

Religious groups see slight drop in giving: A Giving USA report

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According to a study by Giving USA Foundation, religious organizations reported a 0.7 percent decrease in donations last year—a marked contrast from the 5.5 percent increase in giving reported in 2008.

Religious congregations accounted for 33 percent of the total \$303 billion in contributions in 2009. This is the third year in a row that religious donations have exceeded \$100 billion.

Total donations for all charitable groups in 2009 were down by 3.6 percent. The survey showed that foundations lost \$31 billion in 2009, an 8 percent decrease from 2008. Donations to public organizations fell by \$22.7 billion—a 4.6 percent decline—while international aid organizations received about \$9 billion, a 6 percent increase.

“While overall giving declined, many donors—including individuals and foundations—made special efforts in 2009 to respond to greater humanitarian needs,” said foundation chair Edith Falk in a state ment.

The majority of donations came from individual contributors, who gave more than \$227 billion. *-Religion News Service*