

## INTRODUCTION

This article addresses the relationship between religious congregations and social diversity in the United States. Until recently, academics suggested that religious congregations—especially theologically conservative (hereafter *conservative*) ones—generate bonding but not bridging social capital (Putnam 2000: 410; Emerson and Smith 2000).<sup>1</sup> More recent studies, however, demonstrate that members of some conservative congregations report close ties across economic and racial cleavages (Putnam and Campbell 2010), and tolerant political attitudes to racial and sexual minorities (Perry 2013). The specific causal mechanisms, however, are not always evident. What are the causal links, if any, between congregations, the social ties of members, and their political attitudes?

We develop a three-part theoretical framework. First, we theorize that the general theology and denominational affiliation of a congregation influence the social capital and racial makeup of its members. Specifically, theologically conservative congregations generate higher levels of member trust and solidarity, i.e., *bonding* social capital. Further, congregations *outside* of the historically-major denominational families draw more participants across racial lines. Thus congregations that *join* theological conservatism and outsider status generate high levels of social capital in racially heterogeneous settings

Secondly, we propose that the racial makeup and social capital of congregation members influence the development of personal ties across societal cleavages; and that ties across one societal cleavage help to develop ties across other cleavages. Finally, we posit that close ties with members of a particular out-group foster more tolerant political attitudes for that group.

## THEORY

### Religious Congregations and Social Capital

Theologically conservative congregations generate more social capital, and include members of more diverse economic backgrounds, than non-conservative congregations (Putnam 2000: 77). On the other hand, organizations with high levels of solidarity among members (or *bonding* social capital) may lack ties to outsiders (*bridging* social capital). Charles Taylor (1998) theorizes that to the extent communities require mutual trust and solidarity, they are less welcoming to outsiders. Conservative Christians, in particular, are seen as socially exclusive and politically intolerant (Conger and McGraw 2008). The religious and political conservatism of white Evangelicals, such as the belief in individual responsibility, blinds them to structural discrimination against minorities and undermines the authenticity of interracial friendships (Jackman and Crane 1986; Emerson and Smith 2000).

Recent studies, however, show steady growth interracial worship (Yi 2009; Chaves 2011), and that this trend is more pronounced among religious conservatives than liberals. In 2006, Evangelical Protestants were five percent *more* likely to report attending multiracial congregations than were Mainline Protestants (Putnam and Campbell 2010: 292-296). The logic behind racial homogeneity is that it is more efficient for a voluntary organization to focus its effort on one distinct population than to dilute them among multiple populations (Emerson and Smith 2000; Scheitle and Dougherty 2010). In a socially heterogeneous organization, members of the under-served group (usually the minority) are the most likely to leave; and efforts to serve and increase the number of minorities increase the odds of defection among members of the majority group.

One solution is to fuse different racial groups into a new, pan-racial one. A growing number of Americans reject racial homogeneity and seek out multiracial, social networks and institutions (Christerson, Edwards, and Emerson 2005; Emerson 2006). In parallel, a growing number of congregations, especially evangelical ones, are motivated by the biblical mandate to “make disciples of all nations” (Matthew 28:19) and deliberately integrate members of different races. For instance, an originally white-predominant, suburban church (Midwest Baptist) invited every inner-city family to its Sunday school busing program (Emerson and Chai 2003: 223). These evangelical congregations promote a religiously-based, “master status” or identity that unites people of different backgrounds (Marti 2009).

In contrast, Catholics and mainline Protestants often emphasize cultural pluralism among worshipers and “tend to balkanize around ethno-linguistic groupings” (Perry 2013: 263; also Cobb, Park, and Perry 2012). Catholics report high levels or presence of ethno-racial diversity (see below), but the actual *interaction* among members of different ethno-racial groups is less vibrant than in Evangelical congregations. Some Mainline denominations attempt to diversify predominantly white congregations by inserting minority-race pastors and staff, but older, white members often resist these top-down efforts at racial integration (Emerson 2006: 61).<sup>2</sup>

### Historically-Major Denominational Families

Racially diverse congregations tend to come from religious traditions *outside* of the major Evangelical and Mainline Protestant traditions, in particular the Catholic, other Christian (e.g. Jehovah’s Witnesses), and non-Christian traditions (Dougherty and Huyser 2008; Putnam and Campbell 2010: 292). To explain the racial heterogeneity of Catholic parishes, one account claims that an ecclesiastical hierarchy organizes all participating Catholics within a particular geographic area (Putnam and Campbell 2010: 297; Dougherty 2013: 69). As historically white ethnic neighborhoods see an influx of Catholic immigrants from Africa, Asia, and Latin America, and with the conversion of native-born blacks and whites, the territorially-defined parish hosts a diverse set of believers.<sup>3</sup> In another account, Emerson (2006: 39) argues that smaller, religious traditions offer less opportunity for members to select homogeneous congregations. Because of the limited number of congregations, members of diverse races are often forced to worship together in the same congregation.

The literature mainly distinguishes among broad religious traditions or categories (e.g., Mainline, Evangelical, Catholic, Other-Christian). Yi (2009) distinguishes more finely among denominational families, and posits that congregations affiliated with the historically major families would be more racially homogeneous than those not affiliated. In the United States, six Protestant families (Episcopal, Presbyterian, Methodist, Lutheran, Baptist, United Church of Christ/Congregational) largely defined religious practice in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries (Roof and McKinney 1987: 236; Smith 1990), including the pattern of segregated worship.

In the nineteenth century, free black members of mostly Methodist and Baptist denominations separated from their domineering white brethren, forming autonomous black congregations and denominations (e.g., African Methodist Episcopal, National Baptist Convention) (Lincoln and Mamiya 1990; Emerson 2006: 12-17). Whites and blacks both claimed adherence to scripture, however, whites interpreted key passages to legitimate slavery and Jim-Crow segregation (Emerson and Smith 2000: 34-39). Conversely, blacks drew on

scripture to justify collective resistance. Racially homogeneous congregations were civic pillars of white and black communities.

In contrast, relatively marginal, religious organizations were less likely to be standard bearers for the larger white or black community and thus less constrained from experimenting with interracial worship. Many Pentecostal denominations, for instance, were interracial before the 1920s (MacRobert 1997; Emerson 2006: 17). As the Pentecostal movement grew, many white adherents sought societal respectability and to conform to prevailing, segregation norms, by creating white-only denominations (e.g., Assemblies of God). Still, interracial worship continued in smaller denominations, and Pentecostals generally retained a shared, institutional memory of interracial origins (e.g., Azusa Street), which facilitated interracial worship after the mid-twentieth century. In 1993, congregations from the Assembly of God reported more than double the racial-ethnic diversity of congregations from Presbyterian, Lutheran, and Southern Baptist denominations (Dougherty 2003: 76).

In a pooled sample from the General Social Survey, 60 percent of self-identified “Pentecostals” (excluding Assembly of God) claimed interracial worship, which was much higher than Presbyterian, Lutheran, and Southern Baptist respondents (Yi 2009: 201). Smaller, religious groups reported even higher rates of interracial worship: 69 percent of Seventh Day Adventists (est. 1863) and an astounding 86 percent of Jehovah’s Witnesses (est. 1870s) (c.f., Stark and Iannaccone 1997).

Experiments in interracial worship are also common among recently formed (post-1950) denominations. Dougherty and Huyser (2008: 36) report that “congregations with shorter institutional histories do not have the same path dependencies that impede organizational change as do long-established congregations.” Actively proselytizing congregations today either downplay their affiliations with the historically major denominations or break with them altogether. For instance, Mosaic (Marti 2009) and Saddleback (Putnam and Campbell 2010: 54-69) de-emphasize their Southern Baptist affiliations and frame themselves as evangelical, biblically-grounded churches. John Osteen, founder of Houston-based Lakewood Church, was also affiliated with the Southern Baptist Convention before becoming non-denominational. Whether old (Adventists) or new (Lakewood), Christian organizations that distance themselves from major, denominational “brand-names” are among the most racially diverse.

To review, the literature finds that Christian groups *outside* of the Evangelical and Mainline Protestant traditions are more racially diverse: this would include Catholic, Mormon, and other-Christian groups. We add that congregations *inside* the Evangelical tradition, but *outside* the historically major, denominational families, would also be more diverse. These outsider or “New-line” Evangelical groups include both relatively old, but historically minor denominations (e.g., Seventh Day Adventist) *and* relatively new, post-1950 churches (e.g., Lakewood). Our theory helps explain why early studies (e.g., Emerson and Smith 2000) found Evangelical congregations to be racially homogeneous; they included those from the major denominational families (e.g., Methodist, Baptist). With the continuing growth of Evangelical congregations outside the major families, the Evangelical category as a whole should become more multiracial.

We posit three hypotheses on how the characteristics of a congregation influence the social capital and racial makeup of its members. Theologically conservative congregations generate higher levels of social capital among members (e.g., close friendships); congregations outside of the historically major, denominational families are more racially diverse; and

congregations that *join* theological conservatism and outsider status generate high levels of social capital in racially heterogeneous settings.

*H1. Members of conservative congregations report more close friends in their congregation than members of non-conservative congregations.*

*H2. Members of congregations affiliated with historically major, denominational families report less racial diversity in their congregation than members of non-affiliated (outsider) congregations.*

*H3. Members of conservative, outsider congregations report high levels of close friends and racial diversity in their congregation.*

### **Bridging Ties (Cross-Group Friendship)**

The racial makeup and social capital of congregation members, in turn, influence personal ties across societal cleavages. Attending a racially diverse congregation is strongly associated with personal, interracial ties, according to both qualitative (e.g., Marti 2009; Emerson 2006) and quantitative studies (Yi 2009: 162; Putnam and Campbell 2010: 309). A racially diverse congregation does not directly indicate bridging social capital between members of different races. Members of different races may worship inside the same church building but not actually interact on a personal basis. Still, compared to a mono-racial church, a multiracial church provides more opportunity to interact with those of another race. We conceptualize congregation racial diversity as a weak or *potential* form of bridging social capital that, depending on other factors, can be converted into more durable interracial ties.

Studies of multiracial congregations generally overlook social ties across sexual orientations. The intergroup contact literature suggests that ties across one societal cleavage encourage ties across other cleavages, for instance, having a friend from one minority group “related to greater acceptance of minorities of many types” (Pettigrew 1998: 75). We theorize that a racially diverse network is more likely to encompass persons from different backgrounds and lifestyles than a racially homogeneous one, and that members of multiracial congregations are more likely to report ties with sexual minorities than members of mono-racial congregations.

We also consider how social embeddedness (i.e., the number of close ties within a congregation) cultivates cross-cutting ties. We theorize that respondents with many congregation friends are more likely to report close ties with minorities (out-groups) than those with few congregation friends. A large network of friends generally includes a greater diversity of backgrounds and lifestyles than a small network (Putnam 2007: 254). Congregation members potentially develop minority friends directly through their *intra*-congregational social network, or indirectly through the *extra*-congregational networks of church friends (“friends-of-friends”).<sup>4</sup>

*H4. Attending a congregation that is racially diverse increases the likelihood of close ties (friendships) with members of racial and sexual out-groups.*

*H5. A high number of congregation friends increases the likelihood of close ties with members of racial and sexual out-groups.*

*H6. Close ties with members of one out-group increase the likelihood of close ties with another out-group.*

### **Political Inclusion (Out-Groups)**

Finally, we posit that close ties with a member of a particular out-group foster more inclusive political attitudes for that group. That is, ties of friendship erode prejudice toward the other group. Researchers have found that close ties between whites and nonwhites reduce the likelihood that whites will express negative stereotypes (Dixon 2006) and increase pro-immigrant attitudes (Berg 2009; Ha 2010).

*H7. Close ties with members of an out-group increase the likelihood of tolerant political attitudes toward that particular group.*

Perhaps the most problematic relationship is that between conservative Christians and homosexuals. Theological conservatism is strongly associated with prejudice against gays and lesbians (Reimer and Park 2001; Burdette et al 2005). However, even among Evangelicals, attending multiracial congregations is linked to more tolerance for gay sex, marriage and adoption (Perry 2013). To explain, Perry suggests that “increased and intimate exposure to different racial, ethnic, and cultural backgrounds promotes cosmopolitanism and a more generalized tolerance among those who attend racially diverse congregations” (Perry 2013: 263). Perry lacks evidence that generalized tolerance is the intervening variable between multiracial church attendance and support for gay rights. Fortunately, the 2006 Faith Matters Survey includes a plethora of items to investigate this and other questions.

### **DATA & METHOD**

We analyze a nationally representative survey (2006 Faith Matters Survey [FMS]), which contains items regarding respondents' congregation, social network, and political attitudes.<sup>5</sup> Our analysis is limited to respondents who report being non-Hispanic whites and who attend specific Christian congregations (N = 1727 adults). Following Steensland et al. (2000), FMS categorizes Christians along religious traditions, including Evangelical, Mainline, Mormon, and Catholic. We created a residual category, Other-Christian, for respondents who claimed membership in a group (e.g., Jehovah's Witnesses) that did not fit the above categories.

We subdivide Evangelicals into two categories, depending on their affiliation with the leading denominational families of the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. We operationally define historically-major families as denominations coded as “Major Protestant Families” by the General Social Survey (Smith 1990) or as “Mainline” by the FMS (Putnam and Campbell 2010). Altogether, this includes six denominational families: Episcopal, Presbyterian, Methodist, Lutheran, Baptist, and United Church of Christ/Congregational.<sup>6</sup> We label these denominations “Old-line.” All other Protestant groups are coded as “Other-Protestant” in the GSS and as “New-line” in our paper.

The GSS scheme, slightly modified, is a parsimonious, established method to code historically-major, denominational families. It is beyond our scope to construct an alternative scheme. The groups listed as Other-Protestant or New-line were mostly either non-existent or considered less-establishment than the Old-line denominations before 1950; and we expect this



institutional history to influence current race relations. The validity of the categorization emerges in our analysis.

Our focal comparison is Old- and New-line Evangelicals. Old-line Evangelicals include theologically conservative strains of historically-major families (Baptist, Lutheran, Methodist, Presbyterian); Baptists make up the dominant majority (82.7 percent) of respondents. New-Evangelicals are outside of the major-families, and include historically minor (e.g., Pentecostal, Seventh Day Adventist) and more recently formed denominations. By analyzing Old- and New-Evangelicals, we control for the influence of a general religious tradition, and its body of beliefs and practices (Steensland et al 2000). Since the Old- and New-line categories each claim about half of Evangelicals, we also control for the *size* of the religious category (Emerson 2006: 39).

All respondents in Old-Evangelical, New-Evangelical, and Mormon categories, and most respondents in the Other-Christian category, belong to denominations coded as theologically conservative (or “Fundamentalist”) by the General Social Survey (Smith 1990). Moreover, respondents in the Evangelical, Mormon, and Other-Christian categories are more likely than those in Mainline to agree that the Bible is the word of God and should be taken literally.

We also construct categories for high and medium levels of congregation racial diversity. Previous studies define a multiracial congregation as one in which any racial group must be *less* than 80 or 75 percent of the congregation (Emerson 2006; Putnam and Campbell 2010). Therefore, if a respondent reports that her congregation is about three-quarters of the same race, the congregation is coded as homogeneous (Putnam and Campbell 2010: 291). We test the assumption that only a high level of diversity is significant for key outcomes. We create separate variables for “high congregation diversity” (respondent reports that about half or less of the congregation are white) and “medium congregation diversity” (about three-quarters white). A third variable (“multiracial congregation”) includes both medium and high levels of diversity (three-quarters *or* less white).

The Appendix lists the key variables and measurements. Figure 1 (Path Diagram) shows the expected, causal relations among the variables. Respondents from theologically conservative categories (Old-Evangelical, New-Evangelical, Mormon, Other-Christian) are more likely to claim high numbers of friends in their congregations than respondents from non-conservative categories (Mainline, Catholic). Respondents from Outsider categories (New-Evangelical, Mormon, Other-Christian, Catholic) attend more multiracial congregations than respondents from the major Protestant families (Old-Evangelical, Mainline). High levels of congregation friends or racial diversity predict higher odds of other-group friends (e.g., black, Hispanic, gay). Close ties with one out-group predict ties with other out-groups. Finally, respondents who report Hispanic friends are more likely to support current or higher levels of immigration, and respondents with gay friends support gay civil union or marriage rights.

[INSERT FIGURE 1]

Our analysis includes typical predictors of attending a multiracial congregation: sex, age, education, income, urban residence, geographic region, political/social ideology (Dougherty and Huyser 2008; Emerson 2006: 49, 91), and size of one’s congregation.<sup>7</sup> We also include church attendance and biblical literalism as measures of personal religious commitment and as predictors of close friends or racial diversity in one’s congregation.

A key, but somewhat ambiguous, variable is the respondent’s total number of friends. Ideally, in a path diagram, a respondent’s number of close congregation friends contributes to her

total number of close friends, which in turn influences her odds of close out-group friends. Logically, the respondent's number of close *congregation* friends should be smaller than, or at most equal to, the *total* number of close friends. However, 20 percent of respondents report *higher* numbers of close congregation friends than total close friends. This is illogical, unless congregational friendship and generic friendship represent distinct or partly overlapping concepts. For many white Christians, this appears to be the case. For this reason, and to capture extra-congregational friendships, when estimating the likelihood of out-group friendships we conduct two sets of analysis, one with and one without total friends (Tables 3 and 4).

## ANALYSIS

To assess our hypotheses, we analyze descriptive statistics (Table 1) and multivariate regressions (Tables 2-6). Table 1 shows the raw proportions of non-Hispanic white respondents from different religious categories. Consistent with the first hypothesis, respondents from theologically conservative categories (Old-Evangelical, New-Evangelical, Mormon, Other-Christian) are much more likely to frequently attend and somewhat more likely to claim high number of friends (more than ten) in their congregations than Mainline respondents.<sup>8</sup> Conservative and Mainline respondents, though, are not different when it comes to total number of close friends (generic).

Consistent with the second hypothesis, respondents from the Old-line Protestant categories (Old-Evangelicals, Mainline) are the *least* likely to attend racially diverse congregations. Catholics (58 percent) and New-Evangelicals (57 percent) are nearly twice as likely as Old-Evangelicals (35 percent) and Mainline (32 percent) to attend multiracial congregations. The difference is more evident for high levels of racial diversity (about half or less white). Old-Evangelicals and Mainline respondents are the least likely to report attending highly diverse congregations (9 percent each), whereas New-Evangelicals are more than double (23 percent) and Other-Christians are triple (27 percent).<sup>9</sup>

Consistent with the third hypothesis, respondents from outsider (New-line), conservative categories (New-Evangelical, Mormon, Other-Christian) report high levels of close friends *and* racial diversity in their congregation. The most relevant comparison is between Old- and New-line Evangelicals. New-Evangelicals (57 percent) are nearly twice as likely to attend multiracial congregations as Old-Evangelicals (35 percent). Among Evangelical subcategories (table not shown), 58 percent of Pentecostals (N=48) and 64 percent of Non-Denominational (N=81) report multiracial congregations, compared to 34 percent of Baptists (N=250). In terms of interracial worship, Old-Evangelicals (mostly Baptists) act more like Mainline Protestants than New-Evangelicals.

One might infer that the differences between Old and New-Evangelicals are explained by geography. Old-Evangelicals, mostly Baptists, are concentrated in the historically segregated South. In further analysis (not shown), we find the differences are *not* geographic in nature. Even among Southern whites, New-Evangelicals are 11 percent more likely to frequently attend service, nearly twice as likely to report multiracial congregations, and more likely to claim black and especially Hispanic friends than are Old-Evangelicals.

[INSERT TABLE 1 HERE]

Binary logistic regression models in Table 2 confirm that religious categories are significant predictors of congregational friends and racial diversity, after controlling for geography and other variables.<sup>10</sup> In regression Model 1, members of conservative categories (Old-Evangelicals, New-Evangelicals, Mormons), and Catholics, are more likely to claim a high number of close *congregation friends* (more than ten) than our reference category (Mainline Protestants). Mormons are the most likely to claim high congregation friends, followed by New-Evangelicals and Old-Evangelicals. Other-Christians are also more likely, but the association does not reach statistical significance ( $p = .140$ ).

In Model 2, we add two measures of strong religious commitment (high church attendance, biblical literalism). Only high attendance is significantly associated with many congregation friends. Controlling for religious commitment reduces the significance of religious categories, but Old-Evangelicals and especially New-Evangelicals remain significantly more likely to claim a high number of close friends in their congregations.

Model 3 demonstrates that members of outsider categories (New-Evangelical, Other-Christian, Catholic) are more likely to attend multiracial congregations (three-quarters or less white) than are Mainline Protestants. Mormons are also more likely, but do not reach statistical significance.

For New-Evangelicals, and New-line conservatives in general, an alternative explanation for congregation diversity may be that they are simply more active than Mainline Protestants. However, when we control for high levels of attendance and congregation friends in Model 4, New-Evangelicals and Other-Christians are still much more likely to attend multiracial churches. In fact, reporting a high number of congregation friends is *negatively* associated with attending a multiracial congregation. In other words, *despite* their high levels of religiously-based, bonding social capital (high number of congregation friends), New-Evangelicals and Other-Christians report more multiracial congregations than Mainline Protestants.

For most congregants, reporting many close congregation friends is associated with lower odds of attending a multiracial congregation. However, some respondents, especially New-line conservatives, report high levels of both close friends and racial diversity in their congregations. As we discuss below (Table 3), the social capital and racial makeup of a congregation are each independently associated with close ties across racial and sexual cleavages.

As expected, the number of friends in one's congregation is strongly correlated with her total number of friends ( $r = .358$ ,  $p < .001$ ). Model 5 demonstrates that respondents with a high number of congregation friends are nearly six times likely to report high number of generic friends as those with less congregation friends. Mormons are about three times more likely to report high number of generic friends as Mainline Protestants. Interestingly, high church attenders are *less* likely to report many generic friends (Model 5), although they report many congregation friends (Model 2). This suggests that for many white Christians, congregation friends and generic friends are overlapping, but distinct social networks; and that high participation in religious networks may limit their generic social networks.

[INSERT TABLE 2]

Logistic regression models in Table 3 assess whether the social capital and racial makeup of a respondent's congregation are significant predictors of her personal ties across racial cleavages (our fourth and fifth hypotheses). In Model 1, respondents with a high number of friends (more than ten) in their congregation are 2.5 times as likely to report a black friend and



1.5 times as likely to report Hispanic friend as the reference category (respondents with fewer than six congregation friends). White respondents attending high diversity congregations (half or less whites) are three times as likely as the reference category (respondents attending all/nearly all white congregations) to report black or Hispanic friends; respondents attending medium diversity congregations (three-quarters whites) are nearly twice as likely as the reference category.

White Christians with a high number of total friends are more than three times as likely to report black or Hispanic friends as those with a low number of friends (Model 2, 4). Similarly, respondents with black friends are more than three times as likely to report having a close Hispanic friend (Model 4), and vice versa (Model 2). After controlling for total number of friends, reporting many friends within the congregation is no longer significantly associated with having a Hispanic friend, though it is still significantly associated with having a close black friend.

Among religious categories, Old- and New-Evangelicals exhibit higher odds of having a black friend than do Mainline Protestants, but only New-Evangelicals are statistically significant (Model 1). All conservative categories, especially Mormons and Other-Christians, exhibit higher odds of having a close Hispanic friend than do Mainline Protestants (Model 3). The regressions results are consistent with the descriptive statistics in Table 1: Old-Evangelicals (43 percent) and New-Evangelicals (45 percent) are the most likely to report black friends, and Mainline Protestants the least likely (31 percent). Mormons (47 percent) and Other-Christians (48 percent) are the most likely to report having a close Hispanic friend, and Mainline Protestants the least likely (19 percent)

[INSERT TABLE 3]

Logistic regressions in Table 4 assess whether the social capital and racial makeup of a respondent's congregation are also significant predictors of close ties with homosexuals. In Model 1, reporting high levels of congregational friends or high levels of racial diversity are each independently associated with higher likelihood of reporting a close gay friend.

In Model 2, the size of one's social network (number of close friends) is strongly associated with having a gay friend: respondents with high number of friends are more than five times as likely to report close gay friends as those with few friends, and respondents with a medium number of friends are nearly twice as likely. After controlling for total friends, the number of congregation friends is no longer a significant predictor.

Respondents who claim that the Bible is the actual word of God, and is to be taken literally, are less than half as likely to report close gay friends as respondents who claim that Bible is simply written by men (reference). Biblical literalists and social conservatives exhibit the lowest odds of reporting a close gay friend.

In Model 2, we find limited support for our sixth hypothesis that close ties with a member of one out-group increases the likelihood of close ties with a member of another out-group. Respondents with black friends are more than 3.4 times as likely to report gay friends as respondents without black friends. Respondents with Hispanic friends are 1.5 times as likely to report gay friends, but the association is not statistically significant. In additional analysis (not shown), white Christians with gay friends are more likely to report Hispanic and especially black friends than those without gay friends; but the associations become insignificant when we control for total friends.

[INSERT TABLE 4]

Logistic regressions in Table 5 assess whether friendship with a member of out-group significantly increases the odds of supporting inclusive policies for that group, as stated by our seventh hypothesis. In Model 1, reporting a close Hispanic friend is associated with a higher likelihood of supporting current or higher levels of immigration. Among religious categories, Old-Evangelicals are less likely, and Mormons much more likely, to support immigration than Mainline Protestants. Interestingly, being Mormon has a much stronger association with immigration than having a close Hispanic friend: Mormons are 2.5 times as likely as Mainline Protestants to support immigration; whites with Hispanic friends are only 1.3 times as likely as whites without Hispanic friends. When controlling for Hispanic friends, neither a black friend nor total number of friends is a significant predictor. Congregation friends, congregation diversity and congregation size are *not* significant predictors of immigration attitudes (analysis not shown).

In Model 2, white Christians with gay friends are *less* likely to support immigration, but the relationship is marginally significant and may result from overfitting (small sample size and large number of predictors). Moreover, the association between a Hispanic friend and support for immigration loses statistical significance with additional predictors (e.g., a gay friend) and the sharp drop in cases in Model 2.<sup>11</sup>

In Model 3, reporting a close gay friend exhibits the strongest, positive association with gay rights (civil unions or marriages). Respondents with close gay friends are four times as likely to support gay rights as respondents without close gay friends. Respondents who claim that the Bible is the word of God (High Bible Authority) or inspired by God (Medium Bible Authority) are much less likely than those who believe the Bible was written by men to support legal rights for same-sex couples. In contrast, traditional biblical beliefs, especially the view that the Bible is inspired by God, are positively associated with support for immigration (Model 2). Respondents from conservative categories are generally much less likely to support gay rights than are Mainline Protestants, although only New-Evangelicals and Other-Christians are statistically significant.

Interestingly, the social capital and racial composition of one's congregation show opposite associations. Respondents with a high number of close congregation friends or total close friends are much *less* likely, and respondents who attend highly-diverse congregations slightly *more* likely, to support gay rights; likely because of the reduced sample size for gay-related variables, only total friends is statistically significant. For white Christians, heterogeneous social networks that include different races and especially gays are positively associated with support for gay rights, whereas large, homogeneous networks are negative.

[INSERT TABLE 5]

Table 6 presents a separate analysis of white Evangelicals (Old and New), the largest religious category. Model 1 demonstrates that respondents with close black friends are nearly six times as likely to report gay friends as those without black friends; respondents with more than ten friends are three times as likely to report gay friends as respondents with fewer than six friends. Evangelicals with gay friends, in turn, are more than three times as likely to support gay rights as Evangelicals without gay friends (Model 2). Similarly, Skipworth et al. (2010: 899) reported that Evangelicals with gay/lesbian acquaintances are more than three times as likely to

predict support for same-sex marriage (22.2 percent) as are Evangelicals without gay/lesbian acquaintances (6.1 percent).

[INSERT TABLE 6]

## DISCUSSION

Analysis of white Christians from the 2006 Faith Matters Survey largely supports our hypotheses. Respondents from theologically conservative categories report more close friends in their congregations than do non-conservative ones. Respondents from historically-major denominational families (Old-Evangelicals, Mainline Protestants) report much lower racial diversity in their congregations than do other groups. Members of categories that combine conservative theology and outsider status, such as New-Evangelicals, report high levels of racial diversity *and* close friends in their congregations.

White Christians who report high levels of racial diversity *or* close friends within their congregations are more likely to claim close Hispanic, black, and gay friends. White Christians with black friends are more likely to report close Hispanic and gay friends; and Hispanic friends also predicts black friends. Finally, close ties with Hispanics and gays are associated, respectively, with more supportive attitudes on immigration and gay rights, though this relationship is much more robust for gay rights than for immigration. (One interpretation is that gays are more uniformly and strongly supportive of rights for same-sex couples than Hispanics are of immigration.) Among Christian categories, Mormons show the strongest, positive association with Hispanic friends and support for immigration (cf., Knoll 2009). Old- and especially New-Evangelicals are the most likely to report black friends.

Controlling for total number of friends (generic) reduces to insignificance the associations between high levels of congregation friends and Hispanic friend, between congregation friends and gay friend, and between Hispanic friend and gay friend. The number of congregation friends is strongly associated with total number of friends, and the *latter* is strongly associated with black, Hispanic, and gay friends.

We highlight four contributions of this article. Many congregations, especially Evangelical ones, claim a theological mandate for racial integration. However, denominational history is a critical, intervening variable between theology and practice. Congregations affiliated with the major denominational families bear a legacy of segregation and are currently the least diverse. Congregations that combine theological conservatism and outsider status, such as New-Evangelicals, uniquely combine high levels of social capital (i.e., close friends) and racial diversity; this is important, because—our second key finding--both the number of close friends and racial diversity in one's congregation are predictors of personal ties with out-groups.

Third, both high and medium levels of congregational diversity are significantly associated with reporting black and Hispanic friends, compared to those in all, or almost all, white churches. However, only high congregation diversity is a significant predictor for gay friends. This shows the empirical validity of analyzing different levels of racial diversity in congregations, instead of just one level (high-diversity).

Finally, the positive relationship between attending a multiracial congregation and supporting gay rights (Perry 2013) becomes insignificant when controlling for gay friends. This suggests that gay friendship mediates the relationship between multiracial worship and political attitudes toward gays. Racially diverse worship may promote more diverse social networks and a

generalized, cosmopolitan tolerance, both of which increase the likelihood of gay friendships; the latter, in turn, leads one to develop more political tolerance toward gays.

Our paper highlights the complex, contradictory relations between religiously conservative organizations and pluralist virtues. Strict conformity to doctrines may inhibit ties with certain out-groups, especially gays. New-Evangolics and Other-Christians are the *least* likely religious categories to report gay friends and to support gay rights. On the other hand, doctrinal conformity also provides a foundation to unite different kinds of people, and this is especially likely with new or outsider congregations. The propensity of religious conservatives to attend congregations with high social capital and racial diversity, and to develop diverse social networks, partly moderates the negative association between religious conservatism and the inclusion of gays.<sup>12</sup>

## LIMITATIONS & FUTURE RESEARCH

In cross-sectional studies, a critical question remains causality. In our theory, the denominational theology and history of a congregation influence the social networks of attendees, and social networks influence political attitudes. An alternative theory would stress a reverse causality: respondents with prior cosmopolitan or tolerant attitudes are more likely to form diverse social networks *and* to join racially heterogeneous congregations. In fact, persons who attend multiracial congregations are more likely to have grown up in integrated schools and neighborhoods (Emerson, Kimbro, and Yancey 2002); and interracial couples search for diverse congregations (Christerson, Edwards, and Emerson 2005; Emerson 2006).

To address the alternative claim, our control variables include educational status and socio-political ideology. College-educated, socially liberal individuals are more likely to valorize diversity, and better-educated persons enjoy greater opportunities to interact with different social groups at work and in the civic arena (Nie, Junn and Stehlik-Barry 1996). Even controlling for education and ideology, however, our key variables remain significant. In fact, our religious variables, such as New-line Evangelical and Mormon, show stronger associations with interracial friendships than do education or ideology. At the same time, due to the way church diversity and congregational friendships are operationalized, we were not able to investigate the intuitive possibility that having many congregational friendships within a diverse church is more likely to lead to cross-racial friendships than either having many congregational friendships or attending a diverse church alone. We hope to test this interaction in the future using either different data or a different analytic approach.

The problem of self-selection seems less likely with conservative congregations, which are the focus of our study. Conservative congregations tend to be more “strict” (Iannaccone 1994) and to impose more requirements on members (e.g., tithing, proselytizing). It seems unlikely that many people would join the Jehovah’s Witnesses or the Mormons *primarily* to interact with other races, when they can find less onerous venues.

The contact literature shows that social networks more often influence political attitudes than vice versa (Pettigrew and Tropp 2006). Congregation-based social networks play a central role in transmitting political information and shaping respondent attitudes (Djupe and Gilbert 2009). In multiracial congregations, attendees report that their social ties became more racially diverse and that they changed their racial and social views because of their involvement with the church (Emerson 2006).

Finally, our findings demonstrate huge, aggregate differences in interracial worship between congregations affiliated with the historically-major denominational families and those not affiliated. Future research on specific denominations can address the causal mechanisms and perhaps improve on our modified GSS scheme. For instance, many denominations and churches listed as new-line (e.g., Nazarenes, Wesleyan, Lakewood) broke off from old-line denominations (e.g., Methodist, Baptists): to what extent are they affected by the culture or identity of the denomination that they left?

For reasons of space and focus, our analysis was limited to white Christians. The next step would be to replicate the analysis for black Christians. Since most black Protestants join conservative congregations, the critical variable is their affiliation with the major families (e.g., Baptist, Methodist). Among black Christians, we expect that Catholics and new-line Protestants would be more likely to attend multiracial congregations than old-line Protestants.

More generally, our findings suggest that organizations that join shared doctrines and rules with new or outsider status are more likely to bridge entrenched, societal cleavages (c.f., Yi 2009). Further research as to why and how organizations connect different people offers a promising agenda for students of pluralist societies.

## REFERENCES

- Berg, Justin Allen. 2009. "Core Networks and Whites' Attitudes toward Immigrants and Immigration Policy." *Public Opinion Quarterly* 73 (1):7-31.
- Burdette, Amy M., Christopher G. Ellison and Terrence D. Hill. 2005. "Conservative Protestantism and tolerance toward homosexuals: an examination of potential mechanisms." *Sociological Inquiry* 75 (2): 177–196.
- Chaves, Mark. 2011. *American Religion: Contemporary Trends*. Princeton University Press.
- Christerson, Brad, Korie L. Edwards, and Michael O. Emerson 2005. *Against All Odds: The Struggle for Racial Integration in Religious Organizations*. New York: New York University Press.
- Cobb, Ryon J., Jerry Z. Park, and Samuel L. Perry. 2012. "Multiracial Congregations and Denominational Differences in Explanations for Racial Inequality." Paper presented at the Society for the Scientific Study of Religion Annual Conference in Phoenix, Arizona.
- Conger, Kimberly H. and Bryan T. McGraw. 2008. "Religious Conservatives and the Requirements of Citizenship: Political Autonomy." *Perspectives on Politics* 6 (2): 253-266.
- Dixon, Jeffrey C. 2006. "The Ties that Bind and Those that Don't: Toward Reconciling Group Threat and Contact Theories of Prejudice." *Social Forces* 84:2179-2204.
- Djupe, Paul A. and Christopher P. Gilbert. 2009. *The political influence of churches*. Cambridge: University Press.
- Dougherty, Kevin D. 2003. "How monochromatic is church membership? Racial-ethnic diversity in religious community." *Sociology of religion* 64.1 2003.: 65-85.



Dougherty, Kevin D. and Kimberly R. Huyser, "Racially Diverse Congregations: Organizational Identity and the Accommodation of Differences," *Journal for the Scientific Study of Religion* 47, no. 1, 23-44.

Emerson, Michael O. 2009. "Managing Racial Diversity: A Movement toward Multiracial Congregations." Annual meeting of the American Sociological Association, San Francisco, August.

Emerson, Michael O. with Rodney Woo. 2006. *People of the dream: Multiracial congregations in the United States*. Princeton: Princeton University Press

Emerson, Michael O., Rachel T. Kimbro, and George Yancey. 2002. "Contact Theory Extended: The Effects of Prior Racial Contact on Current Social Ties." *Social Science Quarterly* 83:745 – 61.

Emerson, Michael O. and Christian Smith. 2000. *Divided by Faith: Evangelical Religion and the Problem of Race in America*. New York: Oxford University Press.

Gates, Gary J. 2011 (April). "How many people are lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender?" Williams Institute, UCLA. <http://williamsinstitute.law.ucla.edu/wp-content/uploads/Gates-How-Many-People-LGBT-Apr-2011.pdf>

Ha, Shang. 2010. "The Consequences of Multiracial Contexts on Public Attitudes Toward Immigration." *Political Research Quarterly* 63.1: 29-42.

Iannaccone, Laurence. 1994. "Why Strict Churches Are Strong." *American Journal of Sociology* 99 (5): 1180–211.

Jackman, Mary R. and Marie Crane. 1986. "'Some of My Best Friends Are Black...': Interracial Friendship and Whites' Racial Attitudes." *The Public Opinion Quarterly* 50 (4): 459-486.

Knoll, Benjamin R. 2009. "'And Who Is My Neighbor?' Religion and Immigration Policy Attitudes." *Journal for the Scientific Study of Religion* 48 (2): 313–331.

Lincoln, Eric C. and Lawrence H. Mamiya. 1990. *The Black Church in the African-American Experience*. Durham, NC: Duke University Press.

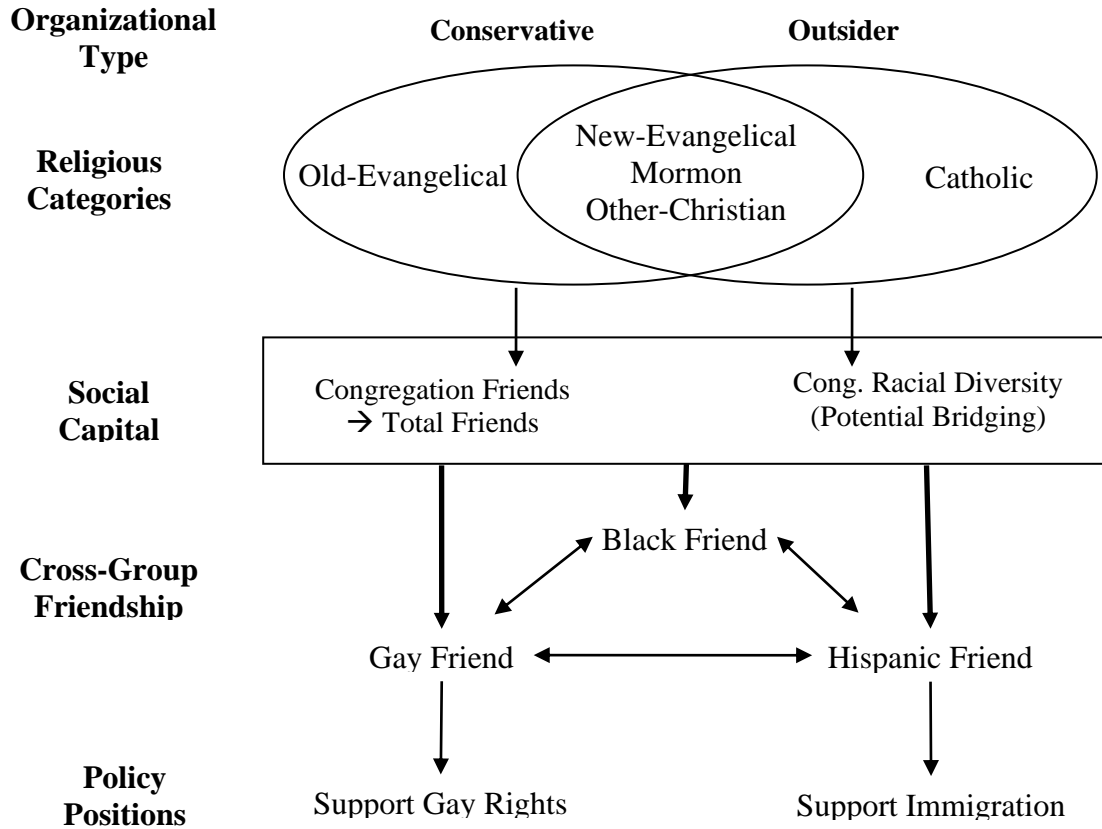
MacRobert, Iain. 1997. "The Black Roots of Pentecostalism." *African American Religion: Interpretive Essays in History and Culture* (Ed. Timothy E. Fulop & Albert J. Raboteau). New York: Routledge.

Marti, Geraldo. 2009. "Affinity, identity, and transcendence: The experience of religious racial integration in diverse congregations." *Journal for the Scientific Study of Religion* 48 (1): 53-68.

- Nie, Norman H., Jane Junn, Kenneth Stehlik-Barry. 1996. *Education and Democratic Citizenship in America*. Chicago, University of Chicago Press
- Perry, Samuel L. 2013. "Multiracial Church Attendance and Support for Same-Sex Romantic and Family Relationships." *Sociological Inquiry* 83 (2): 259-285.
- Pettigrew, Thomas F. 1998. "Intergroup contact theory." *Annual Review of Psychology* 49 (Feb): 65-85.
- Pettigrew, Thomas F and Linda R. Tropp. 2006. "A meta-analytic test of intergroup contact theory." *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology* 90(5): 751-783.
- Putnam, Robert D. and David E. Campbell. 2010. *American Grace: How Religion Divides and Unites Us*. New York: Simon & Schuster.
- Putnam, Robert D. 2007. "E Pluribus Unum: Diversity and Community in the Twenty-first Century, The 2006 Johan Skytte Prize Lecture." *Scandinavian Political Studies* 30 (2).
- Putnam, Robert D. 2000. *Bowling alone: The collapse and revival of American community*. New York: Simon & Schuster.
- Reimer, Sam and Jerry Z. Park, 2001. "Tolerant (In)civility? A longitudinal analysis of white conservative Protestants' willingness to grant civil liberties." *Journal for the Scientific Study of Religion* 40 (4): 735-745.
- Roof, Wade Clark and William McKinney. 1987. *American Mainline Religion: Its Changing Shape and Future*. New Brunswick: Rutgers University Press.
- Scheitle, Christopher P., and Kevin D. Dougherty. 2010. "Race, Diversity, and Membership Duration in Religious Congregations." *Sociological Inquiry* 80 (3): 405-423.
- Stark, Rodney and Laurence Iannaccone. 1997. "Why Jehovah's Witnesses Grow So Rapidly: A Theoretical Application." *Journal of Contemporary Religion* 12 (2): 133-157.
- Skipworth, Sue Ann, A Garner, BJ Dettrey. 2010. "Limitations of the contact hypothesis: Heterogeneity in the contact effect on attitudes toward gay rights." *Politics & Policy* 38 (5).
- Smith, Tom W. 1990. "Classifying Protestant denominations." *Review of Religious Research* 31: 225-245.
- Steensland, Brian, Jerry Z. Park, Mark D. Regnerus, Lynn D. Robinson, W. Bradford Wilcox, and Robert D. Woodberry. 2000. "The Measure of American Religion: Toward Improving the State of the Art." *Social Forces* 79: 291-318.
- Taylor, Charles. 1998. "The Dynamics of Democratic Exclusion." *The Journal of Democracy* 9 (4).

Yi, Joseph. 2009. *God and Karate on the Southside: Bridging differences, Building American communities*. Lanham, MD: Lexington Books.

**FIGURE 1. PATH DIAGRAM**



**TABLE 1. Religious Categories**

|                               |                 | Mainline Protestant | Old Evan         | New Evan         | Mormon           | Other-Christian  | Catholic         | Total |
|-------------------------------|-----------------|---------------------|------------------|------------------|------------------|------------------|------------------|-------|
| <b>Biblical Authority</b>     | God's Word      | 20%                 | 52% <sup>a</sup> | 46% <sup>a</sup> | 35%              | 46% <sup>a</sup> | 16%              | 32%   |
|                               | Inspired        | 60%                 | 41% <sup>a</sup> | 45% <sup>a</sup> | 57%              | 42% <sup>a</sup> | 66%              | 54%   |
|                               | N =             | 468                 | 346              | 328              | 46               | 69               | 470              | 1727  |
| <b>Church Attend</b>          | High            | 43%                 | 59% <sup>a</sup> | 66% <sup>a</sup> | 90% <sup>a</sup> | 71% <sup>a</sup> | 54%              | 56%   |
|                               | N =             | 350                 | 289              | 271              | 40               | 52               | 349              | 1351  |
| <b>Cong. Racial Diversity</b> | High            | 9%                  | 9%               | 23% <sup>a</sup> | 10%              | 29% <sup>a</sup> | 27% <sup>a</sup> | 17%   |
|                               | Medium          | 23%                 | 26%              | 34% <sup>a</sup> | 34%              | 26%              | 31%              | 28%   |
|                               | Total Diversity | 32%                 | 35%              | 57% <sup>a</sup> | 44%              | 54% <sup>a</sup> | 58% <sup>a</sup> | 45%   |
|                               | N =             | 380                 | 302              | 280              | 41               | 55               | 379              | 1437  |
| <b>Close Cong. Friends</b>    | High            | 17%                 | 25%              | 23%              | 22%              | 22%              | 19%              | 20%   |
|                               | Medium          | 9%                  | 15%              | 12%              | 15%              | 11%              | 11%              | 11%   |
|                               | N =             | 382                 | 304              | 284              | 41               | 55               | 388              | 1454  |
| <b>Close Friends</b>          | High            | 15%                 | 18%              | 14%              | 26%              | 17%              | 15%              | 16%   |
|                               | Medium          | 25%                 | 24%              | 24%              | 28%              | 25%              | 25%              | 25%   |
|                               | N =             | 468                 | 346              | 328              | 46               | 69               | 470              | 1727  |
| <b>Black Friend</b>           | Yes             | 31%                 | 43% <sup>a</sup> | 45% <sup>a</sup> | 35%              | 42%              | 35%              | 38%   |
|                               | N =             | 467                 | 346              | 326              | 46               | 69               | 468              | 1723  |
| <b>Hispanic Friend</b>        | Yes             | 19%                 | 26%              | 33% <sup>a</sup> | 47% <sup>a</sup> | 48% <sup>a</sup> | 33% <sup>a</sup> | 29%   |
|                               | N =             | 468                 | 346              | 326              | 45               | 69               | 469              | 1723  |
| <b>Gay Friend</b>             | Yes             | 18%                 | 15%              | 13%              | 15%              | 13%              | 21%              | 17%   |
|                               | N =             | 220                 | 173              | 171              | 20               | 31               | 232              | 847   |
| <b>Immigration</b>            | Yes             | 56%                 | 43% <sup>a</sup> | 52%              | 78%              | 52%              | 54%              | 53%   |
|                               | N =             | 451                 | 342              | 311              | 45               | 65               | 454              | 1668  |
| <b>Gay rights</b>             | Yes             | 70%                 | 46% <sup>a</sup> | 41% <sup>a</sup> | 58%              | 42% <sup>a</sup> | 76%              | 60%   |
|                               | N =             | 452                 | 338              | 319              | 45               | 66               | 445              | 1665  |
| <b>Education</b>              | Bachelor's      | 43%                 | 25% <sup>a</sup> | 27% <sup>a</sup> | 59%              | 36%              | 38%              | 35%   |
|                               | N =             | 468                 | 346              | 328              | 46               | 69               | 469              | 1724  |

Note: <sup>a</sup> Significantly different from Mainline Protestant (Tukey-Kramer pairwise comparisons)



**TABLE 2. Predicting Congregational Friends, Racial Diversity, Total Friends**

| Covariates               | High Congregational Friends |                       | Multiracial Congregation |                      | High Total Friends   |
|--------------------------|-----------------------------|-----------------------|--------------------------|----------------------|----------------------|
|                          | Model 1                     | Model 2               | Model 1                  | Model 2              | Model 1              |
| Old Evangelical          | 1.884**<br>(0.422)          | 1.527+<br>(0.357)     | 1.123<br>(0.202)         | 1.160<br>(0.212)     | 1.333<br>(0.333)     |
| New Evangelical          | 2.278***<br>(0.528)         | 1.686*<br>(0.407)     | 2.572***<br>(0.457)      | 2.671***<br>(0.487)  | 1.077<br>(0.283)     |
| Mormon                   | 3.095*<br>(1.389)           | 1.997<br>(0.905)      | 1.615<br>(0.564)         | 1.685<br>(0.598)     | 2.674*<br>(1.219)    |
| Other Protestant         | 1.408<br>(0.573)            | 1.008<br>(0.419)      | 2.879***<br>(0.912)      | 3.022***<br>(0.971)  | 0.738<br>(0.371)     |
| Catholic                 | 1.672*<br>(0.383)           | 1.455<br>(0.343)      | 2.080***<br>(0.346)      | 2.087***<br>(0.349)  | 1.137<br>(0.278)     |
| Multiracial Congregation | 0.711*<br>(0.111)           | 0.730*<br>(0.115)     |                          |                      | 1.227<br>(0.208)     |
| High Cong. Friends       |                             |                       | 0.699*<br>(0.108)        | 0.715*<br>(0.112)    | 5.863***<br>(1.078)  |
| High Attendance          |                             | 2.589***<br>(0.449)   |                          | 0.939<br>(0.120)     | 0.686*<br>(0.127)    |
| High Biblical Literalism |                             | 1.328+<br>(0.226)     |                          | 0.906<br>(0.125)     | 0.960<br>(0.183)     |
| Congregation size (lg10) | 0.945<br>(0.0946)           | 0.963<br>(0.1000)     | 1.449***<br>(0.117)      | 1.448***<br>(0.117)  | 0.976<br>(0.111)     |
| Female                   | 1.289+<br>(0.195)           | 1.168<br>(0.181)      | 1.028<br>(0.120)         | 1.036<br>(0.122)     | 0.730+<br>(0.121)    |
| Bachelor's or Higher     | 0.702*<br>(0.116)           | 0.702*<br>(0.119)     | 0.872<br>(0.110)         | 0.864<br>(0.110)     | 0.995<br>(0.179)     |
| < \$40k/Year Income      | 0.642**<br>(0.108)          | 0.617**<br>(0.106)    | 1.034<br>(0.134)         | 1.047<br>(0.137)     | 0.904<br>(0.169)     |
| South                    | 1.523**<br>(0.240)          | 1.425*<br>(0.229)     | 1.060<br>(0.134)         | 1.070<br>(0.136)     | 1.071<br>(0.191)     |
| Social Conservative      | 1.435*<br>(0.225)           | 1.197<br>(0.196)      | 0.822<br>(0.0983)        | 0.843<br>(0.103)     | 1.068<br>(0.186)     |
| Age (centered)           | 1.047***<br>(0.00551)       | 1.042***<br>(0.00556) | 0.988**<br>(0.00381)     | 0.989**<br>(0.00386) | 1.017**<br>(0.00569) |
| Urban                    | 0.694*<br>(0.106)           | 0.725*<br>(0.112)     | 1.419**<br>(0.166)       | 1.410**<br>(0.165)   | 0.862<br>(0.144)     |
| (Constant)               | 0.149***<br>(0.0467)        | 0.101***<br>(0.0336)  | 0.219***<br>(0.0545)     | 0.225***<br>(0.0562) | 0.134***<br>(0.0466) |

|                    |        |        |        |        |        |
|--------------------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|
| $\chi^2$           | 143.9  | 183.4  | 124.7  | 125.7  | 138.7  |
| Degrees of Freedom | 14     | 16     | 14     | 16     | 17     |
| Log-Likelihood     | -588.9 | -569.1 | -866.9 | -866.4 | -510.3 |
| N                  | 1347   | 1347   | 1347   | 1347   | 1347   |

---

\*\*\* p<0.001, \*\* p<0.01, \* p<0.05, + p<0.1

Odds-ratios reported with standard errors in parentheses

Source: 2006 Faith Matters Survey

**TABLE 3. Predicting Close Black and Hispanic Friends**

| Covariates             | Close Black Friend  |                     | Close Hispanic Friend |                      |
|------------------------|---------------------|---------------------|-----------------------|----------------------|
|                        | Model 1             | Model 2             | Model 3               | Model 4              |
| Old Evangelical        | 1.320<br>(0.240)    | 1.201<br>(0.232)    | 1.590*<br>(0.325)     | 1.524+<br>(0.332)    |
| New Evangelical        | 1.565*<br>(0.287)   | 1.555*<br>(0.303)   | 1.426+<br>(0.288)     | 1.355<br>(0.292)     |
| Mormon                 | 1.190<br>(0.447)    | 0.820<br>(0.339)    | 2.766**<br>(1.016)    | 2.713*<br>(1.083)    |
| Other Protestant       | 1.083<br>(0.367)    | 0.931<br>(0.339)    | 2.328*<br>(0.773)     | 2.649**<br>(0.934)   |
| Catholic               | 0.955<br>(0.165)    | 0.892<br>(0.165)    | 1.306<br>(0.243)      | 1.374<br>(0.273)     |
| High Cong. Friends     | 2.455***<br>(0.388) | 1.519*<br>(0.271)   | 1.858***<br>(0.315)   | 0.995<br>(0.194)     |
| Medium Cong. Friends.  | 1.222<br>(0.235)    | 0.933<br>(0.195)    | 1.130<br>(0.235)      | 0.837<br>(0.192)     |
| High Diversity Cong.   | 2.822***<br>(0.473) | 2.208***<br>(0.402) | 3.312***<br>(0.566)   | 2.743***<br>(0.502)  |
| Medium Diversity Cong. | 1.933***<br>(0.270) | 1.738***<br>(0.260) | 1.833***<br>(0.274)   | 1.574**<br>(0.251)   |
| High Total Friends     |                     | 3.503***<br>(0.677) |                       | 3.306***<br>(0.660)  |
| Medium Total Friends   |                     | 1.978***<br>(0.297) |                       | 1.675**<br>(0.271)   |
| Close Hispanic Friend  |                     | 3.407***<br>(0.491) |                       |                      |
| Close Black Friend     |                     |                     |                       | 3.461***<br>(0.498)  |
| Female                 | 0.764*<br>(0.0922)  | 0.817<br>(0.105)    | 0.841<br>(0.109)      | 0.955<br>(0.132)     |
| Bachelor's or Higher   | 0.849<br>(0.111)    | 0.803<br>(0.113)    | 1.061<br>(0.147)      | 1.115<br>(0.165)     |
| < \$40k/Year Income    | 0.911<br>(0.123)    | 0.972<br>(0.140)    | 0.886<br>(0.129)      | 0.915<br>(0.142)     |
| South                  | 1.754***<br>(0.225) | 2.063***<br>(0.285) | 0.723*<br>(0.103)     | 0.592***<br>(0.0907) |
| Social Conservative    | 0.841<br>(0.105)    | 0.852<br>(0.113)    | 0.891<br>(0.119)      | 0.936<br>(0.133)     |
| Age (centered)         | 1.004<br>(0.00400)  | 1.004<br>(0.00425)  | 0.996<br>(0.00425)    | 0.993<br>(0.00452)   |
| Urban                  | 1.064<br>(0.129)    | 0.965<br>(0.126)    | 1.599***<br>(0.206)   | 1.695***<br>(0.233)  |
| (Constant)             | 0.309***            | 0.176***            | 0.175***              | 0.0830***            |

|                    |          |          |          |          |
|--------------------|----------|----------|----------|----------|
|                    | (0.0595) | (0.0378) | (0.0372) | (0.0201) |
| $\chi^2$           | 128.5    | 285.3    | 113.4    | 258.5    |
| Degrees of Freedom | 16       | 19       | 16       | 19       |
| Log-Likelihood     | -824.4   | -745.5   | -742.8   | -669.8   |
| N                  | 1344     | 1343     | 1344     | 1343     |

\*\*\* p<0.001, \*\* p<0.01, \* p<0.05, + p<0.1

Odds-ratios reported with standard errors in parentheses

Source: 2006 Faith Matters Survey

**TABLE 4. Predicting Close Gay Friend**

| Covariates                 | Close Gay Friend   |                     |
|----------------------------|--------------------|---------------------|
|                            | Model 1            | Model 2             |
| Old Evangelical            | 1.223<br>(0.432)   | 1.011<br>(0.391)    |
| New Evangelical            | 0.716<br>(0.264)   | 0.602<br>(0.236)    |
| Mormon                     | 0.797<br>(0.648)   | 0.517<br>(0.469)    |
| Other Protestant           | 0.405<br>(0.325)   | 0.290<br>(0.247)    |
| Catholic                   | 1.074<br>(0.329)   | 0.980<br>(0.331)    |
| High Cong. Friends         | 2.090*<br>(0.624)  | 0.974<br>(0.344)    |
| Medium Cong. Friends.      | 1.357<br>(0.468)   | 1.025<br>(0.394)    |
| High Diversity Cong.       | 2.278**<br>(0.663) | 1.751+<br>(0.566)   |
| Medium Diversity Cong.     | 1.081<br>(0.295)   | 0.978<br>(0.293)    |
| High Total Friends         |                    | 5.165***<br>(1.746) |
| Medium Total Friends       |                    | 1.961*<br>(0.590)   |
| Close Hispanic Friend      |                    | 1.497<br>(0.409)    |
| Close Black Friend         |                    | 3.426***<br>(0.902) |
| High Biblical Literalism   | 0.499+<br>(0.208)  | 0.473<br>(0.217)    |
| Medium Biblical Literalism | 0.781<br>(0.273)   | 0.744<br>(0.286)    |
| Female                     | 1.015<br>(0.235)   | 1.149<br>(0.291)    |
| Bachelor's or Higher       | 1.472<br>(0.352)   | 1.636+<br>(0.425)   |
| < \$40k/Year Income        | 0.777<br>(0.202)   | 0.817<br>(0.228)    |
| South                      | 1.055<br>(0.264)   | 1.037<br>(0.283)    |
| Social Conservative        | 0.476**<br>(0.113) | 0.436**<br>(0.114)  |
| Age (centered)             | 0.996              | 0.989               |



|                    |           |           |
|--------------------|-----------|-----------|
|                    | (0.00751) | (0.00806) |
| Urban              | 0.957     | 0.872     |
|                    | (0.219)   | (0.218)   |
| (Constant)         | 0.246**   | 0.106***  |
|                    | (0.110)   | (0.0536)  |
| $\chi^2$           | 37.12     | 112.3     |
| Degrees of Freedom | 18        | 22        |
| Log-Likelihood     | -267.4    | -229.7    |
| N                  | 661       | 660       |

---

\*\*\* p<0.001, \*\* p<0.01, \* p<0.05, + p<0.1

Odds-ratios reported with standard errors in parentheses

Source: 2006 Faith Matters Survey

**TABLE 5. Predicting Support for Immigration and Gay Rights**

| Covariates                 | Immigration          |                    | Gay Rights           |
|----------------------------|----------------------|--------------------|----------------------|
|                            | Model 1              | Model 2            | Model 3              |
| Old Evangelical            | 0.694*<br>(0.112)    | 0.647+<br>(0.169)  | 0.734<br>(0.209)     |
| New Evangelical            | 0.900<br>(0.146)     | 0.886<br>(0.228)   | 0.480**<br>(0.135)   |
| Mormon                     | 2.543*<br>(1.017)    | 1.491<br>(0.878)   | 0.570<br>(0.329)     |
| Other Protestant           | 0.933<br>(0.266)     | 0.852<br>(0.415)   | 0.306*<br>(0.174)    |
| Catholic                   | 0.837<br>(0.121)     | 0.633+<br>(0.150)  | 0.883<br>(0.238)     |
| High Biblical Literalism   |                      | 1.245<br>(0.410)   | 0.146***<br>(0.0675) |
| Medium Biblical Literalism |                      | 1.777+<br>(0.531)  | 0.269**<br>(0.120)   |
| High Diversity Cong.       |                      | 1.093<br>(0.244)   | 1.092<br>(0.274)     |
| High Cong. Friends         |                      | 0.912<br>(0.212)   | 0.770<br>(0.197)     |
| High Total Friends         | 1.011<br>(0.157)     | 1.353<br>(0.359)   | 0.603+<br>(0.180)    |
| Close Hispanic Friend      | 1.290*<br>(0.161)    | 1.228<br>(0.246)   | 1.378<br>(0.307)     |
| Close Black Friend         | 1.095<br>(0.129)     | 1.352<br>(0.261)   | 1.046<br>(0.222)     |
| Close Gay Friend           |                      | 0.632+<br>(0.157)  | 3.985***<br>(1.328)  |
| Female                     | 0.889<br>(0.0946)    | 0.774<br>(0.132)   | 1.131<br>(0.214)     |
| Bachelor's or Higher       | 1.457**<br>(0.169)   | 1.022<br>(0.185)   | 1.336<br>(0.269)     |
| < \$40k/Year Income        | 0.606***<br>(0.0706) | 0.698+<br>(0.129)  | 0.885<br>(0.180)     |
| South                      | 0.797+<br>(0.0924)   | 0.838<br>(0.154)   | 0.689+<br>(0.139)    |
| Social Conservative        | 0.739**<br>(0.0801)  | 0.709+<br>(0.127)  | 0.361***<br>(0.0706) |
| Age (centered)             | 0.996<br>(0.00343)   | 0.993<br>(0.00537) | 0.991<br>(0.00586)   |
| Urban                      | 1.259*<br>(0.134)    | 1.111<br>(0.187)   | 1.528*<br>(0.285)    |
| (Constant)                 | 1.469*               | 1.380              | 10.29***             |

|                    |         |         |         |
|--------------------|---------|---------|---------|
|                    | (0.239) | (0.502) | (5.265) |
| $\chi^2$           | 103.3   | 39.99   | 167.4   |
| Degrees of Freedom | 15      | 20      | 20      |
| Log-Likelihood     | -1025   | -421.0  | -356.9  |
| N                  | 1557    | 638     | 645     |

---

\*\*\* p<0.001, \*\* p<0.01, \* p<0.05, + p<0.1  
Odds-ratios reported with standard errors in parentheses  
Source: 2006 Faith Matters Survey

**TABLE 6. (White Evangelicals only)**  
**Predicting Close Gay Friend and Support for Gay Rights**

| Covariates                 | Gay Friend<br>Model 1 | Gay Rights<br>Model 2 |
|----------------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|
| High Biblical Literalism   | 0.471<br>(0.293)      | 0.0571**<br>(0.0614)  |
| Medium Biblical Literalism | 0.644<br>(0.376)      | 0.112*<br>(0.120)     |
| High Total Friends         | 3.506**<br>(1.628)    | 0.823<br>(0.346)      |
| Medium Total Friends       | 1.370<br>(0.647)      | 0.616<br>(0.199)      |
| Close Hispanic Friend      | 0.865<br>(0.341)      | 1.799+<br>(0.539)     |
| Close Black Friend         | 5.846***<br>(2.315)   | 0.987<br>(0.283)      |
| Close Gay Friend           |                       | 2.874*<br>(1.262)     |
| Female                     | 1.055<br>(0.386)      | 0.986<br>(0.262)      |
| Bachelor's or Higher       | 1.733<br>(0.694)      | 1.040<br>(0.315)      |
| < \$40k/Year Income        | 0.875<br>(0.333)      | 1.283<br>(0.363)      |
| South                      | 0.654<br>(0.238)      | 0.644+<br>(0.171)     |
| Social Conservative        | 0.424*<br>(0.163)     | 0.317***<br>(0.0909)  |
| Age (centered)             | 0.990<br>(0.0116)     | 0.991<br>(0.00846)    |
| Urban                      | 0.827<br>(0.303)      | 1.409<br>(0.374)      |
| (Constant)                 | 0.155*<br>(0.113)     | 20.15**<br>(22.74)    |
| $\chi^2$                   | 48.84                 | 80.44                 |
| Degrees of Freedom         | 13                    | 14                    |
| Log-Likelihood             | -109.9                | -180.2                |
| N                          | 325                   | 318                   |

Odds-Ratios reported

\*\*\* p<0.001, \*\* p<0.01, \* p<0.05, + p<0.1

Source: 2006 Faith Matters Survey

**TABLE 7. Descriptive Statistics**

| <b>Variable</b>               | <b>N</b> | <b>Mean</b> | <b>Std. Dev.</b> | <b>Min</b> | <b>Max</b> |
|-------------------------------|----------|-------------|------------------|------------|------------|
| Old Evangelical               | 1727     | 0.20        |                  | 0          | 1          |
| New Evangelical               | 1727     | 0.19        |                  | 0          | 1          |
| Mormon                        | 1727     | 0.03        |                  | 0          | 1          |
| Other-Christian               | 1727     | 0.04        |                  | 0          | 1          |
| Catholic                      | 1727     | 0.27        |                  | 0          | 1          |
| Congregation Size (lg10)      | 1454     | 2.46        | 0.81             | 0.30       | 5.00       |
| Multiracial Church            | 1437     | 0.46        |                  | 0          | 1          |
| High Diversity Congregation   | 1437     | 0.17        |                  | 0          | 1          |
| Medium Diversity Congregation | 1437     | 0.28        |                  | 0          | 1          |
| High Attendance               | 1351     | 0.56        |                  | 0          | 1          |
| High Congregational Friends   | 1454     | 0.20        |                  | 0          | 1          |
| Medium Congregational Friends | 1454     | 0.11        |                  | 0          | 1          |
| High Total Friends            | 1727     | 0.16        |                  | 0          | 1          |
| Medium Total Friends          | 1727     | 0.24        |                  | 0          | 1          |
| Close Hispanic Friend         | 1723     | 0.29        |                  | 0          | 1          |
| Close Black Friend            | 1722     | 0.38        |                  | 0          | 1          |
| Close Gay Friend              | 847      | 0.17        |                  | 0          | 1          |
| High Biblical Literalism      | 1727     | 0.32        |                  | 0          | 1          |
| Medium Biblical Literalism    | 1727     | 0.54        |                  | 0          | 1          |
| Support Immigration Policy    | 1668     | 0.52        |                  | 0          | 1          |
| Support Gay Rights            | 1665     | 0.60        |                  | 0          | 1          |
| Female                        | 1727     | 0.54        |                  | 0          | 1          |
| Bachelor's or Higher          | 1724     | 0.35        |                  | 0          | 1          |
| < \$40k/Year Income           | 1646     | 0.37        |                  | 0          | 1          |
| South                         | 1727     | 0.37        |                  | 0          | 1          |
| Socially Conservative         | 1691     | 0.54        |                  | 0          | 1          |
| Age (years)                   | 1719     | 53.46       | 16.45            | 18         | 95         |
| Urban                         | 1727     | 0.45        |                  | 0          | 1          |



## APPENDIX. Key Variables and Measurements

### Congregational-level

Congregation Attendance: “How often do you attend religious services?” (High = every week or more; reference = 2-3 times/month or less.)

Congregation size [logged]: “Approximately how many people typically attend weekly worship at this congregation?”

Congregation friends: “How many close friends do you have in this congregation?” (High = more than 10; Medium = 6 to 10; reference = less than 6)

Congregation diversity: “What proportion of this congregation are of the same race or ethnicity as you - all, or almost all, about three quarters, about a half, about a quarter or less?” (High = half or less of congregation same race as respondent; Medium = three-quarters same race; reference = nearly/all same race).

**Biblical Authority (literalism):** “Which of these statements comes closest to describing your feelings about holy scripture.” (High = scripture is actual word of God and is to be taken literally; Medium = scripture is inspired word of God; reference = scripture is an ancient book recorded by men)

**Friends:** “About how many close friends do you have these days, if any?” (High = more than 10; Medium = 6 to 10; reference = less than 6)

### Out-group Friend (Individual-level)

Black friend: "Does Respondent Have Close Friend Who is Black?" (1 = yes; 0 = no)

Hispanic friend: “Does Respondent Have Close Friend Who is Hispanic?” (1 = yes; 0 = no)

Gay friend: “Does Respondent Have Close Friend Who is Gay?” (1 = yes; 0 = no)

### Political Attitudes

Immigration: “Do you think the number of immigrants from foreign countries who are permitted to come to the United States to live should be increased a lot, increased a little, left the same as it is now, decreased a little or decreased a lot?” (1 = increased a lot, increased a little, or left the same as it is now; 0 = decreased a little or decreased a lot)

Gay rights: “Do you think same-sex couples should be allowed legally to marry, should be allowed legally to form civil unions, but not marry; or should not be allowed to obtain legal recognition of their relationships?” (1 = marry or civil unions; 0 = no legal recognition).

### Other Variables

Sex: 1 = female; 0 = male

Age Centered (continuous) = Age – mean age

Education: 1 = Bachelor’s or higher; 0 = less than Bachelor’s

Income: 1 = \$45,000 or more annual; 0 = less than \$45,000

Geographic region: 1 = South

Political-Social ideology: “Thinking POLITICALLY AND SOCIALLY, how would you describe your own general outlook--as being very conservative, moderately conservative,

middle-of-the-road, moderately liberal or very liberal?” (1 = very conservative or moderately conservative; 0 = middle-of-the-road, moderately liberal or very liberal).

### Religious Categories

MAINLINE: American Baptist Churches in USA, Congregationalist, Disciples of Christ, Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, Reformed Church in America, United Church of Christ, United Methodist Church, United Presbyterian Church, Lutheran (not further specified), Methodist (not further specified), Presbyterian Church USA/United Presbyterian Church, Interfaith or Ecumenical Protestant Church.

OLD-LINE EVANGELICAL: Missouri Synod Lutheran, Wisconsin Synod Lutheran, Southern Baptist, Independent Baptist, Non denominational/Independent Baptist, Free Will Baptist, Primitive Baptist, other Baptist (not further specified), Free Methodist, Free Methodist Church, Christian Methodist Episcopal/Methodist Episcopal, other Presbyterian.

NEW-LINE EVANGELICAL: Assembly/Assemblies of God, Evangelical/Born Again, Brethren (or the Brethren Church), Christian Missionary Alliance, Christian Reformed Church, Church (or Churches) of Christ, Church of the Brethren, Church of the Nazarene, Four Square Gospel, Grace Brethren Church, Holiness, Nazarene, Pentecostal, Plymouth Brethren, Salvation Army/American Rescue Workers, Wesleyan, Free Church, Nondenominational-Independent Evangelical, Evangelical(not further specified), Born Again/Bible/Gospel/Missionary, Evangelical Free Church/Free Church, Evangelical Covenant Church, Evangelical, “Just Christian”(nondenominational), “I am just a Christian,” Church of God (not further specified), Church of God/Anderson, Indiana, Church of God/Cleveland, Tennessee, Church of God, Christian Missionary Alliance, Pentecostal Church of God, Pentecostal Holiness Church, United Pentecostal, Pentecostal (not further specified), interdenominational or community church, Nondenominational Christian/Baptist/Protestant, Seventh-Day Adventist, Mennonite.

OTHER-CHRISTIAN: Reformed, Christian Scientist, Friends/Quaker, Orthodox, Jehovah's Witnesses, African Methodist Episcopal, Eastern Orthodox, Greek Orthodox, Russian Orthodox, Other

Deleted from sample: Don't know/No Opinion, No answer/Refused, Buddhist, Pagan

Note: The lists of Mainline and Evangelical denominations come from *American Grace* (Putnam & Campbell 2010), Chapter 1, Note 16 and 18. We subdivide Evangelicals into Old- and New-line, depending on their affiliation with “Major Protestant” denominational families (Smith 1990).

---

<sup>1</sup> Following Smith (1990), theologically conservative congregations (what Smith terms “Fundamentalist”) mostly come from the Evangelical tradition, but also include Mormons, Jehovah’s Witnesses, and some other Christian groups.

<sup>2</sup> Dougherty and Huyser (2008) find that other-race pastors are *negatively* associated with racial diversity in mainline churches, but show positive association in evangelical churches. “For evangelical congregations, the presence of a clergy member from a nondominant race positively

---

relates to membership diversity as compared to mainline Protestant congregations....Racial diversity is actually lower in mainline congregations where there is a mismatch between clergy and the majority of congregants” (35).

<sup>3</sup> On the other hand, special dispensations allow some Catholics to form ethnic or “personal” parishes based on cultural or linguistic preferences, and this may reduce the likelihood of racial heterogeneity.

<sup>4</sup> The literature suggests mixed support for the claim that that congregation members make friends indirectly through extra-congregational networks. In one study, 70 percent of Christians claimed membership in non-church organizations, and members active in church-related organizations were also more active in non-church organizations (Schwadel 2005). Wuthnow (2002) finds that membership and a leadership position in a congregation are associated with status-bridging friendships with societal elites (e.g., government officials). On the other hand, members of highly embedded congregations (i.e., high mean number of within-church friendships) are generally less likely to participate in non-church organizations (Schwadel 2005).

<sup>5</sup> Roper Center for Public Opinion Research Study, University of Connecticut, 2011.

[http://www.ropercenter.uconn.edu/data\\_access/data/datasets/faith\\_matters\\_2006.html](http://www.ropercenter.uconn.edu/data_access/data/datasets/faith_matters_2006.html).

<sup>6</sup> “UCC/Congregational” and “Interfaith or Ecumenical Protestant Church” are not coded as Major Protestant Families in the GSS (Smith 1990), but they are coded as Mainline in the Faith Matters Survey (Putnam and Campbell 2010). Therefore, they are included in our Old-line, historically-major category.

<sup>7</sup> Putnam and Campbell (2010: 296) find that the most important predictor of congregation diversity is Congregation size (c.f., Chaves 2011), followed by Catholic, County racial diversity, Latino (race of respondent), West region, Evangelical, Age, and Female. The publically available dataset does not include county diversity, so we use urban residence as a proxy. Instead of West, we use the South region. Contrary to Emerson (2006: 49), participation in small church groups is *not* a significant predictor of congregation racial diversity (analysis not shown). The Faith Matters dataset does not include a variable for charismatic worship (cf., Emerson 2006; Dougherty and Huyser 2008).

<sup>8</sup> The differences among religious categories are generally statistically significant, with chi-square values less than .05.

<sup>9</sup> Table 1 shows that 45 percent of white Christians attend racially diverse congregations (three-quarters *or* less white), and 17 percent attend highly diverse congregations (less than three-quarters white). These figures may strike some observers as quite high. Analyzing the 1998 National Congregations Survey, Emerson (2006) estimates that only 7 percent of congregations are multiracial (i.e., any race less than 80 percent). One reason for the gap may be our definition of diverse and highly diverse; only the latter would be considered truly multiracial by Emerson. More substantive reasons may include: 1) social desirability: white churchgoers exaggerate the diversity of their congregations; 2) many whites attend large congregations (mega-churches), which are more diverse; and 3) steady growth of interracial worship: between 1998 and 2007, the percentage of multiracial megachurches jumped from 6 to 25 percent (Emerson 2009).

<sup>10</sup> We chose logistic regression models because our key outcomes (e.g., racial diversity, close black friends) are mostly dichotomous or ordinal at best. In contrast, structural equation models (SEM) tend to use continuous variables.

<sup>11</sup> Non-response was a distinct problem for items concerning gays. Sample size drops dramatically when these questions are analyzed or included in analysis. To test for bias, a

---

parallel set of models were estimated using only cases that were complete across all variables (i.e., listwise complete). Parameter estimates based on this subset of cases did not differ substantively from those reported here, though relationships often decreased in statistical significance (as would be expected).

<sup>12</sup> Conversely, one can argue, the theological and political liberalism of Mainline attendees, and their relatively large social networks *outside* the church (as indicated by total number of friends), counter their small and racially homogeneous networks *inside* the church and help generate more tolerant attitudes toward immigrants and gays.