

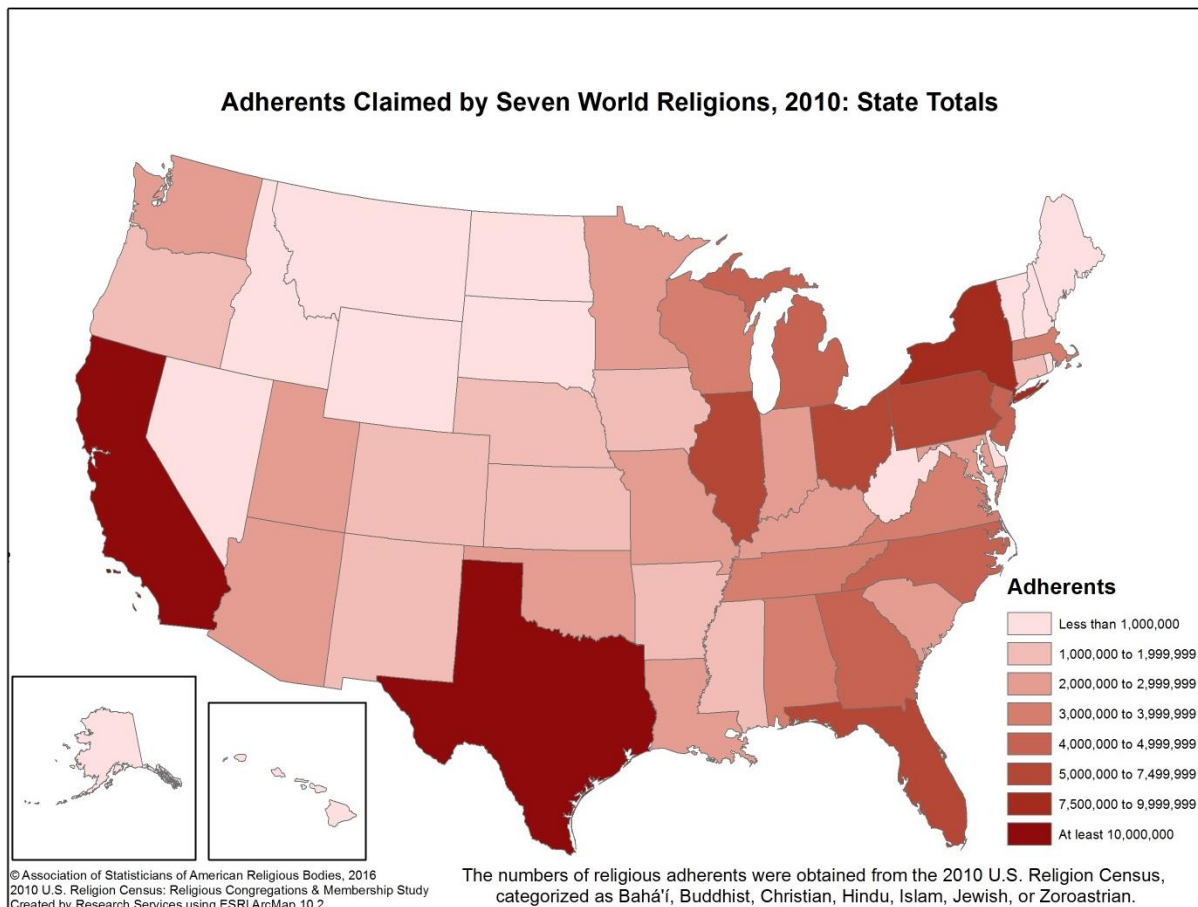
Religion Census Newsletter

May, 2017

Religious Group Concentrations

Seven world religions provided adherent information in the 2010 U.S. Religion Census.* The largest, of course, was the Christian religion with more than 140 million people associated with more than 330 thousand churches across the country. Adherents of Islamic masjids slightly outnumbered adherents of Jewish synagogues, 2.6 million to 2.3 million. Buddhists (991 thousand), Hindus (641 thousand), Bahá'í (171 thousand), and Zoroastrians (7 thousand) also reported adherents throughout the United States.

Just over 150 million people are listed as adherents of one of these seven religious groups. More adherents are found in California than in any other state (nearly 17 million), followed distantly by Texas (14 million).



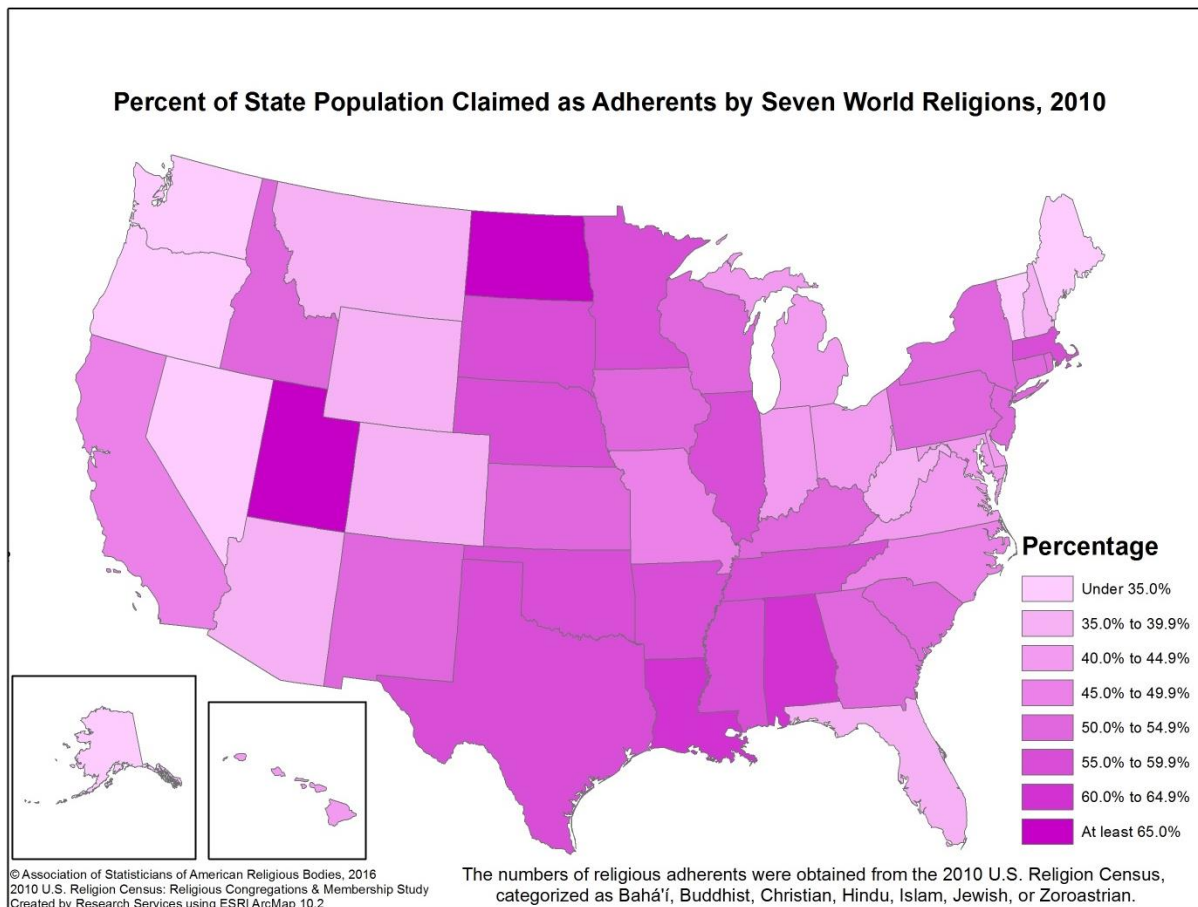
The larger the state's population, the more likely it is to have large numbers of adherents for any group. A national religious group with its largest numbers outside the largest state indicates a strong regional bias for that group.

For five of the seven groups, the largest numbers of adherents are found in the same state: California. Jewish adherents are most numerous in New York, while adherents of Islam are most numerous in Texas.

Within the broadly defined Christian religion, 18 groups reported adherent figures within all 50 states and the District of Columbia. California had the most adherents for five of these groups. Texas had the most adherents for three of them. New York and Pennsylvania had the largest numbers for two groups each. Georgia, Illinois, Massachusetts, Minnesota, North Carolina, and Utah each had the largest number of adherents for one of these groups. (There are tables later in this newsletter listing the groups and their largest states.)

When considering concentrations of adherents, however, total counts are only one part of the story. Of equal concern to researchers is the percentage of the population that is actually claimed by the various religions within each state.

The 150 million total adherents represent just under half (48.8%) of the 2010 population. Again, the ratio varies greatly across the nation, as demonstrated on the next map.



Here, regional concentrations are especially likely to show up. Large numbers of adherents coupled with smaller state populations will result in considerably larger percentage concentrations. On the first map, both the Dakotas were shown in the smallest category of total religious adherents, while Washington State was shown as two categories larger. But when population size is factored in, both the Dakotas are in high categories and Washington dropped to the smallest.

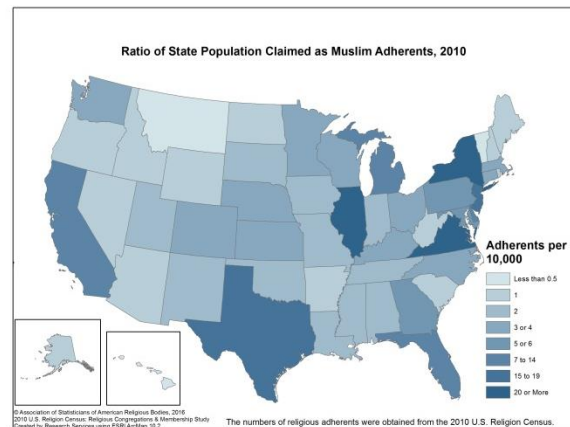
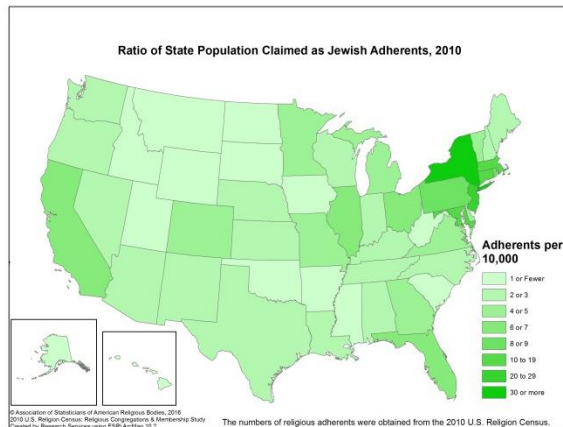
Note: State maps are easier to read as part of a newsletter, but county-level concentration maps are available for every participating group on our [map page](#).

Religions Reported throughout the United States	State with the Most Adherents		State with the Greatest Population Penetration	
Bahá'í	California	29,638	South Carolina	0.4%
Buddhist	California	326,940	Hawaii	4.8%
Christian	California	15,806,986	Utah	78.4%
Hindu	California	112,132	Delaware	0.9%
Islam	Texas	421,972	Illinois	2.8%
Jewish	New York	784,106	New York	4.0%
Zoroastrian	California	1,837	Iowa	0.0%

Only the Jewish religion has both the largest total adherents and the largest penetration in the same state. Normally, the smaller population in other states increases the corresponding penetration much more.

Of course, the Christian religion dwarfs the other groups throughout most of the nation. No state has as much as a 5% penetration rate for any other religion, while the minimum Christian adherent ratio was 27% in Maine.

For example, the Jewish and Muslim concentration patterns differ significantly from the total adherent concentration map and from each other. Percentages for smaller groups can become very small, so different ratio scales are commonly used for non-Christian or smaller Christian groups. For instance, these two maps show the ratio of adherents per 10,000 rather than percentage figures. The patterns won't change no matter the ratio, but this legend may be easier for many people to understand.



Below is the list of the 18 Christian groups with adherents in all fifty states and the District of Columbia. Again, there are a couple of groups where the largest total also became the largest population percentage. This, however, is not the norm.

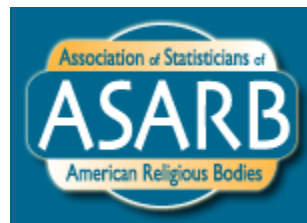
18 Christian Groups Present in 50 States	State with the Most Adherents		State with the Greatest Penetration	
American Baptist Churches in the USA	New York	173,405	District of Columbia	6.2%
Assemblies of God	California	348,747	Arkansas	2.4%
Catholic Church	California	10,233,334	Massachusetts	44.9%
Church of God (Cleveland, Tennessee)	Georgia	175,184	Georgia	1.8%
Church of God of Prophecy	North Carolina	8,701	Tennessee	0.1%
Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints	Utah	1,910,504	Utah	69.1%
Church of the Nazarene	California	86,715	Idaho	1.1%
Churches of Christ	Texas	351,129	Tennessee	3.4%
Episcopal Church	New York	163,730	District of Columbia	3.1%
Evangelical Lutheran Church in America	Minnesota	737,537	North Dakota	24.3%
Lutheran Church--Missouri Synod	Illinois	243,192	Nebraska	6.2%
Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.)	Pennsylvania	241,659	South Carolina	2.0%
Salvation Army	California	39,338	Idaho	1.2%
Seventh-day Adventist Church	California	214,635	Oregon	1.0%
Southern Baptist Convention	Texas	3,721,318	Mississippi	30.6%
Unitarian Universalist Association of Congregations	Massachusetts	31,143	Massachusetts	0.5%
United Church of Christ	Pennsylvania	180,248	Connecticut	2.7%
United Methodist Church	Texas	1,035,168	Iowa	7.7%

Complete state, metro, and county lists for each of 236 groups are available on [our website](#) by choosing the “Individual Group” function. On these lists, the total population is given for each geographic unit so that the ratios can be computed easily by the users.

** Five additional religions took part in the study, but they were only able to provide congregational locations without adherent counts. We strongly hope that they, and others, will be able to participate more fully in the 2020 count.*

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.

Meanwhile, over 7,500 people visited our website in March. Several have let us know how valuable this resource is, and how they are looking forward to the 2020 update. Naturally, we hope to include information from your group in the 2020 counts.



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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.