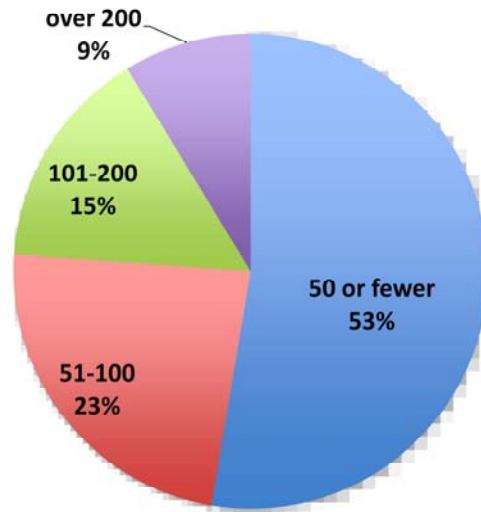


Church Clerk Inventory

Part One

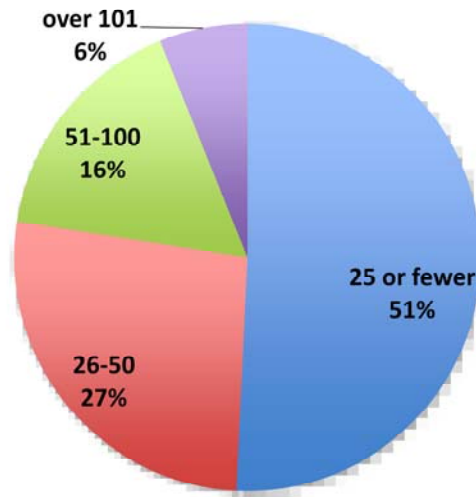
NAD Mega Study One

Sabbath Worship Attendance



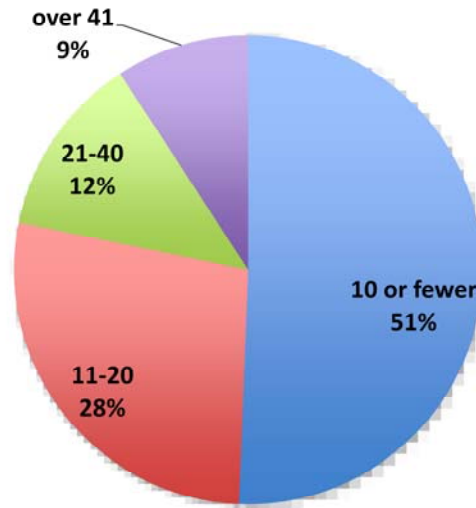
Using the typical Sabbath attendance as an indicator, the majority of local churches in the NAD fall into the Single Cell church dynamic. These are congregations that operate as essentially over-grown small groups. They operate purely on the basis of informal, personal dynamics and lay members who have long tenure (patriarchs and matriarchs) have greater influence than does the pastor, the conference or even the Church Manual. Unless a church grows beyond this category within the first five years after it is planted, there is almost no probability that it will ever move beyond this dynamic. Most of these small churches will never grow and it must be asked how much of scarce resources (tithe funds for pastoral payroll) should be used on these small churches after they have a tenure of a decade or more?

Sabbath School Attendance



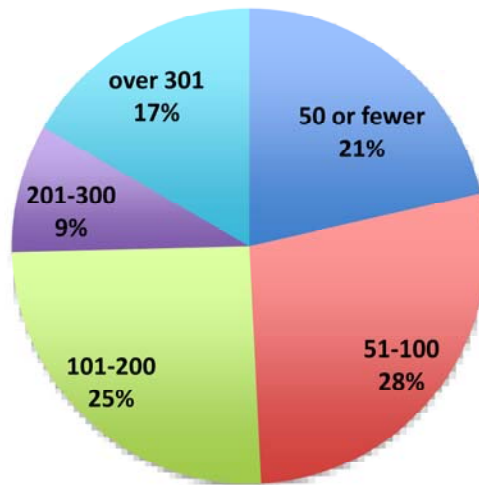
Sabbath School attendance reflects a pattern of about half what the worship attendance is for each congregation. The majority of local churches in the NAD have only one adult Sabbath School class. Research and repeated field experiments have shown that one of the first steps that can be taken toward church growth is simply to start a second adult Sabbath School in any format, although the most likely to produce evangelism and growth is for the second class to be a community Bible class meeting off-site from the church facilities.

Prayer Meeting Attendance



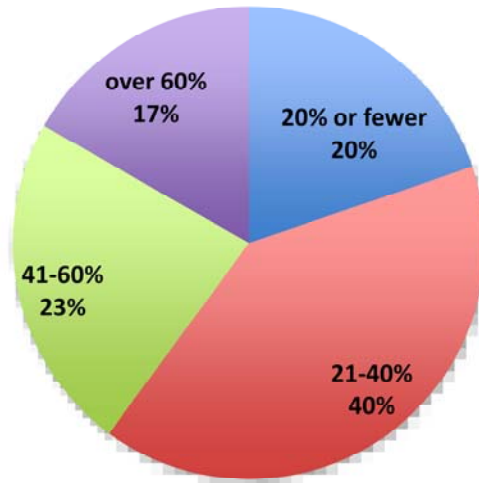
Attendance at mid-week prayer meetings is generally less than half of the attendance at Sabbath School or less than one quarter the typical attendance at Sabbath worship. In most churches this is in fact a small group activity even if it is not conducted along those lines. If continued energy is to be put into the concept of a mid-week prayer meeting it needs reinvention and revitalization. Does it at present touch enough lives to be an effective use of the pastoral and lay-leader time and energy put into it?. Other research and field experiments have shown that if a program of small group ministries is implemented in a church the attendance will be more than doubled and the mid-week meetings will make a much greater contribution both to church growth and caring for members.

Official Church Membership



Three out of four local churches in the NAD have 200 or fewer members. Other research has shown that an average of 65 percent of the book membership is made up of members who attend church at least once a month. This leads to the conclusion that eight out of ten congregations in the NAD consist of about 150 regularly-attending members or less. At the same time, it should be kept in mind that previous analysis of the entire data set of local churches and their membership showed that the majority of Adventists in the NAD belong to a relatively small number of churches who have more than 500 members. These make up less than ten percent of all the local churches in the division.

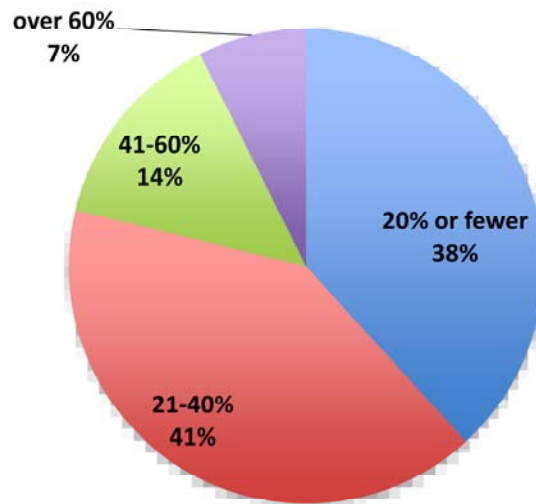
Members Paying Tithe



These data come from a simple question which the church clerk responded to possibly with input from the church treasurer, but possibly without. Consultation was not required. “Approximately how many members of your church regularly pay tithe?”

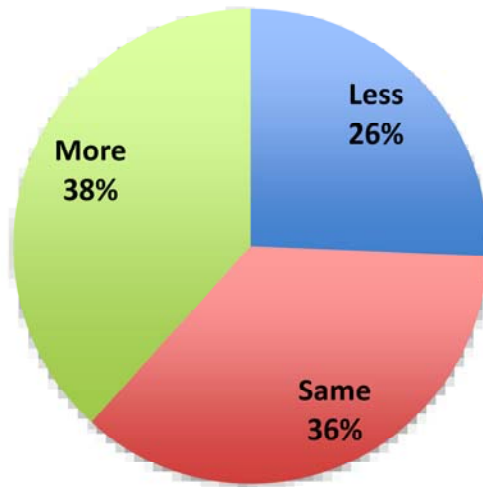
It should be noted that when active church members are asked this same question about their personal behavior, there is a much higher percentage who report that they tithe than is reported by church officers in items such as this one. There is a pronounced perception difference between the answer that congregational leaders give regarding the behavior of others and those that come from individuals about their own behavior. There are at least three parts to this differential. (1) This question is based on the total membership of the congregation, while the individual surveys include largely members who attend regularly. About a third of the members in each local church in the NAD have stopped attending church and non-attenders rarely tithe. (2) There is likely a “halo effect” in the self-reporting of individual surveys. It is well known that in surveys people tend to over-report their behavior on items that they perceive as expected of them. (3) It is evident from studies that include in-depth interviews of church treasurers with the interviewers examining church records with the respondents in the interviews that church officers tend to underestimate how many members tithe regularly. For example, in many interviews in those studies the treasurers had to be prompted to make an allowance for couples who turn in one tithe check instead of two. All of these factors make the data displayed here somewhat unreliable.

Households Paying Offerings



The data displayed here may be a little more accurate than those displayed on the previous page simply because this questions does make allowance for giving units instead of asking about individuals. Otherwise the cautions described on the previous page apply to these data as well.

Membership Compare to Five Years Ago

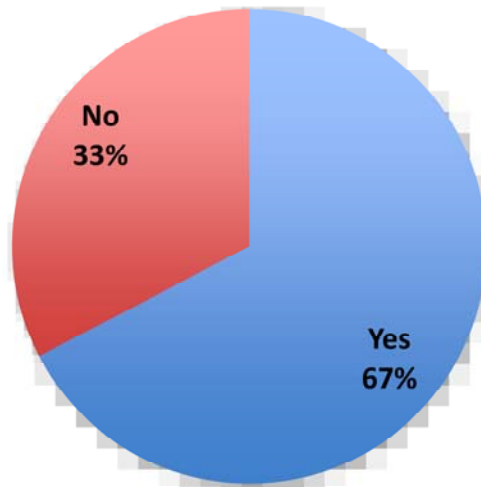


Nearly two in five local churches in the NAD had some growth in the last five years. This is close to the data reported in the Adventist segment of the 2010 Faith Communities Today survey and other previous surveys among pastors in the NAD.

About one church in three has had no change in membership over the past five years. These are “plateaued” congregations that are stalled at a certain membership and have stopped growing. Unfortunately, previous research has shown that most of these churches will begin to decline after ten or twenty years of unchanged membership numbers. These churches are at a stage where intervention is indicated. How many local conferences have a standard policy and process to intervene at this point in a congregation’s development?

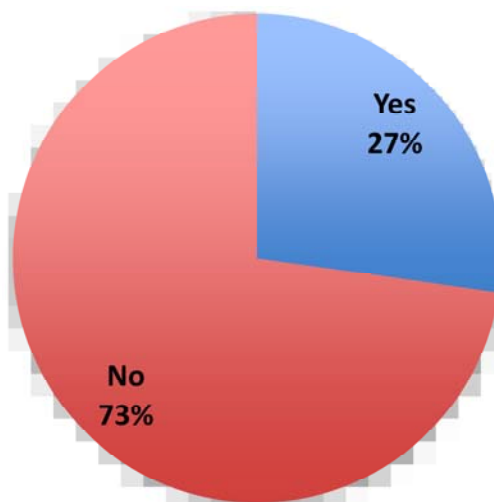
About one in four local churches has declined in membership over the past five years. These are mostly dying churches with little chance of growth. A number of them are quite small and probably should be closed down.

E-Adventist Computer-Based Program



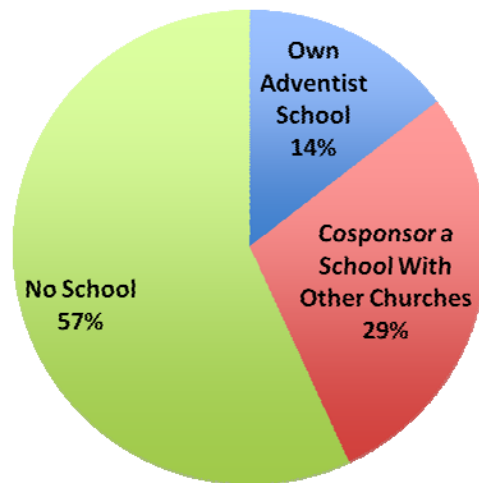
Two thirds of church clerks are using the E-Adventist system for church membership records. The remaining third will be the most difficult to recruit and train in this software. It is probably time for some kind of campaign to pick up the last third of clerks.

Special Reconnecting Ministry



About one in four local churches has a special reconnecting ministry to reach former Adventists and inactive members. Calculated on the basis of the 6,125 congregations reported in the 2013 *Annual Statistical Report* (5,333 organized churches and 792 companies), this means that 1,654 local groups have an active program of reconnecting ministry. Few conferences have added this area of ministry to its departments. The primary support system for these ministries is through the NAD's contract with the Center for Creative Ministry which offers trainers, Webinars, an 800-number hotline, and video and print resource materials. It is likely that a larger investment in this type of ministry is needed in order to expand it more widely.

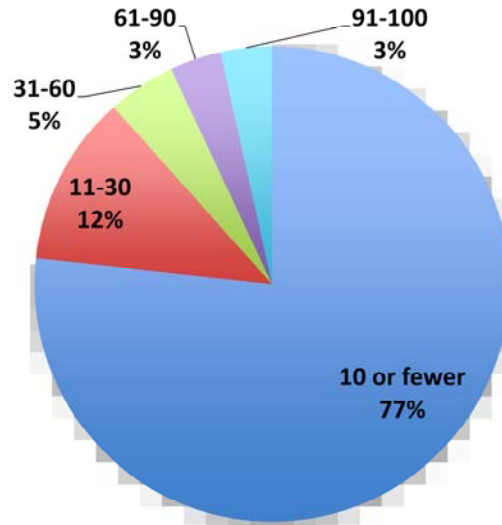
Church's Operation of an Adventist School



One in seven local churches in the NAD operates a school on its own. Nearly another one in three cosponsors a school with others in a multi-church constituency. Some conferences assign every local church to a constituency, which should be reflected in these data. Local churches with significant numbers of ethnic minorities are significantly more likely to have a school than are those where more than 90 percent of the members are white. There is also a correlation between the presence of a school and church growth. The majority of growing churches (55 percent) have a school and the majority of declining churches (68 percent) do not have a school.

The majority of local churches in the NAD are not involved with operating a school, and the smallest congregations (those with a typical Sabbath attendance of 50 or less) are more likely to report that they have no school. At the same time, the practice of tithing is stronger in those local churches which have no school which is just one indicator of the financial cost to congregations that conduct or cosponsor a school.

Percentage of Asians

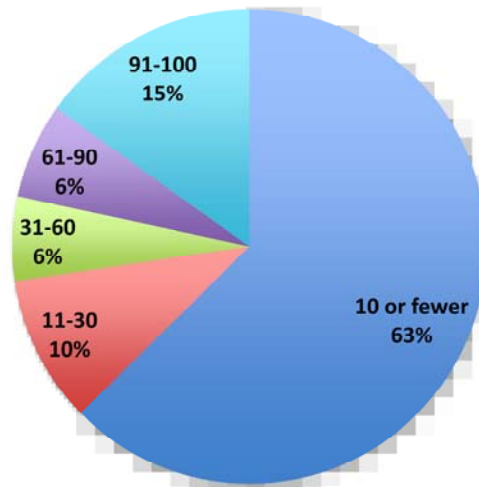


Six percent of the local churches in the NAD are predominantly Asian or Pacific Islander congregations. Almost all of these are immigrant churches. Another five percent of the local churches are roughly “half” made up of Asian members. Some of these are immigrant churches and some are multicultural churches.

One in eight local churches has 11 to 30 percent Asian members. These are mostly multicultural churches, not immigrant churches. Most are located in large metropolitan areas, especially on the Pacific coast.

Three out of four local churches in the NAD have relatively few members of Asian or Pacific Islander ethnicity. Some of these have no such members, although studies have shown that a larger percentage of Adventist churches have at least some members from each ethnic group than do congregations of most other Protestant denominations.

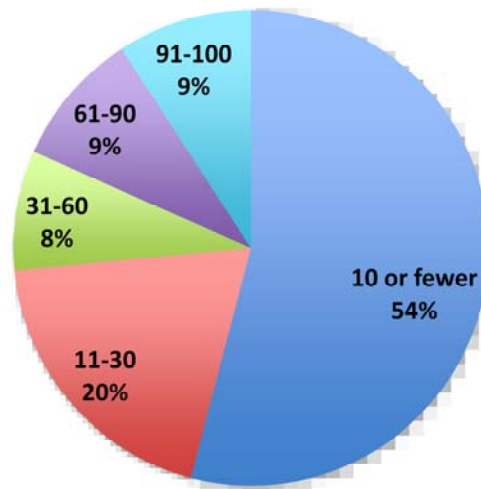
Percentage of Black Americans



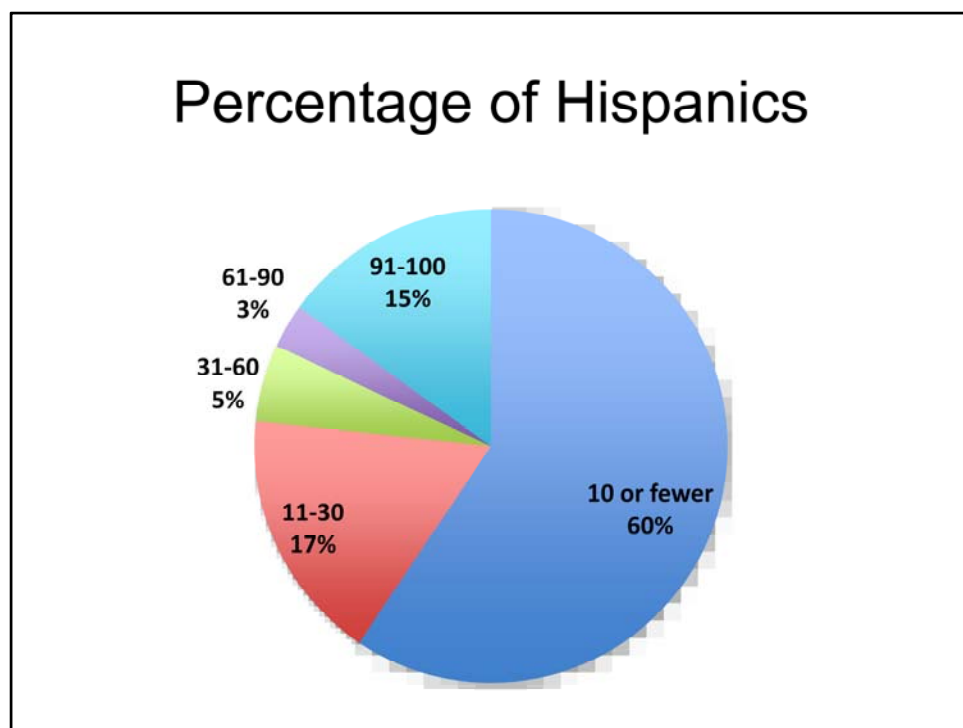
About one in four local churches in the NAD are dominantly Black or historically African American congregations. Another one in eight local churches has a significant minority of Black members. Many of these are multi-cultural congregations with no ethnic majority.

Nearly two thirds of local churches in the NAD have fewer than the national average of Blacks in their membership. Most of these are historically "White" congregations, although a number are immigrant churches of other ethnicities; Hispanic, Asian, etc. Case studies have shown that almost all local churches in the NAD have at least one or two members of color.

Percentage of Black Caribbeans



>>>>PETR, HOW DO THESE DATA RELATE TO THE DATA IN THE PREVIOUS SLIDE? ARE ALL OF THESE INCLUDED IN THE PREVIOUS SLIDE?

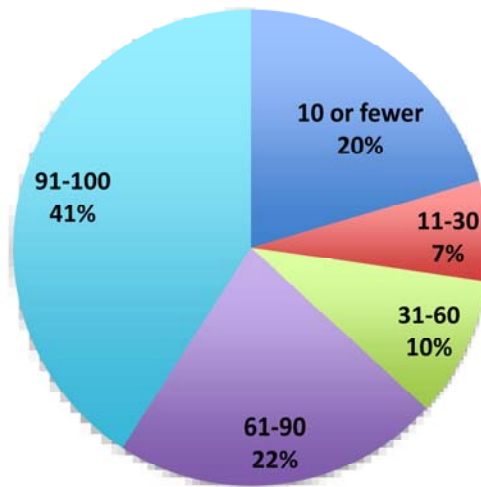


About one in five local churches in the NAD are predominantly made up of Hispanics. Almost all of these operate entirely in the Spanish language and are immigrant churches. Very few “second generation” congregations exist; those that relate to Hispanic communities and culture, but use English for at least some worship events.

Another one in five local churches has roughly a third of its membership Hispanic. Many of these are multi-cultural congregations with no ethnic majority. They are less likely to be immigrant churches.

Three in five local churches in the NAD have a few Hispanic members, including a very small number that have none at all. The majority of these are traditionally “White,” Anglo congregations.

Percentage of Whites

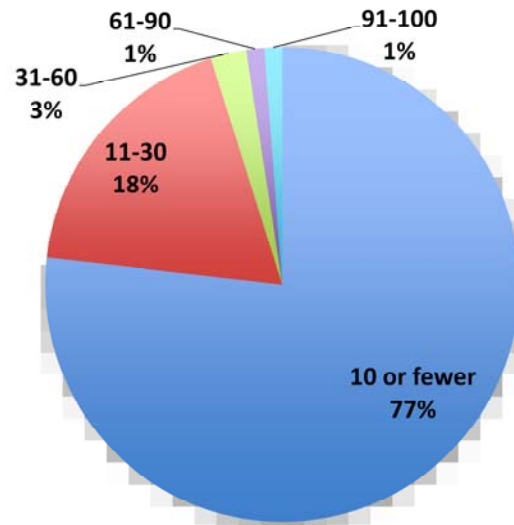


Two thirds of the local churches in the NAD are majority “White” congregations. Many of these are small congregations located outside the major metropolitan areas or in the outer suburbs of metro areas. The average is generally higher in these local churches than in the immigrant churches.

About one local church in eight in the NAD has roughly one third of its membership White. These are the multi-cultural churches who have no ethnic majority. Often they are located in major metropolitan areas or near Adventist institutions.

One in five local churches in the NAD have few if any White members. Most White Americans will not regularly participate in congregations that are dominantly of an ethnic minority. The exceptions are often married to spouses from a minority group.

Percentage of other/Multiracial

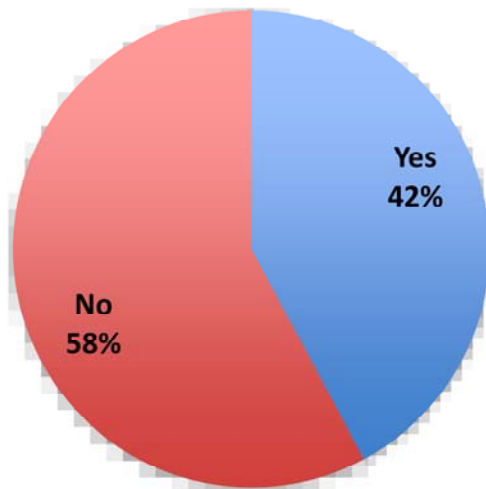


There are very few local churches in the NAD where the majority of the members are either of an ethnicity other than Asian, Black, Hispanic or White or are multiracial.

>>>>>PETR, CAN WE IDENTIFY THE ETHNIC IDENTITY OF THE TWO 1% CATEGORIES HERE??

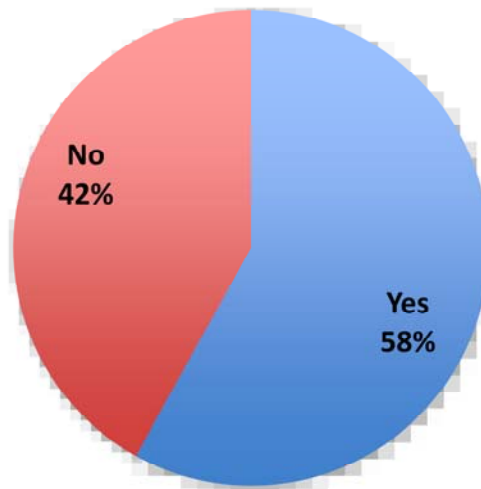
The 18 percent of local churches where up to a third of the members are of a different ethnic minority or multiracial corresponds closely with the one in five congregations that have been identified in previous studies as multi-ethnic. Case studies have shown that some of these multi-cultural congregations have exceptional percentages of cross-cultural married couples compared to the official national census in both the United States and Canada. A number of these churches seem to be particularly friendly places for multi-racial families and individuals.

Change of Ethnic Composition in Past 10 Years



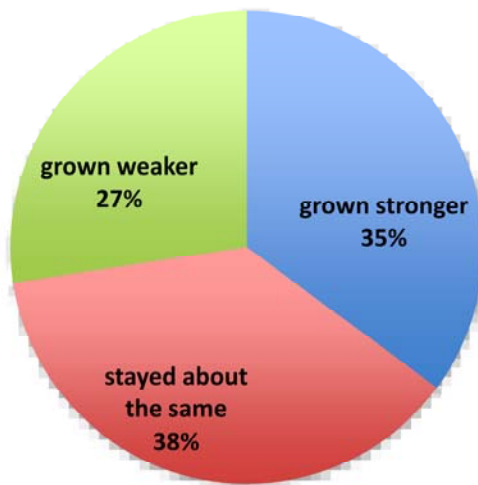
The fact that 42 percent of the local churches in the NAD report a change of ethnic profile in the last decade is further evidence of the extent of ethnic diversity and change in the Seventh-day Adventist Church in North America. Sahlin and Richardson in a demographic profile study conducted by the Center for Creative Ministry for the NAD in 2008 reported that the Division was at the threshold of a “minority majority” situation. The Adventist Church is clearly the most diverse Christian denomination in North America today. Continued change in ethnicity could arguably move the denomination to a position where it may become more difficult to reach out to the ethnic majority in the general population, especially given the “graying” of the Adventist population. Is this a strategic consideration for the NAD?

Membership Audit in the Past 5 Years



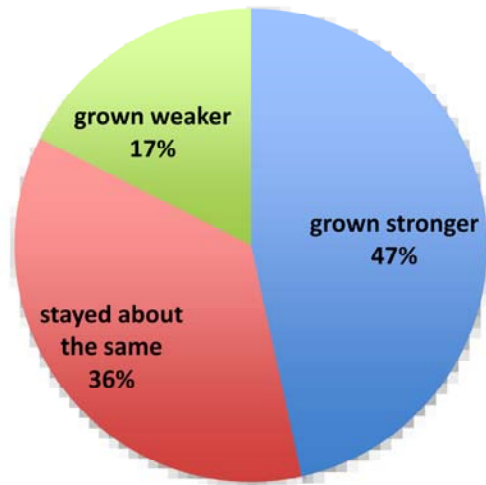
The majority of church clerks report that their local church has “conducted a membership audit to update the church rolls and insure accuracy in the persons counted as members of your church.” It is unclear how many of these strictly followed the requirements of the Church Manual which prohibits dropping members simply due to non-attendance or not giving. Such a high percentage of membership audits may have actually contributed to the high percentage of people dropped from membership noted by a recent report produced by the General Conference office of Archives, Statistics and Research (ASTR). It appears that the accuracy of the records may be as well tended or better cared for than the relationships with church dropouts.

Financial Health in the Past 5 Years



More than a third of local churches in the NAD report that church finances have grown stronger in the last five years despite the Great Recession. More than another third report that church finances are largely unchanged over the same period. Only about one church in four reports a weaker financial picture than five years earlier. In general, it appears that local church finances remain strong despite the economic crisis in the United States in recent years.

Morale and Spirit over the Past 5 Years



Nearly half of the local churches in the NAD report that the morale and spirit among the congregation has grown stronger over the past five years. Less than one in six local churches reports that the congregation has grown weaker. In general, this subjective measure of the quality of spiritual life in local churches is quite positive, although perhaps a denomination with a history of warnings about “laodicean ... lukewarm” attitudes in its midst should focus more attention on the third of local churches who report that things are about the same over the past five years.