

Understanding Megachurches Part 2: Finances

Recently, Leadership Network released a new study entitled [The Economic Outlook of Very Large Churches: Trends Driving the Budgets and Staffing Activities of North America's Biggest Congregations](#). The infographic below was [part of that release](#). Considering the discussion yesterday here on the blog about the growth of the number of megachurches, I thought this was worth sharing today.

Again, the number of megachurches is not declining. And based on these statistics, they are financially healthier than non-megas.

According to our most recent [LifeWay Research economic impact survey](#), 22% of all churches reported giving below budget. Only 17% of megachurches expect giving to be below budget this year. Also, 70% of megachurches showed an increase in giving as compared to just 40% of all churches.

Despite 50% of large churches being slowed by the Great Recession that has marked North America since 2008, a majority of large congregations met or exceeded their budgets in 2012, and most have seen offerings increase over that same time period.

You can find those and other findings in Leadership Network's most recent report, [The Economic Outlook of Very Large Churches: Trends Driving the Budgets and Staffing Activities of North America's Biggest Congregations](#) (free download).

Church staffing trends, giving patterns of worship attenders and the role of e-giving are also part of this year's findings, which draw from two Leadership Network surveys of more than 700 large churches.

A Positive Outlook

How large churches are preparing financially for 2013, based on surveys of 729 leaders.*

1,600

The number of churches in North America with a worship attendance of at least 2,000 adults + children.

83% of large churches expect to meet budget this year.

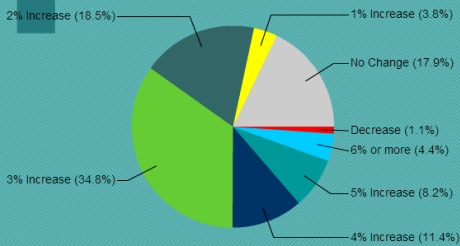
79% of large churches are growing.



Among all Protestant churches across North America, only about 20% are growing.

In sharp contrast a much higher percent of very large churches are growing. Of the churches in our study, 79% report attendance growth between 2010 and 2012. Within that 79%, 27% are reporting growth at a double digit rate.

81% of large churches are planning to increase salaries at the next review point.



75% are adding new staff members in the coming year.



55% are adding between 1-4 new staff

13% are adding between 5-9 new staff



70% of churches with attendance of 2,000 or more saw an increase in offerings from 2011 to 2012.

18% Saw more than a 10% increase

28% Saw a 6-10% increase

96% of a church's budget comes from individual donations.



As church attendance increases, giving per person decreases.

The overall average in our group of churches with worship attendances from 1,000 to over 10,000 was \$29/person/week. That's the same as \$1,492/person/year.

Large churches are generous.



84% of churches give 10% or more of their budget to ministry beyond their own congregation.

To inspire generosity in your own church, check out the book *Contagious Generosity* by Chris Willard and Jim Sheppard.
<http://bit.ly/willard-sheppard>

Read more from Ed [here](#).

Get a free download from Leadership Network [here](#).