

Appendix C African American Church Bodies

Traditionally, church bodies focused on the African American population have been less focused on gathering statistics than those groups largely composed of European Americans. This has made it difficult for such groups to take part in religion censuses focused on congregational location and size.

For the 2010 religion census, the Operations Committee obtained mailing lists for the eight largest historically African American denominations:

- African Methodist Episcopal Church
- African Methodist Episcopal Zion Church
- Christian Methodist Episcopal Church
- Church of God in Christ
- National Baptist Convention of America, Inc.
- National Baptist Convention, USA, Inc.
- National Missionary Baptist Convention, Inc.
- Progressive National Baptist Convention, Inc.

(See Appendix B for further information on such address lists.)

Based on the reported membership sizes included on the address lists, less than 50% of any group's churches or members were able to be identified. Still, the available locations did represent nearly four million people associated with specific religious congregations, so the Operations Committee decided to include this information in the 2010 religion census if no better information could be obtained.

Further efforts were made to gather denominational statistics. The preliminary results were shared with the groups, but none of the denominations was able to supply further details. However, three groups did have on-line church locators, so additional congregation locations were identified for the African Methodist Episcopal Church, African Methodist Episcopal Church Zion, and Christian Methodist Episcopal

Church. For each congregation located in this way, a membership of 100 was assigned. This represented the modal size of Protestant churches that were reported to the data collection office.

For the African Methodist Episcopal Church, this yielded approximately the correct number of congregations, though the membership figures are only about one-third of their official reports. For other groups, the church counts range from 11% to 50% of reported numbers, and membership figures are from 7% to 28% of the reported amounts.

An adherent formula was used to account for children likely to be associated with each church in addition to adult members. The result is 4,877,067 adherents identified as part of eight historically African American denominations in the United States in 2010.

Additionally, three smaller church bodies that had on-line directories available are described as predominantly African American: Church of Our Lord Jesus Christ of the Apostolic Faith, Inc.; Cumberland Presbyterian Church in America; and United Holy Church of America, Inc. No adherent information was available, so only the locations are included in this study.

Group	Reported in Yearbook*		Reported in Religion Census	
	Congregations	Membership	Congregations	Members
African Methodist Episcopal Church	4,174	2,500,000	4,256	827,663
African Methodist Episcopal Zion Church	3,310	1,443,405	1,657	246,285
Christian Methodist Episcopal Church	3,500	850,000	1,462	236,242
Church of God in Christ	15,300	5,499,875	2,966	506,106
National Baptist Convention of America, Inc.	2,500	3,500,000	575	246,044
National Baptist Convention, USA, Inc.	33,000	8,200,000	3,536	1,535,087
National Missionary Baptist Convention, Inc.	Unknown	2,500,000	1,283	213,275
Progressive National Baptist Convention, Inc.	2,000	2,500,000	390	167,286

*Yearbook of American and Canadian Churches: 2010