

General Council on Finance and Administration  
The United Methodist Church  
1 Music Circle North  
Nashville, TN 37203

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

March 11, 2008  
Contact: Sharon Dean  
615.369.2336  
[sdean@gcfa.org](mailto:sdean@gcfa.org)

**2006 United Methodist Membership and Attendance Statistics Released**

*Nashville, TN* – As the denomination prepares for its quadrennial meeting, information regarding church membership among congregations in the United States has been released by The General Council on Finance and Administration (GCFA).

The newly released report, provided by the Analysis and Research division of GCFA, indicates that historic declines in membership and attendance continued in 2006, although the rate of decrease was not as steep.

“Statistics are a historical record of performance,” Scott Brewer, GCFA’s director of research said. “There is a lot of excitement in the denomination right now about our future and the ways all levels of the connection are working to revitalize the Church with this renewed emphasis on making disciples of Jesus Christ for the transformation of the world. It’s important to remember that it will likely be a number of years before we see the fruits of these efforts in our statistics. We should be hopeful, but we also need to be patient.”

Other pertinent data released include:

- Professing membership in the US is 7,931,733, down 0.8% compared to 2005, which saw a 0.99% decrease from 2004.
- Attendance in the US is 3,136,955, down 0.82%, compared to 2005, which saw a 1.65% decrease from 2004.
- 2006 statistics indicate median average church size and weekly attendance are unchanged from 2005.
- The percentage of churches receiving at least one member by profession of faith or restored was 58.8%, up for the third year in a row.
- 14 conferences grew in 2006, double the number in 2005. Those conferences are:
  - Alabama-West Florida 0.84%
  - Alaska Missionary 1.75%
  - Arkansas 0.37%
  - Central Texas 0.89%
  - Kentucky 0.17%
  - North Carolina 0.01%

- North Georgia 1.12%
- Oklahoma 0.04%
- Oklahoma Indian Missionary 0.59%
- Red Bird Missionary 1.56%
- Southwest Texas 0.09%
- Tennessee 0.75%
- Texas 0.77%
- Western North Carolina 0.23%

Churches spent \$6,014,154,420 in 2006, down 3.71% from 2005, adjusted for inflation. “With such a large increase in spending in 2005, I am not surprised to see giving leveling off in 2006,” Brewer said. “In 2005 we saw a tremendous outpouring of support through the Advance for persons affected by hurricanes Katrina and Rita and the December 2004 tsunami. United Methodists have always been generous people, but it’s clear that when we’re motivated, we will give far beyond historical norms.”

Additional statistical data is being prepared and will be reported to General Conference, which begins April 23, 2008 in Ft. Worth, Texas. This information will also be made available through the GCFA website and other United Methodist affiliated news outlets.

# # # # #

The General Council on Finance and Administration coordinates and administers finances and safeguards the legal interests and rights of The United Methodist Church.

[www.gcfa.org](http://www.gcfa.org)