



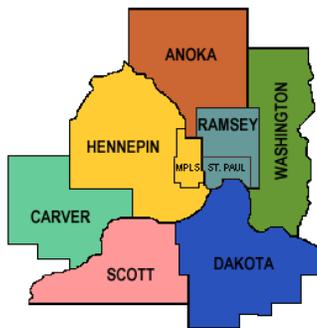
**Church Scouts**

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# BRIEFING 5

## Church Denominations

208 denominations active in Twin Cities



This briefing is for Twin Cities pastors, staff and church boards, an explanation of the size and nature of denominations in the Twin Cities

May 2017

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# Twin Cities Church Denominations

## TAKEAWAY 1 - 208 Denominations active in Twin Cities

In 2015, the **3,344 churches** in the Twin Cities Metro were affiliated with 208 different denominations:

- **1,710** Protestant churches belonged to a single denomination
- **70** Protestant churches belonged to multiple denominations
- **1,313** Protestant churches were either independent or denomination unknown
- **237** Catholic churches belonged to a Roman Catholic diocese
- **14** Catholic churches belonged to other Catholic denominations

In 2015, average weekly attendance in all Twin Cities churches was 762,000. Attendance in churches known to be affiliated with denominations was 662,000 (87%).

## TAKEAWAY 2 - Slight trend toward multi-denominations

There has been a slight trend toward multi-denominations, for a church to belong to two denominations simultaneously. There were 61 multi-denomination churches in 2011, grown to 70 in 2015.

The 61 multi-denominational churches with 5-year history had 43,488 in average weekly attendance in 2011, compared to 45,873 in 2015. A closer look shows that 23 of those churches gained attendance, 24 lost attendance and 17 were essentially unchanged. Statistically, there appears to be no significant growth benefit from being multi-denominational.

To avoid double-counting, this Briefing has attributed all attendance for each multi-denomination church to its predominant denomination.

## TAKEAWAY 3 - Twin Cities denominational landscape

The Twin Cities church landscape is dominated by five categories:

Aside from these five categories, the denominational landscape is very fragmented, as detailed on **Charts 2, 3 and 4**.

	Churches	Attendance	5-Yr Change
1 Catholic	223	258,000	-14,800
2 Lutheran	541	130,000	-14,900
3 Baptist	369	93,000	-2,400
4 Assemblies of God	147	35,000	8,600
5 Methodist	131	17,000	-3,000
All Other	<u>1,933</u>	<u>229,000</u>	<u>-6,300</u>
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>3,344</b>	<b>762,000</b>	<b>-32,800</b>

The charts are a summary of a comprehensive report titled ***Twin Cities Church Denominations*** which lists every Protestant denomination and multi-denomination cluster, and identifies every local church within the denomination, with individual 5-year attendance statistics. This is an 84-page PDF document, available at [www.churchscouts.com/database](http://www.churchscouts.com/database), using data reported to City Vision.

To reduce complexity, the following charts show only the 39 denominations (comprised of 1,761 churches) that have weekly attendance greater than 1,000, but these denominations account for 80% of total Protestant attendance.

### **TAKEAWAY 4 - Waning influence of denominations**

Over the past 20 years, a total of 257 denominations have been active in the Twin Cities, but 49 have withdrawn, leaving 208.

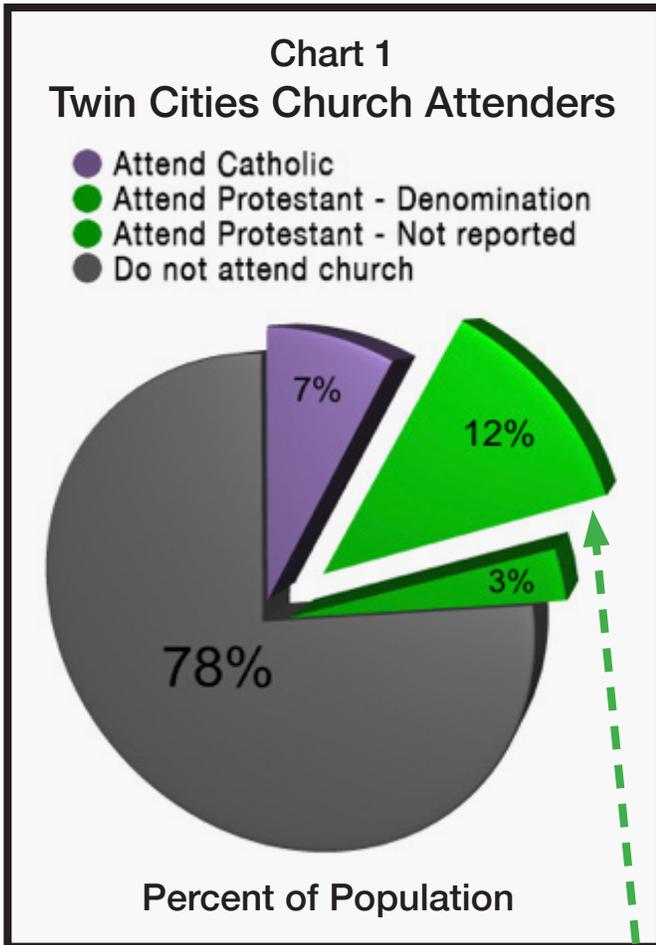
Hundreds of Twin Cities churches have changed their name, removing any reference to denomination, because they believe publicized affiliation is a restriction on church growth.

Large churches, particularly multisite churches, often act as their own denomination with specialized staff and mission departments.

Increasingly, Twin Cities churches are collaborating with each other across denominational lines.

# Typical week in Twin Cities Metro

## 3,500,000 people



**In a typical week** in the Twin Cities metro, approximately **762,000 people attend 3,344 churches** according to figures reported from these churches to City Vision.

This interprets to 22% of the population attending church once a week (overstated).

**CAUTION:** Churches tend to overstate attendance; therefore, actual attendance is probably 10-20% lower than shown here.

### Attend Catholic

251 churches  
258,000 attendance

### Attend Protestant - Not reported

(Affiliation not reported, or independent)  
1,303 churches  
100,000 attendance

### Attend Protestant - Denomination

1,790 churches  
404,000 attendance

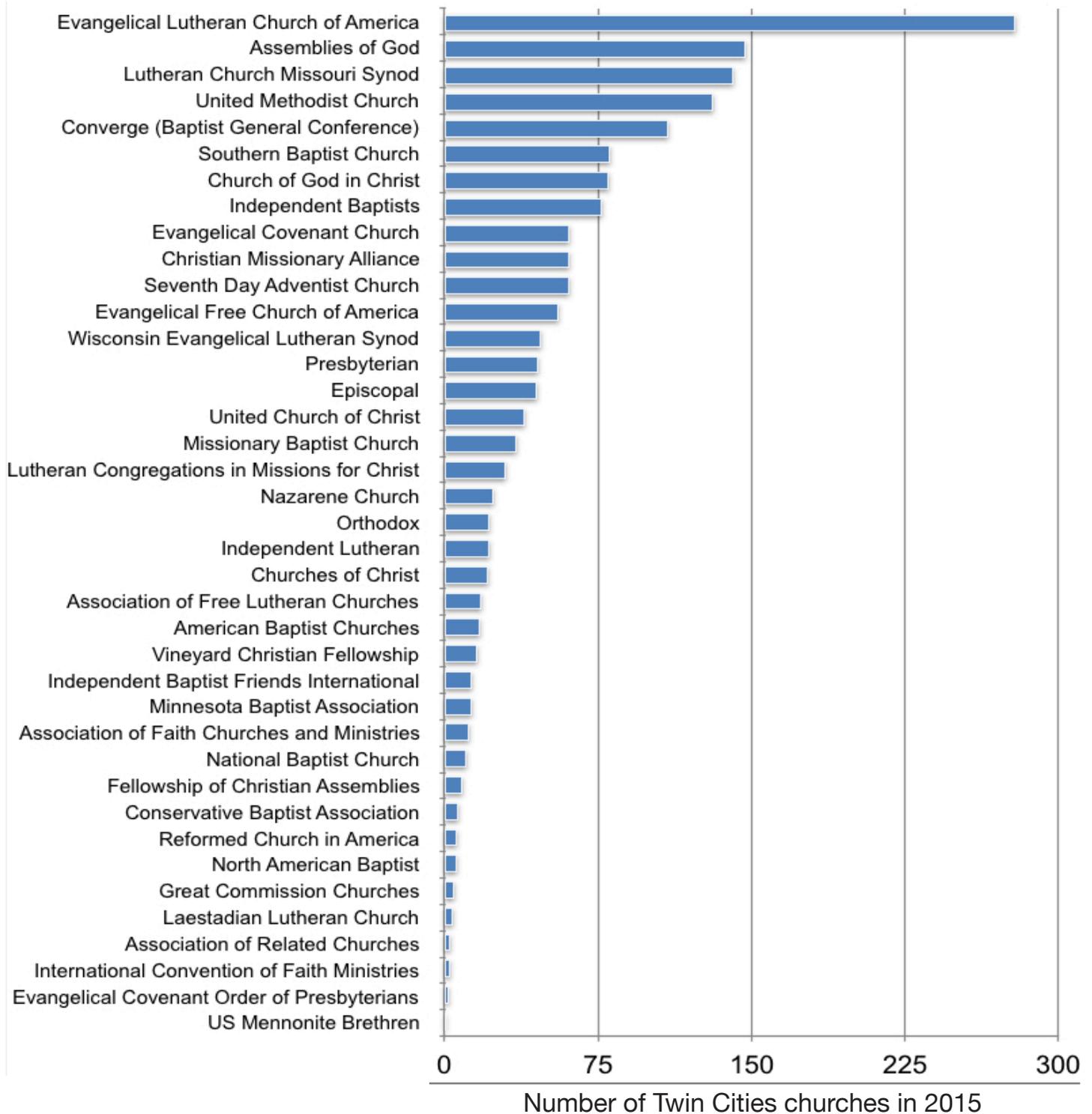
A comprehensive 84-page PDF report is available at [www.churchscouts/database/denominations2015.pdf](http://www.churchscouts/database/denominations2015.pdf) which lists every Protestant denomination and multi-denomination cluster, and identifies every local church within the denomination, with individual 5-year attendance statistics.

**The following charts** provide a close look at this slice of the chart, the Protestant denominations ...

### Chart 2

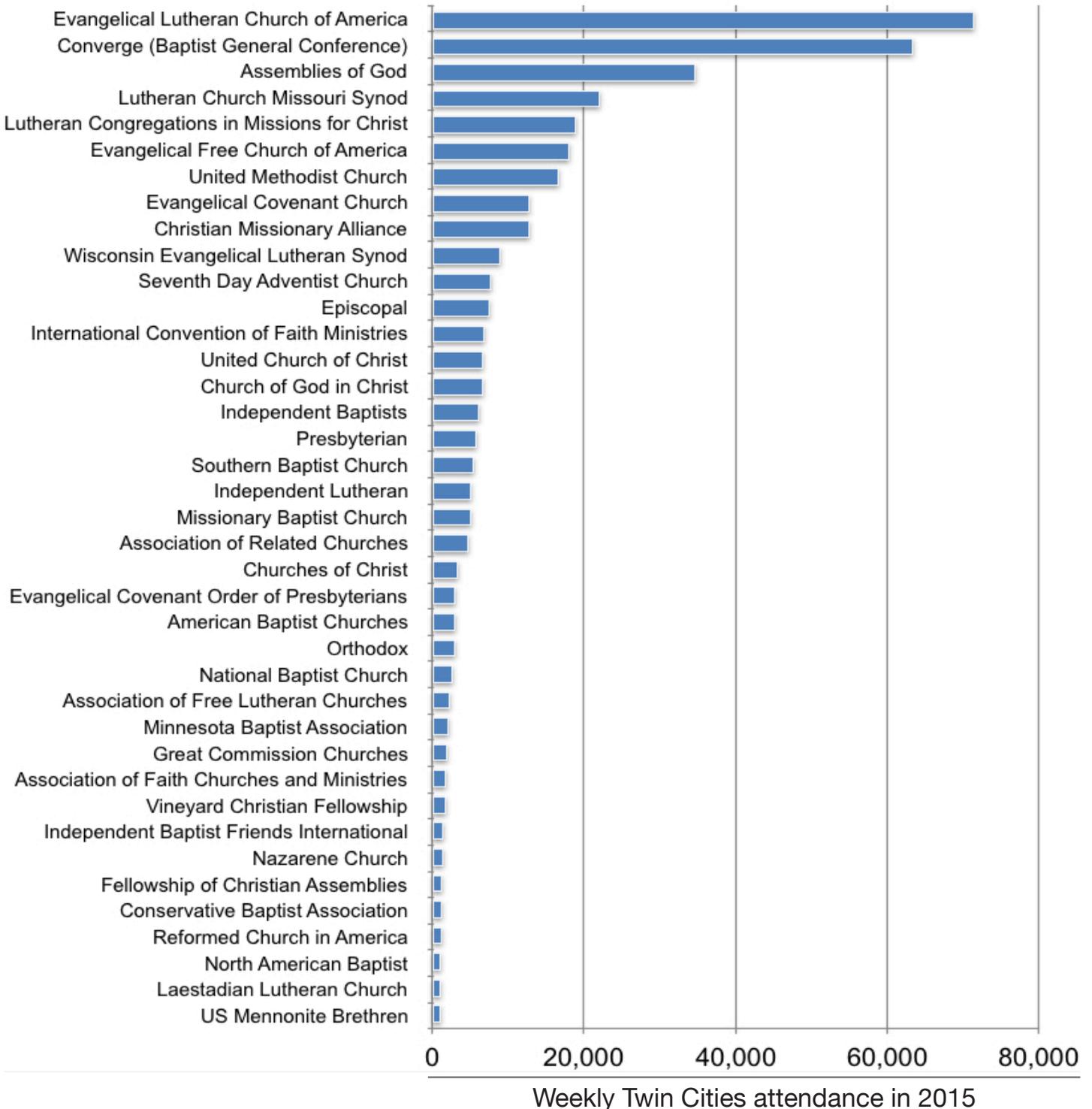
## Twin Cities Protestant Denominations by Number of Churches

In 2015, there were 194 active Protestant denominations in the Twin Cities Metro. This chart shows only Protestant denominations with total weekly attendance greater than 1,000 in all of its Twin Cities churches, but these 39 denominations account for 80% of all Protestant attendance.



## Chart 3 Twin Cities Protestant Denominations by Attendance

In 2015, there were 194 active Protestant denominations in the Twin Cities Metro. This chart shows only Protestant denominations with total weekly attendance greater than 1,000 in all of its Twin Cities churches, but these 39 denominations account for 80% of all Protestant attendance.



## Chart 4 Twin Cities Protestant Denominations by 5-Year Gain/Loss

In 2015, there were 194 active Protestant denominations in the Twin Cities Metro. This chart shows only Protestant denominations with total weekly attendance greater than 1,000 in all of its Twin Cities churches, but these 39 denominations account for 80% of all Protestant attendance.

