



Meet Your Neighbors

Interfaith FACTs

A comparison of the beliefs, practices and vitality across Jewish, Christian and Muslim congregations in America, developed cooperatively through Faith Communities Today with the help of the Lilly Endowment

*Designed for use by
interfaith dialogue groups,
by leaders of temples,
churches and mosques,
as well as by students,
educators, researchers
and journalists*

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David A. Roozen, Director



FAITH
Communities
TODAY

Interfaith FACTs

A comparison of how your neighbors worship and practice their faith

The values of the Hartford Seminary community include respect for the other, interest in the beliefs and worldview of the other, and openness to the possibility that encounter and relationship with the other may in surprising ways change the self. We do not expect or even seek to always agree with the other; our purpose is, rather, academic inquiry and dialogue.

This new report reflects the importance of this interfaith dialogue, both to understand the other and to understand ourselves better. We are confident that the information presented here will encourage dialogue that will lead to new and unexpected relationships among the various faith communities represented in the *Faith Communities Today* study.

By definition a dialogue is somewhat open ended. It is a journey that has not been precisely mapped. It is a process of mutual discovery which promises the possibility of something new emerging, perhaps something no one has dreamed of or expected, a realigning of the self perhaps, a reshaping of one's own hopes and dreams. We encourage you to read and reflect on this report in this spirit of discovery.

It is a part of our mission as Hartford Seminary as well as a great privilege to be able to play this important public role. Today, after the tragic events of September 11, the participation and leadership of Hartford Seminary in these now widening and increasingly urgent conversations feels more like an institutional responsibility or, speaking like my Calvinist ancestors, even a call from God to serve the wider public even more than before.

This report is an example of what Hartford Seminary does so well, linking scholarship with faith in practice and a commitment to interfaith dialogue. The first *Faith Communities Today* report, "A Report on Religion in America Today," was an important first step to increased sensitivity to the United States' pluralistic religious landscape. This second report, "Meet Your Neighbors: Interfaith Facts," asks you to take the next step, to open yourself to learning about, talking with and relating to people whose faith traditions differ from yours.



Heidi Hadsell
President, Hartford Seminary

Meet Your Neighbors: Interfaith FACTs

Errata

With Our Apologies!!

The map showing the distribution of Muslim Mosques on page 5 inadvertently repeated regional percentages from the preceding map. The correct figures are:

Northeastern States.....	27%
Southern States.....	30%
North Central States.....	8%
Western States.....	15%

Figure 18 shows percentages of congregations involved in or supporting programs for migrants and/or immigrants.

Figures 19-22 show the percentage of congregations engaging in interfaith activities rather than both interfaith and ecumenical activities.

The following percentages can be added to the pie charts showing the periods of founding for the various faith families:

<i>Faith Family</i>	<i>Before 1945</i>	<i>1945- 1965</i>	<i>1966- 1989</i>	<i>1990- 2000</i>
Oldline Protestant Churches	76%	14%	8%	2%
Roman Catholic Parishes	69%	21%	8%	2%
African American Churches	51%	23%	21%	5%
Reform and Conservative Temples	47%	32%	16%	5%
Orthodox Christian Churches	52%	15%	24%	9%
Evangelical Protestant Groups	38%	25%	26%	11%
Muslim Mosques	5%	7%	58%	30%

America's New Interest in Interfaith Issues

by Carl S. Dudley and David A. Roozen

The minor conflicts and raging wars at the beginning of our 21st century make us even more aware that religious intolerance feeds on ignorance and misinformation and that this intolerance is perpetuated by the absence of contact among peoples.

The consequences, often tragic, are readily apparent every day. Even within the remarkable pluralism of the United States – and even with our remarkable, 24/7 access to more information than anyone can consume – the majority of us lack appreciative understanding and contact with persons of other faiths.

Especially after 9-11, the information reported on the following pages is uniquely significant. It represents the views and practices of faith groups that feel and often express tensions that originated in other parts of the world. In these pages, we discover that each faith community offers nurture and affirmation of members, and that each proclaims its commitment to peace in the human community.

At the same time each group has its own boundaries and truth claims that make dialogue difficult. Every faith community has a hard side that makes judgments, seeks justice, and is prepared to struggle (in various ways) against the intervention by others upon areas it considers sacred.

Any group that measures itself by its best and others by their worst destroys dialogue. By contrast, the *Faith Communities Today* study compares the responses of 14,301 pastors, rabbis, imams and other key informants, who reported on their congregations. The differing profiles that result suggest neither positive nor negative evaluations. Rather they define the unique character of each community.

In the brief comparisons among these profiles Muslims and Jews in the United States can discover how much they have in common, as well as points at which they may be significantly different. Orthodox and Catholic Christians can find

similarity in faith practices even if doctrines take distinct forms and emphases. Protestant groups that often define themselves by their differences can explore the strengths of common beliefs even as they anchor faith in their uniqueness. All will see themselves and the other more clearly.

In a medieval story, a scholar from Paris studied for two years in London. On his return he was asked what he learned about London. He replied that during his travels he learned much about the British town but even more about his home city. Many who engage in dialogue across religious differences have similar experiences. Faith communities, also, learn a great deal about themselves as they compare themselves with other groups.

FACT is a cooperative effort of the 41 denominations and faith groups in America represented on the following pages, reflecting the practices and convictions of more than 90% of those who worship regularly. It is funded jointly by the Lilly Endowment and by the cooperating religious bodies. The results of the full study can be accessed through the web site at www.fact.hartsem.edu. Based on that study, this publication will help you look at your own faith community alongside congregations other faith groups.

After observing the broad strokes that map the size and distribution of America's faith communities, you can explore the emphasis congregations give to different personal practices and social views within seven religious bodies. We invite you to sense the dynamics of growth, vitality and community outreach among the groups and consider similarities and differences among the professional leaders.

In each of these areas you have access to basic information as you seek to build on the positive elements in your tradition as a church, parish, assembly, temple or mosque. We believe you will learn more about yourself – even as you more clearly discover your religious neighbor.

Getting These Interfaith FACTs

The data presented on these pages was gathered in late 1999 and early 2000 by the faith groups themselves working collaboratively as part of Faith Communities Today. In each case, professional researchers used representative samples of their faith group's congregations. They asked key informants to answer carefully constructed questions about their congregations.

Researchers from 41 denominations identified several dozen common questions. Because the meanings of words or phrases may differ in the various faith groups, researchers sometimes changed the phrasing of specific questions. A few topics important to some groups were regarded as less interesting by others, and were omitted by the latter groups. As a consequence, the FACT survey does not provide comparable data on all topics.

On this and the facing page, the maps show the regional distribution of congregations in each of the faith families; the first pie chart indicates the proportion of congregations located in rural, urban or suburban settings.

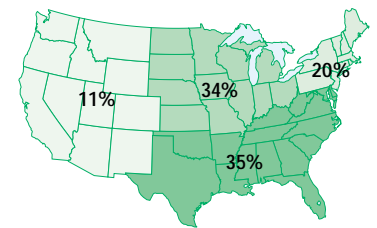
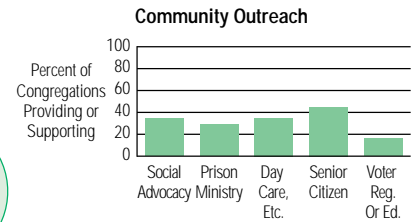
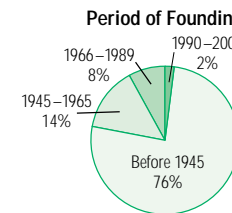
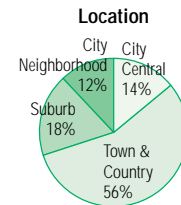
The second pie chart reveals how recently the faith group's congregations were founded. (Many congregations, it should be noted, were established significantly earlier than 1945; that year was selected by researchers because it marked the beginning of the post World War II building boom.) As you look at these pie charts, what do the location of congregations and the periods when they were founded suggest about your faith group?

The bar graph offers a comparison of five areas in which congregations serve their local communities. Other forms of service are shown on page 9. These pages provide the grist for significant discussions.

The Seven Faith Families

Oldline Protestant Churches

- American Baptist Churches
- Christian Church (Disciples of Christ)
- Episcopal Church
- Evangelical Lutheran Church in America
- Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.)
- Reformed Church in America
- Unitarian Universalist Association
- United Church of Christ
- United Methodist Church



Roman Catholic Congregations

African American Churches

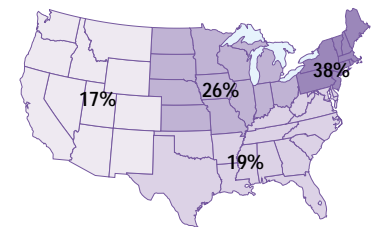
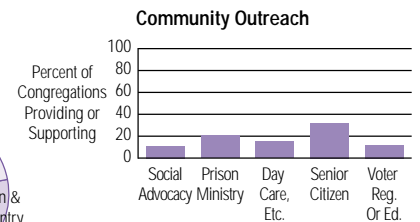
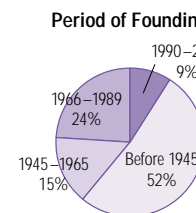
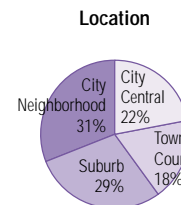
- African Methodist Episcopal Church
- African Methodist Episcopal Zion Church
- Christian Methodist Episcopal Church
- Church of God in Christ
- National Baptist Convention of America
- National Baptist Convention U.S.A.
- Progressive National Baptist Convention

Reform and Conservative Temples

- Union of American Hebrew Congregations
- United Synagogue of Conservative Judaism

Orthodox Christian Churches

- Albanian Orthodox Diocese of America
- American Carpatho-Russian Orthodox Greek Catholic Diocese
- Antiochian Orthodox Christian Archdiocese of North America
- Bulgarian Eastern Orthodox Church
- Greek Orthodox Archdiocese of America
- Orthodox Church in America
- Romanian Orthodox Archdiocese in America and Canada
- Serbian Orthodox Church in America
- Ukrainian Orthodox Church of the U.S.A



Evangelical Protestant Groups

- Assemblies of God
- Christian Reformed Church
- Church of the Nazarene
- Churches of Christ (Non-instrumental)
- Mennonite Church U.S.A.
- Non-denominational Bodies
- Seventh-day Adventist Church
- Southern Baptist Convention

Muslim Mosques

Oldline Protestant Churches

Oldline Protestant statistics in this booklet represent the combination of data developed by denominational research staff.

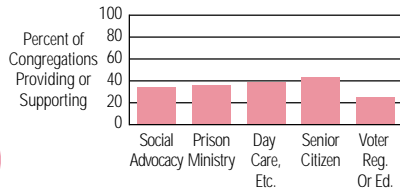
Orthodox Christian Churches

Combined data for Orthodox Christian bodies was gathered under auspices of Standing Conference of Orthodox Bishops in America.

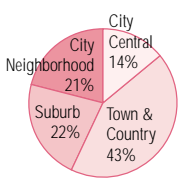
Roman Catholic Congregations

Roman Catholic data was assembled by researcher staff in the New York and Seattle archdioceses.

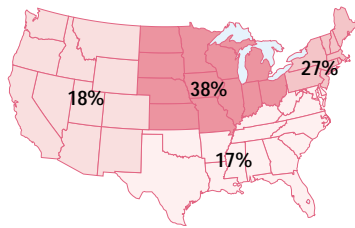
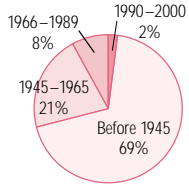
Community Outreach



Location



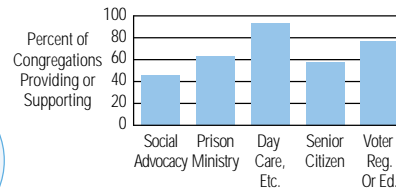
Period of Founding



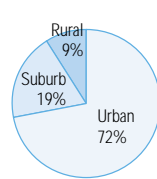
African American Churches

Statistics from African American Churches were gathered by research staff at the Interdenominational Theological Center in Atlanta, GA.

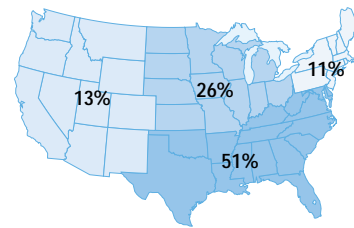
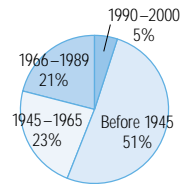
Community Outreach



Location



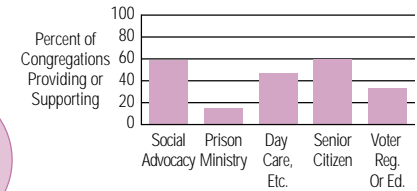
Period of Founding



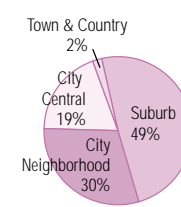
Reform and Conservative Temples

Data on Conservative and Reform Jewish temples was assembled at the Brandeis University Center for Modern Jewish Studies, Waltham, MA.

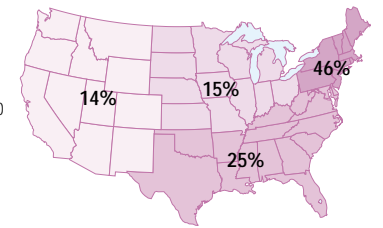
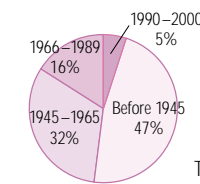
Community Outreach



Location



Period of Founding

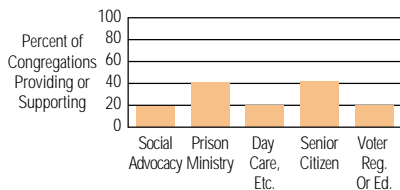


This survey sampled congregations from the two movements within American Judaism that serve the greatest percentage of American Jews. More than four out of five Jews who belong to a synagogue or temple are found in the Conservative and Reform movements.

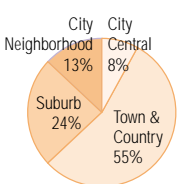
Evangelical Protestant Groups

Evangelical Protestant data was developed by researchers for the particular groups.

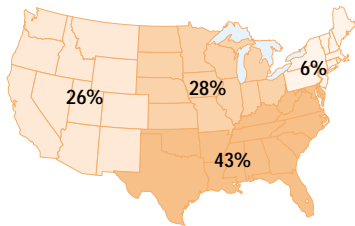
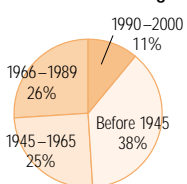
Community Outreach



Location



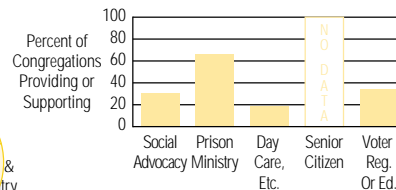
Period of Founding



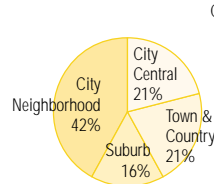
Muslim Mosques

Statistics on Muslim Mosques were gathered at Shaw University in Raleigh, NC, under the auspices of the Council for American Islamic Relations.

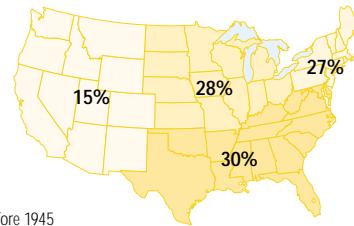
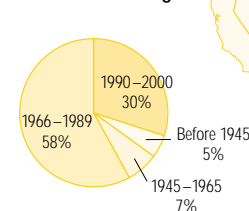
Community Outreach



Location



Period of Founding



Religious Practices Encouraged by Congregations

Personal religious practices often are central to strategies for preserving and transmitting faith traditions. Practices – including Sabbath observance, dietary requirements, and the display of religious symbols in the home – become distinguishing characteristics of individuals, congregations and faith groups.

That is why the researchers who planned the FACT study were so interested in the ways temples, churches and mosques encourage personal religious practices. In wording their questions, researchers used terms their constituents would recognize. The Jewish questionnaire, for example, changed “holy day observance” to “keeping Sabbath,” (Figure 5) and “dietary restrictions” became “observing kashrut” (Figure 4).

Because they were studying the life and practices of congregations, researchers asked about the degree of emphasis placed on such practices during worship and in educational programs. For example, in their worship and education Evangelical Protestant congregations may place greater emphasis on abstinence from premarital sex (Figure 8) than the emphasis given to the display of religious objects in the home (Figure 6). Orthodox Christian and Roman Catholic parishes may emphasize fasting (Figure 3) more than Oldline Protestant churches. On the other hand, the Muslim tradition of abstinence from alcohol (Figure 7) may be so strong that greater emphasis in worship and

Figures show the percentage of congregations that ‘highly emphasize’ various practices in their worship and teaching.

Faith families that did not include a question in their surveys are not shown in the figures below.

Fig. 1
Personal Spiritual Practices

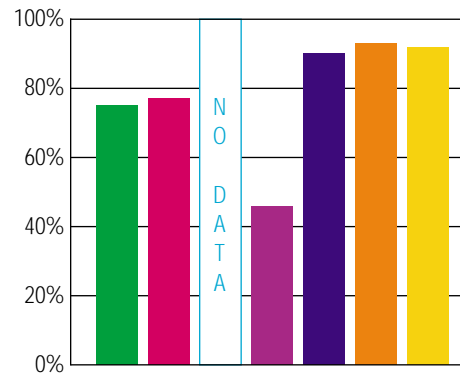


Fig. 2
Family Devotions

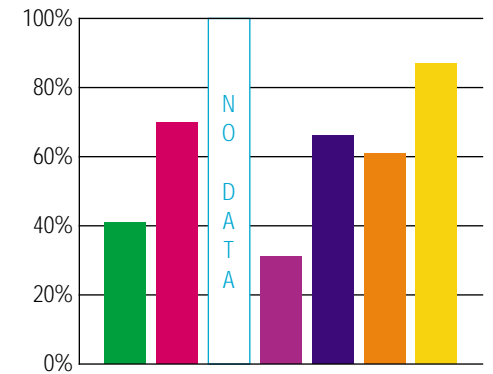


Fig. 3
Fasting

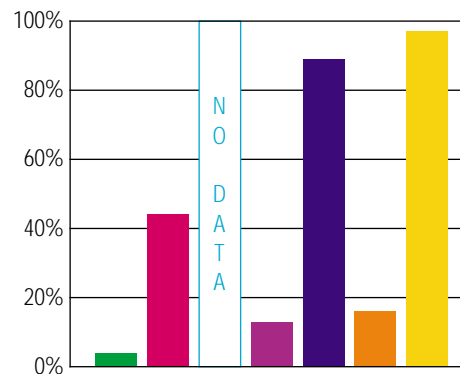
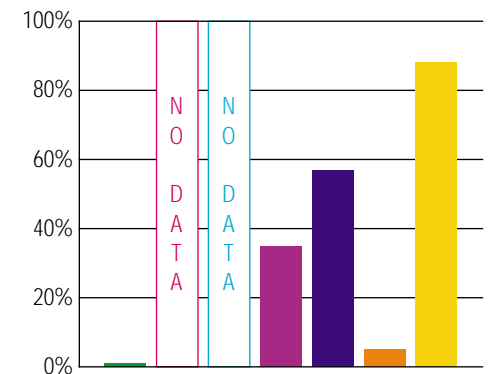


Fig. 4
Observing Dietary Restrictions



- Oldline Protestant Churches
- Roman Catholic Congregations
- African American Churches
- Reform and Conservative Temples
- Orthodox Christian Churches
- Evangelical Protestant Groups
- Muslim Mosques

Fig. 5
Holy Day Observance

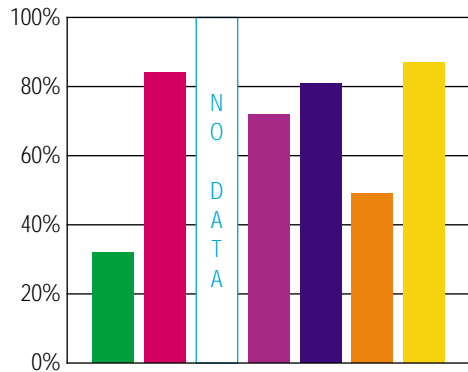


Fig. 6
Religious Objects in Home

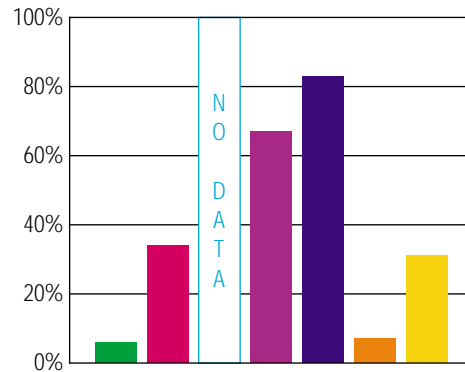


Fig. 7
Abstinence From Alcohol

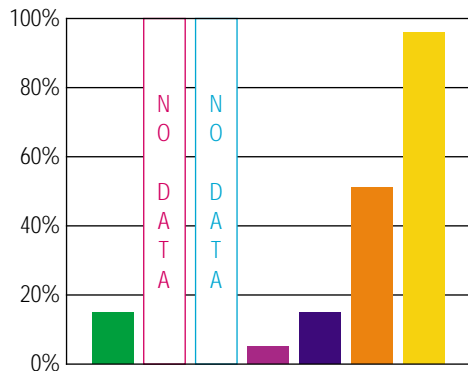
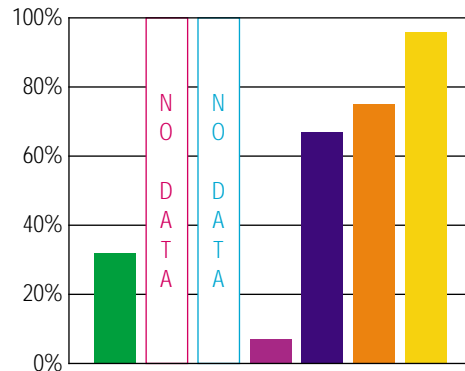


Fig. 8
Abstinence From Premarital Sex



education may be less necessary. The figures presented indicate the percentage of congregations which place “high emphasis” on the practices noted in worship and education, and reflect the importance congregations attach to reinforcing these elements of their traditions.

African American researchers omitted all of these questions, both because they wanted to look at several unique topics and because it was necessary for them to limit the number of questions. Roman Catholic researchers omitted questions on dietary restrictions and abstinence because those are considered well-known teachings of that church.

Several religious groups in one small American city used the FACT survey (available at www.FACT.HartSem.edu) at the same time. One Disciples of Christ congregation spent considerable time discussing their lack of emphasis on fasting as compared with data from a neighboring mosque and Orthodox Christian parish. They decided that fasting could be a very important spiritual discipline – and that the members might be healthier as well!

As you and your neighbors discuss the emphasis your congregations place on personal religious practices, you might consider how your faith traditions are being demonstrated and passed on to the next generation through particular practices.

Social Views and Community Outreach in Temples, Churches and Mosques

Faith families that did not include a question in their surveys are not shown in the figures below.

It is helpful to compare how temples, churches and mosques understand themselves and also to consider how the content of the sermons may reflect differences in needs or emphasis among faith groups. FACT researchers asked about both topics. The key informants were asked, “How well do the statements ‘our congregation is working for social justice’ and ‘our congregation is a moral beacon in the community’ describe your congregation?” Respondents were given five choices, from “hardly at all” to “very well.” Figures 9 and 10 show the percentages of respondents who felt that the statements reflect the identity of their congregations “quite well” or “very well.” (Catholics responded to the statement “Our parish makes a difference through moral and ethical teachings.”)

Respondents also were asked about the frequency of sermons on “social justice or social action” and on “personal spiritual growth.” Figures 11 and 12 show the percentages of respondents who reported that these topics were the focus of preaching “always” or “often.” For all traditions, sermons on spiritual growth are much more frequent than messages on social justice. Although most congregations do not see themselves as highly engaged in social justice, many groups in every tradition understand their role as promoting spiritual growth.

In addition to the community involvement reported on pages 4 and 5, the vast majority of congregations are involved in some form of community service either directly or in cooperation with another organization (Figures 13-18). As you and your neighbors discuss these issues, you might look at how your traditions are reflected in sermons and in community projects.

Fig. 9 Working for Social Justice

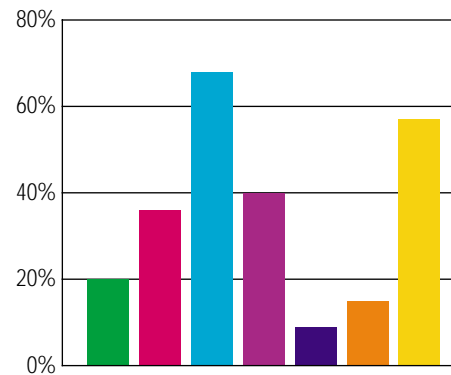


Fig. 10 Being a Moral Beacon in Community

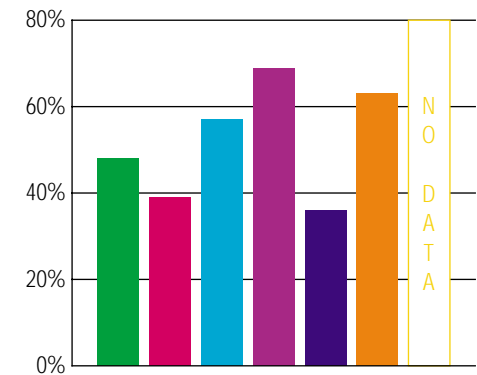


Fig. 11 Sermons on Social Justice

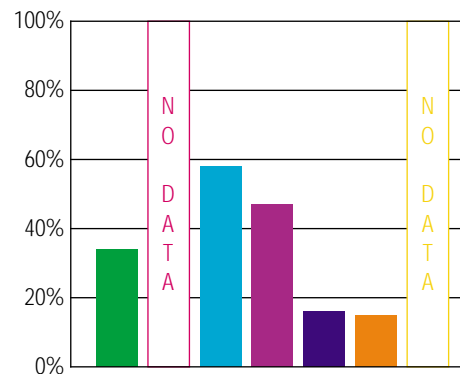
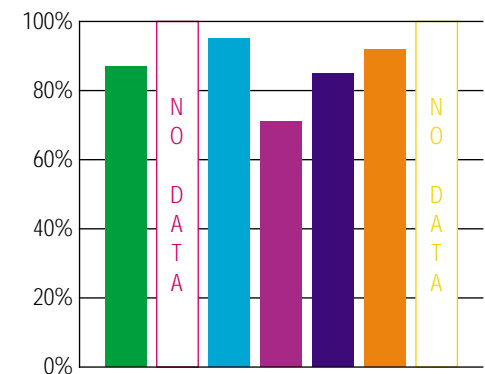


Fig. 12 Sermons on Spiritual Growth



- Oldline Protestant Churches
- Roman Catholic Congregations
- African American Churches
- Reform and Conservative Temples
- Orthodox Christian Churches
- Evangelical Protestant Groups
- Muslim Mosques

Fig. 13
Food Pantry/ Soup Kitchen

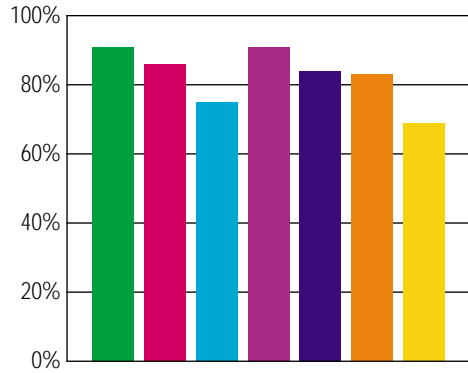


Fig. 14
Counseling Services

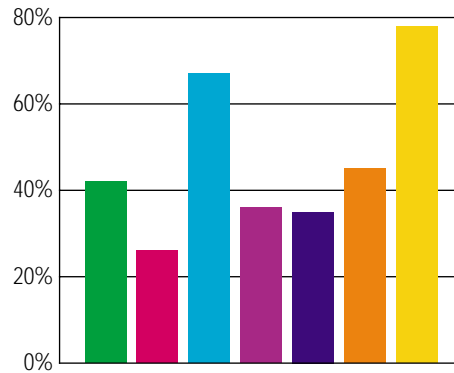


Fig. 15
Substance Abuse Programs

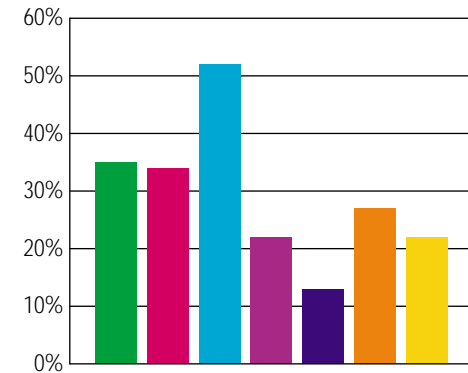


Fig. 16
Employment Counseling

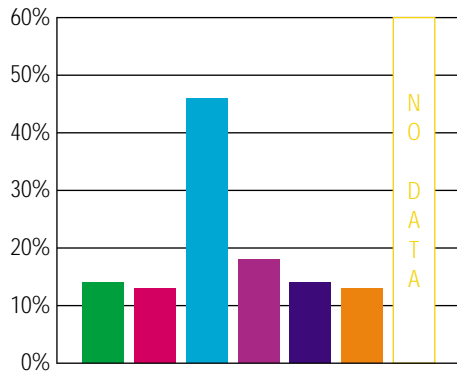


Fig. 17
Tutoring for Children/Teens

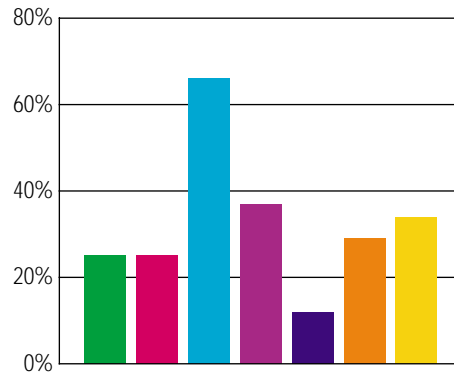
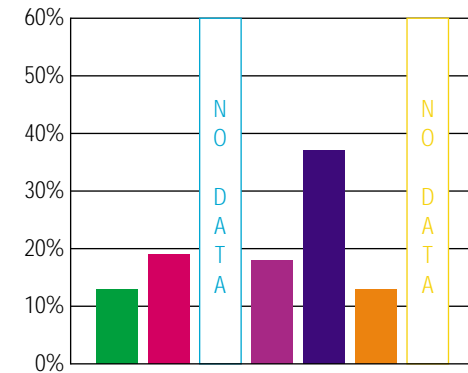


Fig. 18
Programs for Immigrants and/or Migrants



Interfaith and Ecumenical Activities

The interaction of temples, churches and mosques is of increasing significance. Shared worship services, joint service projects, and participation in interchurch or interfaith councils of congregations are examples of the variety of ways in which faith experiences among different groups may be linked. The FACT survey, designed even before 9/11, sought to document the evidence of such relationships.

While the nation-wide results displayed in Figures 19 to 22 are interesting in their own right, they invite comparison with your own community's experience. How frequently is your church, temple or mosque involved in joint worship, in celebrations or programs other than worship, in joint social outreach or service projects? Does it participate in an ecumenical or inter-religious council? Do the clergy of your community enjoy a ministerial or other professional association? Why or why not? Do you and your neighbors know and appreciate your similarities and your differences, and do you build on these?

Many Christian congregations are located outside urban areas where there is less religious diversity, reducing the opportunities for inter-religious events. Opportunities for common activities among Christian bodies are generally available, but events that involve temples and/or mosques are more likely to happen in major population centers. As the pie charts on pages 4 and 5 indicate, Jews and Muslims are more likely to live in cities and suburbs. That fact, in itself, may account for some of the disparities shown in the figures in this booklet.

It should be noted that the African American researchers focused on a different question, concerning inter-racial rather than interfaith events; those responses are not included.

Figures 19-22 show the percentages of congregations engaging in interfaith activities. Figure 23 shows the percentage that has a clear sense of purpose.

Faith families that did not include a question in their surveys are not shown in the figures below.

Fig. 19
Joint Worship Services

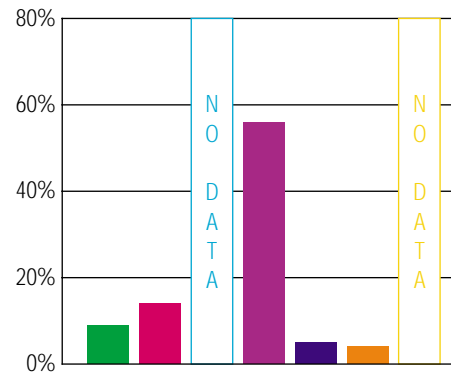


Fig. 20
Programs Other than Worship

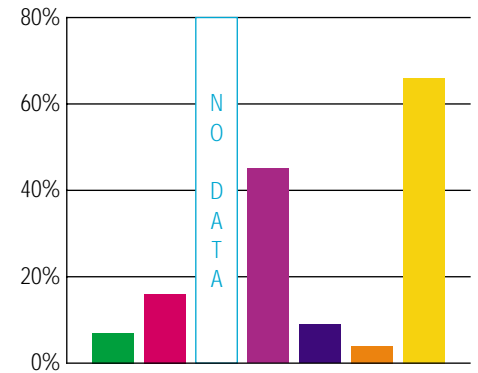


Fig. 21
Joint Service Projects

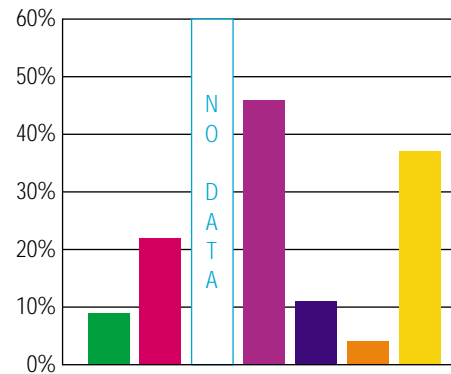
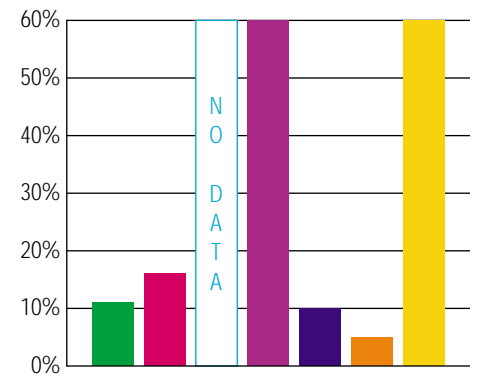


Fig. 22
Councils of Congregations



- Oldline Protestant Churches
- Roman Catholic Congregations
- African American Churches
- Reform and Conservative Temples
- Orthodox Christian Churches
- Evangelical Protestant Groups
- Muslim Mosques

Sense of Purpose and Growth of Temples, Churches and Mosques

Fig. 23
Clear Sense of Purpose

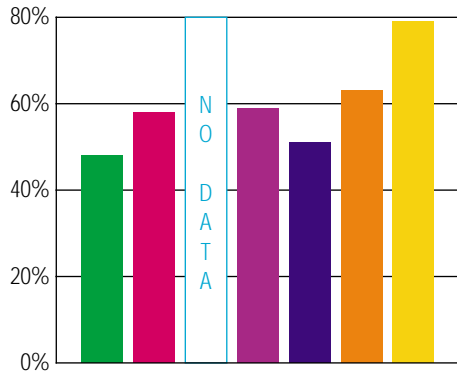
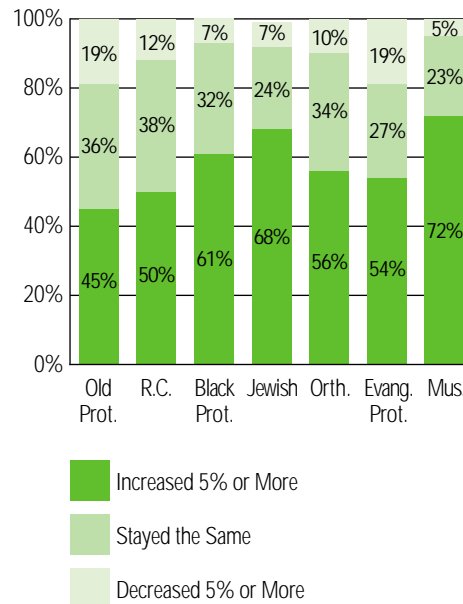


Fig. 24
Growth in Participants



The researchers who developed the FACT surveys were eager to discover any possible relationship between a congregation's sense of purpose and the level of participation. They asked key informants several questions about congregational identity, including one seeking to measure whether the temple, church or mosque had a clear sense of purpose.

Respondents were asked to indicate, on a scale of one to five, how accurately the statement, "Our congregation has a clear sense of mission and purpose" represented them. Figure 23 indicates the percentage of those who said the statement described their congregation "very well" or "quite well."

The same congregations were asked to report whether, since 1995, there had been an increase or decrease of at least five percent in participation, or whether participation stayed about the same. The responses displayed in Figure 24 seem to indicate a correlation between the two topics.

You and your neighbors may wish to discuss whether this applies in your temples, churches or mosques. If you would like to compare your own evaluation with those of other congregations in your particular denomination, you can find that data in an interactive website at www.FACT.HartSem.edu. Additional information is available in the "Report on Religion in the United States Today" (see back cover).

Responses to other questions about congregational identity are displayed in Figures 25, 26 and 27.

How Jews, Christians and Muslims Feel about Their Congregations

Faith families that did not include a question in their surveys are not shown in the figures below.

Serious efforts in getting to know our neighbors will take us beyond the formality of meetings and activities and even beyond agreed upon common projects. We understand our neighbors best – and they understand us best – when together we learn and talk about the life of the communities of faith to which we belong. This may be especially true when we share our feelings about our congregations.

The researchers who worked together in FACT sought to get beneath the surface with several questions about congregational identity. Respondents were invited to indicate the extent to which their temples, churches or mosques “feel like a large, close-knit family” and are “spiritually vital and alive.” Figures 25 and 26 display the percentages of the respondents who said that the characterizations fit their congregations “very well” or “quite well.”

How well do these statements describe your situation? As you compare your community of faith to the nationwide percentages, you can not only share how you feel about your own congregation, but you can describe specific ways that the human and spiritual needs of members are met both within and across religious traditions. What can you learn from the experiences of others to strengthen the ways in which the needs of your members are met?

Another important measure of a congregation’s approach to its community is the extent to which newcomers are easily assimilated. The six groups who asked that question (see Figure 27) seem very much alike. Is that also true of your congregations? What are some of the different ways new members are welcomed and integrated in your congregations? How do you welcome persons of other faith traditions?

Fig. 25
Like a Close-Knit Family

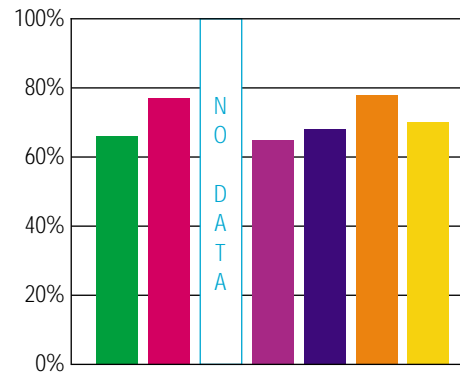


Fig. 26
Spiritually Vital & Alive

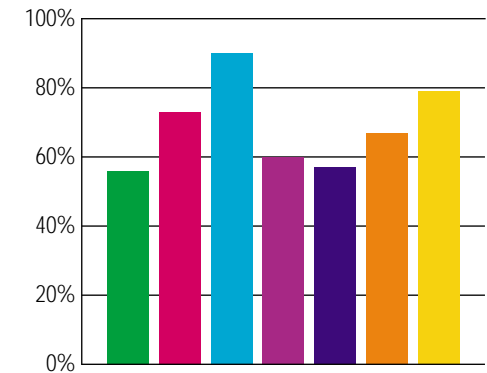


Fig. 27
Newcomers Easily Assimilated

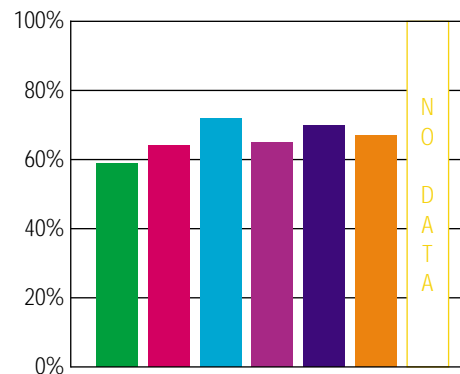
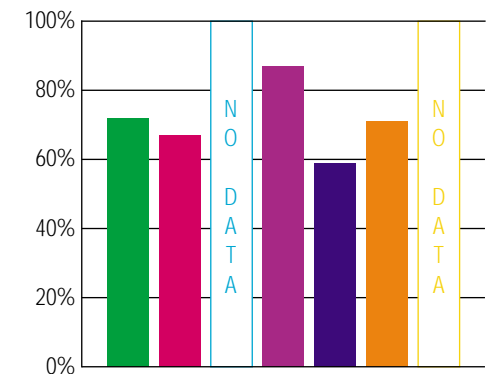


Fig. 28
Through Newspapers



- █ Oldline Protestant Churches
- █ Roman Catholic Congregations
- █ African American Churches
- █ Reform and Conservative Temples
- █ Orthodox Christian Churches
- █ Evangelical Protestant Groups
- █ Muslim Mosques

How Churches, Temples and Mosques Reach Out to Newcomers

The public face that faith groups present to the community in which they are located is also very significant. It is one very important way in which those who attend temples, churches and mosques get to know or to be known by their neighbors.

The FACT researchers were interested in how the use of media – specifically newspapers, radio or television, and direct mail – correlated with the growth of congregations, and with the sense of well being or community identity of the temples, churches and mosques. Local newspapers are the most public ways in which all groups present themselves in their communities. The responses were actually quite similar from one group to another within all the media (see Figures 28, 29 and 30). Roman Catholic researchers included announcements to their parishioners in the direct mail category; this might have influenced the higher percentage reported.

Researchers also asked whether congregations used worship services or special programs to reach newcomers (Figures 31 and 32). It seems likely that liturgical churches, like Roman Catholics and Orthodox Christians, find it more difficult to design special services intended to attract non-members.

As you seek to know your neighbors better, you will be more conscious of the ways different groups use the media and reach out to newcomers.

Fig. 29
Through Radio or TV

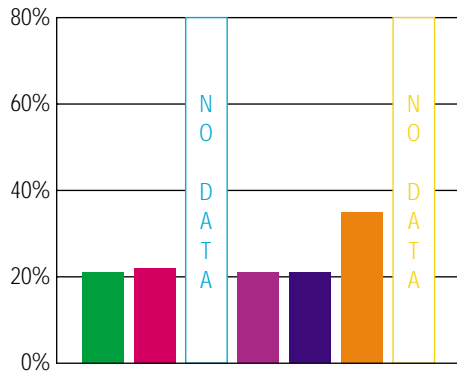


Fig. 30
Through Direct Mail

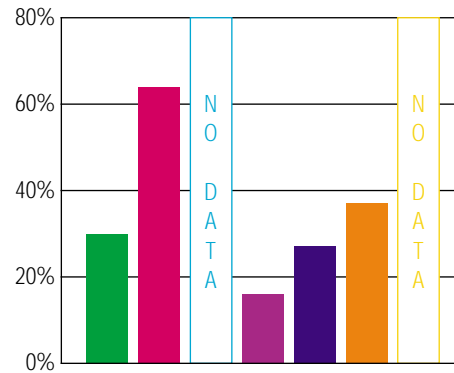


Fig. 31
Through Worship Services

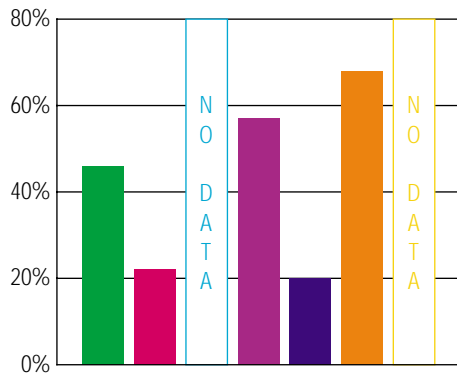
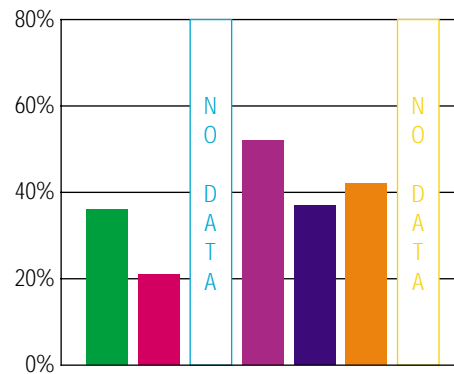


Fig. 32
Through Special Programs



Professional Leadership: A Look at Rabbis, Ministers, Priests and Imams

Leadership in the various faith groups differs significantly. As we seek to understand the ways in which our neighbors worship and work, it is useful to know as much as possible about the religious leaders in the community: who they are, their backgrounds, and what is expected of them in their congregations.

Figure 33 displays a great deal of information about senior professional leaders of the faith groups. The percentage of these persons who serve full and part time is shown, along with the percentage of those who are “tent makers”, i.e. also have some form of outside employment. (Roman Catholics did not include this question in their surveys because priests in most parishes are provided by the diocese or religious order. Catholic researchers had other sources of information and did not need this data.)

The three Protestant Christian communities provide an interesting contrast. For example, although the percentage of full time ministers or pastors is quite similar for Oldline, African American and Evangelical Protestants, the percentage that have outside jobs differs significantly. The percentage of part time clergy among Oldline Protestants perhaps reflects the large numbers of small congregations in rural or town and country settings.

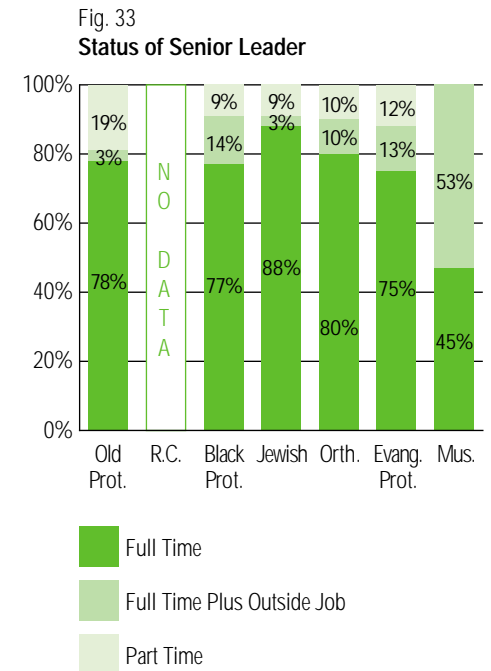
As demonstrated by Figures 33 and 34, Reform and Conservative Jewish temples have both the highest percentage of full time clergy and professional leaders with the highest educational levels. These groups are, of course, smaller in total numbers but the percentages are significant. Evangelical and African American Protestants historically have looked for different experiences and preaching patterns when seeking clergy, although increasingly seminary education is regarded as important.

Roman Catholic researchers did not ask the question about education because required seminary training is provided by the church; Catholic scholars indicate that the typical parish priest has the equivalent of the master of divinity degree that was the basis for comparative data in Figure 34.

Although Muslim researchers did not ask this question, the majority of mosques are known to rely on part time professional leadership. For historic and cultural reasons, the training of imams is very different from that of Christian and Jewish clergy. (See <http://Macdonald.HartSem.edu>.)

The differences evident in Figures 33 and 34 and the historic patterns described above will stimulate good discussion as both lay and clergy members of the various faith groups seek to learn more and understand their neighbors better.

Faith families that did not include a question in their surveys are not shown in the figures below.



- Oldline Protestant Churches
- Roman Catholic Congregations
- African American Churches
- Reform and Conservative Temples
- Orthodox Christian Churches
- Evangelical Protestant Groups
- Muslim Mosques

Volunteer Leadership in Temples, Churches and Mosques

The roles that lay persons (i.e. non professional leaders) play within congregations is another interesting subject.

Figure 35 shows the percentage of regularly participating adults who currently hold volunteer leadership roles in congregations – tasks like serving on administrative committees, teaching children, youth or adults in educational programs, or leading outreach programs, etc.

The dramatic differences among the various faith groups are based largely on organizational patterns among the religious groups. Protestant churches, with numerous educational and other programs, have historically relied heavily on lay leadership. Catholic, Orthodox Christian and Muslim groups have traditionally had relatively fewer activities other than worship. Those patterns appear to be changing as educational programs are increasingly in the hands of trained lay leaders and as parishes, temples and mosques engage in social service efforts.

Researchers also were interested in the ease or difficulty of recruiting volunteers (Figure 36). The six groups that asked the question received strikingly similar results: “It’s tough work, but we did it!”

As in the other sections of this report, the differences and similarities reflected among faith groups provide stimulating subjects for dialogue and conversation. Getting to know each other includes an understanding of the organizational patterns and the theological bases for the roles traditionally assigned to religious leaders and to the laity.

Additional information about the faith groups in this study, including links to nearly 200 denominational home pages, can be found at www.FACT.HartSem.edu, www.HIRR.HartSem.edu, and <http://Macdonald.Hartsem.edu>.

Fig. 34
The Leader’s Education

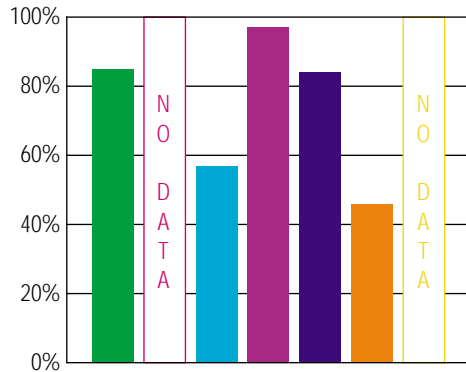


Fig. 36
Recruiting Volunteer Lay Leaders

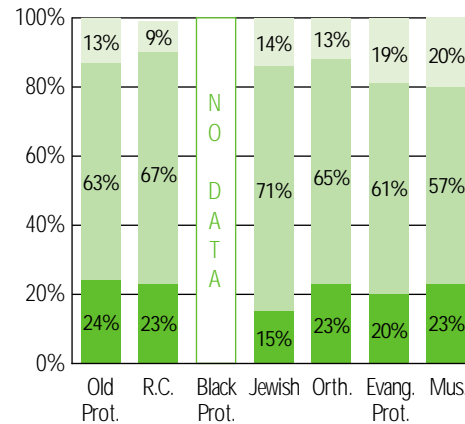
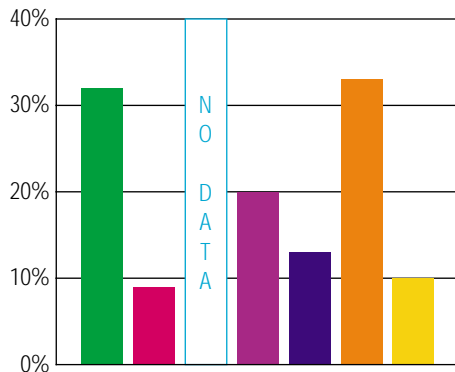


Fig. 35
Active as Leaders



- Not a Problem
- Challenge, But Eventually We Find Enough
- Cannot Find Enough

Use *Interfaith FACTs: Meet Your Neighbors* and learn more about yourself

The information in this booklet can answer your questions and stimulate conversations between you and your neighbors.

This resource has been prepared to:

- **Help participants in interfaith and inter-religious conversations** discuss your own and your neighbors' religious convictions and practices.
- **Help local pastors, rabbis, imams, and others** look at your own communities, review opportunities for collaborative efforts, and seek better inter-group relations. (Groups interested in using the research in congregational evaluation and long-range planning will find the longer report and an interactive on-line handbook useful as well. See below.)
- **Assist leaders of religious organizations** evaluate and plan programs including "living room dialogues."
- **Help community leaders, including secular groups** understand the faith-based organizations with whom you collaborate.
- **Help college and seminary students, professors and other researchers** learn more about the varied landscape of America's faith communities. (Permission is granted for the use of data in unpublished academic reports.)
- **Aid journalists and other writers** obtain data for interpretive articles.
- **Help government officials at all levels** understand and serve their constituents better.

Interfaith Feedback

Those associated with FACT are interested in reactions to this study and in hearing how the research has helped congregations and interfaith organizations.

Users of this booklet are invited to share their experiences with the researchers and each other. To do so, please log on to the FACT webboard: www.HartSem.edu/-FACT.

The FACT team is anticipating further research. Your comments will help. Thank you.

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This resource, as well as a longer "Report on Religion in the United States Today" (also published by *Faith Communities Today*), is available in quantities from:



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An interactive, on-line discussion resource on the FACT study is available at www.FACT.HartSem.edu

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