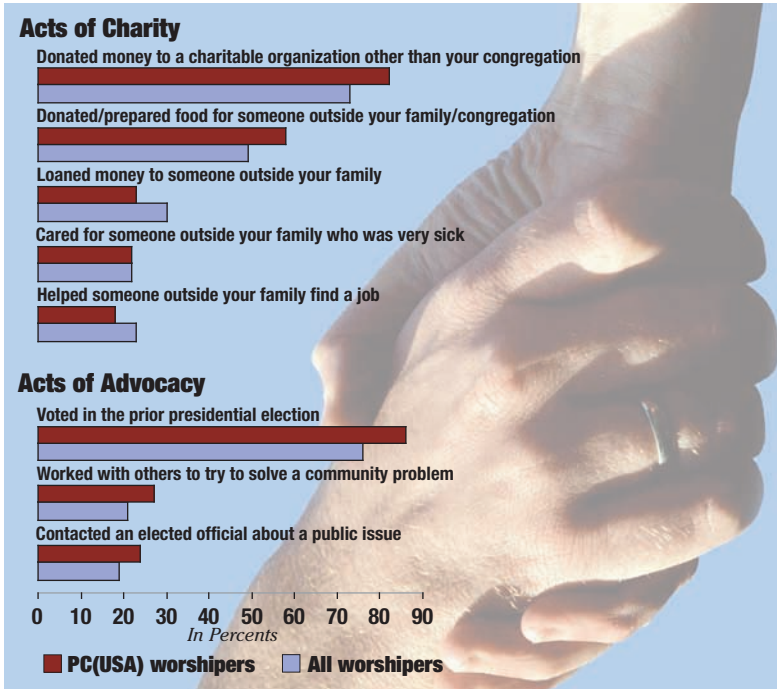


GO FIGURE

DEBORAH BRUCE

Acts of care and advocacy

In the last 12 months have you...?



Source: U.S. Congregational Life Survey (www.uscongregations.org), a project of the PC(USA) Research Services office

Good neighbors and good citizens

Like worshipers in other faith communities, Presbyterians are involved in their communities in a wide variety of ways, as the U.S. Congregational Life Survey reveals:

- A large majority of PC(USA) worshipers (90 percent) view providing aid and services to people in need as an “essential” or “very important priority” for their congregation’s activities in the community.
- Most (57 percent) volunteered at their congregation in the previous month in programs or services to help people in need. In fact, 21 percent gave more than five hours in such service.
- Similarly, most (58 percent) volunteered apart from their congregation in the previous month to help people in need.

Looking at specific acts of care and advocacy:

- Most PC(USA) worshipers (82 percent) have donated money to charitable organizations other than their congregation in the prior year, and many (58 percent) donated or prepared food for people outside their family and congregation in that period.
- Fewer loaned money to someone in need (23 percent), cared for someone who was sick (22 percent), or helped someone find a job (18 percent).
- Nine in ten (86 percent) voted in the prior presidential election.
- Fewer worked on community problems (27 percent) or contacted an elected official (24 percent).

Other findings at www.pcusa.org/research

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What the research shows

As disciples of Jesus Christ, all of us are called to be part of God’s mission. In response many Presbyterians are involved in social service and social justice work—caring for the hurt and needy among us, and working to make our communities a better place to live.

Presbyterians, in particular, are good neighbors and good citizens. Many are involved in service through their congregations—perhaps running a food pantry, sponsoring a Habitat for Humanity build, or working to fight injustice in the community.

Yet congregations are sometimes unaware of the extent to which their worshipers are involved in service apart from their congregations.

Whether they are tutoring at-risk children, coaching youth sports teams, participating in arts and cultural groups, supporting environmental action efforts, or serving on local boards and councils, Presbyterians live out their faith in their daily lives.

It’s a myth that worshipers who are deeply involved in their congregations aren’t very active in their communities. Rather, most Presbyterians give to their communities in many ways. □

Correction: The number of Presbyterian missionaries dropped by 65 percent from 1965 to 1985, not 35 percent as indicated in the April Go Figure column.