

**Faith-Based Communities and Welfare Reform
California Religious Community Capacity Study**

Quantitative Findings and Conclusions

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This paper is dedicated to Dr. Richard Orend who designed the initial study and would have completed the research and analysis, if he had not tragically died before this was possible. Special thanks to Dr. Michael O'Neill who took over the study after Dr. Orend's death and was responsible for all the subsequent work up to the actual analysis of the data. Thanks also to Scott Anderson, Mark Chaves, Michael Cortés, Nancy Kinney, Kenneth Koziol and John Orr for their many helpful comments on this report.

Executive Summary

The California Religious Capacity Study was conducted by the California Council of Churches, the Center for Religion and Civic Culture at the University of Southern California, and the Institute for Nonprofit Organization Management at the University of San Francisco. The research looks at the faith-based community's current involvement in and knowledge of programs operating under the Charitable Choice provision of the 1996 Welfare Reform Act. It further assesses the community's interest in and capacity for participation in welfare-to-work programs.

As a part of this effort, the Institute for Nonprofit Management at the University of San Francisco conducted a state-wide survey of congregations and faith-based nonprofit social service agencies. More than one thousand congregations and organizations were surveyed, via phone interview, about their participation in welfare-to-work programs, the current services they are providing as a part of their social ministry efforts and their organizational capacity to provide such services.

Findings

- ?? Participating congregations were ethnically diverse and included a variety of income levels. They also represented a range of denominational affiliations. The overwhelming majority of those who responded represented congregations (92%) rather than faith-based nonprofits.
- ?? Congregations varied widely in their size, staffing, and budgets. Half the congregations in the sample had fewer than 150 members, and 20 percent had no full-time staff. Half had annual budgets of less than \$112,000. Thus, while there are large congregations in the state that might be able to support welfare-to-work contracts, the "average" congregation would have problems finding the staffing to write applications and oversee contracts.
- ?? Only 3 percent of the congregations and organizations in this study currently had a "working arrangement" under the Charitable Choice provision of the 1996 Welfare Reform Act. Furthermore, only 33.2 percent had any familiarity with the provisions of the act. Those who knew about its provisions were most likely to have heard about it from their religious group (that is, for example, from their diocese or district) rather than from governmental sources. Yet, state and local government were the most likely agencies to encourage participation.
- ?? Congregations overwhelmingly did not apply for public funding for any of their programs. Only six percent had applied for such funds in the past five years and only 3.7 percent had actually received funds. When asked why they did not apply, congregations typically mentioned concerns about accepting government dollars, the absence of resources such as staff or volunteers, or space limitations. They did, however, support other organizations that administered public funds.
- ?? Every congregation in the study performed at least one social ministry function, although some were probably doing so informally rather than through formal

programs. Social ministry programs were often performed in partnership or coalition with another program.

- ?? Congregations felt that the demand for their services was increasing and that they were capable of growing to meet the increased demand.
- ?? The study generally shows that there is the will among much of the religious congregational community to undertake social ministry programs and to absorb the growing demand for such programs. There is not, however, the organizational capacity to administer formal welfare-to-work programs internally. Instead, the greatest potential is through partnerships with other agencies.

Introduction

In 1996, the United States government dramatically changed the way it provided benefits to poor families. The Personal Responsibility and Work Opportunity Reconciliation Act (PRWORA), signed by the President on August 22, 1996, eliminated Aid to Families with Dependent Children (AFDC). Instead, benefits were granted under time-limited programs, no longer as entitlements. Under the provisions of Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF), five-year limits were placed on the total time a household could receive benefits and 18 month to two-year limits on the continuous time a household could receive cash assistance. Families were to take advantage of various support services and work-readiness programs while they made the transition into paid employment. As with previous programs, Federal monies were block-granted to the states. The states, in turn, had greater discretion over program content, with the intent of better matching local needs and capacities. (The full text of the bill can be found via the internet at www.thomas.loc.gov/cgi-bin/query/z?c104:H.R.3734.ENR.)

Under the new act, the government could enter into a contractual arrangement with agencies, whereby providers would be paid directly to administer contracted services. Alternatively, the government could provide certificates, vouchers, or other forms of disbursement, which a recipient could redeem at an eligible provider of her or his choice. In the latter case, the government enters into an indirect arrangement with service providers, through the redemption of the voucher.

Each originating county welfare department determined what array of services were eligible for TANF funds, either by contract or by voucher reimbursement. However, the act specified a wide array of programs that could be so funded. Providers potentially could offer subsidized jobs themselves, could offer job readiness or skills preparation, could assist the recipient in looking for jobs, or could provide educational or vocational training. Providers also could offer food programs, maternity homes, or childcare or medical and health services.

Section 104 of the act was intended to expand the involvement of the nonprofit sector, including faith-based organizations. Under its "Charitable Choice" provisions, if a state were to offer contracts to any independent organization, it had to make such contracts available to religious organizations. If awarded such a contract (in California this program is called Cal Works), religious organizations could continue to "retain their independence from Federal, State and local governments" including "control over the development, practice, and expression of its religious belief." Organizations then could display "religious art, icons, scripture, or other symbols" and use religious criteria in hiring, promotion and firing decisions. They could neither discriminate in whom they served under the contract nor require participation in any religious services. Furthermore, potential service recipients had to have a choice of participation in a program run by a faith-based organization or one run by a secular group (Center for Public Justice, 1997).

There are very real unresolved issues at stake in considering the participation of the faith-based community. As expressed by many of the participants in this study, could the

integrity of the faith-based organization could be maintained, while satisfying program requirements? Will governmental reporting requirements alter the work that faith-based institutions are already doing in serving the poor? Do faith-based congregations have the internal capacity to administer such programs?

As a first step, it is important to at least understand what is already occurring in the faith-based community. We do not know how many programs are participating in welfare-to-work programs, what their interest in participating might be and the extent to which they are already providing the services included under Charitable Choice, but doing so with private funding or volunteer labor.

In order to begin to answer these questions, at least for California, a consortium of three organizations conducted the California Religious Community Capacity Study. The participants were the California Council of Churches, the Institute for Nonprofit Organization Management at the University of San Francisco, and the Center for Religion and Civic Culture at the University of Southern California. Funding for the study was provided by the Irvine Foundation.

This report, produced by the Institute for Nonprofit Organization Management, looks at the results of a statewide survey of faith based institutions. Specifically, it includes congregations, faith-based nonprofit service providers such as Catholic Charities and other faith-based organizations that are more difficult to categorize such as a council of rabbis. The report summarizes the findings from a phone survey of 1107 religious leaders of these organizations. The actual implementation of the survey was conducted by the Survey Research Center at the University of California, Berkeley.

Methodology

There is no single comprehensive sampling frame — that is list — of faith-based organizations. The list used for this study was compiled from several sources. We first used organizations registered with the California Secretary of State's compilation of incorporated organizations. This was combined with information from the California Attorney General's Registry of Charitable Trust listings. Other lists were obtained from religious denominations that were willing to share membership directories. Finally, we supplemented these sources with telephone directory listings of religious organizations. The final list, once duplicates were removed, contained approximately 50,000 organizations, to our knowledge the largest such listing ever compiled for the state of California.

Next, a simple random sample of 2,898 names was drawn from this list. Of these, 1105 or 38 percent were ineligible because there was no valid phone number obtainable from directory assistance or respondent who spoke English (25 cases). Of the remaining 1,793 organizations, 366 respondents were never available to be interviewed and 320 directly refused the interview. This left a final sample of 1107, or 61.7 percent of those eligible. This response rate was extremely high, compared to some other studies in this area of research. The Independent Sector study, for example, using telephone books to establish

a sampling frame, achieved a 19 percent return rate. (Hodgkinson & Weitzman, 1999; See Chaves et al.(1999) for a notable exception; this national survey achieved a 80 percent response rate.)

The original interview schedule was constructed by Dr. Richard Orend, who died before it was finalized. It underwent extensive discussion in focus groups with religious leaders, and was revised by members of the three collaborating sites. The actual interviewing for the California Congregation study occurred over the telephone between March and June of 2000. Interviewers were instructed to speak to the "most senior pastor or religious leader."

Throughout the following discussion, the "significance" of findings is mentioned. This is a technical term that refers not to the importance of the results but rather to their generalizability. The results presented here are from a sample, not from all congregations or faith based organizations in the state. If a result is significant, this means that, subject to a small, but known risk of being wrong, we are willing to conclude that the result is true for the entire population of congregations and organizations that were sampled for this study.

Survey Participants

Overwhelmingly, people who answered our questions described their group as a religious congregation/faith based-community (92%). Only 5.8 percent said they were faith-based social service nonprofits and the remaining 2.2 percent described themselves as "other" — that is something other than the pre-structured choices. Most of these, when asked to use their own words, labeled their organization as a church, a religious organization or a combination of a faith-based congregation and a non-profit.

As shown in the second column of Table I, the majority of organizations in the study were Protestant (76.3%). Of these, more organizations defined themselves as Baptist (16.2%) than any other affiliation. Less than 10 percent selected any other of the offered Protestant affiliations. Instead, the second most often selected alternative was 'other.' Many of those selecting this category saw themselves as non-denominational.

For the entire sample, the next most often selected religious affiliation was 'other,' which encompassed a variety of affiliations with non-denominational or Christian the most often selected. Interestingly, a number of religious leaders affiliated with groups usually listed as Protestant, such as Jehovah's Witness, also selected 'other'.

Table I
Distribution of Denomination/Faith Tradition

Denomination	Percent of Organizations	Percent of Total Members
Protestant	76.3	53.9
Roman Catholic	4.9	27.2
Jewish	2.6	5.1
Eastern Orthodox	1.1	1.1
Mormon/LDS	1.5	3.1
Buddist	1.4	1.1
Hindu	0.3	0.1
Muslim/Islam	0.8	1.2
Other	11.0	7.2
Total	100%	100%
	(1,107)	(506,268)

Sixty-eight percent reported their congregation/organization to be a part of a larger group, that is a denomination.

The percentage distribution of affiliations does not tell us about the percentage distribution of the membership since congregations vary in their size. The religious leaders responding to the survey also gave information on the size of their congregation. If the purely service organizations are removed from the sample because those they serve may not share the faith of the organization and the percentages are therefore recomputed to reflect the different congregational sizes, the results shown in the last column of Table I are found. Thus, while a relatively small percentage of the congregations that responded to the survey were Roman Catholic, they represented a much larger proportion of the total membership.

Religious leaders were asked to estimate what percent of their membership had a household income of less than \$20,000, between \$20,000 and \$100,000, between \$100,000 and \$250,000 and over \$250,000. The responses documented that the membership of these congregations tended to be concentrated in the middle income ranges. In half of the congregations, 15% or fewer earned household incomes of less than 20,000 dollars. In only ten percent did 25% or more earn less than 20,000 dollars. Accordingly, the membership also did not receive welfare or other government transfer programs for low-income households. Twenty-five percent of the leaders stated that no

one received these forms of public assistance; an additional 26 percent stated that 2% or less did. Only 14 percent of the congregations/organizations had 10% or more of the membership receiving such public benefits. It should be added that 11.4 percent of those responding to the survey were unable to answer this question.

If congregations were not concentrated among the lowest incomes, neither were they found among the highest. In only two and a half percent did as many as 30 percent earn between \$100,000 and \$250,000; in only .1 percent did 30% or more earn over \$250,000.

Congregations/organizations were primarily Caucasian, although a good deal of ethnic variation was also present. Fifteen percent were 95-100% white and half were 65% or more white. Seven percent were 95-100% African American, four percent were 95 to 100% Hispanic and 6 percent were 95 to 100% Asian/Pacific Islander. Again, if the ethnic distribution of the congregations or organizations is recalculated, weighting for size of the membership, the results seen in the second column of percentages in Table II are obtained (it should be noted that 11.6 percent of the respondents were unable to answer this question and that may affect the percentage distributions).

Table II
Ethnicity of Membership Compared to California's Population

Ethnicity	Percentage of membership	1998 California Population
White — non Hispanic	50.4	50.5
African American/Black	15.9	7.5
Hispanic	19.4	31.0
Asian/Pacific Islander	11.0	12.1
Native American	0.4	0.9
Other	2.7	-
Total	100% (491203)	

(California Population Estimates from the Bureau of the Census, 2000)

It is of course not to be expected that any survey would precisely reflect population demographics, and this survey is not of the entire population but rather of religious leaders' estimates of the ethnic makeup of their congregations. However, when

compared to California population estimates, the study under-represents people from Hispanic backgrounds and over-represents people who are African-American/Black.

Recent (in the last two years) immigrant congregations were sparse. Eighty-eight percent of the congregations were less than 5% recent immigrants, only one percent was more than 50% recent immigrants.

While members of congregations typically were not receiving welfare benefits, the congregations often were located in neighborhoods where many residents were welfare recipients. According to the religious leaders' estimation, eleven percent of the organizations were in localities where more than half of the households were estimated to be receiving welfare benefits, 11 percent where about half were, 60 percent where less than half were and 17.5 percent where no family was receiving such benefits. Almost 11 percent were unable to make this estimate.

Thus, the organizations in this study were diverse, encompassing a mixture of denominations, populations, and income groups.

When the sampling frame was created, it was decided to include all religious organizations including congregations, faith-based social service agencies, and other faith-based groups. The assumption was that faith-based social service agencies would be the most likely to have entered into a welfare-to-work contract. However, the major interest of this study is in congregations. The sample contains only a small percentage of faith-based social service agencies. In the remaining analysis, these social service organizations will be discussed only briefly and separately. When the report discusses congregations and organizations, it includes the entire sample. When, as is most often the case, it discusses congregations, it is excluding the social service agencies.

Organizational Capacity

For those organizations that described themselves as congregations or faith-based communities, the average membership was 503 participants (both adults and children). This single number, however, obscures the tremendous variation in organizational size. Half of the congregations had fewer than 150 members. Forty percent had fewer than 100 participants. Twenty-five percent had fewer than 70 members. Only 25 percent had congregations of 387 people or more. The high average reflects a few organizations that listed very large memberships, the largest being 18,900 individuals. These numbers contrast favorably with those found by Chaves et al.(1999) in a national study of congregations. Using a slightly different question that asked for adult participation, they found that half the congregations had fewer than 75 regularly attending members.

Echoing the difference in size was the difference in the number of full-time employees. Fully 20.3 percent of the congregations had no full-time staff. (This number is similar to that found by Printz, 1998 in a study of congregations in the Washington DC area. She found that almost a quarter of the congregations that responded to her survey had no full-time staff.) An additional 28.6 percent of the California sample had only one staff

person. Thus almost half had no or only one full-time staff member to support the organization. Seventy five percent had 3 or fewer staff persons, and only 8 percent had as many as 10 full-time employees.

Just as the organizations varied in size, so did their budgets. The mean annual budget was \$306,566; fully half of the congregations had budgets of less than \$112,000. While the most affluent organization had an annual budget of \$15,000,000, 10 percent of the groups had annual budgets of \$18,000 or less. None-the-less, 19.1 percent of the congregations described their financial health as excellent, an additional 40.5 percent as good, 36.3 percent as fair, and only 3.0 percent as poor.

Many organizations also had seen an improvement in their financial health over the past two years. One hundred and thirty congregations retrospectively rated their financial health as excellent two years ago compared to 199 congregations at present. Eighty-eight stated that they were having serious financial difficulties two years ago compared to only 31 today.

In summary, the congregations surveyed in California are diverse. Many are extremely small and lack full-time paid staff. Their operational budget reflects their smaller size. Others are larger and can draw upon greater financial and staff resources. Most consider themselves financially stable. However, there is a great difference between having the resources to fulfill their current mission and having the resources to expand their mission. In this regard, the high percent of congregations with no or only one full-time paid staff person must be considered. Preparation of a formal application for funding probably requires resources that go beyond current internal capacities of these small congregations.

Participation in Welfare to Work Programs

The simple answer to the major question of this study is that both congregations and organizations do not participate in welfare-to-work programs. Only 33 (3 percent) of the congregations stated that they had "entered into a working arrangement with a government agency" under the charitable choice provision and an additional 57 (5.5 percent) had tried for such an arrangement but been had unsuccessful for unstated reasons. The interview did not define "working arrangement". Thus a congregation could actually have a contract, could accept vouchers, or could collaborate in some fashion with an external agency that held the actual contract.

Of the 64 faith-based nonprofit agencies 2 (or 3 percent) had entered into a working arrangement under Charitable Choice and an additional 7 (10.9%) had tried unsuccessfully for such an arrangement. Thus the social service agencies were no more likely to have an existing relationship than the congregations.

The absence of participation among all participants was first understandable because they did not know about the provisions. Only 4.7 percent of the congregations felt very knowledgeable about the act, 28.5 percent somewhat familiar and 37.4 percent not at all familiar, with the remaining 29.3 percent not very familiar. The percentages for the faith-

based social services agencies were only slightly higher: 7.8 percent of these were very familiar with the act, 39.1 percent somewhat familiar, 28.1 percent not too familiar, and 25 percent not at all familiar.

Unsurprisingly, those who were or who had tried to participate were more likely to be familiar with the provisions of the act. As shown in Table III, 22.2 percent of the congregations who had a working arrangement or who had applied for such an arrangement were very familiar with its provisions compared to 3.1 percent of those who had not applied. Fully 40.9 percent of those who had not applied were not at all familiar with the act.

Table III
Familiarity with Charitable Choice by Whether Had Applied

		Has or applied for working arrangement under Charitable Choice	
		<i>No</i>	<i>Yes</i>
Familiar with Charitable Choice Provision	<i>Very familiar</i>	3.1%	22.2%
	<i>Somewhat familiar</i>	26.3	52.2
	<i>Not too familiar</i>	29.7	25.6
	<i>Not at all familiar</i>	40.9	
	<i>Totals</i>	100%	100%
		(950)	(90)

Chi Square Sig. .000

Those congregations who had at least some familiarity with the act were most likely to have heard about it from their religious group (41.8%) and secondarily from a variety of "other" sources, most notably the California Council of Churches, from members of other religious orders, or from the media. Only 21.8 percent of those with some familiarity with the act had received information from either state or local government (18.6% from local and 8.7% from state). The absence of government information was particularly salient since government sources were the most likely to encourage participation. Thus of those encouraged to participate by an outside source, 35.5 percent were encouraged by local (city or county) government, 9.1 percent by state government, 18.2 percent by a larger religious body, and 24.5 percent by some other source (multiple sources are possible).

The obvious question is whether there is something that distinguishes the congregations or organizations that do have a working arrangement from those that do not. Extreme caution must be taken in any comparison, since one or two organizations can appreciably affect summarized information when there are only a small number of organizations involved. However, with this caveat, the 35 organizations that participated included two faith based social service agencies, 32 congregations and one organization that called itself "other" with no further explanation. Three of the participating organizations were Roman Catholic, four were "other," and the remainder were Protestant. The average operational budget was higher for this group than that of the sample as a whole (for the congregations \$756,518 compared to \$306,566); and organizations who have a working arrangement also have approximately two more full-time employees on the average. Yet, two congregations had no full-time paid staff members and eight had only one full time person. We cannot tell if participation in Charitable Choice activities occurred in partnerships/coalitions. However, all save one of the congregations stated that at least one social ministry function occurred in partnership or coalition with another organization. Thus, these congregations had experience in delivering services to the poor in partnership and very probably were engaged in such a partnership under Charitable Choice.

The congregations not only did not apply for government funding under the Charitable Choice Provision, most did not apply for government funding for social programs at all. Only 6.1 percent had applied for any such funds in the past 5 years; of these 39 or 3.7 percent of the total sample had received funding, 11 or 1.1 percent of the total sample had been turned down and 12 or 1.2 percent were awaiting a decision. (Chaves, 1999b found that 3 percent of congregations in a national sample had government funding).

A slightly higher percentage of the faith-based social service nonprofits had applied for funding (12.5%). Of these 9.4 percent (8 organizations) had received funding and the remaining 3.1 percent (3 organizations) had been turned down.

Of the reasons offered to respondents for not applying for government funding, people were more likely to mention concern about government controls, bureaucracy, and red tape (47.8%). They were next most likely to mention that they had created or supported other organizations that did this (45.6%). In all 49.8 percent of those who did not apply mentioned some problem with resources ? either lack of staff or volunteers (39.4%) or lack of space (33.9%). Finally, 29.7 percent stated that theological or philosophical objections to using government funds was an issue, and 22.6 percent mentioned that social ministry/services were not a priority for their congregation.

Some of the reasons given varied by organizational size. Table IV divides the congregations into quartiles. That is the smallest 25 percent are found in the first percentaged column, the next 25 percent in the subsequent column and so forth. As shown in table IV, smaller congregations were more likely to say that social ministry/services were not a priority for them. While 30.6 percent of the smallest organizations mentioned this, only 15.9 percent of the largest ones did so. Conversely, the larger organizations were more likely not to apply because they created or supported other organizations. This was mentioned by 56.8 percent of the largest organizations

compared to 38.8 percent of the smallest. Smaller organizations were more likely to mention lack of staff/volunteers (50.9% compared to 40.2%) but not significantly more likely to mention lack of space. Size did not make a difference in terms of mentioning theological or practical objections to working with the government.

Table IV
Why Did Not Apply by Congregational Size

Why did not apply	Size in Quartiles					Chi-Square Sig.
	0-70 members	71 to 150 members	151 to 375 members	376 to 18,900 members	Total	
Type work not priority for organization	30.6%	25.2%	16.8%	15.9%	22.6%	.000 (943)
Created or supports other organizations	38.8%	43.3%	47.0%	56.8%	46.1%	.001 (945)
Theological objections to government funds	29.8%	33.1%	31.4%	23.2%	29.5%	NS (935)
Concern about gov. control/red tape	49.6%	50.0%	49.0%	42.4%	47.9%	NS (938)
Lack of staff/volunteers	50.0%	41.2%	37.2%	31.0%	40.2%	.000 (938)
Lack of space for more activities	37.7%	32.0%	32.3%	35.4%	34.2%	NS (943)

The open-ended responses to this question were extremely illuminating. Fully 63.7 percent gave some other reason for not applying for government funding for social ministry/programs. The overwhelmingly most often selected reason was absence of knowledge. Of those who had not applied, 54.3 percent stated this as a reason. Indeed, several asked the interviewer how to apply or stated that they were going to investigate applying now that they knew that it was a possibility. As one respondent related:

There was not... I was not fully informed. I didn't know a lot of the different things that would benefit me. I didn't know about it. I wish there was some way we had some direct response from the government, city or state government. Some agencies may mention something vaguely, but in terms of really coming out and saying what's available, that hasn't happened.

Others mentioned lack of knowledge about the mechanism and requirements for applying as well as concern about whether the program would alter their mission.

We were functioning on a level Z consciousness instead of a level one ... we never knew about it until 6 months ago, and I have to say this is the financial equivalent of a unicorn. I've never seen one, and the process is difficult, takes for granted a knowledge of the process without explaining it, and there seems to be a veiled contempt for the church. Some of what we do is regarded as fairly cosmetic.

The other frequently mentioned reason for lack of participation was really an elaboration upon the closed-ended response concerning church/government separation. Some mentioned concern about how government requirements would affect their organization; others discussed basic philosophical tenets about the role of religion and the role of the state.

Basically we don't believe in using tax dollars to do God's work. We just believe that it is something that we can do as a church, and helping is the ministry of the church.

Well we wouldn't apply for government (stet) under any circumstances. We hear a lot about separation of church and state and it seems the state wants that separation unless it benefits them and I think they are two-faced in that they stick their nose in our business all the time so where's the separation?

I don't want to be involved in the government, ruling over me and telling me what to do. I think many Christians are coming to a point where we would rather do something hands on than just send a check. And we'd rather do something that changes us rather than just be a cog the machine... There is a real tendency to focus fewer programs and actions that we can take ourselves rather than just be a part of another program.

Social Ministry/Social Service Involvement

Faith based organizations did not participate in government-funded programs; they did perform social services. The percentages listed below are appreciably higher than found by some others. Chaves (1999b), for example, found that 57 percent of congregations offered social services. The estimate, however, is not out of line with yet other researchers such as Cnaan (1997), Hodgkinson et al.(1993), or Printz (1998). The problem is that the sources that find comparably high percentages of congregations are typically looking at larger organizations with more resources. As such, the Chaves study is more comparable. The higher percentages found in this study may be because the question did not restrict respondents to formal programs — it asked about "programs or services." Thus, informal and occasional service provision might trigger a "yes" answer (see Appendix for the full questionnaire).

Table V
Social Ministry Services

Emergency Services	
Food	78.2
Shelter/Housing Vouchers	40.8
Clothing	67.7
Transportation	46.3
Medical Care	24.6
Cash Assistance	59.8
Percent any Emergency Services	90.7
Non-Emergency Services	
Food	36.5
Shelter/Housing Support	29.0
Transportation	42.6
Percent any Non-Emergency Service	63.3
Family Services	
Child/Adult Care	28.4
Family substitution/supplement	23.4
Mentoring/Big brother, sister programs	31.5
Percent Any Family Services	53.9
Education Programs	
Training	15.6
Job Search	23.2
Language/literacy	24.0
Tutoring/GED	20.9
Scholarship	34.1
Percent Any Education Program	58.0

Health Care Programs	
General Health Care	27.7
Special Services	42.7
Percent Any Health Care Program	51.5
Advocacy Programs	
Needs of the poor	33.0
Community Organization	41.0
Economic Development	11.7
Percent Any Advocacy Program	55.0
Other programs for the needs of the poor	35.6
Percent any social ministry/service programs	100%

As shown in Table V, overwhelmingly the congregations in this study engaged in some form of social ministry/service. Every organization has at least one such program or service. Over half participated in every major category list above. The most often found activity was the provision of emergency services, in particular emergency food. Slightly more than 90 percent had some form of emergency program and 78.2 percent gave out food on an emergency basis.

These activities were encouraged by the larger religious community. Those congregations that were a part of a larger religious group were asked about the group's approach to social ministry/social service programs. Only 10 percent of those who were part of a larger group said that the group did not promote such programs. Two-thirds stated that the group recommended involvement but left the specifics to the local congregation. The remaining 23.6 percent said that the larger group suggested specific programs to them.

Of greatest importance for the possibility of welfare-to-work programs, 58 percent of congregations had some involvement in education programs. The two programs most strongly linked to Charitable Choice involvement are educational training and job search and transition to work skills. In all, 27.3 percent of the congregations performed one of these activities. Congregations were as likely to provide these services as were faith-based service providers.

Congregations could perform these social ministry/service functions themselves, they could provide them in partnership/coalition, or a combination of the two.

As shown in Table VI, congregations that performed social ministry functions did so about equally as sole provider, as a member of a coalition/partnership, or as a combination of the two. Programs that required substantial resources that might fall outside the purview of a congregation such as substitutive family care (foster care programs and the like) or running a shelter were most likely to be accomplished in coalition. Programs that could more easily be accomplished by congregations such as mentoring/big brother-sister programs were most likely to be undertaken solely by the congregation. In all 84.9 percent performed at least one social ministry program solely by the congregation and 77 percent performed at least one program in coalition or partnership with another program.

Table VI
Social Ministry Performed Alone or in Partnership

Services	Solely by Congregation	Part of Coalition	Both
Emergency Food	38.6	37.1	24.2
Emergency Shelter	32.2	55.6	12.3
Emergency Clothes	49.4	34.8	15.8
Emergency Transportation	68.1	19.2	12.7
Emergency Medical Care	43.3	40.6	16.1
Emergency Cash Assistance	72.8	8.7	18.5
Non-Emergency Food Program	29.7	57.1	13.3
Non-Emergency Shelter/HH Supports	35.8	53.3	10.9
Basic Needs — Transportation	75.5	15.0	9.5
Child/Adult Care	64.7	24.1	11.2
Family Substitute/Supplement Programs	26.7	60.9	12.3
Family Support — Mentoring	64.9	22.9	12.2
Education — Job Training	43.8	45.1	11.1
Education — Job Search	47.3	42.7	10.0
Language/Literacy/Citizenship Training	56.6	32.5	10.8
Tutoring/GED Preparation	58.1	31.8	10.1
Scholarships	63.7	22.1	14.2
General Health Care	31.0	56.1	12.9
Special Health Services	40.6	47.2	12.2
Advocacy on Behalf of Poor	29.8	44.2	26.0
Community Organization	44.3	37.5	18.2
Community Economic Development	24.6	63.9	11.5
Other Programs for the Poor and Needy	60.6	26.9	12.5

Congregations often devoted substantial resources to their social ministry programs. Half the organizations estimated that they spent more than 10 percent of their annual budget on such programs; fifteen percent estimated that they spent 25 percent or more of their budget. Six percent of those sampled estimated that they spent 50 percent or more. Congregations were most likely to devote 10 percent of their budget to social ministry programs, while the average was 16.1 percent. In dollar terms, 10.9 percent of the congregations spent no money on social ministry programs while half spent \$10,000 or more. The maximum amount spent in this study was \$9.5 million and the average amount was \$53,574.

Furthermore, although the association was not a strong one, the more staff a congregation could draw upon, the greater percentage of its budget went to social ministry functions. (Pearson's $r = .12$ sig. = .000). Congregational size, in contrast, did not so predict. Thus, what seems to matter is having the staff to administer the program rather than simply having a large congregation.

Some of the congregations could also count on substantial volunteer hours to assist with social ministry functions; 24.6 percent estimated that volunteers put in at total of more than 1,000 hours a year. An additional 18.1 percent were assisted by volunteers 501 to 1,000 hours. However, over half (57.4%) of the congregations were assisted by volunteers 500 hours or less.

Unsurprisingly, the larger organizations were able to command more volunteer hours. As shown in Table VII, slightly more than half of the smallest groups use 0 to 100 hours of volunteer time a year. In comparison, only 10.7 percent of the largest congregations do so. In contrast, only 1.2 percent of the smallest organizations could count on more than 10,000 hours a year while 7.8 percent of the largest did so.

Table VII
Congregational Size by Amount of Volunteer Hours Available

	0-70 members	71 to 150 members	151 to 375 members	376 to 18900 members	Total percent
0 to 100 volunteer hours	54.8%	33.0%	20.3%	10.7%	30.3%
101 to 500 volunteer hours	23.8	36.2	31.1	16.8	27.2
501 to 1,000 volunteer hours	11.9	14.3	21.2	25.8	18.0
1,001 to 5,000 volunteer hours	7.9	10.0	19.8	26.2	15.6
5,001 to 10,000 volunteer hours	.4	4.3	4.7	12.7	5.5
More than 10,000 volunteer hours	1.2	2.2	2.8	7.8	3.4
Totals	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%
	(252)	(279)	(212)	(244)	(987)

Chi-Square sig.=.000

Increased Demand/Capacity

Congregations felt that the demand for their services was increasing. Only 10.4 percent felt that demand had declined in the past two years while 32.7 percent felt that it had remained the same. Almost half (46.3%) stated that demand had increased and an additional 10.6% that it had significantly increased. Moreover, congregations saw demand as increasing more in neighborhoods with a large population receiving welfare. As shown in table VIII, 17.5 percent of those congregations located in neighborhoods where more than half of the residents received welfare reported a significant increase in demand, while 12 percent of those in neighborhoods where no one received welfare also reported such an increase.

Table VIII
Percentage of Families Receiving Welfare by Demand for Social Services

		Percentage Local Families Receiving Welfare			
Demand for Social Programs		<i>More than half</i>	<i>Half</i>	<i>Less than half</i>	<i>None</i>
	<i>Less</i>	5.0	2.9	11.6	13.3
	<i>Same</i>	25.7	31.1	33.4	36.7
	<i>More</i>	51.1	52.4	46.5	38.0
	<i>Significantly More</i>	17.8	13.6	8.6	12.0
Total		100%	100%	100%	100%
		(101)	(103)	(536)	(150)

Chi Square sig.=.003

Congregations felt themselves certainly capable of maintaining the current level of services, but many also saw themselves capable of increasing what they did. Only 1.8 percent thought their congregation would provide fewer services in the next two years, 35.8 percent that they would provide the same level of services and 62.4 percent that they would provide more services. Of those who foresaw an increase, 31.6 percent thought that it would be up to ten percent more, 34.3 percent between eleven and twenty percent, 22 percent between twenty-one and fifty percent more and 12.2 percent that services would increase over fifty percent. Furthermore, 68.8 percent thought it very likely that the congregation would actually increase its support of such programs, 29.4 percent thought it somewhat likely, and only 1.9 percent not very or not at all likely.

Table IX shows the various reasons given for expanded programs. Increased need was the most often given single reason followed by increased likelihood of coalitions.

Table IX
Reasons for Increasing Programs

Reason	Percent
Congregational/regional leaders pressure	48.5
Likelihood of greater cooperation through coalitions/partnerships	67.6
Needs of poor becoming more severe	71.2
New funding opportunities	45.1
Other	73.0

When these reasons were examined, controlling for the size of the staff or congregation, in all cases but one there were no significant differences. That is, large congregations or congregations with larger staffs were as likely to mention each answer as were smaller ones. Only the question concerning the greater likelihood of cooperation through coalitions or partnerships showed a difference, albeit not a large one. Approximately 60 percent of the smallest congregations (under 70 members) mentioned this compared to approximately 72 percent of the ones with memberships over 150 participants.

While a higher percent (73%) of those asked said that there were reasons other than those in the pre-structured questions for their plans to increase services, the open-ended responses revealed a remarkable consistency in their reasons. Social ministry was a spiritual imperative, and the respondents saw an increased need for what they did. Many also mentioned that their congregation was growing so there was a natural increase in what they could do.

The reason would be because of our philosophy of ministering. The Lord gives us and we give out so long as we continue to grow.

We just believe that it's the heartbeat of ministry. We believe we have to meet the needs of the spirit, soul and body. A spark is starting in the congregation.

The growth of our congregation, as it grows we get more resources and volunteers to provide these services.

Table X shows the reasoning of the 397 people who felt that their congregation would not be able to increase supports for social programs. Overwhelmingly people cited limited resources rather than absence of demand. In all 83.1 percent of those who felt that they could not expand their program mentioned a lack of resources (money/volunteers/skills or space).

Table X
Reasons Why Program Cannot Be Expanded

Reason	Percent
Lack of money	66.2
Lack of volunteers	59.8
Lack of skills and training	51.7
Lack of sufficient interest	32.8
Lack of sufficient demand in community	29.4
Lack of space or facilities	52.9
Other	40.3

Here there were two significant differences found by congregational size. Smaller congregations were more likely to mention the absence of money and volunteers compared to the larger ones. Approximately 78 percent of the congregations with memberships of 70 or below mentioned the lack of money compared to 52 percent of those with memberships of over 375 people. About 76 percent of the smallest congregations mentioned the absence of volunteers compared to 50 percent of the largest ones.

Again the open-ended responses were instructive. Many here mentioned that social ministry/services programs fell outside the mandate of their church. Many others mentioned limitations in resources.

The reason that we don't get involved in these social programs is that because Biblically, we don't have the authority. But, as individuals we are very active.

God is calling us to do something different.

We are a small church and we are dying.

Conclusion

The results of this study show first the large diversity in the size and resources of the religious congregations in the state of California. Perhaps because of the use of multiple sources to establish the sampling frame of congregations, the study is able to show how very small many congregations are in the state. The results also show that many

congregations cannot count on the assistance of even one full-time staff person. It is not to be expected that congregations without adequate staffing could apply for CalWorks dollars, administer a program, or keep up with reporting requirements.

Results from the survey of congregations show next that overwhelmingly congregations do not participate in Charitable Choice programs or indeed in any program that is publicly funded. They do not participate because they do not know about the possibility of participation, because they are concerned about how the requirements of participation might affect their traditional religious mission, and because they mistrust their abilities to conform to the red-tape that accompanies government dollars. They further lack the resources to participate without assistance. But of even more importance, they do not participate because they have not been encouraged to do so.

Yet, these organizations are heavily involved in performing many of the same services that a welfare-to-work program would include, although undoubtedly in a less-structured form. They minister to the poor as part of their spiritual mission and because they see the need. They see the demand for what they do in helping the poor as growing and they largely feel that they are capable of meeting the increased demand.

Clearly, some of the organizations in this study have the organizational capacity to operate under a Charitable Choice contract. They already administer substantial budgets, manage diverse programs that serve low-income populations, and count on a great deal of volunteer time. But even these programs may have problems because of the amount of paid staff time available to apply for and administer the contracts. The smaller congregations would require even more assistance to fit their organizational capacities into the requirements of a government-funded program.

Collaborations or partnerships with social service or other organizations would help many of the congregations with interest in participation in conforming to the strictures of a CalWorks contract or arrangement. As documented above, many already have experience with collaborative or partnered work. As also shown, the larger congregations see the possibility of expanded partnerships as increasing what they are capable of doing.

But to say a congregation could take on a Charitable Choice program does not say whether they should. There is no easy answer to whether congregations should increase their participation in welfare-to-work programs. Certainly the findings show that almost half of the congregations have reservations about participation. The concerns expressed by the religious leaders in this study are real, but they are also based on an absence of information. At bare minimum there is a need for a collaboration between public and religious entities in providing this information, that is, in telling congregations realistically what would be required of them and what would be available to help them expand the services they are already providing. Knowledge that they could count on assistance in preparing the grant and in handling its reporting requirements would also remove one substantial barrier to participation.

Congregations in the study were asked to indicate their amount of agreement to the statement: meeting the needs of the poor demands collaboration between government, the religious community, and the secular community. Their answers show their collective belief in the need for all these groups. Only 5 percent disagreed strongly with this statement, 8.4 percent disagreed somewhat while 52.3 percent agreed strongly with it and 34.3 percent agreed somewhat. This study, echoing the work done by the Center for Religion and Civic Culture at the University of Southern California, documents that there is a calling in much of the religious community to minister to the poor and a belief in the need for partnerships among the three major sectors of society. Faith-based organizations, however, do not have the resources to carry the full or even partial burden of that calling on their own. Providing monetary incentives through welfare to work contracts or vouchers does not remove the resource issue, since it requires an existing organizational capacity on the part of the congregation and may move them in directions in which they are disinterested. Instead, the real challenge is to create more opportunities for partnerships between social service organizations and the religious community.

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