have been presented. Obviously some churches were confronted with decreasing memberships while others were characterized by increasing memberships. Table 1 shows the percentage change in total membership for churches that reported decreases in membership and for churches that reported increased memberships. The percentages are given for the years 1929 over 1920 and for 1934 over 1929 with memberships classified on the basis of the population classification.

In 1929 there was a 21.75 per cent decrease in total membership, compared to the membership in 1920, of churches that reported decreases for the total rural area. The largest percentage decrease (29.12 per cent) within the rural area was shown by churches in Class I while the smallest decrease (15.05 per cent) was evidenced by the membership reported from churches in Class VII. For the same year (1929) the churches that increased in membership (over 1920) revealed an increase of 24.05 per cent for the total rural area. Within the rural area membership of churches in Class III showed the greatest increase (31.62 per cent) while the membership in Class VII increased by the smallest per cent (17.64). It will be noted that the total membership for both churches that decreased in membership and those that increased showed a smaller percentage change in Class VII than in any of the other divisions. This is perhaps due to the fact that the average church in Class VII had a larger number of members; therefore, a relatively large change in the total membership is necessary before a very large percentage change is effected. Then it follows that church membership in the more populous rural divisions was in general more stable than the membership in the less populous divisions. That is to say—the larger the membership the less the church stability is likely to be affected by fluctuations in membership.

Turning to the year 1934, in contrast to the year 1929, the largest percentage decrease was accounted for by churches in Class III with a decline of 27.21 per cent while the smallest percentage decline (12.64 per cent) was again shown in Class VII. For the churches that reported increased memberships in 1934 the greatest increase was reported by churches in Class I which afforded an increase of 24.72 per cent. An increase of 18.06 per cent in the church membership of Class VII was again the smallest percentage increase. It is significant that throughout the several population divisions the percentage increase (in the total

membership of churches whose membership increased) was relatively uniform for the year 1934, over 1929. A difference of only 6.66 per cent increase was shown between the smallest and largest percentages reported. The memberships that increased during this latter period were recipients of a portion of the loss from churches whose membership declined. Other itinerant church members (those from the less populous rural divisions) found their way into parishes located in more populous localities. Likewise it should be noted that of the seven divisions only the memberships in Class VI and Class VII showed greater percentage increase in the year 1934 over 1929 than was shown for the year 1926 over 1920. In the remaining five divisions the total memberships that increased did not increase by as great a per cent in 1934 over 1929 as they did in 1929 over 1920. Of the memberships that decreased only the membership in Class III failed to show a smaller percentage decrease in 1934 (the later period). These incidents seem to give further inference of villageward trend with the churches in Class VI and Class VII benefitting the most.

For the total rural area 29.37 per cent of the churches reported an increase of membership in 1929 over 1920 and again in 1934 over 1929. Likewise 19.42 per cent of the churches reported decreases during each of the periods. The variations reported are presented in Table 2 for the total rural area and the population divisions. It will be noted that the percentage of churches characterized by a given variation in membership remains relatively uniform throughout the population divisions. There is no definite allocation of a given variation to a specific population division. Again the tendency of greater increase in church membership during the period since 1929 is indicated by the fact that within the variations reported 51.11 per cent of the churches reported an increase in 1934 over 1929, while 35.94 per cent reported a decrease. The remaining 12.95 per cent reported memberships that remained the same for the period. During the previous period (1929 over 1920) 46.47 per cent reported an increase while 42.71 per cent reported a decrease in membership.²¹ It remains to again make mention of the fact that these variations are representative of those churches which reported memberships for each of the three years and allowance should be made for this consideration. Since it was assumed that churches which provided the desired information were representative of a somewhat higher status, the inclusion of other churches would perhaps alter the situation presented. However, it is believed that in general the trends and variations presented are typical of the rural church in Missouri and that additional sampling would not materially affect the tendencies presented.

²¹In Boone County, Missouri, from 1906 to 1916, 46 per cent of the church memberships increased, 11 per cent remained the same and 43 per cent decreased (Melvin, Bruce L., Master's thesis (unpublished) University of Missouri, 1917).

TABLE 2.—CHURCH MEMBERSHIP VARIATIONS—1929 OVER 1920 AND 1934 OVER 1929—CLASSIFIED ON THE BASIS OF POPULATION.

Membership Variations	Population Classification												Total	Rural		
	I		II		III		IV		V		VI		VII			
	No. Chs.	%	No. Chs.	%	No. Chs.	%	No. Chs.	%	No. Chs.	%	No. Chs.	%	No. Chs.	%		
Increase 1929 over 1920 and 1934 over 1929	91	29.07	65	27.90	41	27.52	34	33.01	28	31.82	20	28.57	25	31.65	304	29.37
Increase 1929 over 1920 Decrease 1934 over 1929	40	12.78	39	16.74	13	8.72	12	11.65	13	14.77	16	22.86	11	13.92	144	13.91
Decrease 1929 over 1920 Increase 1934 over 1929	60	19.17	36	15.45	29	19.46	22	21.36	12	13.63	14	20.00	17	21.52	190	18.36
Decrease 1929 over 1920 and 1934 over 1929	62	19.81	47	20.17	28	18.79	23	22.33	17	19.32	10	14.28	14	17.72	201	19.42
Same 1929 as 1920 and 1934 as 1929	14	4.47	10	4.29	13	8.72	3	2.91	5	5.68	3	4.28	2	2.53	50	4.83
Increase 1929 over 1920 Same 1934 as 1929	11	3.52	8	3.43	5	3.36	1	0.97	4	4.55	2	2.86	2	2.53	33	3.19
Decrease 1929 over 1920 Same 1934 as 1929	15	4.79	17	7.30	9	6.04	2	1.94	3	3.41	2	2.86	3	3.80	51	4.93
Same 1929 as 1920 Increase 1934 over 1929	12	3.83	9	3.86	6	4.03	2	1.94	4	4.55	2	2.86			35	3.38
Same 1929 as 1920 Decrease 1934 over 1929	8	2.56	2	0.86	5	3.36	4	3.89	2	2.27	1	1.43	5	6.33	27	2.61
TOTAL	313	100.00	233	100.00	149	100.00	103	100.00	88	100.00	70	100.00	79	100.00	1,035	100.00

II. CHURCH SERVICES

Frequency of Preaching Services.—The frequency of preaching services was reported by 2,561 rural churches. The number of churches reporting a given frequency of service is shown in Table 3 and the corresponding per cents are presented graphically in Fig. 8. For the total

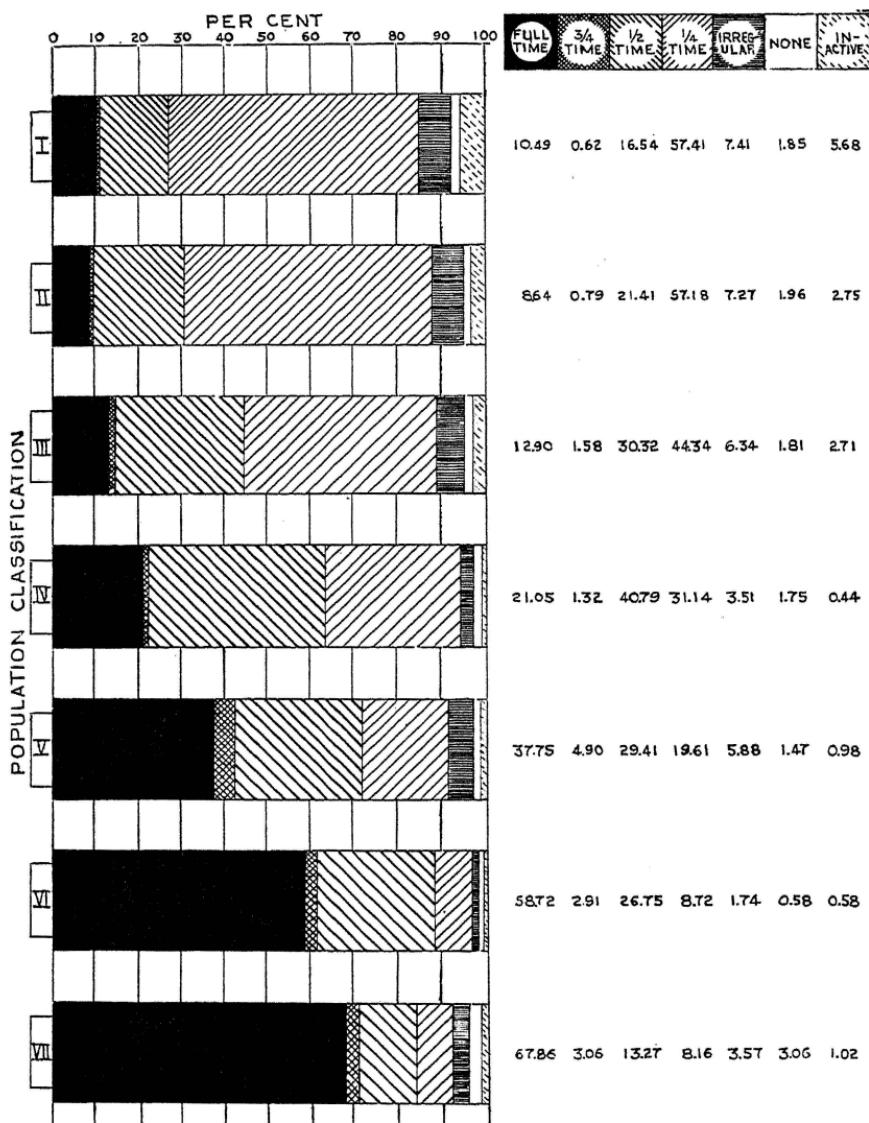


Fig. 8.—Percentage of Churches According to Frequency of Preaching Services, Classified by Population.

TABLE 3.—NUMBER AND PER CENT OF CHURCHES CLASSIFIED ACCORDING TO FREQUENCY OF PREACHING SERVICES AND POPULATION.

Frequency of Services	Population Classification														Rural %	
	I		II		III		IV		V		VI		VII		Total	
	No. of Chs.	%	No. of Chs.	%	No. of Chs.	%	No. of Chs.	%	No. of Chs.	%	No. of Chs.	%	No. of Chs.	%	No. of Chs.	%
Full time.....	85	10.49	44	8.64	57	12.90	48	21.05	77	37.75	101	58.72	133	67.86	545	21.28
Three-fourths time	5	0.62	4	0.79	7	1.58	3	1.32	10	4.90	5	2.91	6	3.06	40	1.56
One-half time.....	134	16.54	109	21.41	134	30.32	93	40.79	60	29.41	46	26.75	26	13.27	602	23.51
One-fourth time....	465	57.41	291	57.18	196	44.34	71	31.14	40	19.61	15	8.72	16	8.16	1,094	42.72
Irregular.....	60	7.41	37	7.27	28	6.34	8	3.51	12	5.88	3	1.74	7	3.57	155	6.05
No preaching services.....	15	1.85	10	1.96	8	1.81	4	1.75	3	1.47	1	0.58	6	3.06	47	1.83
Inactive.....	46	5.68	14	2.75	12	2.71	1	0.44	2	0.98	1	0.58	2	1.02	78	3.05
Total.....	810	100.00	509	100.00	442	100.00	228	100.00	204	100.00	172	100.00	196	100.00	2,561	100.00

rural area 545 churches (21.28 per cent of the total number reported) were conducting full time services compared to 1,094 churches (42.72 per cent of the total) which were characterized by one-fourth time services. Likewise 602 churches (23.51 per cent) conducted one-half time services while 40 churches (1.56 per cent) offered three-fourths time services. The remaining 10.93 per cent were virtually inactive, offering irregular services in some instances while in others no preaching services were conducted but the church remained active for some functions, or the church was entirely abandoned.

Within the population divisions it is significant to note with reference to Fig. 8 that in Class I (the open country) only 11.11 per cent of the churches were conducting more than one-half time services while 14.94 per cent of the churches were either abandoned or on the verge of abandonment. In Class II only 9.43 per cent of the churches had more than one-half time services. From Class III, with services being conducted more frequently than one-half time by 14.48 per cent of the churches, the per cent increases as population increases with 70.92 per cent of the churches in Class VII offering such services. Likewise as population increases the per cent of churches conducting one-fourth time services decreases from 57.41 per cent in Class I to 8.16 per cent in Class VII. Churches conducting three-fourths time services seemed to bear no particular relationship to the population divisions. Larger per cents of such services were reported in the more populous rural divisions but they were of infrequent occurrence. They do however appear to be representative of certain churches which, before "depression retrenchments", conducted full time services. It is also significant that of the churches providing less than one-fourth time services²² 65 per cent were in the two least populous rural divisions, Classes I and II. The recent "depression" has no doubt had due effect upon the frequency

²²Irregular, no preaching services or abandoned.

of preaching services throughout the rural area but it is perhaps true that the present situation is not far removed from prevailing conditions of the last decade.

Preaching Service Attendance.—Average attendance at preaching services was reported by 1,725 rural churches. The averages were estimated and are therefore to be considered as approximations of aver-

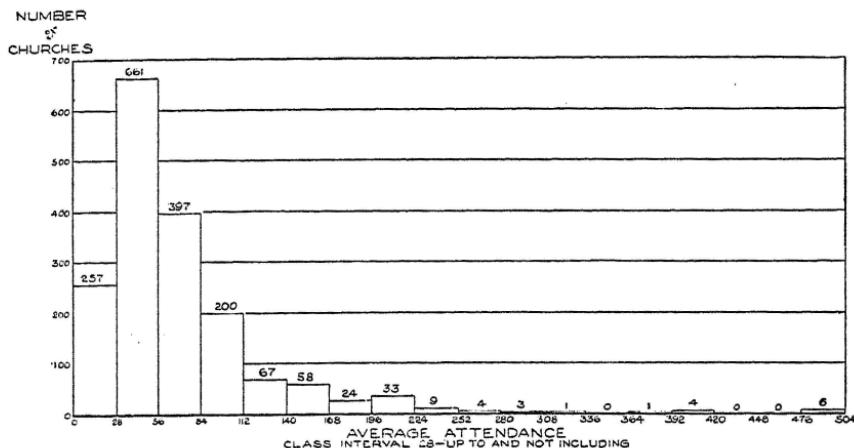


Fig. 9.—Distribution of Average Attendance.

age attendance. A frequency distribution of the averages is shown in Fig. 9 for the total rural area. The arithmetic average of the average attendances was 67.70 persons per church while the median was 53.65 persons and the mode 45 persons. One-fourth were less than 35.38 persons while an additional one-fourth of the churches reported average attendances of more than 82.50 persons. The remaining one-half were between 35.38 persons and 82.50 persons. The average attendances ranged from as few as 4 to as many as 500 persons.

Within the rural area the average²³ ranged from 57.67 persons in Class I to 102.80 persons in Class VII. In Class I, 44.49 per cent of the churches reported average attendances which were less than 50 persons and 71 per cent of the attendances were less than 75 persons, while in Class VII, 20.77 per cent were less than 50 persons and 45.38 per cent were less than 75 persons.

In general, average attendance increased as membership increased and the number in attendance was less than the total number of members.²⁴ As previously indicated the church memberships represented included active, inactive and non-resident members, therefore, there is not as much actual discrepancy between the average of the attendances

²³Simple ungrouped average.

²⁴In Randolph County, Missouri, it was found that attendance was 61 per cent of church membership (Jones, A. J., Master's thesis (unpublished) University of Missouri, 1920).

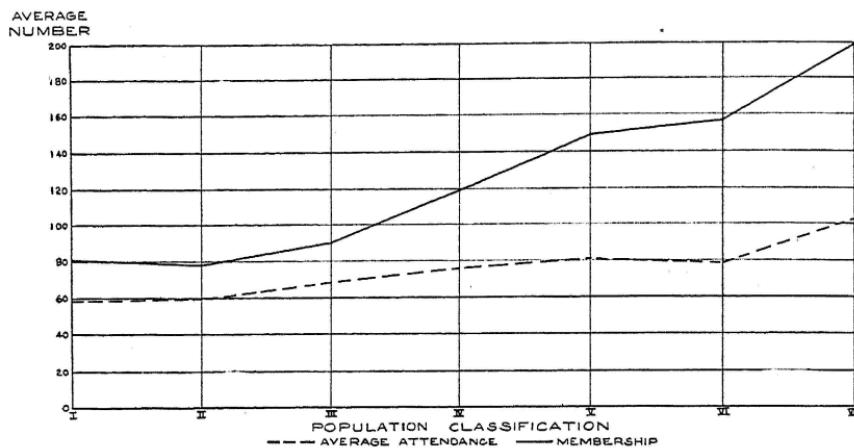


Fig. 10.—Change in Average Membership and Average Attendance on Basis of Population.

and average memberships as comparison of the averages seems to reveal. Quite to the contrary in some specific instances the average attendance exceeded the total membership but such individual cases were the exception rather than the rule. For the population divisions average attendance increased slightly in Class II when compared to Class I while the average membership decreased slightly. In Classes IV and V the rate of increase in average attendance was not as great as the rate of increase in average membership. In Class VI average membership increased, when compared to the membership in Class V while the average attendance decreased. In Class VII the rates of increase in both average attendance and membership were virtually the same. The absolute change in the averages is shown in Fig. 10.²⁵ It is noted that the averages are not definitely comparable but they reveal, approximately, the present status of rural church membership compared to average attendance.

Church Schools.—Sunday School, one of the primary church services, was conducted in virtually all of the rural protestant churches in Missouri and in many instances was the only church service. In a number of cases depression retrenchments and other financial difficulties had brought about a cessation of preaching services but Sunday Schools tended to remain active in the face of such difficulties. Sunday Schools reported had from 8 to 483 pupils. The arithmetic average number of pupils per school for the total rural area was 77.42, an average derived from the reports of 2,254 churches. The median number of pupils was 61.69. More than 10 per cent of the Sunday Schools had no more than 25 pupils while 43.26 per cent had no more than 50 pupils. Likewise 78.62

²⁵The averages were plotted logarithmically to reveal the percentage change.

per cent did not have more than 100 whereas 4.08 per cent had over 200 pupils. In Class I (the open country) 60.95 per cent of the Sunday Schools had no more than 50 pupils and in Class VII, 14.29 per cent did not have over 50 pupils. In general, the distribution of Sunday Schools, in size, corresponded to the distribution of church memberships. Sunday Schools were larger as population increased. A total of 2,222 churches reported the number of Sunday School teachers and officers. The average number of teachers and officers was 10 while the median was 9.14. About 70 per cent of the families having membership in the church were represented in the Sunday School memberships.

No more than 15 per cent of the churches in the total rural area reported either summer vacation Bible schools or week-day religious schools. Within the rural area the per cent of churches reporting such services increased from approximately 10 per cent in Class I to nearly 30 per cent in Classes VI and VII. It should be noted that in many instances, with particular reference to summer vacation Bible schools, the various churches in a given locality cooperated in providing such services. The above per cents do not draw this distinction and they should be considered for the most part as representative of churches that did take part in the services mentioned rather than from the stand-point of each church conducting such services.

Revivals.—In answer to the question, "Does the church hold revivals?" replies were received from 2,552 rural churches. Table 4 shows the number of replies, yes and no, classified on the basis of population. In general the revival is a characteristic service in rural Missouri, the proportion of churches that reported no revivals was largely representative of particular denominations which do not conduct such services as a matter of denominational policy. For the total rural area 85.93 per cent of the churches reporting denoted that revivals were conducted. The variation in the per cent of churches reporting revivals between the several population divisions was insignificant, no information was derived which would relegate the revival as a specific characteristic to any particular population division or divisions within the rural area.

TABLE 4.—NUMBER AND PER CENT OF CHURCHES REPORTING REVIVALS CLASSIFIED BY POPULATION.

Does the Church Have Revivals?	Population Classification										Total	Rural				
	I		II		III		IV		V		VI		VII			
	No. of Chs.	%	No. of Chs.	%	No. of Chs.	%	No. of Chs.	%	No. of Chs.	%	No. of Chs.	%	No. of Chs.	%		
Churches answering yes.....	667	86.74	472	86.61	342	84.24	205	84.71	189	89.15	151	82.97	167	85.20	2,193	85.93
Churches answering no.....	102	13.26	73	13.39	64	15.76	37	15.29	23	10.85	31	17.03	29	14.80	359	14.07
Total.....	769	100.00	545	100.00	406	100.00	242	100.00	212	100.00	182	100.00	196	100.00	2,552	100.00

TABLE 5.—FREQUENCY OF REVIVALS CLASSIFIED ON THE BASIS OF POPULATION.

Frequency of Revival	Population Classification														Total	Rural
	I		II		III		IV		V		VI		VII			
	No. of Chs.	%	No.	%												
Every three months-----	1	0.15	2	0.42	5	1.46	2	0.97	2	1.06	3	1.79	15	0.68		
Every four months-----	2	0.30	4	0.85	2	0.59	1	0.49	3	1.59	2	1.32	2	1.20	16	0.73
Every six months-----	24	3.60	24	5.09	15	4.39	14	6.83	10	5.29	13	8.61	10	5.99	110	5.02
Every year-----	525	78.71	372	78.81	252	73.68	159	77.56	131	69.31	101	66.89	109	65.27	1,649	75.19
Every two years-----	32	4.80	19	4.03	20	5.85	9	4.39	19	10.05	4	2.65	15	8.98	118	5.38
Every three years-----	2	0.30	7	1.48	9	2.63			2	1.06					20	0.91
Every four years-----	4	0.60							1	0.53					5	0.23
Every five years-----	1	0.15	1	0.21									1	0.60	3	0.14
Irregular-----	76	11.39	43	9.11	39	11.40	20	9.76	21	11.11	31	20.53	27	16.17	257	11.72
Total-----	667	100.00	472	100.00	342	100.00	205	100.00	189	100.00	151	100.00	167	100.00	2,193	100.00

The frequency of revivals was reported by 2,193 churches whereby 75.19 per cent of these churches reported annual revivals while 11.72 per cent reported that their revivals were conducted irregularly. Likewise 5.02 per cent of the churches reported revivals in every six month period while 5.38 per cent held revivals every two years. The remaining 2.69 per cent of the churches designated frequencies ranging from every three months to every five years. These frequencies are presented in Table 5, classified according to population. It seems significant that the per cent of churches reporting irregular revivals was greatest in the two most populous rural divisions, with 20.53 per cent of the churches in Class VI reporting irregular revivals and 16.17 per cent in Class VII.

The length of revivals ranged from one week to over four weeks as reported by 2,065 churches. The most frequently reported length was two weeks, a length which was reported by 63.49 per cent of the churches. An additional 17.82 per cent reported a period of two and one-half weeks while 7.22 per cent reported three weeks. Only 5.08 per cent of the churches reported revivals of less than two weeks and 6.39 per cent conducted revivals for a longer period than three weeks. There was no distinctive variation between the per cents for the population divisions, with denominational difference apparently providing the determining element in regard to the length of revivals.

A total of 2,089 answers were received in answer to the question, "By whom is the revival conducted?" Slightly more than 40 per cent of the churches reported that revivals were conducted by the local pastor, 30.69 per cent reported revivals conducted by an evangelist, while the remaining 27.38 per cent designated that they were conducted either by the pastor or an evangelist. Within the rural area the per cent of churches reporting revivals conducted by the pastor decreased, as density of population increased, from 47.99 per cent in Class I to 25.81 per cent in Class VII. The per cent of churches which availed themselves

of the services of an evangelist increased from 27.71 per cent in Class I to 43.87 per cent in Class VII.

The Church Building as a Meeting Place for Extra-Congregational Groups.—Some measure of the extent to which the rural church building is used by other groups was derived from answers to the question, "Is the church used as a meeting place for other groups?" A total of 2,427 churches were represented in the replies received and of this number 2,146 (88.42 per cent) reported no use by extra-congregational groups while the remaining 281 (11.58 per cent) reported that facilities were used by other groups. A compilation of the answers, yes and no, for the population divisions is shown in Table 6. The per cent of churches

TABLE 6.—NUMBER AND PER CENT OF CHURCHES REPORTING USE OF CHURCH BUILDING BY EXTRA-CONGREGATIONAL GROUPS CLASSIFIED BY POPULATION.

Is the Church Used as a Meeting Place for Other Groups?	Population Classification													
	I		II		III		IV		V		VI		Total Rural	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Churches answering yes-----	59	8.07	58	11.53	47	12.14	33	13.92	32	16.16	28	15.64	24	12.50
Churches answering no-----	672	91.93	445	88.47	340	87.86	204	86.08	166	83.84	151	84.36	168	87.50
Total-----	731	100.00	503	100.00	387	100.00	237	100.00	198	100.00	179	100.00	192	100.00
													2,427	100.00

reporting use by other groups increased from 8.07 per cent in Class I to 16.16 per cent in Class V, then declined to 15.64 per cent in Class VI and to 12.50 per cent in Class VII. The decline in the per cent of church buildings which are used by other groups in Classes VI and VII is largely attributed to the fact that certain groups which might use church property for various activities in these more populous rural divisions have been provided with facilities of their own. Churches which had no structures were not included in the tabulation of replies. Some rural parishes (open-country parishes in particular) conduct their services in rural school buildings and a large portion of rural group meetings also convene in school buildings. These observations may account for the low per cent of church structures which are used by other groups in Class I and it is likely that considerable intolerance for other groups is characteristic in many localities.

Other groups using the church building ranged from various social organizations to community meetings. Among the more frequently mentioned were: 4-H Club, Home Economics Club, Fruit Growers' Association, community chorus, various community "socials", political meetings, individual musical and dramatical recitals, free clinics, Fortnightly Club, W. C. T. U., American Legion, Boy Scouts, Girl Scouts, Campfire Girls, Commercial Club and various fraternal lodges. One

church building was used for the "annual Flower Show" while others reported church facilities "open to any group on request". It was significant that some cases were reported where more than one denomination as well as the school conducted services under the same roof. It seems that such cooperativeness might well be followed by other localities in which financial difficulties are especially acute.

III.—THE RURAL PASTOR

Availability of Rural Pastors.—Much has been said about the strategic position of leadership that is occupied by the pastor. This position is placed at a premium in the rural areas. Generally the success of a given church is contingent upon the minister's availability and capacity for leadership who, in turn, may be primarily determined by the financial ability of the church.

To what extent in rural Missouri is the pastor available as a leader in the community? The replies submitted from 2,299 churches reveal that for the total rural area 14.44 per cent have no pastor; 48.63 per cent have non-resident pastors, and 36.93 per cent have resident pastors.²⁶ In this connection mention must be made of the fact that some denominations are not served regularly by a pastor, services being conducted by various officials of the congregation. This observation does not materially change the relationship represented, indeed the relative importance of the group reporting no pastor is still further enhanced if we include inactive churches. The percentages presented are for churches that maintain preaching services in some degree. The effects of the depression have likewise intensified what has already approached a deplorable situation. In a number of cases it was found that services could only be continued through the medium of leaders selected among the congregation.

When the rural population is viewed in terms of the population classification (Fig. 11) the number of churches affording resident pastors increases from 20.76 per cent in the open country (Class I) to 71.98 per cent in Class VII; likewise the number of churches having non-resident pastors decreases from 62.55 per cent in the open country to 14.28 per cent in Class VII. There is again, little difference displayed between Class II and the open country but the former is somewhat better equipped with resident pastors and slightly less confronted with non-resident pastors.

There is small variation in the percentages of the churches that reported no pastor. This may perhaps be explained in part by the fact

²⁶A study of 179 counties in the U. S. revealed that 16.5 per cent of the churches had full time resident pastors, 19.0 per cent had part time resident pastors 52.6 per cent had non-resident pastors and 11.9 per cent had no pastor (Moss, H. N., and Brunner, E. DeS., op. cit., p. 52) In Boone County, Missouri, (1916) three of 37 pastors were located with their churches (Melvin, Bruce L., op. cit.)

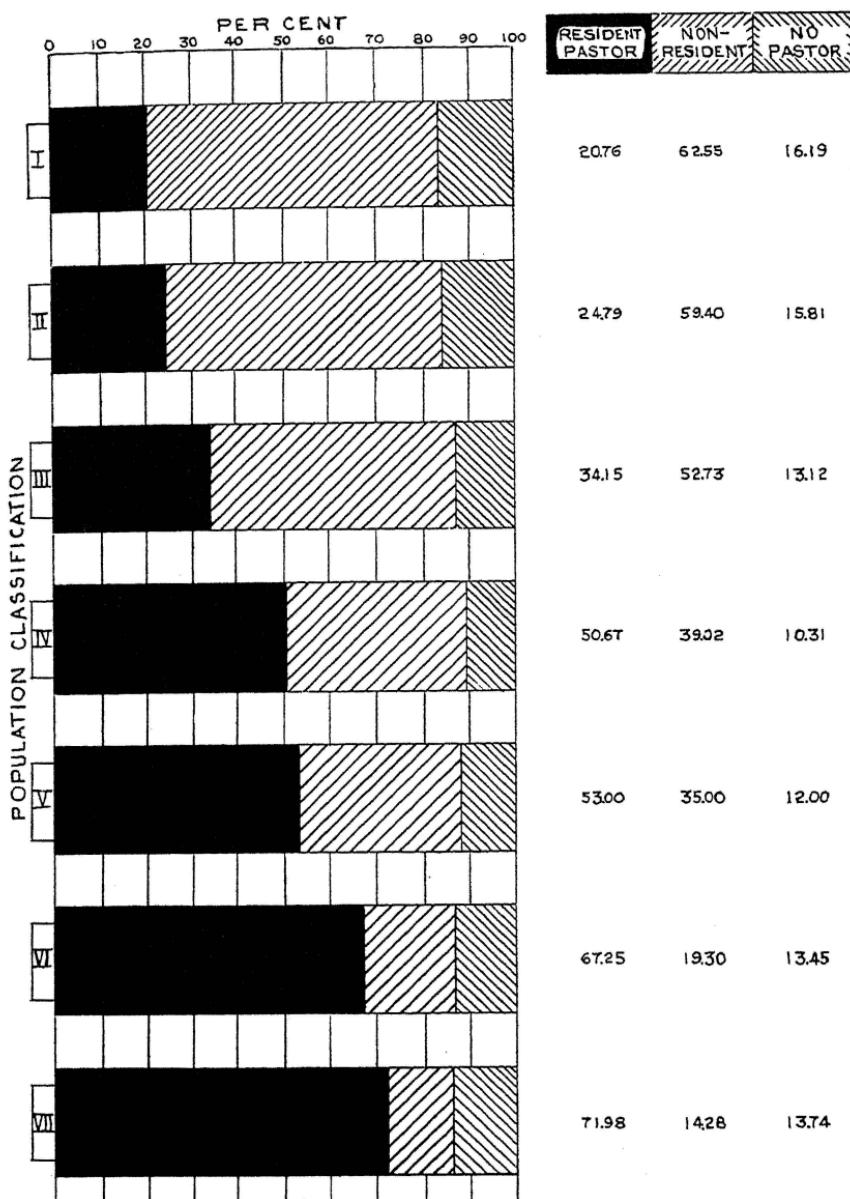


Fig. 11.—Percentage of Churches According to Availability of Pastor, Classified by Population.

that in practically all places there are found samples of a given denomination that is especially weak in those particular communities. The depression has handicapped these individual churches perhaps more than

others in general, but even under more prosperous circumstances it seems that such institutions will at best remain under inadequate guidance, due to an insufficient number of members for local support of the church. Villages of Class IV (400 to 600 population) show the smallest percentage of churches with no pastor and it is perhaps worth while to mention by way of explanation that churches in villages of this size were often found to be predominately one principal denomination.

The preponderance of non-resident pastors is accounted for in part by the "circuit system" which is in vogue in some denominations. The plan of a non-resident pastor is used especially by those denominations that attempt to take their work to small localized groups rather than to concentrate it in centers. It is a method that was more practical and necessary in the pre-automobile days than it is now.²⁷ Unquestionably it seems that non-residence deprives a given community of adequate pastoral supervision.

Distance from Residence to Parish.—Examination of the returns from the 1,118 churches that reported non-resident pastors indicates that many of the pastors are so removed from their respective parishes that at best they can be available to the community for only a short time each trip.

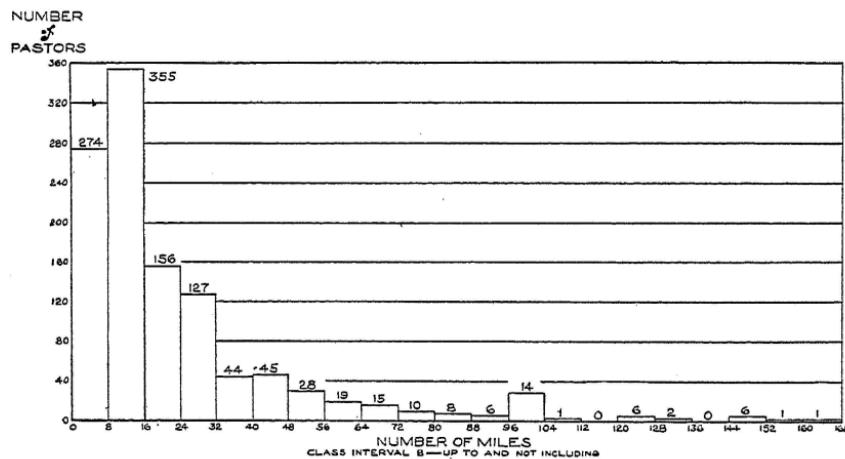


Fig. 12.—Distance from Pastor's Residence to Parish.

The frequency distribution²⁸ of the distances from residence to parish (Fig. 12) shows a condensation of the mileages reported. The arithmetic average of the distances for the total rural area is 22.29 miles, the median 14.42 miles, and the mode 10.90 miles. Division of the distribution into quartiles places one-fourth of the cases below 8.12

²⁷Brunner, E. DeS., and Kolb, J. H., *op. cit.*, p. 227.

²⁸Excluding two observations of 200 miles each.

miles, one-fourth above 27.37 miles, while one-half of the cases fall between 8.12 miles and 27.37 miles. The median seems to be the best representative as a typical value but it is significant to note that one-fourth of the rural parishes are served by pastors who travel from approximately 27 to 165 miles. The range is one-half mile up to and including 165 miles.

The modal group is largely representative of the distance traveled by pastors who reside in villages and conduct part time services in open country churches which are located within the immediate vicinity. The arithmetic averages for each of the seven population divisions show that on the average 20.20 miles are traveled to open country churches while the distance to Class II churches is 21.41 miles; to Class III churches 25.35 miles, to Class IV churches 24.69 miles, to Class V churches 22.40 miles, to Class VI churches 22.91 and to churches in Class VII, 34.46 miles. The relatively larger average for the most populous division of the rural area is largely explained by the fact that non-resident pastors serving in these places generally come to them from nearby cities in contrast to the shorter distance traveled from villages into the open country. In some cases the residence locality was quite far removed, the churches in this division (Class VII) apparently being better able financially to defray the expenses of a lengthy journey.

Length of Service in Present Parish.—As an additional factor upon which to judge the effectiveness of the rural pastor we turn to length of service in the present parish.²⁹ Table 7 shows the number of churches reporting, likewise the percentages of the cases reported for their respective lengths of service are given. Again, the differences within the rural area are shown by division of the rural population into the seven divisions.

TABLE 7.—NUMBER AND PER CENT OF CHURCHES REPORTING YEARS SERVED BY PASTOR IN PRESENT PARISH CLASSIFIED BY POPULATION.

No. of Years in Present Parish	Population Classification														Rural	
	I		II		III		IV		V		VI		VII			
	No. of Cases	%	No. of Cases	%	No. of Cases	%	No. of Cases	%	No. of Cases	%	No. of Cases	%	No. of Cases	%		
1	184	33.83	149	36.79	110	35.71	79	37.98	60	34.68	45	29.80	37	22.84	664 34.04	
2	114	20.95	108	26.66	72	23.38	49	23.56	40	23.12	44	29.14	33	20.37	460 23.58	
3	77	14.15	53	13.08	44	14.28	24	11.54	33	19.07	16	10.60	18	11.11	265 13.58	
4	53	9.74	27	6.67	29	9.42	15	7.21	13	7.51	13	8.61	20	12.54	170 8.71	
5	37	6.80	17	4.20	10	3.25	11	5.29	6	3.47	7	4.64	15	9.26	103 5.28	
6	10	1.84	13	3.21	12	3.90	4	1.93	2	1.16	2	1.32	13	8.02	56 2.87	
7	13	2.39	11	2.72	4	1.30	5	2.40	6	3.47	4	2.65	5	3.09	48 2.46	
8	10	1.84	4	0.99	4	1.30	2	0.96	1	0.58	4	2.65	6	3.70	31 1.59	
9	7	1.29	3	0.74	3	0.97	5	2.40	1	0.58	2	1.32	3	1.85	24 1.23	
10	8	1.47	4	0.99	3	0.97			4	2.31			3	1.85	22 1.13	
11-20	23	4.23	13	3.21	13	4.22	9	4.33	6	3.47	11	7.29	5	3.09	80 4.10	
21-30	4	0.74	3	0.74	4	1.30	3	1.44			2	1.32	2	1.24	18 0.92	
31-50	4	0.74					2	0.96	1	0.58	1	0.66	2	1.24	10 0.51	
Total...	544	100.00	405	100.00	308	100.00	208	100.00	173	100.00	151	100.00	162	100.00	1951 100.00	

²⁹Present parish as of April, 1934.

Summarizing the percentages denotes that of the total rural group 85.19 per cent of the pastors have been in present parishes no longer than 5 years while 34.04 per cent have been in present parishes no more than one year. This relationship holds true, roughly, for the seven divisions except Class VII in which 75.92 per cent have served no longer than 5 years while 22.84 per cent have served no more than one year. Turning to the pastors (for the total rural area) who have been in present parishes from 6 up to and including 10 years, it was found that 9.28 per cent were characterized by this amount of service. This latter percentage is not so representative of the divisional percentages; Class VII in this instance was found to depart considerably from the remaining classes which varied around 8.28 per cent. The number of pastors in Class VII who had served in present parishes from 6 to 10 years accounted for 18.51 per cent of the total number reported in that class.

It is significant to note that in places with a population of 1,500 to 2,500 the pastor becomes less mobile and is more available than in places with smaller population. Obviously churches in the more populous localities of the rural area are characterized by more members, more financial support, larger attendance, and larger salaries for their pastors. These things, and others, lend themselves to the maintenance of a well trained pastor for a greater length of time than is, perhaps, possible under existing circumstances in the more rural divisions but, after all, is it not possible eventually to make better provision in these same more rural divisions? It is not intended to infer here that a pastor should become a "permanent fixture" in a given parish thus leaving no recourse to its members but it is intended to show that under existing conditions the rural pastor is so mobile that at best he can perform only a small portion of the varied functions of leadership that are his as a leader in the community.

There were relatively small departures between the percentages of pastors serving over 10 years for the rural divisions, ranging from approximately 4 per cent in Class II to approximately 9 per cent in Class VI. It occurs that, for the most part, the cases that reported a pastor who had been in the present parish for a comparatively great length of time were set apart from the churches at large. That is to say the cases seemed to have been determined more by individual church conditions and were likely to occur within any population division of the rural area.

The arithmetic average of the number of years pastors have been in present parishes was 3.55 years, the median 2.68 years and the mode 2.29 years. One-half of the pastors had been in the present parish from 1.73 years to 4.36 years; one-fourth for a period less than 1.73 years, and one-fourth had remained longer than 4.36 years.

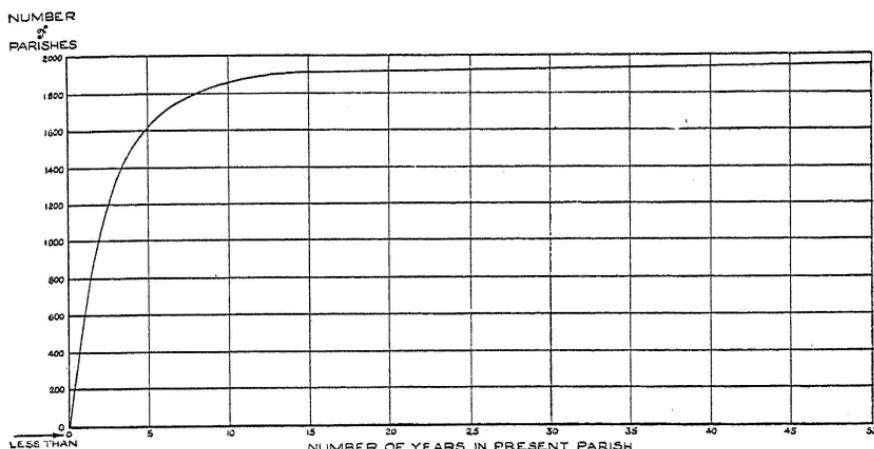


Fig. 13.—Distribution of Years Served by Pastors in Present Parishes.

The distribution of years in present parishes is presented in a cumulative frequency curve (Fig. 13). The total frequency is representative of the 1,951 churches that reported on the years in present parish. Thus it may be seen that the slope of the curve is steep and the rise abrupt through one and two years, then it gradually tapers off, and there is small increase from fifteen years on denoting the relatively small number of pastors who remain for greater lengths of time.

Other Churches Served by the Pastor.—In rural Missouri only 21.28 per cent of the churches reported in the survey boasted full time services, and thereby requiring the services of a full time pastor. The remainder of the pastors are thus confronted with acquiring other parishes in addition to a given one or they must follow some other occupation in conjunction with their theological pursuits, if they are to provide themselves with those things which are essential to a comfortable living. Thus the pastor is often forced to seek complimentary parishes that necessitate lengthy semi-weekly or monthly journeys, and in many cases he travels still more frequently.

The arithmetic average number of other parishes served by the pastor for the total rural area was 1.85 parishes. Table 8 shows the number and percentage of the pastors who serve in other parishes designating the extent in numbers to which additional parishes are served. Thus it was found that 56.50 per cent of the pastors who serve more than one parish serve two or more parishes in addition to the one from which they were reported.

Under such circumstances it is apparent that the parish, which is served by a pastor who must devote from one-half to three-fourths of his time to other parishes, is denied the services and leadership that it as a

TABLE 8.—NUMBER AND PERCENTAGE OF PASTORS CLASSIFIED ACCORDING TO THE NUMBER OF OTHER PARISHES SERVED.

	Number of Other Parishes Served					
	1	2	3	4	5	Total
No. of pastors-----	345	264	149	29	6	793
Per cent-----	43.50	33.29	18.79	3.66	0.76	100.00

primary institution of the community needs.³⁰ This condition of multiple service cannot be said to be accepted willingly by the clergy. Much more frequently it is accepted through necessity or custom. An increasing number of pastors seem to be tacitly in revolt against this system and they tend to major on the main point of the circuit, in an attempt to develop it into a full time church.³¹

Length of Service in Previous Parishes.—Before coming to their present parish the pastors in rural Missouri, as reported by the survey, had served on an average (arithmetic) of 14.71 years in previous parishes. The length of service in previous parishes ranged from less than one year to more than 56 years.

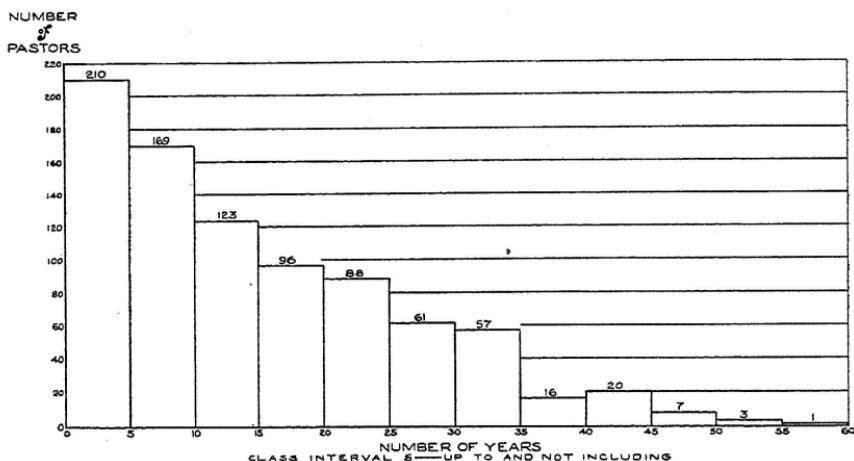


Fig. 14.—Number of Years Served by Pastors in Previous Parishes.

A frequency distribution of the number of years the pastors have served in previous parishes is presented in Fig. 14. The median was 11.89 years and the mode 2.23 years. One-half of the pastors had served in previous parishes from 5 to 21.76 years with one-fourth serving less than 5 years and one-fourth more than 21.76 years. It is significant that 12.22

³⁰Data from 179 counties in the U. S. revealed that 68 per cent of the town churches had ministers who served only one church, as compared with 43 per cent of the village churches and 19 per cent of the country churches. 55 per cent of the pastors served 2 churches or more. (Morse, H. N., and Brunner, E. DeS., op. cit., pp. 55-56).

³¹Brunner, E. DeS. and Kolb, J. H., op. cit., p. 227.

per cent of the pastors reporting had served for 30 years or more in previous parishes and 5.52 per cent had served for 35 years or more.

Education of the Rural Pastor.—The survey did not provide comprehensive information on the exact amount of education obtained by the rural pastor but it does give evidence pertaining to the extent of education. In other words, have the rural pastors in Missouri attended higher institutions of learning?

The pastors were allocated to the rural population divisions. Figure 15 shows the educational status by rural divisions. The figure should be looked upon from the viewpoint of the parish rather than in terms of the pastor's residence. It must be remembered in this connection that roughly two-fifths of the rural pastors serve in more than one parish, therefore it is difficult to definitely assign a pastor to any one population division due to the fact that his several parishes may be located in different divisions. The educational qualities that are available to the parishes within the divisions are shown without duplication of pastors.

Figure 15 shows that some pastors attended only grade school, others attended high school, some attended college, and some attended both college and seminary. The "other" classification includes other combinations and means of training (grade school and seminary, high school and seminary or some other method of education which was considered in the study as "special training.") Typical examples of "special training" are: home courses made possible by the church conference, and some had taken courses offered by a correspondence school.

Of the 1,432 cases reported for the total rural population 217 or 15.15 per cent of the pastors had attended grade school, an additional 146 or 10.19 per cent had attended high school, 642 others or 44.83 per cent had attended college, another group comprising 381 pastors or 26.61 per cent had attended both college and seminary, while 46 or 3.22 per cent had received other training.³²

Turning, again to figure 15 the relative educational merits of the pastors by rural divisions becomes more apparent. Thus Class II is burdened with the largest percentage (25.18) of the pastors who offer no more than grade school education. Class I, consisting of open country churches, closely follows the dubiously adequate situation shown by Class II with 22.48 per cent of the pastors affording only grade school education. The remaining 5 divisions show no marked variation with Class IV displaying the smallest percentage (4.61) of pastors with only

³²In Oklahoma, 11.1 per cent of the pastors in the open country, hamlets, and villages had only grade school training and 23.6 per cent had not gone beyond high school. For open country pastors these figures were 38.0 and 48.3 per cent respectively. (Page, J. F., and LaCamp, I. R., *The Oklahoma Rural Church*, Agricultural Experiment Station Bulletin, 1930).

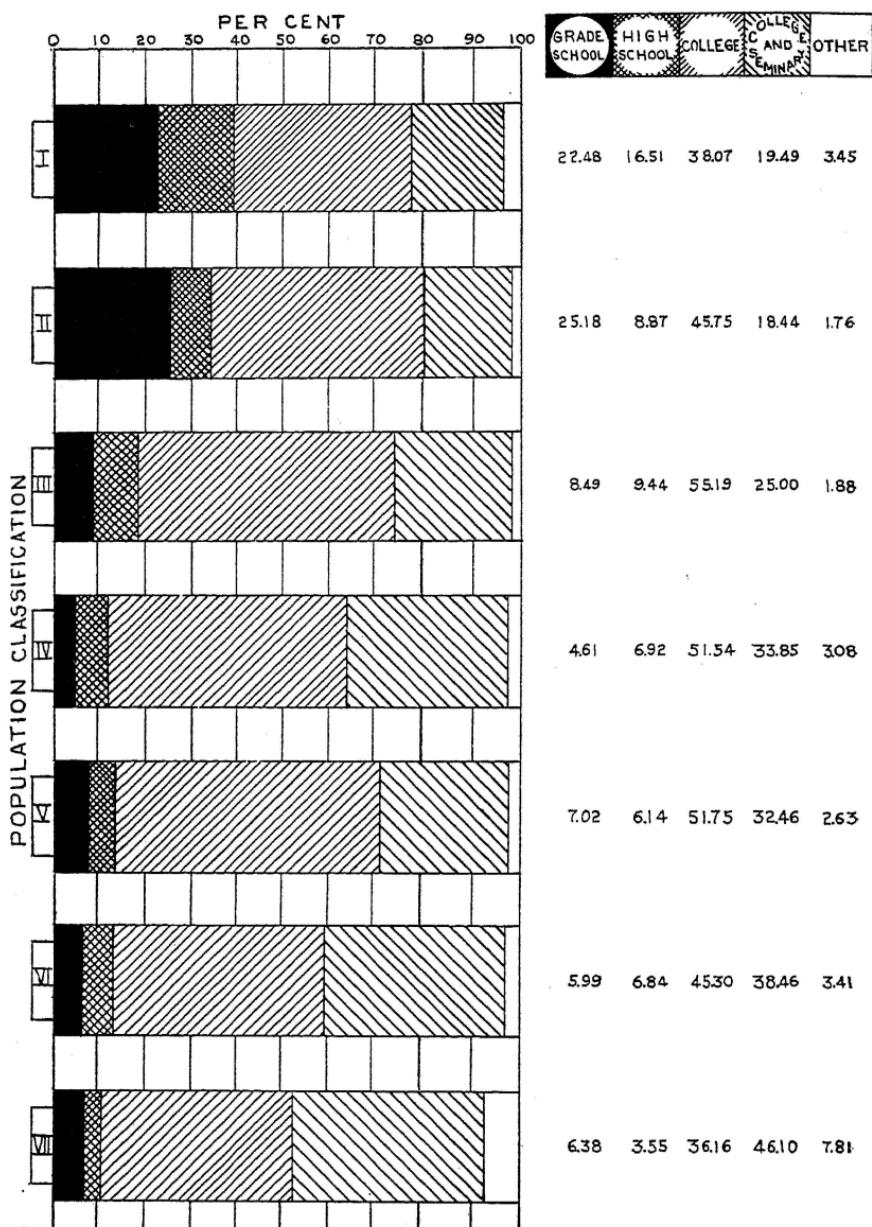


Fig. 15.—Percentage of Pastors According to Education, Classified by Population.

grade school education. It is seen that Class VII contains the largest percentage (7.81) of pastors with other or special education. This may be accounted for, in part, at least, by the fact that pastors in the more urban communities of the rural area who possessed meagre education

found that it was necessary to better equip themselves in order to make adjustment to the changes in educational demands or needs of the more modern parish. Thus the pastor attempted to improve his educational status by correspondence or some other available means.

Summarizing the rural divisions shows in Class I that 38.97 per cent of the pastors have attended no institution of learning beyond high school. Also, in Class II high school was the highest educational achievement for 34.05 per cent of the pastors. It will be noted that when high school education is included the relative position of Class I and Class II (as exemplified by grade school education) is reversed with Class II in this instance showing a smaller percentage of pastors having no more than high school education. Class II further shows improvement over Class I in this instance with 45.75 per cent of its pastors having attended college whereas only 38.07 per cent of the pastors in Class I had attended college. There is little variation in the percentages of pastors in the two most rural divisions who had received both college and seminary education with Class I showing 19.49 per cent and Class II having 18.44 per cent.

In the remaining five divisions the percentage of pastors who have attended only college gradually declines while the percentage who attended both college and seminary gradually increases. This is true except in Class IV and Class V; in this latter division the percentage of those attending college remained virtually the same as that in Class IV while there was a slight decrease in the percentage of pastors who had attended both college and seminary. This would seem to indicate that the two divisions are practically the same in regard to the educational status of their pastors.

Mention should perhaps be made that six pastors were reported who had no education, three of these were reported in Class II, two in Class VII and one in Class VI.

The Pastor's Salary.—Information regarding the pastor's salary was received from 1,819 rural churches in Missouri. It was intended here to present information pertaining to the total annual income of the rural pastor but factual evidence is lacking.

This situation is in part accounted for by the fact that in the weaker churches the pastor's income is almost as "variable as the weather". This statement is especially true when one considers the weaker church as it struggles rather hopelessly with difficulties of the "depression."

As indicated above, the pastor in most instances serves in more than one parish therefore his income is derived in general from more than one source. Some pastors receive a salary and pay rent for their dwellings, others receive a salary and the use of a home, rent free. Itinerant pastors, of course, receive for the most part, only a salary.

This salary may be augmented by traveling expenses but in other instances it is not. In some cases, and especially is it true since the year 1930, the pastor's income has been almost entirely comprised of edibles in one form or another. This study confines itself to the salary in money that a given parish attempts to provide for its leader.

The data reveals that in 114 churches the pastor's salary was entirely dependent upon the offerings received during church services. Of these churches 52 were in the open country, 16 were in Class II of the population divisions, 19 were found in Class III, 5 in Class IV, 8 in Class V, 7 in Class VI, and likewise 7 were reported in Class VII. The 52 open-country churches providing payment in this manner were primarily churches that conducted irregular or one-fourth time services.

Only 1,705 churches, representing an aggregate annual salary of approximately \$700,000 reported on salaries for the year 1933. Of this number 404 were full-time churches, 463 were half-time churches, 805 were one-fourth-time churches and 33 conducted irregular services

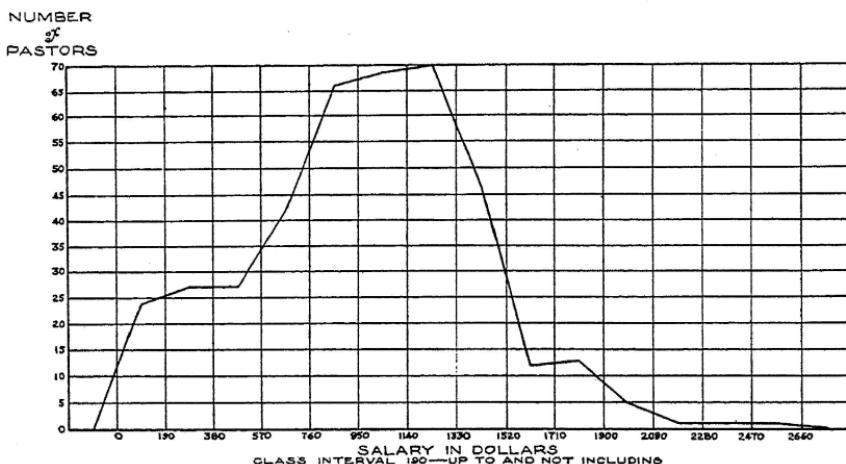


Fig. 16.—Distribution of Annual Salaries of 404 Full-Time Pastors.

A distribution of the annual salaries offered by churches having full-time services is presented in Fig. 16. The distribution is for the total rural area and represents 404 churches affording an aggregate salary of approximately \$389,000. The arithmetic average of the total rural salaries was \$968.33, the mode \$1216, and the median \$994.06.³³ The standard deviation³⁴ was \$389.12, thus approximately two-thirds of the

³³Data from 179 counties revealed that one-third of the resident ministers received a salary of from \$1,000 each to \$1,500 in cash or its equivalent. The average salary, including rental value of parsonage, was \$1,029.75. (Morse, H. N. and Brunner, E. DeS., op. cit., pp. 143-144).

³⁴Appendix, page 73.

rural salaries fell between \$579.21 and \$1,357.45. One-fourth of the salaries were below the first quartile (\$674.04) and one fourth were above the third quartile (\$1,270.28). Either the arithmetic average or median are representative of salaries offered by the rural church in Missouri. Mention should perhaps again be made that this sum is in reference to the cash salary as represented by the rural church that conducts full time services. It does not take into consideration the free use of a home or any other manner of special provision for maintenance of the pastor. In many cases the pastor is granted free residence in his home, thus the equivalent to a somewhat larger salary. However, it is significant that the salaries not infrequently go unpaid. Again, this has been especially true during recent years. It is regretted that information on the extent of unpaid salaries could not be obtained, but evidence from an appreciable number of churches indicates that it is a problem of considerable proportions.

Further consideration of the distribution of full time salaries reveals that 14 (3.46 per cent) of the 404 churches reported offered less than \$100 in cash salary. These churches were, of course, small, relatively inactive, and located primarily in Class I and Class II of the population divisions. In another group 190 churches (47.03 per cent) offered less than \$1,000 while 33 (8.17 per cent) afforded more than \$1,500 annually. Of this latter group, comprised of salaries over \$1,500, the largest number of churches (18) were in Class VII.

In Class I, 77.55 per cent of the churches offered less than \$1,000 for full time service while in Class II, 67.65 per cent of the salaries were thus characterized. In Class VII only 20 per cent of the salaries reported were less than \$1,000.

Additional information on the amount of money provided by a given parish for the salary of its pastor is offered by also presenting the sums paid for services other than full time. Figure 17 shows the average³⁵ annual sum which is allocated by the Missouri Rural parish to its pastor, classified on the basis of the amount of service and the population classification.

The average annual sum for full time services in Class VII of the population divisions was \$1,221.90. This average sum decreased as population decreased down to Class I which shows a slightly higher average than Class II. The same trend was true of churches that conducted half-time services. The average annual sum for half-time services was \$485.65 in Class VII, and again Class I with an average of \$345.40 provided a somewhat larger average than the \$334.06 afforded by churches in Class II. The averages for churches that conducted one-fourth time services were more irregular, with churches in Class VI displaying the highest average sum of \$240.67. Class I in this instance

³⁵Simple ungrouped average.

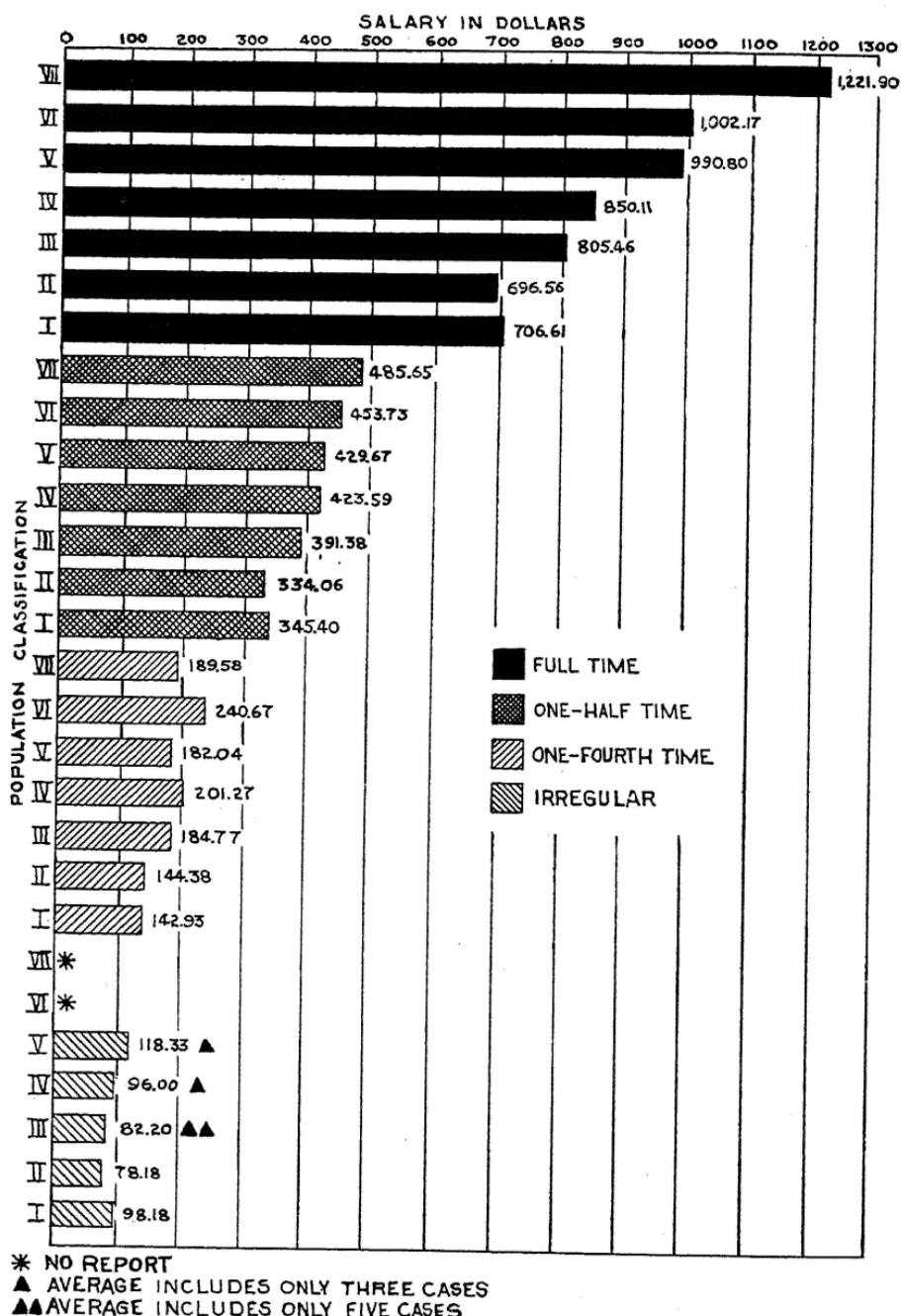


Fig. 17.—Average Annual Pastor's Salary Classified on Basis of Population and Service.

provided the smallest allotment amounting to \$142.93 which was only negligibly below the \$144.38 offered by Class II.

No salaries were reported from churches conducting irregular services in Classes VI and VII. The averages for the remaining five classes are presented and should be considered merely as a rough estimate of the average sum provided by churches that are characterized by irregular services. No definite relationship exists between these latter averages since the number of services conducted during the year was not determined.

It is significant to note that in general the pastor may not only expect to receive a smaller salary as the population decreases but he may also expect to receive less if he does not serve a church that conducts full-time services. That is to say, assuming the data to be typical, that the combined salaries offered by two churches that conduct half-time services are not equivalent to a salary offered by one church that affords full time services. Likewise the salaries from two churches that carry on one-fourth-time services are not equal to the salary offered by one church that conducts half-time services. Exception to the latter was found in Class VI churches which provided the highest average sum for one-fourth time services.

Among other considerations in regard to the pastor's salary is the instance that some parishes make payment quarterly, a large portion pay monthly, and others offer weekly payment. This latter group of parishes that pay weekly is characterized primarily by itinerant pastors and those who receive the preaching service offerings for payment. Of course some churches are served by student pastors, a portion of whom receive some remuneration, while others offer their services in view of the practical experience involved.

Further mention of the pastor's salary has been made in connection with church expenditures.

IV.—PROPERTY EXPENSE AND INCOME

In 1934 the approximate valuation for the church buildings, equipment and grounds belonging to 2,278 rural churches in Missouri was \$12,279,700. This aggregate valuation reveals in some degree the size of the investment in rural church property. Likewise, the magnitude of a budget for total church expenditures is evidenced by an aggregate sum of over \$1,000,000 which was expended by the churches reporting for the year 1933.

The problem of church finance is of foremost importance, it may be the principal problem that must be solved before the status of a given church is recognized and established as being secure. Again, obviously the success of the financial program may be entirely dependent

upon the wealth of the locality within which the church is located. Then, too, regardless of wealth the element of denominational or inter-denominational competition may intervene in such manner as to retard the financial progress of a given institution. The equipment and facilities that are available as tools of service to the congregation and community are limited or augmented, depending for the most part upon finance. The church in better financial condition may and generally does provide itself with a better paid and more adequately trained pastor, at the same time providing more frequent and more regular preaching services. Yet despite the magnitude and importance of the financial problem a surprisingly large number of rural churches lack what may be termed even a resemblance of financial records. In many small communities the number of churches has increased entirely beyond the financial ability of the people to adequately maintain their separate existence. The following paragraphs are devoted to the quantitative presentation of such data on church property, expense and income that were made available during the course of the present study.

Church Property.—Property of the rural parish may in general be allocated to three classifications, viz: structures, equipment and grounds. The number of structures maintained may depend on the size of the church which in turn is more or less dependent upon the density of population. The financial status of the parish and locality in general may be a limitation to the construction of church buildings. Denominations vary in their plans for building and thus become a conditioning factor. This latter observation is made with particular reference to denominations that maintain an educational institution within and as a functional division of the parish. Individual parish policies (denominational policies in some instances) may largely determine the extensiveness of structural facilities. For instance, a building program may be contingent upon the extent and regularity of preaching services. Thus the problem of providing a dwelling for the pastor arises only in the parish that maintains a resident pastor. The extent to which the parish may attempt to provide recreational facilities for its congregation and community will depend on the denominational objectives and the demands of the parish.

The typical open country parish that provides one-fourth time services and thereby obviates the necessity of maintaining a home for the minister is characterized by one major structure, the church building.³⁶ Figure 18 shows the percentage of churches having one, or more than one major structure. The percentage of churches reporting more than one structure increases from 12.32 per cent in the open country to 61.18 per cent in Class VI of the population divisions. Obviously this tendency

³⁶Excluding out-buildings.

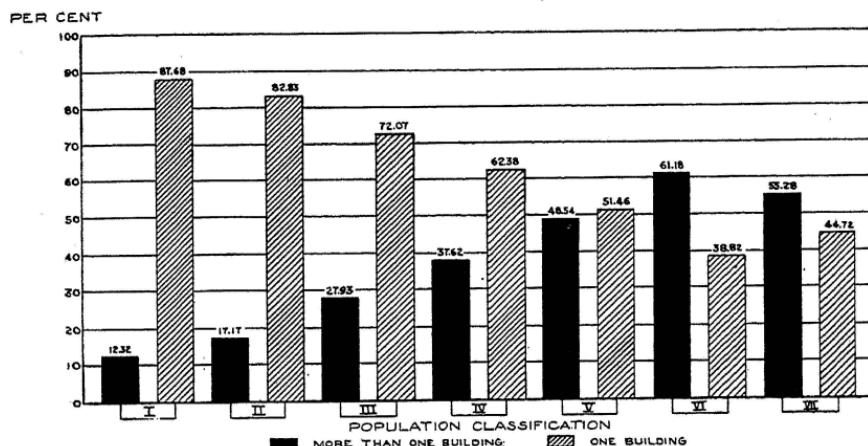


Fig. 18.—Percentage of Churches Classified on Basis of Buildings and Population.

is associated with the increase in the number of resident pastors through the more populous rural divisions. Exception is noted in Class VII where the tendency is for a decrease in the percentage of churches reporting more than one structure. This variation may in part be explained by the fact that in the more populous areas and where the pastor is well paid there seems to be some indication that the pastor who is assured a reasonably permanent tenure of service may own and maintain a private residence.

A number of rural churches included in the study were conducting services without the facility of the customary church edifice. Approximately two per cent of the total number of parishes that were reported conducted services in school buildings. Practically all of these parishes were located in the open country or in small villages having a population of no more than 200 persons. Likewise a similar percentage of parishes reported services conducted in private homes and various meeting places outside of church or school buildings.

Church equipment varies in type and quantity from parish to parish, ranging from a few fixtures to provisions for recreation in addition to the customary church equipment. Likewise there is considerable difference in the amount of land owned by the various rural churches. Usually a small lot is the typical space allotted for the church and other buildings. In some instances the minister's home may be located apart from the church building rather than adjacent. In other instances the plot of land may be quite extensive due to spacial needs for recreational facilities and in some cases the church has been the donee of a relatively large parcel of land at the bequest of a member of its congregation.

Valuation of Buildings and Equipment.—The valuations presented here are intended to give an approximation of the investment in church property. No attempt has been made to adjust the valuations or to equalize them. The valuation reports received from most of the rural churches were derived by estimation on the part of the county worker or by some church official. Original cost has, for the most part, been the basis of valuation. The dubious accuracy of the valuations is recognized and in no sense are they offered other than to give an approximation of the true valuation. More intensive analysis of rural church property valuation is beyond the scope of the present study.

Table 9 shows the total and average valuations for the total rural area and the population divisions. The average valuation of church buildings and equipment was \$4,975.23. This value is not reliable as a typical representative and is considered only as a rough measure. The arithmetic average in this instance is handicapped as a reliable measure due to upward bias through the presence of a number of churches that reported relatively large valuations. The median (\$2,000) is a better representative as the typical valuation.

A better view of the valuation of rural church property is obtained by segregating the parishes according to the number of buildings. The arithmetic average valuation of churches having one building was \$2,600.78 for the total rural area and the median valuation was \$1,500. The most frequently reported valuation was \$1,000, a valuation reported by 226 churches, 40 per cent of which were in the open country. The averages for the population divisions increased as population increased with the exception of Class II. This latter class showed the smallest average valuation (\$1,698.74) while Class VII with an average of \$6,250 represented the largest. It is well to note that approximately 11 per cent of the valuations reported from Class I were no more than \$500 for churches having one structure while only one church in Class VII reported a valuation less than \$600. Likewise from Class I, 31.65 per cent of the churches reported a valuation no greater than \$1,000 and 16.67 per cent reported in like manner from Class VII.

Turning now to churches having more than one building, a comparatively large increase in average valuation is shown by each of the rural divisions as well as the total rural area. These churches, comprising approximately 28 per cent of the total number of churches reporting, accounted for 62 per cent of the total valuation reported. The averages are increased in part by a relatively few churches which maintain educational facilities in addition to the church building and manse. For the total rural area the average valuation was \$10,995.28, the median \$7,000, and the mode \$3,000. The relatively low modal value is representative for the most part of churches in Classes I and II, and it is indicative

TABLE 9.—VALUATION OF CHURCH BUILDINGS AND EQUIPMENT CLASSIFIED ACCORDING TO THE NUMBER OF STRUCTURES AND POPULATION.

		Population Classification							Total Rural
		I	II	III	IV	V	VI	VII	
Churches having one bldg.	No. of Chs.	534	357	240	126	88	59	72	1,476
	Valuation	\$935,500	\$606,450	\$702,250	\$400,900	\$433,900	\$309,750	\$450,000	\$3,838,750
	Average*	\$1,751.87	\$1,698.74	\$2,926.04	\$3,181.75	\$4,930.68	\$5,250.00	\$6,250.00	\$2,600.78
	Range	\$100-\$20,000	\$100-\$25,000	\$200-\$40,000	\$150-\$20,000	\$300-\$35,000	\$350-\$35,000	\$200-\$43,000	\$100-\$43,000
Churches having more than one bldg.	No. of Chs.	75	74	93	76	83	93	89	583
	Valuation	\$590,000	\$437,150	\$681,300	\$657,400	\$982,100	\$1,153,200	\$1,904,100	\$6,405,250
	Average*	\$7,866.67	\$5,907.43	\$7,325.81	\$8,650.00	\$11,832.53	\$12,400.00	\$21,394.38	\$10,995.28
	Range	\$900-\$40,000	\$750-\$35,000	\$1,000-\$42,000	\$1,000-\$36,000	\$1,000-\$40,000	\$1,200-\$40,000	2,000-\$90,000	\$750-\$90,000
All churches	Total No. Chs.	609	431	333	202	171	152	161	2,059
	Total value	\$1,525,500	\$1,043,600	\$1,383,550	\$1,058,300	\$1,416,000	\$1,462,950	\$2,354,100	\$10,244,000
	Average*	\$2,504.93	\$2,421.35	\$4,154.80	\$5,239.11	\$8,280.70	\$9,624.67	\$14,621.74	\$4,975.23

*Simple ungrouped average.

of a number of parishes whose physical plants are symbolic of depletion. It is difficult to look with confidence upon the adequacy of a valuation of \$3,000 to provide the rural parish with more than one building and the necessary equipment. Even so, in Class I it is further noted that 18.67 per cent of the churches with more than one building offered valuations no greater than \$2,000 and 36 per cent reported valuations that did not exceed \$5,000. The valuations in Class II were no greater than \$2,000 for 20.27 per cent of the churches and no more than \$5,000 for 45.95 per cent. On the other hand, in Class VII, 2.25 per cent had valuations no greater than \$2,000 while 5.62 per cent valued their buildings and equipment up to \$5,000. Class II with \$5,907.43 showed the smallest average valuation and churches in Class VII represented the largest valuation reported with an average of \$21,394.38.

Valuation of Grounds.—The approximate valuation of grounds was reported by 1,482 churches in rural Missouri. Table 10 shows the average valuation per church by population divisions. For the total rural area the average was \$356.32 per church while within the rural area the average valuation of grounds ranged from \$178.42 in the open country

TABLE 10.—VALUATION OF CHURCH GROUNDS CLASSIFIED BY POPULATION.

	Population Classification							Total Rural
	I	II	III	IV	V	VI	VII	
No. of churches	456	315	240	137	130	95	109	1,482
Valuation	\$81,360	\$71,600	\$63,330	\$53,030	\$72,145	\$70,105	\$116,495	\$528,065
Average*	\$178.42	\$227.30	\$263.88	\$387.08	\$554.96	\$737.95	\$1,068.76	\$356.32

*Simple ungrouped average.

to \$1,068.76 in Class VII. These averages are biased by extreme observations, especially in the less populous divisions. In class I, 67.98 per cent of the churches reported valuations no greater than \$100 while 88 per cent of the churches reported ground values up to \$300. In Class VII, 28.44 per cent of the church grounds were valued from \$500 to \$1,000 and 10 per cent reported valuations of \$2,000 to \$4,000. Obviously land values increase, for the most part, as density of population increases but the fact that some churches in the less populous divisions had relatively large parcels of land tended to give these churches quite as extensive an investment in grounds as that of some parishes with small lots located in the larger villages.

Valuation of Church Property per Member.—Figure 19 shows the per capita valuation of buildings and equipment, and grounds. It is

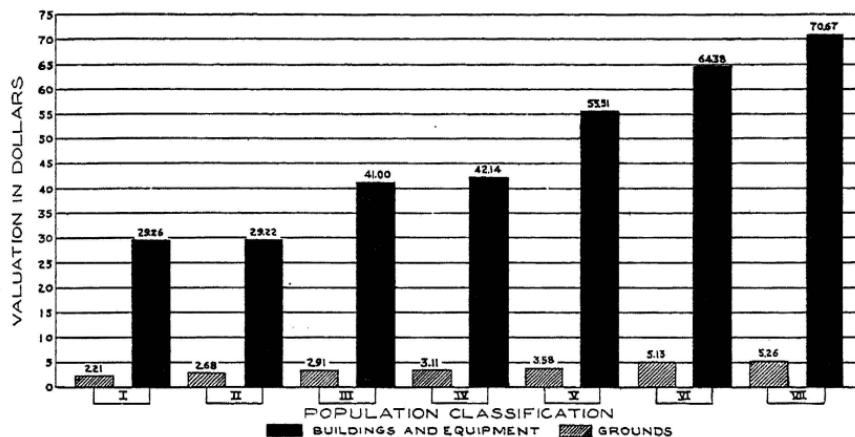


Fig. 19.—Per Member Valuation of Ground, Buildings, and Equipment; Classified by Population.

significant that the valuation of buildings and equipment per member was practically the same for Class I and Class II of the population divisions. In general churches in small villages having no more than 200 population were consistently relegated to the most inadequate level when compared with churches in the other rural population divisions; seldom do they show little if any improvement over churches in Class I. Per member valuation of buildings and equipment increased to \$41.00 in Class III, an appreciable increase over the valuation of \$29.22 in Class II. Churches in Class IV showed valuation of \$42.14 per member, only a small increase over that shown in Class III. From Class V through Class VII per member valuation continues to show substantial increase. The range from \$29.22 in Class II to \$70.67 in Class VII represents an increase of \$41.45 per church member as population increases 2,300 persons.

The valuation of church grounds per member gradually increased as population increased. Churches in Class I with a valuation of \$2.21 per member offered the lowest valuation while the highest was \$5.26, for church members in Class VII.

Indebtedness of Church Property.—Comparable data on indebtedness was not secured but some indication of the extent of indebtedness is offered by the reports from 232 churches. The incumbrances on rural church property reported by these churches ranged from \$5.00 to \$20,000. Indebtedness was appreciably larger for churches that had more than one building. For the total rural area the average indebtedness per church, where more than one building was involved, was \$1,803.75 while for churches having one structure the average was \$764.89. The data do not provide reliable comparison between the population divisions

in the form of averages. Construction of new church buildings was not confined to any particular population division, or divisions, and such construction provided the major basis for indebtedness. In general, however, the trend of indebtedness approaches that of valuation, increasing as population increases. For the total rural area 40.44 per cent of the churches having more than one building reported an indebtedness not exceeding \$500, 38.97 per cent reported debts of \$500 to \$2,000 and 20.59 per cent reported indebtedness over \$2,000. In Class VII, 58.82 per cent of the churches reporting from this division had debts on church property that amounted to over \$2,000. For churches having only one structure the indebtedness did not exceed \$100 for 22.92 per cent of them while an additional 41.67 per cent reported debts ranging from \$100 to \$500. Likewise 15.62 per cent had an indebtedness of from \$500 to \$1,000 and the remaining 19.79 per cent reported debts of \$1,000 or more.

Some parishes availed themselves of the "depression prices" on building materials and constructed new church buildings while in some instances neighboring parishes were on the verge of abandonment.

Church Expenditures.—Church expenditures may be classified under four major types of expenditure, viz: salary expense, running expense, construction and building improvement expense, and benevolences. The pastor's salary is the major element of the salary expense and for most rural churches it is the only salary expense. Occasionally small janitor and accompanist fees are offered but for the most part the rural church affords no such compensation. Running expense includes the expenditures not accounted for under the other three classifications, consisting for the most part of fuel, light and literature expense. Cost of new buildings and improvements constitutes an important class of church expenditure. The term improvement as used here implies the maintenance of church property in addition to extension of facilities other than new building construction. Benevolent expenditures include funds allocated to home missions, foreign missions and other benevolences. Exclusive of the churches that maintained records, the expenditures other than pastor's salary were estimated.

The pastor's salary has been referred to above (in discussion of the rural pastor) primarily from the pastor's standpoint. Here the salary is presented briefly in consideration of the expense per church member. For the total rural area the per capita salary expense was \$3.35, including all churches from which data was obtained and disregarding the distinction between expenditures on the basis of the frequency of preaching services. Figure 20 shows the per capita expense for the rural population divisions, ranging from \$2.58 per member in Class I to \$4.23 in Class VII.

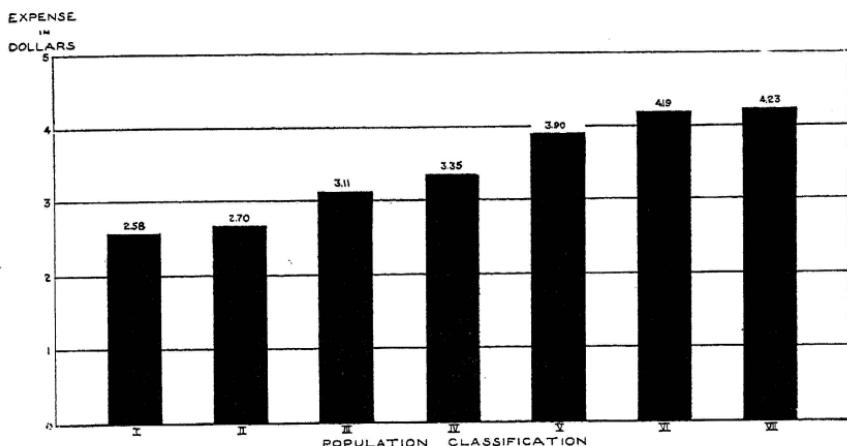


Fig. 20.—Pastor's Salary; Expense per Church Member.

Since the above per capita salary expenditures have not been offered in terms of the frequency of services conducted by the rural parish it seems well to recall that churches in Class VII were characteristically much larger than churches in Class I, they conducted full-time services while the typical church in Class I provided one-fourth-time services and the pastors in Class VII were in general much better educated and salaried than those in Class I. Therefore it follows that the church member in Class VII has an advantage in the form of pastoral services in contrast to the church member in Class I. Yet the former, financially stating the contrast, provided a donation of only \$1.65 more in 1933 than did the church member in Class I. The difference in the status of the church in the two divisions in question is almost obvious and in no sense is it intended to infer that the same advantages accrue to churches within the two divisions but on the other hand it seems similarly obvious that the church member in the least populous rural division pays out of proportion in consideration of that which is received, particularly in view of the frequency of services.

Salary expenditure per church member is further considered in terms of the frequency of preaching services (Table 11). The per capita expenditures thus presented were obtained from those churches which provided comparable data. For the total rural area the expenditure per member for three-fourths and full-time services was \$4.34. This expenditure may be considered typical of that expended for full time services due to the infrequent occurrence of churches which provided three-fourths-time services. The per capita expenditure for the population divisions increased from \$3.52 in Class I to \$4.63 in Class IV. Then as population increased from Class IV the per capita expenditure decreased to \$4.32 in Class VII. Again it should be mentioned that the

TABLE 11.—SALARY EXPENSE PER MEMBER (1933) CLASSIFIED ACCORDING TO FREQUENCY OF SERVICES AND POPULATION.

	Population Classification							Total Rural
	I	II	III	IV	V	VI	VII	
Total salary full and $\frac{3}{4}$ time service	\$33,158	\$23,880	\$31,282	\$35,254	\$67,971	\$87,912	\$120,585	\$400,042
Total membership-----	9,414	5,413	7,111	7,616	14,709	20,059	27,922	92,244
Sal. exp. per mem.-----	\$3.52	\$4.41	\$4.40	\$4.63	\$4.62	\$4.38	\$4.32	\$4.34
Total salary less than $\frac{3}{4}$ time service	\$78,826	\$65,328	\$64,251	\$43,528	\$25,331	\$17,861	\$11,988	\$307,113
Total membership-----	34,019	27,678	23,616	15,921	9,208	5,207	3,387	119,036
Sal. exp. per mem.-----	\$2.29	\$2.36	\$2.72	\$2.73	\$2.75	\$3.43	\$3.54	\$2.58

salaries offered by parishes in the less populous divisions were in general lower than those offered in the more populous divisions and therefore the per capita expenditure should be considered in terms of actual amounts expended. This will avoid the danger of assuming that the church member of a parish situated in a more populous locality was annually spending more for no good reason. In general the basic difference may be stated briefly; the higher the salary, the better equipped is the pastor with the salary being largely dependent upon the size of the church and, perhaps, the wealth of the community within which it is located.

The per capita salary expense is also presented here for churches that conduct less than three-fourths time services. For the total rural area such expenditure amounted to \$2.58 per member. The expenditure increased as population increased for the rural divisions from \$2.29 per member in Class I to \$3.54 in Class VII.

Comparable data were not obtained for running expenses due primarily to the inadequacy of financial records and the variation in the type of expenditures from parish to parish. The data that were received are presented only from the viewpoint of an estimate of the running expenses in 1933. Running expense is of course dependent for the most part upon the frequency of preaching services and the extent to which the parish is provided with buildings and equipment. For the purpose of presentation, running expenses have been classified on the basis of preaching services. A frequency distribution of such expenditures for churches that conduct less than three-fourths-time services is shown in Fig. 21 and for churches that offer three-fourths- or full-time services in Fig. 22. Inasmuch that the extensiveness of church property is largely related to the size of the church which, in turn, is closely related to the frequency of preaching services, the classification of running expenses on the basis of services may be considered likewise as a relative measure of running expenses classified on the basis of church property.

Considering first, churches that conduct services for less than three-fourths time; the average annual running expense for the total rural area was \$92.78. The median expenditure was \$59.35 while one-half the expenditures occurred between \$25.75 and \$116.25 with one-

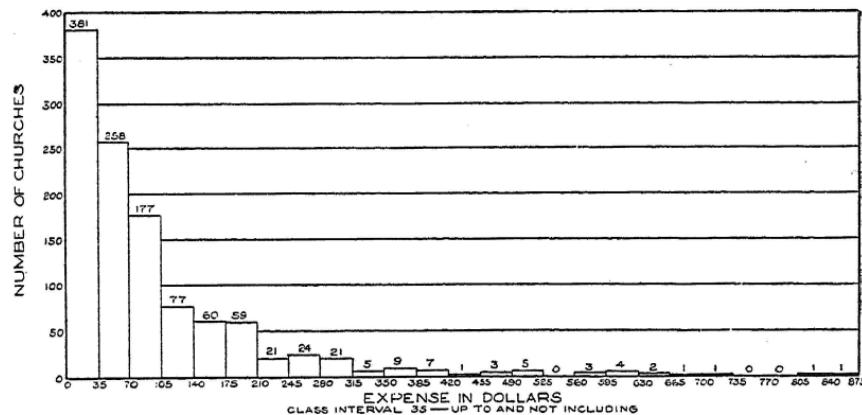


Fig. 21.—Distribution of Running Expenses for Churches Conducting Less than Three-fourths Time Services.

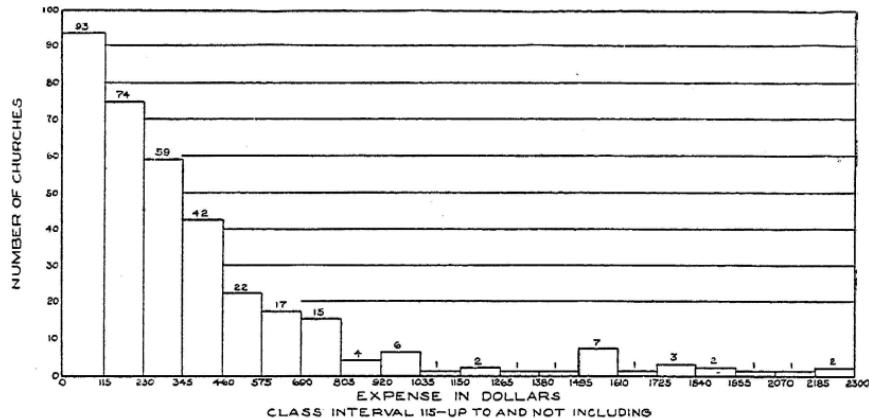


Fig. 22.—Distribution of Running Expenses for Churches Conducting Three-fourths and Full-time Services.

fourth of the churches expending less than \$25.75 and one-fourth more than \$116.25. The expenditures reported ranged from \$5.00 to \$850. Within the rural area the average expenditure ranged from \$72.18 in the open country to \$187.83 in Class VII with the latter representing a marked increase over the \$139.59 average for churches in Class VI. Approximately 50 per cent of the open country churches reported running expenses which fell in the first class interval (no larger than \$35.00) while approximately 20 per cent of the churches in Class VII reported a like expenditure. Turning to churches that conduct three-fourths and full-time services, the average for the total rural area was \$370.66 with a median expenditure of \$249.49. The most frequently reported expenditure was \$200.00 but there was no marked concentration

on this particular magnitude of expenditure. One-fourth of the expenditures were less than \$109.44, one-half occurred between \$109.44 and \$453.16, and one-fourth were larger than \$453.16. For the rural divisions, the smallest average expenditure was \$259.90 in Class II while for Classes I, III, IV, V, and VI the averages ranged from \$267.38 to \$353.77. Class VII offered the largest average, \$623.77. These latter divisional averages were relatively erratic due to the sample received and are presented only as an approximation of the expenditure within the rural area. As in the case of churches conducting less than three-fourths-time services approximately 50 per cent of the expenditures reported from the open country fell in the first class interval (no larger than \$115) while approximately 20 per cent from Class VII did likewise.

Per member running expense for the total rural area was \$1.10 in the year 1933. The annual expense per member in the open country was \$0.78, and in Class II, \$0.74 (Figure 23). The expenditure per capita increased as population increased through the remaining population divisions, from \$1.02 in Class III to \$1.63 in Class VII. It is recognized

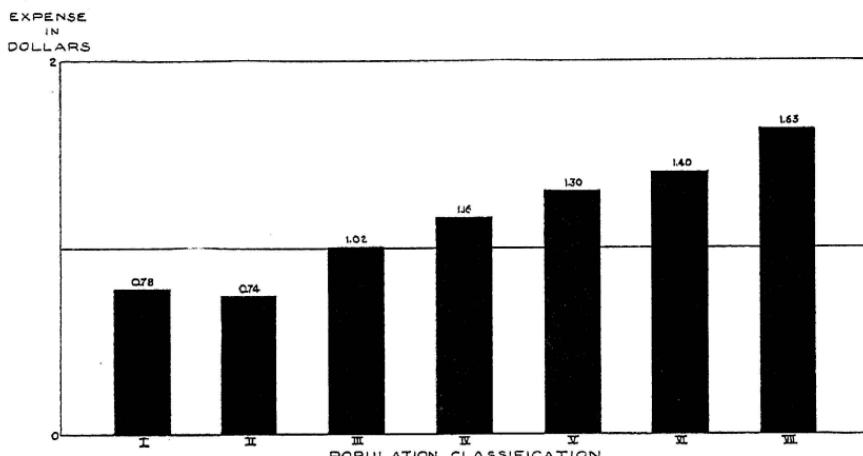


Fig. 23.—Running Expense per Church Member.

that, due to the effects of the depression, running expenses have been minimized and that many necessary expenditures have been entirely disregarded. Minimization of such expense has been especially true of churches located in the less populous divisions and indications are that such churches have been decidedly more restricted than those situated in the more densely populated divisions of the rural area. Therefore the per capita expenditures in the less populous divisions appear to be relatively lower than would be the case in more normal times. However, many of the smaller and relatively inactive churches in these areas have long been relatively immune from such expenditure and it is believed

that per capita expenditures would not be greatly enhanced even under so-called normal conditions.

Approximately 400 rural churches provided data on building improvement expense. The data do not provide a sufficient basis for comparable averages but the averages derived afford an approximation. When classified on the basis of frequency of church services a differentiation in the expenditures for improvement of building facilities was found between the amounts expended by churches conducting three-fourths or full-time services and those which provided less than three-fourths time services. The average annual expenditure of the former for the total rural area was \$249.68 with a median of \$133.07 while for the latter category of rural churches the average expenditure was \$143.89 with a median of \$69.03. The expenditures reported from all churches ranged from \$10 to \$2,000, excluding one extreme observation of \$4,000. When classified on the basis of the number of buildings there was no great difference between the average improvement expense for churches having one building and those having more than one. The former averaged \$204.54 and the latter \$226.88. The incidence (that a marked difference is noted in the average improvement expense when classified according to services while showing small difference when classified according to the number of structures) gives some indication perhaps that repairs and general improvement of church property is largely dependent upon the activity of a given parish rather than the absolute extent of church property. During the ordinary course of events it is reasonable to believe that the church with two or more buildings would by sheer necessity spend on the average considerable more for building improvement than the church with only one structure. However, unless the church is sufficiently active and capable of caring for its structural facilities the properties characteristically depreciate and deteriorate. It should be noted again that the averages presented above for improvement expenditures were derived from the reported expenditures of approximately 400 rural churches, the average expenditures presented should be considered as the average expenditure for the churches that did report such expenditure in the year 1933 and not as being applicable to churches in general for all years. The averages have been presented in order to provide at least a rough estimate of such expenditures.

Expenditure per member for building improvement was found from the available data. For the total rural area the improvement expense per member, in churches that reported such expenditure, was \$1.74. The per capita expense for the rural divisions displayed no particular relationship to population, due for the most part to the departures from comparability on the part of the sample. The lowest per capita expenditure was shown in Class V (\$0.99 per member) and the largest

(\$2.35) was shown by churches in Class II. The expenditure in the latter case is unusually large due primarily to the sample received. A larger and more comparable sample would probably change the relative position of Class II expenditures for building improvement. The other divisional per capita improvement expenditures were: Class I, \$1.78; Class III, \$2.17; Class IV, \$1.32; Class VI, \$1.36 and Class VII, \$1.95. It is assumed that these per capita expenditures afford an approximate measure of building improvement expense but it should be remembered that the available data were not wholly comparable or complete and therefore their usefulness is limited.

The fourth major church expenditure is the sum allotted for benevolent purposes. The rural church in general has long attempted to provide its proportionate part of the benevolences accruing to foreign missions, to educational functions, and to local charities. Many rural churches have provided their allotments for home missions while others have been the recipients of such benevolences. The rural church has long been a primary if not the only social service institution in its particular locality. Extensive benevolent accommodations have been provided under the auspices of the church which have never been considered in monetary terms. The true worth of such services could, perhaps, never be fully determined by financial units of measurement but the fact that such unlisted benevolences do exist is mentioned as a material consideration in connection with rural church benevolences. The following treatment of benevolences is confined to the presentation of data, made available during the course of the present study, pertaining to the benevolent expenditures made from church funds.

A number of churches reported total benevolent expenditures but only about one-half of the churches reported classified them according to the type of benevolence. Table 12 shows a compilation of the data reported and the resultant average benevolent expenditures per church classified on the basis of population. It will be noted that the expenditures

TABLE 12.—BENEVOLENCE EXPENDITURE CLASSIFIED ACCORDING TO THE TYPE OF BENEVOLENCE AND POPULATION*.

		Population Classification							Total Rural
		I	II	III	IV	V	VI	VII	
Foreign Missions	Total Benevolence-----	\$2,785	2,500	3,010	2,555	3,570	4,325	8,125	26,870
	No. of Churches-----	111	.99	.70	.47	.66	.59	.73	525
	Average**-----	\$25.09	25.25	43.00	54.36	54.09	73.31	111.30	51.18
Home Missions	Total Benevolence-----	\$3,275	3,675	3,450	2,015	4,255	4,075	7,795	28,540
	No. of Churches-----	150	122	.96	.53	.69	.63	.76	629
	Average**-----	\$21.83	30.12	35.94	38.02	61.67	64.68	102.57	45.37
Other Benevolences	Total Benevolence-----	\$6,295	4,645	6,125	4,140	3,555	6,105	9,680	40,545
	No. of Churches-----	163	131	.95	.56	.62	.69	.66	642
	Average**-----	\$38.62	35.46	64.47	73.93	57.34	88.48	146.67	63.15

*The table includes only the data from churches where distinction was made between the types of benevolences.

**Simple ungrouped average.

classified as "other benevolences" is much greater than those of either of the remaining two classifications. This is largely due to the fact that the classification is a "catch all" and contains benevolences other than those accounted for by the other classifications. The most prominent benevolence included in the "other classification" is that for educational purposes. It is regretted that further classification of benevolences was not obtainable; inadequacy of church records contributed largely to this short-coming in the data received.

For the total rural area the average provision for foreign missions was \$51.18 per church. The average expenditure increased as population increased with the exception of the expenditure in Class V which averaged somewhat less than the Class II expenditure. The average ranged from \$25.09 in Class I to \$111.30 in Class VII. However, the individual magnitudes of foreign mission benevolences were not as large in general as the averages seem to indicate. In Class I 59.46 per cent of the expenditures were no greater than \$10 while 70.27 per cent were no greater than \$20 and only 4.50 per cent were greater than \$100. In contrast to Class I, 16.43 per cent of the expenditures in Class VII were no greater than \$20.00 while 28.77 per cent were more than \$100.00. For the remaining population divisions the percentages of the size expenditures just mentioned varied between the two extremes (Class I and Class VII), changing as population changed with Class II showing but slight increase in individual church expenditures. The average expenditure for home missions displayed a similar trend to that of foreign missions except for the relative magnitude of expenditure for churches in Class II, in contrast to the average expenditure in Class I. The former in this instance showed the largest average expenditure. The average in Class II, for the most part, is the reflection of a relatively few observations which lend bias to the average. For the total rural area the average expenditure for home missions was \$45.37, while within the rural area the average increased from \$21.83 in Class I to \$102.57 in Class VII. In Class I expenditures no greater than \$20.00 were reported by 67.34 per cent of the churches and only 1.33 per cent reported home mission benevolences exceeding \$100.00, while in Class VII expenditures not exceeding \$20.00 were reported by 27.64 per cent of the churches with 24.99 per cent reporting such benevolences in excess of \$100.00.

It should be noted in this connection that the averages for benevolent expenditures are not definitely comparable between types of benevolences due to the fact that the averages for a given type benevolence were derived from all available data pertaining to that particular benevolence, not confining the computation of such averages to the relatively few churches that provided complete reports on all benevolent expenditure.

The average expenditures for "other benevolences" were more erratic but exemplified the same tendency in general as that shown by home and foreign mission benevolences. The rather extreme departures in the average expenditure for "other benevolences" were due primarily to the fluctuations encountered from church to church in their provisions for educational benevolences. The average (\$63.15) for the total rural area was unduly large due to the presence of data from a few churches whose educational benevolences overshadowed that of all other churches in magnitude. Within the rural area 60.74 per cent of the churches in Class I reported "other benevolences" that did not exceed \$20.00 while 9.20 per cent reported expenditures greater than \$100.00. In Class VII the expenditure in 27.28 per cent of the cases did not exceed \$20.00 while 36.37 per cent were greater than \$100.00.

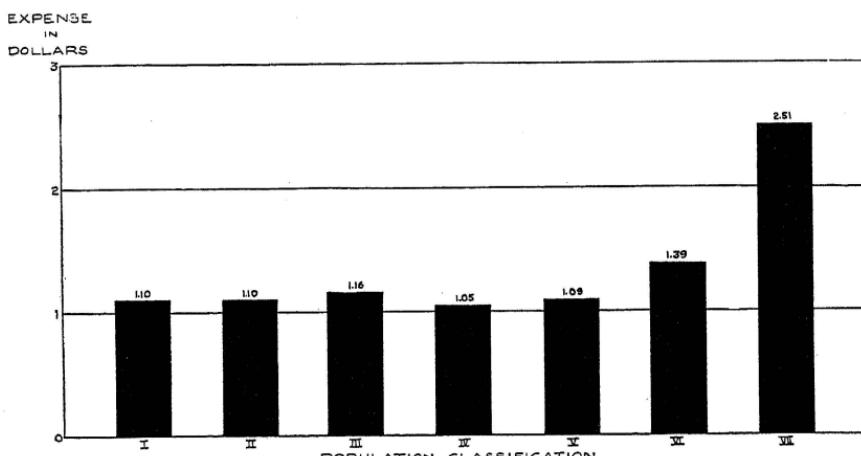


Fig. 24.—Benevolence Expenditure per Church Member.

Per capita benevolence expenditure (total benevolences) for the total rural area was \$1.32. Figure 24 shows the per capita expenditures for the rural divisions. Class IV with an annual expenditure of \$1.05 per church member showed the lowest expenditure while Class VII had the highest with an expenditure of \$2.51 per member. The significant feature of the per capita benevolent expenditures, insofar as the available data may be relied upon, is the similarity in per capita expenditure for the five less populous rural divisions while Class VII shows an appreciably larger expenditure per church member than is evidenced by any of the other six divisions.

Benevolences have in many respects been an almost unbearable burden for the rural church during the last few years. Many rural churches have been confronted with unsurmountable financial difficulties

in keeping the doors of the church open for preaching services and some have been entirely inadequate to the situation. Benevolences in many cases have almost ceased to be thought of as a mode of giving and instead have come to symbolize that which should be received. To exemplify the trend of depressed times it seems appropriate to offer one of the frequent comments received during the course of the study. One such commentary with particular reference to benevolences was, "We just give 'till it hurts". Such an attitude prevailed in general throughout the rural area and especially was it true, as an expression of distress, from numerous small churches. Larger churches, it is true, were likewise distressed but in general they were able to at least maintain the major services of the church. It is worthy of recognition that although many churches were unable to make cash benevolent contributions many could and did contribute various commodities instead.

Church Income.—In general rural church total income was synonymous with total expenditure in 1933 except, of course, with utter disregard to the element of indebtedness. That is to say, the rural church was rarely confronted with surplus revenues. The financial processes of the church functioned for the most part similarly to the principle (if we may borrow terminology from the business world) of "hand to mouth buying". The immediate needs were cared for more or less as the occasion arose. During the "depression" most church expenditures were by necessity restricted to conform to the trend in income. This restriction has primarily been reflected by reductions in the frequency of preaching services with subsequent lessening of salary and running expenses. Then, for the most part, the income for the year 1933 is exemplified by the expenditures presented above. However there is one element of primary significance which should be noted in this instance namely, funds secured for church purposes through the beneficial activities conducted by various organizations within the church.

The per capita expenditures which have been considered in this chapter were derived from the particular expenditures reported by the various churches. When it is said that expenditure was more or less synonymous with income it is not intended to convey the impression that per capita expenditures were typical of individual contributions. In addition to such individual contributions church funds were augmented by monies derived from sundry activities conducted by the various church organizations. For the year 1933 the data seem to indicate that for the total rural area approximately 20 to 30 per cent of the total expenditures were derived from such extra individual contribution sources of income. Information pertaining to funds received from organizational activities was not obtained during the course of the present study. Subscriptions and collections accounted for the greater portion

of church income ranging from less than 25.00 to \$2,100 for churches conducting less than three-fourths-time services and to as much as \$7,800 for churches conducting three-fourths and full-time services. The median size revenue derived from subscriptions and collections for churches conducting less than three-fourths-time services was \$230.24 while in the case of churches offering three-fourths and full-time services the median was \$1,432.73. The latter median was derived from the subscriptions and collections reported from 380 churches while the former was computed from the reports of 1,189 churches.

Recent Trends in Rural Church Finance.—Trends in expenditure in this instance are considered primarily from the viewpoint of a comparison of expenditures in more prosperous years with those in a depressed year. Data on expenditures were received for the years 1920, 1929 and 1933. A total of 443 churches in the total rural area indicated trends in salary expenditures, 296 churches provided data on running expenses

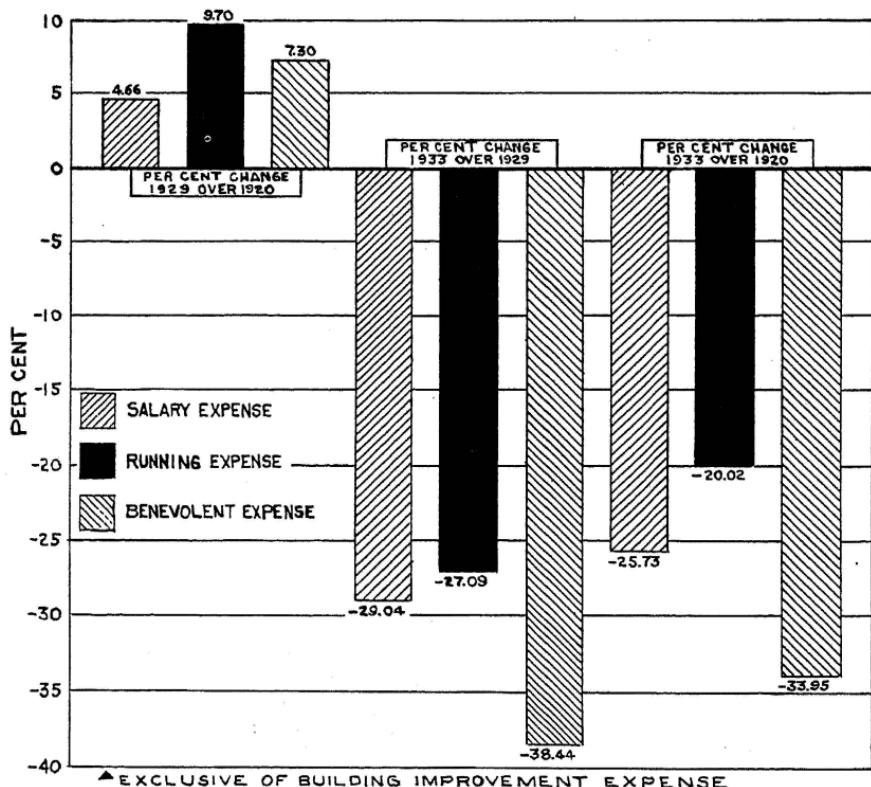


Fig. 25.—Percentage Change in Church Expenditure for the Total Rural Area or 1929 over 1920, 1933 over 1929, 1933 over 1920.

for each of the three years and data on benevolent expenditures were received from 266 churches. Figure 25 shows the percentage change in the total expenditure for each type of expenditure.³⁷ Percentage change is shown for 1929 over 1920, for 1933 over 1929 and for 1933 over 1920 representing the total rural area. The total expenditure reported for salaries in 1929 showed an increase of 4.66 per cent over the total amount expended in 1920. In absolute amounts the aggregate salary expenditure of the 443 churches reporting was \$280,364 in 1920 and \$293,433 in 1929, a net increase of \$13,069 for the period represented. In 1933 the aggregate salary expenditure dropped severely downward to \$208,220 representing a net decrease of \$85,213 since 1929 and in terms of percentage, a decrease of 29.04 per cent. The aggregate sum spent for salaries in 1933 was 25.73 per cent less than the total sum in 1920. Likewise aggregate running expenses increased 9.70 per cent in 1929 over the total expenditure in 1920 while in 1933 such expenditure decreased 27.09 per cent compared to that in 1929 and 20.02 per cent when compared to the expenditure in 1920. Benevolent expenditures had increased 7.30 per cent in 1929 over 1920 but the aggregate expenditure in 1933 was 38.44 per cent less than it had been in 1929 and 33.95 per cent lower than the total in 1920. The same trend in general held true within the rural population division. Data which were available³⁸ pertaining to trend in building improvement expenditure indicated a decided downward trend with approximately 70 per cent less expenditure in 1933 than in 1920.

Data pertaining to rural church income derived from subscriptions and collections were received from 288 churches for the three specific years in question (1920, 1929 and 1933). Such data seem to indicate that in recent years an increasing proportion of expenditures have been provided through the activities of various church organizations. The aggregate income from subscriptions and collections, representing the churches that were reported from the total rural area, showed a decrease of 2.15 per cent in 1929 in contrast to the income from the same sources in 1920, yet, the trend, seemingly, in expenditure was upward in 1929 compared to the previous year, 1920. The data are not wholly comparable but the variation is not sufficient to void the generalization that expenditure increased in 1929 while income from subscriptions and collections decreased, in comparison to the expenditure and income in 1920. This decrease in income was evidenced for the most part throughout the least populous rural divisions while Class VI and Class VII showed an increase of approximately 15 per cent in the total income from subscriptions and collections in 1929. In 1933 the total

³⁷Exclusive of building improvement expense for which sufficient data were not obtained.

³⁸A total of 44 churches provided information pertaining to trend in building improvement expenditure.

sum of subscriptions and collections for the total rural area was 32.65 per cent less than the total in 1929, and 34.09 per cent less than in 1920. This trend was evidenced throughout the rural divisions, the decrease in 1933 from 1929 ranging from 26.47 per cent (the smallest percentage decrease) in Class II to 39.91 per cent (the largest percentage decrease) in Class VI.

It should be remembered in consideration of the trends presented above that trend has not been considered over a period of years but the term is construed to infer the change in one given year when compared to another specified year. A contrast of the expenditure or income in a specific year with that in another specified year which was typical of the churches from which that data was received.

V.—COMMUNITY CHURCH TRENDS

The Community Church in Rural Missouri.—The term community church has been rather widely mentioned from time to time in connection with rural church affairs. This term has been, in some instances, symbolic of a type of church as differentiated from various denominational institutions while in other instances, the term community church has been applied with no inference of a specific type of organization and has been applied only as a name, with no functional differentiation. It was beyond the scope of the present study to include a comprehensive survey of the community church but attempt was made to determine in some degree the existence and tendencies toward the establishment of such organizations. When the term community church is used in this connection it is intended to infer that some method or plan of cooperative organization between denominational factions is present. Hooker listed three generally recognized types of united churches:³⁹ the federated church, the undenominational church, and the denominational united church. She also refers to a fourth type, the affiliated church, which was found during the course of a survey of agricultural villages conducted by the Institute of Social and Religious Research during 1922-1925. These types are: a federated church is composed of two or more organized churches differing in denomination, each related to its own denominational body, which have entered into an agreement to act together as regards local affairs. The denominational units retain their own identity and frequently continue to send benevolences to their separate denominational boards. They combine in holding services of worship in common, in social calling and in paying a minister. The undenominational church is an organized church not connected with any denominational body. The denominational united church is one, connected with a single denominational body, that has definitely undertaken the responsibility

³⁹Hooker, Elizabeth R., United Churches, George H. Doran Company 1926.

for the religious needs of a community or an area that may include members of different denominations in its population. The affiliated church is one that in freedom to form its own constitution and control its own local affairs resembles the undenominational church. It is, however, connected with a denominational body for such purposes as ministerial supply and the distribution of benevolences. Persons from other denominations are received to full membership with equal voting powers.

The data received do not afford an adequate basis for allocation of united churches in Missouri to the types as mentioned by Hooker. It remains for further study to determine the extent of the existence of such churches. The following is a general summary of the data concerning the present status and tendencies of the union church for the area studied.

1. The average age of 2,110 rural churches in Missouri was approximately 50 years. Of these churches, 320 or 15.17 per cent had been established since 1915 and 180 churches or 8.53 per cent had been established since 1925. About one-half of the churches established since 1925 were of united types. This approximation, however, does not reveal the true tendency quite as fully as it actually exists inasmuch that many churches which have recently united in one way or another, reported original dates of founding rather than the dates of reorganization.
2. The recent "depression" brought about conditions in many instances under which some form of cooperative endeavor was imperative for the continued existence of some churches. Cooperation was reported in such forms as combinations between denominations for the purpose of using one church building and for the purpose of utilizing one pastor as well as one building. These cases approach the category of the federated type of united church previously mentioned. A number of cases were reported where combined Sunday School and prayer meeting services had recently come into being but where no attempt had been made to unite in preaching services.
3. One rural church was reported through which persons of different denominational affiliation solved their problem by holding union services in one church building within their neighborhood although maintaining membership affiliations with their denominational preferences "in town".
4. A number of churches indicated participation in union services during the summer months. This tendency seems to be most apparent in recent years.

5. Almost all churches showing union tendencies were in the four least populous rural divisions, i. e., from the open country up to places having less than 600 population. Only one such church was reported from Class VII of the rural divisions, this church had 303 members representing four major denominations and was similar to the affiliated type.
6. All but one of three or more churches in some communities had become inactive over a period of time with the consequence that members from the inactive churches attended services in the one active church but had no permanent affiliation.
7. Some indications were noted of attempts at union which had failed due to various factional disputes.
8. In another instance existing denominations in a given locality had recently abandoned their own church buildings to meet together in some community building.
9. A large number of churches termed community churches were reported from the open country. The majority of these, however, were affiliated with some denomination and were community churches only in the sense that they were the only church within a particular locality.

From the foregoing it appears that there is a rather definite union church trend in Missouri. It is not clear, however, whether it is a somewhat permanent development or whether it is a temporary one brought about in the present emergency largely for the purpose of economic convenience.

Attitude Toward the Community Church.—An indication of the attitude toward the community church in the open country was manifest in the replies given in answer to the two following questions pertaining to community church trends: First, Is there any need for a community church? Second, Have any steps been taken toward such an objective? The replies here presented do not emphasize any specific attitude but rather give a general impression of rural feeling toward possible changes in existing church situations. Such replies are of course the expressions of individuals who answered the questionnaires which were presented during the course of study. Therefore, they should not be considered as being representative of entire parishes. The replies were made by either the pastor, a church official or the county worker and it is perhaps true that the expressions of these persons in many instances reflect the attitude of at least a majority of a given congregation but they are offered here for the most part as the expression of a single individual's attitude. Simultaneously along with an expression of attitudes the replies in several instances reflect the general status of various churches.

In answer to the question—Is there any need for a community Church?—the following replies are typical:

"No, the community church is not mentioned in the Bible". "Yes, this community is small and needs only one protestant church—there are three now. It is doubtful if it can come to pass because all denominations are narrow in their view. In a way, all churches are united in having a union prayer meeting each week"; "No, this church makes a plea for Christian unity as outlined in the New Testament but doesn't preach nor approve of so-called community agreements"; "Yes, with the building of roads (a state highway is only one mile from this church) this church is slowly passing out of usefulness; the membership attends church in town"; "No, there is never any need for a community church, but there is need for a church in every community"; "Yes, I think that the churches in all these small towns should be united in some way"; "No, a community church is a detriment to any community"; "Yes, and no, there should be two churches here instead of five"; "No, not the slightest"; "Yes, if organized having a world wide program, if a disjointed local community organization then, no"; "Yes, but it must have some sort of satisfactory background"; "Yes, we have trouble raising the money to pay the pastor and members have become discouraged trying, thirteen paying families cannot support a pastor"; "Yes, there is one other church and neither congregation can afford to keep a preacher, both denominations meet together for a community Sunday School"; "Yes and no, while a church should be located somewhere near this site, there are too many in this territory—within a radius of five miles there are seven churches"; "No, this is a small town church that believes in preaching and living the Gospel and is not particular about records, recreations, gymnastics, etc. . . .".

The following are replies received in answer to the question—Have any steps been taken toward such an objective?

"Yes, our group tried to get the other churches in town to appoint two from each congregation to meet with two from our own—to discuss formation of a community church but the others were not interested"; "Yes, we have community services every fifth Sunday"; "I have endeavored to bring two churches together. . . . bu so far have had no results, the smaller of the two is going ahead with a building program all their own. There are several churches in this town with many duplications of efforts and, besides, it is my duty to extend my efforts over two hundred and eighty square miles"; "I think it has been suggested by some but there was no response"; "Yes, this is a community church, the people who go to this church have different beliefs but all go to the same church and take turns in having ministers of the different denominations preach"; "No, and it is devoutly hoped that no such steps will ever be taken. . . ."; "Yes, this church was organized by the uniting of four churches at this place, some of which had no preaching services and others only one quarter time. . . ."; "No, we do not believe in the so-called community church"; "No, we have enough churches now, a community church would only make one more".

The Optimum Sized Church.—Is there a best or most favorable size for rural churches? The answer to such a question might be that there probably is such a size.⁴⁰ It is not intended to infer here that a given church should gain a particular number of members, then cease all efforts toward the acquisition of new members. Likewise there is no intention to infer that there can be any one size which would be best for churches in all localities. On the contrary the inference is that of an ever-increasing membership. It is beyond the scope of the present study to offer solutions for the problems presented but it is possible to offer some evidence pertinent to optimum size.

40. One church for 1,000 people is regarded as the norm (Morse, H. N., and Bruner, E. DeS., op. cit.)

For practical purposes in this instance optimum size will be considered as that which, in a particular locality, is at least large enough to make proper provision for normal church functions and facilities. That is, provide adequate facilities and conduct full time services under the leadership of a well trained adequately paid pastor. The exact sized church in which such functions can be most efficiently maintained would be difficult to determine without a case study of localities. However, some measure is afforded, of the situation at the time of this study, by an examination of the size of churches classified according to the frequency of preaching services.

Churches in the total rural area were classified on the basis of the frequency of preaching services and the corresponding memberships were arranged.⁴¹ A total of 518 churches reporting full time services had an average membership of 196.41. Within the rural area the smallest average membership for churches conducting full time services was shown in Class II of the rural population divisions with an average of 121.25 members while in Class VII the average was 260.64 members. The average memberships for the total rural area, classified according to preaching services, are shown in figure 26 and also the corresponding average⁴² attendances. The average membership for churches conducting three-fourths-time services was 129.15 members, an average which was derived from 39 church memberships. It should be recalled that churches affording three-fourths-time services were of relatively infrequent occurrence and were likewise peculiar to no particular locality but it does seem significant that the average membership in churches conducting such services was in keeping with the generalization that the greater the number of members, the more frequent the preaching services. The average for 575 churches reporting half-time services was 111.21 members. Within the rural area the average for half-time services increased as population increased from 89.94 members in Class I to 136.05 members in Class V, then decreased to 108.70 members in Class VI while the average in Class VII for half-time services was 114.81 members. A total of 1,050 memberships in churches conducting one-fourth-time services averaged 74.33 members. For the rural divisions the average increased from 67.48 members in Class II to 102.10 members in Class V then decreased to 87.36 members in Class VI while the average in Class VII evidenced still more decrease with 74.80 members being the average for churches conducting one-fourth-time services. A total of 138 churches which conducted irregular services reported memberships which averaged 51.14 members while the average membership for 37 inactive churches was 34.54 members.

⁴¹Simple ungrouped average.

⁴²Average of average attendances.

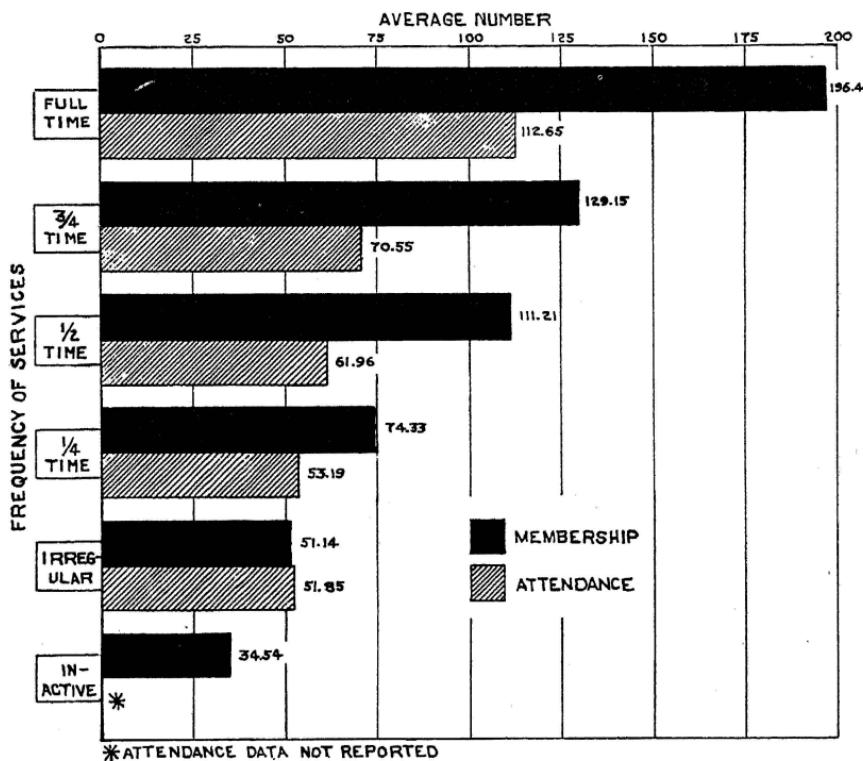


Fig. 26.—Average Membership and Average Attendance of Churches Classified on the Basis of Preaching Services.

It is believed that the average memberships presented above afford at least a rough basis for the determination of what should be an adequate size. All churches having full-time services of course do not have 196.41 members, some have more and some have less but the average is, in general, typical of churches in rural Missouri that conducted full-time services in the year 1934. It is not to be inferred that approximately 200 members is the most desirable size for rural churches but from these data it does appear that such a number of members is desirable and necessary at least as a general minimum if a given church is to conduct full-time services and provide other functions and facilities.

GENERAL SUMMARY

I. Membership

1. Size of the rural church.

- (1) For the total rural area, there was an average of 107.12 members per church and a median of 81.41 members.

- (2) The average membership was smallest (77.47 members) in villages having a population up to 200 persons (Class II) while the largest average membership (199.74 members) was found in churches located in places having a population of 1,500 to 2,500 persons (Class VII).
 - (3) Less than 70 members were reported by 43.67 per cent of the churches in the total rural area and 63.09 per cent had less than 105 members.
 - (4) In the open country (Class I) 54.47 per cent of the churches had less than 70 members while 1.13 per cent had more than 350 members. On the other hand, 19.21 per cent of the churches in Class VII were larger than 350 members and 23.65 per cent were smaller than 70 members.
 - (5) Approximately 16 per cent of the total number of churches represented had memberships smaller than 35, which accounted for only 3.40 per cent of the total number of members reported.
2. Composition of rural church membership.
- (6) Approximately 43 per cent of the total membership was male and the remaining 57 per cent, female.
 - (7) About 90 per cent of the membership was over 13 years of age.
3. The number of families represented in rural church membership.
- (8) For all churches the average number of families per church was 43.82 while the median number of families was 31.50.
 - (9) The average number of families per church ranged from 30.69 in Class II to 88.69 in Class VII.
 - (10) The average size of church family consists of approximately 2.39 persons.
4. The distance from home to church.
- (11) An average distance of no more than two miles from the place of residence to church was reported by 64.63 per cent of the churches in the total rural area.
 - (12) In Class I which is the open country 54.30 per cent of the churches reported an average distance which did not exceed two miles.
5. Membership trends.
- (13) A villageward trend is evidenced in rural church memberships with places having a population of 1,000 to 2,500 (Classes VI and VII) receiving most of the exodus from the less populous rural localities.
 - (14) Villageward trend has apparently been most marked during the years of the recent "depression".
 - (15) Trend toward larger church memberships is shown.

II. Church Services

1. Frequency of Preaching Services.

- (16) Slightly less than one-fourth of the churches enjoyed full-time services while almost one-half conducted only one-fourth-time services.
- (17) The frequency of preaching services tends to be associated with the population of the locality within which a given church is located. In Class I (the open country) only 11.11 per cent of the churches conducted services more frequently than half-time while in Class VII (places having a population of 1,500-2,500) 70.92 per cent conducted three-fourths or full-time services.
- (18) Of the churches conducting less than one-fourth-time services (irregular, etc.), approximately 65 per cent were in the open country (Class I) and places having no more than 200 population (Class II).

2. Preaching service attendance.

- (19) Average attendance tended to increase as membership increased but, in general, did not increase by as great a rate of increase, nor was average attendance as large as average membership.

3. Church schools.

- (20) The average number of pupils in Sunday School was 77.42 while the median was 61.69 pupils.
- (21) The number of teachers and officers in Sunday Schools averaged 10.
- (22) For the total rural area, approximately 15 per cent of the churches reported that either summer vacation Bible schools or weekday religious schools were conducted or participated in. The per cent of churches thus characterized increased as population increased.

4. Revivals.

- (23) The revival may be said to be a characteristic service in rural Missouri with 75.19 per cent of the churches conducting one annually.
- (24) The most frequently reported length of revival was two weeks, a length reported by 63.49 per cent of the churches.
- (25) Evangelists conducted revivals in 30.69 per cent of the churches while in 41.93 per cent they were conducted by the local pastor.

5. The church as a meeting place for other groups.

- (26) Church facilities were not used by extra-congregational groups in more than 85 per cent of the churches while less than 15 per cent of the churches did report such use of their facilities.

III. The Rural Pastor

1. Availability of rural pastors.

- (27) Non-resident pastors were reported from 48.63 per cent of the churches, resident pastors served in 36.93 per cent of the churches and the remaining 14.44 per cent had no pastor.
- (28) Within the rural area, the number of churches having non-resident pastors decreased from 62.55 per cent in the open country to 14.28 per cent in places having a population of 1,500 to 2,500.

2. Distance from residence to parish.

- (29) The average distance from the pastor's home to his parish was 22.29 miles. The median distance was 14.42 miles.
- (30) One-fourth of the parishes were served by pastors who traveled from 27 to 165 miles.

3. Length of service in present parish.

- (31) Nearly 35 per cent of the pastors had served no longer than one year in their present parishes while 85 per cent had served no longer than five years.
- (32) Pastors had served, on the average, 3.55 years in their present parishes. The median was 2.29 years.

4. Other churches served by the pastor.

- (33) An average of 1.85 other parishes were served by rural pastors in addition to their present parish.

5. Length of service in previous parishes.

- (34) Rural pastors in Missouri have served an average of 14.71 years in previous parishes (before coming to the one from which they were reported). One-fourth have served less than five years in previous parishes while an additional one-fourth have served in such parishes for more than 20 years.

6. Education of the rural pastor.

- (35) In Class I (the open country) 40 per cent of the pastors had attended no higher institution of learning than high school and more than 20 per cent had not gone beyond grade school.
- (36) On the other hand in Class VII approximately 90 per cent of the pastors had received training beyond high school.

7. The pastor's salary.

- (37) For full-time services the average annual salary was \$968.33.
- (38) More than three-fourths of the churches in the open country provided less than \$1,000 annually for full time salaries. In places having 1,500 to 2,500 population only one-fifth of the salaries were less than \$1,000.
- (39) Generally, pastors not only received a smaller salary in less populous localities but they also received less when they

served in more than one church. That is to say: the more churches served the smaller the salary received; and, at the same time, the less the population the less the salary.

IV. Church Property, Expenses and Income

1. Church property.
 - (40) The percentage of churches having more than one building increased from 12.32 per cent in the open country to 61.18 per cent in places having a population of 1,000 to 1,500 (Class VI).
 - (41) Approximately 4 per cent of the churches had no structures of their own.
2. Valuation of buildings and equipment.
 - (42) The average valuation of buildings and equipment was slightly less than \$5,000. When classified according to the number of structures the average valuation was approximately \$2,600 for churches having one building and \$10,995 in instances of more than one structure.
3. Valuation of grounds.
 - (43) Church grounds averaged slightly more than \$350 in value.
4. Valuation of church property per member.
 - (44) Per member valuation of buildings and equipment decreased from \$70.67 in places having a population of 1,500 to 2,500 to \$29.22 in small villages of no more than 200 persons.
5. Indebtedness of church property.
 - (45) Debts on church property ranged from \$5.00 to \$20,000.00. The indebtedness was appreciably larger for churches having more than one building.
6. Church expenditures.
 - (46) In 1933, a depression year, the expenditure for pastors' salaries amounted to \$3.35 per church member.
 - (47) For churches conducting less than three-fourths-time services the average running expense in 1933 was \$92.78 while in churches that conducted three-fourths and full-time services the average was \$370.66.
 - (48) Running expense per church member was \$1.10 in the depression year, 1933.
 - (49) For the most part average benevolent expenditures increased as population increased.
7. Church income.
 - (50) Rural churches tended to spend as they received in 1933, with total income being more or less synonymous with total expenditures.

8. Recent trends in rural church finance.

- (51) The data received shows that expenditures were greater in 1929 than they were in 1920 and that expenditures in 1933 were about one-third less than the 1929 expenditures.

V. Community Church Trends

1. The Community Church in Rural Missouri.

- (52) Churches have been established, on the average, for 50 years while more than 8 per cent of the churches reported have been established since 1925. Of the churches established since 1925 approximately one-half were of united types.

- (53) Economic conditions have at least temporarily intensified union movements of one type or another.

2. Attitude toward the Community Church.

- (54) Individual expressions in regard to the need for a community church were about evenly divided, pro and con.

3. The optimum sized church.

- (55) It was found that the average number of members per church increased as the frequency of preaching services increased, from an average of 34.54 members in inactive churches to an average of 196.41 members in churches conducting full-time services.

APPENDIX

This appendix is intended to afford a brief explanation of certain statistical terms. For a more adequate description of statistical methods the reader should refer to text books on elementary statistics.¹

I. The Frequency Distribution

The frequency distribution is simply an arrangement of numerical data according to size. For example, in Fig. 1, the memberships of 2,590 churches were grouped into 20 divisions which are called class intervals. It is assumed that the midpoints of the class intervals represent the size of the memberships that fall in the various intervals. Thus in the interval 35-70 (Fig. 1) the midpoint (52.5) is taken to represent the size of the 711 church memberships which fell in that class interval. The size of the interval selected (35 members in this instance) depends upon the data in question, the object being to obtain intervals in which there are as many cases (church memberships in this instance) below the midpoint as above.

In Fig. 1 the frequency distribution is presented graphically by what is generally known as the *Histogram*. In this chart the area of the rectangles for the several class intervals represents the total number of church memberships which fell in those intervals. For the reader's convenience the number of cases in the various intervals has been designated by numbers at the top of the rectangles. Thus Figure 1 indicates that there were 420 churches that had less than 35 members, 711 had from 35 to 70 members, 503 had from 70 to 105 members, etc.

The frequency distribution is also presented graphically in the *Frequency Polygon* (Fig. 16). In this chart the total area under the curve represents the total number of cases (salaries of 404 full time pastors in this instance). The height of the curve (with respect to the vertical scale on the left which is the Y axis) at the midpoint of the class intervals represents the number of cases within the intervals. Thus Fig. 16 shows that there were 24 salaries of less than \$190 while 27 were from \$190 to \$380—etc.

An accumulation of the cases by class intervals is presented graphically in the *Cumulative Frequency Curve* (Fig. 2). The curve accumulates the frequencies (number of cases) of the several class intervals from zero up through the last interval and thereby includes the total number of cases. The highest point at the end of the curve represents the total number of items (275,479 church members in Fig. 2) in the distribution. The slope of the curve is gradual when the frequencies are few and in turn it becomes steeper as the number of cases becomes greater.

¹Croxton, F. E., and Cowden, D. J., *Practical Business Statistics*, Prentice-Hall Inc., 1934; Crum, W. L. and Patton, A. C., *Economic Statistics*, A. W. Shaw Company, 1928; Mills, F. C., *Statistical Methods*, Henry Holt and Company, 1924; White, R. C., *Social Statistics*, Harper and Brothers, 1933.

II. Measures of Central Tendency (Averages)

A. *The Arithmetic Average.*—The arithmetic average is the most familiar measure of central tendency. In ungrouped data (data that have not been grouped into a frequency distribution) the arithmetic average is derived by simply adding the observations and dividing the sum obtained by the number of items. When dealing with a large number of items however such procedure is highly laborious. Therefore it is advantageous to group the items by use of the frequency distribution which will make the computation of averages, etc., less tedious. The arithmetic average may be obtained of the items in a frequency distribution by the formula:

$$Ma = \frac{\sum f m}{N}$$

in which Ma represents the arithmetic average; \sum = "the sum of"; f = the frequency (or number) of items within a class interval; m = the midpoint of that class interval and N = the total number of items. The average obtained in this manner, assuming a fairly even distribution of items in each class interval, corresponds to the average obtained when the data are not grouped.

B. *The Median.*—The median is so located that one-half of the items fall above and one-half below. In ungrouped data arranged according to magnitude it is the middle value (or item) if there is an odd number of observations. Where the data are grouped into a frequency distribution

N
2

the median may be located by interpolation using the formula:— in which

N = the total number of items. Thus the class interval in which the median falls is located.

C. *The Mode.*—The mode is the point of greatest concentration or the item that occurs most frequently. If the data have not been grouped into a frequency distribution the mode is simply the item that was reported most often. In the frequency distribution the approximate mode may be obtained from the formula:

$$l + \frac{f_1}{f_1 + f_2} i$$

in which l = the lower class limit of the interval in which the mode falls; f_1 = the number of items in the interval next below the modal group; f_2 = the number of items in the interval next above the modal group and i = the size of the class interval. The *Modal Group* is the interval in which the mode falls.

D. Certain Characteristics of the Measures of Central Tendency.—

(1) The arithmetic average is affected by the size of all the items and is readily understood but it is disadvantageous in instances where extreme items (large or small) are relatively numerous. Extreme items tend to bias the average in whatever direction the extremes may lie. (2) The median is termed a position average and it is not affected (as in the case of the arithmetic average) by extreme items. One principal disadvantage is that the median gives no recognition to the size of the individual items. (3) The mode, like the median, is also a position average and likewise is not affected by extreme items. Its principal significance, where used in this study, is to afford an approximation of the most commonly occurring item.

III. Measures of Variation

A. The Range—The range is simply the difference between the values of the largest and smallest items.

B. Quartiles—Quartiles divide the total number of items into four equal parts. The first quartile is an item or value below which 25 per cent of the total number of items fall while 25 per cent of the items fall above the third quartile. The remaining 50 per cent of the items fall between the first and third quartiles. The quartiles may be located in grouped data by interpolation using the formulae:

$$Q_1 = \frac{N}{4} \quad Q_3 = \frac{3N}{4}$$

in which Q_1 = the first quartile; Q_3 = the third quartile and N = the total number of items.

C. The Standard Deviation.—When a value equal to the standard deviation is laid off on each side of the arithmetic average in a normal distribution approximately 68 per cent of the items are included. Likewise in a normal distribution, if twice the standard deviation is laid off on each side of the arithmetic average approximately 95 per cent of the items are included. The standard deviation is the square root of the average of the squares of the deviations from the arithmetic average.

Where the items have been grouped into a frequency distribution the standard deviation may be computed by the formula:

$$\sigma = \sqrt{\frac{\sum f d^2}{N}}$$

in which σ = the standard deviation; \sum = "the sum of"; f = the number (or frequency) of items; d = the deviation from the arithmetic mean and N = the total number of items.

D. *Certain Characteristics of the Measures of Variation.*—(1) The range is but a rough measure of variation based only on the two most extreme items. (2) The quartiles are position values only. (3) The standard deviation is based on all the observations and it gives weight to extreme items.

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