Mission Challenges

David Trim
Annual Council
2020
“Some find little that is of interest in statistical reports. But they have a purpose. The Lord saw wisdom in placing genealogical tables, statist-ics, and historical records of various kinds in the Bible.”
155th annual report on statistics made, to a GC Session, Autumn Council, or Annual Council, by GC Secretary, Statistical Secretary, or Director of AST/ASTR
• Tenth report by present director of ASTR
• One challenge relates to attrition and loss
• The other relates to growth and a levelling-off of growth rates
Accessions
(Through Year-End 2019)
LOSSES
(Through Year-end 2019)
Since the start of 1965, 40,421,554 people have been members of the Seventh-day Adventist Church.
MEMBERS WHO LEAVE

In the last 55 years, 40,421,554 people have been members of the Seventh-day Adventist Church.

Of those, 16,240,069 have chosen to leave.

Our net loss rate is 40.1%
Global Missing and Unknown are 120.11% of the dropped global lost.
Resources on Church Member Losses, Retention & Nurture

AdventistResearch.org

- https://www.adventistresearch.org/node/335
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Presentations by David Trim and Galina Stele of data on nurture, retention, and discipleship
ACCESSIONS PER ANNUM
(Through Year-End 2019)
Annual % Rate of Increase/Decrease in Accessions, 2000–2019
Church Planting
Congregations –

Total of churches and companies
Total Congregations, per annum, 1999–2019
Total-Congregation Annual Growth Rates, 1999–2019
New Congregations *per annum* 1999–2019
Accessions per Congregation, per annum, 1999–2019
Accessions per Congregation, Trend, 1999–2019
Accessions per Pastor 1999–2019

![Graph showing accessions per ordained pastor and all credential types from 1999 to 2019. The graph displays fluctuations in accessions over the years with a notable peak in 2011 for ordained pastors.](image-url)
In 1863, at the first General Conference Session, our founders were clear about why they had undertaken to organize:

_We have before us the great work of disseminating light upon the commandments of God, the faith of Jesus, & the truths connected with the third angel’s message._

(May 23, 1863)
Our prophetic mission has not altered

• God still looks to His followers to co-operate with the Holy Spirit to reach the world

• He calls on each of us to say, “I will go”, whether literally or figuratively

• But He also calls on us to use all our skills, creativity, and intelligence
There has been no change

Our prophetic mission has not altered

• If we are to fulfill that mission

• We need to engage with these two missional challenges:
  1) Mounting Losses
  2) Diminishing returns
There has been *no change*

Our prophetic mission has not altered

- If we are to fulfill that mission
- We need to emphasize wholistic discipleship and disciple-making
- Nurturing & retaining members
- **Motivating** them to **reach out** to others
I WILL GO

Proclaim the Three Angels’ Messages