

# CHURCH OF GOD

## STATISTICS

Summary for the United States, with urban-rural classification.—A general summary of the statistics for the Church of God 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 Church of God consists of those persons, including children, who are enrolled in the local churches upon profession of faith and evidence of a Christian life.

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

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 (local organizations)</b> .....	644	168	476	26.1	73.9
<b>Members</b> .....	23,247	7,903	15,344	34.0	66.0
Average per church.....	36	47	32		
<b>Membership by sex:</b>					
Male.....	7,358	2,504	4,854	34.0	66.0
Female.....	15,848	5,374	10,474	33.9	66.1
<b>Sex not reported</b> .....	41	25	16		
Males per 100 females.....	46.4	46.6	46.3		
<b>Membership by age:</b>					
Under 13 years.....	740	269	471	34.4	63.6
13 years and over.....	20,716	7,190	13,526	34.7	65.3
<b>Age not reported</b> .....	1,791	444	1,347	24.8	75.2
Per cent under 13 years <sup>3</sup> .....	3.4	3.6	3.4		
<b>Church edifices:</b>					
Number.....	379	109	270	28.8	71.2
<b>Value—Churches reporting</b> .....	873	107	266	28.7	71.3
Amount reported.....	\$718,329	\$408,470	\$309,859	56.9	43.1
Average per church.....	\$1,926	\$3,817	\$1,165		
<b>Debt—Churches reporting</b> .....	119	52	67	43.7	56.3
Amount reported.....	\$85,885	\$59,251	\$26,634	69.0	31.0
Churches reporting "no debt" on church edifice.....	199	50	149	25.1	74.9
<b>Parsonages:</b>					
<b>Value—Churches reporting</b> .....	50	22	28		
Amount reported.....	\$58,075	\$40,200	\$17,875	69.2	30.8
<b>Debt—Churches reporting</b> .....	14	9	5		
Amount reported.....	\$11,270	\$10,700	\$570	94.9	5.1
Churches reporting "no debt" on parsonage.....	27	8	19		
<b>Expenditures during year:</b>					
<b>Churches reporting</b> .....	471	129	342	27.4	72.6
Amount reported.....	\$290,981	\$145,423	\$145,558	50.0	50.0
Current expenses and improvements.....	\$241,505	\$123,323	\$118,182	51.1	48.9
Benevolences, missions, etc.....	\$44,972	\$21,532	\$23,440	47.9	52.1
Not classified.....	\$4,504	\$568	\$3,936	12.6	87.4
Average expenditure per church.....	\$618	\$1,127	\$426		
<b>Sunday schools:</b>					
Churches reporting.....	429	131	298	30.5	69.5
Officers and teachers.....	2,644	894	1,750	33.4	66.6
Scholars.....	21,377	7,746	13,631	36.2	63.8

<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 644 active organizations of the Church of God, with 23,247 members. The classification of membership by sex was reported by 643 churches and the classification by age was reported by 594 churches, including, however, only 201 which reported any members under 13 years of age.

**Comparative data, 1926 and 1916.**—Table 2 presents, in convenient form for comparison, a summary of the available statistics of this denomination for the censuses of 1926 and 1916. Although this body existed previously, it was not separately reported until 1916, at which time it was known as the Churches of God, General Assembly.

TABLE 2.—COMPARATIVE SUMMARY, 1926 AND 1916: CHURCH OF GOD

ITEM	1926	1916
<b>Churches (local organizations)</b> .....	644	202
Increase over preceding census:		
Number.....	442	
Per cent.....	218.8	
<b>Members</b> .....	23,247	7,784
Increase over preceding census:		
Number.....	15,463	
Per cent.....	198.7	
Average membership per church.....	36	39
<b>Church edifices:</b>		
Number.....	379	122
Value—Churches reporting.....	373	122
Amount reported.....	\$718,329	\$73,283
Average per church.....	\$1,926	\$601
Debt—Churches reporting.....	119	31
Amount reported.....	\$85,885	\$6,639
<b>Parsonages:</b>		
Value—Churches reporting.....	50	4
Amount reported.....	\$58,075	\$3,000
Debt—Churches reporting.....	14	
Amount reported.....	\$11,270	
<b>Expenditures during year:</b>		
Churches reporting.....	471	149
Amount reported.....	\$290,981	\$32,090
Current expenses and improvements.....	\$241,505	\$22,715
Benevolences, missions, etc.....	\$44,972	\$5,807
Not classified.....	\$4,504	\$3,568
Average expenditure per church.....	\$618	\$215
<b>Sunday schools:</b>		
Churches reporting.....	429	142
Officers and teachers.....	2,644	740
Scholars.....	21,377	6,475

**State tables.**—Tables 3, 4, 5, and 6 present the statistics for the Church of God by States. Table 3 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 4 gives for selected States the number and membership of the churches for the last two censuses, 1926 and 1916, together with the membership for 1926, classified as under 13 years of age and 13 years of age and over. Table 5 shows the value of church property and the debt on such property, for 1926 alone. Table 6 presents, for 1926, the church expenditures, 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 5 and 6 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 3.

**TABLE 3.—NUMBER AND MEMBERSHIP OF CHURCHES IN URBAN AND RURAL TERRITORY, AND TOTAL MEMBERSHIP BY SEX, BY STATES, 1926: CHURCH OF GOD**

GEOGRAPHIC DIVISION AND STATE	NUMBER OF CHURCHES			NUMBER OF MEMBERS			TOTAL MEMBERSHIP BY SEX			
	Total	Ur- ban	Rural	Total	Urban	Rural	Male	Female	Sex not re- ported	Males per 100 females ( <sup>1</sup> )
United States.....	644	168	476	23,247	7,903	15,344	7,358	15,848	41	46.4
Middle Atlantic:										
Pennsylvania.....	8	5	3	157	97	60	47	85	25	-----
East North Central:										
Ohio.....	20	17	3	847	755	92	292	555	-----	52.6
Indiana.....	4	3	1	299	66	233	93	206	-----	45.1
Illinois.....	24	11	13	1,257	982	275	336	921	-----	36.5
Michigan.....	6	3	3	198	127	71	91	107	-----	85.0
West North Central:										
Minnesota.....	1	-----	1	5	-----	5	3	2	-----	-----
Missouri.....	15	5	10	434	164	270	126	308	-----	40.9
North Dakota.....	2	-----	2	109	-----	109	49	60	-----	-----
Kansas.....	2	2	-----	78	78	-----	26	52	-----	-----
South Atlantic:										
Maryland.....	7	2	5	137	31	106	44	93	-----	-----
Virginia.....	27	6	21	647	200	447	227	420	-----	54.0
West Virginia.....	42	5	37	1,226	214	1,012	359	867	-----	41.4
North Carolina.....	33	10	23	949	359	590	314	635	-----	49.4
South Carolina.....	24	5	19	925	327	598	279	646	-----	43.2
Georgia.....	68	14	54	2,435	672	1,763	721	1,698	16	42.5
Florida.....	84	15	69	2,948	977	1,971	965	1,983	-----	48.7
East South Central:										
Kentucky.....	37	7	30	1,394	370	1,024	419	975	-----	43.0
Tennessee.....	75	23	52	3,391	1,280	2,111	1,098	2,293	-----	47.9
Alabama.....	57	9	48	2,153	447	1,706	675	1,478	-----	45.7
Mississippi.....	32	2	30	1,255	91	1,164	443	812	-----	54.6
West South Central:										
Arkansas.....	25	4	21	823	64	759	252	571	-----	44.1
Louisiana.....	9	5	4	379	163	216	128	251	-----	51.0
Oklahoma.....	8	2	6	216	62	154	58	158	-----	36.7
Texas.....	28	10	18	907	360	547	286	621	-----	46.1
Mountain:										
Montana.....	1	-----	1	23	-----	23	8	15	-----	-----
New Mexico.....	3	2	1	17	7	10	6	11	-----	-----
Arizona.....	1	1	-----	10	10	-----	5	5	-----	-----
Pacific:										
California.....	1	-----	1	28	-----	28	8	20	-----	-----

<sup>1</sup> Ratio not shown where number of females is less than 100.

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

### DENOMINATIONAL HISTORY

The denomination known as the Church of God had its origin in the conviction of a number of people, in different denominations in Tennessee, that existing bodies with which they were acquainted were not strictly in accord with their views of Scripture, and in the belief that their wishes for a body conforming to their own views must be satisfied. The first organization was formed in August, 1886, in Monroe County, Tenn., under the name "Christian Union." In 1902 there was a reorganization under the name "Holiness Church," and in January, 1907, a third meeting, at Union Grove, Bradley County, Tenn., adopted the name "Church of God," with a membership of 150, representing 5 local churches in North Carolina, Georgia, and Tennessee. From that time the body has grown until it is represented in 28 States and has churches in the British West Indies. The headquarters in 1926 were in Cleveland, Tenn.

<sup>1</sup> This statement, which is substantially the same as that published in Part II of the Report on Religious Bodies, 1916, has been revised by Rev. F. J. Lee, general overseer, Church of God, and approved by him in its present form.

**TABLE 4.—NUMBER AND MEMBERSHIP OF CHURCHES, 1926 AND 1916, AND MEMBERSHIP BY AGE, 1926, BY STATES: CHURCH OF GOD**

[Separate presentation is limited to States having 3 or more churches in either 1926 or 1916]

STATE	NUMBER OF CHURCHES		NUMBER OF MEMBERS		MEMBERSHIP BY AGE, 1926			
	1926	1916	1926	1916	Under 13 years	13 years and over	Age not reported	Per cent under 13 <sup>1</sup>
<b>United States</b> .....	<b>644</b>	<b>202</b>	<b>23,247</b>	<b>7,784</b>	<b>740</b>	<b>20,716</b>	<b>1,791</b>	<b>3.4</b>
Pennsylvania.....	8		157		3	86	68	
Ohio.....	20	3	847	58	19	808	20	2.3
Indiana.....	4	1	299	57	10	289		3.3
Illinois.....	24	1	1,257	136	40	1,206	11	3.2
Michigan.....	6		198		6	107	85	5.3
Missouri.....	15		434		23	394	17	5.5
Maryland.....	7	2	137	128		103	34	
Virginia.....	27	13	647	344	2	645		0.3
West Virginia.....	42	7	1,226	146	42	958	226	4.2
North Carolina.....	33	8	949	285	19	896	34	2.1
South Carolina.....	24	2	925	89	12	669	244	1.8
Georgia.....	68	27	2,435	978	100	2,211	124	4.3
Florida.....	84	44	2,948	1,294	113	2,761	74	3.9
Kentucky.....	37	6	1,394	203	11	1,268	115	0.9
Tennessee.....	75	39	3,391	2,288	102	3,143	146	3.1
Alabama.....	57	27	2,153	918	49	1,825	279	2.6
Mississippi.....	32	11	1,255	510	64	1,121	70	5.4
Arkansas.....	25	1	823	38	33	637	153	4.9
Louisiana.....	9	3	379	149	10	311	58	3.1
Oklahoma.....	8		216		2	181	33	1.1
Texas.....	28	3	907	84	57	850		6.3
New Mexico.....	3	2	17	46	1	16		
Other States.....	8	2	253	33	22	231		8.7

<sup>1</sup> Based on membership with age classification reported; not shown where base is less than 100.

**DOCTRINE**

In doctrine this body is Arminian and in accord with the Methodist bodies. It recognizes no creed as authoritative, but relies upon the Bible "as a whole rightly divided" and as the final court of appeals. It emphasizes sanctification as a second definite experience subsequent to regeneration; also the baptism of the Holy Ghost, evidenced by speaking in other tongues, subsequent to sanctification. Conditions of membership are profession of faith in Christ, experience of being "born again," bearing the fruits of a Christian life, and recognition of the obligation to accept and practice all the teachings of the church. The sacraments observed are the Lord's Supper, foot washing, and water baptism by immersion.

**ORGANIZATION AND WORK**

The ecclesiastical organization is described as "a blending of congregational and episcopal, ending in theocratical, by which is meant that every question is to be decided by God's Word." The pastor of the local church is the chief ruler, and after conference with the board of deacons and the men of the church for the purpose of ascertaining general sentiment, he announces the decision of the board of deacons, after which a vote is taken to determine the sentiment of the church concerning the case in question.

The officers of the churches are bishops, deacons, and evangelists. Bishops and deacons must be at least 24 years of age, having experienced sanctification and the baptism with the Holy Ghost, evidenced by speaking with other tongues

TABLE 5.—VALUE OF CHURCH PROPERTY, AND CHURCH DEBT, BY STATES, 1926:  
CHURCH OF GOD

[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.....	644	379	373	\$718,329	119	\$85,885	50	\$58,075	14	\$11,270
Ohio.....	20	8	8	16,350	5	4,784	—	(1)	—	—
Indiana.....	4	3	3	15,300	3	3,176	—	—	—	—
Illinois.....	24	17	17	33,950	6	1,748	3	5,200	3	2,900
Michigan.....	6	4	4	12,700	3	6,871	—	—	—	—
Missouri.....	15	6	6	7,150	3	1,200	—	—	—	—
Maryland.....	7	6	6	5,000	3	985	—	—	—	—
Virginia.....	27	14	14	22,100	3	2,435	—	—	—	—
West Virginia.....	42	15	15	36,450	9	4,024	—	(1)	—	—
North Carolina.....	33	21	21	23,485	8	3,937	—	(1)	—	—
South Carolina.....	24	13	13	17,860	7	3,091	—	(1)	—	(1)
Georgia.....	68	47	46	30,635	7	1,510	3	1,375	1	300
Florida.....	84	64	63	195,498	21	27,058	15	17,950	2	365
Kentucky.....	37	15	15	25,900	6	3,310	—	(1)	—	—
Tennessee.....	75	52	51	164,930	11	12,847	8	18,650	4	5,090
Alabama.....	57	39	37	61,950	5	2,240	3	2,150	—	—
Mississippi.....	32	16	16	10,950	3	162	—	—	—	—
Arkansas.....	25	8	8	8,825	2	800	—	(1)	—	(1)
Louisiana.....	9	7	7	3,550	—	—	—	(1)	—	—
Texas.....	28	17	16	17,459	11	4,610	5	2,200	1	65
Other States <sup>2</sup> .....	27	7	7	8,287	3	1,097	13	10,550	3	2,550

<sup>1</sup> Amount included in 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 12 churches in Ohio, West Virginia, North Carolina, South Carolina, Kentucky, Arkansas, and Louisiana.

as the Spirit gives utterance; and they must prove themselves to have lived what they profess. There is no age limit for evangelists. All are required to have a fair general education, good judgment, wisdom, and ability to speak.

When a reasonable number of churches have been organized in a State, an annual State assembly is held, not legislative in character, but rather educational, and for the advancement of the interests of the church in that State. A General Assembly convenes annually, and is composed of representatives from all States, provinces, and countries; and this is recognized as the Supreme Council.

The missionary work of the denomination, both home and foreign, is under the supervision of a General Overseer appointed by the General Assembly, who is assisted by 12 men.

**TABLE 6.—CHURCH EXPENDITURES AND SUNDAY SCHOOLS, BY STATES, 1926:**  
**CHURCH OF GOD**

[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.	Not classified	Churches reporting	Officers and teachers	Scholars
<b>United States..</b>	<b>644</b>	<b>471</b>	<b>\$290,981</b>	<b>\$241,505</b>	<b>\$44,972</b>	<b>\$4,504</b>	<b>429</b>	<b>2,644</b>	<b>21,377</b>
Pennsylvania.....	8	4	3,818	3,219	599	-----	6	28	164
Ohio.....	20	18	20,561	16,372	4,189	-----	14	75	709
Indiana.....	4	3	7,400	6,750	650	-----	3	34	370
Illinois.....	24	21	17,832	17,345	487	-----	20	157	1,384
Michigan.....	6	5	4,536	3,852	684	-----	5	27	183
Missouri.....	15	8	4,440	3,772	668	-----	9	55	370
Maryland.....	7	3	963	848	115	-----	6	31	147
Virginia.....	27	22	10,279	8,857	1,400	22	18	110	974
West Virginia.....	42	32	12,041	9,359	2,436	246	27	157	1,225
North Carolina.....	33	27	11,850	9,563	2,099	188	20	121	988
South Carolina.....	24	14	7,218	6,517	701	-----	17	99	921
Georgia.....	68	50	15,453	11,569	3,199	685	44	244	2,147
Florida.....	84	73	88,093	75,514	11,202	1,377	57	358	2,498
Kentucky.....	37	30	9,821	7,059	1,708	1,054	23	152	1,289
Tennessee.....	75	43	22,747	16,969	5,659	119	49	333	2,775
Alabama.....	57	41	23,170	18,901	3,636	633	39	253	1,936
Mississippi.....	32	16	3,577	3,121	456	-----	17	95	716
Arkansas.....	25	18	4,524	3,276	1,083	165	14	69	652
Louisiana.....	9	7	2,689	1,430	1,259	-----	9	59	369
Oklahoma.....	8	6	1,313	865	448	-----	6	34	306
Texas.....	28	22	14,790	13,407	1,368	15	18	117	989
Other States.....	11	8	3,866	2,940	926	-----	8	36	265