

Religion Census Newsletter

January, 2017

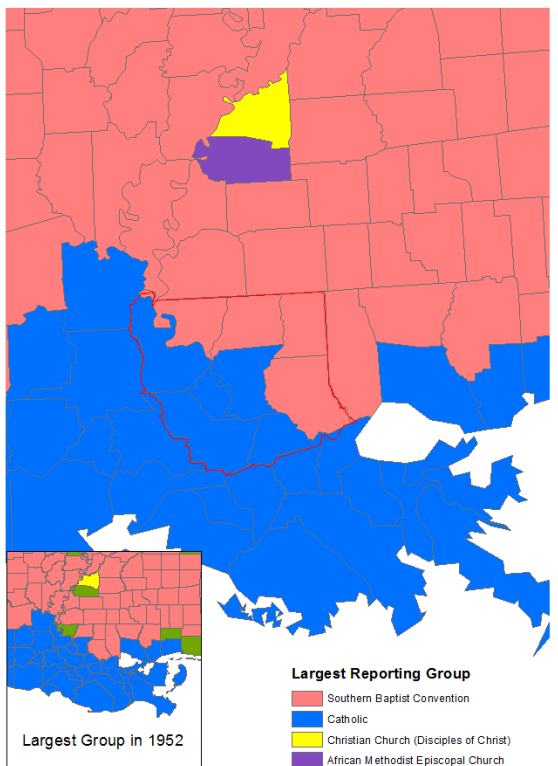
In our 2010 US Religion Census (released in 2012) information from 236 religious bodies was included. The participation of so many diverse religious groups has allowed us to generate valuable analysis. Recently, we posted religious census information pertinent to [Minneapolis's 150th anniversary](#). This month's newsletter extends the exploration of the US Religion Census material in Baton Rouge, to celebrate its bicentennial, incorporated January 16, 1817.

We hope this more nuanced look at the Census is interesting and helpful to you. Certainly our website and Facebook visitors have found it interesting. In the last two months of 2016, visitors to the site have nearly doubled from earlier in the year, to 6,000 visitors a month. Visit the [US Religion Census](#) website and our Facebook page for information about religious groups across the country and for particular areas.

Religious Boundaries Available from the 2010 Religion Census

Baton Rouge, Louisiana, was incorporated as a city on January 16, 1817. In 2015, Baton Rouge was the hub of a nine-parish metropolitan area with 830,480 people.

Participating Religious Group with the Largest Number of Adherents, 2010



© Association of Statisticians of American Religious Bodies, 2016
2010 U.S. Religion Census: Religious Congregations & Membership Study
Created by Research Services using ESRI ArcMap 10.4

The largest single religious group in the Baton Rouge metro is the Catholic Church, claiming 38% of the area's religious adherents. The Southern Baptist Convention is the second largest group, with 22% of all religious adherents.

But southern Louisiana demonstrates another religious reality in this area of the country. The line between Catholic dominance and Protestant dominance runs right through the Baton Rouge metropolitan area.

Baton Rouge itself is part of Catholic East Baton Rouge parish, and four additional parishes to the south and west are also predominantly Catholic. But the four parishes to the east and north are definitely Southern Baptist territory.

Because the religion census is part of a continuing series of studies, we were able to run the same analysis for the mid-twentieth century. In 1952, the same pattern can be seen in southeast Louisiana and southern Mississippi. The only

change is where the Methodists are no longer the largest group in a few counties. In each case, another Protestant group became largest.

Similar religious boundaries are visible in other parts of the country. Glenmary Research Center has published a [map](#) based on the religious census for several decades. Patterns for smaller groups are available in the [map section](#) on our own website.

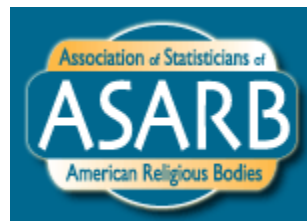
The Baton Rouge bicentennial was the inspiration for this latest study. To finish out its religious picture, here are the five faith groups that claimed at least 25,000 adherents in the Baton Rouge metropolitan area during the 2010 Religion Census.

Faith Group	Congregations	Adherents	% of All Adherents
Catholic Church	53	181,042	37.7%
Southern Baptist Convention	200	104,969	21.8%
Non-denominational Christian Churches	138	77,390	16.1%
United Methodist Church	87	33,109	6.9%
National Baptist Convention, USA, Inc.	40	25,738	5.4%

Of course, non-Christian groups are also present in Baton Rouge, but in smaller numbers. There are an estimated 1,840 Muslim adherents; 1,538 Hindu adherents, (primarily Indian-American Hindu Temple Associations); 1,022 Buddhist adherents (Mahayana); and 991 Jewish adherents (Reform Judaism).

One caution: A major undercount in the Religion Census involves African American Christian bodies. While our 2010 count includes a far better representation of these groups than in previous decades, we are certain that we missed many adherents of these groups. It is likely that several of the Protestant counties would be dominated by some of these denominations if they had been able to provide more complete data.

Every decade the US Religion Census tries to include additional religious groups, making the US Religion Census increasingly accurate. The 236 groups that took part in 2010 are listed [online](#). If you know of other faith groups that would like to participate and be included in this census effort, please [send us](#) the group's contact information or contact person.



www.asarb.com

Published by the [Association of Statisticians of American Religious Bodies](#), sponsor of the U.S. Religion Census

This newsletter is intended for the following audiences:

Groups that participated in the 2010 Religion Census. *The newsletter is sent to the latest contact we have for the supplier of the statistics.*

Groups that are eligible to participate in the upcoming 2020 Religion. *The newsletter is sent to the latest contact we have for the supplier of the statistics.*

Members of the sponsoring agency for the Religion Census, the Association of Statisticians of American Religious Bodies.

Those who requested to receive the newsletter through our website.