

*University of Southern California  
Center for Religion and Civic Culture*

**Excerpts from Report on  
Peninsula Clergy Survey  
In Conjunction with the  
Peninsula Clergy Network  
Fall 2005**

The Peninsula Clergy Network (PCN) has done a remarkable job of accomplishing its vision. The PCN has attracted leaders from almost all faith traditions in what is truly a [multi-faith] network. The interface between these [clergy] and civic leaders is one of the reasons why respondents choose to come to the PCN events. This provides a solid base for building the social capital of the Peninsula region. The PCN serves as a bridge between different population groups and between public agencies. Since many of the PCN clergy are also networked with a variety of other associations (local, state-wide and national), the impact of this “bridging” social capital\* has the potential of going beyond the region to the rest of the country.

Among those [respondents] who described their involvement in civic affairs, all but one spoke positively about ways in which these activities had enriched their ministries. Most cited their expanded awareness of issues facing their communities. Others expressed appreciation for the network of civic relationships they had been able to build. Ninety-seven percent of the respondents said that the Peninsula Clergy Network had functioned as a key enabler of these civic relationships.

Among those who spoke about the expansion of civic activities through their participation in the PCN, 60% said their primary interest had emerged as “civic involvement.” Forty percent said that their major interest is “clergy networking.” The reasons they give speak highly of the importance of the networking. For example:

- It has offered a chance to meet and dialogue with a wider range of civil servants
- It provides an opportunity to meet with principals in the high schools and with business leaders
- It provides a better understanding of the problems faced by civic and community leaders

Through roundtable discussions, it provides an opportunity to connect around important issues that can be addressed collaboratively.

\* Robert Putnam, in his book *Bowling Alone: the Collapse and Revival of American Community* (New York: Simon and Schuster, 2000), talks about two types of social capital. “Bonding” social capital links people within communities together, fostering social trust and cohesion among people within a neighborhood, town, religion congregation, racial or ethnic group. “Bridging” social capital links people across these kinds of communities, fostering social trust and cohesion between people and groups on opposite sides of social divides.

*Rabbi Jay Miller* RELIGION SECTOR 3.0

*1.0 On the Town Square      2.0 Walls of Separation  
3.0 Alignment: Among Congregations - Within Society*

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