



Congregation and Community

by Nancy Ammerman

DESCRIPTION

Change--in population, economy, and culture--is sweeping through American communities. Corner groceries are stocking new foods. New roads are being built and Main Streets abandoned. Schools have come and gone, and old friends move away as strangers arrive. But in every community, no matter how volatile, religious institutions provide for their members places of moral guidance and spiritual nurture, civic participation, and identity.

How do congregations react to significant community change? Why do some religious institutions decline in the face of racial integration while others adapt and grow? How do congregations make sense of economic distress? Do they provide havens from community upheaval or vehicles for change? *Congregation and Community* is the most comprehensive study to date of congregations in the face of community transformation. Nancy Ammerman and her colleagues include stories of over twenty congregations in nine communities from across the nation, communities with new immigrant populations, growing groups of gays and lesbians, rapid suburbanization, and economic dislocations.

With almost half of the nation's population attending religious services each week, it is impossible to understand change in American society without a close look at congregations. *Congregation and Community* will exist as a standard resource for years to come, and clergy, academics, and general readers alike will benefit from its insights.

AUTHOR/EDITOR BIOGRAPHY

NANCY TATOM AMMERMAN is a professor of the sociology of religion at the Hartford Seminary. She is author of several books, including *Baptist Battles* and *Bible Believers* (both Rutgers University Press). The research for this book was supported by a grant from the Lilly Endowment.

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