

FREE CHURCH OF GOD IN CHRIST

STATISTICS

Summary for the United States, with urban-rural classification.—A general summary of the statistics for the Free Church of God in Christ, for the year 1926 is presented in Table 1, which shows also the distribution of these figures between urban and rural territory.

The membership of this denomination consists of persons who have been baptized by immersion and are recognized by this church as worthy of fellowship.

TABLE 1.—SUMMARY OF STATISTICS FOR CHURCHES IN URBAN AND RURAL TERRITORY, 1926: FREE CHURCH OF GOD IN CHRIST

ITEM	Total	In urban territory ¹	In rural territory ¹	PER CENT OF TOTAL ²	
				Urban	Rural
Churches (local organizations)	19	15	4		
Members	874	797	77	91.2	8.8
Average per church.....	46	53	19		
Membership by sex:					
Male.....	300	274	26	91.3	8.7
Female.....	574	523	51	91.1	8.9
Males per 100 females ³	52.3	52.4			
Membership by age:					
Under 13 years.....	32	30	2		
13 years and over.....	747	672	75	90.0	10.0
Age not reported.....	95	95			
Per cent under 13 years ⁴	4.1	4.3			
Church edifices:					
Number.....	11	10	1		
Value—Churches reporting.....	11	10	1		
Amount reported.....	\$23,700	\$23,200	\$500	97.9	2.1
Average per church.....	\$2,155	\$2,320	\$500		
Debt—Churches reporting.....	8	7	1		
Amount reported.....	\$7,200	\$7,000	\$200	97.2	2.8
Churches reporting "no debt" on church edifice.....	3	3			
Parsonages:					
Value—Churches reporting.....	1	1			
Amount reported.....	\$2,000	\$2,000		100.0	
Debt—Churches reporting.....	1	1			
Amount reported.....	\$1,000	\$1,000		100.0	
Expenditures during year:					
Churches reporting.....	18	15	3		
Amount reported.....	\$19,540	\$16,440	\$3,100	84.1	15.9
Current expenses and improvements.....	\$12,505	\$10,805	\$1,700	86.4	13.6
Benevolences, missions, etc.....	\$7,035	\$5,635	\$1,400	80.1	19.9
Average expenditure per church.....	\$1,086	\$1,096	\$1,033		
Sunday schools:					
Churches reporting.....	17	14	3		
Officers and teachers.....	100	87	13	87.0	13.0
Scholars.....	633	568	65	89.7	10.3

¹ Urban territory includes all cities and other incorporated places which had 2,500 inhabitants or more in 1920, the date of the last Federal census; rural territory comprises the remainder of the country.

² Per cent not shown where base is less than 100.

³ Ratio not shown where number of females is less than 100.

⁴ Based on membership with age classification reported; not shown where base is less than 100.

The data given for 1926 represent 19 active organizations of the Free Church of God in Christ, with 874 members. The classification of membership by sex was reported by all of the 19 churches and the classification by age was reported

by 17 churches, including, however, only 5 which reported any members under 13 years of age.

This denomination was organized since the 1916 census of religious bodies and no comparative data are available.

State tables.—Tables 2, 3, 4, and 5 present the statistics for the Free Church of God in Christ by States. Table 2 gives for each State the number and membership of the churches classified according to their location in urban or rural territory and the total membership classified by sex. Table 3 gives for selected States the number and membership of the churches, together with the membership classified as under 13 years of age and 13 years of age and over. Table 4 shows the value of church property and the debt on such property. Table 5 presents the church expenditures for 1926, showing separately the amounts expended for current expenses and improvements, and for benevolences, etc., and also gives the data for Sunday schools. Separate presentation in Tables 4 and 5 is limited to those States in which three or more churches reported the principal items shown (values or expenditures), in order to avoid disclosing the financial statistics of any individual church. The States omitted from these tables can be determined by referring to the complete list which appears in Table 2.

TABLE 2.—NUMBER AND MEMBERSHIP OF CHURCHES IN URBAN AND RURAL TERRITORY, AND TOTAL MEMBERSHIP BY SEX, BY STATES, 1926: FREE CHURCH OF GOD IN CHRIST

GEOGRAPHIC DIVISION AND STATE	NUMBER OF CHURCHES			NUMBER OF MEMBERS			TOTAL MEMBERSHIP BY SEX		
	Total	Ur- ban	Rural	Total	Urban	Rural	Male	Female	Males per 100 females ¹
United States.....	19	15	4	874	797	77	300	574	52.3
East North Central:									
Illinois.....	1	1		50	50		20	30	
West North Central:									
Missouri.....	1	1		60	60		20	40	
Kansas.....	3	3		106	106		30	76	
West South Central:									
Oklahoma.....	2	2		77	77		32	45	
Texas.....	5	4	1	297	286	11	94	203	46.3
Mountain:									
Colorado.....	6	3	3	184	118	66	64	120	53.3
Pacific:									
Washington.....	1	1		100	100		40	60	

¹ Ratio not shown where number of females is less than 100.

TABLE 3.—NUMBER AND MEMBERSHIP OF CHURCHES, AND MEMBERSHIP BY AGE, BY STATES, 1926: FREE CHURCH OF GOD IN CHRIST

[Separate presentation is limited to States having 3 or more churches]

STATE	Number of churches	Number of members	MEMBERSHIP BY AGE			
			Under 13 years	13 years and over	Age not reported	Per cent under 13 ¹
United States.....	19	874	32	747	95	4.1
Kansas.....	3	106	5	101		4.7
Texas.....	5	297	10	254	33	3.8
Colorado.....	6	184	17	167		9.2
Other States.....	5	287		225	62	

¹ Based on membership with age classification reported.

**TABLE 4.—VALUE OF CHURCH PROPERTY, AND CHURCH DEBT, BY STATES, 1926:
FREE CHURCH OF GOD IN CHRIST**

[Separate presentation is limited to States having 3 or more churches reporting value of edifices]

STATE	Total number of churches	Number of church edifices	VALUE OF CHURCH EDIFICES		DEBT ON CHURCH EDIFICES		VALUE OF PARSONAGES		DEBT ON PARSONAGES	
			Churches reporting	Amount	Churches reporting	Amount	Churches reporting	Amount	Churches reporting	Amount
United States.....	19	11	11	\$23,700	8	\$7,200	1	\$2,000	1	\$1,000
Kansas.....	3	3	3	4,000	2	400				
Colorado.....	6	4	4	6,700	3	2,800				
Other States.....	10	4	4	13,000	3	4,000	1	2,000	1	1,000

**TABLE 5.—CHURCH EXPENDITURES AND SUNDAY SCHOOLS, BY STATES, 1926:
FREE CHURCH OF GOD IN CHRIST**

[Separate presentation is limited to States having 3 or more churches reporting expenditures]

STATE	Total number of churches	EXPENDITURES DURING YEAR				SUNDAY SCHOOLS		
		Churches reporting	Total amount	For current expenses and improvements	For benevolences, missions, etc.	Churches reporting	Officers and teachers	Scholars
United States.....	19	18	\$19,540	\$12,505	\$7,035	17	100	633
Kansas.....	3	3	2,250	1,400	850	3	17	90
Texas.....	5	5	4,929	3,954	975	3	21	187
Colorado.....	6	5	5,700	2,600	3,100	6	29	165
Other States.....	5	5	6,661	4,551	2,110	5	33	191

HISTORY, DOCTRINE, AND ORGANIZATION ¹

DENOMINATIONAL HISTORY

The Free Church of God in Christ had its beginning in Enid, Okla., in 1915, when 16 persons, the majority of whom belonged to the family of a Baptist minister, Rev. J. H. Morris, felt called upon by a new baptism of the Holy Ghost to leave the Baptist church and to form a new denomination which they called the Church of God in Christ. From a single church, for whose leadership Morris's son felt he was selected, there developed an organization of 16 churches. These were located in western Kansas and Colorado and were incorporated in the State of Kansas. In 1921, J. E. Morris and the churches under his jurisdiction affiliated with another body of Holiness people, with headquarters at Memphis, Tenn., having much the same faith. This denomination at that time had the same name—Church of God in Christ. This fellowship lasted for about four years, but in 1925 some dissatisfaction over a State charter arose, and Elder Morris and his group of churches withdrew and took the name of Free Church of God in Christ.

¹ This statement was furnished by Elder J. E. Morris, bishop, Free Church of God in Christ, and approved by him in its present form.

DOCTRINE

This church holds the beliefs commonly held by holiness denominations. Sanctification is stressed, and also the belief that persons who are entirely sanctified and baptized with the Holy Ghost and with fire may speak in "new tongues." Divine healing is recognized as a "gift and also as a sign in answer to fervent prayer." Tithing is opposed, as being contrary to Scripture. Although members are admonished to respect the Government and the laws, they are averse to war in all its various forms. In general, emphasis is placed on the teachings of Jesus rather than on creeds.

ORGANIZATION AND WORK

In organization this church is practically congregational. Each local church elects a clerk, a treasurer, 3, 5, or 7 deacons, and a pastor. In cases where there are not sufficient men to fill all offices, women may be elected as deaconesses or even as preachers. The pastor, assistant pastor, Sunday-school superintendent, and president of the missionary band are the governing officers of the local churches. General leadership of the church is vested in a "presbytery of ordained elders." Each ordained elder is allowed to establish his right to apostleship by organizing churches, the organizing of 7 churches being the "seal of his apostleship." Every apostle (of whom there may be more than 12) is made bishop or overseer over the churches which he has organized. There is no general overseer of this denomination, that office being considered contrary to the teachings of Scripture. The senior bishop, however, is called the "General Leader," and is the presiding officer.

Missionary work, both home and foreign, is carried on by a general missionary board. The organizations of the church are the Home Mission Band, Sunday schools, and Young People's Christian workers.

The general headquarters of the church are in Wichita, Kans.