

## REFORMED BODIES

### GENERAL STATEMENT

The churches, aside from the Lutheran, that were the direct outcome of the Protestant Reformation, trace their ecclesiastical origin to republican Switzerland, and those leaders in the cause of representative government, Zwingli, Calvin, and Melancthon. Of these the Swiss, Dutch, and many German churches came to be known as Reformed; the Scotch and English as Presbyterian; and the French as Huguenot; while those in Bohemia and Hungary preserved their national names.

In the early colonization of America, Dutch and Germans, as well as Scotch and English, were prominent, and as a result there are 4 Reformed Churches—2 tracing their origin to Holland, 1 to the German Palatinate, and 1 to Hungary. The first church in New Amsterdam was organized by the Dutch in 1628, and for a considerable time the Hollanders were practically limited to the province of New Netherland. Somewhat later a German colony, driven from the Palatinate by the ruthless persecution of Louis XIV, settled in upper New York and Pennsylvania, and as it grew spread westward. Another Dutch immigration, which established its headquarters in Michigan, identified itself with the New York branch, but afterwards a minor part formed its own ecclesiastical organization. The New York branch, known at first as the "Reformed Protestant Dutch Church," later adopted the title "Reformed Church in America"; similarly, the German Reformed Church became, in 1867, the Reformed Church in the United States. The third body is known as the Christian Reformed Church; while a fourth is styled the Free Magyar Reformed Church in America. This denomination was organized in 1924 by certain congregations which refused to accept the "Tiffin Agreement," under whose terms the majority of the churches constituting the former Hungarian Reformed Church in America were formally transferred to the jurisdiction of the Reformed Church in the United States. There are also a number of churches called Netherlands Dutch Church or True Reformed Dutch Church, and some of the Hungarian churches, which have no general ecclesiastical organization and are included under the head of "Independent churches."

In its earlier history each body clung to its ancestral language, a practice which not infrequently checked a natural growth, although it had the advantage of giving to the newcomers a congenial church life, to which is largely due the fact that these communities have grown up loyal to the best interests both of their mother church and of their new country. As conditions changed, the use of English was accepted, and the older churches blended with the general interests of the community.

In their doctrine, polity, and general public life, the Reformed churches remain conservative. New ideas, simply because novel, have not had ready acceptance; yet new forms of organization, such as the various societies for young people and similar enterprises, have found a cordial welcome. In interdenominational relations they have always been friendly, are members of the Alliance of Reformed Churches, and the Federal Council of the Churches of Christ in America and early inaugurated foreign mission work. They have stood for high standards in education and scholarship and have furnished many men prominent in public life.

In doctrine they are generally Calvinistic. Their Heidelberg Catechism emphasizes the general comfort of redemption in Christ, while the Westminster Catechism teaches the same and emphasizes the sovereignty of God. The polity is synod-presbyterian, differing from that of the Presbyterian churches only in the names of church offices and some other details. They have a consistory instead of a session, a classis instead of a presbytery, and a general synod instead of a general assembly.

The denominations grouped under the name "Reformed Bodies," in 1926, 1916, and 1906, are listed in the table below, with the principal statistics as reported for the three periods. Since 1916 the Hungarian Reformed Church in America has been transferred to the jurisdiction of the Reformed Church in the United States, with the exception of a few churches which did not approve the merger and organized in 1924 as the Free Magyar Reformed Church in America.

SUMMARY OF STATISTICS FOR THE REFORMED BODIES, 1926, 1916, AND 1906

DENOMINATION AND CENSUS YEAR	Total number of churches		VALUE OF CHURCH EDIFICES		EXPENDITURES DURING YEAR		SUNDAY SCHOOLS	
	Number of churches	Number of members	Churches reporting	Amount	Churches reporting	Amount	Churches reporting	Number of scholars
<b>1926</b>								
<b>Total for the group</b> .....	<b>2,682</b>	<b>617,551</b>	<b>2,618</b>	<b>\$88,457,147</b>	<b>2,659</b>	<b>\$14,810,436</b>	<b>2,489</b>	<b>465,725</b>
Reformed Church in America.....	717	153,739	690	38,436,822	714	5,524,673	689	124,308
Reformed Church in the United States.....	1,709	361,286	1,680	44,662,875	1,692	7,488,446	1,614	315,343
Christian Reformed Church.....	245	98,534	238	5,061,850	242	1,700,760	178	25,281
Free Magyar Reformed Church in America.....	11	3,992	10	295,600	11	96,557	8	793
<b>1916</b>								
<b>Total for the group</b> .....	<b>2,745</b>	<b>537,822</b>	<b>2,600</b>	<b>41,137,627</b>	<b>2,684</b>	<b>6,842,542</b>	<b>2,575</b>	<b>454,099</b>
Reformed Church in America.....	715	144,929	690	18,928,383	705	2,746,065	697	123,092
Reformed Church in the United States.....	1,758	344,374	1,663	20,116,336	1,714	3,247,773	1,658	304,250
Christian Reformed Church.....	226	38,668	209	1,658,308	221	715,193	188	24,445
Hungarian Reformed Church in America.....	46	9,851	38	434,600	44	133,511	32	2,312
<b>1906</b>								
<b>Total for the group</b> .....	<b>2,583</b>	<b>449,514</b>	<b>2,477</b>	<b>30,648,247</b>			<b>2,345</b>	<b>361,548</b>
Reformed Church in America.....	657	124,938	639	15,553,250			639	120,705
Reformed Church in the United States.....	1,736	292,654	1,667	14,067,897			1,569	222,324
Christian Reformed Church.....	174	26,669	160	903,600			133	18,340
Hungarian Reformed Church in America.....	16	5,253	11	123,500			4	179

# FREE MAGYAR REFORMED CHURCH IN AMERICA

## STATISTICS

**Summary for the United States, with urban-rural classification.**—A general summary of the statistics for the Free Magyar Reformed Church in America 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 the Free Magyar Reformed Church comprises all baptized persons (including infants) who have been enrolled in the official congregational records. Full membership rights are exercised by confirmed members over 18 years of age.

**TABLE 1.—SUMMARY OF STATISTICS FOR CHURCHES IN URBAN AND RURAL TERRITORY, 1926: FREE MAGYAR REFORMED CHURCH IN AMERICA**

ITEM	Total	In urban territory <sup>1</sup>	In rural territory <sup>1</sup>	PER CENT OF TOTAL <sup>2</sup>	
				Urban	Rural
<b>Churches</b> (local organizations).....	11	9	2		
<b>Members</b> .....	3,992	3,408	584	85.4	14.6
Average per church.....	363	379	292		
Membership by sex:					
Male.....	1,784	1,513	271	84.8	15.2
Female.....	1,808	1,495	313	82.7	17.3
Sex not reported.....	400	400		100.0	
Males per 100 females.....	98.7	101.2	86.6		
Membership by age:					
Under 13 years.....	1,398	1,348	50	96.4	3.6
13 years and over.....	1,895	1,445	450	76.3	23.7
Age not reported.....	699	615	84	88.0	12.0
Per cent under 13 years <sup>3</sup> .....	42.5	48.3	10.0		
<b>Church edifices:</b>					
Number.....	13	12	1		
Value—Churches reporting.....	10	9	1		
Amount reported.....	\$295,600	\$270,600	\$25,000	91.5	8.5
Average per church.....	\$29,560	\$30,067			
Debt—Churches reporting.....	6	6		100.0	
Amount reported.....	\$121,000	\$121,000			
Churches reporting "no debt" on church edifice.....	4	3	1		
<b>Parsonages:</b>					
Value—Churches reporting.....	5	4	1		
Amount reported.....	\$54,400	\$44,400	\$10,000	81.6	18.4
Debt—Churches reporting.....	4	4		100.0	
Amount reported.....	\$25,500	\$25,500			
Churches reporting "no debt" on parsonage.....	1		1		
<b>Expenditures during year:</b>					
Churches reporting.....	11	9	2		
Amount reported.....	\$96,557	\$89,781	\$6,776	93.0	7.0
Current expenses and improvements.....	\$93,031	\$87,370	\$5,661	93.9	6.1
Benevolences, missions, etc.....	\$3,526	\$2,411	\$1,115	68.4	31.6
Average expenditure per church.....	\$8,778	\$9,976	\$3,388		
<b>Sunday schools:</b>					
Churches reporting.....	8	6	2		
Officers and teachers.....	24	18	6		
Scholars.....	793	638	155	80.5	19.5

<sup>1</sup> 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.

<sup>2</sup> Per cent not shown where base is less than 100.

<sup>3</sup> Based on membership with age classification reported.

The data given for 1926 represent 11 active organizations in the Free Magyar Reformed Church, with 3,992 members. The classification of membership by sex was reported by 10 churches, and the classification by age was reported by 7 churches, including 4 which reported members under 13 years of age.

Comparative data for earlier years are not available, this church having been organized since the preceding Census of Religious Bodies from a number of the churches then comprising the Hungarian Reformed Church in America.

**State tables.**—Tables 2, 3, 4, and 5 present the statistics for the Free Magyar Reformed Church 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 the States of New Jersey and Pennsylvania the number and membership of the churches for the census of 1926, together with the membership classified as under 13 years of age and 13 years of age and over, and similar data for all other States combined. 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 MAGYAR REFORMED CHURCH IN AMERICA**

GEOGRAPHIC DIVISION AND STATE	NUMBER OF CHURCHES			NUMBER OF MEMBERS			TOTAL MEMBERSHIP BY SEX			
	Total	Urban	Rural	Total	Urban	Rural	Male	Female	Sex not reported	Males per 100 females <sup>(1)</sup>
United States.....	11	9	2	3,992	3,408	584	1,784	1,808	400	98.7
Middle Atlantic:										
New York.....	1	1		135	135		55	80		
New Jersey.....	3	1	2	2,531	1,947	584	1,236	1,295		95.4
Pennsylvania.....	5	5		846	846		448	398		112.6
East North Central:										
Ohio.....	1	1		400	400				400	
Michigan.....	1	1		80	80		45	35		

<sup>1</sup> 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 MAGYAR REFORMED CHURCH IN AMERICA**

[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 <sup>1</sup>
United States.....	11	3,992	1,398	1,895	699	42.5
New Jersey.....	3	2,531	1,235	1,212	84	50.5
Pennsylvania.....	5	846	163	683		19.3
Other States.....	3	615			615	

<sup>1</sup> Based on membership with age classification reported.

TABLE 4.—VALUE OF CHURCH PROPERTY, AND CHURCH DEBT, BY STATES, 1926: FREE MAGYAR REFORMED CHURCH IN AMERICA

[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....	11	13	10	\$295,600	6	\$121,000	5	\$54,400	4	\$25,500
Pennsylvania.....	5	5	5	95,600	2	37,000	(1)	(1)	(1)	(1)
Other States <sup>2</sup> .....	6	8	5	200,000	4	84,000	5	54,400	4	25,500

<sup>1</sup> Amount included in the figures shown for "Other States," to avoid disclosing the statistics of individual churches.

<sup>2</sup> The figures for parsonages (value and debt) include data for 2 churches in Pennsylvania.

TABLE 5.—CHURCH EXPENDITURES AND SUNDAY SCHOOLS, BY STATES, 1926: FREE MAGYAR REFORMED CHURCH IN AMERICA

[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....	11	11	\$96,557	\$93,031	\$3,526	8	24	793
New Jersey.....	3	3	29,776	28,286	1,490	3	10	471
Pennsylvania.....	5	5	37,369	35,683	1,686	3	10	183
Other States.....	3	3	29,412	29,062	350	2	4	140

### HISTORY, DOCTRINE, AND ORGANIZATION<sup>1</sup>

This church was established December 3, 1924, at Duquesne, Pa. It is not exactly a continuation of the former Hungarian Reformed Church in America, although it corresponds to it in faith, government, etc., and its constituency is made up to a large degree from that of the former church.

The Hungarian Reformed Church in America was organized in 1904, in the city of New York, by six congregations and six ministers, and other congregations united with it, under the general care and supervision of the Reformed Church in Hungary. It received its ministers and some financial aid from Hungary until the World War, when connection with the mother church was interrupted.

After a series of conferences with representatives of the Reformed Church in the United States and the Presbyterian Church in the United States of America, culminating in the "Tiffin Agreement"—made at Tiffin, Ohio—the congregations constituting the Eastern and Western Classes of the Hungarian Reformed Church in America were transferred by the Mother Church of Hungary, through its official delegates, to the Reformed Church in the United States.

<sup>1</sup> This statement has been revised by Rev. Endre Sebastyen, dean, Free Magyar Reformed Church in America, and approved by him in its present form.

Three of these churches, however, did not accept the terms of the "Tiffin Agreement," and these three churches, together with four newly formed churches, were the founders of the Free Magyar Reformed Church in America.

These have constituted themselves as a classis and made their own constitution of 226 articles in 5 sections. They follow, as much as possible in the new circumstances, the doctrine and organization of the mother church in Hungary. The symbolical books of the church are the Second Helvetic Confession and the Heidelberg Catechism. In government the church occupies a middle position between the presbyterian and the episcopal systems, the episcopate being upheld along with the synodical principle. Having not more than one classis, they can not have synodical meetings; instead of these they hold general meetings every three years. Over the church properties the individual churches have absolute control.