

D. CHURCH MEMBERSHIP COMMITTEE

1. GENERAL REPORT

The Committee's attention this year has been directed towards the compiling of a further Report to Conference on the question of "Active and Inactive Membership". This is a supplement to the "Church Membership and Christian Nurture Report" to Conference 1989.

The role of the Committee continues to change. Matters of ecclesiology properly belong to the Faith and Order Committee and statistical analysis and research are carried out by the Home Mission Division. The present Church Membership Committee will be halved in size as from Conference 1990 and its budget similarly reduced. The work of the new sub-committee will be under the auspices of the Lay Ministries Group in the Division of Ministries.

Triennial returns of Church Membership are published this year and are printed below. The rapid change of social patterns makes it difficult to interpret statistics. We are dependent on the faithfulness of people for accuracy. The figures show the following trends which are disappointing. The total membership for 1989 is 431,549 compared with 450,406 in 1986, a loss of 18,857 or 4.19%. The attendance at worship figures are disappointing with only four Districts (South Wales 3.20%; Cumbria 0.73%; West Yorkshire 4.44%; Scotland 11.53%) showing an increase. The percentage loss in the Southern Districts is 4.73% and in the Northern Districts, excluding Scotland and the Shetland Islands, is 7.2%. There has been a 3% decline in attendance at morning worship compared with a 10% decrease in evening congregations.

There are some encouraging features; the maintaining of baptisms at 30,000 per year; the steady inflow of over 9,000 new members per year; the increase in the number of reinstated members; all of which indicates the importance of Christian nurture. There has been a growth in the number of people transferred from other denominations and the decline in the total membership in the past 12 months (436,810 to 431,549) is only 1.2% compared to a higher loss in other years. We rejoice that in the period 1986-1989, 2,828 churches out of a total of 7,389 (38.3%) show an increase in attendance at worship and 2,148 churches (29.1%) show an increase in membership. We need to foster and develop these growth areas.

METHODIST CHURCH MEMBERSHIP 1989

SUMMARY AND COMPARISON

	1986	1987	1988	1989	3 Year gain/loss
COMMUNITY ROLL	1,345,701	1,336,959	1,332,174	1,321,383	-24,318
MEMBERSHIP	450,406	443,813	436,810	431,549	-18,857
GAINS					3 YEAR TOTAL
NEW MEMBERS	9,986	9,269	9,323	9,188	27,780
RESTORED TO MEMBERSHIP	2,043	2,006	2,075	2,278	6,359
Balance of transfers:					
FROM OTHER CHURCHES	+48	+6	-7	+2	+1
FROM OTHER DENOMINATIONS	+1,379	+1,078	+1,191	+1,420	+3,689
FROM OVERSEAS	-3	+40	+7	+106	+153
MINISTERS AND STUDENTS	-2	+194	-69	-10	+115
FORCES	+1	+0	-2	+13	+11
LOSSES					
DEATHS	11,347	10,710	11,024	10,703	32,437
CEASED TO BE MEMBERS	7,697	7,919	7,872	7,168	22,959
Balance of transfers:					
TO OTHER CIRCUITS	-829	-557	-625	-387	-1,569
NETT LOSS	-6,421	-6,593	-7,003	-5,261	-18,857
BAPTISMS	30,801	30,092	31,298	30,864	92,254
CHURCHES	7,389	7,404	7,291	7,207	-182
MINISTERS AND STUDENTS	3,399	3,593	3,524	3,514	+115

MEMBERSHIP IN THE DISTRICTS, 1986 - 1989

	1986	1987	1988	1989	3 Year Gain/Loss
Southern Districts:					
1. The London North-East District	16755	16576	16252	16157	-598
2. The London North-West District	18327	18251	17986	17865	-462
3. The London South-West District	20837	20618	20425	20291	-546
4. The London South-East District	15141	14991	14838	14695	-446
5. The Birmingham District	17960	17834	17549	17357	-603
6. The Bristol District	17980	17651	17468	17118	-862
7. The South Wales District	10877	10746	10880	10848	-29
8. The Cornwall District	12594	12278	12077	11820	-774
12. The East Anglia District	12285	12144	11929	11793	-492
14. The Oxford and Leicester District	17149	16908	16717	16472	-677
23. The Plymouth and Exeter District	17683	17509	17274	16941	-742
24. The Southampton District	19539	19599	19360	19360	-388
26. The Wolverhampton and Shrewsbury District	19585	19193	18643	18422	-1163
Southern Totals:	216921	214298	211577	209139	-7782
Northern Districts:					
6. The Bolton and Rochdale District	10361	10226	10040	10006	-355
9. The Cumbria District	7412	7280	7184	7106	-306
11. The Chester and Stoke-on-Trent District	20557	15966	15791	15632	-4925
13. The Darlington District	14156	13871	13600	13425	-731
16. The Leeds District	15124	14880	14586	14372	-752
17. The Lincoln and Grimsby District	11412	11264	11063	10901	-511
18. The Liverpool District	15671	15355	15044	14916	-755
19. The Manchester and Stockport District	18678	18330	17722	17574	-1104
20. The Newcastle upon Tyne District	18608	18118	17807	17526	-1082
21. The North Lancashire District	15057	14924	14760	14629	-428
22. The Nottingham and Derby District	16125	15789	15560	15326	-799
23. The Sheffield District	16070	15807	15365	15371	-699
25. The West Yorkshire District	14581	14445	14187	13998	-583
27. The York and Hull District	16526	16343	16131	15835	-691
29. The North Wales District	210338	202598	198840	196617	-13721
Northern Totals:	2785	2681	2637	2503	-282
10. The Channel Islands District	1820	1818	1831	1806	-14
15. The Isle of Man District	6779	6485	6283	6093	-686
30. The Cymru District	7518	7222	7035	6863	-655
31. The Scotland District	549	537	504	459	-90
32. The Shetland District	297	297	295	427	+427
33. The North Wales District	3399	3593	3524	308	+11
Forces Ministers Totals:	450406	443813	436810	431549	+115
					-18857

BAPTISMS AND NEW REINSTATED MEMBERS, 1987 - 1989

	Baptisms		New Members		Reinstated	
	1987	1988	1987	1988	1987	1988
Southern Districts:						
1. The London North-East District	1370	1510	482	329	60	73
2. The London North-West District	1396	1344	551	490	67	78
3. The London South-West District	1223	1263	544	514	103	106
4. The London South-East District	916	962	359	369	72	60
5. The Birmingham District	1448	1420	422	429	70	96
7. The Bristol District	1254	1251	308	387	68	118
8. The South Wales District	675	790	189	275	44	36
12. The Cornwall District	561	693	263	279	44	57
14. The East Anglia District	616	686	271	208	39	50
23. The Oxford and Leicester District	1012	1164	383	327	62	86
24. The Plymouth and Exeter District	757	721	348	340	55	74
26. The Southampton District	870	848	355	399	91	74
28. The Wolverhampton and Shrewsbury District	1894	1925	389	360	53	68
Southern Totals:	13992	14577	4864	4706	828	976
Northern Districts:						
6. The Bolton and Rochdale District	542	592	250	294	55	34
9. The Cumbria District	402	426	121	135	61	35
11. The Chester and Stoke-on-Trent District	1673	1784	350	410	92	98
13. The Darlington District	1343	1402	308	261	74	68
16. The Leeds District	1012	1150	282	266	69	90
17. The Lincoln and Grimsby District	578	588	225	167	68	46
18. The Liverpool District	896	965	343	330	77	58
19. The Manchester and Stockport District	1215	1239	418	391	71	94
20. The Newcastle upon Tyne District	1952	2001	360	366	67	112
21. The North Lancashire District	681	696	346	385	78	85
22. The Nottingham and Derby District	1077	1093	293	363	117	61
23. The Sheffield District	1838	1790	294	326	177	60
25. The West Yorkshire District	870	827	245	283	79	89
29. The York and Hull District	1376	1498	310	332	95	101
Northern Totals:	15455	16051	4145	4309	1074	1024
10. The Channel Islands District	115	129	35	53	17	15
15. The Isle of Man District	71	53	30	23	16	12
30. The Cymru District	91	93	52	84	6	8
31. The Scotland District	155	158	68	64	31	9
32. The Shetland District	13	13	16	3	3	3
33. The North Wales District	200	224	59	81	34	28
Totals:	30092	31298	9269	9323	2006	2075
						2278

MOD

Southern Districts:

	Deaths		Lapsed Members	
	1987	1988	1987	1988
1. The London North-East District	318	367	343	316
2. The London North-West District	340	345	297	276
3. The London South-West District	427	454	436	363
4. The London South-East District	298	312	292	264
5. The Birmingham District	399	418	312	385
7. The Bristol District	416	429	326	309
8. The South Wales District	298	288	194	163
12. The Cornwall District	337	330	258	179
14. The East Anglia District	292	341	191	234
23. The Oxford and Leicester District	350	360	376	289
24. The Plymouth and Exeter District	461	473	265	260
26. The Southampton District	469	483	318	413
28. The Wolverhampton and Shrewsbury District	447	461	329	368
Southern Totals:	4852	5061	3937	3819

Northern Districts:

	Deaths		Lapsed Members	
	1987	1988	1987	1988
6. The Bolton and Rochdale District	290	243	145	301
9. The Cumbria District	170	207	142	87
11. The Chester and Stoke-on-Trent District	362	423	307	305
13. The Darlington District	357	331	264	225
16. The Leeds District	357	379	226	329
17. The Lincoln and Grimsby District	296	281	211	132
18. The Liverpool District	365	365	356	285
19. The Manchester and Stockport District	530	454	302	548
20. The Newcastle upon Tyne District	530	537	390	266
21. The North Lancashire District	367	388	202	266
22. The Nottingham and Derby District	419	428	249	266
25. The Sheffield District	415	435	289	326
27. The West Yorkshire District	378	454	181	197
29. The York and Hull District	429	424	217	257
Northern Totals:	5265	5349	3481	3790

Totals:

	10710	11024	7919	7872
	10703		3148	7168

THE COMMUNITY ROLL, 1986 - 1989

	1986	1987	1988	1989	Three Year Gain/Loss
Southern Districts:					
1. The London North-East District	62676	61776	60814	61652	-1024
2. The London North-West District	56477	57588	58078	58422	+1945
3. The London South-West District	66788	65718	66068	65426	-1362
4. The London South-East District	51734	50924	50924	50145	-2496
5. The Birmingham District	57887	57194	56105	56837	-1050
7. The Bristol District	53947	52566	53765	51951	-1996
8. The South Wales District	29020	27775	29968	29521	+501
12. The Cornwall District	35467	34660	34307	32092	-3375
14. The East Anglia District	35717	36077	36047	36971	+1254
23. The Oxford and Leicester District	50823	50081	49581	50997	+174
24. The Plymouth and Exeter District	43644	41886	42517	42289	-1355
26. The Southampton District	53004	52807	53253	52291	-713
28. The Wolverhampton and Shrewsbury District	56142	55017	53780	54285	-1857
Southern Totals:	653326	644069	644428	641972	-11354
Northern Districts:					
6. The Bolton and Rochdale District	31642	30911	31806	28351	-3291
9. The Cumbria District	19290	19677	20208	20114	+824
11. The Chester and Stoke-on-Trent District	64147	54321	53213	52601	-11546
13. The Darlington District	42422	41264	45956	44547	+2125
16. The Leeds District	48366	47582	46721	46780	-1586
17. The Lincoln and Grimsby District	33183	32466	32315	31633	-1550
18. The Liverpool District	54427	63038	55359	54717	+290
19. The Manchester and Stockport District	61153	61545	60241	59277	-1876
20. The Newcastle upon Tyne District	62332	60228	59735	61464	-868
21. The North Lancashire District	42627	42178	40923	40724	-1903
22. The Nottingham and Derby District	49942	49804	49710	50114	+172
25. The Sheffield District	58612	56322	55580	53169	-5443
27. The West Yorkshire District	41357	42309	42012	41631	+274
29. The York and Hull District	45864	47363	48531	49382	+3518
Northern Totals:	655364	649008	642310	634504	-20860
10. The Channel Islands District	6997	7002	7140	6885	-112
15. The Isle of Man District	4786	4740	4557	4412	-374
30. The Cymru District	8887	7845	8155	7590	-1297
31. The Scotland District	14901	12752	14151	15644	+743
32. The Shetland District	1440	1459	1281	1277	-163
33. The North Wales District		10084	10152	9099	+9099
Totals:	1345701	1336959	1332174	1321383	-24318

ATTENDANCE AT WORSHIP, OCTOBER 1989

	Morning Afternoon	Evening	Principal Service	Total Attendance	Total Attendance 1986	Membership
Southern Districts:						
1. The London North-East District	11696	396	3552	12022	15644	16157
2. The London North-West District	13185	519	3852	13836	17556	17865
3. The London South-West District	14097	257	4211	14182	18565	20291
4. The London South-East District	10402	349	2795	10919	13566	14695
5. The Birmingham District	11287	679	4363	12222	16329	17129
7. The Bristol District	11897	488	5190	12908	17575	17118
8. The South Wales District	6319	641	3614	7676	10574	10848
12. The Cornwall District	9056	543	4264	10094	13863	14299
14. The East Anglia District	9272	1217	3060	10518	13549	13904
23. The Oxford and Leicester District	11389	687	4459	12479	16535	16869
24. The Plymouth and Exeter District	11947	1036	4541	13472	17524	16941
26. The Southampton District	14081	424	4749	14778	19254	19360
28. The Wolverhampton and Shrewsbury District	10528	966	6333	12467	17827	18422
Southern Totals:	145156	8202	54983	157573	208341	209139

Northern Districts:						
6. The Bolton and Rochdale District	6530	178	1861	6634	8569	10006
9. The Cumbria District	3812	932	1879	5207	6623	7106
11. The Chester and Stoke-on-Trent District	9640	1412	5508	11559	16560	6575
13. The Darlington District	7786	921	4328	9411	13035	15632
16. The Leeds District	9419	579	3708	9901	13206	13425
17. The Lincoln and Grimsby District	6873	579	3452	8498	14274	14372
18. The Liverpool District	9031	967	3452	8498	11282	10901
19. The Manchester and Stockport District	11487	646	3010	9385	12887	14916
20. The Newcastle upon Tyne District	9360	551	3596	12008	15634	14811
21. The North Lancashire District	9386	267	6239	10838	15866	17526
22. The Nottingham and Derby District	9774	514	3413	9915	13313	14629
25. The Sheffield District	10188	683	6190	11529	16647	17315
26. The West Yorkshire District	9368	795	6070	11949	17053	15371
27. The York and Hull District	10941	703	3347	10133	13418	14041
29. The Channel Islands District	123595	799	4783	12590	16523	15835
Northern Totals:	123595	9947	56884	139557	190426	196617
10. The Channel Islands District	1768	207	720	1952	2695	2503
15. The Isle of Man District	894	237	688	1421	1819	1806
30. The Cymru District	1639	759	1247	2672	3645	6093
31. The Scotland District	3705	83	585	3743	4373	6863
32. The Shetland District	243	62	182	432	487	517
33. The North Wales District	2541	210	783	2710	3534	4247
Totals:	279541	19707	116072	310060	415320	427727

SUNDAY SCHOOLS AND YOUTH GROUPS

	No. of Churches	Sunday Schools	Sunday School Attendance 1986	Sunday School Attendance 1989	Young People 1986	Young People 1989
Southern Districts:						
1. The London North-East District	236	187	5033	3989	19763	19141
2. The London North-West District	248	206	5806	4882	18880	17090
3. The London South-West District	206	177	5490	4279	19885	18872
4. The London South-East District	203	147	3810	3327	15728	15259
5. The Birmingham District	233	173	4833	4017	17788	16965
7. The Bristol District	318	206	5398	4236	16844	15388
8. The South Wales District	205	149	3890	3301	8521	8787
12. The Cornwall District	349	243	4481	3829	8212	6921
14. The East Anglia District	343	188	3829	2975	9059	8040
23. The Oxford and Leicester District	292	201	5397	4163	15589	15009
24. The Plymouth and Exeter District	365	235	4658	3739	12140	11417
26. The Southampton District	298	205	5121	4233	14920	13509
28. The Wolverhampton and Shrewsbury District	315	214	5929	4599	17497	14190
Southern Totals:	3611	2531	63675	51569	194826	180588
Northern Districts:						
6. The Bolton and Rochdale District	119	106	3078	2324	8337	7129
9. The Cumbria District	182	92	1969	1635	4699	4622
11. The Chester and Stoke-on-Trent District	274	197	6013	4093	16192	12772
13. The Darlington District	252	156	4027	3058	12802	12293
16. The Leeds District	186	148	4348	3077	13118	12011
17. The Lincoln and Grimsby District	300	169	4008	2911	9048	8196
18. The Liverpool District	147	130	4445	3584	15889	14742
19. The Manchester and Stockport District	202	169	5630	4312	17826	16639
20. The Newcastle upon Tyne District	237	179	5464	4179	17774	15632
21. The North Lancashire District	150	132	3824	2975	10702	10002
22. The Nottingham and Derby District	323	225	5928	4560	14045	13538
25. The Sheffield District	301	205	5349	4334	17205	15094
27. The West Yorkshire District	303	171	3877	3362	11124	10362
29. The York and Hull District	329	190	5082	3867	15050	13507
Northern Totals:	3205	2269	63042	48271	183812	166539
10. The Channel Islands District	40	32	914	783	2647	2410
15. The Isle of Man District	39	30	761	669	1594	1229
30. The Cymru District	181	52	816	703	1067	1043
31. The Scotland District	55	51	873	978	2761	2709
32. The Shetland District	23	9	253	145	353	262
33. The North Wales District	53	46	890	1913		
Totals:	7207	5020	130334	104009	387060	356693

MOD

MINISTERS AND THOSE IN PASTORAL CHARGE AND LOCAL PREACHERS

	Ministers	Deaconess num'ies	Active Super-num'ies	Lay Workers	Rec and Other	Mmbrs per P.chg	Chchs per P.chg	Mmbrs per Church	Act LP	LP on Trial
Southern Districts:										
1. The London North-East District	87	1	5	1	6	155	2.3	68	356	94
2. The London North-West District	80	1	3	2	6	180	2.5	72	423	96
3. The London South-West District	96	1	3	8	5	176	1.8	99	426	77
4. The London South-East District	72	1	6	2	6	171	2.4	72	331	54
5. The Birmingham District	79	1	1	4	5	193	2.6	74	412	64
7. The Bristol District	76	1	4	4	5	192	3.6	54	485	82
8. The South Wales District	50	1	1	2	2	201	3.8	53	219	71
12. The Cornwall District	51	1	2	2	5	204	6.0	34	380	74
13. The East Anglia District	59	1	3	3	2	171	5.0	34	435	67
23. The Oxford and Leicester District	67	3	3	8	2	201	3.6	56	461	63
24. The Plymouth and Exeter District	67	1	1	3	2	226	4.9	46	488	92
26. The Southampton District	78	1	8	6	7	196	3.0	65	479	73
28. The Wolverhampton and Shrewsbury District	73	1	2	2	4	227	3.9	58	398	104
Southern Totals:	935	7	40	39	50	190	3.3	58	5293	1011
Northern Districts:										
6. The Bolton and Rochdale District	43				2	222	2.6	84	176	37
9. The Cumbria District	34			1		203	5.2	39	237	54
11. The Chester and Stoke-on-Trent District	60			4	1	237	4.2	57	402	88
13. The Darlington District	61			1	2	200	3.8	53	326	58
16. The Leeds District	57	2	1	1	2	218	2.8	77	285	60
17. The Lincoln and Grimsby District	48	2	2	3	3	202	5.6	36	354	84
18. The Liverpool District	60	1	2	1	6	219	2.2	101	262	44
19. The Manchester and Stockport District	77			2	1	220	2.5	87	366	47
20. The Newcastle upon Tyne District	78	1		1	1	216	2.9	74	383	62
21. The North Lancashire District	58			1	1	244	2.5	98	270	56
22. The Nottingham and Derby District	75			4	1	189	4.0	47	464	96
25. The Sheffield District	67	1	1	3	2	197	3.9	51	417	90
27. The West Yorkshire District	63			2	4	200	2.9	69	354	65
29. The York and Hull District	66	3	2	2	3	208	4.3	68	457	84
Northern Totals:	847	8	10	23	19	212	3.5	61	4753	925
10. The Channel Islands District	12			2		179	2.9	63	39	8
15. The Isle of Man District	8					226	4.9	46	31	11
30. The Cymru District	16		3		2	290	8.6	34	58	1
31. The Scotland District	31	1	1			196	1.6	125	93	21
32. The Shetland District	3			2	1	77	3.8	20	12	4
33. The North Wales District	14	1		1		265	3.3	80	80	19
Totals:	1866	17	54	66	72	201	3.4	59	10359	2000

The total of those in Pastoral charge has been used to calculate the two relevant columns above. As well as Ministers and Probationers, Deaconesses, Active Supernumeraries, Lay Workers, Recognised and Regarded Ministers and Others (Authorised Ministers, Ministers without appointment and those from Overseas) are reported as taking Pastoral charge.

*** RESOLUTION

D1 Conference accepts the General Report of the Church Membership Committee.