

FREE CHRISTIAN ZION CHURCH OF CHRIST

STATISTICS

Summary for the United States, with urban-rural classification.—A general summary of the statistics for the Free Christian Zion Church of Christ for the year 1926 is presented in Table 1, which shows also the distribution of these figures between urban and rural territory. All of the organizations reported in 1926 were in the State of Arkansas, although at previous censuses there were churches also in Louisiana, Oklahoma, and Texas.

The membership of the Free Christian Zion Church of Christ consists of all persons who have been formally received into its local churches on profession of faith.

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

ITEM	Total	In urban territory ¹	In rural territory ¹	PER CENT OF TOTAL ²	
				Urban	Rural
Churches (local organizations)	5	1	4		
Members	187	60	127	32.1	67.9
Average per church.....	37	60	32		
Membership by sex:					
Male.....	94	35	59		
Female.....	93	25	68		
Membership by age:					
Under 13 years.....	25	25			
13 years and over.....	162	35	127	21.6	78.4
Per cent under 13 years ²	13.4				
Church edifices:					
Number.....	4	1	3		
Value—Churches reporting.....	4	1	3		
Amount reported.....	\$22,000	\$16,000	\$6,000	72.7	27.3
Average per church.....	\$5,500	\$16,000	\$2,000		
Debt—Churches reporting.....	1	1			
Amount reported.....	\$275	\$275		100.0	
Churches reporting "no debt" on church edifice.....	3		3		
Expenditures during year:					
Churches reporting.....	5	1	4		
Amount reported.....	\$2,481	\$1,806	\$675	72.8	27.2
Current expenses and improvements.....	\$2,006	\$1,506	\$500	75.1	24.9
Benevolences, missions, etc.....	\$475	\$300	\$175	63.2	36.8
Average expenditure per church.....	\$496	\$1,806	\$169		
Sunday schools:					
Churches reporting.....	5	1	4		
Officers and teachers.....	22	5	17		
Scholars.....	97	35	62		

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.

The data given for 1926 represent 5 active organizations of the Free Christian Zion Church of Christ, with 187 members. The classification of membership by sex and by age was reported by all of the 5 churches, including, however, only 1 which reported any members under 13 years of age. No parsonages were reported in 1926.

Comparative data, 1906-1926.—Table 2 presents, in convenient form for comparison, a summary of the available statistics of this denomination for the censuses of 1926, 1916, and 1906.

TABLE 2.—COMPARATIVE SUMMARY, 1906 TO 1926: FREE CHRISTIAN ZION CHURCH OF CHRIST

ITEM	1926	1916	1906
Churches (local organizations)	5	35	14
Increase ¹ over preceding census:			
Number.....	-30	21	-----
Per cent ²	-----	-----	-----
Members	187	6,225	1,835
Increase ¹ over preceding census:			
Number.....	-6,038	4,390	-----
Per cent.....	-97.0	239.2	-----
Average membership per church.....	37	178	131
Church edifices:			
Number.....	4	35	14
Value—Churches reporting.....	4	35	13
Amount reported.....	\$22,000	\$35,900	\$5,975
Average per church.....	\$5,500	\$1,026	\$460
Debt—Churches reporting.....	1	13	7
Amount reported.....	\$275	\$1,700	\$1,150
Parsonages:			
Value—Churches reporting.....	-----	13	2
Amount reported.....	-----	\$8,500	\$450
Expenditures during year:			
Churches reporting.....	5	35	-----
Amount reported.....	\$2,481	\$19,154	-----
Current expenses and improvements.....	\$2,006	(³)	-----
Benevolences, missions, etc.....	\$475	(³)	-----
Average expenditure per church.....	\$496	\$547	-----
Sunday schools:			
Churches reporting.....	5	35	7
Officers and teachers.....	22	288	63
Scholars.....	97	3,411	340

¹ A minus sign (—) denotes decrease.
² Per cent not shown where base is less than 100.
³ Not reported.

HISTORY, DOCTRINE, AND ORGANIZATION ¹

DENOMINATIONAL HISTORY

The Free Christian Zion Church of Christ was organized on July 10, 1905, at Redemption, Ark., by a small company of Negro ministers. The immediate occasion was a protest against any attempt to tax members of the church for the support of an ecclesiastical system, and a feeling that the church itself should care for its poor and needy. The founder, E. D. Brown, was a conference missionary of the African Methodist Episcopal Zion Church. Others associated with him represented the Methodist Episcopal Church, the Colored Methodist Episcopal Church, the African Methodist Episcopal Church, and the Negro Baptist churches.

¹ This statement is substantially the same as that published in Part II of the Report on Religious Bodies, 1916.

DOCTRINE AND ORGANIZATION

In doctrine and polity the church is in general accord with the Methodist bodies, except that it has chiefs or superintendents in place of bishops, and pastors and deacons are the officers in the local church. A chief pastor is chosen to preside over the whole denomination, and all appointments to offices in the church, as well as to pastorates, are made by him. The laity has from the beginning had a share in the conduct of the local church, and also in the general assembly.

WORK

The principal activity of the church is the care of the poor, who are provided for directly through the church officers, each local church being expected to provide for its needy ones. There are also district evangelists, appointed by the chief pastor, whose duty it is to care for the unevangelized communities. No late statistics for the work of this denomination have been received.