



Redemptive Membership Review Process

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Then Jesus told them this parable: “Suppose one of you has a hundred sheep and loses one of them. Doesn’t he leave the ninety-nine in the open country and go after the lost sheep until he finds it? And when he finds it, he joyfully puts it on his shoulders and goes home. Then he calls his friends and neighbors together and says, ‘Rejoice with me; I have found my lost sheep.’”

Luke 15:3-6



Redemptive Membership Review Process

Jesus called us to make disciples

Local churches should aim to

- create a warm and caring environment for spiritual growth
- encourage all ministries of the church to be united in making mature and faithful disciples
- develop strategy to reclaim former and inactive members through:
 - (1) regular redemptive membership review process and
 - (2) reclaiming ministries

Redemptive Membership Review

Definition

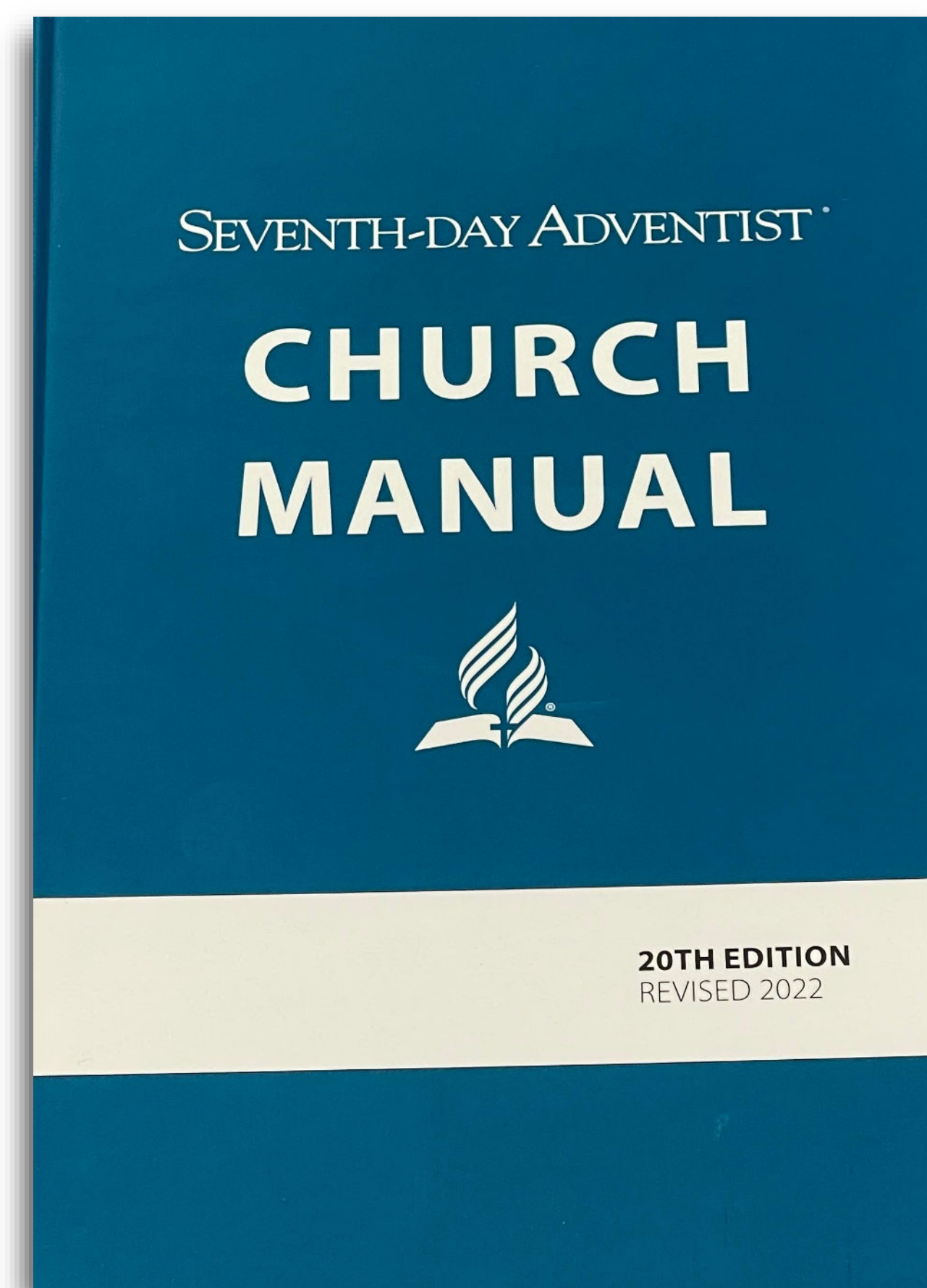
Membership review provides more effective pastoral care based on establishing accurate membership records. Nevertheless, it must have a redemptive purpose of seeing people through numbers.



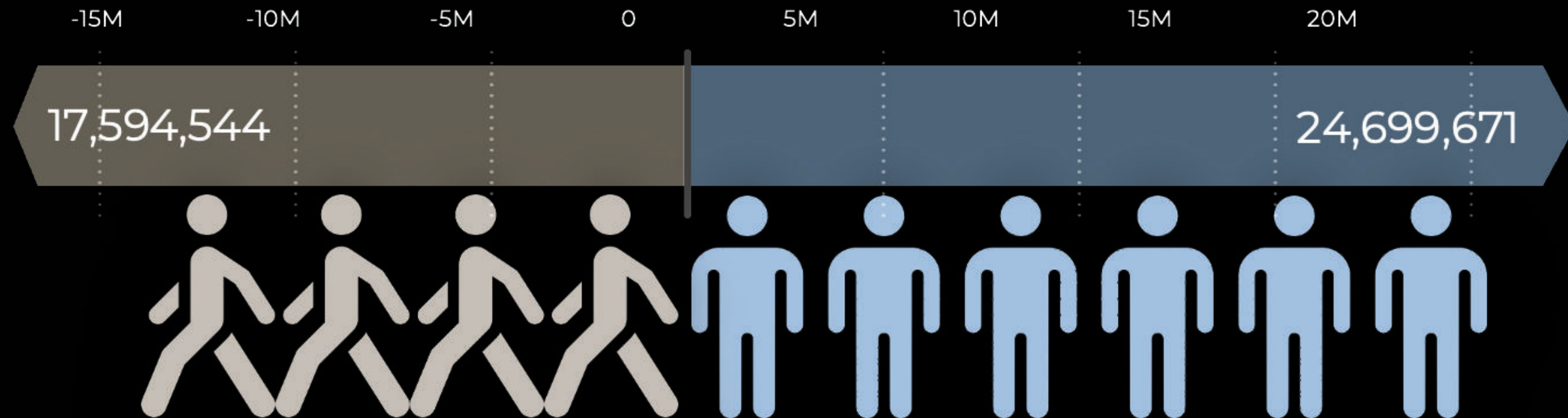
The Church Manual, on page 61, states:

Redemptive Membership Review —

Membership records are kept up to date by the local church. They are subject to review by the next higher organization. This rule, which also applies to every entity or level of the organization, provides the maximum privacy of members' personal information and shall comply with legal requirements.



MEMBERS WHO LEAVE



In the period 1965 through 2021, 42,294,215 people have been members of the Seventh-day Adventist Church.

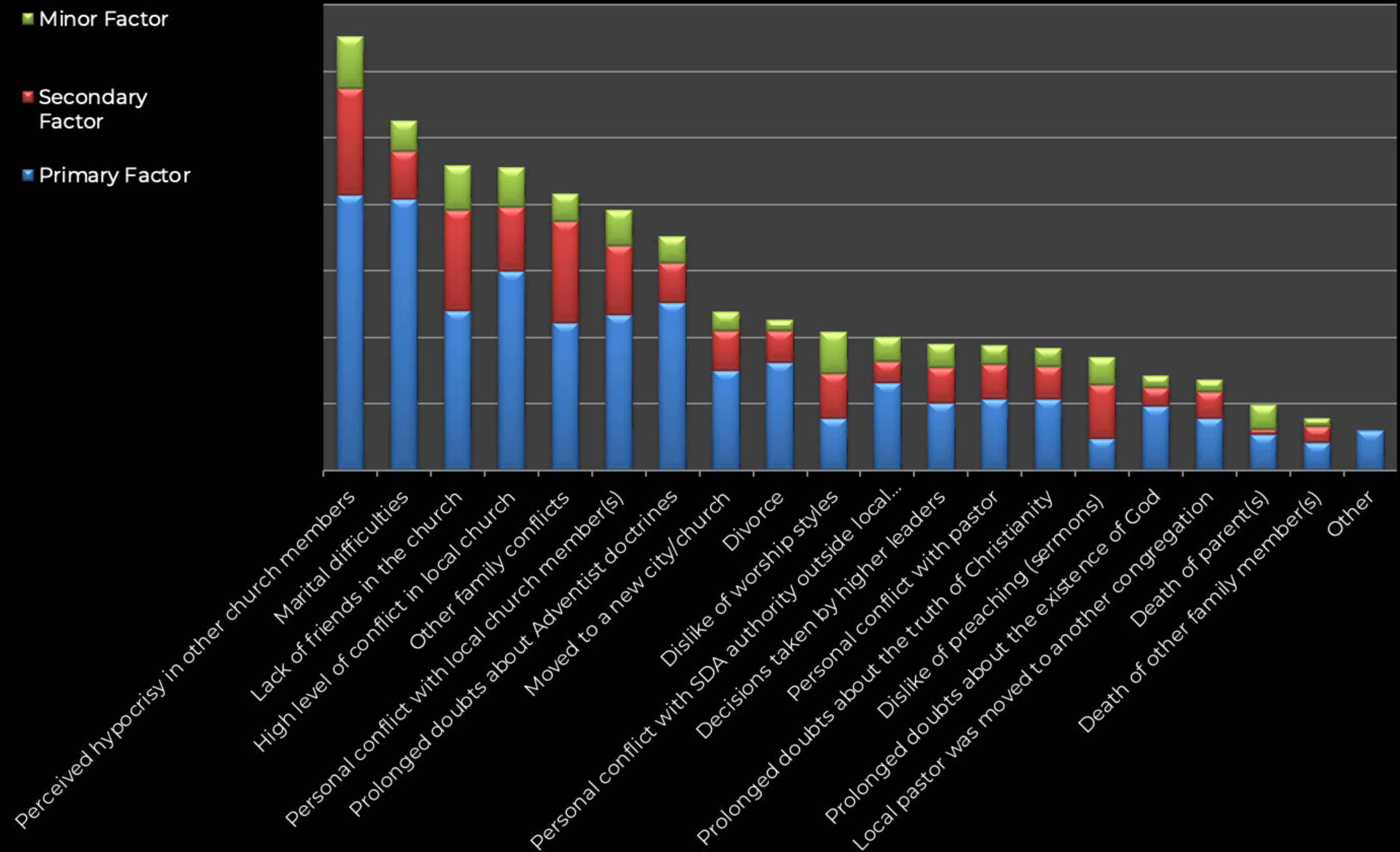
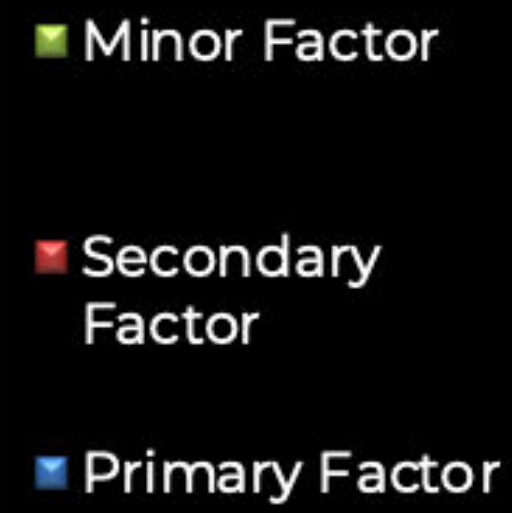
Of those, 17,594,544 have chosen to leave.

Our net loss rate is 42%.

In effect, 4 of every 10 church members are slipping away.

- Members who left
- Members who stayed

What event triggered your decision to leave? (Listed in weighted rank order) – Former Members

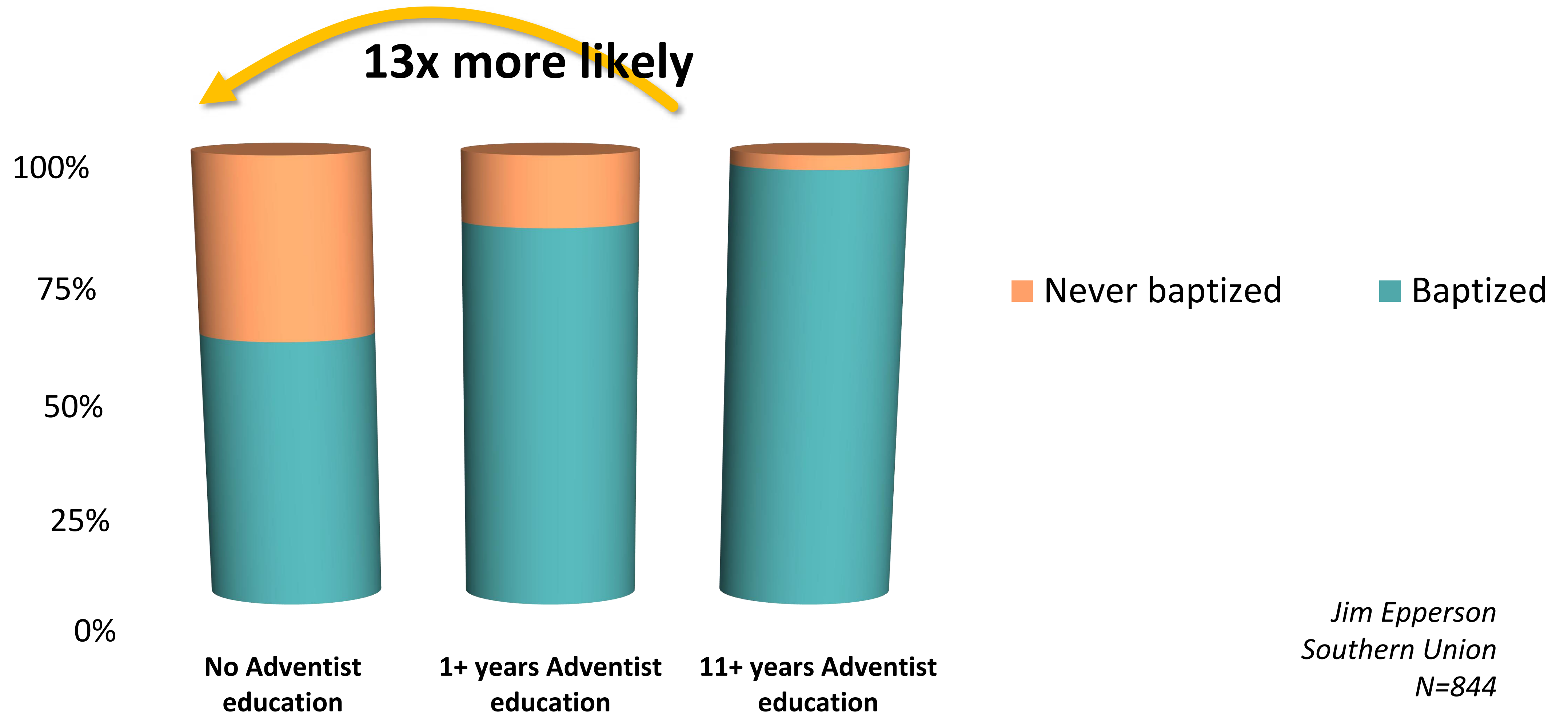


What Happened When I Stopped Attending Church

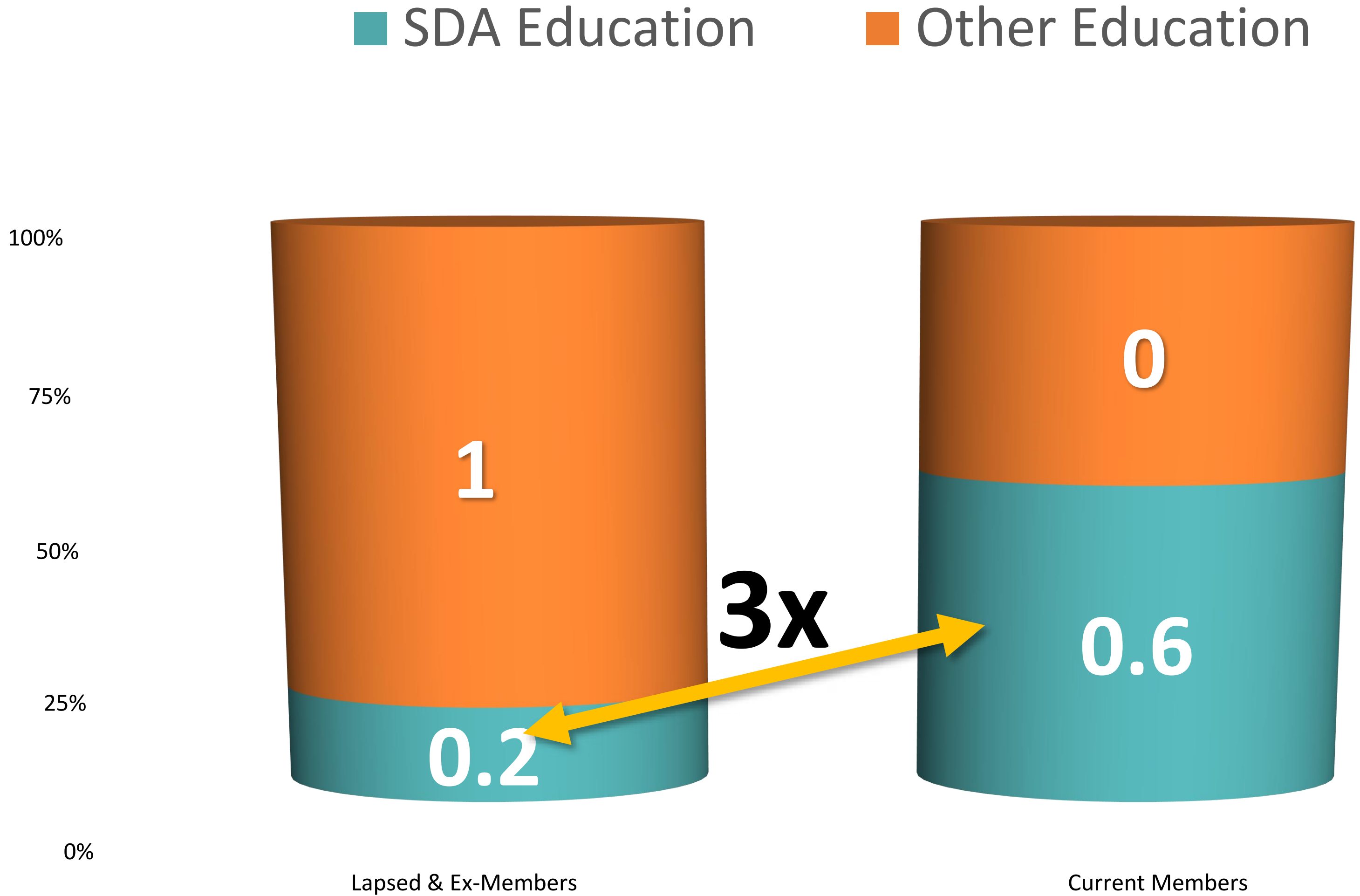
- 40% No one contacted me
- 19% A church member came to visit me
- 17% A local elder came to visit me
- 15% A local church member contacted me by phone
- 10% An Adventist relative made contact
- 9% The pastor came to visit me
- 6% The pastor contacted me by phone or Email
- 3% An Adventist, not a local member contacted me
- 2% I received a letter in the mail
- 0.3% Printed material was mailed to me



Children from Adventist families

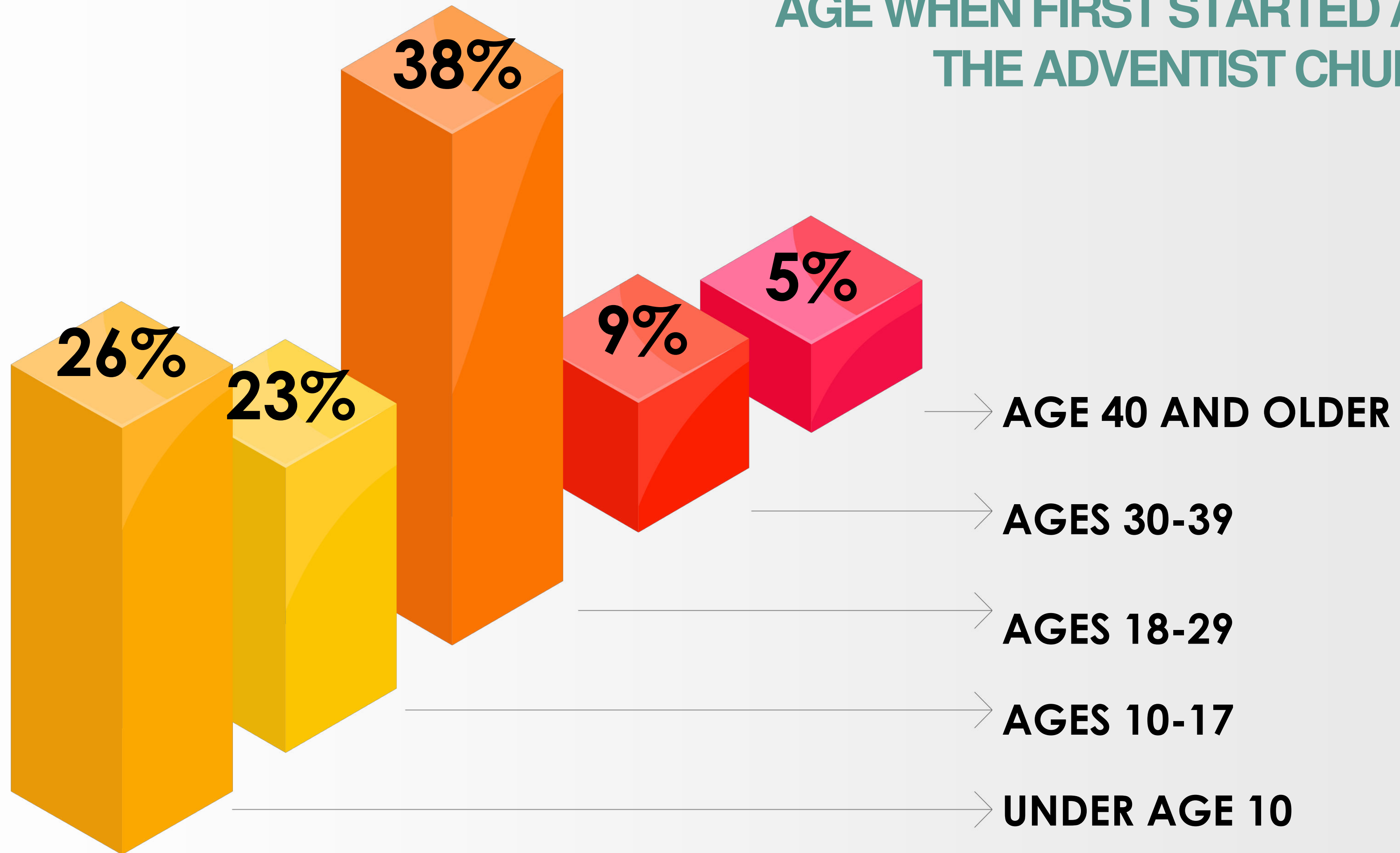


Center for Creative Ministry Study

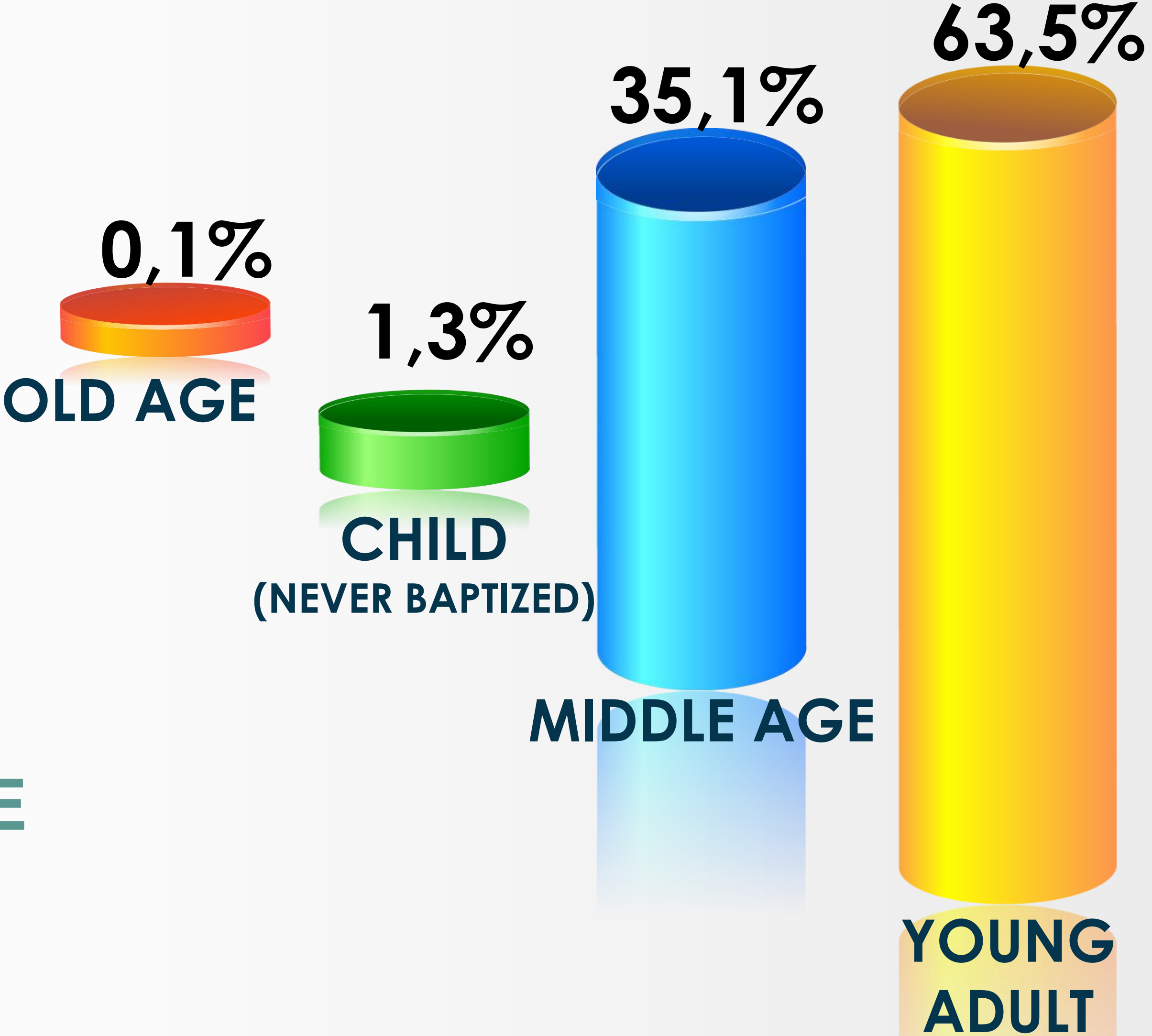


P. Richardson, 2013.
Qualitative. Global.
N=925.

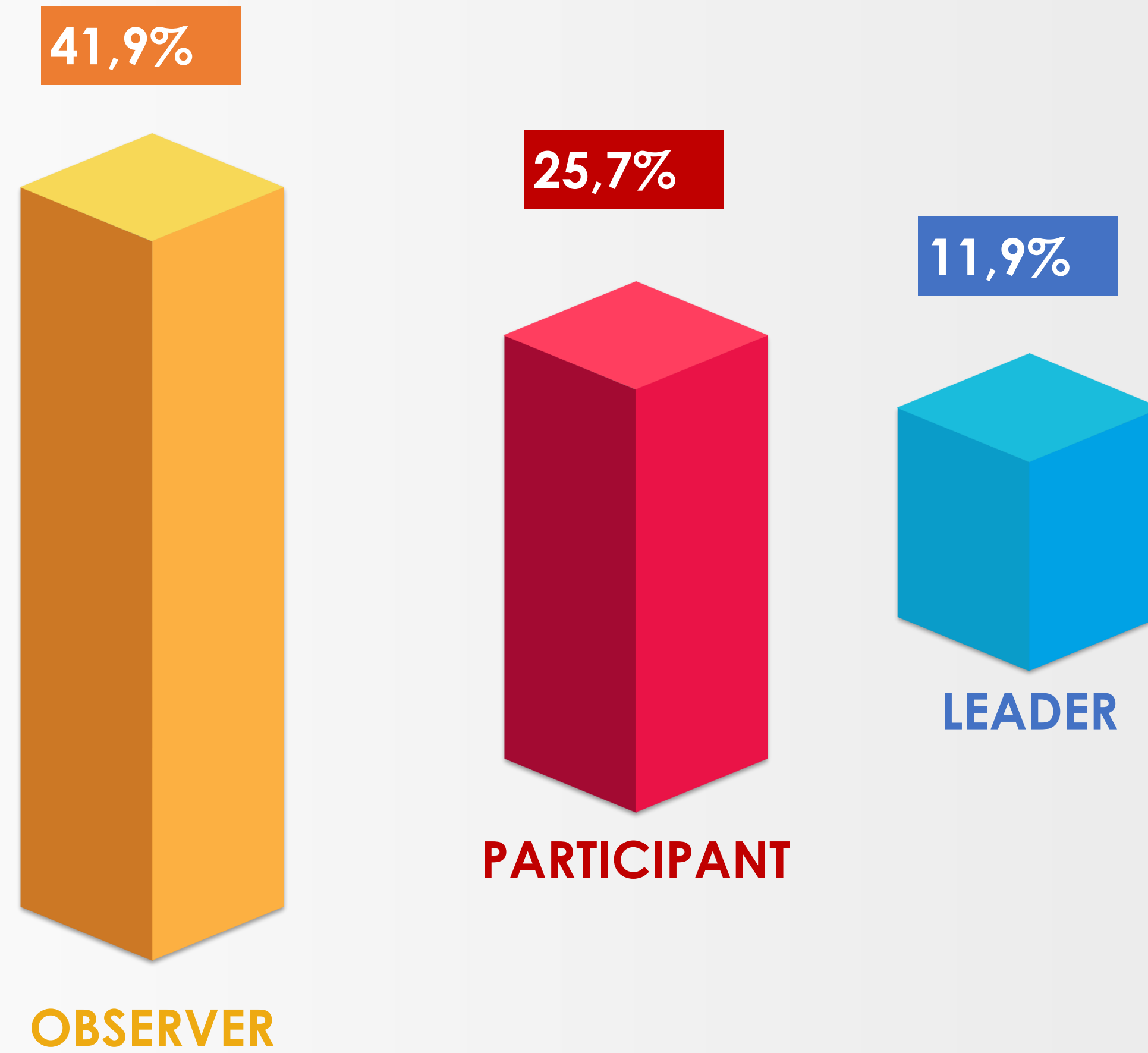
AGE WHEN FIRST STARTED ATTENDING THE ADVENTIST CHURCH



**STAGE OF
LIFE AT
DEPARTURE**



LEVEL OF ENGAGEMENT BEFORE LEAVING



FAULTY DISCIPLEMAKING

WE ARE FAILING ON MAKING
DISCIPLES



Caring about people

“The shepherd who discovers that one of his sheep is missing does not look carelessly upon the flock.... He counts and recounts the flock. When he is sure that one sheep is lost, he slumbers not... He makes every effort to find that one lost sheep...

The parable does not speak of failure but of success and joy in the recovery.”

COL, 146



Redemptive Membership Review Process

“If the lost sheep is not brought back to the fold, it wanders until it perishes. And many souls go down to ruin for want of a hand stretched out to save.”

Christ's Object Lessons, p. 191



CARING ABOUT PEOPLE

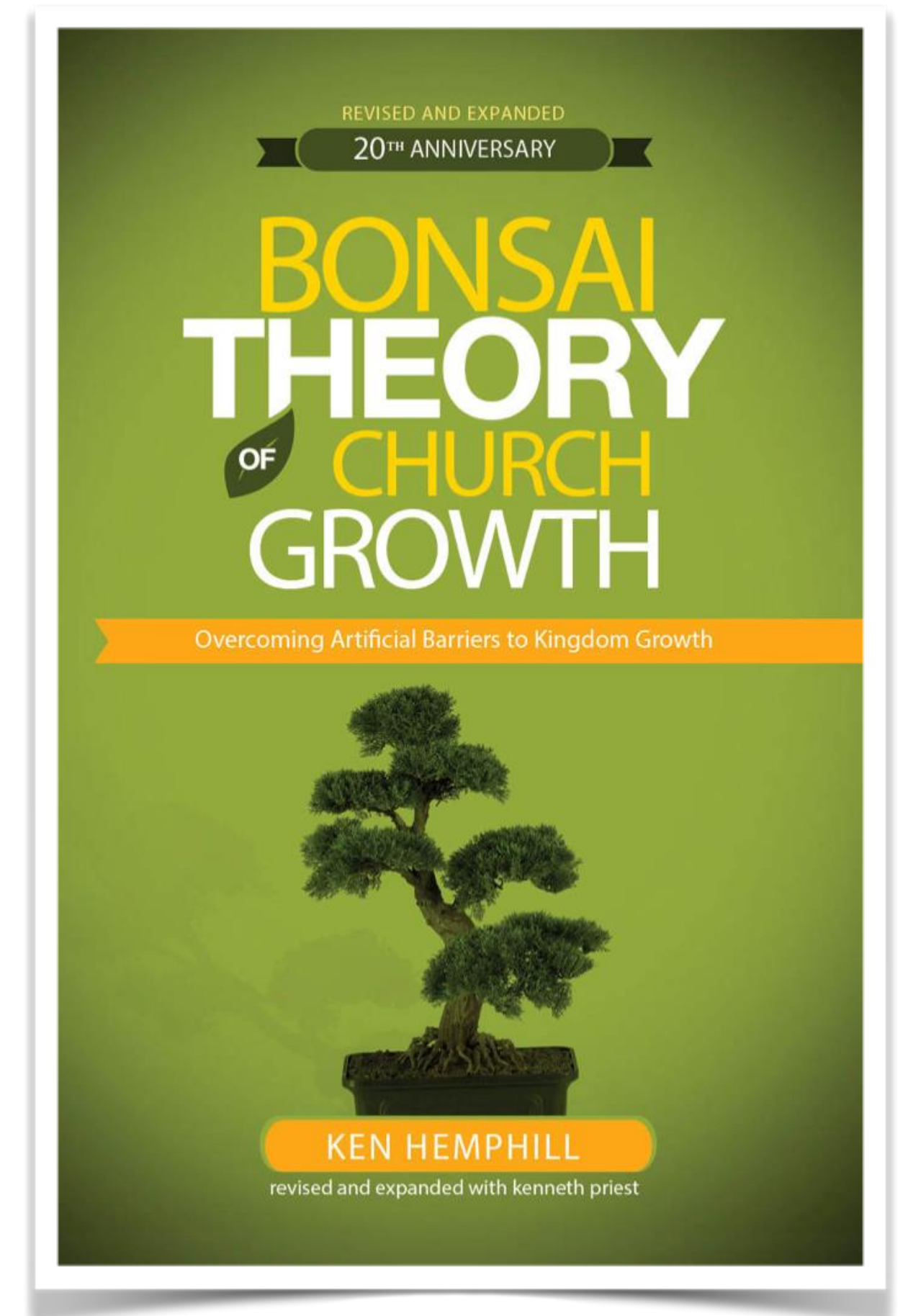
The main purpose of the membership review is not to clean the books but to offer more effective pastoral care.



Redemptive Membership Review Process

“Our primary goal is not to boast about the percentage of members present, but to reach the unsaved in our community and to care for the inactive in our fellowship. We’re not caring for someone when we prune them from our rolls. We simply lose contact and opportunity for ministry.”

Kenneth S. Hemphill



The rescue starts with the
counting of the flock:

“The shepherd who discovers that one of his sheep is missing does not look carelessly upon the flock... He counts and recounts the flock. When he is sure that one sheep is lost, he slumbers not... He makes every effort to find that one lost sheep.”

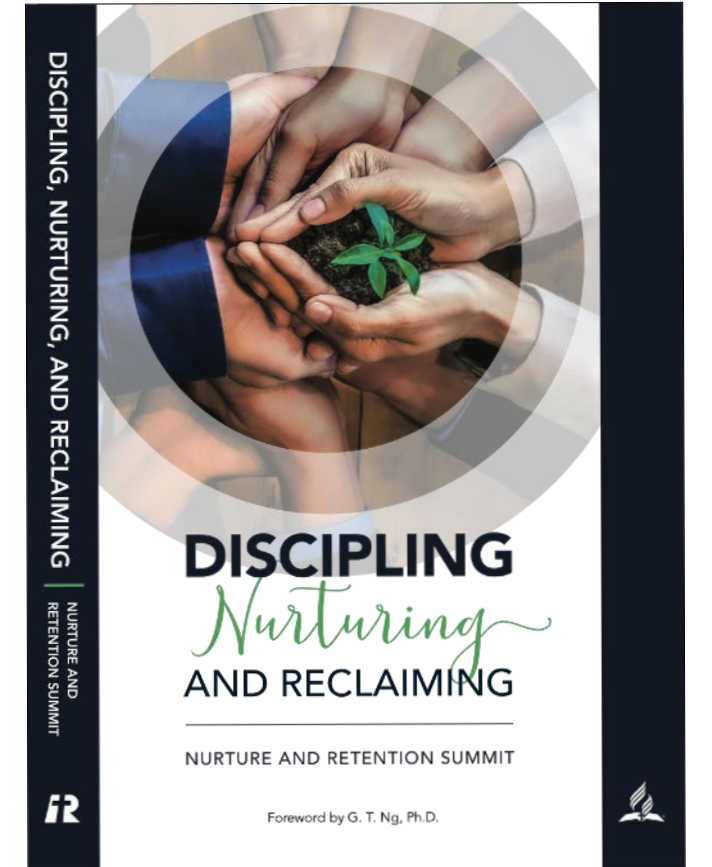
Christ's Object Lessons, pp. 187-188



Redemptive Membership Review Process

Local Church

1. Special Revision Committee and membership classification
2. Church Board should follow a frequent examination of the auxiliary lists, implementing strategies to involve each member in disciple-making of each category.
3. The church clerk's role is crucial to prepare the auxiliary lists and implement membership review.



Redemptive Membership Review Process

#1 Electronic Membership System

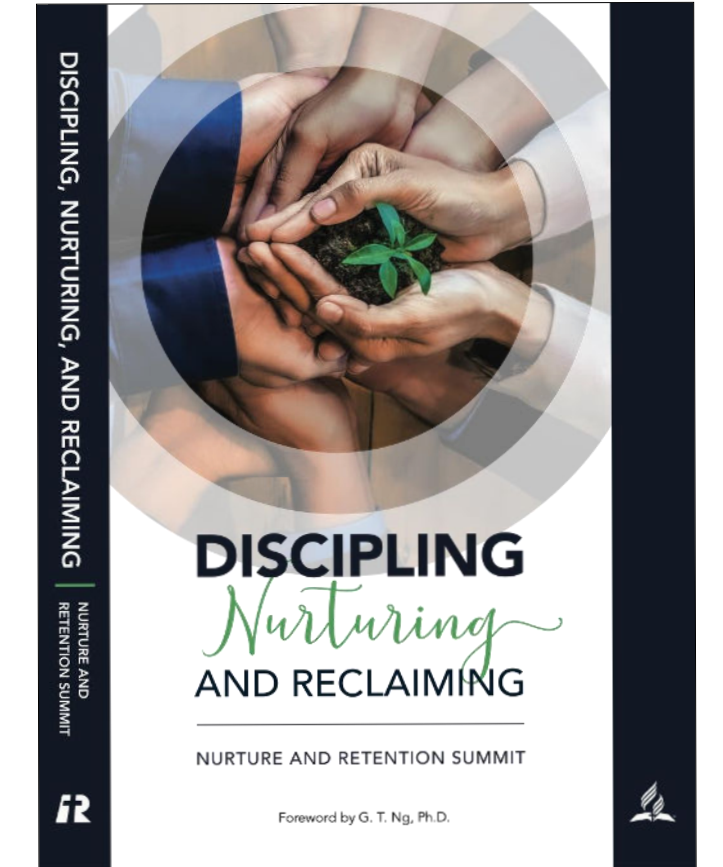


#2 Membership Classification

1. Frequently attending members,
2. Non-frequently attending members,
3. Attending another SDA congregation,
4. Whereabouts unknown (missing),
5. Members to rescue (missing).

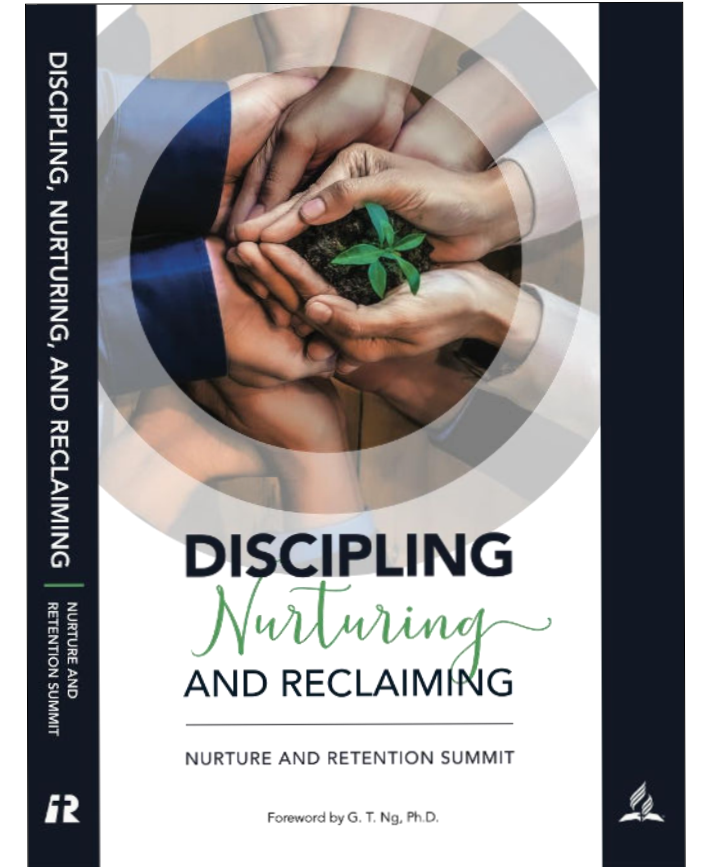
#3 Permanent Membership Review

Reclaiming Ministry



Local Field

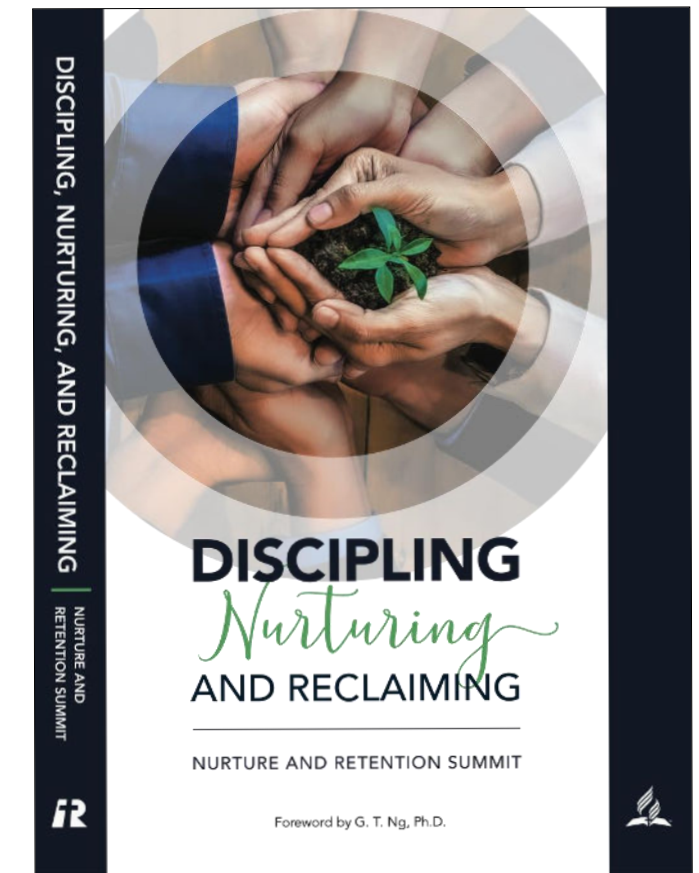
1. Training for church clerks, leaders, and members for membership review and reclaiming ministries
2. Implementing an electronic membership system to identify real people
3. Taking administrative decision to “close the gap”
4. Planning to progressively close the gap by “adjustments”
5. Keeping organizational records consolidated with local church membership

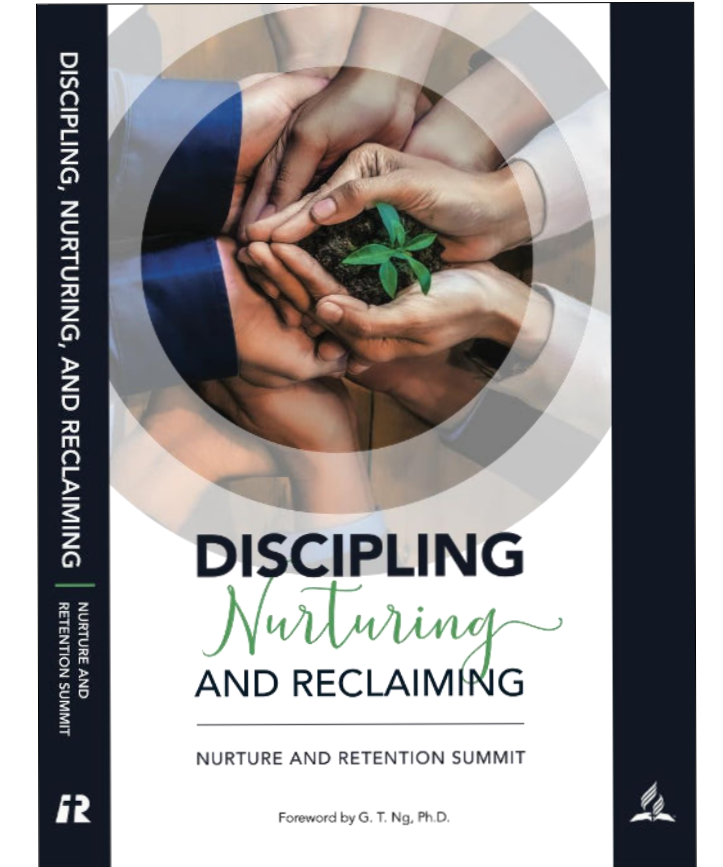


Redemptive Membership Review Process

Division/Union

1. To have a designated DMR coordinator and a DMR committee chaired by one of the officers and including departmental directors.
2. To have an overall plan to improve the audited membership retention rate and a 20% increase in church attendance.
3. To have and implement an active disciple-making plan, according to their context, to increase evangelism, assimilation, and leadership development.
4. To hold conferences on nurture, retention, reclaiming and disciple-making.
5. To implement approved membership software in 75% of unions to improve records of local church membership.
6. Specific training in nurture, retention, reclaiming and disciple-making to be part of all ministerial and theological education programs.
7. To update its membership as their units follow the process, not waiting for all the units to finish the process.



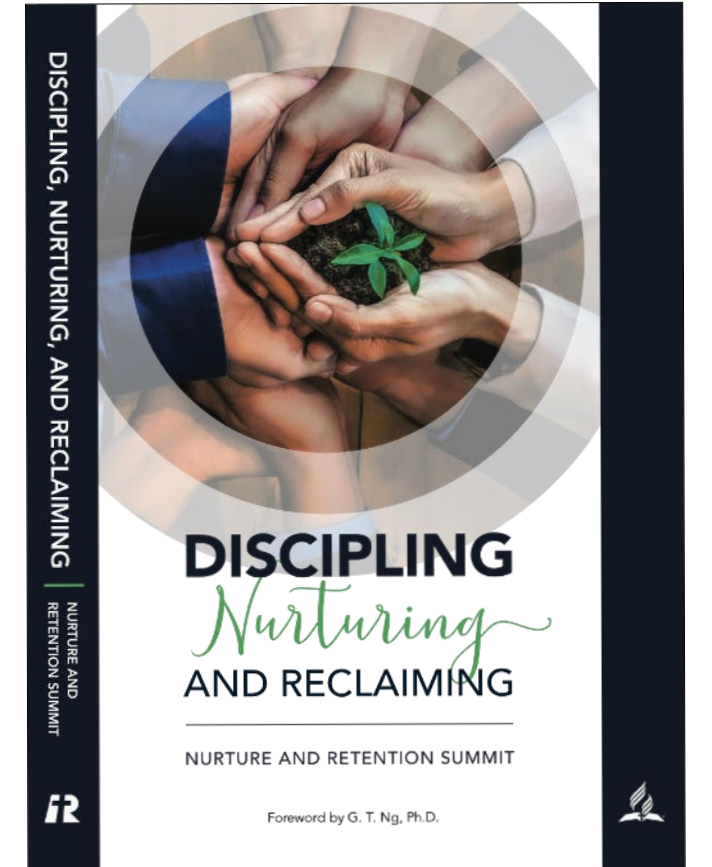


General Conference

1. The General Conference has an active Disciple-making and Reclaiming Committee to support worldwide initiatives on discipleship, retention, and reclaiming ministries.
2. General Conference Departments, in collaboration with one another and in consultation with division leaders, share materials that meet expressed needs in nurture, retention, disciple-making, and reclaiming ministries.

Terms of Reference

1. Recommend proposals for improving the retention rate
2. Facilitate plans that address “I Will Go” objectives
3. Identify, assess, and promote strategies and resources
4. Promote a clear and comprehensive vision for discipleship, nurture, and retention.



Caring about people

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