

Megachurches Thriving

✖ An ongoing study shows that the overwhelming majority of megachurches have experienced numeric growth during the current economic recession, while most smaller churches are also expanding—though at a slower rate.

After surveying 555 mostly megachurch pastors in January 2009, The Leadership Network, , found that 96 percent of churches averaging more than 2,000 in attendance have experienced growth, compared to 70 percent of congregations with less than 2,000. Overall, only 7 percent of responding pastors said the economic downturn was having a “very negative” impact on their church the study found. Among megachurch pastors, 63 percent expect their church to meet budget this year—a decline of only 3 percent since May/June 2008.

According to the study, churches hit hardest by the recession are in the “sand states” (Florida, Arizona, California and Nevada), followed by those in the “rust belt” states (Michigan, Indiana and Ohio). And among both growing and non-growing congregations, more younger churches expect their budget to increase compared to more established churches.