

A
STATISTICAL COMPARISON
OF THE
WISCONSIN SYNOD, 1961-1975

by

Timothy A. Meier

May 12, 1976

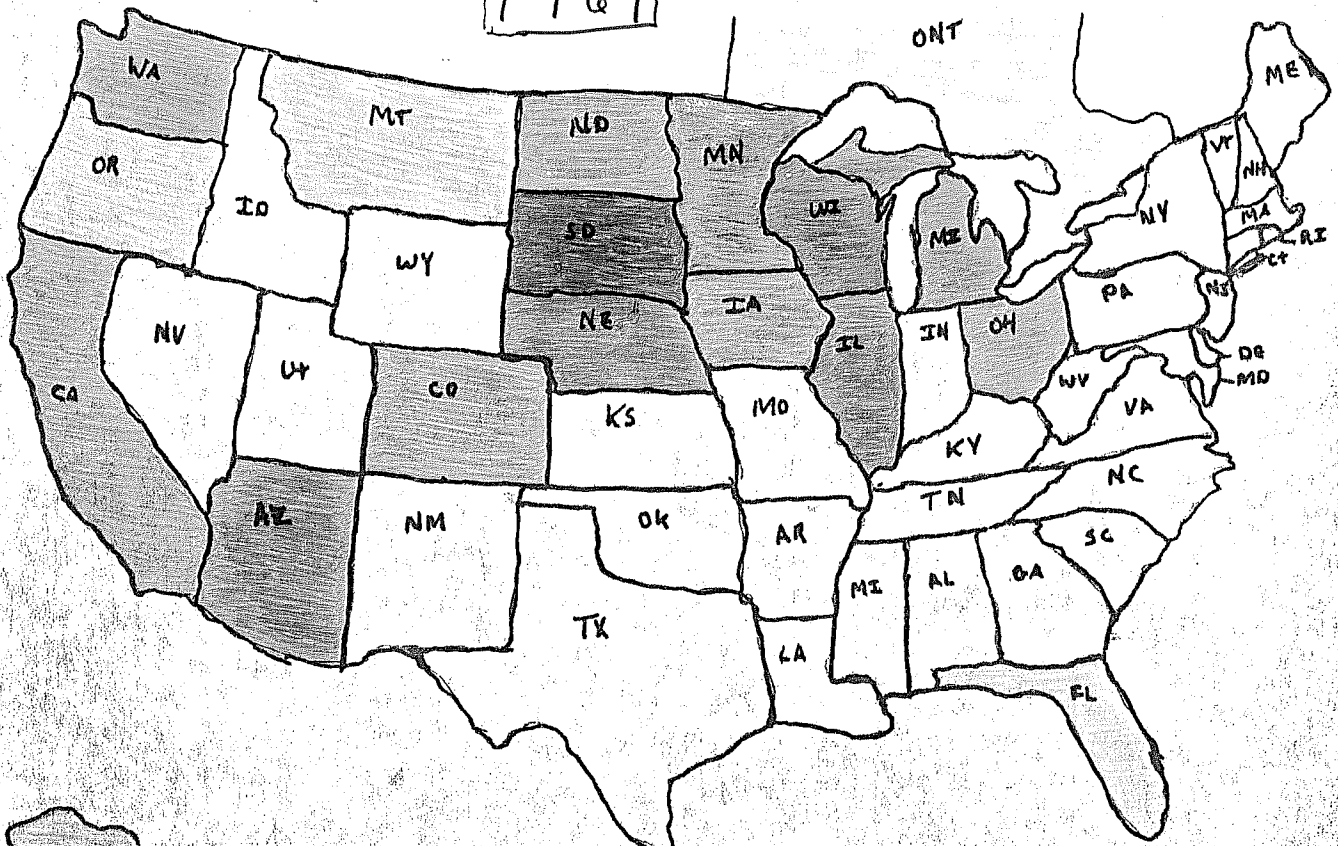
WISCONSIN LUTHERAN SEMINARY
Library
6633 W. WARTBURG CIRCLE
MEQUON, WISCONSIN 53092

The following pages are the result of a comparative statistical study of the Wisconsin Synod in 1961 and in 1975. The study was prompted by the following questions: "To what extent is the complexion of our Synod changing? To what extent have we changed in the last fifteen years from a primarily midwestern body to a truly national body?"

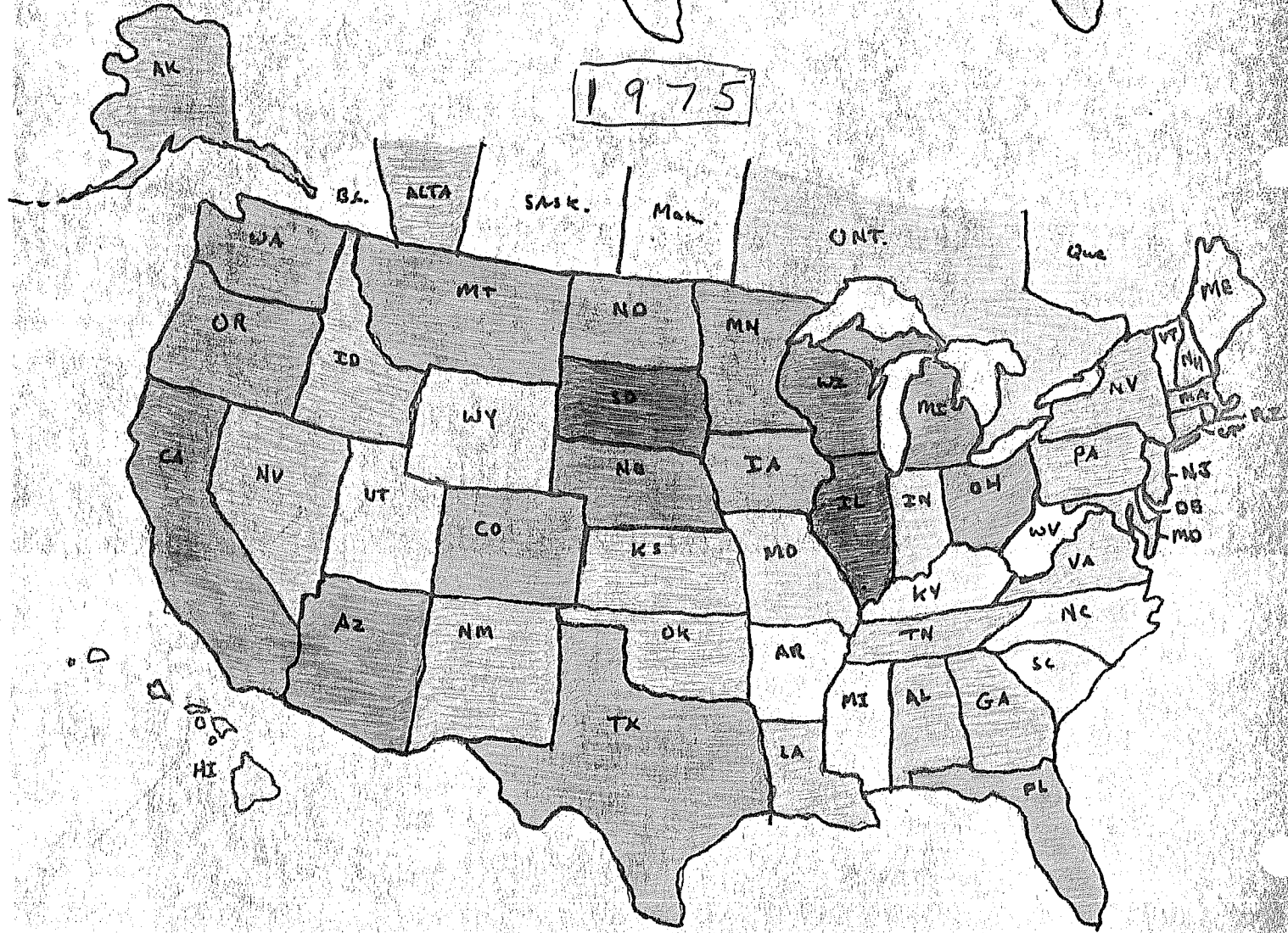
Of course, statistics are a slippery business. Raw numbers are objective but without some conclusions are not meaningful. And conclusions based on statistics are always more or less subjective. With that warning in mind, the following three comparisons are presented: 1) Membership, 1961-1975; 2) Congregations, 1961-75; 3) Support of Synod, 1961-75.*

*All numbers have been drawn from the Statistical Reports of the Wisconsin Evangelical Lutheran Synod: (1961, E. A. Wendland, Statistician--1975, David Worgull, Statistician). The "Support of Synodical Budget" figures actually include both "budgetary" and "special" contributions.

1961



1975



BAPTIZED MEMBERSHIP

Antigua W. Indies

MEMBERSHIP--WIS. SYNOD

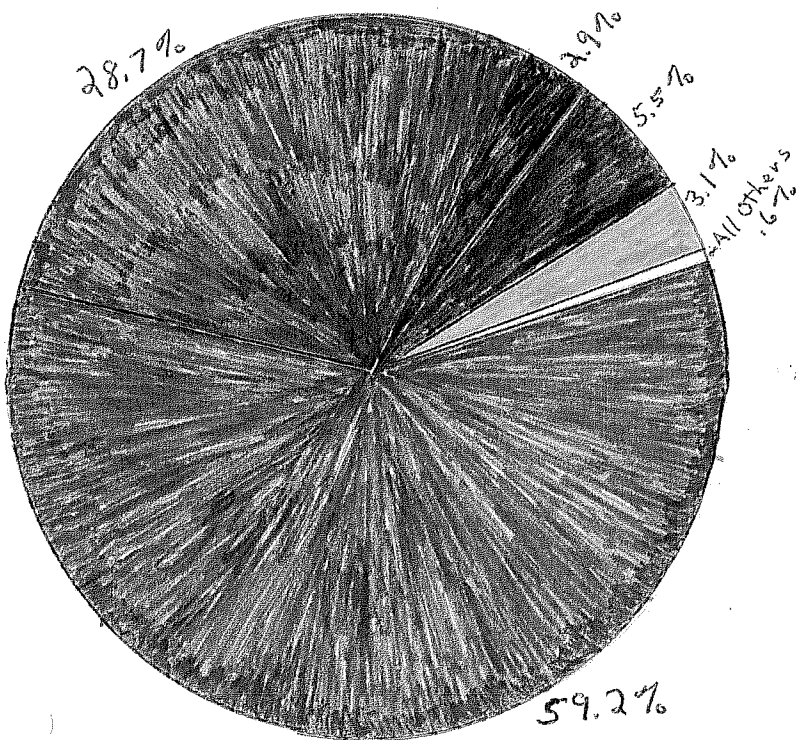
Category	1961		1975			
	State	Baptized	Communicant	State	Baptized	Communicant
Over 200,000	WI	206,062	141,580	WI	221,605	166,893
40-60,000	MN	57,526	39,235	MN	59,264	44,814
	MI	42,360	27,398	MI	48,460	35,304
10-20,000	SD	10,027	6,516	SD	10,294	7,620
				IL	10,056	7,313
5-10,000	AZ	7,535	3,645	AZ	9,069	5,525
	NE	6,249	4,267	NE	6,386	4,809
	IL	5,446	3,533	CA	6,071	3,929
1-5,000	OH	2,546	1,659	OH	4,097	3,045
	ND	2,260	1,425	WA	2,788	1,919
	WA	2,115	1,181	FL	2,110	1,549
	CO	1,508	767	TX	1,870	1,334
	CA	1,377	696	ND	1,861	1,465
	IA	1,024	556	CO	1,668	1,157
				IA	1,560	1,016
				OR	1,155	776
			MT	1,057	671	
500-1,000	MT	922	448	Ont*CA	912	610
	FL	659	420	IN	765	541
	OR	509	269	MO	670	469
100-500				KS	464	304
				NJ	434	310
				VA	418	265
				OK	379	242
				PA	320	240
				MD	262	185
				AK	256	158
				NV	195	137
				LA	195	134
				AL	192	144
				Alta*	161	112
				TN	146	87
				NM	140	100
				MA	138	100
				CT	138	87
				GA	130	66
			Ant+	129	61	
			NY	123	82	
			ID	107	80	

MEMBERSHIP--WIS. SYNOD (Cont.)

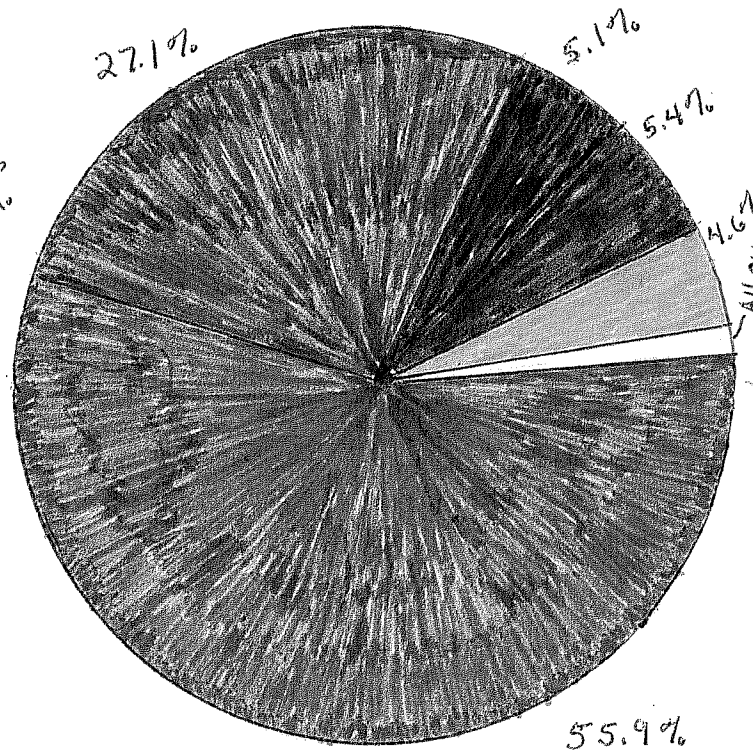
Category	1961		1975	
	State	Baptized Communicant	State Baptized	Communicant.
<input type="checkbox"/> Under 100	Ont *	59	38	
	NJ	80	43	
	HI	71	46	
	WY	65	51	
	NC	57	34	
	RI	49	32	
	SC	47	30	
	KY	45	33	
	DE	39	26	
	Que*	32	23	
NH	18	10		
Totals	16 Sts. 1 Prov.	348,184	233,627	45 Sts. 3 Prov. W. Ind.

* Canadian Provinces
+ West Indies

Baptized Membership--1961
(% represented by each color grouping on opposite page)

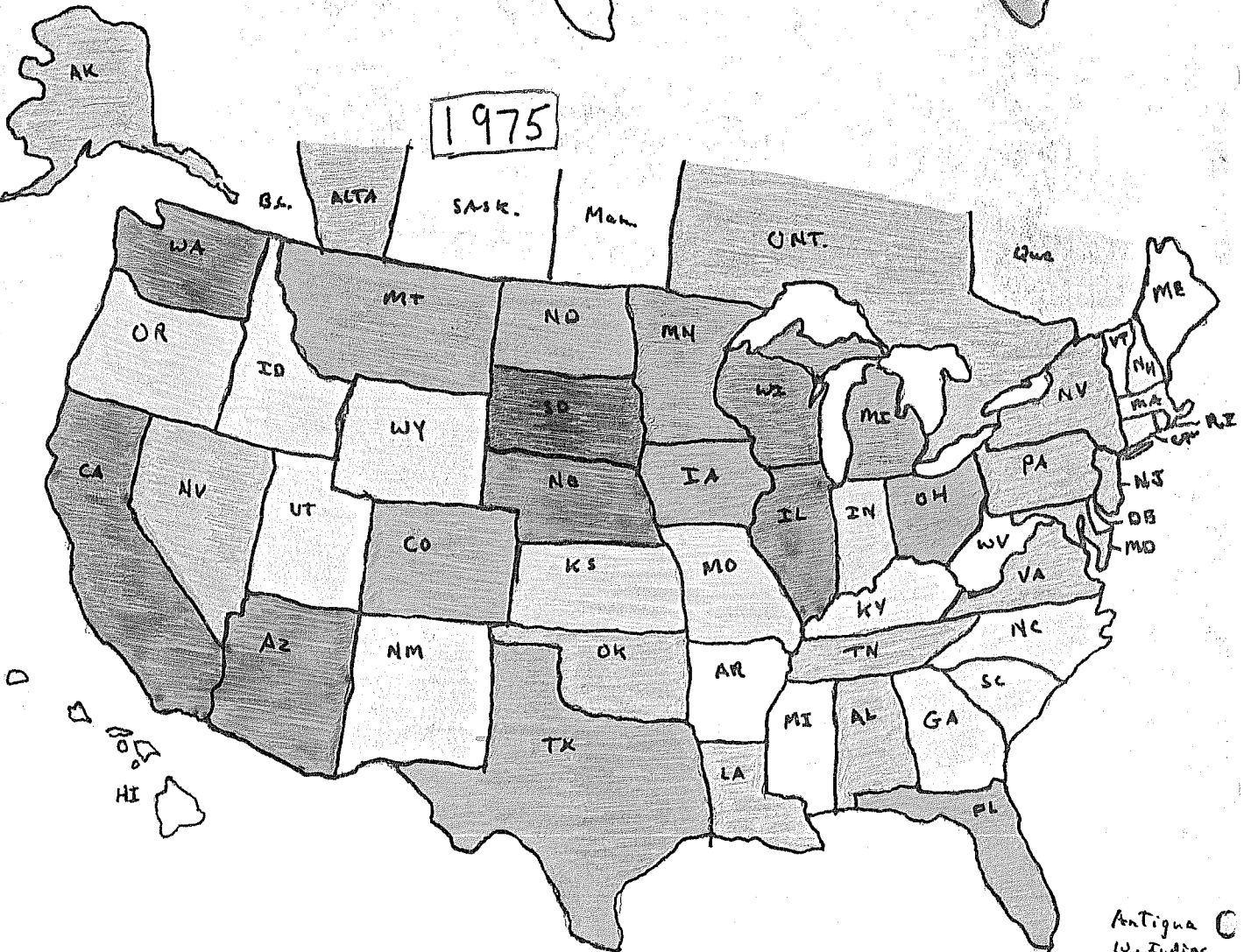
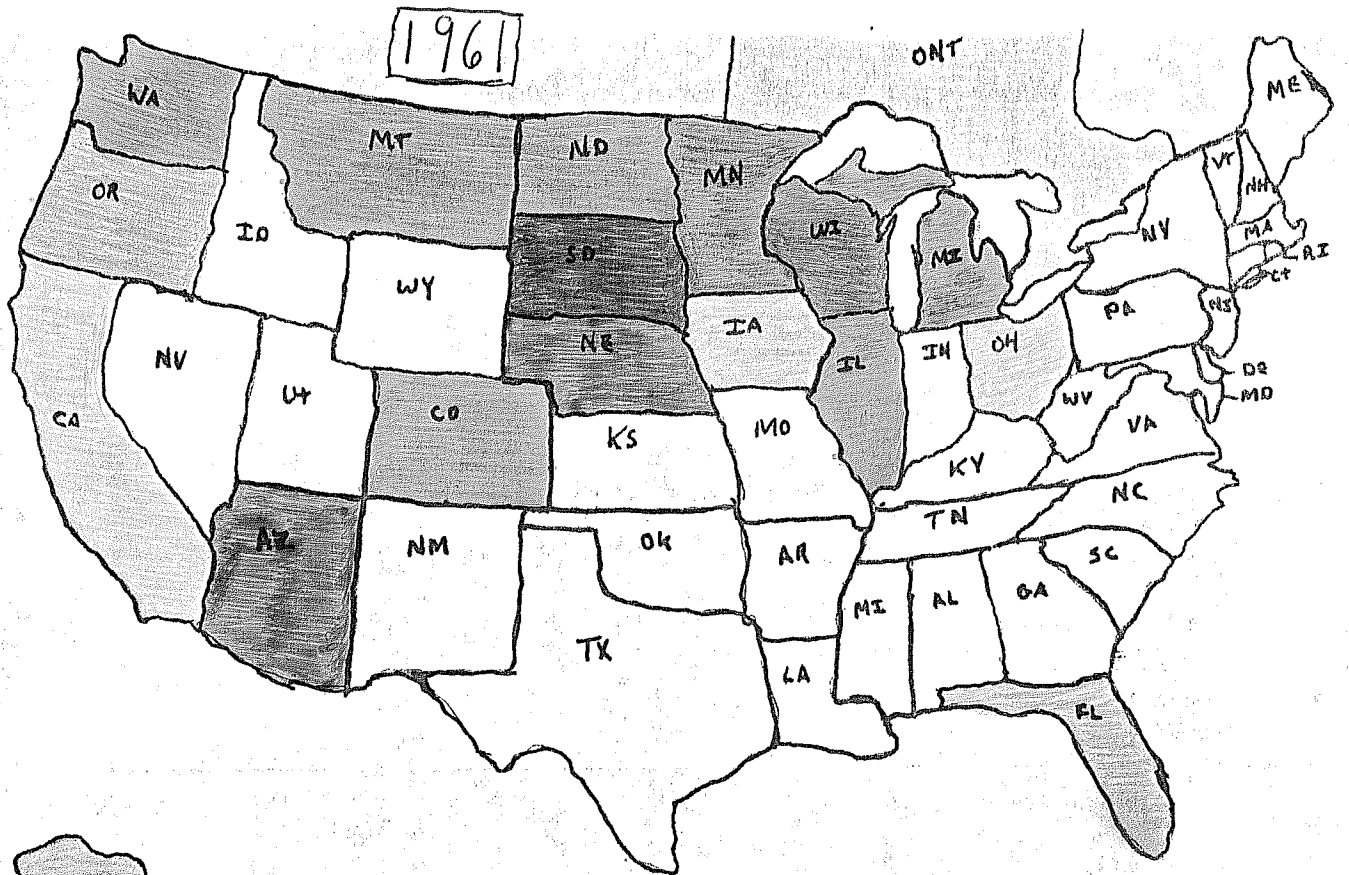


Baptized Membership--1975
(% represented by each color grouping on opposite page)



NOTE: The map on opposing page and the above chart reflect baptized membership. Communicant figures are included in the list and would produce comparable results on a map or chart.

CONGREGATIONS



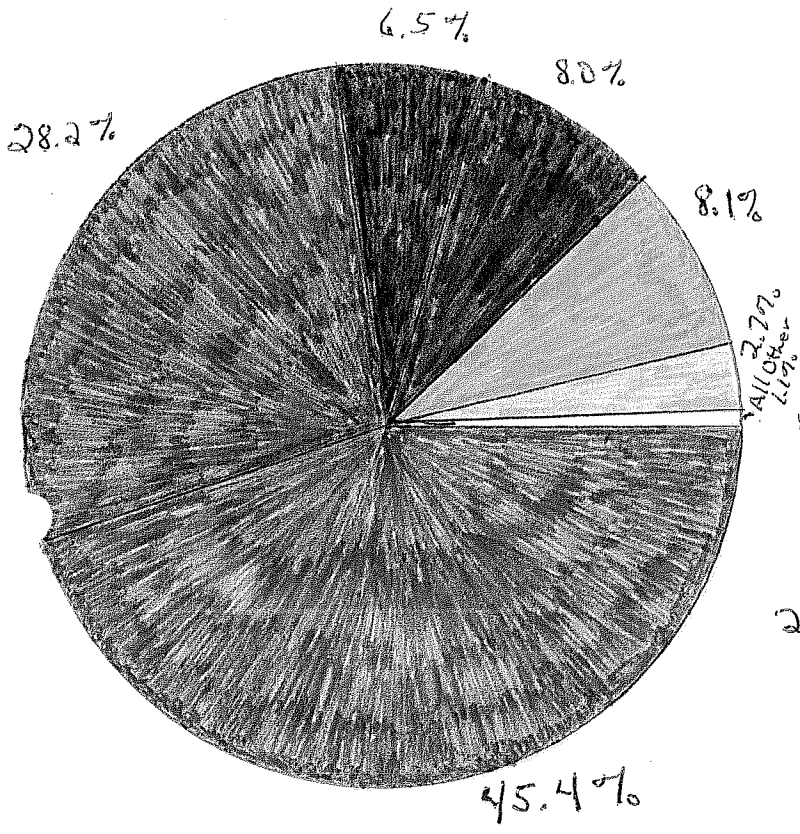
CONGREGATIONS--WIS. SYNOD

Category	1961		1975	
	State	# of Cong.	State	# of Cong.
Over 300	WI	381	WI	396
100-150	MN	127	MN	139
	MI	110	MI	128
50-100	SD	55	SD	57
20-50	AZ	38	AZ	43
	NE	29	CA	34
			IL	31
			NE	31
			WA	23
10-20	WA	15	TX	18
	IL	14	CO	17
	ND	14	OH	16
	CO	13	FL	16
	MT	12	ND	13
			MT	12
			IA	11
5-10	OH	8	MO	8
	IA	8	OR	7
	CA	7	IN	6
			KS	6
2-5	FL	4	PA	4
	OR	4	Ont*	3
			NJ	3
			OK	3
			NV	3
			LA	3
			AL	3
			NY	3
			VA	2
			MD	2
			AK	2
			Alta*	2
		TN	2	
1 Cong.	Ont*		NM, MA, CT, GA, Ant+*, ID, UT, HI, WY, NC, RI, SC, KY, DE, Que*, NH	
TOTALS	16 Sts. 1 Prov.	840	45 Sts. 3 Prov. W. Indies	1063

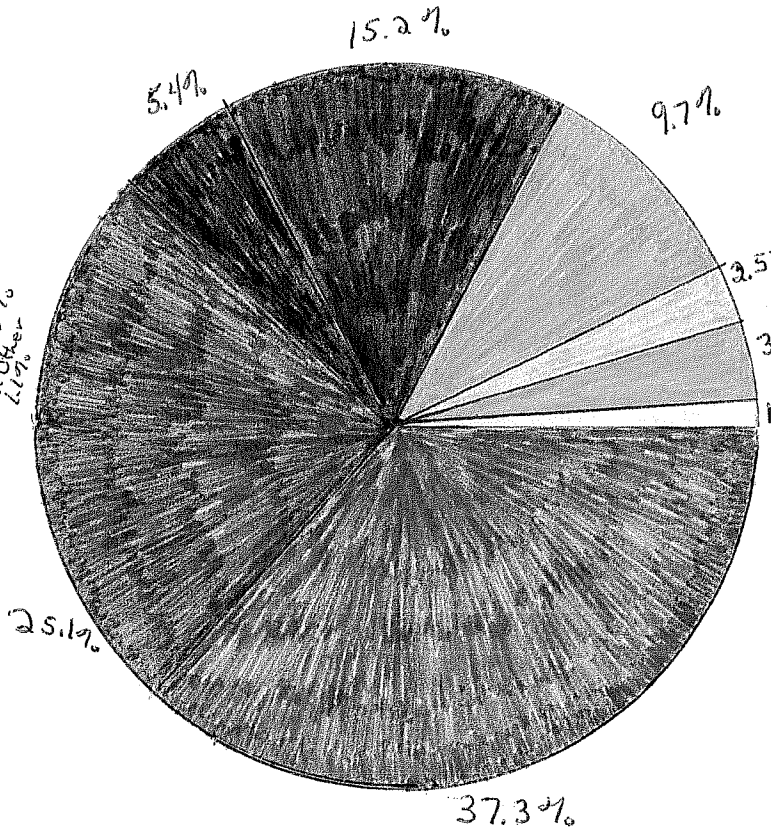
*Canadian Province

+West Indies

Congregations--1961
 % represented by each color
 grouping on map and chart

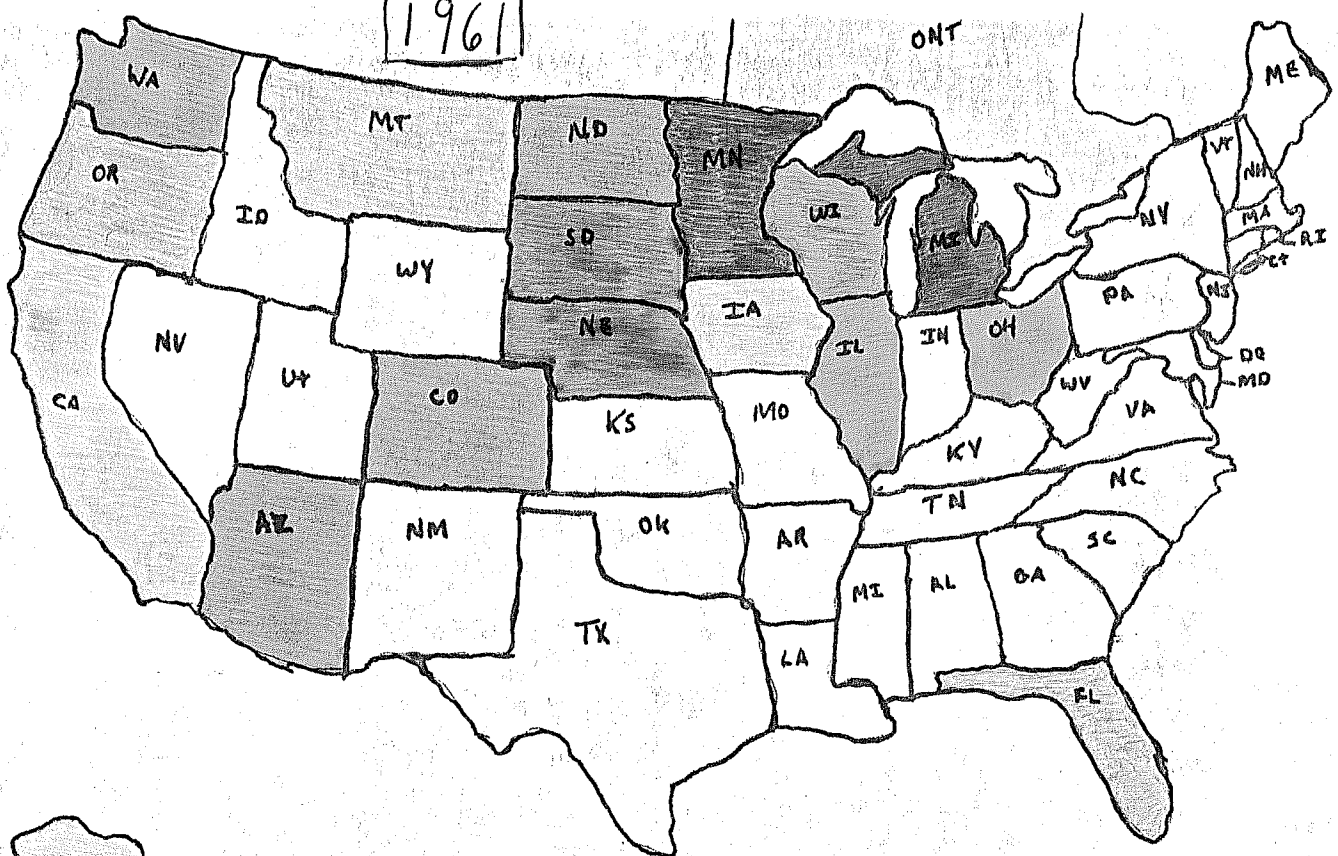


Congregations--1975
 % represented by each color
 grouping on map and chart

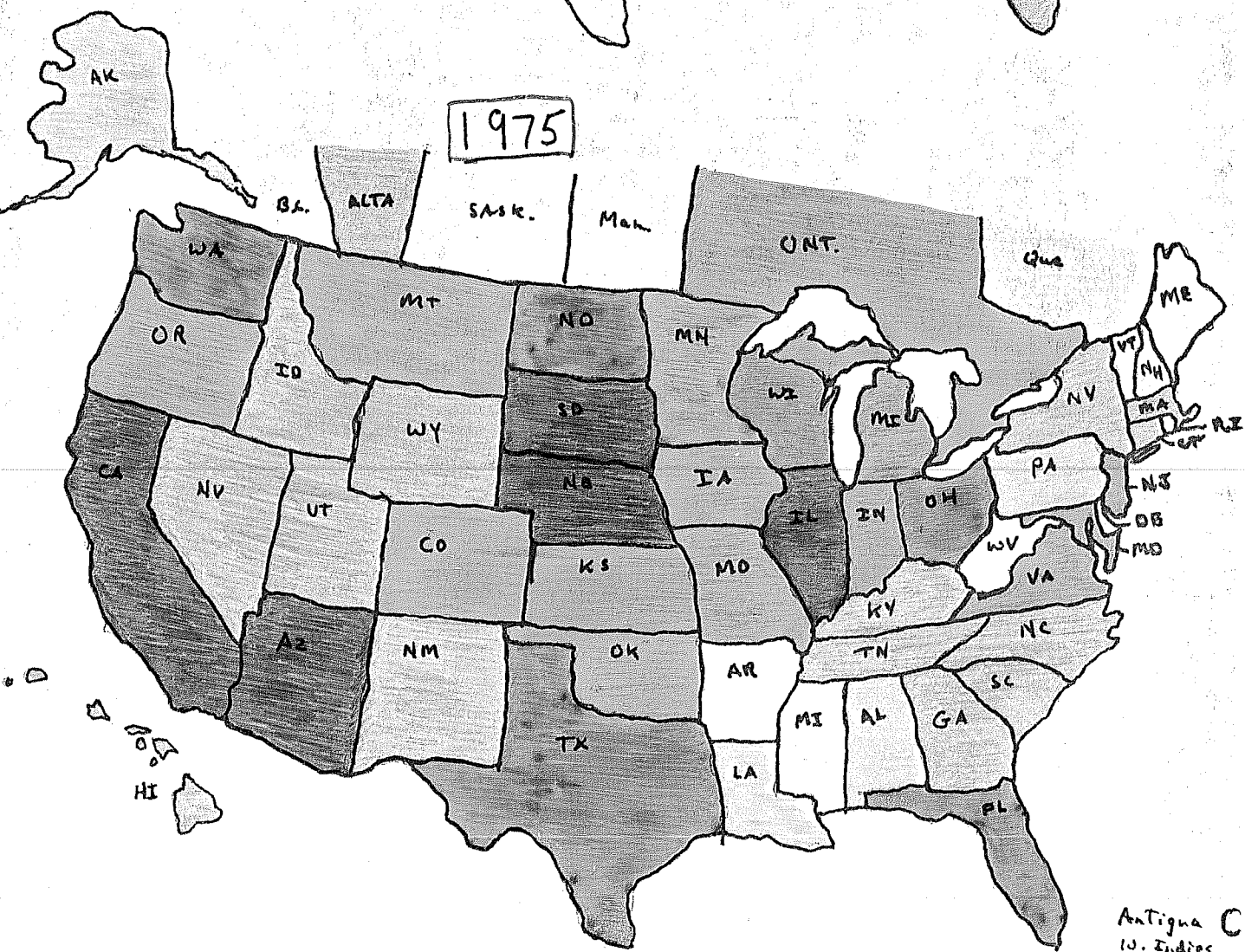


SUPPORT OF SYNODICAL BUDGET

1961



1975



Antigua C
10. Indies

SUPPORT OF SYNODICAL BUDGET

Category	1961		1975	
	State	Support in \$	State	Support in \$
Over \$4,000,000			WI	4,834,592
\$1,000,000-2,000,000	WI	1,630,270	MN MI	1,442,657 1,182,803
\$100,000-1,000,000	MN MI	480,693 347,096	IL SD AZ CA NE	278,253 253,773 194,472 171,992 171,681
\$50,000-100,000	SD NE	91,095 62,677	OH WA FL ND TX	95,197 75,869 64,969 55,749 54,364
\$10,000-50,000	IL AZ OH ND WA CO	41,952 39,504 19,537 18,829 13,057 10,140	OR CO Ont* IA MT IN MO KS NJ VA OK MD	41,392 39,863 35,929 29,947 21,572 20,382 20,242 20,039 17,646 15,879 11,969 11,713
\$5,000-10,000	IA CA MT	7,534 7,477 5,846	PA AK AL LA	9,211 8,688 8,445 6,891
\$1,000-5,000	OR FL	3,603 3,288	NY TN NM CT MA GA NV Alto* KY NC WY SC ID HI UT	4,835 4,520 4,139 4,071 3,990 3,450 2,650 2,602 2,247 1,744 1,708 1,669 1,543 1,290 1,144

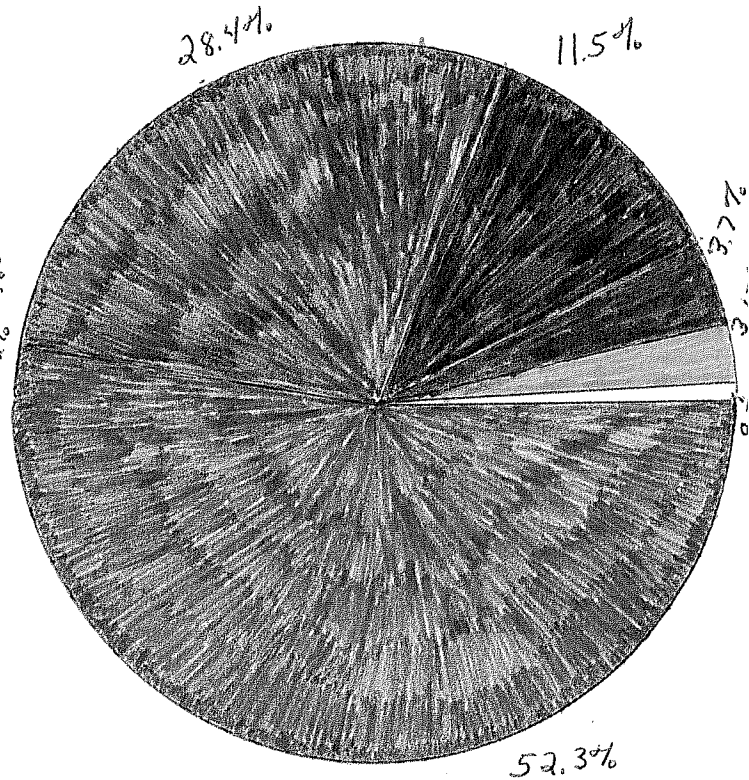
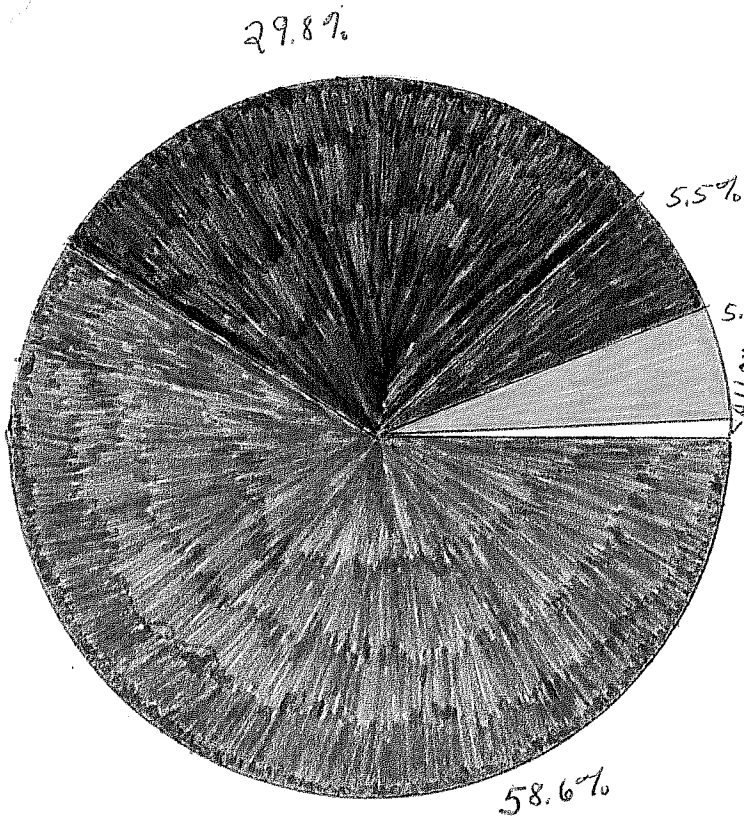
SUPPORT OF SYNODICAL BUDGET (Cont.)

Category	1961		1975	
	State	Support in \$	State	Support in \$
☐ \$0-1,000	Ont*	318	Que*	997
			RI	907
			DE	699
			Ant+	70
			NH	0
TOTALS	16 Sts. 1 Prov.	\$2,782,916	45 Sts. 1 Prov. W. Ind.	\$9,240,454

*Canadian Province
+West Indies

Support--1961
% of support represented by
each color grouping on map
and chart

Support--1975
% of support represented
by each color grouping
on map and chart



DISTORTIONS

As with any study based on statistics, there are some distortions in the preceding pages. Perhaps the greatest distortion is the apparently overwhelming increase of contributions to Synod (230 %) from 1961-75. Although I do not know the inflation rate over these years, it is obvious enough that 1975 dollars are not 1961 dollars.

Another less serious distortion is in the categories chosen to divide the various states into groups. Obviously, any such division is subjective and liable to misinterpretation. In my defense, I wish to say that I chose the categories as those which would reflect the most significant changes.

CONCLUSIONS

To a large extent, we are still a primarily Midwestern Synod. The three states, Wisconsin, Michigan, and Minnesota still account for 83 % of baptized membership, 62.4 % of the congregations, and 80.7% of synodical support. This compares with 87.9%, 73.6%, and 88.4 % in 1961, respectively. How significant are these changes? On the surface, they are not all that striking. On the other hand, it could be argued that the stage has been set; that, humanly speaking, the next fifteen years could see vast changes in the complexion of Synod. From the latter point of view, the present time would be viewed as a time of transition.

Besides the problems of statistical studies already mentioned, one more should be added. There is a temptation to leave our Lord and His grace out of the picture; a temptation to project the future on the basis of the past. It must not be forgotten that both future and past depend on Him. Therefore, no doubt the best conclusion is to give thanks to God for the past and present and pray for His blessing on the future.