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On the Road to Samaria: Urban Religious Congregations as Resource Brokers

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ON THE ROAD TO SAMARIA:

URBAN RELIGIOUS CONGREGATIONS AS RESOURCE BROKERS

by

Kirk Aaron Foster

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ABSTRACT OF THE DISSERTATION

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Concentrated poverty is an increasing problem in urban U.S. neighborhoods leading to social isolation and marginalization from mainstream institutions. Conventional thought has argued that the urban poor lack resources necessary for social and economic mobility due to constrained social networks endemic in homogeneously poor communities. However, neighborhood based organizations may be one place where the urban poor can engage heterogeneous resource networks to advance socially and economically. Religious congregations are enduring neighborhood organizations that present the opportunity for social interaction and resource access. Thus, this study examines the role of religious congregations in providing access to resources embedded in congregational social networks.

Using survey and network methods, data were gathered on network relations, positional resources, and resource structure of active adult members of two Christian congregations in an urban neighborhood (N=122). The congregations represent two types of urban churches – neighborhood-based (n=59) and one that draws membership from

within and beyond the neighborhood (n=61). Exploratory social network analysis is used to assess the network structure and distribution of resources, regression analyses to examine the effect of factors on social and economic returns, and exponential random graph modeling is used to predict the likelihood of ties between congregants of varying resource positions.

Resource gatekeepers were more easily identified in the neighborhood congregation and both congregations were densely connected. Congregants generally reached high on the social ladder and reported access to a broad range of resources across four domains. Further, resources were spread widely across networks and not concentrated with any one group or congregants with certain characteristics. Neighborhood congregations offered a place for interactions to occur across upper reachability and income at the neighborhood congregation and across income at the mixed congregation. The mixed income congregation demonstrated less interactions among diverse populations within the congregation.

Urban congregations are important neighborhood-based organizations where the urban poor can interact to access heterogeneous resource networks. However, access to resources does not necessarily translate into social and economic returns. Access is a necessary but insufficient condition to produce the returns essential for social and economic mobility. While urban religious congregations may act as brokers of resources, other forces impact the capitalization of those resources to make a significant, measurable difference in the lives of the urban poor.

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CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

On 5 February 2009, President Barack Obama signed an executive order establishing the White House Office of Faith-based and Neighborhood Partnerships which keeps intact much of President G. W. Bush's efforts toward increased public-private partnerships with faith-based organizations (Amendments to Executive Order 13199, 2009). This signaled the devolutionary processes begun several administrations ago and strengthened under the Personal Responsibility and Work Opportunity Reconciliation Act of 1996 (PRWORA) will continue. Through this order, the federal government not only seeks to continue its partnerships with faith-based organizations (often religious congregations) in the provision of community-based services, but also demonstrates a bias toward such organizations as the locus of contemporary efforts for poverty alleviation and reduction of social problems.

The Charitable Choice provision in the PRWORA reignited a national debate about the role of religious congregations in social service provision and community development. Much of this debate has focused on the legalities of this public-private partnership (Esbeck, 1996; Rees, 1999; Sherman, 2000) and the effectiveness of faith-based services (Bartkowski, Call, Heaton, & Forste, 2007; Johnson, 2002; Kearns, Park, & Yankoski, 2005; Lockhart, 2003; Wuthnow, Hackett, & Hsu, 2004). However, current research has overlooked an opportunity to examine a central assumption in the Charitable Choice movement – that congregations are repositories of resources that can be accessed as part of outreach efforts. Some have argued that congregations have a wide-sweeping impact on individuals' lives by using fewer resources because of the extant resources within the social networks of congregational members (Bush, 2001).

Yet many congregations at the center of our social service and community development efforts are situated in poor urban neighborhoods. Resource networks among the urban poor are often constrained, are characterized by strong ties, and are homogenous with respect to types of resources available (Tigges, Browne, & Green, 1998). Such constraints limit the abilities of individuals and families to make sustainable social and economic advances. However, Small (2006) found that resource networks of participants in neighborhood based organizations are available to others within the organization who themselves may not necessarily be part of well-resourced social networks. In light of such findings, religious congregations become an important locus of research about the abilities of neighborhood based organizations to mediate network embedded resources. Research is scant on the embedded resources in urban religious congregations and the accessibility of those resources to others within congregations.

Research Questions

To this end, central questions need to be answered as we move forward in our engagement of religious congregations. Given the overall exploratory nature of this work and the application to a new context toward the effort of building social theory, the guiding research questions are:

- What is the structure of the social networks in two urban religious congregations of different types?
- What is the distribution of embedded resources across social networks in urban religious congregations?
- How is access to embedded resources associated with power and income?

Research Aims

This dissertation uses a synchronic case study design involving two congregations in an urban poor African American neighborhood to examine resources embedded in urban congregations. Lin's (1999) theory of social capital provides guidance to this study. The primary goal is to map the social networks among active participants of these two congregations in an effort to assess the network structure trends, the distribution of resources across networks, the accessibility of embedded resources, and how network structure impacts access. Study aims are to:

Aim 1: Map the network of relations within two urban congregations;

Aim 2: Map the embedded resources onto the congregational network structures;

Aim 3: Explore the relationship between network structure and prominence, to resource access, power and wealth.

In *Aim 1,* I use a network measure with congregants to identify key relationships and to describe networks in the two churches. For *Aim 2,* I measure the resources congregants have access to and maintain, and map these onto the network structure to explore the distribution of resources. *Aim 3* explores the relationship between structural characteristics of resource networks and access to resources, along with the outcome variables wealth and power.

Hypotheses

In *Aim 1* it is hypothesized that networks are primarily kinship based (Tigges, Browne, & Green, 1998) and trusted congregants act as bridges between subgroups (Burt, 2005). Specific hypotheses were:

$H_{1.1}$: Subgroups are homogeneous with respect to race and income.

$H_{1.2}$: Members who exhibit an outreach orientation act as bridges.

For *Aim 2* it is hypothesized that access to different types of resources would cluster in subgroups and resources are differential based on congregation type. Specifically,

$H_{2.1}$: Subgroups are homogeneous with respect to upper reachibility.

$H_{2.2}$: Members of the integrated church have access to more diverse resources than members of the neighborhood church.

Hypotheses in *Aim 3* are based on Lin's (1999) theory of social capital focusing on *capitalization* and *effects* and Burt's (2005) notion of structural holes. Burt (2005) posits that networks containing a broker (a person who acts as a bridge to other networks) will have greater access to resources while those networks that are highly interconnected and/or connected indirectly through a central person will be closed to brokerage. Hypotheses include:

$H_{3.1}$: Members who report higher resource access have more connections with others in the network.

$H_{3.2}$: Members who report higher participation in church-related events are prominent in the network.

$H_{3.3}$: Structural proximity to actors who are bridges between subgroups increases access to resources.

$H_{3.4}$: Income, upper reachability, and extensity are directly related – as income decreases, so will upper reachability and extensity.

These relationships have not been tested either in religious contexts or in the context of neighborhood based organizations in U.S. neighborhoods with concentrated

poverty. The proposed relationships are extrapolated from theoretical relationships and studies of other organizational contexts (see Burt, 2005).

CHAPTER 2: BACKGROUND & SIGNIFICANCE

Prevalence and Consequences of Poverty

Poverty has long been a problem in the United States and recent scholarly interest in the impact of neighborhood poverty on general well-being has increased. Such interest is not surprising given the current poverty rates and the changes in concentrated poverty since 1970. In 2008, over 12% of the total population in the United States or 2.45 million people and 18% of children under the age of 18 years lived in poverty (DeNavas-Walt, Proctor, & Smith, 2008). The Current Population Survey (CPS) revealed that a staggering 21% of children under the age of 5 years lived in poverty. Poverty is not equally distributed across metropolitan statistical areas (MSA). While the overall MSA poverty rate is nearly 12% (or 2 million people), the CPS showed that 16.5% of all residents living inside principal cities live in poverty (DeNavas-Walt et al., 2008). This suggests that many urban U.S. residents live in poverty and in neighborhoods with high levels of poverty and the resulting social effects.

Concentrated poverty, defined as "the percentage of the poor in some city or region that resides in higher-poverty neighborhoods" (Jargowsky, 2003, p. 3), became endemic among "rust belt" cities through the 1970s and 1980s. Between 1970 and 1990, the U.S. neighborhood poverty rate rose from 3% to 4.5% and the number of poor people who resided in high poverty areas (neighborhoods with ≥40% poverty) doubled – from 1.9 million people to 3.7 million (Jargowsky, 1997, 2003). Populations living in high poverty neighborhoods grew significantly from 1970 to 2000, with much of the concentration occurring in central cities and inner-ring suburbs (Danziger & Gottschalk, 1987; Kasarda, 1989; Jargowsky, 1997; Jargowsky & Yang, 2006; Wilson, 1996).

Despite the economic gains of the 1990s, the number of high poverty census tracts grew from 1,662 in 1970 to 2,222 in 2000, and the number of poor residents in high poverty neighborhoods rose from 4.9 million in 1980 to 6.7 million in 2000 (Kingsley & Pettit, 2003; Osterling, 2007). Most affected are African Americans and Hispanics with 1.3 million and nearly 422,000 respectively living in high poverty neighborhoods (Jargowsky, 2006).

The growth in high poverty areas is attributable, in part, to the outmigration of the middle class and commercial abandonment (Jargowsky, 1997; Wilson, 1996). Such a growth in concentrated poverty leads to isolation from society and social dislocation (Wilson, 1996). Increasingly isolated from mainstream society, residents of high poverty urban neighborhoods, regardless of their own poverty level, are faced with the concomitant social problems associated with poverty (Jargowsky, 2003; Jargowsky & Yang, 2006). Studies have shown an association between neighborhood-level socioeconomic disadvantage and social problems, including unemployment, crime, health problems, mental health problems, child maltreatment, and low educational achievement (Aneshensel & Sucoff, 1996; Brooks-Gunn, Duncan, Klebanov, & Sealand, 1993; Coulton, Korbin, & Su, 1999; Jargowsky, 1997; Mayer & Jencks, 1989; Osterling, 2007; Pettit, Kingsley, & Coulton, 2003; Sampson, Morenoff, & Gannon-Rowley, 2002).

Social Isolation & Social Ties

Social isolation is an important consequence of concentrated urban poverty, though recent literature suggests that the urban poor may not be as isolated as once thought. The urban poor living in areas with concentrated poverty have limited connections to mainstream societal institutions of work, education, religion, and government (Tigges, Browne, & Green, 1998). Particularly challenging is the lack of

social ties to individuals participating in mainstream American social institutions that can transmit norms of behavior and facilitate economic and social mobility (Tigges et al., 1998; Wilson, 1996, 2003). Studies have shown that higher levels of neighborhood poverty significantly reduce the number of discussion partners and size of social networks (Tigges et al., 1998) and limit the stock of private and public institutions necessary to provide basic needs and to build relationships of trust and cooperation particularly in poor black neighborhoods (Small & McDermott, 2006; Smith, 2007). In addition, isolation and limited information contributes to unemployment (Wilson, 1987, 1996) further increasing isolation and reinforcing labor market marginalization (Gallie & Paugam, 2004). Social isolation therefore has a spiraling effect on the urban poor, entrenching their marginalization.

Social isolation is an important theoretical perspective to explain persistent poverty due to the entrenchment of homogeneous social networks among the poor (see Yan & Jargowsky, 2006). However, social capital theory provides the framework to understand best the role of social networks for social and economic mobility among the urban poor (Lin, 1999). Granovetter's (1973) seminal work demonstrated the importance of social ties and networks for the job search and consequent upward economic mobility. Putnam (1993) found that economic transactions (e.g., job searches) are more efficient when they are embedded in social networks.

Resources embedded in social networks of neighborhood-based organizations (i.e., structural social capital) have received increased scholarly attention because of their potential role in alleviating poverty (Small, 2006; Small & McDermott, 2006; Smith, 2005, 2008). In his study of childcare centers in New York City, Small (2006) found that

centers facilitated the development of social ties among parents through providing spaces for social interaction. Wuthnow (2004) found that membership in religious congregations provides access to a diverse set of actors who can provide resources otherwise not available through one's own social networks. Important for this study is the finding that for African Americans a greater percentage of persons in their networks live in the same neighborhood and attend the same congregation (Farnsley, 2000) thus it remains important to explore the composition of the resource networks and access to resources.

Social ties are therefore important to consider for the embedded resources they maintain which the urban poor may access and mobilize for social and economic mobility. Smith (2007) noted in her review of the empirical literature that blacks are more likely to exchange child care, transportation from family members, housework, and share a residence with kin. The central issue for the urban poor and for scholars of urban poverty and poverty alleviation remains how to increase access to the resources necessary to get by and get ahead. While we recognize that increased suburbanization has led to a geographic fragmentation of the population by social class and created homogenous poor neighborhoods (Yang & Jargwosky, 2006) and that many social institutions have abandoned urban poor neighborhoods (Wilson, 1987, 1996), it is a mistake to assert that the urban poor are completely isolated from the American mainstream. Results from a recent study show that poor neighborhoods in most cities are not deinstitutionalized ghettos (Small & McDermott, 2006). Small (2006) argues that neighborhood institutions act as resource brokers that other populations obtain through social networks. He further posits that "the truly disadvantaged may be not merely those living in poor

neighborhoods, but those *not participating in well-connected neighborhood institutions*" (Small, 2006, p. 275, emphasis original).

Religious Congregations & Urban Neighborhoods

Religious congregations are often the last institution to leave a poor urban neighborhood and the first to return (Foley, McCarthy, & Chaves, 2001; Kinney & Winter, 2006). Black churches specifically have been the primary source for social capital among African Americans (Putnam, 1993). While congregations have long been at the center of social service provision and community development, congregations resumed prominence in the 1980s after President Reagan claimed that churches and voluntary groups should accept more responsibility for the poor (Cnaan, 1999). However, rhetoric since the passage of the PRWORA in 1996, has catapulted congregations to the center of the poverty debate. President George W. Bush used the Executive Office to advance an agenda of greater inclusion of faith-based organizations in addressing social problems resulting in offices of faith-based and community initiatives at many levels of federal and state government (Bush, 2001; see Executive Orders 13198 & 13199). Any concerns that policy specifically encouraging faith-based organizations (i.e., religious congregations) to partner with the government to address social and economic problems were assuaged when President Barack Obama issued an amendment to Executive Order 13199 continuing and strengthening the federal government's commitment to partner with faith-based organizations. It is unlikely that religious congregations, at least urban congregations, will again retreat to the strict confines of ecclesial authority but will remain a significant player in the provision of social services and an important partner in social and economic development efforts.

Religious congregations are not monolithic. Most congregations in the United States are small, but most churchgoers are active in large congregations (Chaves, Anderson, & Byassee, 2009). The National Congregations Study (see Chaves, 2004) revealed that the average congregation has 75 regular participants but the average attendee worships in a congregation with approximately 400 regular participants. The number of people attending congregations in predominantly urban areas increased from 61% in 1998 to 67% in 2006-07 with 10.4% of all churchgoers attending congregations in a census tract with ≥30% poverty and 4% attend in a census tract with ≥80% African American population. With respect to social or human service provision to people outside the congregation (a loose proxy for community engagement), 82% of congregations are engaged in these ministries and fully 90% of all regular attendees are members of these congregations. Cnaan and Boddie (2001) found that 44.5% of regular attendees in Philadelphia congregations lived within 10 blocks of the congregation's geographic location. In one study, the Independent Sector found that among U.S. citizens 35% devote the greatest amount of their total volunteer hours to religious organizations and over 40% of the U.S. population reported volunteering at a religious organization (Spring & Grimm, 2004).

Connections to neighborhood organizations that have wider networks and can provide the social closure that mitigates negative effects of limited social networks (Coleman, 1988) is important for access to heterogeneous resources. Religious congregations offer a place to develop relationships in the community (Esbeck, 1994) and to establish social ties that can help meet needs informally (Wuthnow, 2004). One study showed that congregations are important for developing a network of supportive

relationships, strong social ties, and a network of resources (Lockhart, 2003). Using data from the Civic Involvement Survey, Wuthnow (2004) found that nearly 60% of all regular churchgoers reported having 6 or more close friends within the congregation. Even small congregations were found just as capable as large congregations in generating and sustaining informal social bonds (Wuthnow, 2004). Among inner-city residents, the CIS showed high trust in members of congregations (Wuthnow, 2004).

Ram Cnaan and associates have documented well the activities of Philadelphia congregations and posit they are prototypical of other urban congregations (Cnaan & Boddie, 2001; Cnaan, Boddie, Handy, Yancey, & Schneider, 2002). They found that congregations were a significant source of information referrals and acted as resource brokers. Participants in these studies who reported a higher degree of participation in an exchange network were able to benefit significantly from others' experience and information.

A look at the black church is revealing because it is a community institution in which "the seeds of trust can be planted and cultivated in ways that benefit the whole" (Smith, 2007, p. 50). Social ties among African Americans are primarily rooted in kinship and church membership (Tigges et al., 1998) indicating that religious congregations are a potentially important source for accessing embedded resources. Smith (2007) concluded that the black church has been perfectly situated for intra-community linkages that can help people achieve social and economic mobility. The central question remains how these social networks are useful and whether or not the resources embedded within them can be accessed.

Significance

The literature is replete with studies on the effectiveness of faith-based service delivery (Bartkowski, Call, Heaton, & Forste, 2007; Johnson, 2002; Kearns, Park, & Yankoski, 2005; Lockhart, 2003; Wuthnow, Hackett, & Hsu, 2004). Equally abundant are the debates about the appropriate role of religion and religious organizations in the use of public funds and in the provision of public goods (Ebaugh, Chafetz, & Pipes, 2005; Lewis, 2003; Sherman, 1999). Scholarship has primarily focused on the act and quality of service delivery and its constitutionality. However, little attention has been given to how religious congregations function organizationally to broker resources embedded in the relational networks that comprise them irrespective of the quality and appropriateness questions. That is, we have yet to understand the structure of these brokerage relationships and their subsequent effect on outcomes of interest. This is a surprising omission in the literature given that current policy assumes congregations can do more with less because of the value (and subsequent mobilization) of the resources embedded in congregational networks.

While specific programs are vital to enhancing the lives of the poor, informal resources are also necessary to achieve instrumental gains (Collier, 2002; Small, 2006). Religious congregations are relational organizations comprised of a web of social relations (Wuthnow, 2004) which have been shown to be important sources of resources (King & Furrow, 2004; Nowak, 2001; Silverman, 2002). Given that congregations are enduring institutions in poor urban neighborhoods, federal policy encourages their participation in social and economic development efforts, and recent findings demonstrate that neighborhood-based organizations are important brokers of resources for the poor, it is important to examine if and how religious congregations broker

resources. No prior study to date has systematically examined the structure of social networks in religious congregations and the embedded resources within them. That is the task of this present study.

CHAPTER 3: CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

As I consider the role of religious congregations as resource brokers in urban U.S. neighborhoods, I examine the more fundamental question about the accessibility of resources critical for individual wellbeing. Several theoretical frameworks are central to understanding resource access in congregations as a particular type of neighborhood organization. Lin's (1999) network theory of social capital provides the main theoretical perspective to understand the relationship between resource access and returns. Coleman's (1988) theory of social capital provides insight into the social constraints governing exchange relationships within formal and informal institutions. The theoretical frameworks are employed here in support of the individual research questions to organize a body of data that increase our understanding of resource access through urban religious congregations specifically and, more generally, through neighborhood-based organizations.

Networks among the urban poor are often kinship based, closed, or otherwise constrained which results in a homogeneous set of resources (Barnes, 2003; Granovetter, 1983; Tigges et al., 1998). The power of neighborhood organizations to impact social and economic mobility rests in their ability to bring individuals together who have diverse resource networks. As we build community development theory regarding the role of neighborhood based organizations, it is necessary to understand the types of resources available and how individuals organize themselves intra-organizationally to gain access to those resources. That is, to advance knowledge about urban neighborhood based organizations it is incumbent upon us to explore the aspects of such organizations that might facilitate community development. To this end, this dissertation explores

whether or not the network of relations reflects naturalistic trends within urban neighborhoods or if individuals are able to build diverse social networks through religious congregations that might be used for social and economic mobility.

Social Capital: Conceptual Definition

Pierre Bourdieu defines social capital as "the aggregate of the actual or potential resources which are linked to possession of a durable network of more or less institutionalized relationships of mutual acquaintance or recognition" (Bourdieu, 1986, p. 248). His definition, important for the discussion of religious congregations and urban neighborhoods, stresses the benefits of social networks embedded in various institutional structures that are necessary to provide certain benefits (e.g., educational attainment and economic gain). It is through social capital that actors gain direct access to economic resources, increase cultural capital, or can align themselves with institutions that confer valued credentials (Portes, 1998). According to this argument, such capital is best developed and nurtured within the contexts of institutions that have a variety of actors possessing different types and amounts of capital.

Putnam, however, focuses his definition of social capital on the "trust, norms, and networks that can improve the efficiency of society by facilitating coordinated actions" (Putnam, Leonardi, & Nanetti, 1993, p. 167; see also Putnam, 1993). However, to focus on trust, norms, and networks as if they were a uniform, aggregate concept presents some challenges (Bjørnskov, 2006; Portes, 1998, 2000). Aggregating these concepts suggests they naturally covary to form a singular notion of social capital without acknowledging that norms and trust may be embedded in social networks or that shared norms and particular levels of trust may not be necessary to attain resource access through networks. This is not to say that trust and norms bear no importance for the discussion of resource

access among urban religious congregations; it is to suggest that we need to approach the concept of social capital carefully, disaggregate it into its constituent parts, and focus narrowly. Focus on this type of capital ignores the important and necessary inquiry into the resources that actually inhere in social networks.

Conceptual Clarification

Considering both the Bourdieu/Portes/Coleman approach and the Putnam approach, social capital can be understood as a multidimensional concept with both a structural and a cultural dimension (Lelieveldt, 2004). From Bourdieu, Portes, and Coleman we understand that structural social capital inheres in social relations. This type of capital exists in the extent to which individuals are engaged in formal and informal networks through work, voluntary associations, or the workplace. These network structures provide access to knowledge and opportunities that may otherwise be unavailable through other networks by connecting individuals to their neighborhoods and to the wider world (Lelieveldt, 2004).

While cultural social capital is not the focus of this stage of my research, it is, ultimately, important to consider within the broader context of building a theory of and conceptual model for resource access and mobilization (i.e., social capital) among urban religious congregations. Cultural social capital encompasses an individual's mindset; trust; and norms and values. Trust here is not necessarily one's trust in an institution, but the amount of personal and social trust one has toward his/her fellow citizens (Lelieveldt, 2004). Trust in institutions to treat people fairly and with respect is important for resource mobilization among congregants of urban religious congregations.

Norms and values are also part of cultural or attitudinal social capital and are considered separately from structural social capital, particularly for the arguments made here. These refer to an individual's sense of obligations to others (Lelieveldt, 2004). The distinction between structural and cultural social capital becomes important as it is not necessarily true that one must be obligated to others to gain benefits from social networks. An individual might free ride and ignore institutional obligations while still gaining positive effects from the ability to engage social networks that inhere in religious congregations.

Structural Social Capital

I use the term "embedded resources" or "resource access" interchangeably as a specific and concrete alternative to the conceptually murky term "social capital." Considering that social capital is the level of development of formal and informal networks in a given community that link individuals to important resources (Bourdieu, 1986; Bjørnskov, 2006; Cnaan, Boddie, Handy, Yancey, Schneider, 2002; Coleman, 1990; Portes, 1998, 2000), embedded resources are the constituent component of social capital. In this regard, relations among and between individuals who share affiliation with a religious congregation have access to network embedded resources and, as such, congregations become resource brokers. Consequently, the function of congregations as resource brokers is centrally important here – that is, the structure of congregants' formal and informal relationships has value particularly as "resources that can be used by the actors to realize their interests" (Coleman, 1990, p. 305).

In general, the literature has settled that "social capital stands for the ability of actors to secure benefits by virtue of membership in social networks or other social

structures" (Portes, 1998, p. 6). As congregations represent a network of individuals who may come from various geographic and social contexts, this definition of structural social capital is most salient for this study. I acknowledge the role of trust in facilitating resource access and mobilization through religious congregations and the effect trust among the poor has on social networks (Small, 2007). However, this study focuses strictly on understanding embedded resources (i.e., structural social capital) within urban congregational contexts as a first step in building theory about the ability of congregations in poor urban U.S. neighborhoods to broker resources necessary for social and economic mobility. To focus on other functions of the organizational system moves toward addressing the mobilization question; these factors will be the focus of future research efforts but nevertheless are important to discuss in this context.

Social Networks

Much of the literature on urban U.S. neighborhoods cites the limited and closed social networks of the urban poor. At the same time, scholars argue that access to social networks shape life outcomes (Small, 2007). It is important, therefore, to explore the role of social networks in accessing network resources necessary for social and economic mobility. As much of the work to date has focused on networks and individuals rather than macro community approaches, the same focus is carried out here.

A network perspective focuses on the role that individual-level relations play in benefiting from embedded resources (Mitchell & Bossert, 2007). The structuralist perspective used here argues that embedded resources necessary for social and economic mobility inhere in the structure of relationships gained and nurtured through social networks. In this regard, networks are of primary importance for building capital that can result in real human gains. For urban U.S. residents who have constrained resources and

limited access to heterogeneous network resources, the neighborhood context matters with respect to their ability to "get by" and "get ahead" (Briggs, 1998; Small, 2007). Small (2007) found in his study that "despite advances in transportation and communication and the increased ability to communicate across space, neighborhoods continue to matter to social networks" (p. 339). Given that studies have demonstrated networks matter and that we know networks among the urban poor are often kinship based, closed, or otherwise constrained, it is important to examine the role of social networks for social and economic mobility.

Strength of Weak Ties

Granovetter (1973, 1983) introduced the concept of strong and weak ties into the social science lexicon. In his paradigm for social networks, acquaintances (weak ties) are less likely to be socially involved with one another than are close friends and family (strong ties). Low density networks are comprised of an individual and her or his acquaintances and a high density network is made up of the same individual and his or her close friends. Granovetter argues that weak ties act as a bridge between two densely knit networks of close friends thereby appropriating certain benefits from the dense networks through the weak tie to that actors' other dense networks of close friends and family. This is what has become known as the Strength of Weak Ties theory of network relations.

The role of ties is important for our conversation about social networks inasmuch as they are the conduit some have claimed facilitate the accessibility of embedded resources. This claim rests on the notion that individuals with strong ties are deprived of resources from portions of the social system far removed from them; therefore, they will

be confined and constrained by the resources available only within their particular network (Granovetter, 1983). For the urban U.S. poor, this equates to being placed in a disadvantaged position relative to their counterparts with bridges to other dense networks. They are often forced to rely on social support ties that provide mainly everyday support and have weak social leverage ties that can help them move up the social ladder (Small, 2007).

Social Ties & Neighborhood Institutions

Network ties are usually discussed within the context of networks of friends, family, or acquaintances. In most respects these ties are between individuals who know one another and have some sort of relationship. Yet studies have found that neighborhood institutions in poor communities are sources of ties despite the limited nature of the relationships between individuals. Domínguez and Watkins (2003) found social service organizations are sources of trust and social capital for women in low income neighborhoods; these organizations and their staff became important social support networks. Similarly, Small (2006) found that social ties developed at childcare centers substituted for support unavailable through personal ties. Institutional-based relationships offer viable and important alternatives to kinship and friendship networks that are ineffective at providing access to resources necessary for social and economic mobility.

Effects of Network Ties

The theoretical and empirical question remains about the effect of network ties in impoverished communities, particularly urban neighborhoods. Small (2007) posits that ties to persons of high socioeconomic status have been shown to facilitate access to

resources. This suggests that not only are weak ties important for gaining social and economic advancements, but also about resources essential for daily survival. Further, these weak ties act as paths to upward social mobility. Conversely, a heavy concentration of strong ties fragments poor communities who are often trapped within constrained networks. Networks comprised mainly of strong ties insulate individuals from others and potential new knowledge; however, in poor communities this may also serve as a protective factor from deleterious neighborhood effects. I do not mean to suggest that weak ties necessarily exist through voluntary associations or religious congregations; it is likely that in urban religious congregations normally weak ties between members of different socio-economic statuses are in fact strong with respect to the tie strength itself.

Religious Congregations as Resource Brokers

Because religious congregations provide a physical location where individuals can participate in formal and informal social interactions, they may have a pivotal role to play in expanding the vital social networks of the marginalized. Congregations have the potential to be important resource brokers inasmuch as they are comprised of webs of relationships and encourage assortative mixing. Certain attributes of religious congregations enhance their ability to function as resource brokers assisting in social and economic mobility among the urban poor. Congregations are not organizations focused solely on weekly worship and religious education; they are webs of networks with embedded resources that may be accessed to realize particular interests. The theory of social capital posits that through social interactions providing opportunities for meaningful exchanges resource access is facilitated. It is through such networks and access to diverse resources that individuals are able to achieve certain ends that in its absence would be impossible (Coleman, 1988).

We must acknowledge certain limitations to the abilities of urban congregations to act as resource brokers. If religious congregations are solely neighborhood-based – that is, draw their membership exclusively from the surrounding neighborhood – then they may have a limited effect on an individual's ability to expand his or her social networks. This may be so because such congregations would draw from a limited pool of resources, likely those others have already engaged. Conversely, congregations may draw members from outside the community (Chaves, 2004); congregations that have a wider draw have a greater opportunity to expand access to diverse resource networks.

Closure

The fundamental issue here with respect to resource brokerage is the generally restricted movement between social networks that marginalized and poor populations in America experience – especially those networks with the capacity to promote social and economic mobility. Religious congregations offer a place where individuals can participate in a closed system and interact with others who may or may not share the same social and economic position. Within congregations, members ascribe to a certain set of norms and obligations about caring for others and the network proximity may facilitate mutual sharing of embedded resources. Congregants can therefore rely on the congregational social system to provide support simply because of, in this case, Christian obligations that are inherent in Christian communities. The caveat here, particularly when considering congregational resource brokerage, is one's engagement in the congregational system itself.

It is difficult to conceive of a situation where a minimally-engaged congregant who is therefore isolated from the predominant congregational social network could

access the resources of another. In this situation the intensity of engagement in the congregational life may matter with respect to the ability of the organization to function as a resource broker. That is, resource brokerage may be differential across members based on their own engagement which affects network proximity, social closure, and the adoption of institutional norms.

Networks

Social networks are central to the conversation about the accessibility of embedded resources and congregational resource brokerage. Congregations have historically been places where people find their most meaningful relationships (Wuthnow, 2004) and where African Americans have found a powerful source of political engagement (McRoberts, 2003; Putnam, 1993; see also Boddie, 2002). Congregations have the potential to affect meaningful change because they are integrated into social networks of their immediate and broader communities (McRoberts, 2003; Nowak, 2001). This connection opens the possibility for those affiliated either through membership or through other engagement to have access to a wider social network than might otherwise be possible. Engagement in these networks may facilitate resource access by bridging heterogeneous groups (Wuthnow, 2002) that may provide access to a heterogeneous social network with diverse resources (Putnam, 1993) unavailable in one's own network. Through these networks individuals have the potential to facilitate change in their lives (Coleman, 1990; Coulton, 2000) and be actively engaged in shaping their own destiny (Sen, 1999). This process is believed to be a precondition for economic mobility (Putnam, 1993) and access to wider networks through congregations may facilitate this process.

Types of Network Ties

Religious congregations may be thought to provide two types of network ties that affect resource access: bridging and bonding. Bonding ties bring together homogenous groups of people. Homogeneity is somewhat problematic for the argument that inner-city religious congregations can be effective resource brokers. As inner-city neighborhood-based organizations, religious congregations' role in bonding together a homogeneous group may result in strengthening the ties between people who already experience a similar resource pool. Therefore it may be difficult to imagine the potential benefits from this bonding.

Bridging ties are another possibly important attribute of religious congregations. Small social networks limit the bridging relationships that provide access to resources different from that which comes through family and neighbors (Tigges et al., 1998). Bridging heterogeneous groups then becomes the single most important attribute of neighborhood-based organizations in resource brokerage for social and economic mobility. In the regular course of Sunday morning activities, individuals may encounter physicians, business owners, political leaders, law enforcement officers, or other community leaders. Or, it is equally important to highlight that while such individuals may not be an active part of a particular religious congregation, they may be part of the social networks of those who are an active part of that congregation. This is precisely the bridging argument – that one need not have all the necessary social resources within her or his own network but have access to such resources through the social network they have constructed.

Conceptual Framework

I developed a full model for applying a network theory of social capital to urban religious congregations considering both cultural and structural social capital (see Figure 3.1). Figure 3.2 abstracts portions of the full model to depict the specific model explored through the current research. While this research is not intended to test this model per se, it guided analyses in exploring how the variables related. Mechanisms govern the behavioral interactions among participants in congregations which promote resource access. Access refers to the presence of and the proximity to resources within the social network. Lin (1999) posits that access alone can lead to gains from embedded resources.

Because this research is situated within religious congregations, particular institutional variables are salient to accessibility. For example, opportunities for face-to-face contact and formal institutionalized norms may have a direct impact on the propensity to make resources accessible. This theoretical framework helps understand whether or not the institutional characteristics of a religious congregation matter for resource access and instrumental gains. Congregations promote certain norms of behavior to which members adhere and use to achieve common goals (Fukuyama, 2001). We assume that attributes of congregations as formal institutions promote cooperation; however, it is unclear whether or not congregations can overcome constraints of distrust that Smith (2005) found in her job seekers network.

Given the theoretical and empirical support for the importance of social proximity to those who are well-resourced, it theoretically holds for this inquiry that one's position in the network structure, or network prominence, is directly associated with access to embedded resources. Therefore network structure becomes important for these reasons: 1) religious congregations may provide mechanisms for assortative mixing; 2) one's

central position in the congregational network affects resource access; and 3) close ties among congregants may increase resource access thereby enhancing instrumental returns.

Figure 3.1. Full Dynamic Model of Resource Accessibility among Religious Congregations

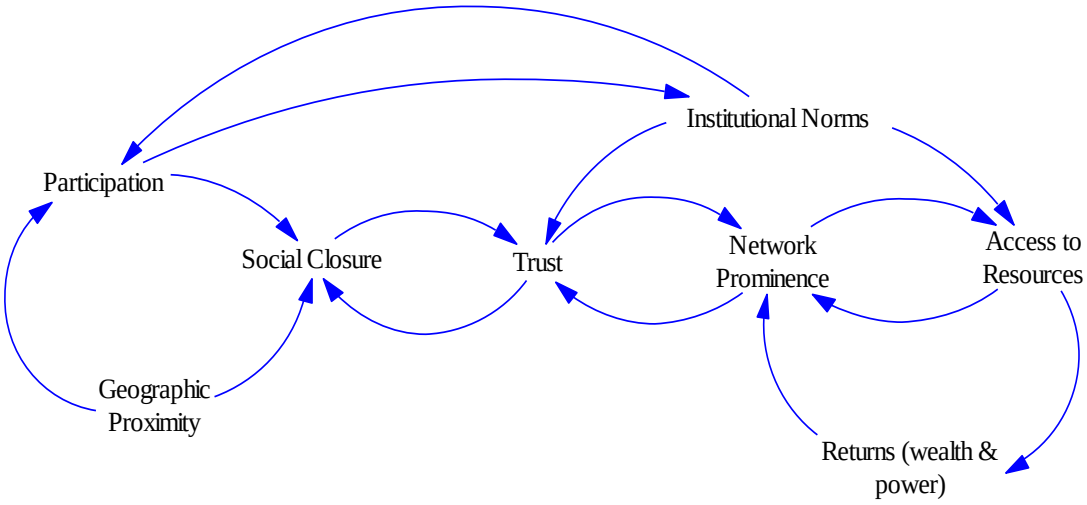
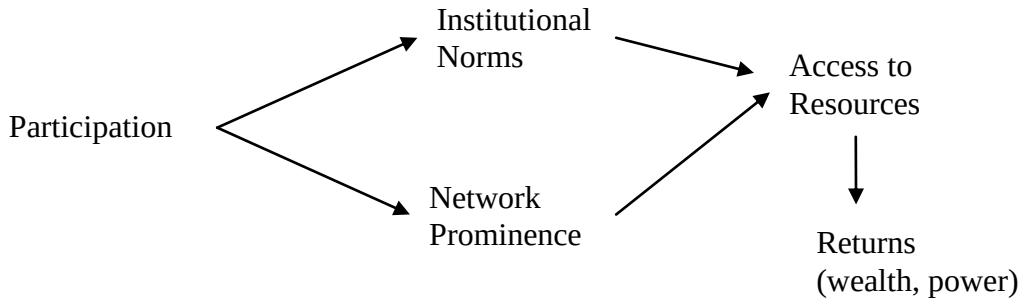


Figure 3.2. Static Model of Resource Accessibility



Study Variables

Accessibility

Different types of resources are made available to different network members and resource networks vary in the types of embedded resources available (van der Gaag &

Snijders, 2004). Accessibility refers to the resources that are available through one's social network and the proximity to those resources. Location within a network is paramount to determining the accessibility of embedded resources (Lin, 1999). This variable includes embedded resources as measured by the position generator and the resource generator. For the position generator, accessibility is measured as upper reachability. That is, each occupational position on the position generator is given a social indicator value of between 0 and 100 (see Smith, 2008) and the highest endorsed value becomes a congregant's upper reachability score as a proxy for the quality of resources one can access.

Extensity is also used as a measure of resource accessibility, but differently than Smith (2008). Prior research calculated *extensity* as the difference between the highest and lowest scores on the position generator – a range of prestige scores. However, in using the resource generator as an actual measure of resources accessed, extensity is used here as a raw count of the number of items endorsed on the resource generator scale. This represents the heterogeneity of resources accessed.

Network Prominence

Network prominence can be measured in several ways using network methods, but indicates how connected a congregant is to others and how important they are to the network. In effect prominence for this study referred to network position that promoted resource brokerage. The measure most closely related to brokerage is betweenness centrality – congregants who lie on the paths between other members. The calculation for this measure can be found in Chapter 4.

Participation

It is theorized that greater participation in church related activities places congregants in close, regular contact with one another. Using the religious involvement items (Ammerman, 2005), this study measures engagement as a sum of three ordinal scaled variables surveying attendance at church events (worship, religious education, and fellowship activities). Congregants could have a range of 0 to 12.

Institutional Norms

Religious congregations are organizations built on a defined set of norms to which members ascribe. These norms govern behavior toward and relations among others. In this model of resource access, it is believed that ascribing to traditional norms of Christian stewardship will impact access to resources. It is measured here using Ammerman's (2005) religious engagement items whereas three ordinal items covering participation in service or outreach activities are summed.

Wealth

Any theory of embedded resource access "should demonstrate how social capital is capital, or how it generates a return or gain" (Lin, 1999, p. 42). Wealth is used as a crude measure of capitalization in this study – placing more emphasis on the process of resource access through religious congregations to inform future studies on concrete outcomes of resource mobilization at the individual and community level.

Power

As an outcome of resource access, Lin (1999) defines power as one's own social status and the connections an individual maintains to persons of higher social status. A similar approach is used in this study with particular attention paid to one's role in the

social network (i.e., acting as a bridge) or proximity to a bridge. Power is defined using upper reachability from the position generator as a proxy for congregants' ability to access persons of power and influence.

Table 3.1. Description of Study Variables

Variable	Source	Data Type
Participation	3 items (worship participation, religious education participation, fellowship participation)	Survey
Institutional Norms	3 items (engagement in church service activities, community service activities, providing informal help)	Survey
Network Prominence		
- Centrality: Degree	Congregational Network Survey	Network
- Centrality: Betweenness	Congregational Network Survey	Network
- Centrality: Closeness	Congregational Network Survey	Network
Resource Access		
- Positional Embeddedness	Modified Position Generator	Survey
- Embedded Resources	Modified Resource Generator	Survey
Instrumental Returns		
- Wealth	1 item (income, ordinal scale)	Survey
- Power	Modified Position Generator	Survey

CHAPTER 4: METHODS

Design

This study incorporates survey and network methods to assess the types of resources available, the extent to which resources are shared, and the structure of social and resource networks. Two religious congregations in the same geographic neighborhood are examined in-depth utilizing surveys of individual congregants. This synchronic comparative case study design allows for the intense study of two congregations at a single point in time (Gerring, 2007) to elucidate how these processes work generally among urban congregations. Each congregation represents a specific unique case that is prototypical of urban congregations; however, these cases are not perfectly representative of the total population of urban congregations or their congregants. This research design is appropriate for this setting because it allows for the close examination of phenomena in an area where social theory is being applied in a new setting and hypotheses are being generated for further research (George & Bennett, 2005; Gerring, 2007).

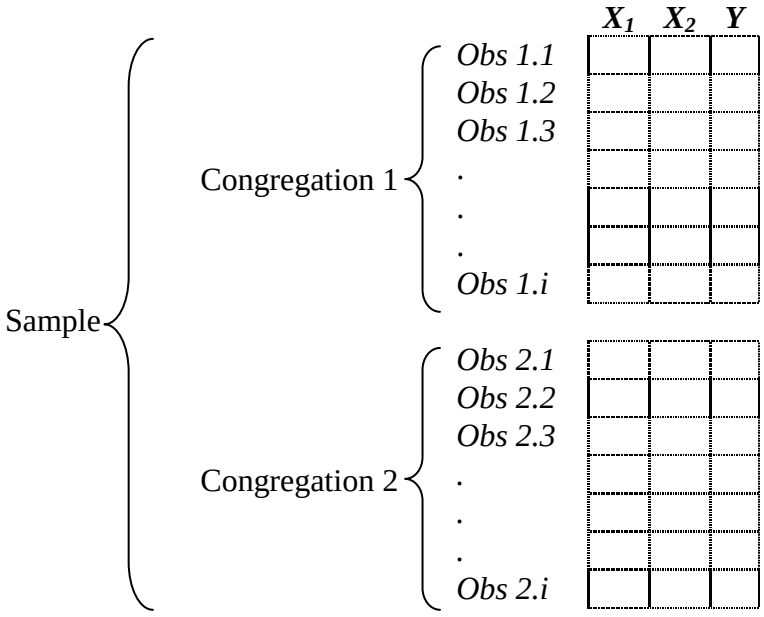
In this design, resource access is examined at one time point in two congregations that represent different types of cases within the same population allowing for the examination of within and between case variation. Each congregant represents an observation and Figure 4.1 depicts the data structure (Gerring, 2007). Quantitative and network surveys are used to gather data on each individual observation, which are then used to draw conclusions about cases.

Case Selection

Generally, urban congregations can be divided into three types: (1) commuter congregations with relatively homogeneous demographics that are dissimilar to the surrounding geographic neighborhood; (2) neighborhood congregations with demographics similar to the surrounding geographic neighborhood; and (3) integrated congregations, a mix of demographics and neighborhoods of residence (see Farnsley, 2000). Commuter congregations in urban U.S. neighborhoods tend to be white and of a higher socioeconomic status than neighborhood residents; neighborhood congregations tend to be of lower socioeconomic status; and integrated congregations are diverse with respect to socioeconomic status (Farnsley, 2000). The congregations in this study represent two of the three types – neighborhood and integrated. These two diverse cases have the greatest potential to reproduce the relevant features of the phenomena under study (Gerring, 2007) and to illuminate the full range of variation on resource accessibility in urban congregations.

Given that we know little about the types of resources available in and mobilized through organizations in poor urban neighborhoods and virtually nothing about these processes in urban religious congregations, these diverse cases present an important opportunity to examine resource accessibility in diverse settings. Choosing cases that represent the types of urban congregations where neighborhood residents interact with each other allows me to understand better if and how this type of urban neighborhood organization serves as a resource broker. Both congregations under study are located in the same urban neighborhood of a mid-sized Midwest "Rust Belt" city.

Figure 4.1: Synchronic Comparative Case Study Design (adapted from Gerring, 2007)



Immanuel Church

Immanuel Church has been located in this neighborhood since 1849. An historically German congregation, the membership is now predominantly African American, low income, and neighborhood-based. The demographics of this congregation closely mirror the geographic neighborhood making it a neighborhood congregation. In addition to the customary activities of worship and Christian education, Immanuel has an active portfolio of community outreach ministries including: youth basketball; musical theater camp; computer camp; free instrumental and voice lessons; cheerleading; and financial literacy classes. This congregation began and sponsors a separate nonprofit community based housing development organization.

Grace Church

Grace Church is also an historically German congregation that followed its members to this neighborhood in the 1920s. Unlike Immanuel Church, this congregation is ethnically diverse with congregants, black and white, commuting in from outside the neighborhood in addition to drawing from the surrounding geographic neighborhood. The majority of active members are African American but a notable portion are white. Grace is primarily a "working class congregation," with a wide income spectrum from low income to annual family incomes in excess of $100,000. This congregation is considered integrated with respect to geography, race, and economic status. Grace has an active portfolio of community outreach ministries including the separate incorporation of a community service ministry and a community outreach initiative which includes partnerships with a local theater group, denominational partners, ecumenical and interfaith partners, and local advocacy organizations in an effort to mobilize public services for the neighborhood.

Sampling Strategy

The population of inquiry in this study is the membership of two specific religious congregations in an urban neighborhood of a Midwest city. Given the defined parameters of church membership, this population represents a small, closed set of actors with a definable boundary. The boundary of the set of actors is active membership in either congregation; however, "membership" proved to be a fluid concept for Immanuel Church which did not have a formal, updated membership roster at the time of data collection. The set of actors is therefore finite and enumerable inasmuch as key informants identified a respondent, listed on the membership roster or endorsed in the network survey, met the inclusion criteria. Every attempt was made to include all social units within the network

boundary (see Wasserman & Faust, 1994). This nominalist approach to boundary specification (Laumann, Marsden, & Prensky, 1989) is based on the theoretical need to gather measurements on all actors within the congregations so that we can better understand the embedded resources and networks of relations.

With network studies it is often not necessary to sample from the population of study; rather, measures are taken from the entire population. Complete network mapping, or the saturation sampling technique, is useful in small organizations with well-defined boundaries (Lin, 1999) such as the congregations under inquiry here. Using this sampling technique data were gathered from all possible actors given the limitations of membership definition (Lin, 1999).

All adult members age 18 years and older listed on the congregations' membership rosters and considered active (participation at least quarterly) regardless of appearing on the formal roster were invited to participate. To achieve proper boundary delineation, the name-generator technique was used to capture members endorsed as part of one's network but who had not themselves participated in the study. This technique elicited a list of ties from the congregant based on the network survey (Lin, 1999); other congregants who had not completed a survey were invited directly to do so. The name-generator technique ensures proper boundary specification by collecting data on all network members endorsed by others through social ties (McCallister & Fischer, 1978). The prevailing assumption was that congregants not endorsed by others have no active ties to others and are therefore not necessarily part of the network specified in the population boundary. However, every effort was be made to survey all members regardless of endorsement.

Recruitment Efforts and Results

Membership rosters obtained from each congregation included the names, addresses, and telephone numbers of each adult member age 18 years and older. Key informants guided the recruitment process at each congregation by indicating active members and encouraging congregants to participate. At Immanuel Church, a trusted church staff member made announcements during worship and study information was published in the monthly newsletter and weekly bulletin. The same staff member managed the initial registration, distributed letters describing the study and outlining data collection times, distributed study information sheets, and registered congregants for prescheduled data collection events. Congregants could also drop-in during data collection events that coincided with ongoing evening church activities.

At Grace, each member or member household received a study information sheet and one letter via U.S. mail signed by me and the church pastor describing the study and inviting them to participate. I made an announcement during worship and registered congregants during an all-church luncheon. Information was also published in the monthly newsletter and weekly bulletin. Congregants could drop-in during data collection events that coincided with ongoing church activities at various times during the week.

For each congregation, members endorsed as part of another's network but who had not completed or scheduled an interview received a follow up recruitment letter and telephone call. To facilitate recruitment, these respondents were given the choice of meeting at the church or another location of their convenience.

Recruitment results are detailed in Table 4.1. Of the 94 active adult congregants at Immanuel Church, 59 completed the interview (63% response rate), 17 were endorsed

but did not complete (18%), and 18 were not endorsed and did not complete (19%). Removing the isolates (*n*=14) based on the theoretical assumption isolates are not actively engaged members of the congregation's network (McCallister & Fischer, 1978), the overall population size is reduced to *n*=76 boosting the response rate to 78%.

Sixty-one of the 76 active adults at Grace completed the survey (80% response rate), 13 were endorsed but did not complete (17%), and two were not endorsed and did not complete (3%). Again removing the isolates (*n*=2), the population size is reduced to 74 and the response rate boosted to 82%. Generally, reasons for non-completion from both congregations included participant's lack of time to schedule the interview, infirmity including those temporarily homebound, or frustration with recent changes in the congregation.

Table 4.1: Recruitment Results

	Immanuel Church	Grace Church
Total Active Members	94	76
Complete	59	61
Endorsed, Not Complete	17	13
Not Endorsed, Not Complete[a]	18	2
Response Rate	63%	80%
Results with Isolates Removed		
Total Active Members (without Isolates)	76	74
Complete	59	61
Endorsed, Not Complete	17	13
Response Rate	78%	82%

[a]These congregants are considered isolates and not actively engaged in the congregational network.

Data Collection

Data collection occurred via data collection events on church property during times when members were onsite for other events (i.e., worship, committee meetings, education, etc.). Interviews took place in congregants' homes when necessary. Collection occurred sequentially, completing all scheduled interviews at one

congregation before moving to the next. Trained masters level social work students and I conducted the interviews.

Each interview lasted approximately 40 minutes and focused on assessing network resources, religious involvement, and connections to others within the congregation. Questions solicited information on the network of relations in each congregation, the types of resources respondents possess or have access to, attitudes about trusting and helping others, and range of access to individuals of varying social standing (See Appendix B).

Grant funds from the Lutheran Foundation of St. Louis provided subject incentives. Participants received $25 for their time and those using public transportation to attend a data collection event received reimbursement of $5.50. The Washington University HRPO approved all financial incentives.

Measures

The measures deployed for data collection in this study gathered a broad range of data to explore many facets of resource access and mobilization in urban religious congregations. However, not all data and variables are used for the analyses proposed here; instead, the data gathered are meant to assist in building a larger body of work extending from the dissertation. Specifically, questions about the mechanisms governing resource mobilization remain relatively unaddressed. Following is a discussion of all measures deployed regardless of use in the analyses.

Network Measure

The network measure consists of three questions to gather network connections in increasing closeness based on Burt's (2005) survey of network closure. Burt's categories are: information; advice; and personal support. Items in the network survey created for

this study are: talk to regularly; discuss personal problems; visit outside regularly scheduled church events. Respondents were asked to consider church members with whom they were the closest and to endorse up to five individuals for each question. For each person endorsed, data were gathered about nature and intensity of the relationship using four questions.

Standardized Measures

Position generator. The position generator used in this study is taken from a study Smith (2005, 2008) conducted with a similar population. It asks respondents to identify contacts from among a list of ordered structural positions within society (Lin et al., 2001). First proposed by Lin and Dumin (1986), this method makes it possible to construct measures of (1) range of accessibility to different hierarchical positions within society, or the percentage of respondents having access to each of the positions listed; (2) heterogeneity of accessibility to different positions; and (3) upper reachability, or the highest social position to which one has access (Lin et al., 2001; Smith, 2008). The measure is content-free and the sample of structural positions is theoretically driven to represent positions across the socio-economic spectrum.

The position generator has demonstrated reliability and validity across wide contexts including among the poor in urban U.S. neighborhoods. Cross-sectional reliability (Cronbach's α) was demonstrated at 0.83 with other studies finding similarly high reliability (Lin, 2008). Among the same respondents interviewed one year apart, the correlation between endorsed occupations was 0.62. Fu (2005) demonstrated the position generator's validity by comparing network diaries to responses to the single-item generator question.

Resource generator. While the position generator measures access to an unknown pool of resources tied to a certain social status, the resource generator measures the actual resources that are potentially available through network members (van der Gaag & Snijders, 2005). This instrument measures the social resources in a diverse set of life domains that satisfies the needs of an average person in a modern, industrial society (van der Gaag & Snijders, 2005). Given that resources necessary to achieve social and economic mobility vary by culture, contextual theoretical concerns governed the construction of the resource generator.

The resource generator surveys access to a fixed set of resources each "representing a vivid, concrete subcollection of [embedded resources], together covering several domains of life" (van der Gaag & Snijders, 2005, p. 4) in Lin's (1982) theoretical resource classification. The accessibility of each resource is assessed by measuring the tie strength through which a particular resource may be accessed. Items theoretically salient for an urban U.S. context used in this study are abstracted from a comparison of those used in the Netherlands (van der Gaag & Snijders, 2005), the U.K. (Webber & Huxley, 2007), and Canada (Wellman et al., 2005). The items cover human, cultural, financial, political, and physical capital domains of resource collections and indicate power, wealth, and status.

This study follows the response pattern used in the U.K. with an additional response choice indicating the presence of the resource through a fellow congregant; order acquaintance represented an ascending order of tie strength. The additional response choice assesses whether or not congregants perceive resources to be available through others within the congregation. While on the standardized measure only the

strongest tie strength is recorded for each item, all ties are recorded in this study to assess the totality of congregants' resource networks which accounts for the limitation van der Gaag and Snijders (2005) cite that skews the data toward demonstrating a strong reliance on family members for resource access.

The resource generator used in this study is most similar to the RG-UK. This measure contains four internal scales with corresponding *H*-coefficients and rho values. Internally, the scales demonstrate sufficient homogeneity based on Loevinger's *H*-coefficient (Loevinger, 1947) and scale reliability demonstrated by rho values (ρ) above 0.60 (van der Gaag & Snijders, 2005). Table 4.2 provides homogeneity and scale reliability information. Kappa coefficients for the RG-UK items ranged from 0.33 to 0.85 in a test-retest study (Webber & Huxley, 2007) with most items demonstrating good or excellent reliability according to the Landis and Koch (1977) matrix. A convergent-divergent validity test revealed that the RG-UK and the position generator, the current standard to measure access to resources, measure a similar construct (Webber & Huxley, 2007).

Table 4.2. Resource Generator-UK scale characteristics (Webber & Huxley, 2007)

Scale		Scale H	ρ
1	Domestic resources	0.52	0.78
2	Expert advice	0.54	0.83
3	Personal skills	0.37	0.69
4	Problem solving resources	0.42	0.60

Other Measures

Demographic and background items are abstracted from Ammerman's (2005) study *Organizing Religious Work* and from Lin et al. (2001) who recommend specific

demographic control variables. Wuthnow (2004) argued that certain individuals may be more likely to obtain resources through congregations because of their outgoing personality; as such, this research employed a "gregariousness" measure. His three item scale was used as one phrase completion and one dichotomous response.

To assess the extent to which respondents are engaged in the congregation and community, their attitudes about the church's mission, and personal attitudes about helping others (norms), Ammerman's (2005) religious involvement items are used. Generalized trust questions are abstracted from the General Social Survey.

Pilot Testing

The combined instrument was pilot tested on three members of the religious congregation where the I hold my membership. Respondents were chosen in consultation with the senior pastor, had no investment in the research, and were distant acquaintances. The instrument was tested for timing, question formatting, question wording and comprehension, and flow. A brief discussion with each respondent concluded the interview to elicit questions or comments about the survey. From the pilot, minor changes were made to instructions, questions, and interview procedures.

Analytic Strategy

Survey and network data were entered into a Microsoft Access database by a trained research assistant. I audited data entry for quality assurance. SAS and R are used for quantitative analysis and Pajek is used for exploratory social network analysis. Logistic regression analyses are used to explore the relationships between attributes and the outcome variables of power and wealth.

Aim 1: Mapping Network Relations

Exploratory social network analysis techniques are used to map the network of relations among congregants. Three network types are mapped in each congregation according to the network survey.

Network visualization. Sociograms are drawn as an important first step in network visualization. Directional and nondirectional relations are mapped and utilized in the analysis. Directed graphs indicate bidirectional relationships where both congregants endorse the presence of a tie between each other. Nondirected graphs indicate any tie between two congregants whether or not endorsed by either individual; these types of nondirectional relationships are commonly examined in communication networks and are mostly used in this study.

Connectedness. Network structure is assessed through an examination of the network density, connectedness, centrality, and prestige. Actor-level analyses indicate the network position of individual congregants where standardized group-level analyses allow networks to be compared between congregations. Network density considers the proportion of ties in the network to the total possible ties; separate measures are conducted for directed and nondirected graphs. For nondirected graphs, density is calculated as: $\Delta = \frac{2L}{g(g-1)}$, where each line L is counted twice and divided by the total number of nodes g (congregants) multiplied by the nodes minus one to reach the proportion of ties possible. For the directed graphs, density is calculated as: $\Delta = \frac{L}{g(g-1)}$ (see Wasserman & Faust, 1994). Density indicates how tightly knit congregants are within the network by exploring the number of ties that exist as a proportion of all ties possible (de Nooy, Mrvar, Batagelj, 2005).

Connectedness assesses the reachability of individual congregants within the network and is measured using geodesics, distance, and diameter. A network is strongly connected if each pair of vertices is connected by a path – that is, no other congregant lies in the path between two other congregants. A network is weakly connected if each pair of vertices is connected by a semipath – that is, no direct ties exist but go through other congregants (de Nooy et al., 2005). Sociograms are drawn to assess connectedness and to detect subnetworks. Subnetworks, or subgroups, are those that are maximally connected.

Prominence – Centrality. Access to embedded resources may rest in the hands of centrally important people within each congregation. The extent of a congregant's prominence within the congregation is a factor of those ties that heighten their visibility to others within the congregation. In religious congregations, key individuals may serve as the gatekeepers of resources and ties to them may influence how and what resources are accessed and mobilized. The importance, or prominence, of individual congregants within a network is measured by examining actor centrality and prestige or, more specifically, location within the network. Congregants are also aggregated across networks to obtain a "group-level index which summarizes how variable or differentiated the set of actors as a whole with respect to a given measure" (Wasserman & Faust, 1994, p. 169). Nondirectional data are used to assess congregant prominence because it is assumed that communication is nondirectional.

Degree centrality measures the percentage of ties in the network that involve a specific congregant and indicates the role of that congregant in regulating the flow of information and/or resources. Simply, the degree of an individual congregant is that

individual's centrality in the network; therefore, actor-level degree centrality is $C_D(n_i) = d(n_i)$ (Wasserman & Faust, 1994). The degree for each congregant is calculated to identify those who have the highest number of connections within each congregation. The standardized degree centrality measure $\left(C'_D = \frac{d(n_i)}{g-1}\right)$ is used to compare centrality between the two congregations. While individual degree centrality is important in identifying prominent congregants, group degree centralization of the nondirectional ties is preformed to examine the variability of the individual congregant indices to indicate the extent to which congregational ties are centralized or dispersed. A summary of congregant indices are calculated as: $C_D = \frac{\sum_{i=1}^{g}[C_D(n^*)-C_D(n_i)]}{[(g-1)(g-2)]}$ where $C_D(n^*)$ is the largest observed value and g are the congregant degree indices (Wasserman & Faust, 1994).

Prominent congregants are also close to many others within the network – "the idea is that an actor is central if it can quickly interact with all others" (Wasserman & Faust, 1994, p. 183). Closeness centrality is used to assess how close congregants are to all others in their respective congregation. This centrality measure is calculated as $C_C(n_i) = \left[\sum_{j=i}^{g} d(n_i, n_j)\right]^{-1}$ where $d(n_i, n_j)$ is the number of lines in the geodesic linking congregants *i* and *j* and $\sum_{j=i}^{g} d(n_i, n_j)$ is the total distance that *i* is from all other congregants (Wasserman & Faust, 1994). This centrality measure identifies particular congregants as central in the network structure and assists in detecting subgroups and resource brokers. Congregants who are close to a high number of others within the congregation may have quick and easy access to a heterogeneous resource network and serve as resource brokers to others within their subnetworks. Group cohesion is

measured using the standardized closeness centralization index which reflects how close or dispersed congregants are as a whole in the congregational network.

Betweenness centrality also identifies congregants who may serve as gatekeepers of information and resources; a congregant is considered central if he or she lies on the paths between other congregants. A large betweenness centrality score means that a congregant lies between many other congregants. This index is calculated as $C_B(n_i) = \sum_{j<k} g_{jk}(n_i)/g_{jk}$, the sum of the estimated probabilities over all pairs of congregants not including the i^{th} congregant (Wasserman & Faust, 1994). Gatekeepers may also be resource brokers or bridges to other networks. The prior analysis plan assumes nondirectional relationships and is appropriate to assess the structural characteristics of the congregational networks under study.

Prominence – Prestige. Prestige is the importance of a particular actor within a system particularly with respect to the extent others endorse a relationship with her or him. That is, a congregant is prominent within the congregation if other members of the congregation choose that person to be part of their network. Two specific measures of prestige are used – degree and proximity. In degree prestige, the indegree of each congregant, or the number of endorsements, is calculated. A higher indegree value indicates the member is more prestigious than those with a lower value. The standardized measure is used to compare across congregations. Proximity prestige focuses on the adjacency of congregants to each other such that some can be reached directly and others indirectly. This measure examines a congregant's influence domain.

Cohesive subgroups. This study is particularly interested in the role of subgroups in the accessibility of resources embedded in congregational networks. I

theoretically assume that subgroups in which congregants are situated are places where resources are most readily accessed. Cohesive subgroups are identified using *k*-cores; cores are successively reduced in a stepwise fashion to generate a layered perspective of the data. From this reductive method, complete subgroups are identified.

Aim 2: Map Embedded Resources onto Congregational Network Structures

This analysis utilizes the network structure identified in Aim 1 to understand the distribution of resources across networks. Given that congregants who serve as links between groups (bridges) and who have access to a heterogeneous pool of resources are often resource brokers (Burt, 2005), particular attention is given to the resources of prominent network members. Prominent members are described with respect to resource access.

Data from the position and resource generators are mapped onto the networks. These data are used to explore the distribution of resources across networks. Heterogeneity of resources (extensity), upper reachability, and range of resources are explored. Resource generator items are collapsed into four domains according to Webber and Huxley (2007) and cumulative dichotomous endorsements mapped onto the networks. Domains are mapped in aggregate according to resource access, those congregants personally possessed, and those resources mobilized on behalf of other church members. Differences in mean access scores are assessed.

Aim 3: Explore the Relationship between Network Structure and Resource Access, Power and Wealth

In addition to mapping resources, regression methods are used to examine the main effects of positional and resource variables on wealth and power. Upper

reachability is used as both a predictor and outcome variable, depending on the model. As a predictor, its influence on income is assessed through a generalized logits model. As an outcome, its relationship with resource access is assessed through OLS regression. The effect of extensity on income is also assessed through a generalized logits model. This method gives a snapshot of the overall networks, regardless of network relations, to indicate how the factors in the model are related in these two cases.

The relationship between model predictors and outcomes is examined through exponential random graph modeling to account for the role of network structure and congregant prominence. In the exponential-family random graph model (ERGM), predictors are the ties between congregants. "These predictors, called 'network statistics,' represent configurations of ties…that are hypothesized to occur more often or less often than expected by chance" (Morris, Handcock, & Hunter, 2008, p. 2). ERG models effectively function as logistic regressions for network data. Four outcomes of interest are tested with respect to their relationship with network structure – extensity, upper reachability (or power), income, and religious engagement. This statistical method allows me to test whether or not a network is random or structured around resources or individuals as resource brokers.

Using the statnet suite of packages for R allows me to model the probability that a set of relations would occur given a particular variable of interest. Nondirectional data are used for the analyses based on the assumption that communication is bidirectional. More detail on these methods is provided in Chapter 7.

Protection of Human Subjects

This proposed study involved only adults age 18 years of age and older who were listed on the membership roles of two religious congregations at the time data collection

commenced. Congregants participated in confidential in-person interviews administered by trained masters level social work students. Risks to participants involved the time burden of completing the study, the costs of transportation to reach the church for data collection events, and the breach of confidentiality. Potential benefits were helping to increase the knowledge about resource access through urban religious congregations.

Each participant received a study information sheet (Appendix C) outlining the purpose of the research, potential risks and benefits, and emphasizing the voluntary nature of their participation. The Institutional Review Board reviewed and approved the study protocol under Exemption Category 2 of the Federal Regulations. Participants were informed of their right to refuse participation, refusal to answer any question, and to withdraw from the study at any time. The faculty supervisor and congregational leaders have agreed to review any final dissemination products to ensure proper confidentiality is maintained. Only de-identified data are used though it is difficult to highlight important leaders without indicating their positions within the congregations. The very nature of this type of research calls for exploring key actors who are likely identifiable to other study participants and those associated with either congregation. Participants were reimbursed $25 for completing the interview and $5.50 Metro reimbursement if public transportation was necessary.

CHAPTER 5: A WINDOW INTO THE CONGREGATIONS

The congregations purposively selected for this study represent different types along the spectrum of urban congregations while being situated within the same geographic neighborhood. Regardless of the historic circumstances that shaped their current reality, their compositions are different as is their resource base.

Sample Characteristics

Immanuel Church

Of those members completing the survey from Immanuel Church, 56% were female and the average age was 34.49 years (*SD*=15.47) with the youngest being 18 years and the oldest 75 years. The median age of participants was 29 years and the mode 18 years. The average age of male participants was nearly 27 years and for women it was almost 41 years. Just over 88% of the population was African American, 5% were white, 3.39% were Latino/Latina, and 3.39% reported being biracial or other unidentified ethnicity. Over 59% reported being single (never married), 20.34% were married, 13.56% divorced, and 6.78% widowed.

With respect to the highest level of education achieved, 18.64% reported having less than a high school diploma, 35.59% reported having completed high school only, 32.20% reported some college, 8.47% held a college degree, and 5.08% held a graduate degree. It should be noted, however, that 8.47% (*n*=5) of the respondents were age 18 years and currently completing high school.

Income distribution for individuals is skewed toward the lower end of the scale. Fully two-thirds (66.10%) of the participants reported earning less than $20,000 per year, 22.03% reported earnings between $20,000 and $39,999, 10.17% reported earnings

between $40,000 and $59,999, and one person (1.69%) reported earnings between $80,000 and $99,999 per year. Not surprisingly, 50.85% (*n*=30) of participants reported the receipt of public assistance at one point in the life course; 55.17% (*n*=16) of those who indicated the receipt of public assistance in the life course also reported the current receipt of public assistance. Forty-four percent were currently unemployed, though this also includes retirees and high school seniors not seeking employment.

The average household size was just over 3 people (*SD*=2) with a mode of 4 people. Participants reported an average of 1.25 children per household (*SD*=1.5) and most reported no grandchildren currently living in the same household (mean=0.03; *SD*=0.18). The presence of grandchildren in the household has been reported to decrease social capital (Lin et al., 2001); therefore, this factor will have little or no impact on this population.

On average participants reported attending this congregation for nearly 9 years (*SD*=7.25) though the range was less than one year to 21 years with a median of 7 years and a mode of 1 year. Of note, the current pastor has been in office for approximately 21 years. This study uses a measure of engagement that sums the level of participation across three items from a prior study of congregations (Ammerman, 2005) – worship, Sunday school/religious education, and church fellowship activities. The maximum value for engagement is 12 (participating weekly or more in each of the aforementioned activities). Study participants from Immanuel Church, on average, report an engagement score of 9.17 (*SD*=2.84; mdn=10); most participants report an engagement score of 12 suggesting a high level of religious involvement among the study participants.

As a proxy for service orientation, this study uses a measure of participation in community service through the congregation or other community-based organizations. These items used in a prior study of congregations (Ammerman, 2005) – participation in church mission groups/service activities, community service organizations, and providing informal help – are summed for a maximum value of 12 (weekly or more for each item). Participants at Immanuel Church reported an average service orientation score of 6.64 (*SD*=3.37; mdn=7.0) with most reporting an orientation score of 6. This indicates an orientation score at midrange of engagement in these activities.

Grace Church

Nearly 61% of study participants from this congregation were female and the average age was 48 years (*SD*=19.94) with a range of 18 years to 92 years. The median age of participants was 50 years and most participants were 53 years. The average age of female participants was nearly 52 years (*SD*=19.51; mdn=51) though the mode was 74 years. The average male population was notably younger – average age of 42 years (*SD*=19.60; mdn=38.50) with a mode of 53 years. African Americans comprised nearly 82% of the population, whites 14.75%, and slightly more than 3% reported being biracial. Almost half of the population (45.90%) reported being single (never married), 26.23% were married, 11.48% were divorced, 14.75% were widowed, and one participant (1.64%) reported being in a domestic partnership or civil union.

The distribution of educational attainment is normal with most (39.34%) of the population completing some college. Nearly 23% reported holding a high school diploma only, almost 20% reported holding an undergraduate degree, almost 10%

reported completing a graduate degree, and just over 8% indicated they had not completed high school.

Reported income at Grace is bimodal representing almost two-thirds of the congregation – 31.15% (*n*=19) reported earning less than $10,000 and 32.79% (*n*=20) reported earning between $20,000 and $39,999. Thirteen percent reported annual income between $40,000 and $59,999, 6.56% reported income between $40,000 and $59,999, and 14.75% reported earning between $10,000 and $19,999 in 2009. Nearly 38% (*n*=23) reported receiving public assistance at some point during the life course and of those 52% (*n*=12) are currently receiving assistance. Slightly over 44% were currently unemployed which also includes retirees.

The average household size was 2.77 people (*SD*=1.96) with a mode of 2 people. Households averaged just under 1 child (*SD*=1.46) and most reporting having no children currently living in the home. Logically following, most reported no grandchildren currently residing in the household (mean=0.10; *SD*=0.54) with the exception of one outlier reporting 4 grandchildren in the home. Similar to Immanuel Church, the low number of grandchildren in the home will have no impact on the social capital of the participants at Grace Church as has been shown in prior studies.

Participants reported attending Grace Church for an average of just over 18 years (*SD*=17.58; mdn=12.0) though most in this study reported attending 1 year or less. Years attending ranged from less than 1 to 60 years. It should be noted that the current pastor has been in office since June 2008. Study participants, on average, reported an engagement level of 7.85 (*SD*=3.32; mdn=9); most participants reported an engagement score of 11indicating a high level of religious involvement. With respect to service

orientation, participants averaged 8.84 (*SD*=17.58) though both the median and mode scores were 6. Similar to Immanuel, by and large participant's engagement lies in the midrange of the scale.

Network Structure

The structure of each congregation is assessed at both the network and individual congregant levels on the three networks measured. With respect to Aim 1 of the dissertation, the purpose here is to understand how the networks are constructed and which congregants emerge as central to the networks. Understanding this structure then allows for the distribution of resources to be mapped and patterns discerned.

Immanuel Church

Centrality. Degree centrality is simply the number of connections a particular congregant has with others in the network. That is, this centrality measure counts the number of other people with whom a particular congregant interacts in a given network and can be represented either by a raw count (degree) or as a percentage of all ties (normalized) involving a specific congregant ($C'_D(n_i)$). Table 5.1 shows the ten congregants in the Immanuel Church *talk to* network that have the highest degree and subsequently have the greatest percentage of ties with others in the network. Using directed data, the pastor emerges as the central figure in this network with 57% of all ties (degree=41) involving him. Using this measure two other congregants emerge as central – the first is involved with 38% of all ties in the network and the second with 29% of all ties. As Figures 5.1 and 5.2 demonstrate, degree centrality drops sharply and begins to level off after the third most centralized congregant. This suggests that these three congregants are most central to others in the *talk to* network.

Table 5.1. Degree Centrality for Immanuel Church "Talk To" Network (top 10)

Participant ID	Degree	$C'_D(n_i)$
310	41	0.57
131	27	0.38
161	21	0.29
112	15	0.21
162	12	0.17
115	11	0.15
127	11	0.15
119	10	0.14
123	10	0.14
137	10	0.14

Figure 5.1. Degree Centrality for Immanuel Church "Talk To" Network

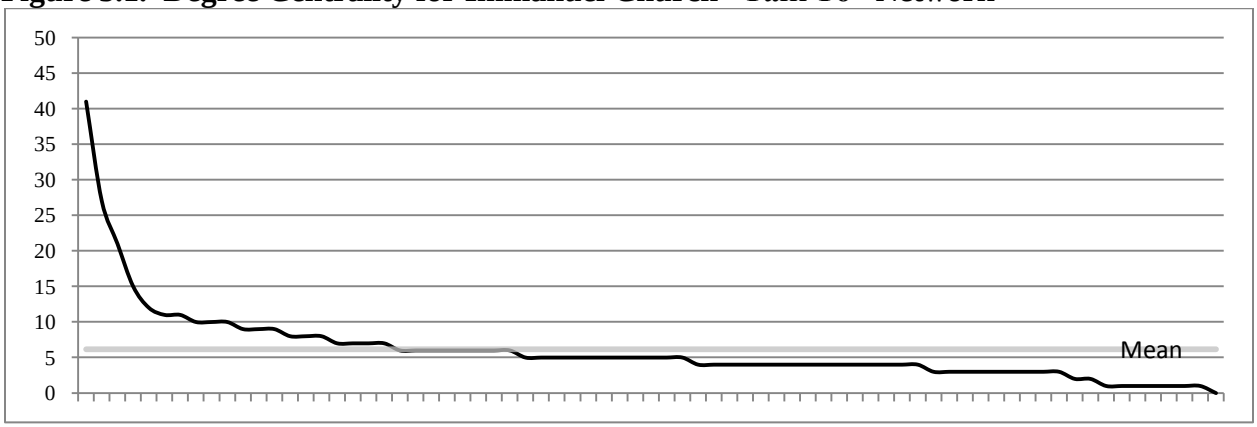
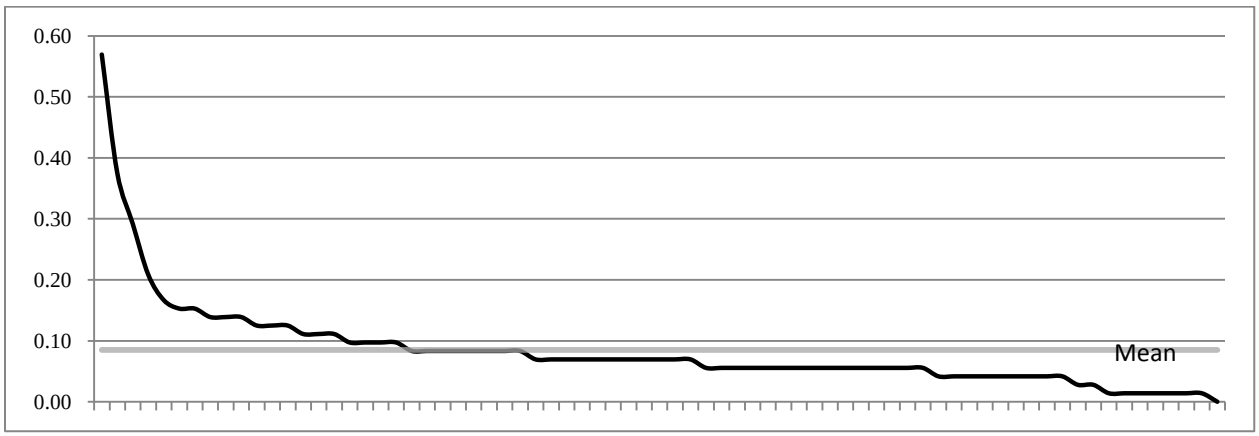


Figure 5.2. Normalized Degree Centrality for Immanuel Church "Talk To" Network



While the values drop (intensity of degree centrality decreases) for the three most central congregants in the Immanuel networks, they remain central in all three networks though to varying extents. When asked to name up to five people with whom

congregants share personal problems, these same congregants emerge at the top of the list. Not surprisingly for a religious congregation, the pastor is the main person with whom individuals share personal problems ($C'_D = 0.49$); nearly half of all ties within the *personal problems* network involve the pastor. The other two congregants switch positions among the top three, but remain central with $C'_D = 0.32$ (or 32% of all network ties involve this congregant) for respondent 161 and $C'_D = 0.21$ for respondent 131 (see Table 5.2). As with the *talk to* network, degree centrality falls off precipitously after the top three most central congregants.

Table 5.2. Degree Centrality for Immanuel Church "Personal" Network (top 10)

Participant ID	Degree	$C'_D(n_i)$
310	36	0.49
161	23	0.32
131	15	0.21
112	12	0.16
119	11	0.15
127	10	0.14
137	9	0.12
106	8	0.11
115	8	0.11
162	8	0.11

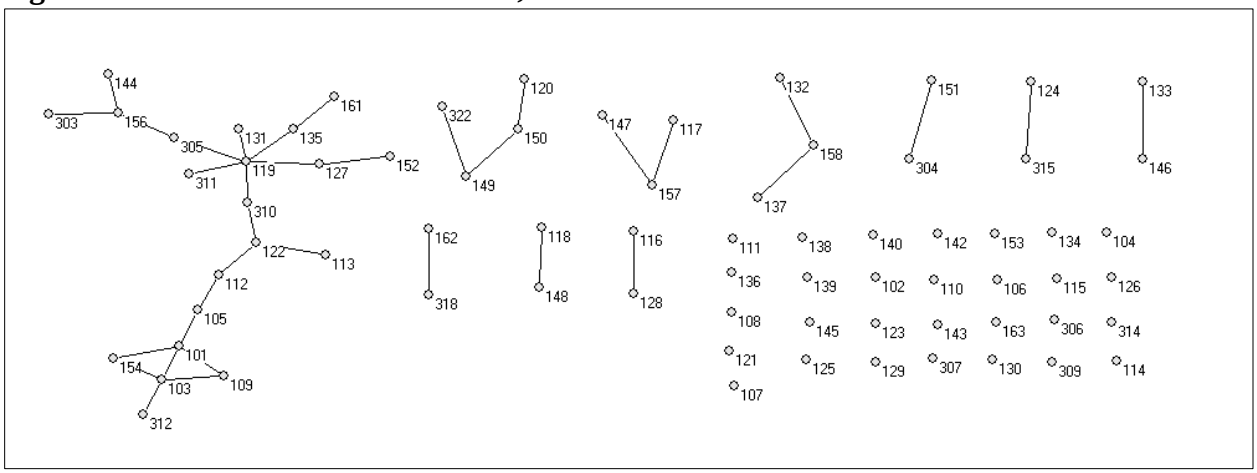
The *visit* network paints a somewhat different picture. The degree centralization score indicates this network, as a whole, is not centralized (see discussion below). This is apparent when examining the individual degree and normalized degree scores. Those congregants in the top three for the *talk to* and *personal* networks remain among the top five of the *visit* network; however, lower percentages of all ties involve these congregants (see Table 5.3). As noted below, this suggests that these congregants remain important in this network but to a lesser extent. Network visualization helps understand this distribution of degree. We might assume that congregants who visit with one another will be related or connected through family ties – Figure 5.3 shows that the three most

central congregants in the *talk to* and *personal* networks are part of the largest *visit* subnetwork when partitioned according to familial ties.

Table 5.3. Degree Centrality for Immanuel Church "Visit" Network (top 10)

Participant ID	Degree	$C'_D(n_i)$
161	12	0.17
119	11	0.15
162	11	0.15
310	11	0.15
131	8	0.11
137	8	0.11
112	7	0.10
113	7	0.10
132	7	0.10
103	6	0.08

Figure 5.3. Visit Network of Relations, Immanuel Church



Another measure of actor-level centrality within a network is closeness. Closeness centrality is "based on the total distance between one vertex [congregant] and all other vertices, where larger distances yield lower closeness centrality scores" (de Nooy, 2005, p. 127). Higher scores indicate that a particular congregant is more central within the network and the distances between she or he and other congregants is shorter than for others making it easier for information to reach the more central person. Congregants with a higher closeness centrality score may also serve as gatekeepers of

resources between subnetworks. Table 5.4 lists the ten highest C'_C scores for the *talk to* network at Immanuel Church. As with degree centrality in the Immanuel Church networks, the same congregants (131, 161 and 310) have the highest closeness scores in the *talk to* network and are among the highest in the *personal* network; the *visit* network is not centralized on this measure though the same congregants are among those with the highest scores. The pastor is the closest to others (C'_C =0.66) or most central in the *talk to* and *personal* networks; again, this is not surprising given the role of the clergy in Christian congregations. Respondents 131 and 161 hold visible positions within the congregation and, like the pastor, their centrality within the *talk to* and *personal* networks is not surprising. It should be noted that respondents 112 and 310 and respondents 119 and 161 report an immediate family tie and are consistently among those congregants with the highest centrality scores. Given this information, both individuals and families emerge as central to the networks at Immanuel Church.

Table 5.4. Closeness Centrality for Immanuel Church "Talk To" Network (top 10)

Participant ID	$C'_C(n_i)$
310	0.66
131	0.56
161	0.51
112	0.49
119	0.48
123	0.47
127	0.47
132	0.46
135	0.46
115	0.46

Table 5.5. Closeness Centrality for Immanuel Church "Personal" Network (top 10)

Participant ID	$C'_C(n_i)$
310	0.62
161	0.52
119	0.47
131	0.47
112	0.46
115	0.46
127	0.46
135	0.46
106	0.44
140	0.44

Table 5.6. Closeness Centrality for Immanuel Church "Visit" Network (top 10)

Participant ID	$C'_C(n_i)$
162	0.36
119	0.36
131	0.36
310	0.36
132	0.35
135	0.33
147	0.33
161	0.33
143	0.33
158	0.32

Another way to approach centrality is to explore how important congregants are as intermediaries in the network. Centrality from this perspective examines the extent to which a congregant links together different parts of the network. A high betweenness centrality score indicates that a congregant lies on the paths between many other congregants, serving as important intermediary of information and resources. As with degree and closeness centrality, respondents 131, 161 and 310 emerge as the three most central figures in the *talk to* (Table 5.7) and *personal* (Table 5.8) networks and are among the top ten most central in the *visit* (Table 5.9) network at Immanuel Church. These three

congregants likely serve as resource gatekeepers and information clearly passes through them to reach other parts of the networks.

Table 5.7. Betweenness Centrality for Immanuel Church "Talk To" Network (top 10)

Participant ID	$C'_B(n_i)$
310	0.39
131	0.15
161	0.09
162	0.05
110	0.04
113	0.04
119	0.04
112	0.04
108	0.03
149	0.03

Table 5.8. Betweenness Centrality for Immanuel Church "Personal" Network (top 10)

Participant ID	$C'_B(n_i)$
310	0.49
161	0.21
131	0.10
119	0.08
112	0.06
156	0.06
106	0.05
137	0.05
110	0.05
162	0.04

Table 5.9. Betweenness Centrality for Immanuel Church "Visit" Network (top 10)

Participant ID	$C'_B(n_i)$
162	0.28
119	0.15
310	0.14
132	0.11
161	0.10
120	0.09

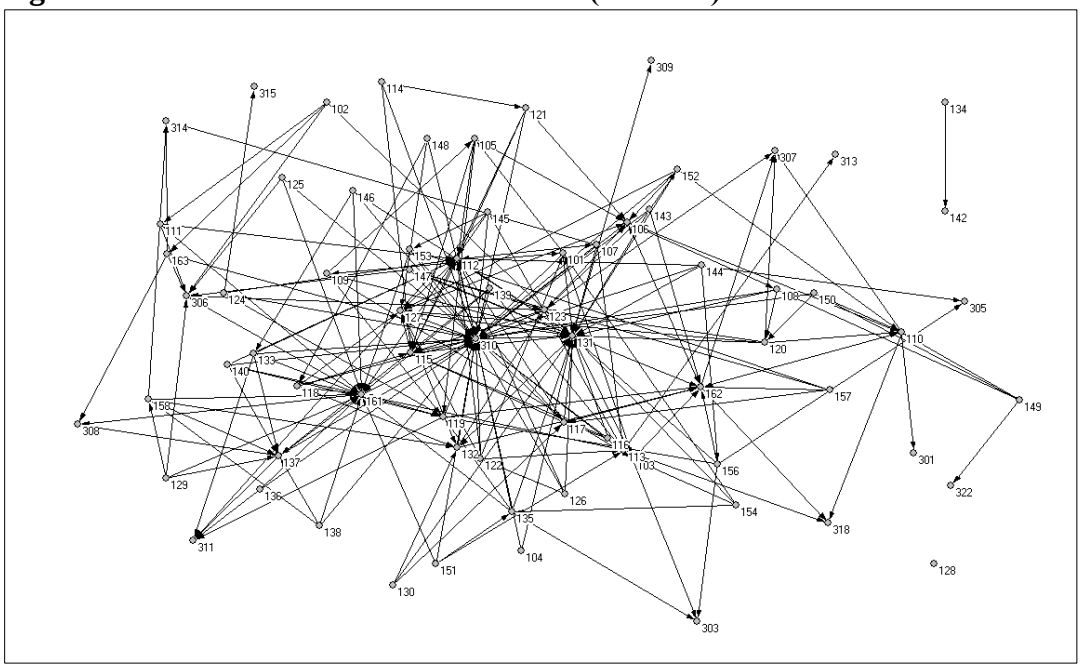
147	0.09
131	0.08
103	0.07
122	0.06

The centrality measures each indicate that three members (131, 161, and 310) are most central to the congregation. While other congregants are among those with the highest centrality scores, when considering immediate family ties (112-310; 119-161) among the top ten most central on each of the measures, centrality is concentrated in three households. It is likely that little information or resources are shared across the congregation without going through (being mediated by) one of these individuals and/or families. This suggests, therefore, that if resources exist but are unknown to these central congregants the extent to which they are shared is minimized. A select few individuals can control who has access to what kinds of resources and lacking connection to these central figures or being many steps away might result in an inability to access resources and information.

Network centralization. Degree centralization (C^*_D) indicates the variability of individual vertices across a network and as the value approaches 1, the network is more centralized (de Nooy, 2005). That is, lower scores indicate less variability (similar numbers of connections) among the congregants whereas high variability indicates that some congregants have more connections within the network than do others. Both the *talk to* ($C^*_D = 0.50$) and *personal* ($C^*_D = 0.44$) networks at Immanuel Church are moderately centralized. Within these two networks, relationships center primarily on three members (see Figure 5.4 and Figure 5.5) suggesting that centralized congregants have the greatest access to diverse information about the network and its members and access to diverse embedded resources. This also suggests that many members within the

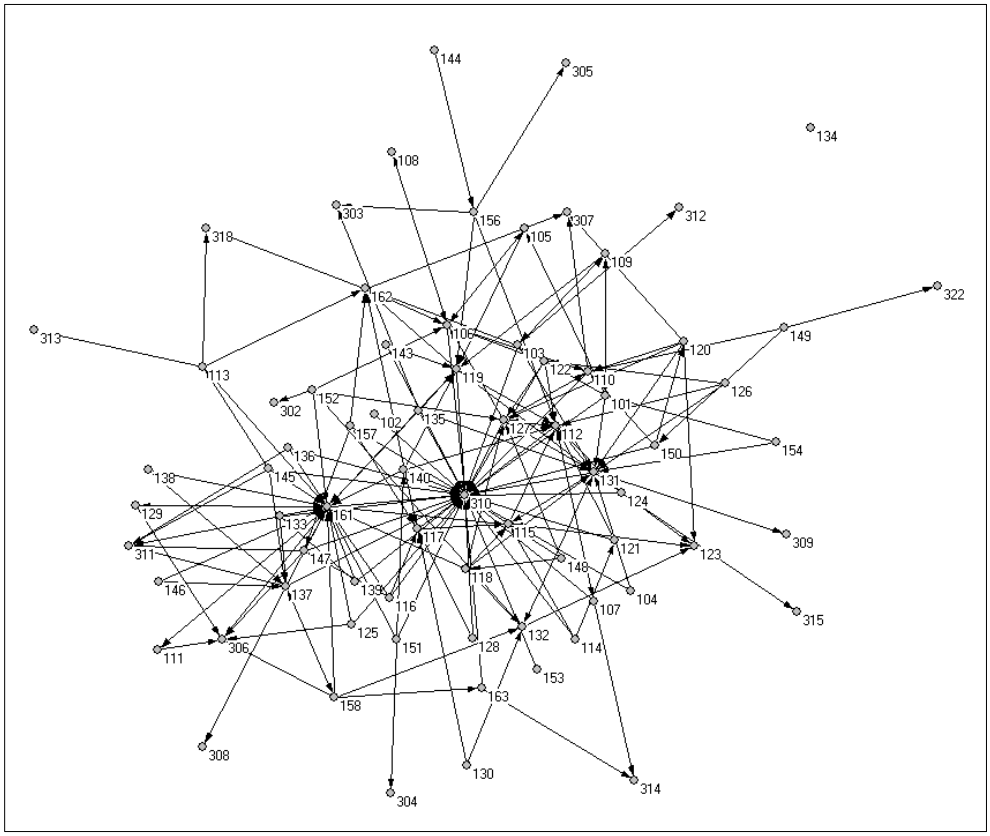
congregation regularly talk to and discuss personal problems with the same centralized members making these individuals important repositories of information and potential brokers of resources. The *visit* network exhibits low centralization ($C^*_D = 0.13$) as little variation exists in the degrees among the members.

Figure 5.4. Immanuel "Talk To" Network (directed)



Closeness centralization (C^*_C) scores reflect how close or dispersed congregants are as a whole within the congregational networks (Wasserman & Faust, 1994). Essentially this indicates how quickly one member can reach another. For each network measured at Immanuel Church, a C^*_C could not be computed because the networks are not weakly connected. That is, because some nodes dominate the network, meaning many geodesics are equal to one, the denominator in the equation results in a zero value.

Figure 5.5. Immanuel "Personal" Network (directed)



Betweenness centralization (C^*_B) measures the frequency of a member appearing on the path between two nonadjacent members of the network in relation to all other members in the network (Wasserman & Faust, 1994). As with the other centralization measures, C^*_B varies between 0-1 and approaches the maximum value if a member lies on all shortest paths between all other members. The *personal* network is moderately centralized ($C^*_B = 0.48$) indicating that one person lies between nearly 48% of all others in the network. This is not surprising, however, given the general tendency of members to confide personal problems to the pastor. The *talk to* ($C^*_B = 0.38$) and *visit* ($C^*_B = 0.25$) networks are centralized though not as strongly as the *personal* network.

Table 5.10. Comparison of Centralization Scores Across Intra-Church Networks at Immanuel Church

Network	C^*_D	C^*_C	C^*_B
Talk To	0.50	**	0.38
Personal	0.44	**	0.48
Visit	0.13	**	0.25

**Closeness centralization cannot be computed since the networks are not weakly connected

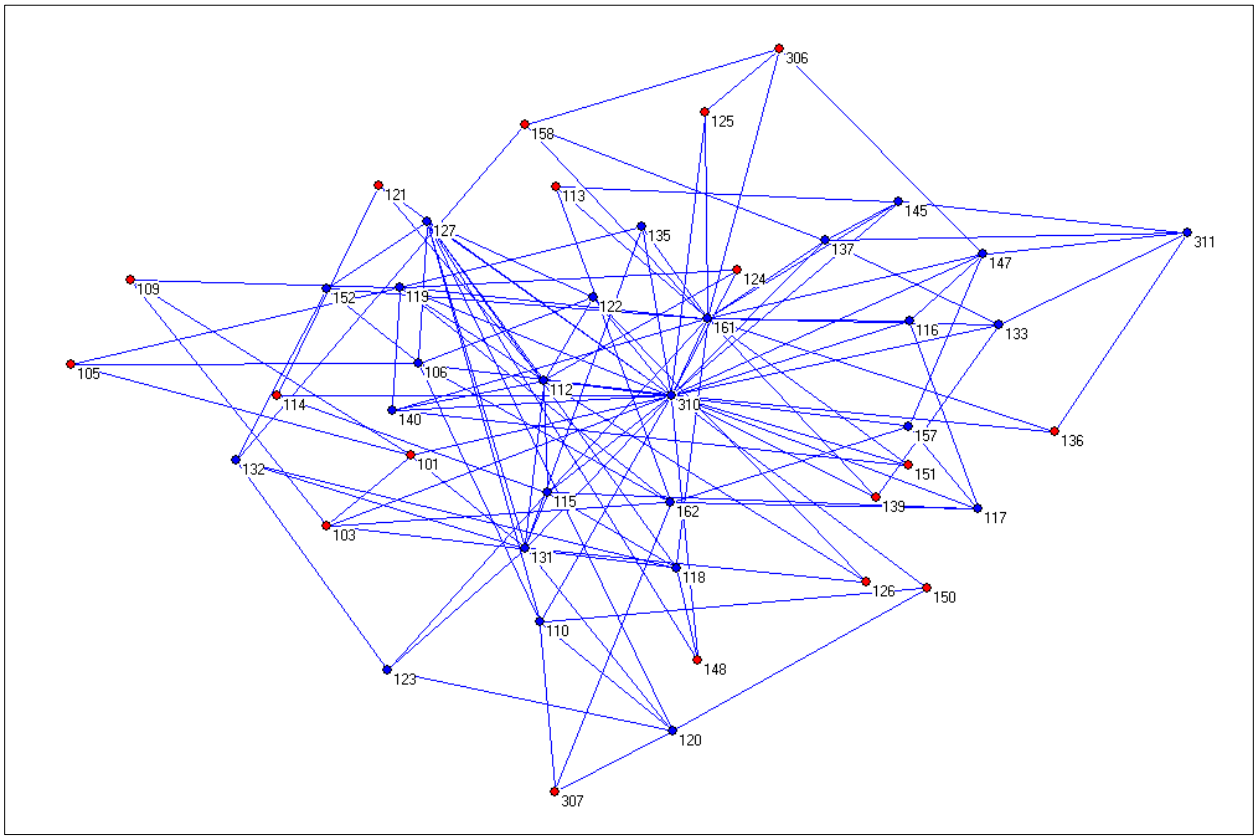
Overall the *talk to* and *personal* networks are highly centralized; many congregants are tied directly to a few key individuals and these individuals connect parts of the network otherwise unreachable. This suggests that congregants at the center of the networks may serve as resource brokers. This level of centralization also suggests that information in disparate parts of the congregation flows through these individuals to reach others and, therefore, central figures are not only repositories of knowledge they dictate what might be shared across the network.

Subgroups. Cohesive subgroups are detected using the *k*-core method for each of the three networks. Degree values for each congregant are calculated and sociograms drawn. The *talk to* and *personal* networks at Immanuel Church are comprised of one large (65.75% and 35.14% of all respondents respectively) subgroup and the *visit* network a smaller subgroup. No network exhibited separate, cohesive subgroups; therefore Hypotheses 1.1 and 1.2 cannot be confirmed for Immanuel Church.

Among the congregants in the *talk to* network, four is the maximum of degree. Figure 5.6 displays the size of the subgroup and demonstrates (comparing to Figure 5.4) the magnitude of the subgroup as compared to the whole network. The maximum degree among congregants in the *personal* network is 4 though fewer congregants shared this level of connection within the network. Figure 5.6 displays 2 degrees (extracting subgroups in a step-wise fashion), red nodes denoting congregants with a degree of three

and blue a degree of four. Again, the most connected congregants constitute a single large cohesive subgroup. No separate components exist among these networks – that is, the congregation does not break apart into separate subgroups that are necessarily connected by single bridge members.

Figure 5.6. Immanuel Church "Personal" Network, *k*-core Analysis



The *visit* network has fewer congregants as part of its main subgroup (37.5% of all congregants in the largest *k*-core). Three is the maximum degree of congregants in this network and is displayed in Figure 5.7. Like the other two networks, no separate subgroups emerge nor are any bridges obvious between sections of the subgroup.

Figure 5.7. Immanuel Church "Talk To" Network, *k*-core Analysis

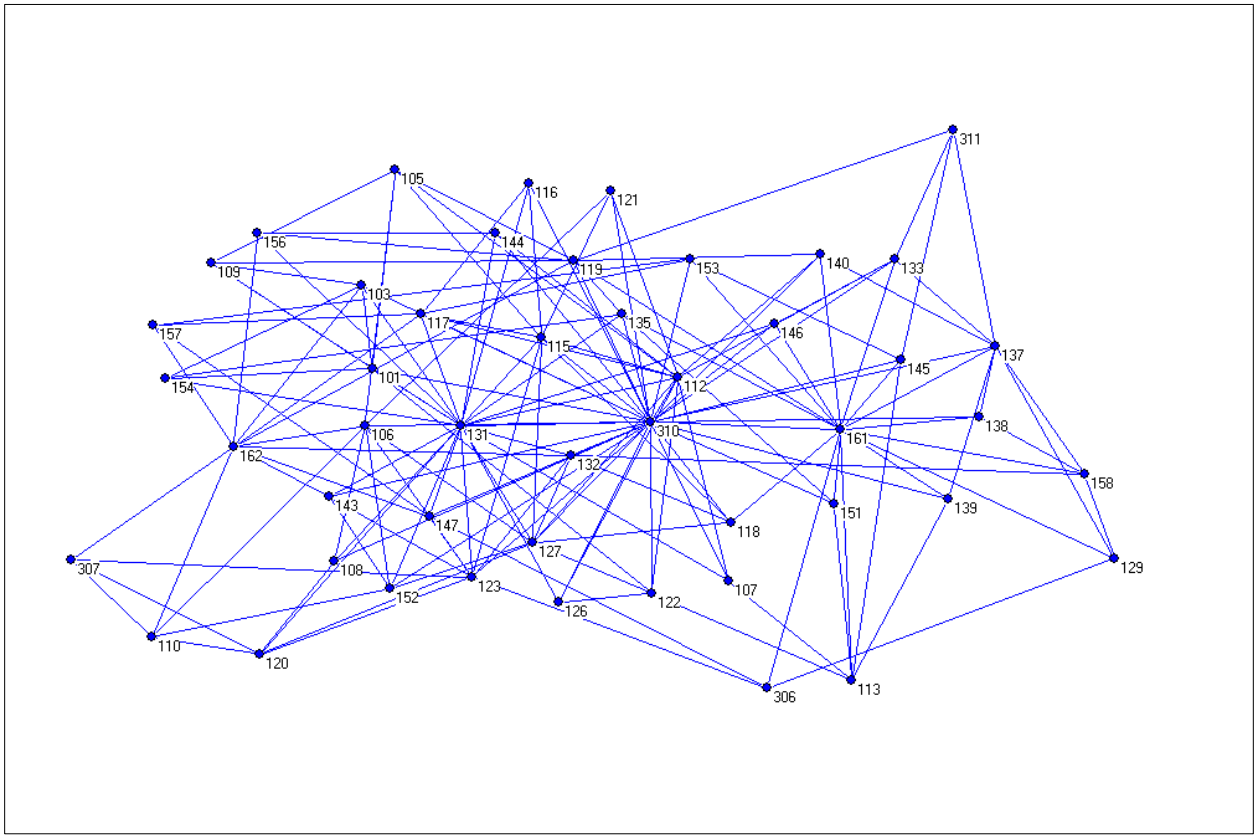
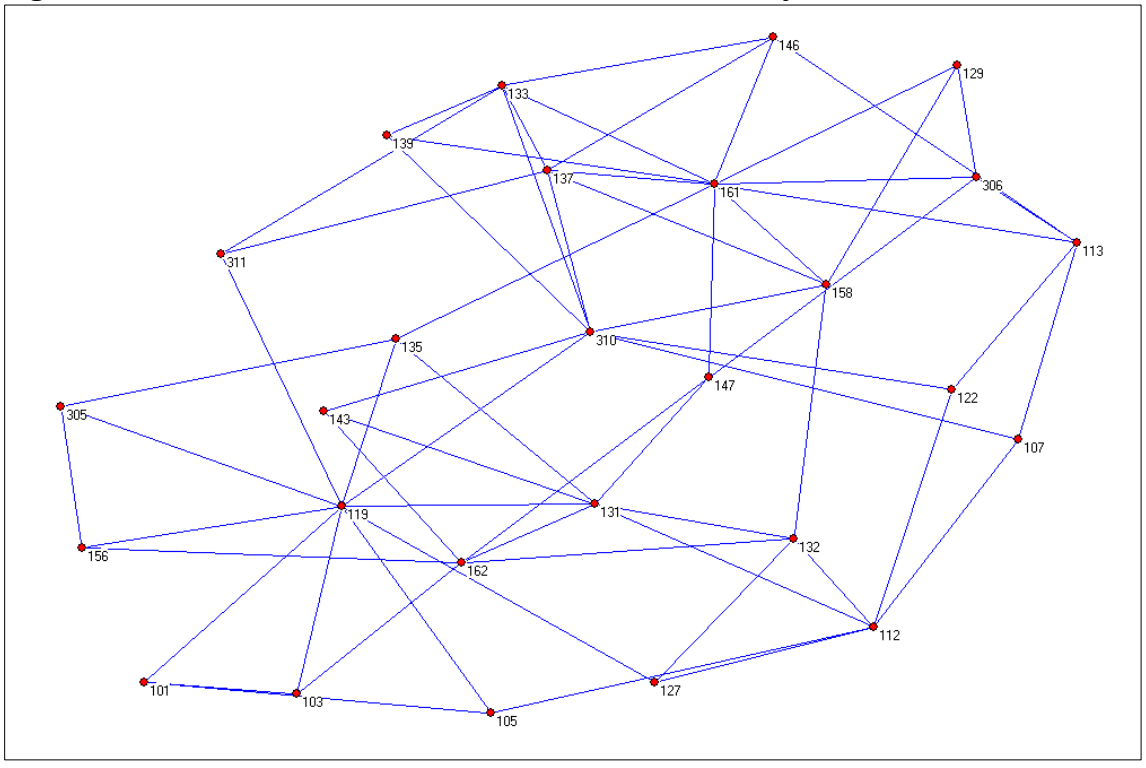


Figure 5.8. Immanuel Church Visit Network, *k*-core Analysis



Grace Church

Centrality. Table 5.11 shows the ten congregants in the Grace *talk to* network that have the highest degree and subsequently have the greatest percentage of ties with others in the network. Using directed data, the pastor emerges as the central figure in this network with 43% of all ties (degree=30) involving him. When excluding the pastor, whom we would naturally assume to have a high number of ties, a small group (*n*=5) of congregants emerge as most central in this network, involving between 30% and 24% of all ties. As Figures 5.9 and 5.10 demonstrate, degree centrality drops gradually among the six most centralized congregants, then declines sharply and levels off under 10%. Unlike Immanuel when excluding the pastor two congregants are notably more central than others, central figures at Grace represent a slightly larger pool.

Table 5.11. Degree Centrality Indices for Grace Church "Talk To" Network (top 10)

Participant ID	Degree	$C'_D(n_i)$
247	30	0.43
262	21	0.30
202	19	0.28
230	19	0.28
231	18	0.26
260	17	0.24
213	12	0.17
235	12	0.17
263	12	0.17
221	10	0.14

Figure 5.9. Degrees for Individual Congregants in the Grace Church "Talk To" Network

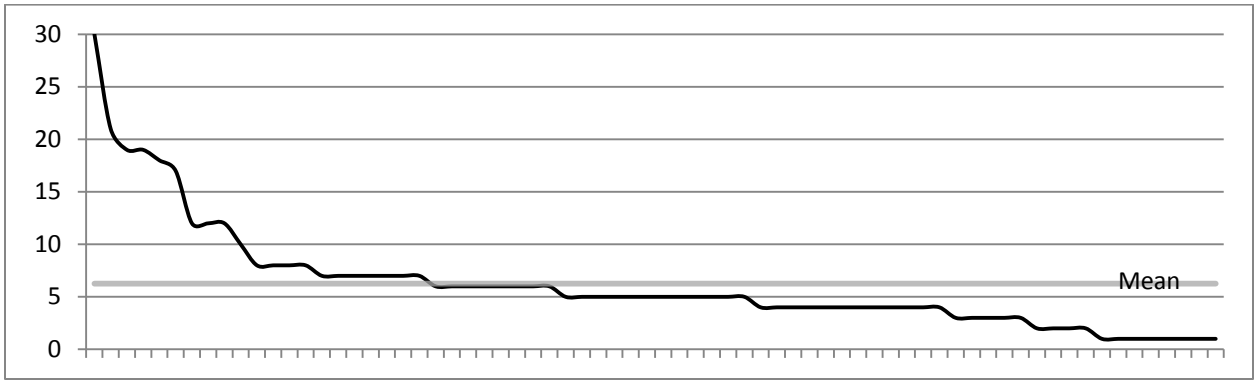
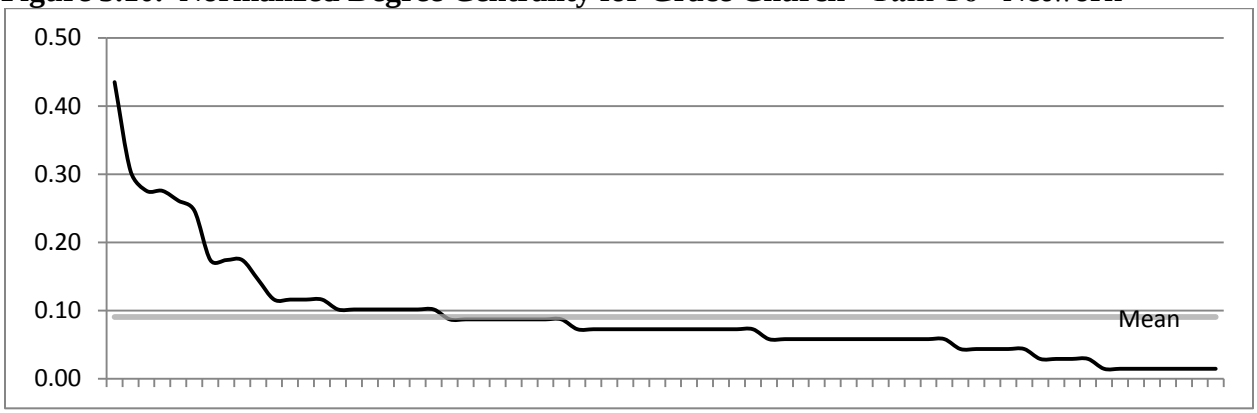


Figure 5.10. Normalized Degree Centrality for Grace Church "Talk To" Network



Considering degree centrality of the *personal* network, the six most central congregants in the *talk to* network remain central though the values drop by nearly half for five of them. As expected and like Immanuel Church, the pastor is the main person with whom individuals share personal problems with 43% ($C'_D = 0.43$) of all ties within this network involving him. The other five congregants change positions, but remain central (see Table 5.12 for distribution). Unlike Immanuel Church where the distribution of degree was similar between the *talk to* and *personal* networks, degree centrality in the Grace *personal* network falls off precipitously after the pastor.

Table 5.12. Degree Centrality for Grace Church "Personal" Network (top 10)

Participant ID	Degree	$C'_D(n_i)$
247	29	0.43
230	11	0.16
231	11	0.16
260	10	0.15
262	10	0.15
202	7	0.10
232	7	0.10
212	6	0.09
206	5	0.07
211	5	0.07

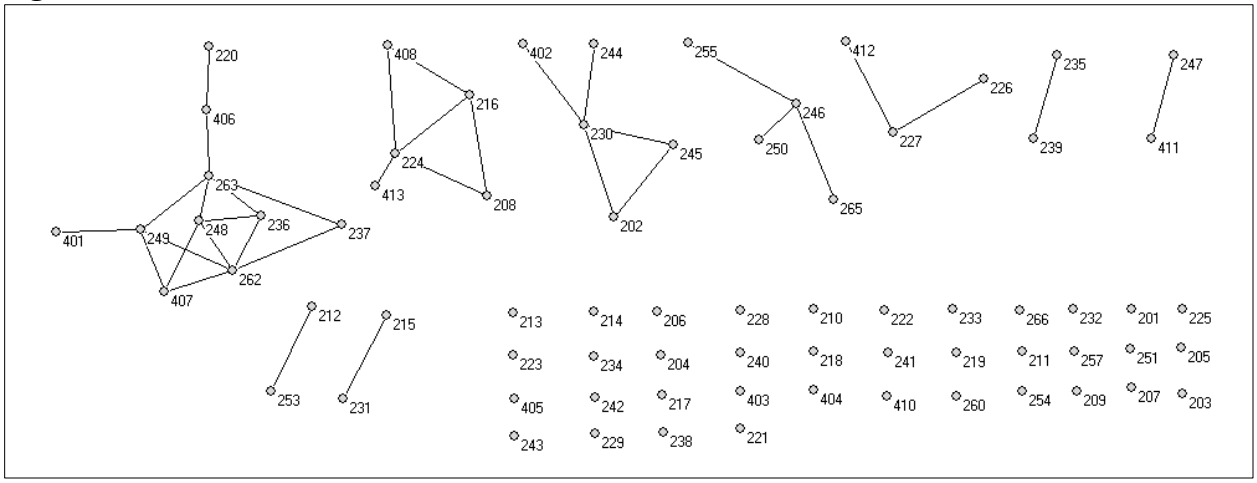
The degree centralization score indicates the *visit* network, as a whole, is minimally centralized (see discussion below). Individual congregant-level data for the Grace *visit* network reveals that the most central person is involved with 18% of all ties (Table 5.13); these data do not help understand fully the patterns of relations among congregants. While some congregants among the most central in the *talk to* and *personal* networks remain in the *visit* network, most are not central to this network. Network visualization helps understand this distribution of degree and, subsequently, ties between congregants who visit outside of regularly scheduled church-related events. The presence of isolates lowers the centralization score and indicates that some congregants do not interact with others socially. Three subgroups are not connected to each other nor to the main network – these are familial networks and are logically connected (see Figures 5.11 and 5.12 to compare *visit* network of relatives to all *visit* network ties). Visualization reveals the main network is roughly centered on three people, or two families (262 and 263 report an immediate family tie). The subgroup with congregants 262 and 263 at the center represents individuals who have been members of the congregation for many

years, as do the isolated subgroups. However, the subgroup primarily linked to 247 is comprised of newer members.

Table 5.13. Degree Centrality for Grace Church "Visit" network (top 10)

Participant ID	Degree	$C'_D(n_i)$
262	13	0.18
247	12	0.17
263	10	0.14
213	7	0.10
211	6	0.08
215	6	0.08
230	6	0.08
206	5	0.07
221	5	0.07
236	5	0.07

Figure 5.11. Grace "Visit" Network of Relatives



Considering closeness centrality, Table 5.14 lists the ten highest C'_C scores for the *talk to* network at Grace. Unlike Immanuel Church where the same actors remained the most central in the *talk to* network based on degree and closeness centrality measures, different congregants emerge as central at Grace when examining closeness centrality. Closeness values in this network vary little among the top 10 most central congregants indicating that no one congregant or group of congregants are highly central based on this

measure suggesting that specific members may not serve as resource gatekeepers. The pastor is the closest to others (C'_C =0.59) or most central in the *talk to* and *personal* networks.

Figure 5.12. Grace "Visit" Network

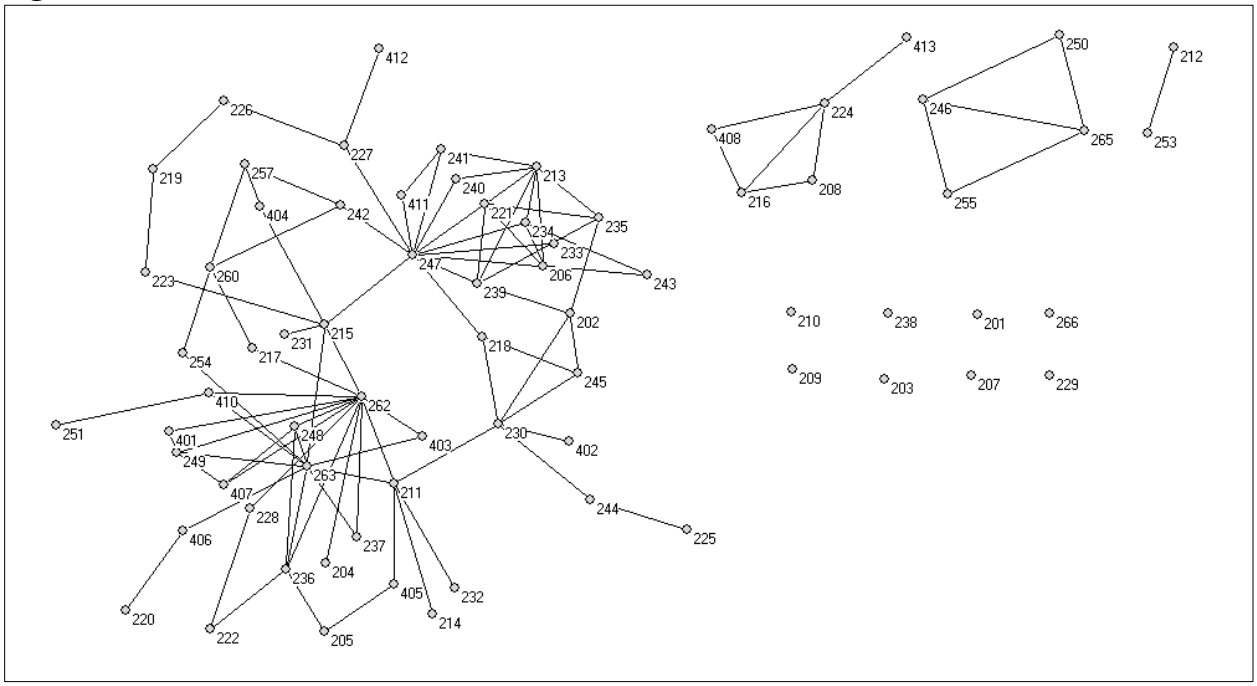


Table 5.14. Closeness centrality for Grace Church "Talk To" network (top 10)

Participant ID	$C'_C(n_i)$
247	0.59
260	0.55
202	0.53
231	0.53
262	0.49
230	0.49
219	0.47
235	0.47
211	0.47
215	0.47

No clear set of intermediaries for the Grace networks emerges using betweenness centrality measures. The pastor is the most central on each network, but only two other

congregants appear among the top ten in all three networks (see Tables 5.15, 5.16, 5.17). One congregant is a longtime member and holds a very visible position; the other congregant is also a longtime member but interfaces regularly with both longer term and newer members. Taking into account all three centrality measures, it is difficult to identify congregants who consistently act as gatekeepers within the Grace networks.

Table 5.15. Betweenness Centrality for Grace Church "Talk To" Network (top 10)

Participant ID	$C'_B(n_i)$
247	0.33
262	0.14
260	0.13
202	0.13
230	0.10
231	0.10
255	0.07
212	0.06
235	0.04
224	0.04

Table 5.16. Betweenness Centrality for Grace Church "Personal" Network (top 10)

Participant ID	$C'_B(n_i)$
247	0.46
260	0.16
262	0.09
231	0.08
255	0.07
230	0.06
215	0.05
237	0.05
244	0.04
212	0.04

Table 5.17. Betweenness Centrality for Grace Church "Visit" Network (top 10)

Participant ID	$C'_B(n_i)$
247	0.24
215	0.20
262	0.17
263	0.13
211	0.12
230	0.10
218	0.04
227	0.04
236	0.03
242	0.02

Unlike Immanuel Church where three members consistently emerge as central across networks and network measures, beyond the pastor five congregants can be considered central when examining their frequency among the top ten on the measures for the *talk to* and *personal* networks. The *visit* network does not produce the same key central people suggesting that the socializing network at Grace varies from the networks that are necessarily situated within the congregational context. It is difficult to argue that these six individuals mediate the flow of resources across the Grace network since their positions on the centrality measures vary across networks and measures, never consistently falling in the top six.

Network centralization. The networks at Grace demonstrate weak centralization which is reflected in the individual centrality scores (see Table 5.18). With respect to degree centralization, the *talk to* ($C^*_D = 0.35$) and *personal* ($C^*_D = 0.39$) networks are more strongly centralized than the *visit* ($C^*_D = 0.15$) network. Beyond the pastor, degree variability among individual congregants is not dissimilar enough to produce a higher centralization score.

Closeness centralization (C^*_C) could only be computed for the *talk to* network. This network exhibited moderate centralization ($C^*_C = 0.40$) suggesting that while the congregation is relatively dispersed the network has central members. No score could be computed for the *personal* and *visit* networks.

Table 5.18. Comparison of Centralization Scores across Intra-Church Networks

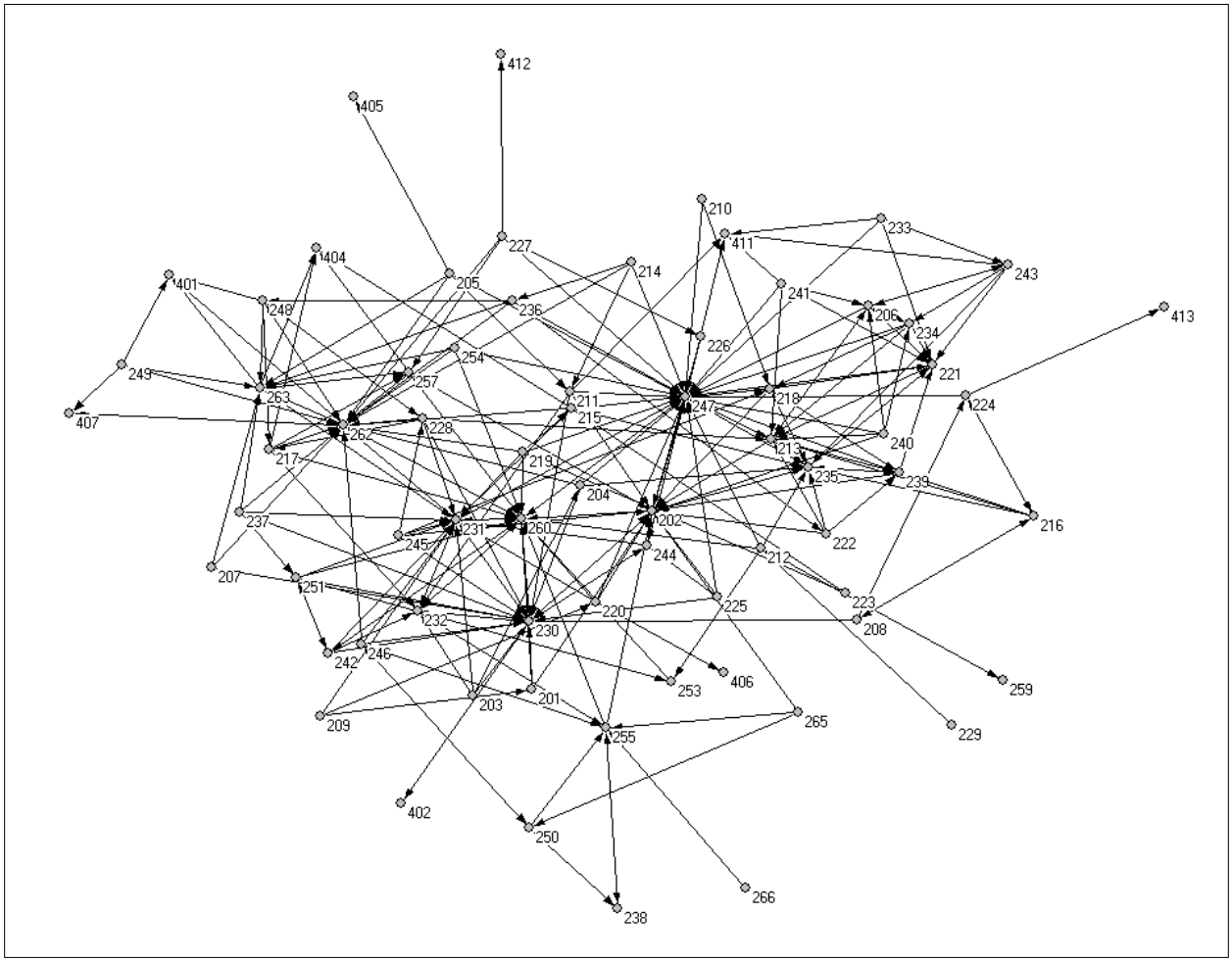
Network	C^*_D	C^*_C	C^*_B
Talk To	0.354	0.391	0.314
Personal	0.385	**	0.445
Visit	0.148	**	0.222

**Closeness centralization cannot be computed since the networks are not weakly connected

As Figures 5.13 and 5.12 visually demonstrate, the *talk to* ($C^*_B = 0.31$) and *visit* ($C^*_B = 0.22$) networks are weakly centralized when considering members appearing on the path between nonadjacent members. However, the *personal* ($C^*_B = 0.45$) network is more strongly centralized confirming what we already know – that congregants often turn to their pastor to discuss personal problems.

The *talk to* and *personal* networks at Grace are more centralized than the *visit* network. Yet Grace is less centralized than Immanuel which suggests organizational characteristics govern congregational cohesiveness and how networks form. Differences between a neighborhood-based and integrated congregation are likely forces shaping patterns of interaction among members and the emergence of centralized congregants.

Figure 5.13. Grace "Talk To" network (directed)



Subgroups. Both the *talk to* and *personal* networks have a large, single subgroup. When reducing the *talk to* network to those congregants with the highest degrees (4 and 5), 65.71% of the congregants remain. Figure 5.14 displays this subgroup where blue nodes are a degree of 3 and pink are 4. The *personal* network has fewer total congregants (n=69), but does not break apart into separate components (76.81% of congregants are part of the 2 and 3 k-cores). In Figure 5.15, green nodes are a degree of 2 and red are 3 suggesting a smaller core of congregants surrounded by a periphery. Given the high percentage of congregants in this subgroup, Hypotheses 1.1 and 1.2 cannot be confirmed for Grace Church.

Figure 5.14. Grace Church Talk To Network, *k*-core Analysis

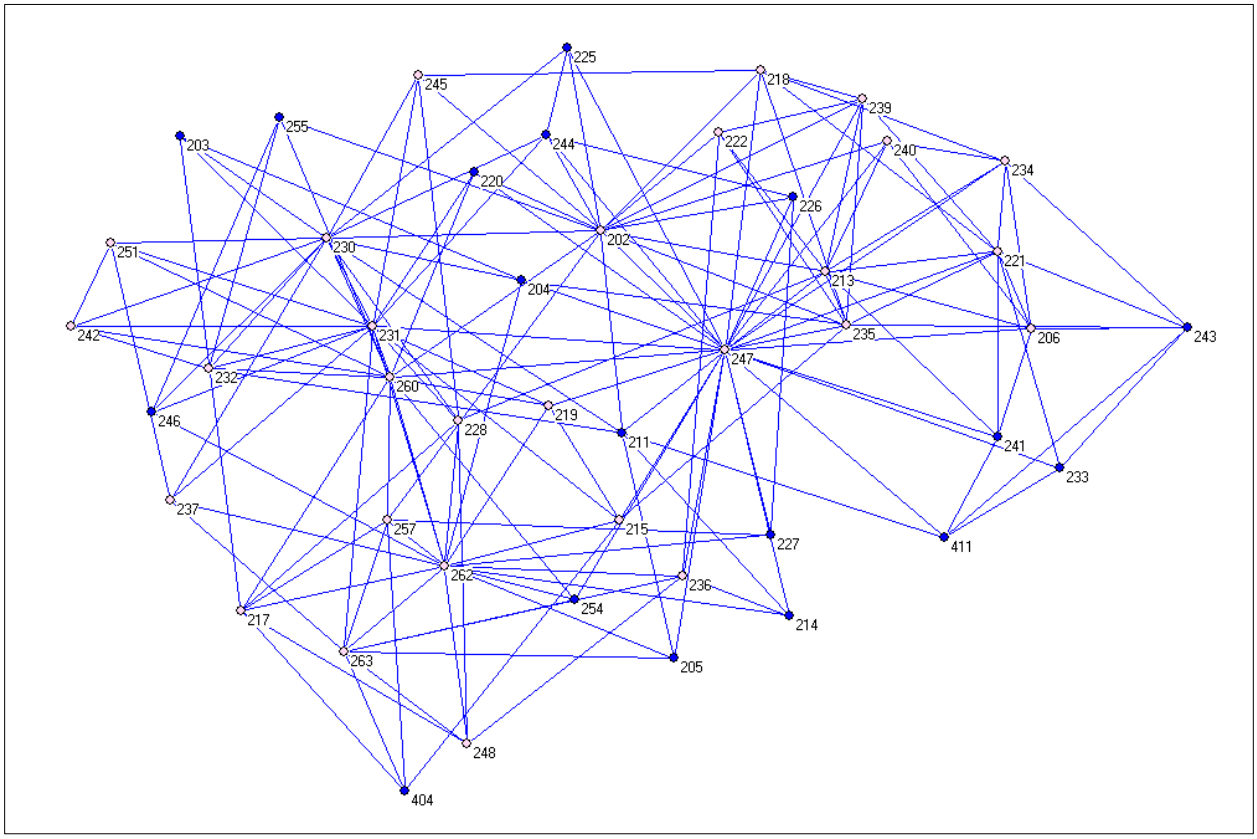
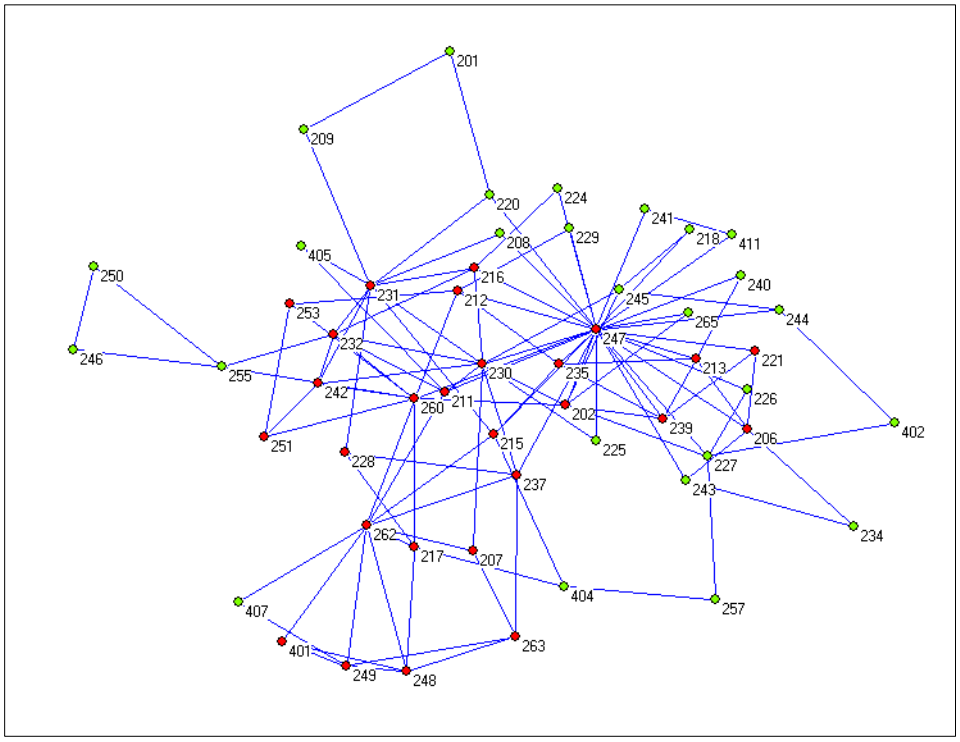
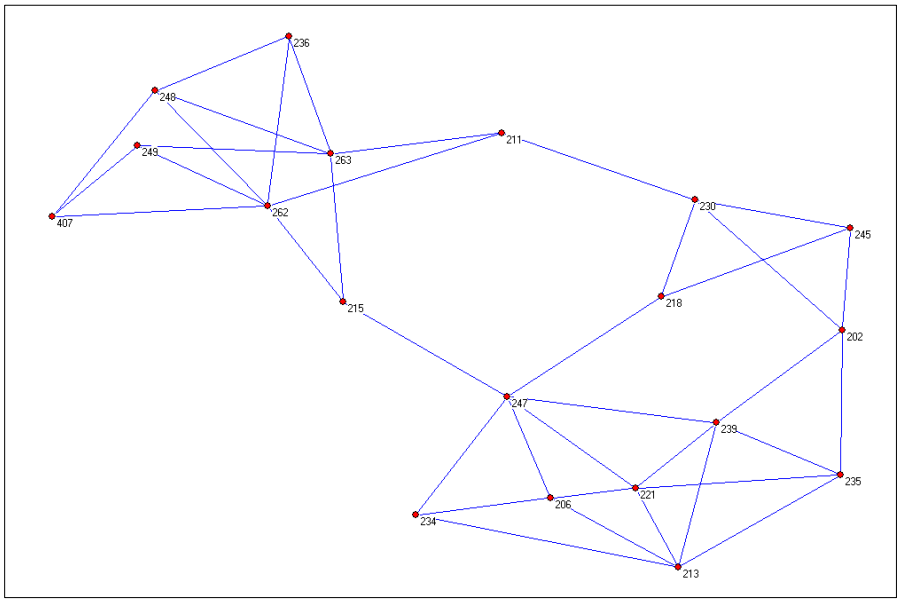


Figure 5.15. Grace Church Personal Network, *k*-core Analysis



The *visit* network at Grace presents a different picture. Three is the maximum degree held by any single congregant and extracting these individuals from the network reveals two subgroups connected by two bridges (see Figure 5.16). Interestingly, neither bridge from the smaller subgroup appears among the most central congregants on the centrality measures.

Figure 5.16. Grace Church Visit Network, *k*-core Analysis



Discussion

The first aim of the dissertation is to explore and map the network of social relations in two urban congregations of different types – neighborhood-based (Immanuel) and integrated (Grace Church). Similarities emerged between the congregations but are distinguished by differences in the centrality of members to the networks measured. Generally, three congregants are central in the Immanuel networks whereas four congregants are central at Grace, albeit to a lesser extent. Immanuel as a neighborhood-based congregation is more centralized.

Examining the different centrality measures across the three networks measured in each congregation reveals that in the neighborhood-based congregation the same members consistently emerge as central across networks and measures. While not always maintaining the same position across measures, they retain the highest scores among the top five in the measures. It is more difficult to identify central congregants at the integrated congregation. Congregants scoring the highest among the centrality measures across networks are not consistent beyond the pastor. Whereas degree centrality drops off steeply at Immanuel, it tapers as a gradual slope at Grace indicating that ties at Immanuel are more concentrated among a few congregants.

Interestingly, subgroups do not emerge in either congregation to any notable extent. No subgroups are present at Immanuel and only the *visit* network at Grace reveals two subgroups connected by two congregants. As such, no congregants emerge as clear bridges within the networks to link potential pools of diverse resources across the networks. Examining the congregations using the *k*-core method in a stepwise reductive fashion leaves single large networks that remain connected. Therefore, this indicates that the numbers of connections are similar across individual congregants and that small groups of people do not hang together more tightly than they do with others.

Gatekeepers do emerge at Immanuel Church. Given that three congregants emerge as consistently central, they can be viewed as gatekeepers controlling the access to resources across the congregation. While not tested here, it is likely that knowledge of resources can only travel across the congregation by going through one of these three members. It is also important to note that these congregants represent access to different constituent groups within the congregation, though the pastor has wide access. However,

it is difficult to identify gatekeepers at Grace because congregants do not consistently emerge as central. Given this, the pastor and one prominent longtime member can be considered gatekeepers of resources within this network. Yet it would be a mistake to assert that access to resources in various parts of the congregational networks cannot be accessed unless going through one of these two individuals.

Based on these analyses, the neighborhood-based urban congregation is more centralized than the integrated congregation. Qualitatively, the neighborhood congregation has organized programs and services geared specifically for the neighborhood and, as such, members at the helm interact widely with participants. Because these congregants are visible and seen as resources themselves, the numbers of interactions with them are logically higher elevating them on the centrality measures. It is therefore easy to identify them as resource brokers within the congregation. Applying the same logic to the integrated congregation, one member emerges as central beyond the pastor. Maintaining one primary outreach ministry, the longtime congregant serving as its executive holds a visible position interacting with many individuals. Yet it is difficult to disaggregate congregational tenure from ex officio prominence as the reason this congregant emerges. Considering the totality of centrality measures across all three networks that either scores drop off significantly after the pastor or remain relatively homogenous across all members, the influence of this member as a resource broker remains suspect.

CHAPTER 6: DISTRIBUTION OF EMBEDDED RESOURCES

The next step in exploring urban religious congregations as resource brokers is to examine the distribution of resources across congregants. Using the network structure discovered through the network measures, actual resource domains and positional access to resources are mapped. The *talk to* network is used exclusively to map resources for Immanuel Church because the same congregants emerge as central across the *talk to* and *personal* networks and are moderately centralized while the *visit* network exhibits weak centralization. In addition, no subgroups were identified on any network obviating the need to explore subgroup impact and the role of bridges. Considering Grace Church, the *talk to* network is used to ease comparison between the two congregations. Yet given that the *visit* network exhibits two subgroups, resource distribution is examined across this network to elucidate any interesting patterns that form across this network with respect to the role of bridges (or individuals serving as resource brokers).

This chapter addresses the central question: what is the distribution of embedded resources across social networks in urban religious congregations? To this end, methods pertaining specifically to scale and domain creation are reviewed to frame the detailed findings presented thereafter (see Chapter 4 for in-depth methods description). A brief discussion of findings is also presented to situate them within the literature.

Methods

Two measures are used to assess access to resources – the resource generator (van der Gaag & Snijders, 2004) and the position generator (Lin, 1999). The position generator measured formal knowledge of individuals who hold certain hierarchical positions in the society as a proxy for resource access. The higher into the social stratum

one can reach, the better the resources accessed. As such, upper reachability is measured and mapped onto the network structures. The range of individuals accessed also proxies the diversity of resources available to an individual; therefore, range (highest positional score minus lowest score) is calculated and mapped onto the networks to assess if diversity is concentrated in any part. (see Lin, 1999; Smith, 2008)

The resource generator is used to measure actual access to resources, the possession of resources, and the history of sharing resources among other congregants. Four domains are created from 24 items: domestic resources; expert advice; personal skills; and problem solving resources. Because respondents could endorse multiple relationships for each item on the access measure, various scoring options exist to examine the presence and magnitude of resource access. The method used here dichotomizes items into endorsed or not endorsed and sums across the domains to yield a maximum score equal to the number of scale items in the domains (domestic resources=8; expert advice=8; personal skills=4; and problem solving resources=4).

In an effort to move beyond measuring access to resources as a proxy for one's own resources, congregants were asked which resources they themselves possessed. The mobilization question was addressed by expanding the resource generator to inquire whether or not a congregant had previously shared a possessed resource with "someone at church." This measure served as a proxy for future likelihood of mobilizing certain resources on behalf of others. Each of these measures – possession and mobilization – is dichotomous and summed over the domain.

Positional Resources

It is theorized that higher positional embeddedness (or the higher one can reach on the social ladder) yields access to resources necessary for social and economic

mobility (Lin & Dumin, 1986). Further, if one can reach higher than her or his social position, then advancement is more likely. The literature argues that the urban poor are socially dislocated from mainstream society and isolated from social classes that would provide access to resources for economic mobility. However, the data from these two urban congregations suggest otherwise. Lin's model (1999) asserts that positional embeddedness has a direct positive effect on instrumental returns.

Table 6.1 reports a summary of position generator variables across the entire sample and by congregation. Members from both congregations report access to an average of 9.56 of the 16 positions. Congregants from Immanuel report access to slightly more than 9 out of 16 positions and congregants at Grace report access to slightly over 10 positions. Nearly 39% (*n*=23) of the participants from Immanuel Church and 67% (*n*=41) of those from Grace Church report the ability to reach to the highest social position examined in this study – physicians. Wording of the question may have skewed these data since many individuals claim to know their physician on a "first name basis." To obviate the concern that upper reachability is overestimated, it should be noted that nearly 36% (*n*=21) from Immanuel and 61% (*n*=37) from Grace report knowing a lawyer on a first name basis, the second highest position on the measure. See figures 6.1 and 6.2 for upper reachability distribution.

Table 6.1. Position Generator Variables by Congregation

	All congregants	Immanuel Church	Grace Church
Positions Accessed	9.56	9.05	10.05
Mean prestige	53.48	52.38	54.56
Upper reachability	76.88	74.78	78.90
Range of prestige	47.03	45.05	48.89
Accessed Positions			
Physician (86)	53.33	38.98	67.21
Lawyer (74)	48.33	35.59	60.66
Alderman/alderwoman (69)	45.00	40.68	49.18
Registered nurse (66)	78.33	71.19	85.25
High school teacher (66)	79.17	83.05	75.41
Accountant (65)	49.17	44.07	54.10
Computer programmer (61)	58.33	57.63	59.02
Police officer (60)	71.67	64.41	78.69
Social worker (52)	57.50	47.46	67.21
Electrician (51)	60.00	59.32	60.66
Secretary (46)	73.33	74.58	72.13
Nurse's aide (41)	65.83	71.19	60.66
Machine operator (33)	51.26	51.72	50.82
Cashier (29)	74.17	74.58	73.77
Childcare worker (29)	69.75	67.24	72.13
Taxi/chauffeur driver (28)	21.67	25.42	18.03

Figure 6.1. Upper Reachability Distribution for Immanuel Church

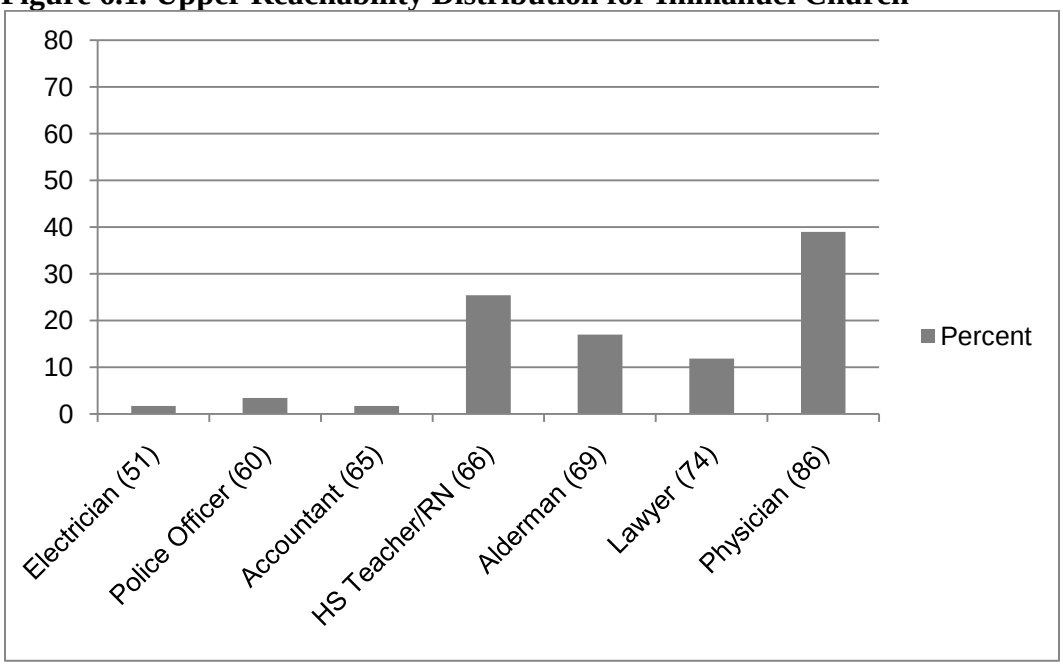
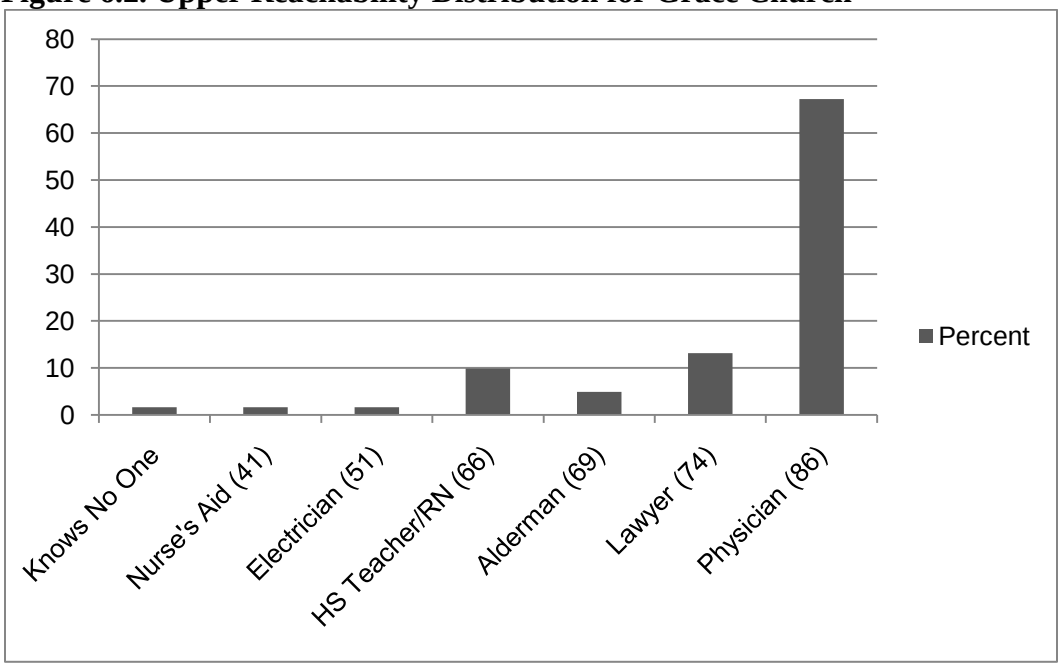


Figure 6.2. Upper Reachability Distribution for Grace Church



Among all participants, the average upper reachability score is 76.88 (*SD*=12.30) which is between lawyer (social prestige score of 74) and physician (social prestige score of 86), the top two positions examined. The average upper reachability score among Immanuel participants is 74.78 (*SD*=9.73) and 78.90 (*SD*=14.14) at Grace. Again, each congregation individually scored slightly above lawyer. However the average prestige score of positions accessed for all congregants in this study is 53.48 (*SD*=4.61) – at Immanuel the average is 52.38 (*SD*=4.41) and at Grace it is 54.56 (*SD*=4.59). The average range of positions accessed for all participants is 47.03 (*SD*=13.43). For Immanuel the range is 45.05 (*SD*=11.63) and 48.89 (*SD*=14.77) at Grace. To examine Lin's (1999) hypothesis that access to higher social strata yields increased instrumental returns, income is regressed on upper reachability. Across all congregants, for every unit increase in the ability to reach higher on the positional scale the odds of earning more income increase by 0.97 (*p*=.04).

Considering that the Position Generator measures access to individuals as a proxy for access to resources, important to consider here is how upper reachability and range scores are distributed across congregational networks. Scores clustering in certain parts of the network would suggest that access is concentrated in the hands of particular congregants. Figures 6.3 and 6.4 show the distribution of upper reachability scores at Immanuel and Grace respectively; individual scores for each congregant are displayed within the brackets. As expected from the high average scores, little variation exists across the networks with respect to distribution of scores. Not only are scores relatively homogenous across the network they cluster around the highest five positions examined. However, because no subgroups were detected Hypothesis 2.1 cannot be confirmed.

Figure 6.3. Upper Reachability, Immanuel Church Talk To Network (score in "[]")

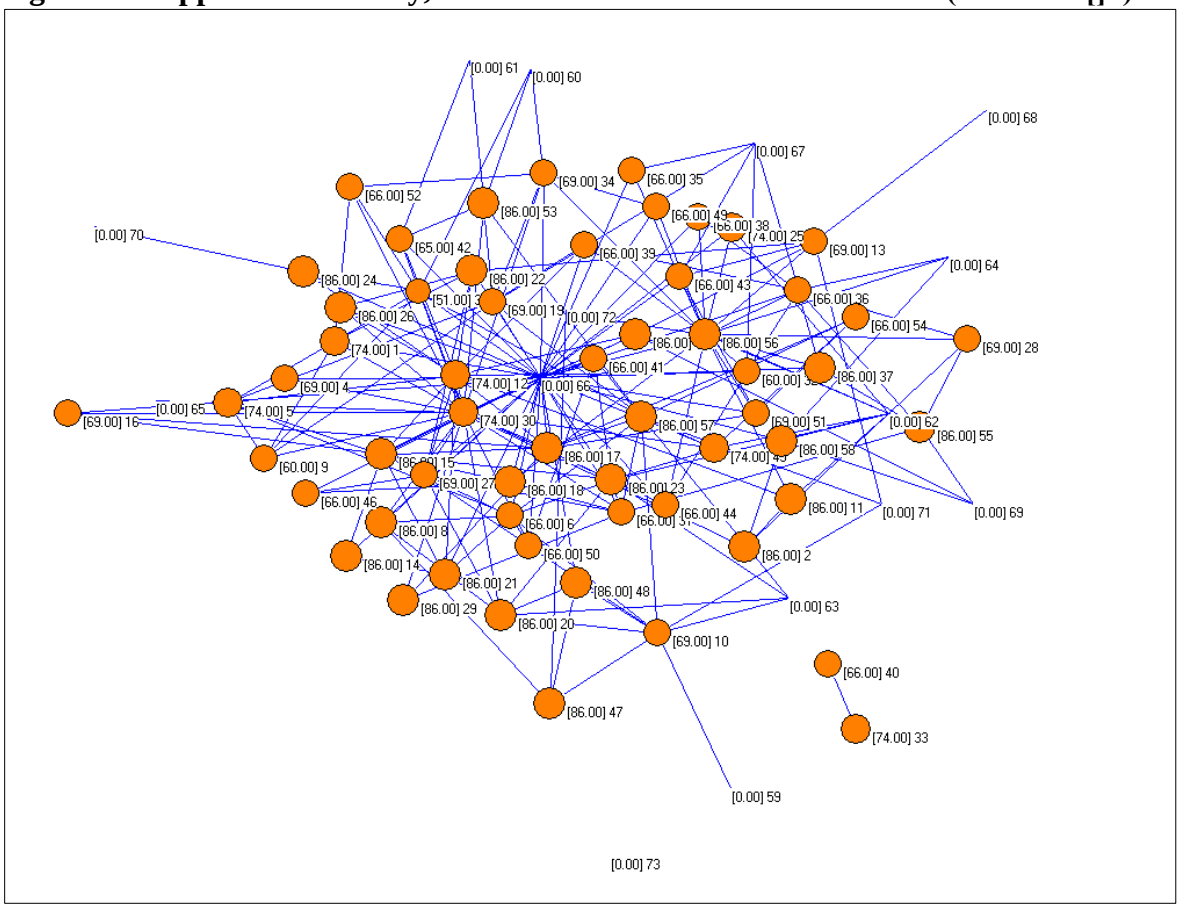
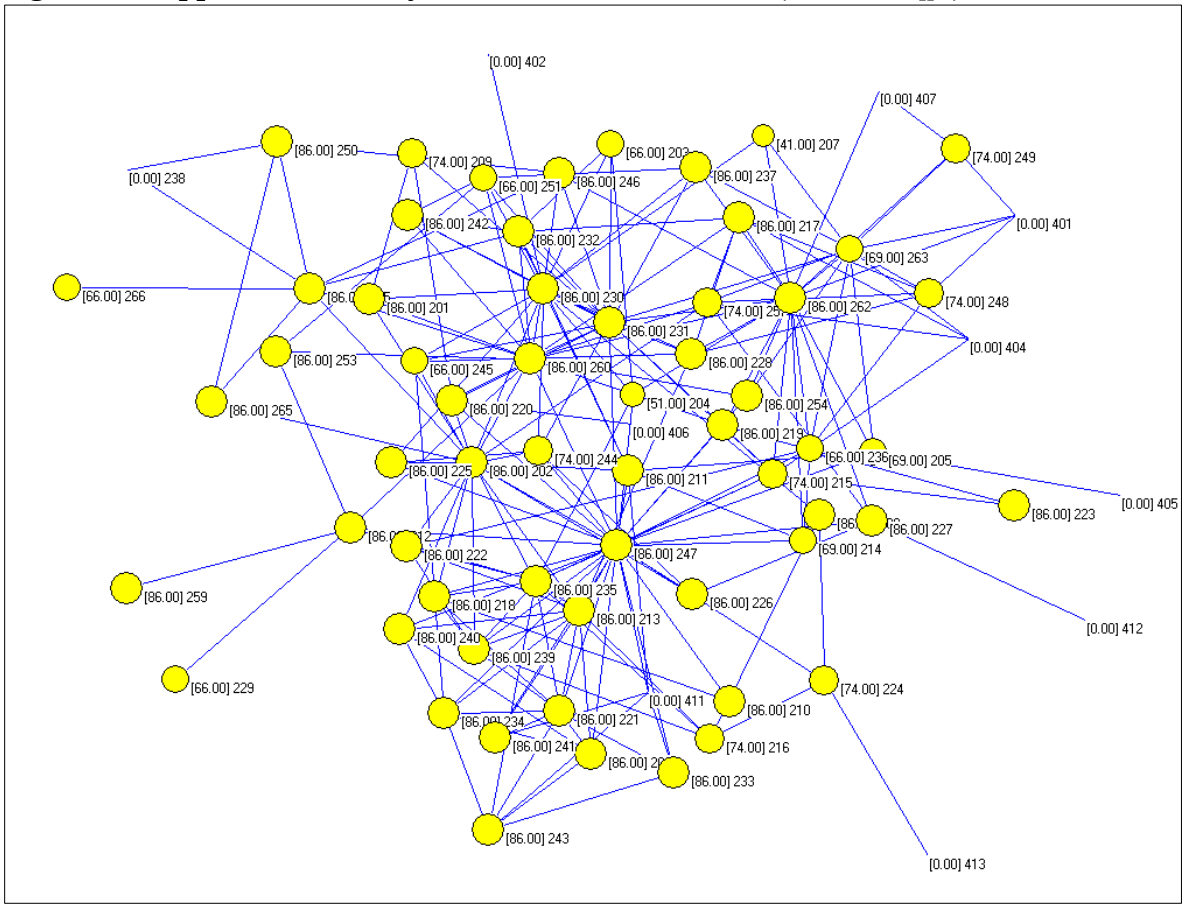


Figure 6.4. Upper Reachability, Grace Talk To Network (score in "[]")



Similarly, range scores demonstrate little variability. Smaller scores indicate a less diverse resource pool but do not suggest quality of those resources; that is, a congregant's contacts may be primarily in the upper end of the social spectrum returning a small range of resources important for social and economic mobility. However, another congregant's range score also may be small but at the lower end of the social spectrum returning a small range of resources less helpful for social and economic mobility. Conversely, a large score indicates access to a diverse pool of resources.

Range scores at Immanuel Church are relatively homogenous. The most central actors for whom data are available vary little (131=45; 161=58). Likewise, range scores

at Grace demonstrated little variability but unlike Immanuel, some actors reported very small ranges. The central actors at Grace also varied little (202=57; 247=57; 262=58). With both networks, data are missing resulting in a null response for some congregants.

Figure 6.5. Positional Prestige Range Scores, Immanuel Talk To Network

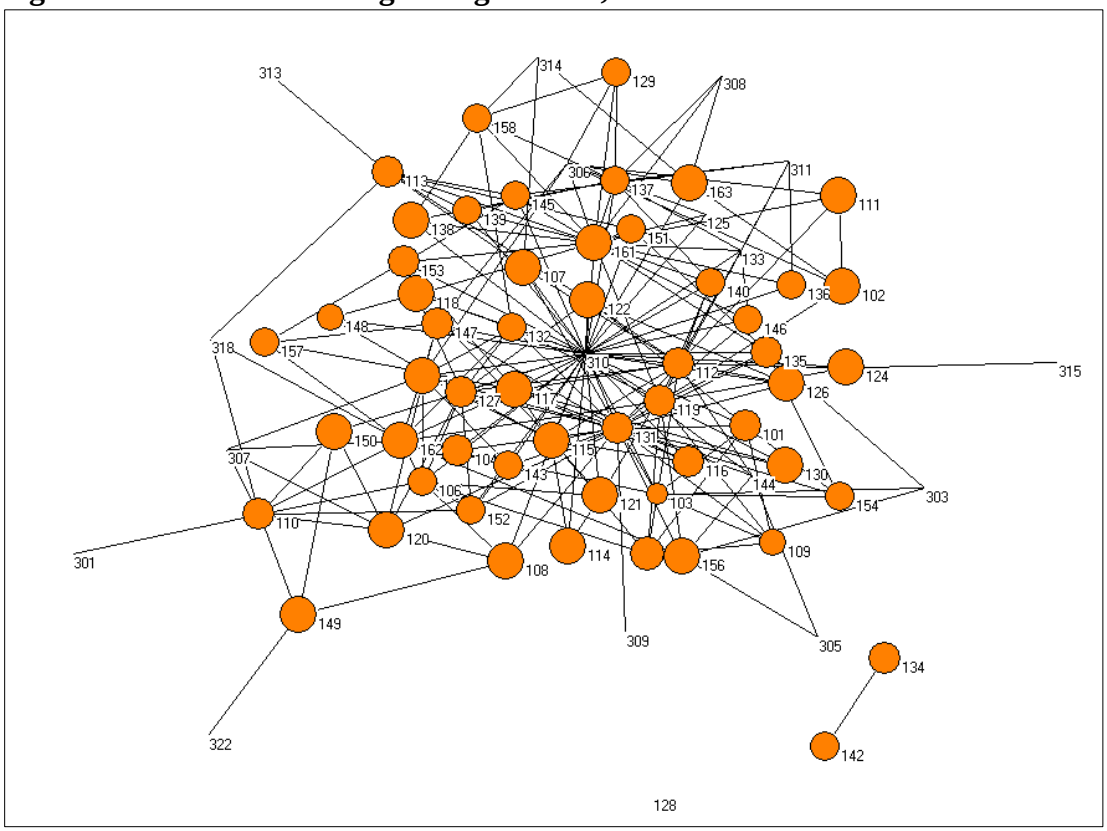
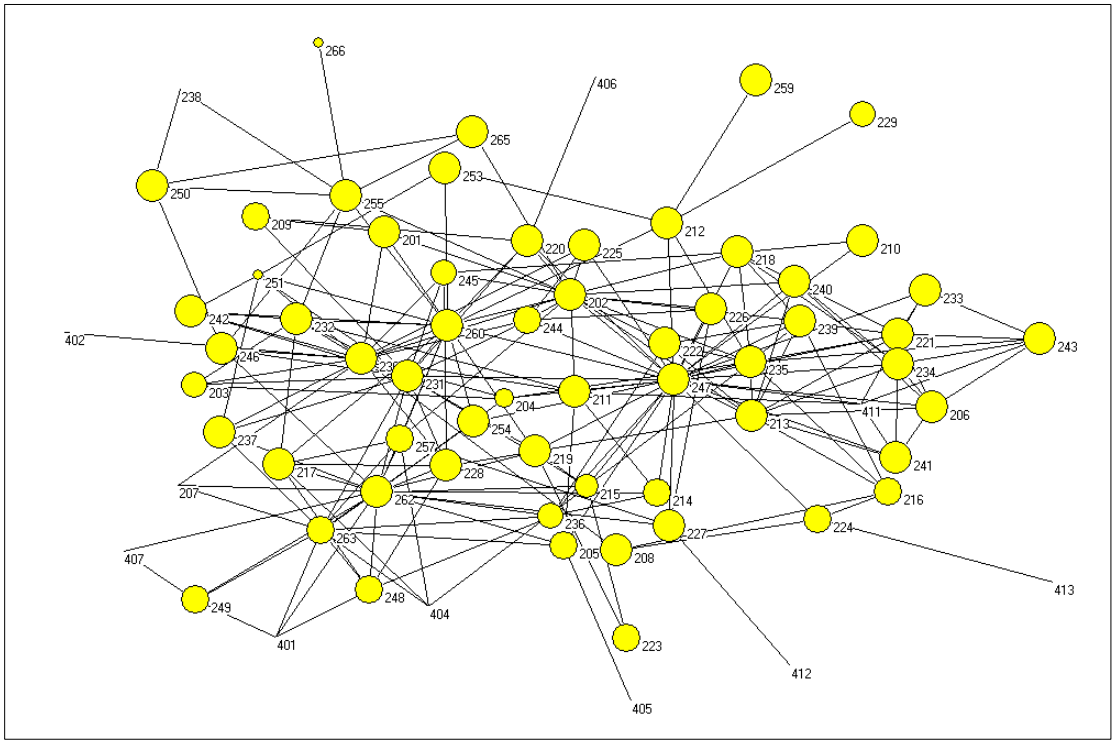


Figure 6.6. Positional Prestige Range Scores, Grace Talk To Network



Resource Generator

The Resource Generator measures access to specific resources theoretically important for social and economic mobility. Examining unequal variances, the difference in mean access (i.e., the average total number of resources accessed) was statistically significant between the two congregations, $t(89.8) = 2.20$, $p = .01$, with congregants at Immanuel (21.08) reporting a higher mean access score than congregants at Grace (19.21). The more conservative Wilcoxon rank sum test also demonstrates statistical significance, $z = 1.78$, $p = .04$. Therefore, Hypothesis 2.2 is not confirmed but the opposite is true – that the congregants of the neighborhood congregation, in this study, have access to more diverse resources. These findings demonstrate that even this small difference in the average number of resources accessed suggests a different level of advantage between neighborhood-based and integrated congregations

To examine network distribution of embedded resources, items are divided into four domains and results displayed on the *talk to* networks by domain with respect to network access, resources individually held by congregants, and prior history of sharing resources with another congregant. To explore subgroup variation, access data are also mapped onto the Grace *visit* network. Table 6.2 reports a summary of resource variables by domain.

Table 6.2. Resource Generator Variable Means by Congregation

	Immanuel Church	Grace Church
RG – Access		
Domestic resources	7.29 (1.13)	6.57 (1.45)
Expert advice	6.92 (1.15)	6.11 (2.50)
Personal skills	3.05 (.73)	2.85 (1.03)
Problem solving	3.83 (.46)	3.67 (.70)
RG – Personally Possess		
Domestic resources	5.76 (1.30)	5.70 (1.64)
Expert advice	4.25 (1.84)	4.41 (1.87)
Personal skills	1.05 (.95)	1.03 (.84)
Problem solving	3.28 (.81)	3.30 (.94)
RG – Shared		
Domestic resources	3.25 (2.11)	2.15 (1.93)
Expert advice	2.72 (2.01)	2.19 (2.08)
Personal skills	0.73 (.81)	0.55 (.59)
Problem solving	2.22 (1.16)	1.66 (1.18)

Standard deviations in parentheses

Domestic Resources

Domestic resources are those necessary to maintain a home and to assist with domestic responsibilities like childcare, and the maintenance of large assets like a car and cash reserves that can be loaned. The maximum number of resources accessed in this domain is eight – congregants at Immanuel average 7.29 (*SD*=1.13) resources and Grace average 6.57 (*SD*=1.45). When asked if a congregant personally held resources in this domain, individuals report averages slightly lower compared to overall access. The average at Immanuel is 5.76 (*SD*=1.30) and Grace is similar at 5.70 (*SD*=1.64). Of those

congregants who personally maintain at least one domestic resource, the average number of resources shared with other church members is 3.25 (*SD*=2.11) at Immanuel and 2.15 (*SD*=1.93) at Grace. The most commonly mobilized resources are helping others around the house and babysitting children" – 70% (*n*=40) and 68% (*n*=36) at Immanuel and 49% (*n*=28) and 52% (*n*=25) at Grace respectively. Six congregants at Immanuel and zero at Grace report a history of lending a large sum of money despite 16 and 7 people reporting the ability to do so respectively. Not surprisingly the most central congregants at Immanuel are among those who share the most whereas at Grace the sharing of resources does not correspond necessarily to network centrality.

Figure 6.7. Number of Domestic Resources Accessed via Network Connections, Immanuel (left) and Grace (right) "Talk To" Networks

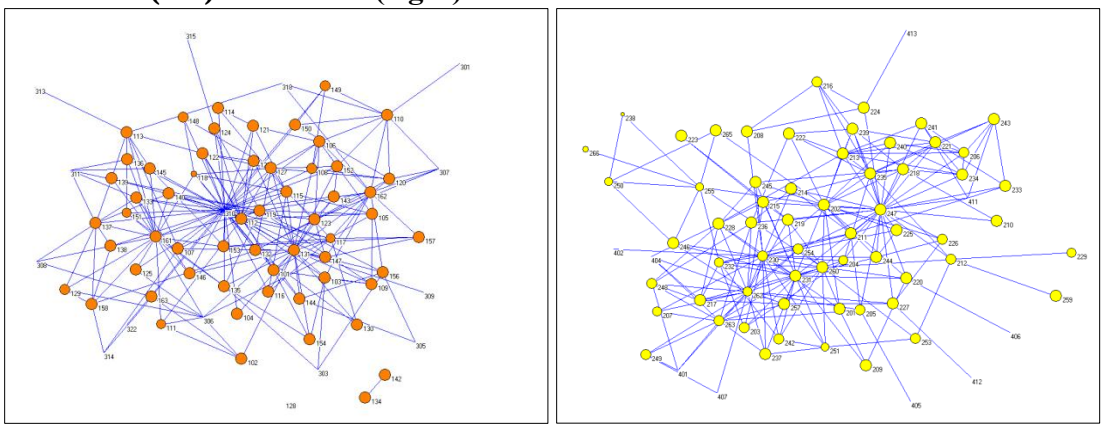


Figure 6.8. Number of Domestic Resources Personally Held by Members of Immanuel (left) and Grace (right) "Talk To" Networks

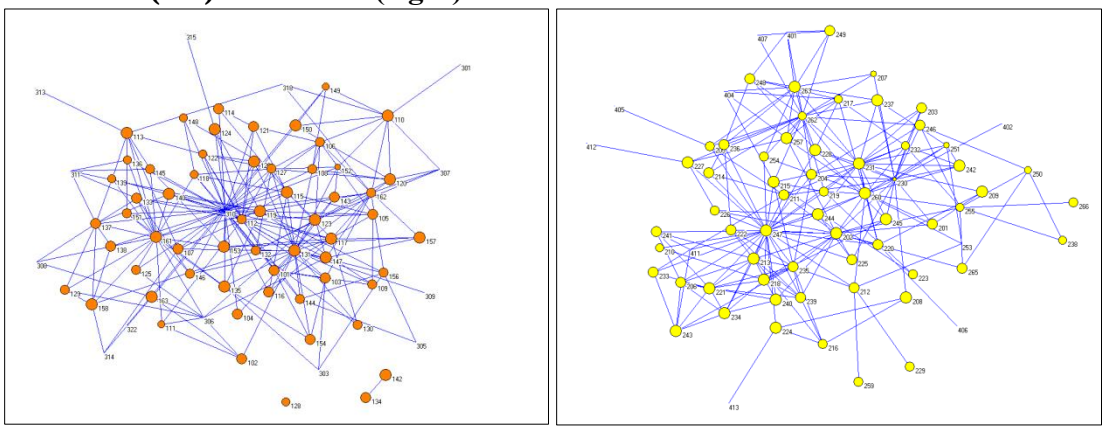
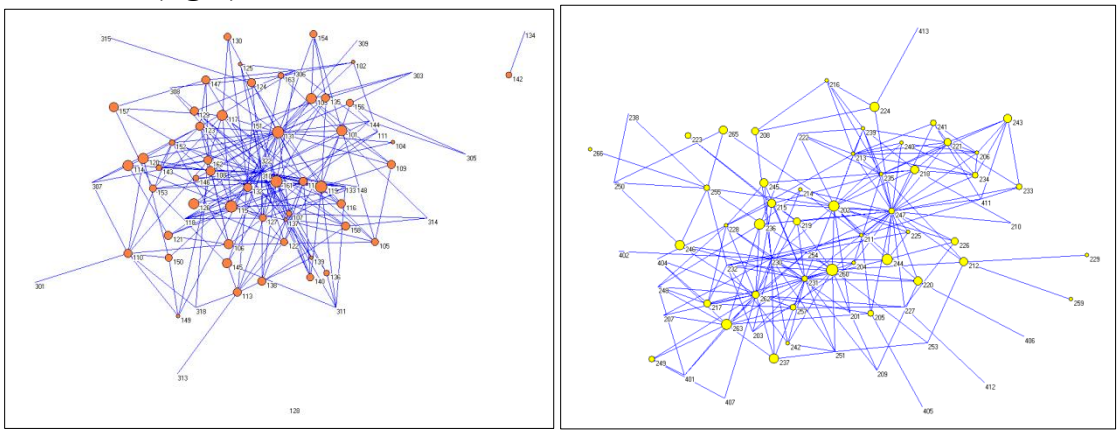


Figure 6.9. Number of Domestic Resources Shared by Members of Immanuel (left) and Grace (right) "Talk To" Networks



Key to Figures: Each vertex (circle) represents the magnitude of resources held by an individual congregant. The maximum for Domestic Resources and Expert Advice is 8 and for Personal Skills and Problem Solving it is 4. The absence of a circle indicates a null response or missing data.

8 4

Expert Advice

Expert advice is theorized to provide greatest access to resources necessary for economic development among the urban poor. Resources in this domain include knowledge about problems, ability to give advice on money and work problems, and contacts with the media. The maximum number resources accessed in this domain is eight – congregants at Immanuel average 6.92 (*SD*=1.15) and 6.11 (*SD*=2.50) at Grace. On average, congregants at Immanuel personally maintain 4.25 (*SD*=1.84) resources and 4.41 (*SD*=1.87) at Grace. Of those who indicate holding resources, an average of 2.72 (*SD*=2.01) at Immanuel and 2.19 (*SD*=2.08) at Grace have been mobilized on behalf of other church members. Giving advice on work problems (67%, *n*=30), giving career advice (74%, *n*=28), and giving a good job reference (51%, *n*=25) are the most

commonly mobilized resources at Immanuel. At Grace, the most commonly mobilized resources are discussing politics (68%, *n*=28), career advice (60%, *n*=27), and advice on work problems (52%, *n*=25). The most central congregants at Immanuel are among those who share the most expert advice resources and the pastor at Grace is among those who share the most along with some congregants who are among the top 10 on centrality measures. However, the congregant who consistently appears among the most central is not among those who report sharing the most expert advice resources.

Figure 6.10. Number of Expert Advice Resources Accessed by Members of Immanuel (left) and Grace (right) "Talk To" Networks

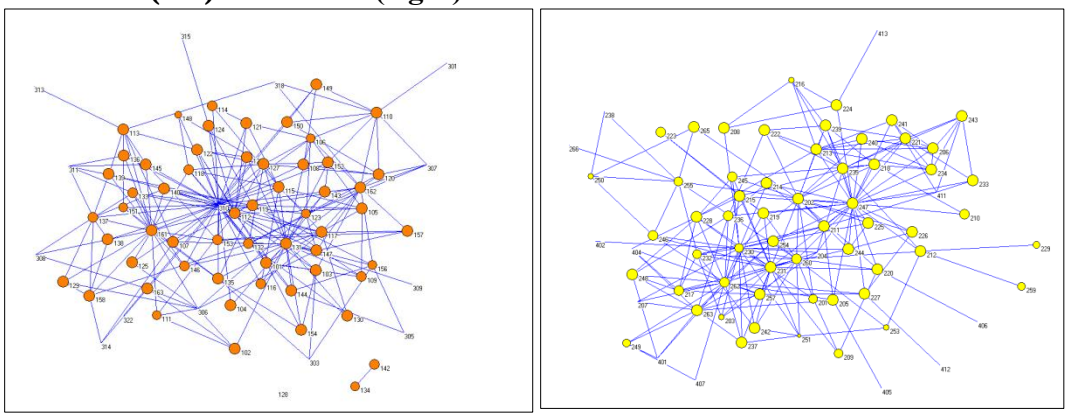


Figure 6.11. Number of Expert Advice Resources Personally Held by Members of Immanuel (left) and Grace (right) "Talk To" Networks

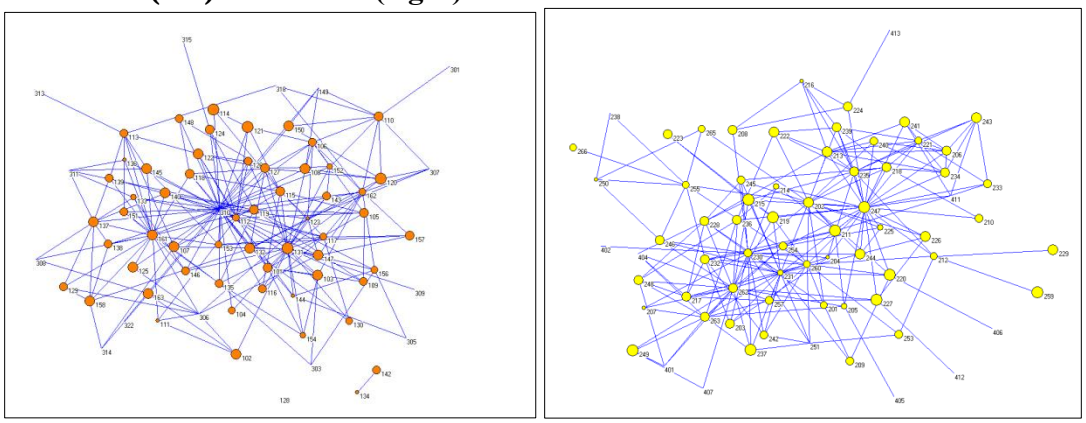
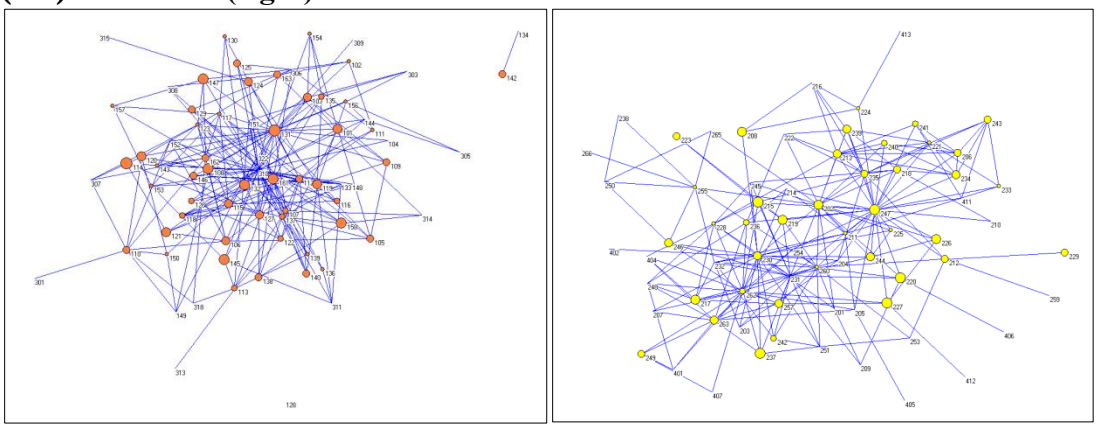


Figure 6.12. Number of Expert Advice Resources Shared by Members of Immanuel (left) and Grace (right) "Talk To" Networks



Personal Skills

This domain includes four variables beneficial for personal advancement or addressing personal needs. The variables include the ability to fix a car, knowledge of city hall staff, knowledge of individuals who have the ability to hire others, and caring for others when sick. On average, congregants at Immanuel have access to 3.05 (*SD*=.73) resources in this domain and Grace congregants average access to 2.85 (*SD*=1.03) resources. The maximum number of resources one can personally hold considering this domain is four; Immanuel congregants average 1.05 (*SD*=.95) and Grace 1.03 (*SD*=.84). Of those who indicate holding these resources, congregants at Immanuel share an average of .73 (*SD*=.81) with other church members and at Grace .55 (*SD*=.59) resources are shared on average. Congregants in this study personally held few personal skills resources and, consequently, were unable to share these with others in the congregation. At Immanuel, more congregants reported the ability to care for others while they are ill (*n*=31) but only 32% (*n*=10) reported providing that care to others within the congregation; however, while only 14 members report the ability to provide employment, 12 (86%) have employed other church members. Results are similar for Grace –

providing care for the ill is the most commonly held and shared resource (39%, *n*=11) though a greater percentage of those who can employ others actually have shared that resource (63%, *n*=12). The sociogram demonstrates that at Immanuel the central congregants are among those who share more resources in this domain whereas at Grace this is not the case.

Figure 6.13. Number of Personal Skills Resources Accessed by Members of Immanuel (left) and Grace (right) "Talk To" Networks

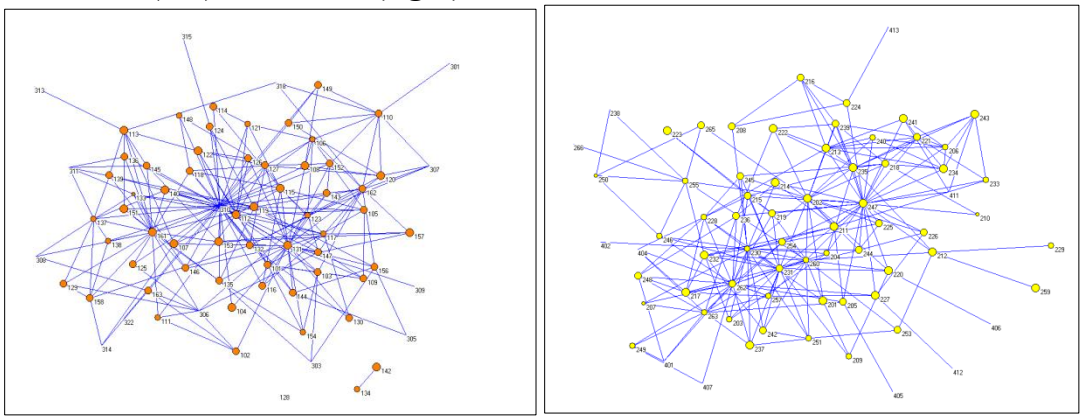


Figure 6.14. Number of Personal Skills Resources Personally Held by Members of Immanuel (left) and Grace (right) "Talk To" Networks

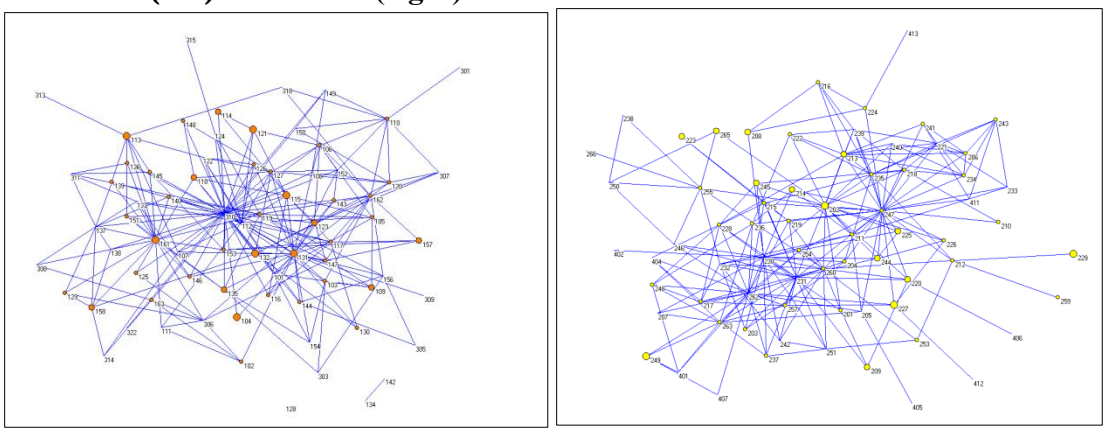
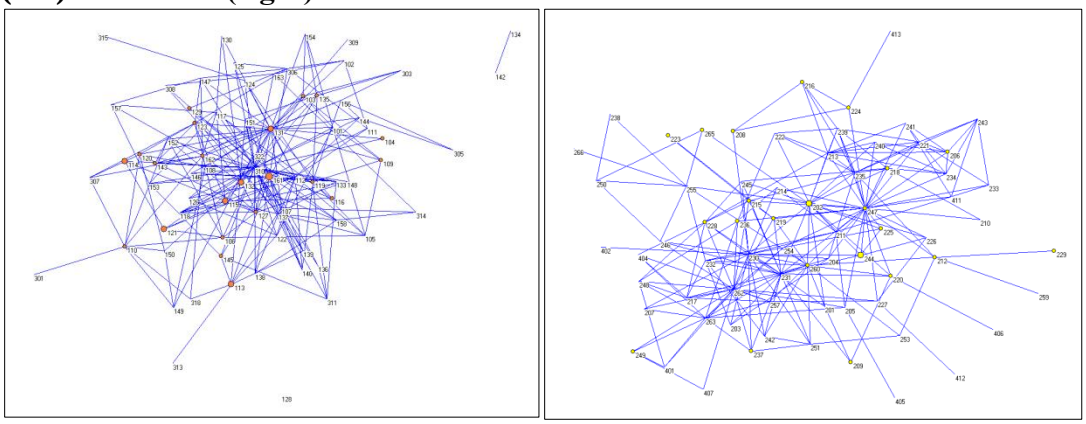


Figure 6.15. Number of Personal Skills Resources Shared by Members of Immanuel (left) and Grace (right) "Talk To" Networks



Problem Solving Skills

Problem solving skills include using a personal computer, shopping for others (or having someone shop for you), lending small amounts of money, or lending a listening ear. Not surprisingly, these resources are readily accessible and shared when possessed. The average number of problem solving skills congregants at Immanuel report accessing is 3.83 (*SD*=.46) and 3.67 (*SD*=.70) at Grace. Considering those personally held, Immanuel congregants report possessing an average of 3.28 (*SD*=.81) and Grace report an average of 3.30 (*SD*=.94). Sharing of resources is high with an average of 2.22 (*SD*=1.16) at Immanuel and 1.66 (*SD*=1.18) at Grace. The willingness to talk to with someone about their day is the most commonly possessed and shared resource in this domain (91% of the 57 have shared at Immanuel; 83% of the 60 have shared at Grace). More people at Immanuel have the ability to lend a small amount of money and are willing to mobilize it on behalf of other congregants (67%, *n*=32) than at Grace (35%, *n*=17). Likewise, while nearly all the congregants surveyed at Grace indicate they have the ability to shop for others during an illness, 36% (*n*=20) indicate they have done so; however, the number is slightly higher for Immanuel (53%, *n*=28). As with personal

skills, the central congregants at Immanuel are among those who report sharing resources more often on average and at Grace the central congregants are not among those who share most often (see Figure 6.18).

Figure 6.16. Number of Problem Solving Skills Resources Accessed by Members of Immanuel (left) and Grace (right) "Talk To" Networks

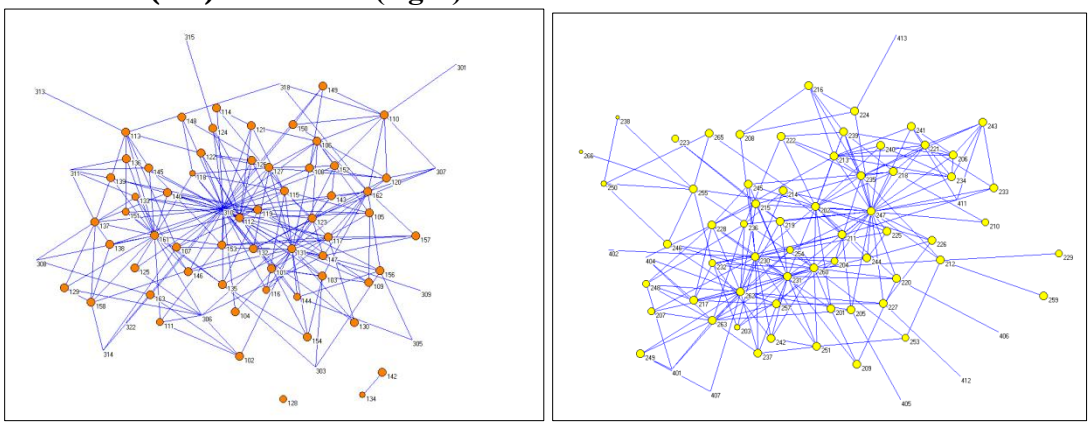


Figure 6.17. Number of Problem Solving Skills Resources Personally Held by Members of Church (left) and Grace (right) "Talk To" Networks

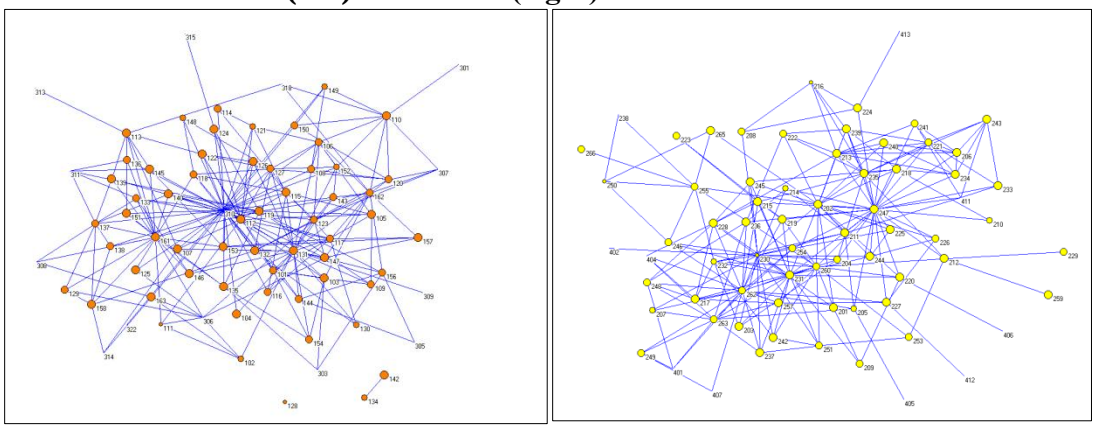
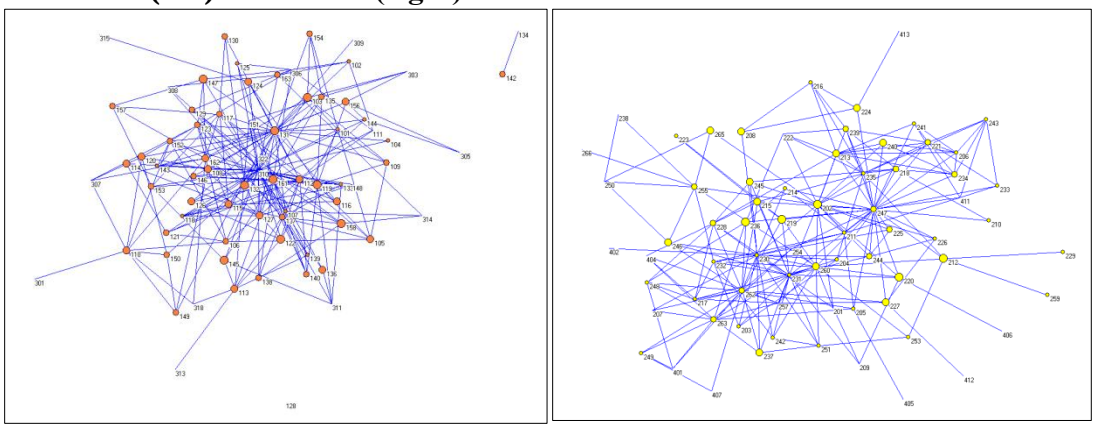


Figure 6.18. Number of Problem Solving Skills Resources Shared by Members of Immanuel (left) and Grace (right) "Talk To" Networks



Subgroups & Resource Brokers

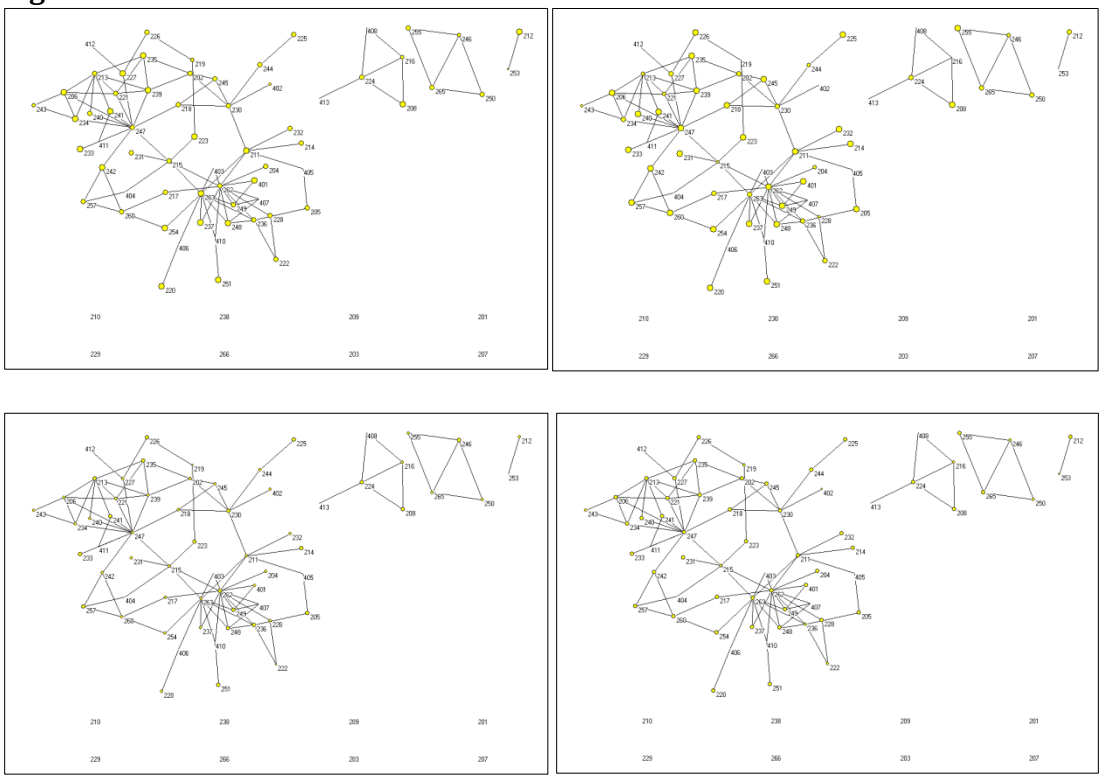
No cohesive subgroups are evident at Immanuel Church; however, the visit network at Grace Church suggests two main groups with several bridges. Burt (2005) contends that bridges will be those individuals who have access to greater numbers of resources yet it is difficult to tease similar findings from these data because of the generally high levels of resource access across the network. In some instances (e.g., 215) the theory does not hold and no discernable and distinctive pattern of distribution exists between the two subgroups. Findings are similar with respect to resource sharing as Figure 6.19 demonstrates. Qualitatively, congregants who bridge subgroups do not necessarily mobilize more resources than others across the network.

Table 6.3. Resource Generator Variable Counts by Central Congregants

	Immanuel Church			Grace Church		
	112	131	161	202	247	262
RG – Access						
Domestic resources	7	8	8	7	8	5
Expert advice	7	8	8	8	8	6
Personal skills	4	4	4	4	4	3
Problem solving	4	4	4	4	4	4
RG – Personally Possess						
Domestic resources	5	7	8	7	8	4
Expert advice	3	7	6	6	7	5
Personal skills	0	3	3	3	1	0
Problem solving	4	4	4	4	4	3
RG – Shared						
Domestic resources	4	7	8	6	2	3
Expert advice	3	7	6	5	6	2
Personal skills	--	2	3	2	1	--
Problem solving	3	4	4	4	0	2

Note: Respondent 310 who is most central to Immanuel Church did not complete the survey.

Figure 6.19. Resource Access in the Grace Church "Visit" Network



Discussion

Position Generator

Members of both congregations demonstrate ready access to individuals whose occupational position places them high on the social ladder. While at Immanuel the upper reachability distribution is more generally spread across the top 5 positions, congregants at Grace by and large indicate they can reach to the top. These findings are important when viewed in light of Smith (2008) who reached similar findings in a study of African American job seekers. The average upper reachability score among congregants in this study is in keeping with what we would expect across similar populations, though Immanuel's data more closely mirrors Smith's. However, Smith found the distribution of all positions accessed weighted more heavily toward the bottom of the scale which is somewhat true for Immanuel but not so for Grace (see Table 6.1).

Important to note here is the breadth of access congregants report. We would expect the urban poor to have little reach upward and, similarly, for contacts to be concentrated at lower levels of the prestige scale. Yet an organizational effect seems to be operational with this population. Just as Small (2009) found in his study of childcare centers, members of Immanuel and Grace trend slightly better than the urban poor have in other studies when organizational effects have not been considered. Differences between the two congregations exist, suggesting that the mix of congregants does matter. That is, the neighborhood-based congregation's prestige access is more similar to Smith's sample of black urban poor whereas the integrated congregation's, drawing a larger percentage of congregants from outside the neighborhood, is broader with notable access at the top of the scale. This finding is not surprising given what we know about the homogeneity of networks among the urban poor and limited access to heterogeneous

resources (see Tigges et al., 1998). This does indicate that perhaps in a larger sample we might see significant differences in populations from organizations that have a community focus as compared to those who are community-based but draw membership from a cross-section of the population.

Interestingly, a generalized logits regression model of income on upper reachability does not produce a statistically significant relationship. This finding is important with respect to Lin's hypothesis that higher prestige access yields higher instrumental returns. That is simply not the case with this population. It begs Smith's (2008) question about mobilization – that access does not necessarily translate into usable returns (or become capital). Even with the ability to reach high up the social ladder, congregants did not experience returns on capital. The interaction effect between church and upper reachability also is not statistically significant ($p = .06$) suggesting that even the type of church does not make a difference with respect to generating capital from resource access. These findings point to the need for additional studies to examine the impact of well-connected neighborhood organizations on the poor's social and economic mobility.

Resource Generator

Findings from the position generator highlight the salience of measuring actual resources. Specifically of interest is not only the number and types of resources accessed, possessed, and shared, but how these variables are distributed across congregational networks. Table 6.2 reports a summary of mean access scores for each resource domain of the resource generator. Generally, Immanuel reports higher access than do congregants at Grace though only marginally. Prestige scores would suggest, however,

that Grace should report higher access. These data are in paradox with Lin's network theory of resource access and reported access among this population.

Congregants have access to more domestic resources than any other resources but a greater percentage of problem solving skills resources than resources in any other domain. Being religious congregations, it is logical that congregants know, possess, and are willing to share resources such as "shopping for others when they are ill" or "being there to talk about the day." Such actions are intrinsic to what it means to be part of a Christian community. It is as Lin (1999) argues about membership in religious communities – resources garnered through these relationships may yield expressive returns rather than instrumental. However, this study examines instrumental returns, as measured in access to power and income, as a mechanism for social and economic mobility.

The most interesting finding is the decreasing extensity as we move from resources accessed to resources shared. As Table 6.2 indicates, percent of resources endorsed within domain is consistent across congregations and levels with problem solving resources ranked first, domestic resources second, expert advice third and personal skills last. Therefore we do not see differences emerge across the resource domain spectrum or between congregations. We do see differences in domain intensity as we move from resources accessed to resources shared – that is, the percent of total potential resources accessed by domain decreases as we move across the access spectrum.

Reports of access are generally strong, but reports of possession are weaker and reports of sharing resources among congregants have been weak. Access is not a concern

– congregants report high levels of access to resources on all four domains. As Smith (2008) argues, access is a necessary but not sufficient condition for capitalization. The assumption that organizational membership mediates the capitalization process does not hold for this population. From a strictly qualitative view, the sociograms demonstrate that congregants are sharing fewer resources than they possess. Unfortunately the resource domain most often shared is one that will not advance congregants socially or economically.

Using the network structure discovered through Aim 1 and mapping the PG and RG data onto the structure reveals that resource access is widely spread across the congregational networks. Just as no subgroups were uncovered, resource access does not cluster in any part of the network. Congregants central to the networks do demonstrate higher RG scores than the average (see Table 6.3); however, the sociograms indicate that congregants determined as central based on centrality measures are not always those who report higher levels of resource possession and sharing.

Burt (2005) argued that network resource brokers would be those who span structural holes and consequently be central to the network structure. Theoretically this finding should hold true, but given the density of these congregational networks and the absence of subgroups, typical trends in resource access across network structures are not salient. Central members are above average on nearly every measure across the access spectrum (see Table 6.3) than the within congregation average scores but they do not necessarily score the highest on these items. For these congregations, network centrality and resource extensity does not go hand-in-hand. It also suggests that further exploration about individual congregant characteristics is necessary to understand the accessibility

question. Just because someone is central to a religious congregation, does not automatically indicate they will have the greatest access, be the most resourced, or share more readily. This is not to discard the importance of network centrality; instead, we can say that central congregants are important to the access question and should be included in efforts to understand the role of religious congregations in social and economic mobility. It may be that communication networks are equally salient for linking individuals who are resource rich and resource poor. This study is not designed to answer this latter question. Regardless, the level and network distribution of resources is an important discovery for organizations in a high-poverty neighborhood.

CHAPTER 7: EXAMINING THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN RESOURCES, ACCESS AND NETWORK STRUCTURE

Building on the findings from Aims 1 and 2, this chapter furthers the discussion by examining the relationship between network structure and resource access as expressed through upper reachability and extensity. Essentially, do congregants who are prominent or have many connections within the congregations act as resource brokers? The unit of analysis here is the individual as a proxy for how the organization itself functions as an environment for resource sharing. Resource access and extensity among the urban poor is an interesting question itself, but the larger question remains whether or not these forms of structural social capital result in any social and economic gains. This question remains more complicated to address partly because upper reachability is both seen as an independent and dependent variable, depending on the approach.

The larger question explored in greater detail through this effort is whether or not the structure of network relations places congregants into closer contact with the resources necessary for social and economic mobility. To address this question, several hypotheses are tested that examine both relational and attribute data. Religious congregations have particular characteristics that differentiate them from other types of neighborhood-based organizations – namely a developed set of norms to which congregants ascribe (Wuthnow, 2002; Wuthnow, et al., 2004). The relationships between these congregant attributes and access and extensity are explored as a way to understand better what characteristics, if any, about members of religious congregations impact their resources access in an effort to differentiate the attributes of congregations from other neighborhood-based organizations among high-poverty U.S. neighborhoods.

Analytic Methods

Exponential Random Graph Models

Several hypotheses are tested using both network and traditional analytic methods. Because network data are relational, observations are not independent therefore violating the assumptions of many traditional statistical methods. To test the relationships between network relations and congregant attributes, exponential random graph models (ERGM) are used. The exponential-family random graph model functions differently than traditional statistical models by examining the tie that exists between two actors as a variable (Morris, Handcock, & Hunter, 2008). In ERG models, the predictor variables are functions of the ties themselves and "represent configurations of ties…that are hypothesized to occur more often or less often than expected by chance" (Morris et al., 2008, p. 2). ERG models are autoregressive because the predictors are direct functions of the response variables which changes model specification and estimation (Morris et al., 2008).

The general form of the ERG models is: $Pr(\mathbf{Y} = \mathbf{y}) = \frac{1}{\kappa}\exp\{\Sigma_A \eta_A g_A(y)\}$ where you have the probability of a random set of relations given a set of specified relations across the sociomatrix based on a specified network statistic (Robins et al., 2007). Using the statnet package (Handcock et al., 2003) with R to estimate ERGMs provides approximate maximum likelihood estimates and goodness-of-fit statistics (Hunter et al., 2008). In essence, ERGMs describe "the local selection forces that shape the global structure of a network…a network dataset…may be considered like the response in a regression model" (Hunter et al., 2008, p. 2). Information from an ERGM can help understand a phenomenon with respect to network relations.

To this end, ERGMs are used to explore the following hypothesis in an effort to better understand the relationship among variables in the conceptual model:

$H_{3.1}$: Members who report higher resource access have more connections with others in the network.

And modified, generalized versions of the unconfirmed hypotheses from Aims 1 and 2 are explored in the section on assortative mixing:

$H_{1.1}$: Congregants mix across race, income, and upper reachability.

$H_{2.1}$: Congregants mix across upper reachability scores.

Because no subgroups were detected in the church networks, homophily for the networks is examined for each of these attributes through one model (see Tables 7.1 and 7.2). That is, the likelihood of links between congregants in the same category and fewer links with congregants in different categories is tested. Homophily indicates how similar or dissimilar ties are among groups based on congregant attributes.

OLS and Correlations

Another series of hypotheses are tested in an exploration of the conceptual model and to test relationships between network generated data and outcomes of interest. Bivariate correlations and regression models are developed and tested to further explicate the relationship among variables in an effort to build theory about the salient factors within a religious congregation that impact resource access. Network data violate the statistical assumption of independence of observations; therefore, hypotheses involving such data are not entered into a regression model and are instead used in a more conservative Spearman Correlation to explore bridging qualities of congregants. To this end, the following hypotheses are tested:

$H_{3.2}$: Members who report higher participation in church activities are more prominent in the network.

$H_{3.3}$: Structural proximity to congregants who are bridges between subgroups increases access to resources.

$H_{3.4}$: Income and resource access and extensity are directly related – as resource access and extensity decrease, so will income.

As in previous analyses, because subgroups were not detected in Aim 1, hypothesis four explores the correlation between extensity and betweenness centrality. For hypothesis five, a generalized logit model is used over the preferred proportional odds model due to a failure of the POM to converge. Even the logit model demonstrates poor model fit when using the extensity variable, rendering findings suspect at best.

Missing Data

As noted in Chapter 5, members from each congregation were endorsed as part of another's network but did not complete the survey. These missing data created holes in the networks particularly problematic for analyzing, with confidence, statistical models including attribute data. Because traditional imputation methods are not possible given the lack of any information on missing cases, rudimentary data replacement methods are used to add data on variables for the ERGMs. Mean values are used for continuous data and mode values are used for nominal data with the exception of race for the pastor of Immanuel which is known.

Hypothesis 3.1

Using an ERGM, extensity from the RG is explored in each congregation. That is, this analysis uses extensity as the predictor variable and ties between congregants as

the outcome variable. The relationship is significant for both congregations indicating that as extensity rises so do connections with other congregants. These data demonstrate that the log odds of having increased ties with higher extensity is 1.07 ($p < .01$) for Immanuel and 1.07 ($p < .001$) for Grace Church. Therefore ties incrementally increase with resources. At issue here is the temporal nature of this relationship – do ties come because a congregant has resources or do resources come because a congregant has ties? Unfortunately this study design cannot answer this vital question.

Hypothesis 3.2

To explore the relationship between religious engagement and network prominence, a Spearman correlation is performed due to the lack of independence between observations. The betweenness centrality variable generated through the network analysis is used along with the scaled engagement variable. Considering Immanuel, the correlation between the variables is weak, $\rho = .32$, $p = .01$. The correlation among the variable with congregants at St. Johns is even weaker at $\rho = .26$, $p < .05$. While this finding is statistically significant, it does not suggest strongly that because someone participates more heavily in a congregation that he or she will lie on the paths between other congregants. That is, religious engagement is not necessarily a good predictor of a congregant becoming a resource broker though participation does matter.

Hypothesis 3.3

Similar to hypothesis 3 above, the relationship between resource access (extensity in this case) and network prominence (betweenness centrality) is examined through a Spearman correlation. The relationship for Immanuel is not statistically significant, $\rho = .22$, $p = .10$ and does not improve when examining the personal and visit networks. At

Grace the relationship is statistically significant, $\rho = .29$, $p < .05$, though weak. Again, being prominent in a congregational network does not necessarily mean that one also has access to a heterogeneous resource pool.

Hypothesis 3.4

Lin (1999) posits that resource access and income are directly related. The theory argues that as access to resources increases, so does income. That relationship is tested here in a bivariate generalized logit model because income is measured on an ordinal scale and the proportional odds model did not converge with these data. Both extensity and upper reachability are examined as independent variables with income as the dependent variable. Income is recoded from a seven level ordinal scale to a three level ordinal scale where 1= ≤ $19,999, 2= $20,000 - $59,999, and 3= ≥ $60,000 to account for skewness; a frequency of recoded income data shows that only 5 participants across both congregations report annual income at or above $60,000 in 2009. Upper reachability is also used as a dependent variable in an OLS model as a proxy for power; it is regressed on extensity.

First a Spearman correlation is run on extensity and income by congregation. Neither church exhibits a correlation between the variables ($\rho_{Immanuel} = -.06$, $p = .63$; $\rho_{Grace} = .21$, $p = .11$). Considering extensity in the generalized logit model, only parameters within the Immanuel data are significant; no statistical significance exists among congregants at Grace. These findings should be approached with caution since model fit is questionable (residuals vary significantly from zero). Model-predicted probabilities are reported here because data are skewed to low income inflating the log odds that a low income congregant will have a certain set of resources compared to other incomes. At

Immanuel, the model-predicted probability that a low income congregant has an extensity score of 18 is .50 and of 19 is .25. Similarly, model-predicted probabilities for middle income congregants to have an extensity score of 20 is .38, 21 is .18, and 23 is .20. Table 7.1 reports the frequency of extensity scores by income level for Immanuel Church, demonstrating extensity scores are mixed for both middle and low income congregants. While this does not tell us whether or not the differences are statistically significant, qualitatively, due to small sample size and skewed data, it does suggest that low and middle income congregants look relatively the same with respect to resource extensity. The distribution for Grace is spread across a wider spectrum.

Table 7.1. Extensity Scores by Percent Within Income Level for Immanuel Church

	13	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24
Low	0	5.13	2.56	2.56	2.56	2.56	7.69	23.08	20.51	20.51	12.82
Middle	5.26	5.26	0	0	5.26	15.79	5.26	10.53	26.32	10.53	15.79
High	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	100	0	0

Upper reachability as a proxy dependent variable for power (i.e., the higher up the social ladder one can reach, the more access to persons of power he or she has) is regressed on extensity in a traditional OLS model. The assumptions of the test were examined and met; multicollinearity is not a problem based on the variance inflation factor for the parameter estimate. When examining the data for both congregations, upper reachability and extensity are correlated (r = .46, p < .001). The regression using all 120 observations is statistically significant (F = 31.77, df = 1, 119; p < .001) and extensity accounts for 21 percent of the variance (R^2 = .21) in upper reachability. A statistically significant relationship exists between extensity and upper reachablity (b=1.39; t =5.64; p < .0001); for every unit increase in extensity, a congregant reaches 1.39 units higher on the social ladder.

When performing the regression on each church separately, the variables for Immanuel are not correlated ($r = .06$, $p = .65$) but are for Grace ($r = .68$, $p < .0001$). Regressing upper reachability on extensity for congregants at Grace is statistically significant ($F = 51.41$, $df = 1, 59$; $p < .0001$); the regression assumptions were satisfied and extensity accounts for 47 percent of the variance ($R^2 = .47$) in upper reachability. For every unit increase in extensity, a congregant at Grace reaches 1.93 units higher on the social ladder (b=1.93; t =7.27; $p < .0001$). That is, for every additional resource endorsed on the resource generator, a congregant moves two points higher on the position generator scale.

Assortative Mixing

To test the tendency for assortative mixing among the congregations, an ERG model is built for each congregation including the variables religious engagement, upper reachability, income, and race. It was originally hypothesized that subgroups would follow naturalistic tendencies found among the urban poor – homogeneous with respect to race, income, and resource access. This model tests whether or not the networks in this study mimick those found in other studies of U.S. neighborhoods with concentrated poverty.

Tables 7.2 and 7.3 report the findings from the ERGMs for Immanuel and Grace respectively. Both null models indicate that fewer links are reported than expected in the model. For Immanuel, model fit improves with the addition of engagement, upper reachability, and income; however, it degrades with the addition of race. This finding is quite logical for Immanuel because the pastor's race is different from the majority of his congregation and many congregants reported a direct tie to him along with their ties to

other congregants who are racially homogeneous. Adding the structural predictors to the Immanuel attribute model 2 (sans race), increases the model fit by accounting for structural tendencies in the data.

Considering Immanuel Church, religious engagement was statistically significant before adding the structural predictors. After adding the structural variables, upper reachability ($p < .001$) and low income are significant ($p < .10$). Holding other predictors constant, the log odds of mixing among congregants with differential abilities to reach higher on the social ladder is .67 ($p < .001$) and congregants with low income having ties with a congregant of upper income is .92 ($p < .10$). The structural model demonstrated that the log odds of shared partners (i.e., two congregants being linked) is 1.07 ($p < .001$) and for shared partners to be linked with another congregant is 2.05 ($p < .001$) when controlling for the other the variables. This finding supports Coleman's (1988) notion of social closure inasmuch as clustering is a statically significant phenomena linking two congregants together through a third.

Table 7.2: Attribute and Structural Models for Immanuel Church

	Null Model	Attributes Model 1	Attributes Model 2	Attributes Model 3	Structural Model
Edges	-2.37 (.07)***	-3.23 (.39)***	-3.15 (.39)***	-3.03 (.45)***	-4.34 (.48)***
Religious Engagement		.05 (.02)*	.04 (.02)*	.04 (.02)*	.02 (.03)
Upper Reachability		-.19 (.19)	-.19 (.19)	-.19 (.19)	-.40 (.08)***
Low Income			.01 (.14)	.01 (.14)	-.08 (.04)†
Middle Income			-14.60 (417.47)	-14.48 (396.12)	-13.48 (329.75)
Race				-.09 (.17)	
GWESP (Clustering)					.72 (.02)***
GWDegree (Degree)					.23 (.35)
GWDSP (Structural equivalence)					.07 (.00)***
Model Fit AIC	1533.5	1530.6	1525.9	1527.6	1262.7

***$p < .001$; **$p < .01$; *$p < .05$; †$p < .10$

Considering Grace, model fit improves with the addition of each predictor variable and significantly improves with the addition of the structural predictors. The attributes model with all predictors is statistically significant on each factor when holding the others constant. Holding other predictors constant, the log odds of mixing among congregants with similar levels of engagement is 1.07 ($p < .001$), upper reachability 1.97 ($p < .001$), and among congregants of the same race is 1.42 ($p < .001$). Controlling for the other attributes, the odds of congregants with low income having ties with a congregant of upper income is .93 ($p < .05$) and congregants with middle income having ties with a congregant of upper income is .51 ($p < .10$). The structural model demonstrates that the log odds of shared partners is 1.01 ($p < .001$), for shared partners to be linked with another congregant is 3.82 ($p < .001$), and for congregants with more links to form partnerships is 8.41 ($p < .001$) when controlling for the other variables. Not only do the Grace data support Coleman's social closure theory, they also suggest that those with a greater number of ties are more likely to form partnerships with others regardless of their individual attributes.

Table 7.3. Attribute and Structural Models for Grace Church

	Null Model	Attributes Model 1	Attributes Model 2	Attributes Model 3	Structural Model
Edges	-2.31 (.07)***	-4.27 (.33)***	-4.22 (.33)***	-4.61 (.37)***	-6.47 (.31)***
Religious Engagement		.10 (.02)***	.11 (.02)***	.10 (.02)***	.07 (.02)***
Upper Reachability		.66 (.15)***	.67 (.15)***	.73 (.15)***	.68 (.03)***
Low Income			-.21 (.15)	-.19 (.15)	-.07 (.04)*
Middle Income			-1.23 (.47)**	-1.11 (.48)*	-.67 (.16)***
Race				.52 (.18)**	.35 (.03)***
GWESP (Clustering)					1.34 (.01)***
GWDegree (Degree)					2.13 (.19)***
GWDSP (Structural equivalence)					.01 (.00)***
Model Fit AIC	1470.9	1407.6	1401.6	1394.9	1066.7

***$p < .001$; **$p < .01$; *$p < .05$

Discussion

The purpose of these analyses is to explore the relationship between network structure and prominence and resource access, power and wealth. In addition, the analyses go further to test, at a basic level, the specific relationship between resource access and power and wealth. Two theoretical strands drive these analyses: 1) that resource networks among the urban poor are homogeneous (Tigges et al., 1998); and 2) that increased access leads to higher income and more social power (Lin, 1999). Irrespective of the returns themselves, the main thrust of the effort here was to understand the processes that shape resource access among urban religious congregations and whether or not organizational characteristics mitigate the naturalistic tendencies toward homogeneous networks.

The combination of network and traditional analytic methods provides important insight into the processes at work in these two congregations. As Burt (2005) argued, other network members want to be close to those who are well-resourced. This is true for members of Grace and Immanuel, albeit a modest relationship. As noted above, it is impossible to tease out the temporal nature of this relationship through a synchronic

design – a longitudinal design is necessary to better understand if members are well-resourced because they have more connections or if they have more connections because they are well-resourced. Nonetheless, these findings do suggest that congregants with higher resource access can serve as resource brokers inasmuch as other members capitalize on their connections within the network. This finding also supports the notion that congregations are repositories of resources (Wuthnow, 2002) that have the potential to be shared among the urban poor.

Homophily is an important concept to examine within the context of the urban poor and particularly the role that religious congregations can play in the assortative mixing process. This process is tested using terms salient to both congregations and resource access. Interestingly the two congregations vary, suggesting that because their compositions vary by being of different types (neighborhood versus integrated), congregants mixed across categories differently. At Immanuel, congregants are more likely to mix with dissimilar others on upper reachability and low income congregants are more likely to mix with congregants of other incomes. Clustering and structural equivalence are both significant, indicating that linked congregants share partners and that other congregants link two non-connected congregants together. All of this to say that a congregant need not travel very far before she or he can reach another congregant and, likely, access resources in another part of the network to which a direct connection may not exist.

At Grace the picture is somewhat different. The effect sizes are larger and whereas the direction was consistently negative (mixing across attributes), assortative mixing at Grace varies. Congregants who are more involved tend to report a tie with

others who were similarly engaged in the life of the congregation. Likewise for upper reachability – congregants tended not to mix with others who were not as connected. However, though the effect size is small, low and middle income congregants mix with others beyond their income level. This finding is not surprising given the income heterogeneity at Grace. Considering the most general communication network is used for the analyses (talk to network), it is unlikely that class would significantly divide members of a small congregation. That congregants do not tend to mix across races is surprising, though the congregation is primarily African American. Congregants at Grace report a significant number of shared partners and an even higher number of shared partnerships between linked pairs. This finding indicates that one need not travel far to reach resources that may not be directly accessible.

These findings are mixed. On one hand congregants are able to interact with others who represent the potential of expanding resource access and extensity; on the other hand, assortative mixing is not widespread across attributes. The hope that urban religious congregations provide space for people to mix across the normal confines to access resources does not seem to be the case in these congregations. It is not to say that no mixing occurs and that congregants are not sharing what they have with others. It is to say that the ERG model indicates mixed outcomes on assortative mixing that warrant further exploration.

Two individual level attributes that were hypothesized to impact extensity, religious engagement and network prominence, are inconsequential. While the relationship between engagement and prominence is statistically significant, it is not practically significant. The weak correlations in these data indicate that increased

engagement does increase one's prominence at church, but only slightly. Moving through the conceptual model from engagement to prominence to extensity, no significant relationship is found between prominence and extensity though the correlation between engagement and extensity is statistically significant for Grace ($r = .55$, $p < .0001$). Given these findings, the role of networks, at least when considering extensity, remains uncertain.

Of significant concern to social capital researchers is whether or not resources actually convert into capital. Unfortunately the data collected in this study make these relationships difficult to model. Findings cannot be reported nor discussed with any confidence to draw conclusions about the impact of resources on income. We can say that extensity, the diversity of accessible one's resources, is directly and positively related to how high one reaches up the social ladder, at least for members of integrated congregations. As with extensity and connections within the congregation, the temporal question looms and cannot be answered.

What then can I say about network structure, prominence, resource access, and instrumental returns among members of urban religious congregations? It is a complicated set of relationships that needs to be explored through a larger sample and compared to residents of urban poor neighborhoods who are not actively engaged in religious congregations. The data show that congregants are structurally close to others and it only takes a step or two to get to a person whose resource base might be more diverse. The data show some mixing across attributes but not others, probably an artifact of the sample composition. The data show that higher levels of engagement produce

more personally held resources. In the end, participating in a religious congregation does have an effect, however small, in connecting individuals to resources.

CHAPTER 8: DISCUSSION

Summary of Findings: Bringing it Together

By using network and survey approaches this study examines two urban religious congregations to assess resource access for the purpose of building theory about the role of this type of neighborhood organization as a resource broker among the urban poor. This work representes the first step in adapting Lin's (1999) network theory of social capital to urban congregations and as such is not designed to test a conceptual model but to explore, through varied and limited quantitative and exploratory social network methods, what types of resources are present in urban congregations, how they are distributed across networks, and which factors impact both access and resource heterogeneity. The findings from these two cases cast doubt on the belief that the urban poor are resource constrained but do not provide a clear picture about the specific mechanisms that convert resources to capital. The discussion here brings together the findings from the study aims explores and compares and contrasts the two unique cases.

Upper Reachability and Resource Access

The findings from these two religious congregations demonstrate that the urban poor, at least those studied here, can reach high up the social ladder. This finding is in keeping with Smith's (2008) study of a similar population. But the more surprising finding is the extent to which congregants at both Grace and Immanuel reported access to resources and the personal possession of resources. Given the income figures, particularly with the generally low income population at Immanuel, I would have expected to see lower resource access and possession. This is, in effect, what the current network theory of social capital argues.

At play may be the type of resource domain most commonly accessed and possessed among urban religious congregations. Using Webber and Huxley's (2007) domain classification scheme, congregants access *problem solving skills* and *domestic resources* most readily. While important for daily living, these types of resources may not promote social and economic mobility. It is likely that resource domains have a differential effect on income and social power – an effect not tested in this study. Basically not all resources are created equally when it comes to social and economic mobility among the urban poor. While I would expect the combination of upper reachability and resource access to impact a congregant's economic status, for many in this study it does not seem to matter significantly.

Striking is the wide distribution of access extensity and possession among congregants at both study sites. It was hypothesized that subgroups would be present in the congregations and resources from particular domains would be nested within those subgroups. This hypothesis was founded on the belief, particularly for Grace as the integrated congregation, that members of different economic statuses would cluster together and economics would dictate resources. However, subgroups were not detected nor is there any evidence that resources are restricted to certain populations of individuals. This speaks directly to the need to understand better the forces that perpetuate and entrench poverty in urban U.S. neighborhoods. This becomes particularly salient when we see populations such as these accessing important resources necessary for social and economic mobility but who remain unable to capitalize sufficiently to raise their economic standing.

Network Structure

Much of this study rests on the assumption that networks are important to resource access and, subsequently, social and economic mobility. It was hypothesized that religious congregations as a unique type of neighborhood organization have the ability to reshape the opportunity structure of the urban poor such that resources would be more readily accessible. To this end, the findings are mixed and do not offer a clear picture as to the effect of religious congregations or how they might be impactful. However, some important findings bear discussion.

Members who have more connections in their congregations report higher resource extensity, and religious engagement and network prominence are directly and positively associated for both congregations. These findings say two things about the congregants in this study: 1) that active involvement in a religious congregation may be a requirement for the effective accessibility of network embedded resources; and 2) that connections really do matter. Federal social welfare policy has assumed that congregations would readily mobilize their resources on behalf of community members; however, these findings show that not only is active engagement perhaps a prerequisite for accessing resources embedded in religious congregations, but that mobilization beyond the church walls may be limited based on patterns of sharing within the congregational networks. It is the connection between congregants that is the necessary conduit to access resources, not only the endorsement of membership or engagement.

The role of gatekeepers or congregants who act as resource brokers is difficult to tease out from these data. Clearly connections across the congregations are high and clustering is significant for both Immanuel and Grace. The question of prominence, specifically betweenness centrality as a measure of lying on the path between two other

congregants, plays out differently for these congregations. Whereas Immanuel has three leaders through whom it can be assumed resources flow from one part of the congregation to the other, the picture at Grace is not as clear. This could be an artifact of membership composition – neighborhood versus integrated – or it could be an artifact of the ministries in which congregations are engaged. The bias here is toward the former since members who also reside in closer geographic proximity theoretically mix more often and may be accessed beyond organized church events. Ultimately this is a question of geography and social closure which is beyond the scope of this study, but data were gathered for future analyses to include these variables specifically. The pastors naturally emerge as central, but beyond that one universal characteristic of a resource broker included holding a visible position in the congregation that required interaction with a broad cross-section of the church membership. Neither race nor income matters for this measure of prominence.

It is difficult to reject the null hypothesis that assortative mixing did not occur. The ERG models demonstrate that mixing occurs on some factors and not others. Disregarding race because of the relative homogeneity of each congregation, members at both congregations reported mixing across economic strata. This is good news when considering poor urban populations. Mixed, however, is the tendency to mix with congregants of a different upper reachability level; congregants at Immanuel mix across levels whereas congregants at Grace do not. Is this to suggest that members of integrated congregations are less likely to comingle with other congregants of a lower social status? Perhaps that is the case, but I do not know from these data because missing data bias the estimates and the study only examines two congregations. Generally, however, it does

appear that congregants mix across attributes which supports the notion that networks connected to urban religious congregations are perhaps more heterogeneous than those naturally occurring in poor urban neighborhoods.

But in the end, the discovery that these two congregations are tightly knit and that resources are not segregated is important. With respect to Immanuel Church, network structure is likely an artifact of its composition of neighborhood residents. This is a congregation with relatively low membership tenure (9 years) and a clearly defined neighborhood outreach ministry. Given Coleman's (1988) arguments about social closure within geographic social relations, the structure in this congregation is not surprising. Members have the opportunity to interact beyond the church walls but were likely introduced to the congregation through one of the members who emerged as central. These central congregants are a conduit into the life of the church and the public face of the congregation to those in the community.

Further, the ERGM helps illumine the pattern of relations among members at Immanuel Church. Those congregants who emerged as central do not fit the typical resident profile of this neighborhood. All are well-educated and employed at typically middle-class levels. As such and coupled with their visible leadership positions, that congregants at Immanuel would share ties with other congregants who are generally different is logical. These personal attributes may also be the impetus behind their centrality and their rise to leadership positions.

However, Grace Church is much less centralized. Congregants have been members here much longer on average (18 years) and are more heterogeneous with respect to demographics and residence. As an integrated congregation and one

undergoing transition, the difficulty identifying central congregants is not surprising. Members at Grace likely interact primarily at organized church events and lack the kind of social closure present at Immanuel. The structure of the *visit* network is telling – a divide exists here that does not for the other congregation under study. Yet the other networks are dense and resources widely distributed.

The ERGM for Grace Church predicts less interaction among congregants. It may be that resource access at Immanuel is relatively uniform because of robust, accessible congregational resource networks; however, that members at Grace are less likely to interact with congregants of differing background may suggest that personal networks are more robust than congregational networks specifically. In my read of the data, integrated congregations may be less likely to broker resources than neighborhood congregations. Members of integrated congregations, at least the one under study, tend to affiliate with others more like them. Structurally, which is borne out in Chapter 5, this means the network structure makes it more difficult to identify entry points for interventions.

Instrumental Returns

Members of the integrated congregation demonstrate a higher pay off from their connections and resource access than do members of the neighborhood based congregation. Unfortunately the income data do not lend themselves to reliable statistics that allow the examination across the income spectrum. These data are heavily weighted at the bottom of the income scale, not surprisingly, which makes explorations of the relationship between income and instrumental gains problematic. Simple correlations show no relationship between resource extensity and income.

Two important findings speak to Lin's (1999) network theory of social capital. The first is that upper reachability does not necessarily have an impact on instrumental returns when considering members of these two urban religious congregations. No clear connection could be made between income and the ability of one to reach higher on the social ladder or to have access to more resources. Qualitatively speaking, examining the distribution of upper reachability scores by income demonstrates that a similar number of low income congregants at Immanuel reach the top of the scale as do the midrange yet at Grace more low income congregants report reaching the top than any other category on the position generator.

Second, the number of resources accessed does impact the ability to reach higher up the social ladder, at least for this integrated congregation. This poses an interesting dilemma for interpretation. It could be understood as resources beget power and therefore congregants at Grace have more power to influence their lives and situation. However, it could also be interpreted that members of this neighborhood congregation have an egalitarian approach and resources are shared and accessed widely without restrictions based on personal attributes. It could also be that neighborhood churches are more homogeneous and therefore resources are similarly held across the population.

But resource homogeneity does not equate to resource deprivation just as it does not necessarily translate into instrumental returns. By no means can I argue that members of Immanuel Church are resource poor. There is a disconnect between the prevailing assumptions and theoretical suppositions with respect to the urban poor and resource access. Several issues may be at play, the most paramount being mobilization. The type of resources accessed and personally possessed may impact instrumental returns

more than resource extensity itself. It may be that certain kinds of resources are necessary for social and economic mobility, resources that are not readily available through these religious congregations.

The assumption here is that this phenomenon relates more to the notion of resource mobilization, the argument that Smith (2005, 2008) makes. She rightfully asserts that access is a necessary but insufficient condition for resource capitalization. The mere presence of a resource in another congregant's network does not mean that a resource will be mobilized on your behalf. We cannot assume that just because a resource inheres in a congregational network that it will be mobilized. The cursory work on mobilization done here (Chapter 6) suggests that resources are not readily mobilized on behalf of other congregants. This work sets the stage for an in-depth exploration of the mechanisms governing the mobilization process and the types of resources mobilized and why.

Limitations

The design of this study is intended to compare two types of urban congregations for the purpose of generating theory about resource access and instrumental returns in a religious context. To this end, two seemingly representative congregations were chosen. However, urban congregations come in many different sizes and forms and the congregations under study represent only two unique cases. Some are as small as family-centered "storefront" churches that meet for worship and education only whereas others have a wide draw and boast diverse outreach and programmatic efforts. Grace and Immanuel are average with respect to all congregations in the U.S. (Chaves et al., 2009), but not necessarily representative of urban congregations.

The inherent challenge with network studies is participation and this study suffers from missing data. The populations are small considering all who could have participated, but not all active members who were endorsed as part of another's network chose to participate. This created holes in the network data that were filled with rudimentary data replacement techniques. Quantitative data analysis used only data collected which strengthens those findings; however, important information remains absent from the data itself. As such, the findings are approached with caution but important nonetheless for advancing thought in these areas. Generalizability is limited due to case selection and response rates.

The resource generator has no reported prior uses in the United States which weakens its validity and reliability in this context. While reliability and validity was strong in other applications, this measure is contextually driven and measures used in other countries are not necessarily easily adapted to another context. The U.K. version is used in large part as the most theoretically comparative context, but it is unknown if the resources included in the measure actually matter to urban U.S. residents' efforts toward social and economic mobility particularly since the instrument was pilot tested on congregants from a wealthy suburban congregation.

Another limitation in this study due to measurement is how respondents interpreted the main position generator and resource generator question. Both instruments ask for respondents to endorse those individuals whom they know *on a first name basis*. From my experience interviewing on this project, it is clear that respondents interpreted "first name basis" not necessarily as a close relationship but as someone whose name they would know if they saw them walking down the street. Knowing

someone on a first name basis in the context of this study meant that not only do you know them but that they know you on a first name basis. Interviewers were trained to remind respondents that this meant "someone you would know if you were walking down the sidewalk;" however, for example, respondents often said they knew their doctor. This type of "knowledge" is different from the intent of the question – knowing someone such that you may call upon them for assistance when needed. Given this, congregants may have over reported their connections with individuals on the position generator and to persons maintaining resources on the resource generator.

Choosing to measure income as an ordinal variable was a significant limitation in the analyses. This decision stemmed from prior research with religious congregations (Ammerman, 2005) but, in the end, was not the best way to gather these data in this study. Because the preponderance of congregants reported incomes on the lower end of the scale, variability was lost between actual incomes in the ordinal scale. This measurement decision limited the analyses that could be run using income data, despite transformation efforts, and likely biased estimates. Measuring income on an ordinal scale also prevented exploring differences in resource access and extensity among persons reporting little income.

Certain respondent bias may have been introduced into the study based on racial/ethnic, economic, and social status differences with the study team. This type of bias is inevitable in this type of research and is difficult to introduce controls beyond those which were used – choosing a team that reflects certain characteristics of the population under study. Further, interviewer bias may be present though all interviewers underwent standardized and rigorous training.

The failure to examine specific congregational characteristics limits the research and its findings. The study looks specifically at active members of religious congregations, their attributes, and their resources. However, it is likely that connections congregations have to other organizations also influence the resource base of its congregants. These resources may consist of inter-organizational relationships with local nonprofits and neighborhood-based organizations that have the ability to provide goods and services to promote social and economic mobility. Resources assessed in this study are limited to those that inhere in congregant social networks. Additionally, specific norms about outreach and helping others that guide the congregation's theological orientation may prove an important factor in the accessibility question particularly with respect to resource capitalization. This approach would allow for multi-level modeling analytic techniques to be employed accounting for the influence at both the individual and organizational levels.

Implications to Social Work Research

The use of resource networks has been studied in poor populations and resource access among the urban residents has received increasing scholarly attention since Wilson's (1987) seminal work was published. However, emerging research suggests that the poor may achieve greater social and economic mobility when they are affiliated with well-connected organizations (Small, 2009). This study examines resource access in the most enduring of neighborhood institutions, but one of the most under studied in the field of social work. Religious congregations are assumed to be repositories of resources that are readily accessed, yet social work research efforts have focused almost exclusively on effectiveness of faith-based social service delivery and spirituality. This research moves

the social work community to consider religious congregations as important institutions for social and economic mobility within poor, urban U.S. neighborhoods.

The findings from this study demonstrate that, at least for the members of these two urban congregations, a wide variety of resources inhere in the social networks of urban churches. Further, these resources were not concentrated among a select few, but were widespread across the networks. This study provides support for greater exploration of the embedded resources in urban religious congregations and how they are accessed through networks. It also provides support to study congregations as important neighborhood based organizations for social and economic development irrespective of their social programs and ability to promote a spiritual agenda. Specific research efforts can involve the examination of a larger sample of religious congregations and a comparison of those who do and do not actively participate in congregations. This research would be in keeping with the growing trend in social capital research (Small, 2009; Smith, 2008) that explores the impact of well-connected institutions. Larger samples will provide more robust analytic abilities and a comparison across types of congregations and levels of individual engagement. Examining a specific neighborhood would further explicate how these processes transcend the boundaries of urban congregations for social and economic development of communities of people.

Second, the findings from this study highlight the gap between reported resource access and resource capitalization. Access to resources is not a problem for the congregants studied here; instead, the mechanisms that convert a resource into usable capital remains relatively unknown. Data from this study will inform efforts to explore which resource domains are most salient to social and economic mobility as we consider

the mobilization question. This black box of mobilization is, however, a more difficult question to explore. It is to agree with Evans and Syrett (2007) when they posited that measures of social capital "should prioritize interpretation over measurement" (p. 70). Quantitative and network methods are essential in understanding what resources inhere in congregational networks and whether or not capitalization occurs; but qualitative work is necessary to understand which mobilization mechanisms are likely to govern resource brokerage.

Specific research efforts would explicate which types of resources are more likely to be mobilized on behalf of others and the processes that govern mobilization. Answers to these questions will likely make significant strides in understanding how urban religious congregations not only act as resource brokers for their members, but how congregations may mobilize resources for wider social and economic development. The larger social work question is how can we tap into extant resources in poor urban neighborhoods for development purposes. Research efforts aimed at unlocking the black box of mobilization, using the findings from this study about the types of resources available for mobilization, will move the social work research community in important directions.

Lastly, an important next step in assessing resource access in urban U.S. neighborhoods with concentrated poverty is to develop and test rigorously the resource generator specifically for this context. Webber and Huxley (2007) set forth a method for this process in their development of the instrument for the U.K. The findings from this study demonstrate that members of urban congregations report higher access in domestic resources than in other areas; given the items in this scale, it is not surprising with respect

to congregations. However, this study used Webber and Huxley's scheme which may not be appropriate for this context. Specific measurement development work, beginning with the findings here, will advance our ability to inventory the resources accessed by the urban poor that are vital for social and economic development. Studies heretofore have relied on the position generator as a proxy for resource access; the findings from this study demonstrate the diversity of resources that might be obscured when using proxy measures instead of direct measures.

Future Research Plan

This research has proven to be foundational work for understanding how the network of relations in urban congregations may be structured and the landscape of resource access among those who participate in them. Exploring the data has left me with questions for future inquiry in my attempts to understand urban poverty and the role of religious congregations in social and economic development of urban U.S. neighborhoods. I shall outline a few directions here.

The findings presented here suggest that access is a necessary but insufficient condition for capitalization. As such, other processes impact a congregant's ability to make resources (either those embedded in networks or personally possessed) work for real gain. Smith (2008) and Small (2009) have both suggested that mobilization of resources is key to social and economic mobility among the urban poor – the findings from this dissertation beg the same question. The next step currently underway is a qualitative extension of the dissertation utilizing a sequential mixed method design. The aim of the qualitative interviews is to reconstruct contexts when needed resources were and were not mobilized on behalf of the respondent and the respondent's mobilization, or

lack thereof, on the behalf of others. These data will provide insight into how the capitalization process unfolds within these specific congregational contexts. Similar research is underway in Chicago; as such, findings can be compared to other organizational contexts in other cities.

The dissertation findings may be an artifact of methods, specifically measurement. The resource generator is a theoretically-driven measure and items should reflect the particular context under study. Webber and Huxley (2007) conducted important validity and reliability work on the resource generator for the U.K. context. To use this instrument with confidence in the United States, similar work needs performed on the measure used in this study as noted above.

This limited scope of this study also begs the question whether or not urban religious congregations actually matter in social and economic mobility or if participation in other types of organizations is more important. To explore this question, a random neighborhood sample is necessary to tease out organizational effects. Sampling from one geographic area controls for neighborhood effects and will allow me to examine the relationship between intensity of organizational engagement, resource access, and capitalization. This is an important step in disaggregating the myriad of effects impacting the gains from embedded resources.

Lastly, it is likely that different types of congregations function differently with respect to resource access. Many different types of religious congregations exist beyond those studied here – Roman Catholic, Jewish, Hispanic, and Asian to name only a few. I hope to explore specifically resource access and mobilization among Hispanic populations and congregations as the fastest growing minority population in the United

States. Domínguez and Watkins (2003) found that networks function different among African-American and Latin-American populations and such a study would build nicely upon and compare to the findings here.

Implications for Social Work Policy

The advent of Charitable Choice in 1996 brought the role of urban religious congregations back to the fore in our policy discussions about the poor. Policy has continued to assume that urban congregations are places where public funds can be multiplied into significant development and programmatic efforts, more so that other nonprofit organizations. This policy assumption rests on the belief that members of religious congregations have access to resources they are willing to mobilize on behalf of others. The assumption is predicated on the notion that congregations naturally have an outreach orientation in addition to their repository of resources.

The findings from this study speak directly to the ongoing proclivity for states and the federal government to turn to religious congregations for service provision and community development. As Wuthnow (2004) has argued in the past, congregations are essentially about two primary functions – worship and education. All other activities are an extension of these activities and not inherently a central part of what it means to be a religious congregation. Yet policy continues to favor the inclusion of congregations to the point of encouragement. These findings suggest that a wide variety of resources are already available to and held by residents of urban poor neighborhoods and extant mobilization efforts are low. The findings from this study should serve as a word of caution that congregations may need to be cultivated into neighborhood based

organizations that can effectively assist community based social and economic development.

These findings also speak to current budget policy discussions about the reduction of community service block grant funds. Reduction in the amount of money available to local communities will certainly place an additional strain on the already strapped nonprofit community. Findings from this study highlight the resources that already exist in this particular urban community and that policy efforts might need to be directed at mobilization mechanisms rather than the addition of resources. As we consider ways to help poor communities with even fewer financial resources (which also translates into fewer human resources), urban religious congregations are an important repository that can be tapped in these efforts.

Implications for Social Work Practice

With respect to social work practice, several implications from this research become evident for working in poor, urban U.S. neighborhoods. First, it is a mistake to approach social work practice with the urban poor from a needs perspective particularly given the findings from this study. For nearly 20 years community development practitioners have been arguing for an asset based approach to development (see Kretzmann & McKnight, 1993), yet scholars have continued to argue that the urban poor are disconnected from mainstream social resources necessary for social and economic mobility (Tigges et al., 1998). The disconnect between extant research and frontline efforts has been problematic. However, this research supports the notion that asset based community development is not only an appropriate approach, but provides an opportunity to exploit network resources present in urban communities.

Practitioner and policy bias is to bring resources into communities; however, the findings from this research suggest those resources already exist among residents of urban neighborhoods. It is not about filling an empty pool, but discerning what exists and building upon the extant resources embedded in organizations within urban poor neighborhoods. Asset mapping and the subsequent interventions encourage community participation in the development process (Watt, Higins, & Kendrick, 2000) and residents will have the opportunity to shape programs that promote a life of their own choosing (Sen, 1999). This research reminds the social work practice community that urban neighborhoods are not void of resources, but that their resources need to be capitalized.

The second implication for social work practice is the acknowledgement that not all resources (or resource classes) are created equally. Briggs (1998) has long argued that the urban poor not only need to get by, but also to get ahead. The urban poor, particularly African American and Hispanic, have developed systems of relying on family to ensure daily needs are met. These familial bonds are essential for getting by but not helpful in promoting social and economic mobility. The findings from this study show that domestic resources are the most commonly available and mobilized on behalf of others. While important for daily support and maintaining a home, these resources do not help the urban poor advance economically. Resources necessary for social and economic mobility are accessible via networks, yet capitalization is a challenge. That is, the resources necessary for the urban poor to get ahead are present, they simply cannot be or have not been put to work. Practitioners can, therefore, work to capitalize on these extant resources that promote mobility and further identify barriers to capitalization.

A third practice implication involves engaging urban religious congregations in social and economic development. Only two types are studied here – neighborhood and integrated. Both bear important fruit for thinking about social and economic mobility. While the neighborhood based congregation reported higher access to resources, the integrated congregation reported slightly higher possession of resources among its members. The implication for practitioners is that valuable resources inhere within the networks of neighborhood based organizations that are comprised of mainly neighborhood residents. Congregations are not only institutions that can be engaged for rallying community support or for tapping community leaders; they do have, as policy implies, a cadre of resources ready to be tapped. Practitioner bias may be to turn to "better resourced" congregations, those with a reach beyond the neighborhood; yet both types of congregations demonstrate important resource access.

An interesting finding in this study for practitioners which is not surprising given the social closure likely to exist among the neighborhood church's congregants is that resource mobilization is higher among the these respondents. So while we may believe those who live outside poor urban neighborhoods yet come in for worship have more resources and are psychologically committed to the success of neighborhood residents, neighborhood folks are more likely to share what they have with others. The implication here is twofold: 1) outside folks coming in may need more encouragement to engage in activities to promote social and economic mobility among the urban poor despite their neighborhood connection; and 2) neighborhood residents have access to resources that may promote social and economic mobility but interventions are necessary to capitalize those resources in ways that make a difference on a macro level.

Lastly, a fourth implication for social work practice is not necessarily obvious from the data, but is implicit in the discordance between reported resource access and social and economic status. Studies in other countries have demonstrated the benefits of sharing a common pool of resources for community development (see Ostrom, 1996). The resources congregants access and possess are viewed as personal assets and the crude mobilization figures presented here suggest that they are not always viewed as assets to be shared among others. Social work practitioners in the field are therefore challenged to work with the urban poor not only to map assets but to devise ways these assets can be pooled together to effect change at the individual and macro levels. Decades of poverty alleviation strategies have focused on individual-level approaches and while vital for everyday survival, they have proven insufficient to ameliorate generational poverty endemic in poor urban U.S. neighborhoods. Practitioners ought to re-vision how they approach community development and employ methods that capitalize on collective efforts for systemic change.

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APPENDIX A: RECRUITMENT LETTERS

Grace and peace to you in the name of the newborn Christ!

We write this letter to invite you to participate in a research study Rev. Kirk Foster is currently conducting in two area churches. The study seeks to give a clearer picture of the types of resources (e.g., childcare, home repair, job referrals, etc.) that members of urban churches and urban residents have available to them through people they know. He is specifically studying the relationships church members have with each other and the personal qualities that may influence access to resources.

Rev. Foster is a doctoral candidate at the Brown School of Social Work, Washington University where he studies urban neighborhoods and neighborhood-based organizations (specifically congregations). As a seminary graduate, he has served local churches in the City of St. Louis and in North St. Louis County. He is native to the St. Louis metropolitan area and has been a proud City resident since 1998. Rev. Foster has a passion for this City and its residents, along with a passion for understanding better how urban churches can be agents of community-level change.

He hopes to interview each adult member of Immanuel Church beginning February 15, 2010. If you choose to participate, you would meet with a research assistant at the church during a time which you might normally be there (e.g., Sunday morning after worship or a meeting), and spend about one hour answering a series of questions. More information about the study can be found on the enclosed Study Information Sheet. You will receive $25 for completing the study, Metro fare ($5.50) if you used public transportation to reach the interview, and light snacks; childcare will be provided on Sunday and may be provided at other times if arranged in advance. We will provide a luncheon on Sunday after worship for those participating in the study.

We have set the following dates and times for the interviews to take place at the church:

Monday, February 15th, 5:00 – 8:00PM
Thursday, February 18th, 6:00 – 9:00PM
Sunday, February 21st, 1:00 – 4:00PM

Please see Jane to sign up for a date and time slot. If you would like to participate but cannot make any of these times, we will be happy to schedule another time and discuss other options. You may contact Rev. Foster at 314-935-9643 or by email at kaf3@wustl.edu if you have questions or concerns about this study.

We hope you will consider participating in this important research. With our findings we hope to better understand the role of urban churches in social and economic development, how to better engage congregations in outreach efforts, and the role that church members play in supporting one another. Your participation is vital and most appreciated!

In hope,

Rev. Kirk A. Foster
Brown School of Social Work
Washington University

Jane Giddings
Immanuel Church

Grace and peace to you!

We write this letter to invite you to participate in a research study Rev. Kirk Foster is currently conducting at Grace Church. The study seeks to give a clearer picture of the types of resources (e.g., childcare, home repair, job referrals, etc.) that members of urban churches have available to them through people they know. He is specifically studying the relationships church members have with each other and the personal qualities that may influence access to resources.

Rev. Foster is a doctoral candidate at the Brown School of Social Work, Washington University where he studies urban neighborhoods and neighborhood-based organizations (specifically congregations). As a seminary graduate and church minister, he has served local churches in the City of St. Louis and in Ferguson. He is native to the St. Louis metropolitan area and has been a proud City resident since 1998. Rev. Foster has a passion for this City and its residents, along with a passion for understanding better how urban churches can be agents of community-level change.

You are receiving this special invitation to participate in his study because you are an active member at Grace Church. We hope you will consider participating and sharing your individual story with Rev. Foster so that he may share our collective story.

Interviews are conducted at the church on a day and time that best fits your schedule. Your participation will take no more than 45 minutes and you will receive $25 for completing the study and Metro fare ($5.50) if you used public transportation to reach the interview. More information about the study can be found on the enclosed Study Information Sheet.

Please contact Rev. Foster at 314-935-9643 or by email at kaf3@wustl.edu if you have questions or would like to schedule an interview.

We hope you will consider participating in this important research. With our findings we hope to better understand the role of urban churches in social and economic development, how to better engage congregations in outreach efforts, and the role that church members play in supporting one another. Your participation is vital and most appreciated!

In hope,

Rev. Kirk A. Foster
Brown School of Social Work
Washington University

Rev. John Lovejoy
Pastor, Grace Church

Grace and peace to you!

We write this letter to invite you to participate in a research study Rev. Kirk Foster is currently conducting at Grace Church. The study seeks to give a clearer picture of the types of resources (e.g., childcare, home repair, job referrals, etc.) that members of urban churches have available to them through people they know. He is specifically studying the relationships church members have with each other and the personal qualities that may influence access to resources.

Rev. Foster is a doctoral candidate at the Brown School of Social Work, Washington University where he studies urban neighborhoods and neighborhood-based organizations (specifically congregations). As a seminary graduate and Church minister, he has served local churches in the City of St. Louis and in Ferguson. He is native to the St. Louis metropolitan area and has been a proud City resident since 1998. Rev. Foster has a passion for this City and its residents, along with a passion for understanding better how urban churches can be agents of community-level change.

You are receiving this special invitation to participate in his study because someone in the congregation has indentified you as an important part of their network of church friends. We hope you will consider participating and sharing your individual story with Rev. Foster so that he may share our collective story.

The interview may be conducted at the church or your home, whichever is most convenient for you, and at a day and time that best fits your schedule. Your participation will take no more than 45 minutes and you will receive $25 for completing the study and Metro fare ($5.50) if you used public transportation to reach the interview. More information about the study can be found on the enclosed Study Information Sheet.

Please contact Rev. Foster at 314-935-9643 or by email at kaf3@wustl.edu if you have questions. He will be contacting you via telephone in the next week to inquire about your willingness to participate and to discuss the study further.

We hope you will consider participating in this important research. With our findings we hope to better understand the role of urban churches in social and economic development, how to better engage congregations in outreach efforts, and the role that church members play in supporting one another. Your participation is vital and most appreciated!

In hope,

Rev. Kirk A. Foster
Brown School of Social Work
Washington University

Rev. John Lovejoy
Pastor, Grace Church

APPENDIX B: SURVEY

URBAN CONGREGATIONS AS RESOURCE BROKERS

PI: Kirk A. Foster, MDiv, MSW

Respondent ID: _____ Interviewer Initials: _____

Date: _____

Start Time: _____ End Time: _____

Name: _____

Street: _____

City, State, Zip: _____

INTRODUCE YOURSELF TO THE RESPONDENT, THEN BEGIN WITH SCRIPT BELOW.

Thank you for participating in this research study being conducted by the Rev. Kirk Foster from the Washington University School of Social Work. The purpose of this study is to help us better understand how people in urban religious congregations relate to one another, the types of resources you have access to, and the ways those resources might be shared with others. I will ask you questions about your: background; participation in this congregation; views of others; people you know who may have particular professions; resources you have access to; and your closest relationships here at IMMANUEL/GRACE church.

Did you receive the paperwork telling you about the study? *[IF NO, GIVE RESPONDENT THE STUDY INFORMATION SHEET AND ALLOW A FEW MINUTES TO REVIEW.]*

Please remember that all your responses are confidential and your individual responses will only be known to the study team and Rev. Foster who is conducting this study and reviewing the data. At no time will your name be used in any reports nor will your individual responses be shared with others at IMMANUEL/GRACE church.

You may choose not to answer any question and end your participation in the study at any time. Refusing to answer a question does not jeopardize your participation in the study; however, if you choose to stop the interview before finishing you will not receive payment. You must complete the survey to receive payment. We estimate that it will take approximately forty-five minutes to complete the interview.

Do you have any questions about the study or your participation before we begin?

This page will be detached from the completed survey and stored in a separate, locked file cabinet.

URBAN CONGREGATIONS AS RESOURCE BROKERS

Respondent ID: _____

CONGREGATIONAL NETWORK

We would like to know more about the people you are closest to **at church**. For each question, many different names may come to mind; however, please only give us **up to five** names of those people you would consider the most important for each category. We ask that you give us first and last names. To better understand your relationship with those people you identify, we will also ask specific questions about each person. Again I would like to remind you that your responses are strictly confidential and no names will be shared outside of the study team; no actual names will appear in any report.

Thinking about other members of your congregation, who do you…

A1. Talk to regularly

1A. _____ P1A

1B. _____ P1B

1C. _____ P1C

1D. _____ P1D

1E. _____ P1E

A2. Discuss personal issues and/or problems

2A. _____ P2A

2B. _____ P2B

2C. _____ P2C

2D. _____ P2D

2E. _____ P2E

A3. Visit outside of scheduled or organized church events

3A. _____ P3A

3B. _____ P3B

3C. _____ P3C

3D. _____ P3D

3E. _____ P3E

Respondent ID: _____

Now I'm going to ask you questions about each person specifically. **[SHOW CARD]**

A1A. With respect to *[**PERSON 1A**]…*

Would you describe your relationships as: CLOSE

Distant	1
Less Close	2
Close	3
Especially Close	4

On average, how often do you talk for more than 5 minutes at a time? TALK

Less than monthly	1
Monthly	2
Weekly	3
Daily	4

How long have you known him/her? KNOWN

Less than 1 year	1
1-2 years	2
3-5 years	3
6-8 years	4
9 years or more	5

Is this person a relative? REL

No	0
Immediate Family	2
Other Family	1

A1B. With respect to *[**PERSON 1B**]…*

Would you describe your relationships as: CLOSE

Distant	1
Less Close	2
Close	3
Especially Close	4

On average, how often do you talk for more than 5 minutes? TALK

Less than monthly	1
Monthly	2
Weekly	3
Daily	4

How long have you known him/her? KNOWN

Less than 1 year	1
1-2 years	2
3-5 years	3
6-8 years	4
9 years or more	5

Is this person a relative? REL

No	0
Immediate Family	2
Other Family	1

A1C. With respect to ***[PERSON 1C]***…

Would you describe your relationships as: CLOSE

Distant	1
Less Close	2
Close	3
Especially Close	4

On average, how often do you talk for more than 5 minutes? TALK

Less than monthly	1
Monthly	2
Weekly	3
Daily	4

How long have you known him/her? KNOWN

Less than 1 year	1
1-2 years	2
3-5 years	3
6-8 years	4
9 years or more	5

Is this person a relative? REL

No	0
Immediate Family	2
Other Family	1

A1D. With respect to [**PERSON 1D**]…

CLOSE

Would you describe your relationships as:

Distant	1
Less Close	2
Close	3
Especially Close	4

TALK

On average, how often do you talk for more than 5 minutes at a time?

Less than monthly	1
Monthly	2
Weekly	3
Daily	4

KNOWN

How long have you known him/her?

Less than 1 year	1
1-2 years	2
3-5 years	3
6-8 years	4
9 years or more	5

REL

Is this person a relative?

No	0
Immediate Family	2
Other Family	1

A1E. With respect to *[**PERSON 1E**]*…

CLOSE

Would you describe your relationships as:

Distant	1
Less Close	2
Close	3
Especially Close	4

TALK

On average, how often do you talk for more than 5 minutes at a time?

Less than monthly	1
Monthly	2
Weekly	3
Daily	4

KNOWN

How long have you known him/her?

Less than 1 year	1
1-2 years	2

	3-5 years	3	
	6-8 years	4	
	9 years or more	5	
Is this person a relative?			REL
	No	0	
	Immediate Family	2	
	Other Family	1	

A2A. With respect to ***[PERSON 2A]***…

Would you describe your relationships as:			CLOSE
	Distant	1	
	Less Close	2	
	Close	3	
	Especially Close	4	
On average, how often do you talk for more than 5 minutes?			TALK
	Less than monthly	1	
	Monthly	2	
	Weekly	3	
	Daily	4	
How long have you known him/her?			KNOWN
	Less than 1 year	1	
	1-2 years	2	
	3-5 years	3	
	6-8 years	4	
	9 years or more	5	
Is this person a relative?			REL
	No	0	
	Immediate Family	2	
	Other Family	1	

A2B. With respect to ***[PERSON 2B]***…

Would you describe your relationships as:			CLOSE
	Distant	1	
	Less Close	2	
	Close	3	
	Especially Close	4	

On average, how often do you talk for more than 5 minutes? TALK

Less than monthly	1
Monthly	2
Weekly	3
Daily	4

How long have you known him/her? KNOWN

Less than 1 year	1
1-2 years	2
3-5 years	3
6-8 years	4
9 years or more	5

Is this person a relative? REL

No	0
Immediate Family	2
Other Family	1

A2C. With respect to *[**PERSON 2C**]…*

Would you describe your relationships as: CLOSE

Distant	1
Less Close	2
Close	3
Especially Close	4

On average, how often do you talk for more than 5 minutes? TALK

Less than monthly	1
Monthly	2
Weekly	3
Daily	4

How long have you known him/her? KNOWN

Less than 1 year	1
1-2 years	2
3-5 years	3
6-8 years	4
9 years or more	5

Is this person a relative? REL

No	0
Immediate Family	2

	Other Family	1	

A2D. With respect to ***[PERSON 2D]***…

Would you describe your relationships as:			CLOSE
	Distant	1	
	Less Close	2	
	Close	3	
	Especially Close	4	
On average, how often do you talk for more than 5 minutes at a time?			TALK
	Less than monthly	1	
	Monthly	2	
	Weekly	3	
	Daily	4	
How long have you known him/her?			KNOWN
	Less than 1 year	1	
	1-2 years	2	
	3-5 years	3	
	6-8 years	4	
	9 years or more	5	
Is this person a relative?			REL
	No	0	
	Immediate Family	2	
	Other Family	1	

A2E. With respect to ***[PERSON 2E]***…

Would you describe your relationships as:			CLOSE
	Distant	1	
	Less Close	2	
	Close	3	
	Especially Close	4	
On average, how often do you talk for more than 5 minutes at a time?			TALK
	Less than monthly	1	
	Monthly	2	
	Weekly	3	
	Daily	4	

How long have you known him/her? KNOWN

Less than 1 year	1
1-2 years	2
3-5 years	3
6-8 years	4
9 years or more	5

Is this person a relative? REL

No	0
Immediate Family	2
Other Family	1

A3A. With respect to ***[PERSON 3A]***…

Would you describe your relationships as: CLOSE

Distant	1
Less Close	2
Close	3
Especially Close	4

On average, how often do you talk for more than 5 minutes? TALK

Less than monthly	1
Monthly	2
Weekly	3
Daily	4

How long have you known him/her? KNOWN

Less than 1 year	1
1-2 years	2
3-5 years	3
6-8 years	4
9 years or more	5

Is this person a relative? REL

No	0
Immediate Family	2
Other Family	1

A3B. With respect to ***[PERSON 3B]***…

Would you describe your relationships as: CLOSE

Distant	1
Less Close	2

	Close	3	
	Especially Close	4	
On average, how often do you talk for more than 5 minutes?			TALK
	Less than monthly	1	
	Monthly	2	
	Weekly	3	
	Daily	4	
How long have you known him/her?			KNOWN
	Less than 1 year	1	
	1-2 years	2	
	3-5 years	3	
	6-8 years	4	
	9 years or more	5	
Is this person a relative?			REL
	No	0	
	Immediate Family	2	
	Other Family	1	

A3C. With respect to *[**PERSON 3C**]…*

Would you describe your relationships as:			CLOSE
	Distant	1	
	Less Close	2	
	Close	3	
	Especially Close	4	
On average, how often do you talk for more than 5 minutes?			TALK
	Less than monthly	1	
	Monthly	2	
	Weekly	3	
	Daily	4	
How long have you known him/her?			KNOWN
	Less than 1 year	1	
	1-2 years	2	
	3-5 years	3	
	6-8 years	4	
	9 years or more	5	

Is this person a relative? REL

No	0
Immediate Family	2
Other Family	1

A3D. With respect to ***[PERSON 3D]***…

Would you describe your relationships as: CLOSE

Distant	1
Less Close	2
Close	3
Especially Close	4

On average, how often do you talk for more than 5 minutes at a time? TALK

Less than monthly	1
Monthly	2
Weekly	3
Daily	4

How long have you known him/her? KNOWN

Less than 1 year	1
1-2 years	2
3-5 years	3
6-8 years	4
9 years or more	5

Is this person a relative? REL

No	0
Immediate Family	2
Other Family	1

A3E. With respect to ***[PERSON 3E]***…

Would you describe your relationships as: CLOSE

Distant	1
Less Close	2
Close	3
Especially Close	4

On average, how often do you talk for more than 5 minutes at a time? TALK

Less than monthly	1
Monthly	2

	Weekly	3	
	Daily	4	
How long have you known him/her?			KNOWN
	Less than 1 year	1	
	1-2 years	2	
	3-5 years	3	
	6-8 years	4	
	9 years or more	5	
Is this person a relative?			REL
	No	0	
	Immediate Family	2	
	Other Family	1	

RELIGIOUS INVOLEMENT

B1. How long have you been attending this church? _____ Years — YRSATND

B2. About how often do you personally participate in each of the following church and community activities? **[SHOW CARD]**

	Weekly or More	2-3 times a month	Once a month	A few times a year	Never	
Worship services at this church	4	3	2	1	0	WORSHIP
Sunday School/Religious Education	4	3	2	1	0	ADULTED
Church fellowship activities	4	3	2	1	0	ADFLSHP
Church mission groups or service activities	4	3	2	1	0	ADLTSVC
Service organizations in the community	4	3	2	1	0	SVCORG
Informal help for people in need	4	3	2	1	0	HELP
Working for political candidates	4	3	2	1	0	PLTCS

B3. Apart from your Sunday church participation, do you currently participate on a regular basis in any of the following types of groups? If you participate in more than one group of a given type, think about the one that is most important to you. For each, also note whether it is connected in any way with your church.

	Do you participate?		Connected to this church?		
	Yes	No	Yes	No	
Personal or spiritual growth support group	1	0	1	0	SPTGRP SPTGRPCH
Bible study group	1	0	1	0	BIBLE BIBLECH
A 12-step or other recovery group	1	0	1	0	12STEP 12STEPCH
Sports team or hobby group	1	0	1	0	ADLTSPT ADLTSPTCH

B4. If you have children under 18 years old, do any of them participate on a regular basis in any of the following types of groups? If so, is the group connected to this church?

No children at home 99

	Does your child participate?		Connected to this church?		
	Yes	No	Yes	No	
Sports league	1	0	1	0	CHSPT CHSPTCH
Scouts	1	0	1	0	SCOUTS SCOUTSCH
Youth bible study or fellowship groups	1	0	1	0	YTHBIBLE YTHBIBLECH
Enrolled in a religious school	1	0	1	0	RELIGED RELIGEDCH

B5. When you think about priorities for your church, how important are each of the following to you? **[SHOW CARD]**

	Essential	Very important	Somewhat important	Not at all important	
Supporting social action groups in the church	3	2	1	0	SOCACT
Encouraging members to share their faith	3	2	1	0	FAITH
Having a beautiful place to worship	3	2	1	0	SANCT
Providing space for community groups to meet	3	2	1	0	CMTYSPC
Providing aid and services to people in need	3	2	1	0	OUTRCH
Helping members resist worldly temptations	3	2	1	0	NOSIN
Cooperation with other community groups	3	2	1	0	COLAB
Maintaining a strong evangelism program	3	2	1	0	EVANG
Nurturing a strong denominational identity	3	2	1	0	DENOM
Helping individual members to be good citizens	3	2	1	0	CITIZEN
Encouraging the pastor to speak out on social and political issues	3	2	1	0	SEPE
Promoting a strong sense of fellowship	3	2	1	0	FLSHIP
Being a well-known and respected institution	3	2	1	0	CTYRSPCT
Supporting mission efforts in the nation and the world	3	2	1	0	MISSION

RESOURCE ACCESS

We are interested in the types of professions of your family, friends, and acquaintances. This will help us understand how you are connected to different types of resources in the community.

C1. Among your relatives, friends, acquaintances, or other church members are there people you know on a first-name basis who have the following jobs? If so, what is his/her relationship to you? ***[CIRCLE ALL THAT APPLY] [SHOW CARD] [PROMPT – ANYONE AT CHURCH?]***

	Relatives	Friends	Acquaintances	Church	No one	
Physician	4	3	2	1	0	DOCTOR
Lawyer	4	3	2	1	0	LAWYER
Alderman/woman	4	3	2	1	0	ELECTED
Registered nurse	4	3	2	1	0	RN
High school teacher	4	3	2	1	0	TEACHER
Accountant	4	3	2	1	0	ACCY
Computer programmer	4	3	2	1	0	PRGMR
Police officer	4	3	2	1	0	POLICE
Social worker	4	3	2	1	0	SOCWKR
Electrician	4	3	2	1	0	ELECTRIC
Secretary	4	3	2	1	0	SECY
Nurse's aid	4	3	2	1	0	RNAID
Machine operator	4	3	2	1	0	OPERATOR
Cashier	4	3	2	1	0	CASHIER
Childcare worker	4	3	2	1	0	CHILD
Taxicab/chauffeur driver	4	3	2	1	0	TAXI

C2. We are also interested in the types of resources that might be available to you through people you know as part of your involvement with this congregation as well as other relatives, friends, acquaintances, work colleagues, and neighbors. Do you know anyone on a first-name basis who…
[CIRCLE ALL THAT APPLY] [SHOW CARD] [PROMPT – ANYONE AT CHURCH?]

	Knows no one	Family	Friend	Acquaintance	Work Colleague	Neighbor	From church	
Can repair a car or truck	0	6	5	4	3	2	1	FIXCAR
Owns a car	0	6	5	4	3	2	1	OWNCAR
Give advice on using a personal computer	0	6	5	4	3	2	1	USEPC
Works for city hall	0	6	5	4	3	2	1	CITYHALL
Can sometimes employ people	0	6	5	4	3	2	1	EMPLOYS
Knows a lot about government regulations	0	6	5	4	3	2	1	REGS
Has good contacts with the local newspaper, radio, or TV	0	6	5	4	3	2	1	TV
Give you sound advice about money problems	0	6	5	4	3	2	1	MONEY
Give you sound advice on problems at work	0	6	5	4	3	2	1	WKPROBS
Help you move or dispose of bulky items	0	6	5	4	3	2	1	TRASH
Help you with small jobs around the house	0	6	5	4	3	2	1	SMJOBS
Do your shopping if you are ill	0	6	5	4	3	2	1	SHOP
Provide care for a serious health condition	0	6	5	4	3	2	1	SICKCARE
Lend you a large sum of money	0	6	5	4	3	2	1	LGCASH
Lend you a small sum of money	0	6	5	4	3	2	1	SMCASH
Give you career advice	0	6	5	4	3	2	1	CAREER
Can provide a place to stay for a week if you have to leave your house temporarily	0	6	5	4	3	2	1	CRASH

Discuss politics with you	0	6	5	4	3	2	1	POLITCS
Give you sound legal advice	0	6	5	4	3	2	1	LEGAL
Give you a good reference for a job	0	6	5	4	3	2	1	JOBREF
Can babysit your children	0	6	5	4	3	2	1	BABYSIT
Help you find somewhere to live if you had to move	0	6	5	4	3	2	1	MOVE
Look after your home or pets if you go away	0	6	5	4	3	2	1	PETSIT
Be there just to talk about the day	0	6	5	4	3	2	1	TALK

C3. And yourself?

	Do you or can you…?		Have you shared this resource with a member of your church?		
	Yes	No	Yes	No	
Repair a car or truck	1	0	1	0	IFIXCAR IFIXCARS
Own a car	1	0	1	0	IOWNCAR IOWNCARS
Give advice on using a personal computer	1	0	1	0	IUSEPC IUSPECS
Work for city hall	1	0	1	0	ICITYHAL ICITYHALS
Can sometimes employ people	1	0	1	0	IEMPLOY IEMPLOYS
Know a lot about government regulations	1	0	1	0	IREGS IREGSS
Have good contacts with the local newspaper, radio, or TV	1	0	1	0	ITV ITVS
Give sound advice about money problems	1	0	1	0	IMONEY IMONEYS
Give sound advice on problems at work	1	0	1	0	IWKPROB IWKPROBS
Help others move or dispose of bulky items	1	0	1	0	ITRASH ITRASHS
Help others with small jobs around the house	1	0	1	0	ISMJOB ISMJOBS

	Do you or can you…?		Have you shared this resource with a member of your church?		
	Yes	No	Yes	No	
Do shopping for others if they are ill	1	0	1	0	ISHOP ISHOPS
Provide care for a serious health condition	1	0	1	0	ISICKCRE ISICKCRES
Lend a large sum of money	1	0	1	0	ILGCASH ILGCASHS
Lend a small sum of money	1	0	1	0	ISMCASH ISMCASHS
Give career advice	1	0	1	0	ICAREER ICAREERS
Provide others a place to stay for a week if they have to leave their house temporarily	1	0	1	0	ICRASH ICRASHS
Discuss politics	1	0	1	0	IPOLITCS IPOLITCSS
Give sound legal advice	1	0	1	0	ILEGAL ILEGALS
Give a good job reference	1	0	1	0	IJOBREF IJOBREFS
Can babysit others children	1	0	1	0	IBABYSIT IBABYSITS
Can help others find someplace to live if they have to move	1	0	1	0	IMOVE IMOVES
Look after someone's home or pets if they go away	1	0	1	0	IPETSIT IPETSITS
Be there just to talk about the day	1	0	1	0	ITALK ITALKS

DEMOGRAPHICS & BACKGROUND

D1.	RECORD GENDER AS OBSERVED. IF NECESSARY SAY: I am recording that you are a male/female.	Male Female	1 2	GENDER
D2.	What is your current age?	_____ years		AGE
D3.	What is your race or ethnicity?			
		African American	1	RACE
		White	2	
		Latino/Latina	3	
		Asian	4	
		Biracial	5	
		Other	6	
D4.	What is your current marital status?			
		Single	1	MARSTAT
		Married	2	
		Domestic Partnership/ Civil Union	3	
		Divorced	4	
		Windowed	5	
D5.	How many people currently live in the same house as you?	_____ people		HHNUM
D5a.	How many of these people are children under the age of 18 years?	_____ children		NUMCHILD
D5b	How many of these people are your grandchildren?	_____ grandchildren		NUMGDCH
D6.	What is your highest level of formal education?			EDUCATE
		Less than High School	1	
		High School Diploma	2	
		Some College	3	
		4-Year College Degree	4	
		Graduate Degree	5	

D7. Are you currently employed?

Yes	1	EMPLOY
No (SKIP TO D7b)	0	

D7a. What is your occupation? _____ OCCU

D7b What was your most recent occupation? **[ONLY IF D7 IS NO]** _____ *[RECORD LAST OCCUPATION IF RETIRED]* RECOCCU

D7c. What was your approximate income in 2009? *(individual income, <u>not</u> household)*

Under $10,000	1	INCOME
$10,000 – 19,999	2	
$20,000 – 39,999	3	
$40,000 – 59,999	4	
$60,000 – 79,999	5	
$80,000 – 99,999	6	
$100,000 or more	7	

D8. Have you ever received any form of public assistance? (TANF, Food Stamps, etc.)

Yes	1	ASTLIFE
No (SKIP TO D9)	0	

D8a. Are you currently receiving public assistance?

Yes	1	ASTCUR
No	0	

D9. On a scale from 1 (drains me) to 10 (energizes me), would you say being around other people...

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 GREG1

Drains me Energizes me

D9a. Would you say that you prefer to have a lot of quiet time alone, rather than being around other people?

Yes	1	GREG2
No	0	

GENERALIZED TRUST

Please complete the following questions by circling the response closest to your thoughts and feelings. Your answers are completely confidential and I (the interviewer) will not know how you responded.

E1. Generally speaking, would you say that most people can be trusted or that you can't be too careful in dealing with people? GENTRUST

People can be trusted	1
You can't be too careful	2
Depends	3
Don't Know	98

E2. For each group of people listed below, please indicate if you trust them a lot, some, only a little, or not at all.

	Trust them a lot	Trust them some	Trust them only a little	Trust them not at all	
People in your neighborhood	3	2	1	0	TRUSTNE
The police in your local community	3	2	1	0	TRUSTCOP
People who work in the stores where you shop	3	2	1	0	TRUSTWK
White people	3	2	1	0	TRUSTWH
African Americans or Blacks	3	2	1	0	TRUSTAA
Hispanics or Latinos	3	2	1	0	TRUSTHSP

Please place the completed survey in the envelope provided.

APPENDIX C: STUDY INFORMATION SHEET

Washington University in St. Louis

8/08
Human Research Protection Office
Box 8089
(314)633-7479
Fax (314)367-3041

Minimal Risk – Exempt
Social-Behavioral-Educational Research
Information for Participants

On the Road to Samaria: Urban Religious Congregations as Resource Brokers
HRPO #

The purpose of this study is to help us better understand how people in urban religious congregations relate to one another, the types of resources you have access to, and the ways those resources might be shared with others. This study will help us better understand how congregations in urban neighborhoods might be engaged in social and economic development. It will also help us better understand the types of resources that exist in urban neighborhoods. You will be asked questions about: your background; your participation in this congregation; your views of others; people you know who have particular professions; resources you have access to; and your closest church relationships.

Your participation in this study in completely voluntary and you may decide not to participate at any time. Choosing not to participate will not affect your membership or involvement in your church in any way. You may also choose not to answer any question. Refusing to answer a question does not remove you from the study.

You will receive $25 (twenty-five dollars) for completing the survey. If you require public transportation to participate in this study, you will receive an additional $5.50 (five dollars fifty cents) to cover the cost of roundtrip Metro fare with a transfer.

Every effort will be taken to protect your confidentiality. Your name and address will never appear in any written report. You will be given a unique code that identifies you, and only Rev. Foster and his study team will have access to the list linking you to your code. Once data have been collected and entered into the computer for analysis, all information identifying you will be removed. Completed surveys will be kept in a locked filing cabinet to which only Rev. Foster will have access. Your data will not be released to your church, pastor, or church leaders. Only reports discussing overall findings will be shared with your church.

There are potential risks to participating in this study. You may feel burdened and experience fatigue by the amount of time it takes to complete the survey. We estimate it will take you approximately 60 minutes to complete. A confidentiality breach is also a risk; however, efforts outlined above will be taken to minimize this risk.

There are no direct benefits to you for participating in this study. The information you provide will help increase our knowledge about how resources are accessed and shared in urban religious congregations. This information may be used to shape policies and programs for urban economic development.

If you have any questions later, please feel free to contact Rev. Foster at 314-935-9643 or kaf3@wustl.edu. If you were unhappy with your experience or wish to express a complaint, please contact me or my faculty advisor, Professor Yadama, at 314-935-5698 or yadama@wustl.edu.

If you would like to speak with someone about your rights as a research participant, please call Dr. Philip Ludbrook at 314-633-7400 or 800-438-0445. Dr. Ludbrook is an employee of Washington University but is not part of the research team. His job is to make sure that research participants' rights are protected.