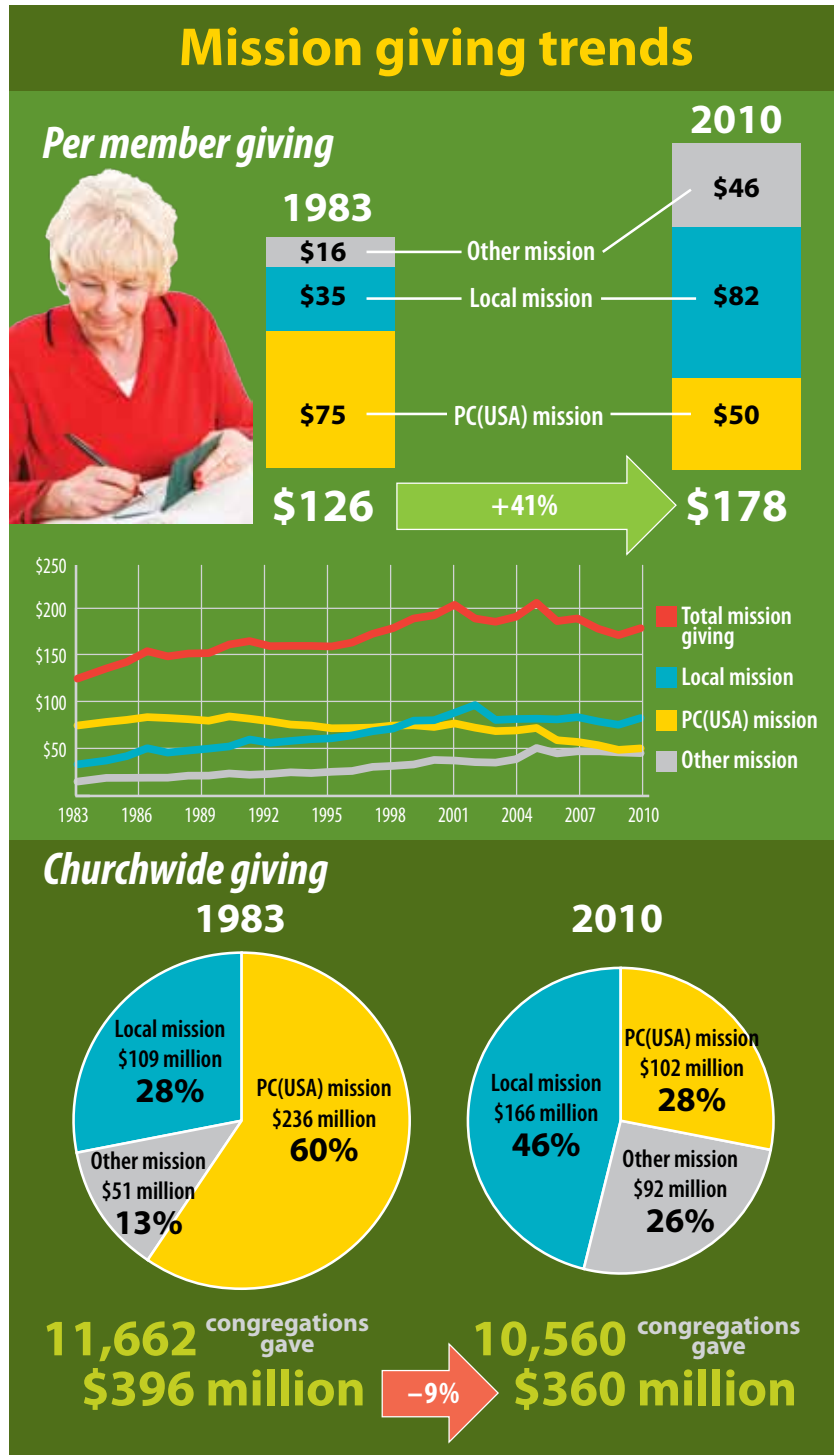


Mission giving by congregations



Note: Figures above are expressed in 2010 dollars to adjust for inflation. These amounts exclude per capita apportionment, which averaged \$27 per member in 2010.

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What the research shows

The figure shows at least two important trends. One is the increase of \$52, or more than 40 percent, in per-member mission giving by congregations over the 28-year period.

The second trend is a change in how congregations allocate their mission dollars. While a sizable majority of funds went to PC(USA) mission in 1983, less than a third of the total donated went to PC(USA) mission in 2010. At the same time, the share given to local mission and to non-PC(USA) mission increased significantly.

While the overall increase in per-member giving is certainly good news, the shift in allocations is disconcerting for supporters of Presbyterian mission. Yet the shift in allocations is hardly a surprise, in light of larger trends in American society, such as the declining significance of denominations and a growing distrust of major institutions, including religious ones.

In the long term, it's conceivable that congregations might shift funds from non-PC(USA) causes to Presbyterian ones. For that to happen, congregations would need to become more familiar with the many effective mission programs of presbyteries, synods and the General Assembly. And improving trust between congregations and higher church councils would be essential.

Meanwhile, we can all celebrate the cumulative mission that is made possible by the gifts of PC(USA) congregations.

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