

**Executive Summary:** *The State of Church Giving through 2011: The Kingdom of God, Church Leaders and Institutions, Global Triage Needs, and the Promises of Jesus*, 23<sup>rd</sup> ed. (Champaign, IL: empty tomb, inc, Oct. 2013)

**Overview:** The latest data available from the broad combination of communions analyzed in *The State of Church Giving* series is 2011. That is because the data is based on actual congregational reports, submitted to their individual denominations, which then aggregate and publish the data, including in the *Yearbook of American and Canadian Churches* series, or obtained directly from the denominations by empty tomb, inc.

**Giving 2010-2011:** From 2010 to 2011, per full/confirmed member giving to Total Contributions declined as a percent of U.S. per capita income, in current dollars, and in inflation-adjusted dollars. One subcategory of Total Contributions, Congregational Finances (internal operations of the congregation), declined in giving as a percent of income, and in both current and inflation-adjusted dollars. The other subcategory of Total Contributions, Benevolences (the larger mission of the church, including denominational and seminary support, domestic and international missions), declined from 2010 to 2011 as a percent of income and in inflation-adjusted dollars. (See chapter 1, pp. 16-22.)

**Giving 1968-2011:** From the 1968 base, per member giving as a percent of income to Total Contributions declined 25%; Congregational Finances declined 19%; and Benevolences declined 48%. In 2011, all three categories were at their lowest point in the 1968-2011 period. Per member donations in current dollars to Total Contributions declined in 2008, 2009, and 2011. These declines were the first per member current dollar giving declines in the 1968-2011 period. In inflation-adjusted dollars, from 1968-2011, per member giving to churches declined to Total Contributions for each of the four years of 2008 to 2011 (pp. 16-22). Declines in giving as a percent of income appeared across the theological spectrum (see chapter 3, pp. 29-38, including p. 35). In 11 denominations with data for 1921-2011, giving to Total Contributions in inflation-adjusted dollars also declined in 2008-2011; the only longer extended period of decline was in 1928-1934, with six of those seven years occurring in the Great Depression (Chapter 4, p. 47).

**Membership as a Percent of U.S. Population:** Membership in a group of 36 denominations, including some of the fastest growing Protestant communions and the Roman Catholic Church, declined from 45% of the U.S. population in 1968, to 35% in 2011, a decline of 22% from the 1968 base. Chapter 5 presents trends based on past data for both per member giving and membership as a percent of population. The numbers do not dictate what will happen, but do suggest what may happen if past trends continue (pp. 52-58).

**Potential Giving:** If church members had given the same percent in 2011 that they gave in 1968, the composite denominations in the empty tomb analysis would have received aggregate Total Contributions of \$30.3 billion rather than \$22.9 billion, a 32% increase; Congregational Finances of \$24 billion rather than \$19.6 billion (rounded), or 22% more; Benevolences of \$6.4 billion, rather than \$3.4 billion (rounded), or 90% more. These amounts do not represent increased giving, but rather would have occurred if the 1968 levels in giving as a percent of income had not decreased (pp. 14-15).

A comparison of native-born church member giving to global ministries with foreign-born remittances to other countries found a difference between the two levels of spending. While foreign-born residents of the U.S. sent an average of \$2,481 each internationally in 2011, native-born church members were estimated to have donated \$90 each in 2011 to international ministries. If native-born church members had supported international missions at the level of foreign-born remittances, there would have been an additional \$385 billion available in 2011 for global ministries, far more than the estimated additional annual needs of \$5 billion to reduce global child deaths and \$200 million to engage the unengaged unreached people groups. Chapter 6 considers potential church member giving (pp. 65-88).

**An Analysis of the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS) 2011 Consumer Expenditure Survey (CE) for Americans' Charitable Giving:** The US BLS 2011 CE cash contributions of all Americans were analyzed by age, income level, and region of the U.S. In 2011, Americans reported that 69% of their donations were given to the category of "church, religious organizations," compared to 23% to "charities and other organizations," 3% to "educational institutions," and 5% to "Gifts to non-CU (consumer unit) members of stocks, bonds, and mutual funds" (pp. 95-101).