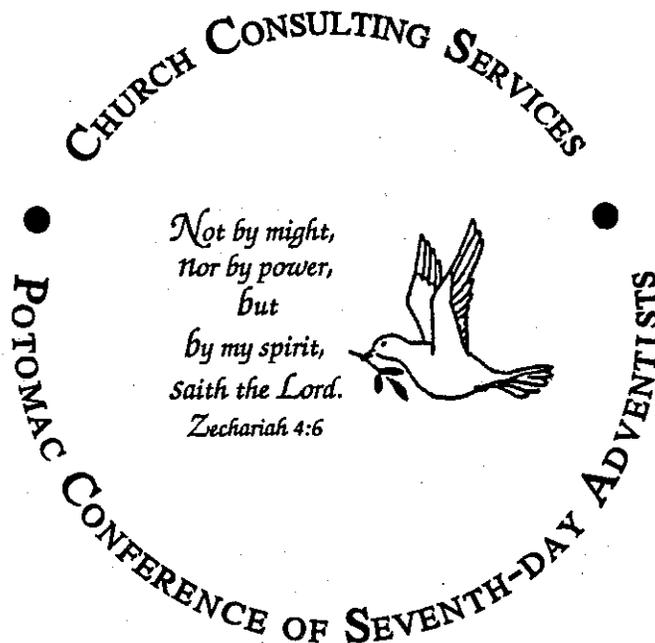


DIAGNOSTIC ANALYSIS

Sligo Seventh-day Adventist Church
Takoma Park, Maryland

Prepared by
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Potomac Conference

of Seventh-day Adventists

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THE SLIGO SEVENTH-DAY ADVENTIST CHURCH

Diagnostic Analysis May 1993

I. INTRODUCTION

A. The Purpose of the Report

The purpose of this report is to provide the staff, leaders and membership of the Sligo Seventh-day Adventist Church with a clear overview of the present situation, and to reflect the strengths and weaknesses as they relate to growth potential for the future. By providing a "freeze frame" perspective, significant trends can be assessed and the church's potential determined. Although the final section presents a series of recommendations, it is not intended to serve as a "master plan." This can, however, serve as a "jump start" towards the development of a comprehensive strategy of ministry for the church.

The study of the church was first requested by Elder Rudy Torres, senior pastor, and then officially requested by the church board on March 23, 1993. The data for this analysis, from which conclusions and recommendations were made, came from the church itself.

Congregational surveys were sent to each member sixteen years of age and older who lived within a reasonable driving distance, approximately fifty miles, of the Sligo church. In addition to this over thirty individuals including the administrative and pastoral staff were personally interviewed. Numerous diagnostic instruments were completed which helped portray assorted trends in the history of the church.

B. Philosophy of Ministry

Members of healthy and growing churches usually have a clear understanding of the purpose of their church, the reason for its ministry, and the strategies it is using to achieve its God-given goals. Each congregation is unique and must work out its own approach for ministry as it attempts to match its resources with current opportunities.

The mission statement of the Sligo church is found in Appendix A and describes the purpose of the church. In a strict sense, your philosophy-of-ministry statements should build upon this purpose. As the statement describes the WHAT, your philosophy of ministry statements should seek to fulfill your purpose. Such understandings are crucial to the life and health of a church.

Every congregation is either consciously or unconsciously functioning under a philosophy of ministry. Where this is clearly understood and accepted, it becomes a thread which ties together all the church's activities and informs its decisions. When this underlying philosophy is fuzzy and indistinct there tends to be a lack of direction with conflict resulting on numerous fronts.

II. CONGREGATION ASSESSMENT

A. Positive, Growth-Oriented Strengths

The strengths of Sligo help provide the foundations from which a revitalizing strategic plan for ministry can be laid. The following are the most significant strengths in summary form.

1. *Pastor Torres' preaching and philosophy towards ministry.*

Pivotal to the future of a church is the direction the senior pastor charts and how well he or she matches the current needs of the church. The overall "pastoral orientation" plus relevant but relational preaching matches the needs of the majority now attending Sligo. The survey respondents ranked Pastor Torres' preaching as ministering to the spiritual needs of our members with a score of 86.¹ The score for the fit between the senior pastor and the congregation was placed at 83 and his ability to carry out his ministry responsibilities at 84. An additional strength is his ability to communicate with the congregation which was also ranked at 84.

1. The scores listed are the "Adjusted Frequency Response Scores" which are described in more detail in Appendix B. The scale is as follows: 90+ Strongly Agree; 80-90 Agree; 70 to 80 Moderately Agree; 60 to 70 Maybe; 50 to 60 Moderately Disagree; 35 to 50 Disagree; 20 to 35 Strongly Disagree.

2. *Cultural diversity.*

The diverse cultural and ethnic make-up of the congregation was among the top strengths among those who wrote additional comments in the survey. This was also a frequently mentioned strength in personal and group interviews. The survey respondents also said that the changing ethnic make-up of Sligo is positive and ranked it at 80. Those 44 and younger tended to see it in a more positive light than did their seniors, but all age categories placed this attribute in the favorable scoring range. This is an important strength for a church found in a community undergoing a demographic shift. (See Section III, "A Demographic Overview.")

3. *Worship services including music.*

This is clearly seen by the survey respondents when they ranked, "I look forward to our worship services each week" at 82, "songs and music" at 82 and worship services as "promoting a genuine communion with God" at 78. The addition of an alternative worship service which is in contrast with the more traditional service provides the church with an avenue of reaching a larger spectrum of potential members.

4. *Desire for involvement among the church membership.*

This desire is substantiated in the interviews and various surveys that we have taken. There are numerous individuals who are looking for some way to become involved in a ministry so they can make a meaningful difference for the good of the church, for some individual project or for someone. This fact is an important building block for strategic planning. It is characterized by the following comment in the survey:

"Could we be taught how to lead someone to Christ? I'd really like to know how to do this."

One area of the church where this strength is especially noticeable is in the Young Adult group. Sparked by the life transformations of some of its lay leaders, this group has enormous potential for attracting other young adults who are looking for hope and a sense of meaning² as well as minimizing certain institutional tendencies of the church. The interest of this group in prayer, Bible study, witnessing and small group ministries is an important strength of the Sligo church.

5. *An openness to innovation with an emphasis on quality.*

Sligo has a tradition of being innovative and the ability to offer quality whether it be in preaching, worship styles, music or in most programs offered to the public. This came through clearly in personal interviews although no specific question in the survey addressed this trait. Sligo does have a broad range when it comes to values, beliefs and life-styles but it is our impression that within each group there is an innovative or pioneering spirit. While this poses some challenges, when dealt with constructively this characteristic enhances the overall potential of the church.

6. *The diversity of skills and ministries represented on the pastoral staff.*

One of the strengths of a large church is its ability to offer a large menu of programs, activities and various enrichment opportunities. One of the ways Sligo is able to do this is through its pastoral staff which comprises a diversity of skills and interests. Even with the reduction of a needed staff position within the past year, the Sligo church continues to have a wide diversity of available pastoral skills and experience.

2. See Lyle E. Schaller's, *The Seven-Day-a-Week Church*, pp. 14, 58 and 91 for the implications of transformational leadership.

7. *Children's Sabbath School.*

The children's Sabbath School ministry for ages Cradle Roll through Juniors was given a ranking of 83 by the survey respondents. It is very important at this time in the history of the Sligo Church for this area to receive a positive score.

8. *Weekly fellowship dinner.*

Although it represents a lot of work, organization and personal expense by those who are part of this ministry, it is an invaluable part of a visitor-care program.

9. *Facility additions.*

The fairly recent addition of the atrium with its multipurpose capability, the additions of fellowship and children's Sabbath School rooms enhance the use of the church's facility.

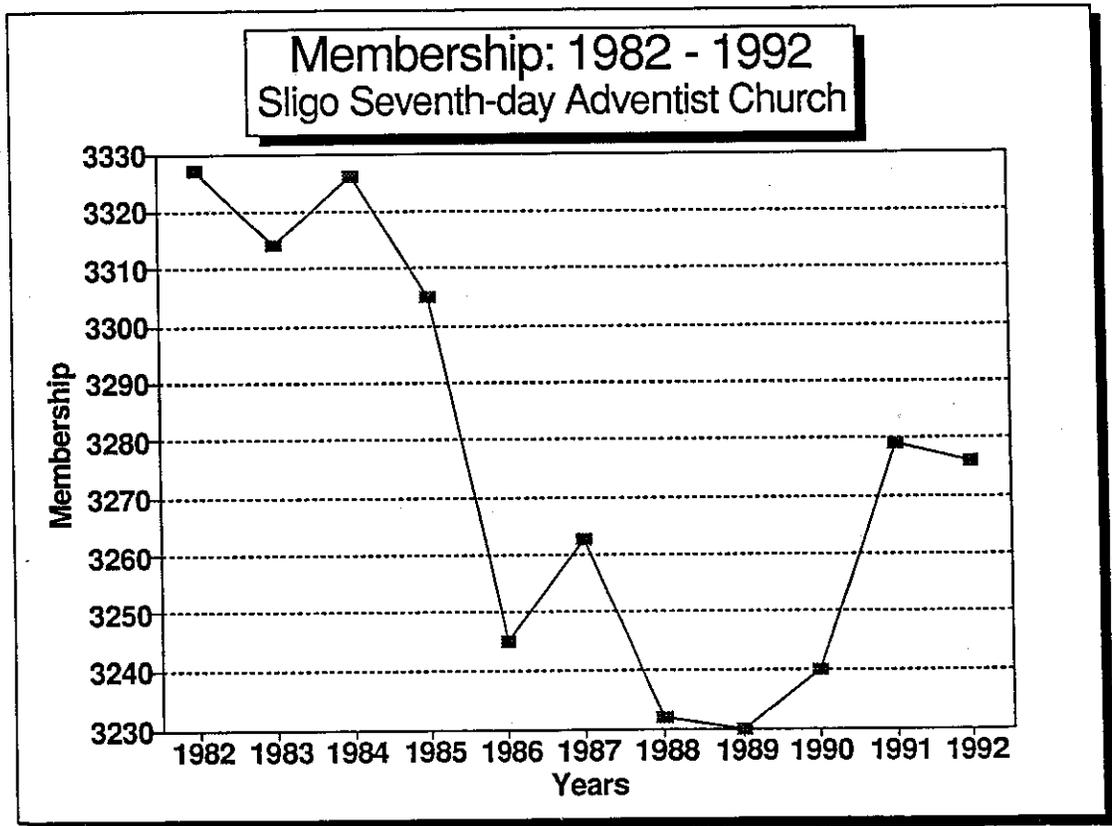
10. *An active Community Services Center.*

The amount of service rendered to the community and good-will generated for the church is significant. In 1992 3,772 families were served. Food, clothing, furniture and in a few instances cash grants were given to those in need. In addition to this help various community service programs were sponsored. The Center is also a referral agency for other denominations in the area.

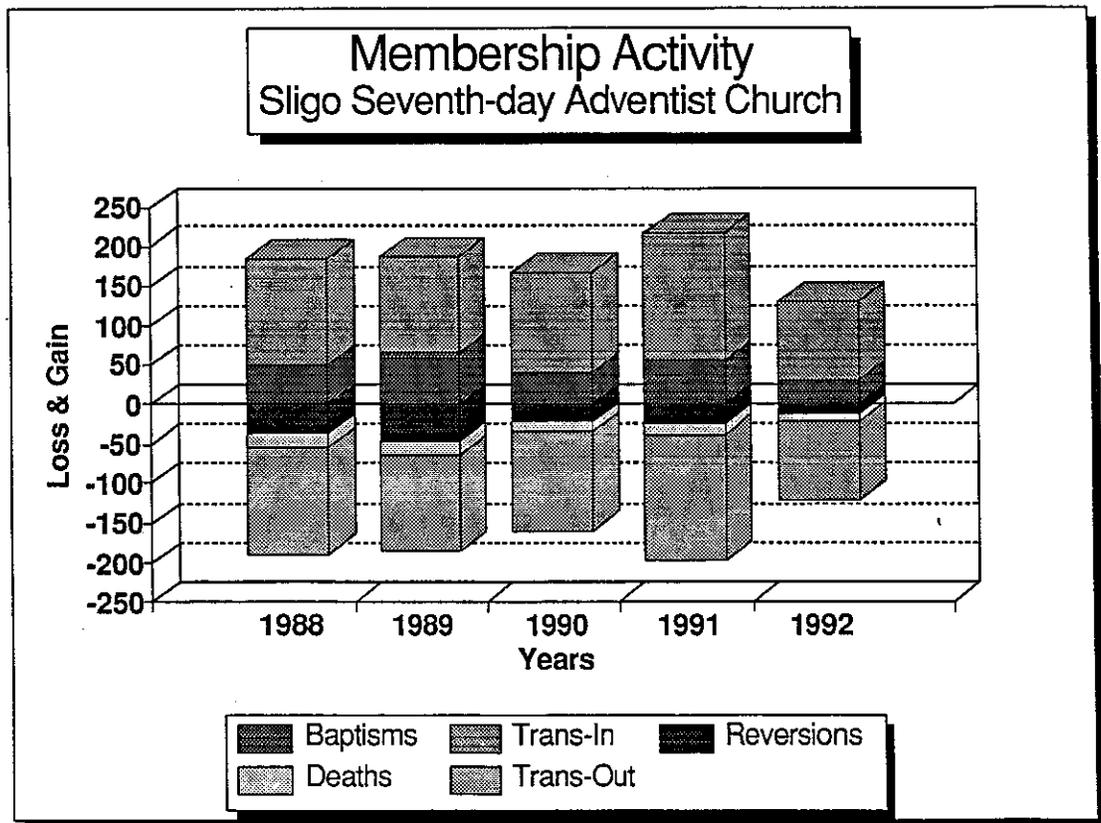
B. Concerns Impacting Growth Potential

The above listed strengths of the Sligo church could be the envy of many churches in North America. The corporate resources of the church and the needs of the community clearly provide a gold mine of opportunities for productive ministries. Indeed the church is fortunate. However, many churches have ridden the crest of the wave only to find that

certain restrictive factors worked against the church's forward momentum, thereby limiting its effectiveness. In some cases this cherished momentum simply slowed, but in others the church plateaued and ultimately suffered decline and near demise. There are reasons for the church to give special study to growth impingements. One of these is the membership history reflected in the following graph.



The graph indicates that during the past eleven years the church has been predominantly in plateau and decline. Further more, the decadal growth/decline rate from 1982 through 1992 is -1.53%.³ Progress was made in 1990 and 1991 but the plateau effect showed again in 1992. There are obviously many factors behind these trends. While pastoral transitions, the moving of the world headquarters and new churches in the area are frequently mentioned as causal factors behind the plateau and decline in membership, others discussed later, are also having a significant impact. The following graph indicates the numerous kinds of membership activity Sligo has experienced during the past five years. Of special note is the fact that during the past three years, 193 or 39.2% of the transfers-out were to local churches.⁴



3. Among North American Protestant church decadal growth rates of 300% are considered outstanding, 200% is excellent growth, 100% is good, 50% is fair, and 25% is considered poor.

4. See Appendix C for results of the exit survey of those who transferred-out to local churches.

As the above information confirms, the life of a church is not static; to the contrary, it is dynamic. Change is part and parcel of any church but even more so in the setting in which Sligo finds itself. As it is in the physical life of an individual so there are principles of health and well being in the life of a church. The following are warning signals that need to be addressed as soon as possible:

1. *The church is lacking an effective and coordinated game plan for ministry.*

This is not to deny that there are many good things happening at Sligo. It simply says that the church is lacking "focus." As a result the advantages of synergy, of efficiency, are lacking. The survey respondents clearly expressed this idea when answering the questions, "Our church has a clearly defined vision for its ministry" [66], and "Our church has clearly defined ministry goals to carry out its mission" [64]. Symptoms often associated with this malady and apparent at the church include:

- a. When the future is defined by the accomplishments of the past rather than opportunities of the present.

Sligo has an average tenure of membership of approximately 26 years. This is very high. These individuals will have a tendency to recall the "golden years," but since then the community has changed, the college has changed and the make-up of the church has changed and equally important, the world has changed.

- b. Basic responsibility for ministry is placed on paid staff.

If lay involvement is given a priority in strategic planning then this would be reflected in adequate training for respective responsibilities. Some survey respondents expressed their frustration with this need. The survey respondents scored this at 53 to the statement, "Our members are adequately trained to use their gifts in the ministries of our church." It also indicated that significant planning should be given to the idea of developing a "more effective process for recruiting, training, placing and supporting volunteers." [84].

An exit survey of members who transferred out of Sligo into area churches between 1990 and the end of 1992 was done.⁵ Approximately one fourth of the 193 who transferred out of Sligo and into a local area church were surveyed to find out what their motivating factor was for changing churches. Next to "friends" and wanting to join their own language/ethnic group, the next most frequently given reason for changing their membership was so that they could get more involved. This need of involvement was born out in the main congregation survey. To the question, "Our church provides clear information on how members can be involved in the ministries of our church," the church got one of its lowest scores -- a 53. A similar survey statement, "I feel needed and included in the mission of the Sligo church," scored 64. A sense of belonging and the feeling that "I am contributing to the success of the Sligo church" are "game plan" issues. It is somewhat ironic that one of the most

5. See Appendix C

influential churches in the denomination, when it comes to the issue of ordaining women in professional ministry, is marked down so strongly on training and involving its members in ministry.

- c. Another game plan issue is the need for an effective stewardship program.

To the statement, "Our church has an effective stewardship program for developing and promoting membership giving," the respondents replied with an average score of 66. The lowest scores were given by those in the youngest category.⁶

- d. A fourth indication that a comprehensive ministry game plan is not in effective use is the lack of visitor follow-up.

The survey respondents underscored this with a score of 50 to the statement that "Our church has an effective follow-up program for those who have visited our church." Churches much larger than Sligo have struggled with this issue but eventually found reasonable success. It works only if it is given a priority. (See 2,c below)

6. This last point is especially interesting in light of the following insight from the national pollster, George Barna in *The Frog in the Kettle*, p.107. "While church leaders and clergy typically assume that the congregation understands its responsibility regarding church financial support, the research suggests otherwise. As Boomers become active in the Church, they may be especially difficult to stimulate to significant giving levels. They will already be donating money to a variety of nonprofit organizations. Giving to a church will not be viewed as a priority -- unless the church works diligently and intelligently to lead them to lift it to higher priority. They will have to see tangible and moving results of such support."

2. *Inadequate care/fellowship provided.*

The more "high-tech" our society becomes, we are told, the more important it is for avenues of "high-touch" to be provided. George Barna has pointed out that Americans are wanting to: (1) be loved, (2) make a significant difference in their world and (3) to attain security and comfort. The first two can directly be addressed by the caring ministry the church. Even the third provides indirect and in some cases direct implications for the work of the church. Sligo has the potential to rise to the occasion but the following will need to be addressed:

- a. When compared to the average scores of approximately 100 other churches in the area of Care and Fellowship, Sligo fell behind in each category.⁷ These areas include:

- (1) Helping members grow in personal relationships [63]
- (2) Effective small group ministry [61]
- (3) Caring for members in need or crisis [66]
- (4) Responding to needs of absentee members and drop-outs [42]
- (5) Adequate pastoral care and counseling available [63]

Also related to the nurture of the church are the following areas of concern:

- (6) The need to expand the number or variety of care/fellowship groups [75].
- (7) Our elected and appointed leadership provide adequate visitation of our members. [48]

7. For the actual comparison see Appendix B.

(8) When I have a spiritual concern or need I have someone with whom I can share it. [66]

- b. One of the biggest challenges facing the church is that the majority sitting on boards and ministry committees have long tenure in this church and were largely drawn to this church because of its pulpit ministry. They have grown accustomed to little personal care. We now, however, have a new generation seeking out churches that not only provide quality worship services but also quality care. Generally, when the average tenure exceeds 12 to 15 years (Sligo's is 26 years) the assimilation of new members becomes awkward and difficult. Heritage goals rather than contemporary goals will often be reflected in strategic planning sessions. If Sligo is to maintain its tradition of a high quality church then it will have to broaden its scope of ministry to include quality care of today's members and visitors.
- c. Visitor care deserves a special point of its own. While it is more difficult in a larger church, the following areas need to be given special study:
- (1) The location of individual adult Sabbath Schools are not given nor are there signs on the doors of the classrooms. Visitors would not know to use the back door of Richards Hall, for example, if they wished to enter the building to attend a class.
 - (2) A similar problem exists with the children's Sabbath Schools as noted above.
 - (3) There is awkwardness regarding the invitation of guests to the fellowship dinner. The process needs refinement.

(4) While friendly, greeters were not engaging of visitors nor was there anyone at most doors at the close of the second service.

3. *Sociological strangulation*⁸ -- *the parking problem.*

Parking can be very difficult to find on Sabbath morning-- especially for the visitor who is unacquainted with the various parking lots. It was a problem frequently mentioned in the comment sections of the survey and scored 51 in the tabulation.

4. *Inadequate Programming.*

a. *Narrow evangelistic targeting.*

The addition of the A.M. worship service has broadened the church's evangelistic potential. Some shifts in the church programming will need to be adjusted to take advantage of these new opportunities. One of the existing possibilities that is not adequately met may respond better with the general orientation of the A.M. service. This group is the group of parents of non-Adventist students attending Adventist schools in the area.

b. *Infrastructure not adequate.*

The need for more lay training has already been emphasized. There is a serious need for expanding the number and variety of Adult Sabbath School classes. The survey respondents indicated, however, a need beyond Sabbath School classes. They

8. As a basic rule of thumb, when the sanctuary, Sabbath School divisions or the parking lot becomes 80% or more full the growth of the church will plateau. Lyle Schaller suggests that a church should own one acre for every 100 in attendance. With an average attendance of nearly 1800 Sligo needs 15 to 18 acres.

expressed this by their response to the presence of "an effective 'small group' ministry" [61] and that plans need to be made to expand the number or variety of care/fellowship groups." [75] This, however, should not be limited to nurture strategies but should include evangelistic ones as well.

c. Cultural/ethnic presence is not the same as incorporation.

Although cultural diversity is listed as a strength, there is potential for frustration and confusion. Communication in areas of cultural identities, barriers, needs and wants is difficult at best. Ethnic presence or White, for that matter, does not constitute the incorporation of that culture. A clear statement of the purpose of worship in a diverse congregation is needed but lacking. The opportunity for bold multicultural expressions of worship has not been seized.

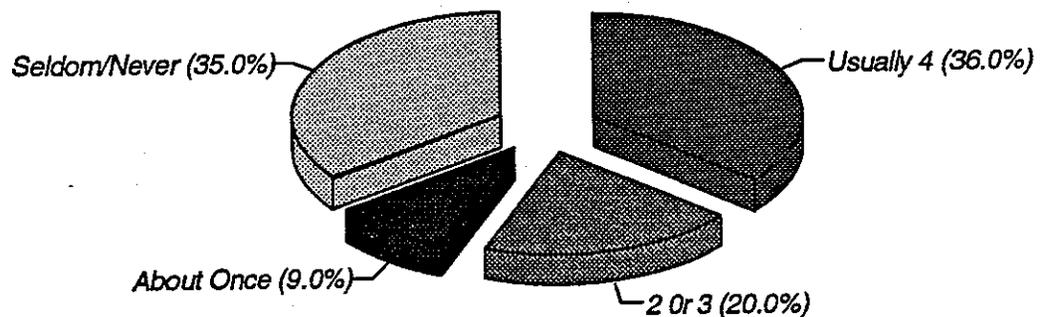
d. Pathfinders.

The fruitful opportunities afforded by this group for enriching the overall church has not been capitalized upon. Children and youth programs are vital to the future of Sligo. Creative approaches to "Pathfinding" could open up whole neighborhoods, set a standard in the community for parents interacting with youth and become a bulwark in the fight against juvenile crime. Leadership will need to find a common need, cast a creative and imaginative vision, stimulate motivation and implement plans which will capture the attention of both youth and adults. A tall order, but Sligo has the ability.

e. Adult Sabbath School

Considerable comment has been made regarding the adult Sabbath School program. The survey respondents in answer to the question, "Our church needs to develop our Sabbath School curriculum to respond better to participants' need" indicated with a score of 76 that serious strategic planning needs to take place regarding this issue. Furthermore, the younger the age the more important change appeared to be.⁹ This becomes an important issue if Sligo wishes to continue to attract college age youth and young adults. The following graph reflects these concerns through attendance patterns of the survey respondents.

*Adult Sabbath School Attendance
of Survey Respondents*



9. Those 29 or younger scored this at 83; ages 30 to 44 at 80; ages 45 to 60 at 76 and ages 61 and over at 69.

5. *Facility Needs*

This concern is mentioned last because a clear ministry focus, relevant programming and genuine people care are far more important than "brick and mortar." However, while facilities will seldom attract and hold new members they can interfere with the ministry of the church. The following are some general concerns although facility needs were not the major focus of this study.

- a. A study of possible renovation is apparently under way. Hopefully part of the study will be given to the need for comfortable and convenient seating, carpet and the ability to darken the windows of the sanctuary.
- b. There appears to be a problem with the miking (PA system) especially during the AM worship service.
- c. The youth room needs significant attention.
- d. The organ is in need of repair.

III. SUMMARY OF THE DEMOGRAPHIC ANALYSIS

A. Description of the Analysis

The *Church Information Development Services* was contracted to do a demographic profile of the 1, 3 and 5 mile radii immediately surrounding the Sligo church. It is recognized that the influence area of the church is much wider than what the study encompassed, however, in order to gather more specific data a narrow field was selected. In addition to the standard demographic information, other profiles were also requested which may assist in the strategic planning process. These "ethographic" studies of the targeted ministry area were done by census tracts and included: (1) "No Preference but Interested," (2) "Primary U.S. Lifestyles Segment," (3) "Primary Concern: Dealing With Change," (4) "Adventist Preference," and (5) "Primary Concern: Dealing With Racial/Ethnic Prejudice. This summary will not attempt to deal with the ethographic information and will only deal in an abbreviated manner with the other. The full demographic report is available at the church office.

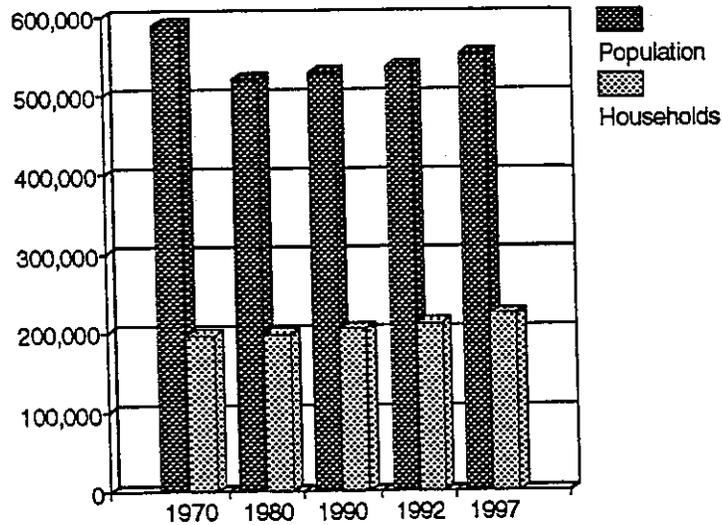
B. Population Trends

The average annual growth rate is moderate. From 1990 to 1997 the population is projected to show a gain of 1.13% in the one mile radius with a population density per square mile increasing from 10,153 to 12,270. The projected growth of the five mile radius is 4.6% with the population density increasing from 6,716 to 7,024 per square mile.

The population seems to be growing at a faster rate within a one mile radius. While the five mile radius has grown by 1.4% since 1990, the population has grown by 2.4% within the one mile radius of the church. The projected population growth from 1990 to 1997 for the five mile is 3.1% and 5.4% for the one mile radius.

The graphs below illustrate the population and household trends of the five radii.

Population and Households



C. Race/Ethnicity Trends

From 1990 to 1997 in both the one and five mile radii a gradual decrease in the White population can be expected. The fastest rate of growth, although not the largest in number, is among the Hispanics.

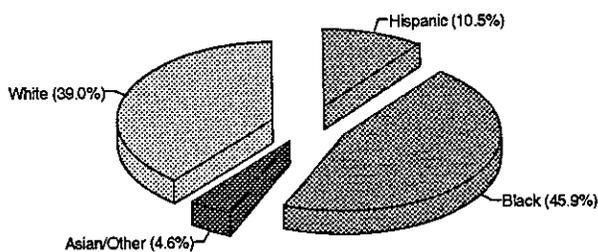
In the five mile radius between 1992 and 1997, the White population is projected to increase by 9,916 persons and to decrease from 39.0% to 36.9% of the total population.

In the one mile radius the decrease is more significant. It decreases from 32.8% to 28.7%.

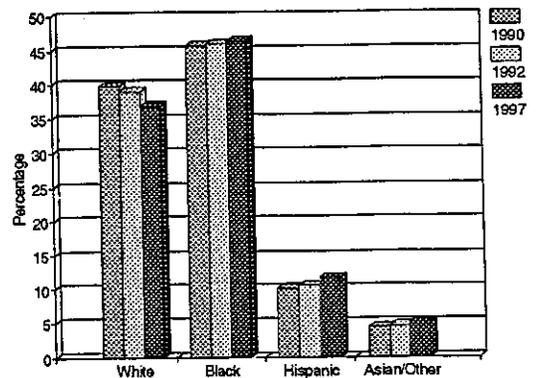
The Black population is projected to increase in the five mile radius from 1992 to 1997 from 45.9% to 46.3%; the Hispanic from 10.5% to 11.7% and the Asian/Other from 4.6% to 5.1%. The one mile radius shows the Black population increasing from 34.2% to 35.1%; the Hispanic from 25.7% to 28.2% and the Asian/Other from 7.3% to 8.0%.

The following graphs shows the breakdown of the 1992 population as well as projected trends within the five mile radius.

Population By Race/Ethnicity-1992

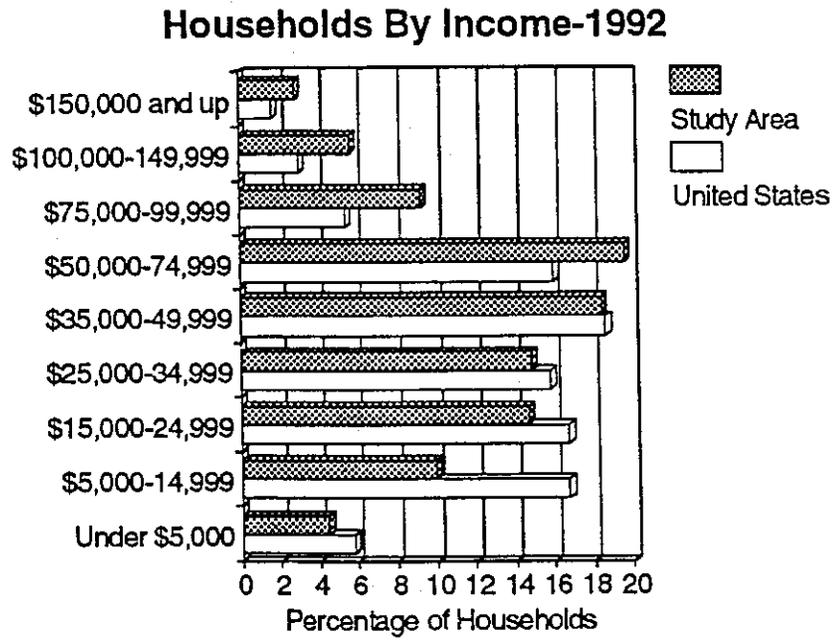


Population By Race/Ethnicity Trend



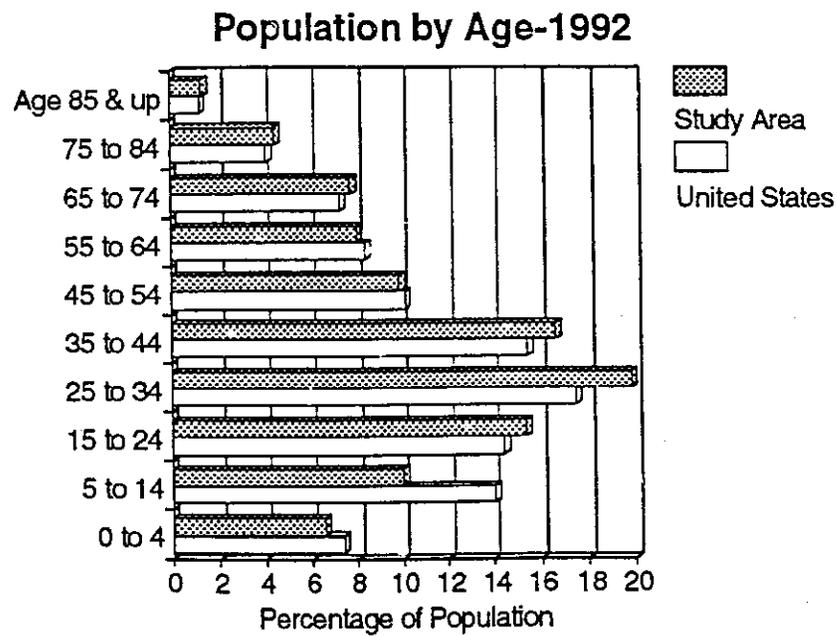
D. Income Trends

The income levels in both the one and five mile radii do not indicate any downward trends through 1997. In fact, even after taking inflation into consideration, the projected income levels show stability. In the one mile radius the average household income will increase from \$38,736 in 1990 to \$46,329 in 1997 -- an increase in eight years of 19.6%. The five mile radius will increase from \$43,743 in 1990 to \$51,283 in 1997 -- a total increase of 17.24%. The average household income in the United States is \$40,247. The following graph shows a breakdown of income categories.



E. Age Distribution Trends

The average age in the one mile radius is 32.7 and is expected to decrease slightly to 32.5 by 1997. The five mile radius is 36.9 and is projected to remain stable through 1997. Of special interest to Sligo is the projection that the age categories showing the greatest growth in the next five years are ages 30 to 49 years. The average age in the United States is 35.5 and is projected to increase to 35.8 by 1997. The following graph depicts these trends.



F. Conclusion

Abrupt demographic changes are not expected. A growing ethnic population, however, can be expected but this will not be accompanied with lower income levels. Actually there will be a decrease in the number of households earning less than \$25,000 per year and an increase in all categories between \$25,000 and \$150,000.

Within the one mile radius an increase can be expected in those before formal schooling (ages 0-4) and in "families, empty nesters" (ages 35-54). In the five mile radius the population increase will be seen in: those before formal schooling (ages 0-4), singles and young families (ages 25-34), "families, empty nesters" (ages 35-54) and in retirement opportunities (ages 65+).

The demography with its anticipated shifts should be considered in the long-range strategic planning. Some challenges will be presented as the church rises to the occasion; however, more opportunities for ministry are emerging which are within the capability of Sligo to meet.

IV. RECOMMENDATIONS

In order for the Sligo Seventh-day Adventist Church to become healthy, vibrant and growing it is essential that its leadership take seriously the growth-restricting factors summarized in Section II. There is, however, no magic formula; but there is one certainty: human wisdom is not sufficient! In addition to appealing for God's intervention, it is important to note the observation that Sir Isaac Newton called, "The first law of motion." Simply stated this law of physical science observes that, "Bodies in motion tend to remain in motion, and bodies at rest tend to remain at rest unless acted upon by some outside force." When it comes to spiritual concerns, the outside force is not primarily new methodologies but the presence and activity of the Holy Spirit. Therefore, our first recommendation is:

A. Pray earnestly for God's guidance and for unity of thought and spirit.

Jeremiah 33:3 says, "call on me and I will answer you and tell you great unsearchable things. The psalmist reminds us, "Unless the Lord build the house, they labor in vain that build."

Pray for renewed spiritual commitment. Historically, whenever God's people have sought to know His will they have come to Him in penitence and humility. The most important matter is to know the mind of God concerning the future of the Sligo church.

B. Sponsor a "Vision to Mission" visioning session for the leadership of the church.

We would suggest that an outside consultant, such as Monte Sahlin, be invited to lead the church through this vision and mission-clarifying workshop. It is important, if such a workshop is sponsored, that leaders from as diverse backgrounds, tenure of membership in Sligo and experience be invited to participate. Special attention should be given to the refinement of mission, quality programming and quality care-giving by pastoral staff and membership alike. It is important that the mission be able to be stated briefly and in a fashion that it can be easily remembered by the membership. We recently saw the following statement on the church sign of a Catholic church near the Sligo church which reflected this principle:

"We are gifted by God's grace; We are needed and treasured."

C. Reorganize the approach to ministry.

We suggest that a ministries reorganization task force be formed to study, coordinate and implement suggested changes. It is important that serious consideration be given towards the development of a synergistic systems approach¹⁰ to ministry. Attention should be given to the Jethro principle¹¹ of a shared and delegated ministry with accountability built in. Currently the administrative board consists of over a hundred individuals. This is too large to give the necessary coordination of all areas of ministry.

10. A helpful book on this subject is *Management for Your Church* by Alvin J. Lindgren and Norman Shawchuck (1977:Abingdon).

11. See Exodus 18:13-23; also *Prepare Your Church for the Future* by Carl F. George (1991:Revel).

A separate committee needs to deal with relevant ministry issues while overseeing (1) coordination of the total church program, (2) the recognition and development of spiritual gifts,¹² (3) maintain quality control,¹³ (4) make sure that people more than programs are made the priority¹⁴ and (5) evaluate the effectiveness of each program.

This task force may wish to delegate certain responsibilities, but we are suggesting that special consideration be given to the following recommendations:

- (1) The implementation of a process by which the majority of the attending membership have a church job, role or belong to a small group. Each member that is not involved in at least one of these three areas should be personally contacted at least once every thirty days by another member -- with the purpose of intentionally showing Christian love and concern. A table could be set up in the atrium once a month for members to get better acquainted with the program. Adequate training should be part of the total package to avoid a sense of poor performance with the ultimate loss of motivation.

12. A.R.M.S. of the North American Division may be able to give you some assistance in developing a data base for tracking members and their spiritual gifts.

13. Lyle Schaller in his book *The Seven-Day-a-Week Church*.⁷³ speaks of quality this way. "One example of this emphasis on quality that also is consistent with high commitment is the church that enlists only adults who have completed a teacher training program in staffing the Sunday school. A second is the church that reserves convenient parking for single mothers bringing children to the nursery. Another is the church that videotapes and critiques next Sunday's worship service as a part of the Thursday evening choir rehearsal. A fourth is the church that prepares a new display advertisement every week for the local newspaper. . . ." Several more "quality" examples are given.

14. For a helpful guide to making the large church more people oriented within a total systems approach see *Where Do We Go From Here?* by Ralph W. Neighbour, Jr., (1990: Touch Publications) as well as Carl George's book mentioned above.

(2) We would also suggest that consideration be given to the nomination of a lay volunteer ministries coordinator and associates whose responsibility would be the recruiting and matching of individuals with spiritual gifts that match the current needs. In some cases these needs may be met by non-members as a means of giving a genuine sense of inclusion. These ministries need not be an officially elected position but a role in some form of ministry, e.g. a host or hostess for a small group, part of a prayer ministry or someone on call to get prescriptions for the elderly. This lay volunteer ministries coordinator would report at least every other month to the pastoral staff and quarterly to the church board. It is important that the person nominated for this position be out-going with an engaging personality, respected by a wide-range of the church's membership, understands the dynamics of inclusion and exclusion of the Sligo church and is optimistic about both the church's future and the transforming power of the Holy Spirit in the life of each individual. While this is a tall order, it is imperative that serious work be done to help a larger percentage of the membership feel needed and involved!

(3) More small groups need to be formed including those of an evangelistic nature as well as those with specialized interests, e.g. singles, parents of troubled children, divorcees.¹⁵ The goal to work towards is to have four to six small groups per one hundred members who attend regularly.

Key to the future of the church's small group ministry is a lay leadership whose lives have been radically altered by the work of the Holy Spirit. Such is the experience of some in the Young Adults' division. We would also suggest that a

15. Small groups can be categorized as follows: care groups, Bible study groups, and ministry team groups.

delegation be sponsored by Sligo to attend the coming East Coast Prayer and Small Group Conference this October in Cohutta Springs, Georgia. You may also wish to invite national SDA leaders like Kurt Johnson, Garrie Williams or Clay Peck to give you local assistance.

- (4) While multiculturalism is one of your perceived strengths, it could easily turn against you. Specialists in this area need to be consulted. Finding ways of bridging cultural values and expectations will be your task. The Potomac Conference has recently organized a Multicultural Ministries Commission which will be giving special study to strategic issues facing cosmopolitan churches. We would suggest you request delegates from the Sligo church be part of that research group.
- (5) In the minds of many, Sligo is a college church but the relationship is not clearly defined. We recommend that a special joint task force be formed and directed by the college chaplain and the first elder of Sligo. This task force would be composed of faculty, students, church members and clergy. The purpose would be to clarify the dynamic relationship between Sligo and the college with the intent of finding ways of supporting the mission statement of each other. The ministry to the community should play a vital part in the overall strategy.
- (6) Sligo has for decades been a trend setter. Given its unique history and its innovative approach to facing contemporary issues, we would suggest that Sligo serve as host church and assist in sponsoring an east coast worship conference. The multicultural setting of the church is not unique but it does offer an invaluable social laboratory.

A worship conference called for the purpose of exploring the issues of meaningful worship in a multicultural setting would not only assist Sligo, but the denomination as well

- (7) Visitor care must be given more priority. The following are issues that should be given immediate attention:
- (a) In order to make foyer ministry more of a reality, we suggest that a training program be conducted for those serving at the doors. The training emphasis should be directed towards discerning needs and how to direct these individuals to those who can care for them. Your current greeter staff may be understaffed for this kind of ministry.
 - (b) We would suggest that greeters be stationed at both ends of the atrium for the purpose of helping children of guests find their Sabbath School rooms.
 - (c) Adult and children's Sabbath School classrooms need signs that can be read with the door open or shut. A directory showing the location of adult classes should be a regular insert of the church bulletin.
 - (d) Greeters should be stationed at each door at the close of both worship services-- again watching for opportunities to minister.
 - (e) A long term solution should be sought for the parking problem. Until that is resolved we suggest that parking attendants be stationed at all satellite parking areas and be in touch via walkie-talkies with those who are stationed at the

church directing guests and members to available parking areas. The parking attendants should dress similarly and distinctively for the purpose of identifying their role.

- (8) A stewardship emphasis should be made. We would suggest that someone like Harold Lee from the Columbia Union or Dick Hanson from the Oregon Conference, who present stewardship from a holistic approach, be invited to give a comprehensive study and present a stewardship program designed to meet the needs of your church.¹⁶
- (9) The need for equipping a large number of members in personal evangelism is pressing. There are several who are showing a willingness to become involved in this kind of ministry. Seize the opportunity! Knowing how to lead a person to Christ is basic but do not assume your members know how to do it. Training with corresponding mentoring needs to take place in all forms of personal evangelism.

16. Church board action #93-13 states that there will be "no 'checking' into a person's giving pattern" to see if they qualify for church office. We recognize that there are reasons why the "honor system" is easier, and in some ways preferable, to the traditional system of checking. However, as Dean Kelly has pointed out in *Why Are Conservative Churches Growing?*, churches which have a strict sense of accountability are indeed the churches that are growing. What concerns us most is the message that may be sent directly or indirectly -- accountability to others is not important. We got the distinct impression from the write-in comments that some members feel that leaders need more not less accountability. We are not sure that an action of this kind will send the right signals when expectations of leadership is higher, and when confidence in the spiritual commitment of its leaders needs reaffirmation. Can we really expect the members to rally around a stewardship program if they perceive that their leadership may not have a stewardship commitment? This observation has already been specifically stated in write-in comments as well as in personal interviews.

D. Review the findings of this Diagnostic Analysis during a church leadership retreat.

The Diagnostic Analysis will not change anything without church ownership. We are suggesting that the findings and recommendations be considered by the church's leadership in a retreat setting. All insights may not be accurate. They are, however, the result of much reflection and prayer. Before rejecting the insights presented, make sure careful consideration is made of the many on-going dynamics within the church. Use the report as a means of creating more and better insights into the possibilities that God has in store for the Sligo church. You have demonstrated in the past that you can rise to meet the occasion. You have come to the crossroads. Now is a golden opportunity to reach new horizons.

V. CONCLUSION

During the past several weeks we have worked closely with the Sligo church. Both positive and negative factors have been evaluated. Few churches have been through such scrutiny. The recommendations are far reaching. It is clear that this church is at the crossroads. You must not act impulsively but you do need to act immediately. Your future, however, is not in the hands of the consultant, the conference or even a pastor. If the church is legitimate, and we believe it is, then your future is in God's hands. Your commitment, your positive attitude, your perseverance and hard work will be needed but it will be God who will "make it happen." It is for this reason that we are optimistic. We sense a commitment by many members--not all, but most, to keep the vision of Sligo alive. Yet with all of its natural resources and rich history, Sligo is part of a larger church family. The Adventist family is unique because it is diverse in culture, in language and even in its theological perspectives, yet it is driven by its prophetic mandate and directed by the love of God. That larger family appreciates and needs the Sligo church. The contributions you have made and can make to the world church is staggering. As you give prayerful study to the concerns raised by this report, rest assured that the solutions you find will be a resource to other churches facing similar challenges. It is the view of this consultant that Sligo is in a period of transition but this in no way takes away from the possibility of a bright future. However, the bright future is contingent upon how you respond to today's challenges and opportunities.

Feel free to contact our office if for any reason additional clarification or resourcing is needed during the next critical period -- the application of the findings of this report. We will be looking forward to your written response to this report by the middle of August.

Finally, be patient. Be persevering, but by all means move with haste! Your condition is critical and you will not have a better opportunity to prove your ability to determine your destiny with God's help than now. The words recorded by the Old Testament prophet, Zechariah, are a promise, "*Not by might nor by power, but by my spirit,' saith the Lord.*" Zechariah 4:6.

APPENDIX A

MISSION AND TESTIMONY

Our Mission Statement

The mission of Sligo Church is to make Christ a tangible presence in a hurting world. By being a compassionate community we can reveal Christ not only to one another but also to those outside our circle.

We pledge ourselves to accept, to encourage and to support our fellow church members. In race, class, age and gender we are diverse; in commitment and love we are one. Through service and fellowship, in small groups and in all-embracing worship, we are resolved to build an ever-stronger life together in the Gospel.

We further pledge ourselves to serve the wider world. We intend, by telling and living the Gospel story, to be instruments of peace, witnesses to hope, examples of love. Through the grace of God we will be a force of redemptive change in the world.

Finally, we pledge ourselves to be pioneers in the faithful renewing of Adventism. Seventh-day Adventists wish to grow in the knowledge and practice of faith. We of Sligo, loyal to our heritage and open to God's Spirit, consider it our special purpose to be leaders of renewal and growth.

Our Testimony

The church is a family centered around the God of Jesus Christ. In this family we find rejuvenation—the healing of hurt, the adventure of mission. Through Christ we are forgiven, encouraged, empowered; we become part of the healing process that renews the whole creation. This is our testimony.

Whether freed at the Exodus or renewed by Jesus, the founders of our heritage heard a call to faithful partnership with God. Scripture tells their story, and its call to faithful partnership inspired our own denomination's founders, including Ellen White. Today the story and teachings of the Bible continue to ring true for us, and because of this we further testify as follows:

*That God is the Maker of all things; that God's will and way are shown through Jesus; that God's work goes on through the presence of the Holy Spirit.

*That what God has made is very good; human life, mind and body together, is good, bearing the image of God; the surrounding world is good, a place for hopes and dreams to flourish.

*That mistrust and betrayal of God—what the Bible calls sin—diminishes our lives, our relationships, our world, producing a harvest of pain.

*That Jesus of Nazareth, through his ministry, cross and resurrection, has secured our passage from sin to love and from death to life.

*That through baptism into the church every human being can experience forgiveness, community and growth.

*That the church must be what Scripture calls the 'remnant,' a people faithful to the end, working for justice and peace, caring for mind and body, upholding fidelity in relationships and simplicity in lifestyle.

*That Jesus' Second Coming, the climax of his continuing ministry on our behalf, will mark final victory over evil, vindicating our dreams for a better tomorrow.

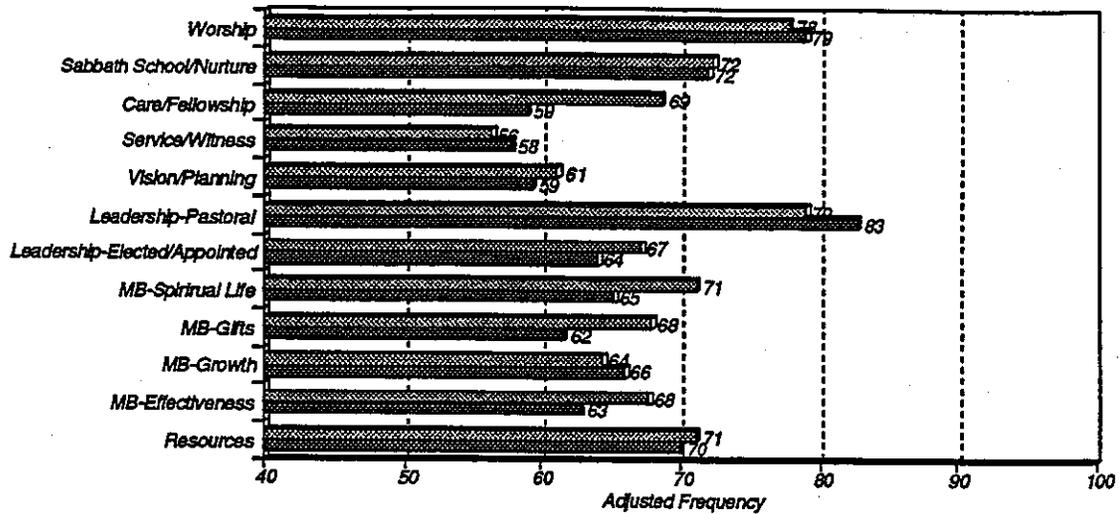
*That through joyful fellowship—in Sabbath celebration, in sharing the Lord's Supper, in watching over one another—we receive strength and courage for the journey we are making together.

APPENDIX B

CONGREGATIONAL SURVEY REPORT

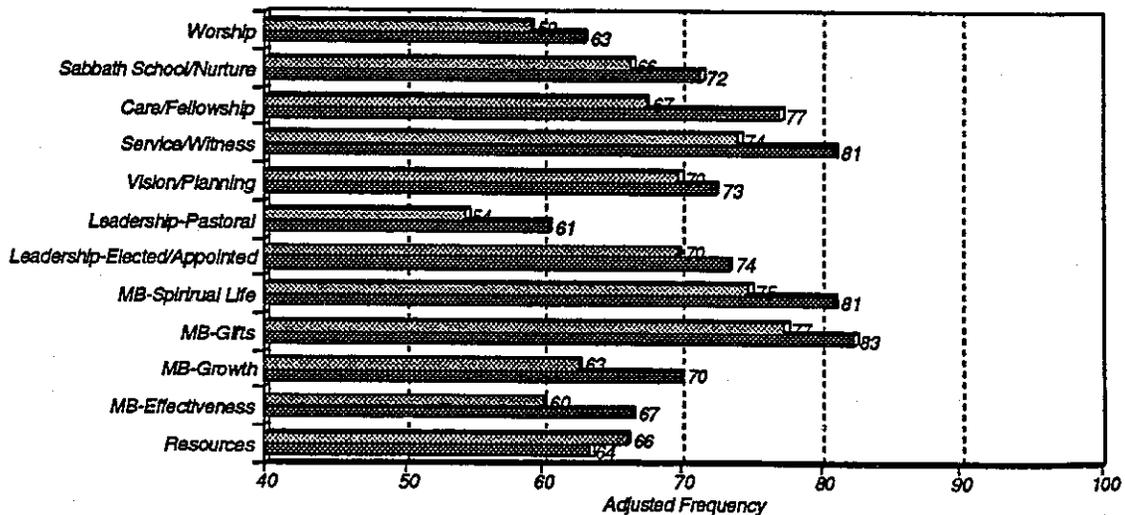
EXECUTIVE SUMMARY - CONGREGATIONAL SURVEY REPORT

Evaluative Questions Summary By Ministry Section



■ Sligo Seventh Day Adventist ▨ Average Response

Planning Questions Summary By Ministry Section



■ Sligo Seventh Day Adventist ▨ Average Response

DEMOGRAPHIC PROFILE SUMMARY

The following congregational demographic information is compiled from all returned surveys. "TR" represents the total number of responses received in each category while "%" represents the percentage of contribution toward the whole for each question.

	TR	%
1.) Gender		
Male	178	38%
Female	290	62%

	TR	%
2.) Age Group		
29 or younger	51	11%
30 to 44	112	24%
45 to 60	158	34%
61 or over	147	31%

	TR	%
3) Number of Years Associated with this Church		
4 years or less	45	10%
5 to 9 years	60	13%
10 to 14 years	56	12%
15 or more years	308	65%

	TR	%
4) Sabbath Morning Worship Attendance this Past Year		
Usually 4 times a month	272	58%
2 or 3 times a month	97	21%
About once a month	45	10%
Seldom or never	51	11%

	TR	%
5) Adult Sabbath School Attendance this Past Year		
Usually 4 times a month	167	36%
2 or 3 times a month	93	20%
About once a month	39	9%
Seldom or never	166	35%

	TR	%
6) Distance to Church		
Less than 5 minutes	75	16%
5 to 15 minutes	170	36%
15 to 25 minutes	137	29%
25 minutes or more	87	19%

	TR	%
7) Pattern of Personal Devotions		
Daily	195	41%
Fairly regularly	127	27%
Occasionally	93	21%
Seldom to never	49	11%

	TR	%
8) Level of Education		
Some High School or less	28	6%
High School graduate	31	7%
Some College	112	24%
College Grad/Post Grad	298	63%

Note: The following two questions were completed by only one member per household

	TR	%
9) Type of Household		
Married - children under 21 at home	117	31%
Married - no children under 21 at home	166	44%
Single head of household - children under 21 at home	114	4%
Single head of household - no children under 21 at home	81	21%

	TR	%
10) Average Annual Family Giving to this Church (Optional)		
0 to \$500 a year	72	20%
\$501 to \$1500 a year	57	16%
\$1501 to \$2,500 a year	49	13%
Over \$2,500 a year	188	51%

ADJUSTED FREQUENCY

Understanding and Using the Adjusted Frequency Response Score

The questions in the survey were answered on a scale ranging from "1" which represented "Strongly Agree" to "5" which represented "Strongly Disagree". To make it easier to understand and interpret the information, the results are presented in this report as "Adjusted Frequency" rather than a numerical average within the 1 to 5 scale. This method allows for the use of a broader numerical scale (see Adjusted Frequency Scale below) which leads to an easier understanding of the data. An explanation of the Adjusted Frequency calculation is presented in the sample question below.

Strength Of Support For Each Item:	Strongly Agree			Strongly Disagree		No Opinion
1. Our worship services promote a genuine fellowship and communion with God.	1	2	3	4	5	6
# of responses to the question as a percentage	13%	48%	28%	7%	4%	

In the above sample question, 13% of the respondents chose # 1, 48% chose # 2, etc. A multiplier is used (see the calculation example below) to adjust each percentage in light of its strength of support. The total is divided by 5 (the number of possible responses) to arrive at an **Adjusted Frequency**, or weighted average. The sample question above was calculated as follows:

Calculation Example

$$(5 \times 13\%) + (4 \times 48\%) + (3 \times 28\%) + (2 \times 7\%) + (1 \times 4\%) = 359 \text{ divided by } 5 = 71 \text{ (Adjusted Frequency)}$$

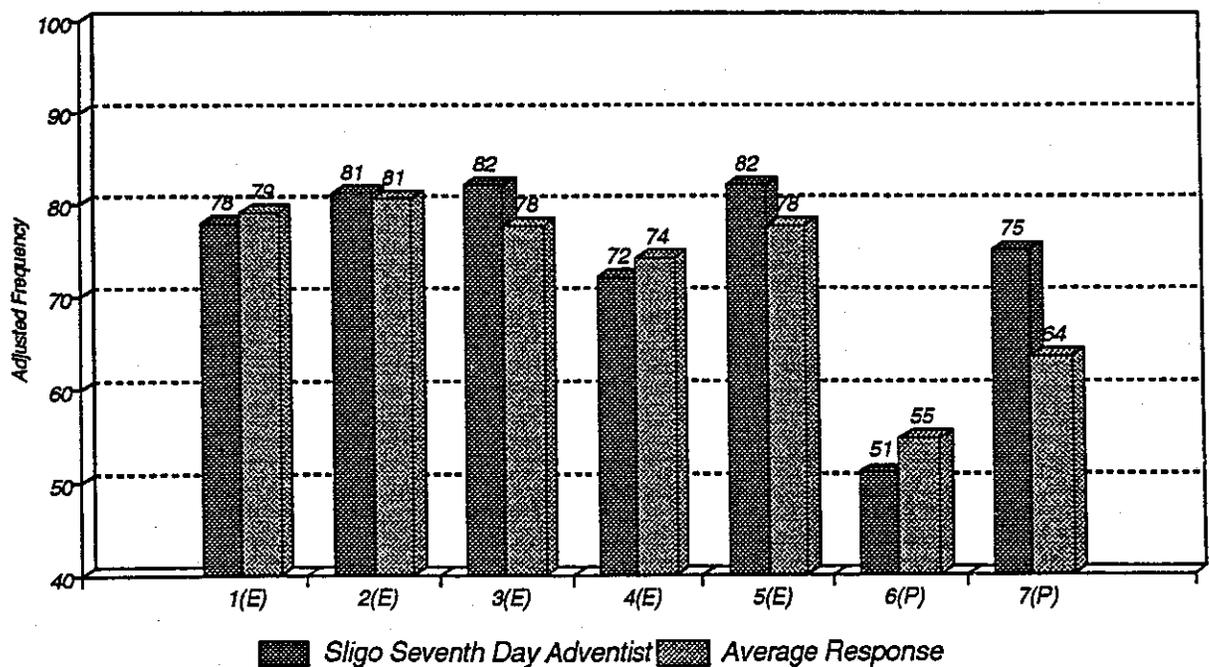
ADJUSTED FREQUENCY SCALE

- 90 + *Strongly Agree*
- 80 to 90 *Agree*
- 70 to 80 *Moderately Agree*
- 60 to 70 *Maybe*
- 50 to 60 *Moderately Disagree*
- 35 to 50 *Disagree*
- 20 to 35 *Strongly Disagree*

WORSHIP

Strength of Support for Each Item: Total Survey Response	Total # of Responses	Average Response	Adjusted Frequency
1. Our worship services promote a genuine communion with God.	449	2.1	78
2. Sermons clearly relate the truths of the Bible to the daily issues of life.	457	2.0	81
3. The songs and music used in our worship services promote meaningful worship.	457	1.9	82
4. Our worship services make visitors feel at ease and accepted.	429	2.4	72
5. I look forward to our worship service(s) each week.	447	1.9	82
6. I feel our worship services should be more non-traditional in style.	415	3.4	51
7. Our church needs to make our worship more responsive to the needs of members and visitors.	424	2.3	75

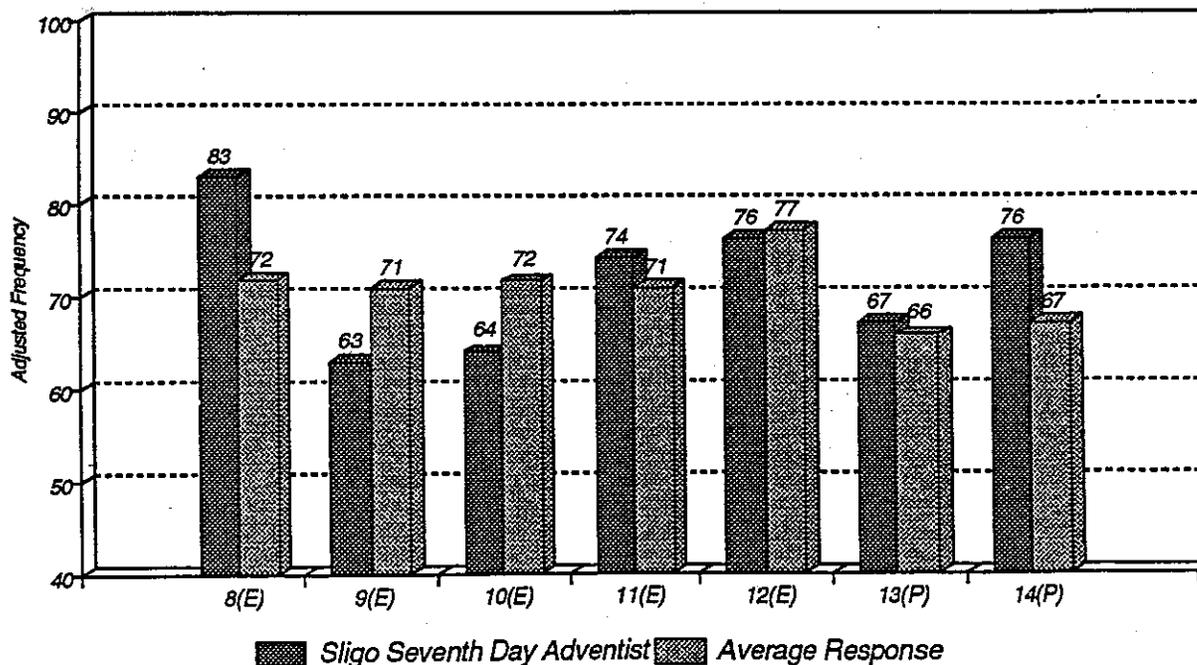
Worship



SABBATH SCHOOL/NURTURE

Strength of Support for Each Item: Total Survey Response	Total # of Responses	Average Response	Adjusted Frequency
8. The children's Sabbath School ministry (Cradle Roll through Juniors) meets the needs of that age group.	247	1.9	83
9. The youth's Sabbath School ministry (Earliteen to Youth) meets the needs of that age group.	229	2.8	63
10. Our adult Sabbath School ministries are effective in meeting the needs of our adult members.	365	2.8	64
11. There are an adequate number of Sabbath School and nurture ministries available for members.	375	2.3	74
12. The teachers in the Sabbath School ministries do a good job in their teaching.	354	2.2	76
13. I think our church should increase the number or variety of Sabbath School and nurture ministries.	354	2.6	67
14. Our church needs to develop our Sabbath School curriculum to respond better to participants' needs.	369	2.2	76

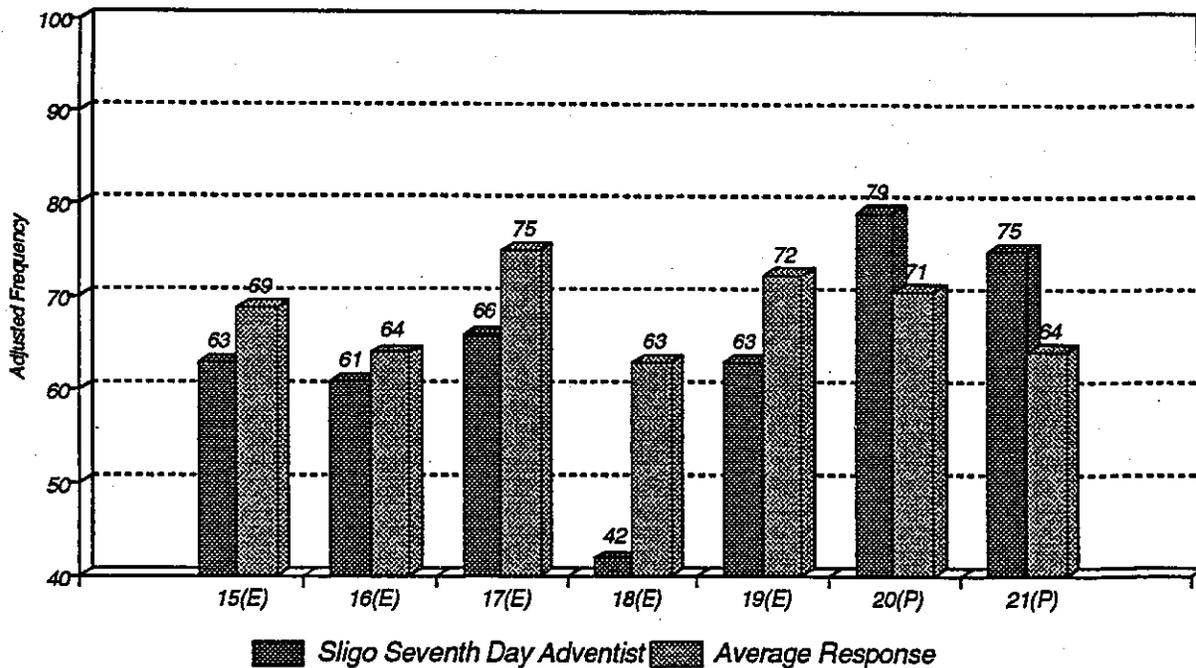
Sabbath School/Nurture



CARE/FELLOWSHIP

Strength of Support for Each Item: Total Survey Response	Total # of Responses	Average Response	Adjusted Frequency
15. The overall church ministry helps members grow in their relationships with one another.	425	2.8	63
16. Our church has an effective "small group" ministry that meets the spiritual and fellowship needs of our members.	356	3.0	61
17. Our church makes sure that members in need, or crises, are adequately cared for.	384	2.7	66
18. Our church responds well to the needs of absentee members and drop outs.	361	3.9	42
19. Adequate pastoral care and counseling are available to help members with individual needs.	370	2.9	63
20. Our church needs to help our members develop better personal relationships with one another.	421	2.0	79
21. Our church needs to expand the number or variety of care/fellowship groups.	389	2.2	75

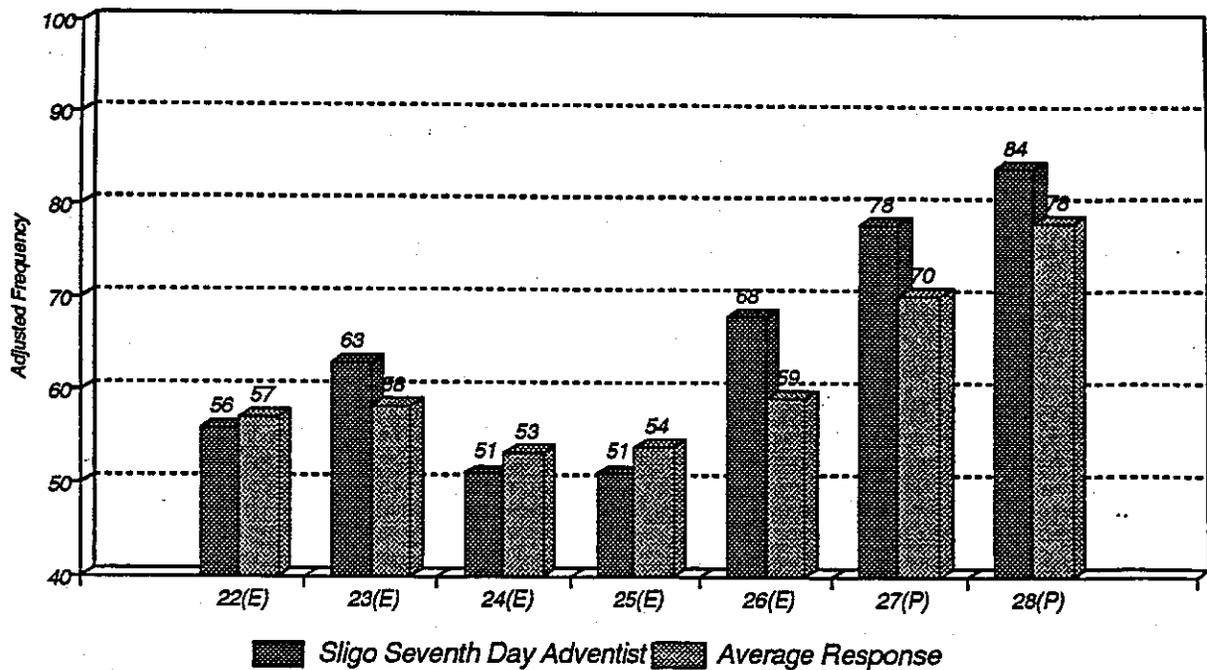
Care/Fellowship



SERVICE/WITNESS

Strength of Support for Each Item: Total Survey Response	Total # of Responses	Average Response	Adjusted Frequency
22. Our church has adequately analyzed the people/needs of our community.	368	3.2	56
23. Our church has a clearly defined group(s) of people that it is trying to serve and reach.	376	2.9	63
24. Our church effectively equips members to serve and witness to unchurched people in our community.	381	3.5	51
25. Our church is effectively presenting the gospel to unchurched persons in our community.	366	3.5	51
26. Our church is responding well to the persons with needs in our community.	401	2.6	68
27. Our church should expand its ministry to persons with needs in our community.	412	2.1	78
28. Our members need to develop more vision and commitment for reaching unchurched persons.	418	1.8	84

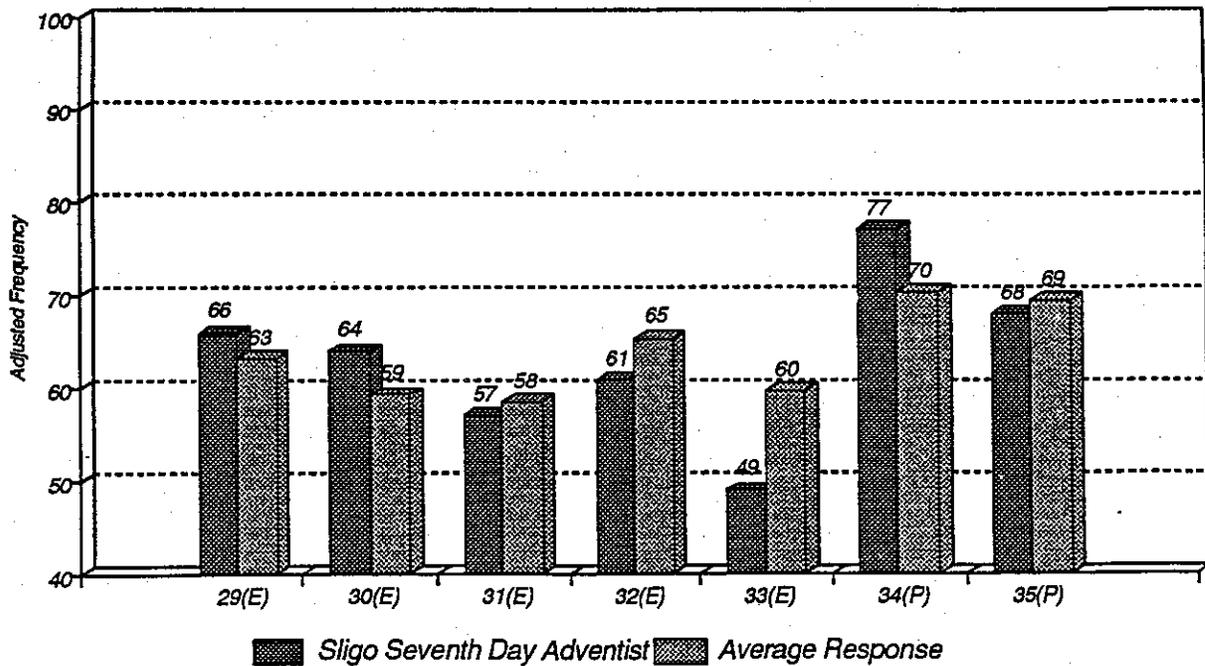
Service/Witness



VISION/PLANNING

Strength of Support for Each Item: Total Survey Response	Total # of Responses	Average Response	Adjusted Frequency
29. Our church has a clearly defined vision for its ministry.	392	2.7	66
30. Our church has clearly defined ministry goals to carry out its mission.	372	2.8	64
31. Our church gathers and evaluates information on a regular basis for its planning needs.	312	3.1	57
32. Church members have ample opportunity to help shape the ministry goals of our church.	409	2.9	61
33. There is a real sense of excitement among our members about our church's future.	386	3.6	49
34. Our church needs to become more systematic and deliberate in planning for its ministry.	374	2.2	77
35. Our church should seek to grow numerically.	409	2.6	68

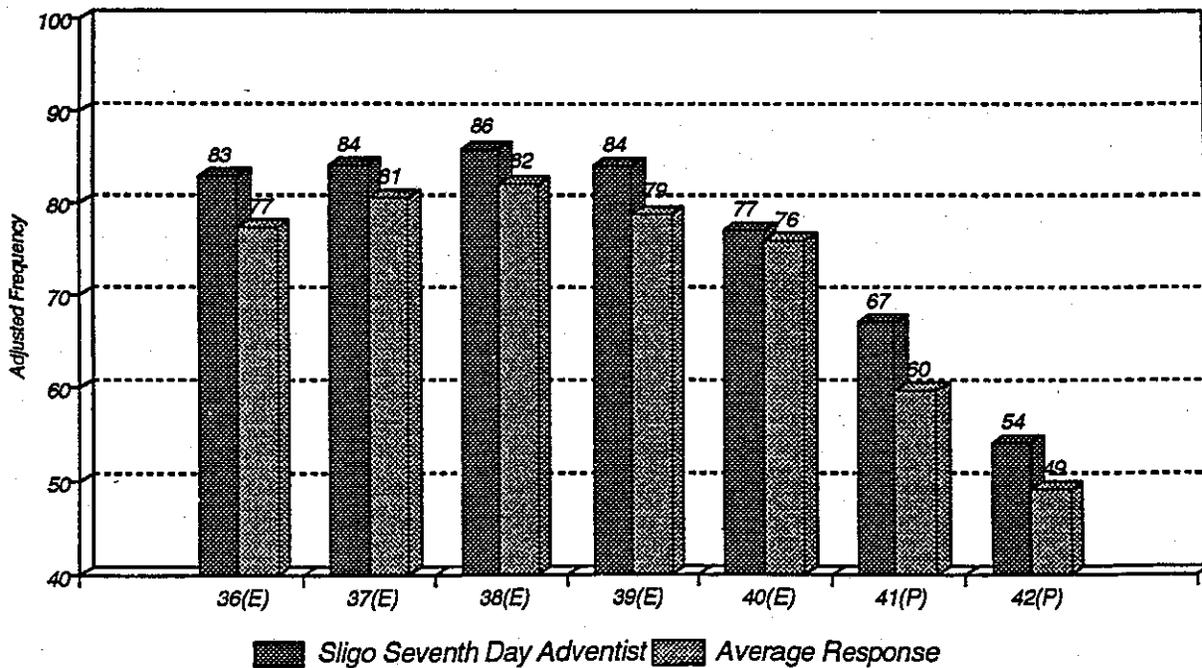
Vision/Planning



LEADERSHIP - SENIOR PASTOR

Strength of Support for Each Item: Total Survey Response	Total # of Responses	Average Response	Adjusted Frequency
36. There is a good "fit" between our senior pastor and the make-up of our congregation.	404	1.9	83
37. Our senior pastor does a good job of carrying out assigned ministry responsibilities in our church.	348	1.8	84
38. Our senior pastor's preaching ministers to the spiritual needs of our members.	440	1.7	86
39. Our senior pastor communicates well with our congregation.	424	1.8	84
40. Our senior pastor helps us work together to reach our ministry goals.	318	2.2	77
41. Our senior pastor needs to provide more leadership for the direction of the church's ministry.	327	2.7	67
42. Our church needs to add additional ministry staff.	353	3.3	54

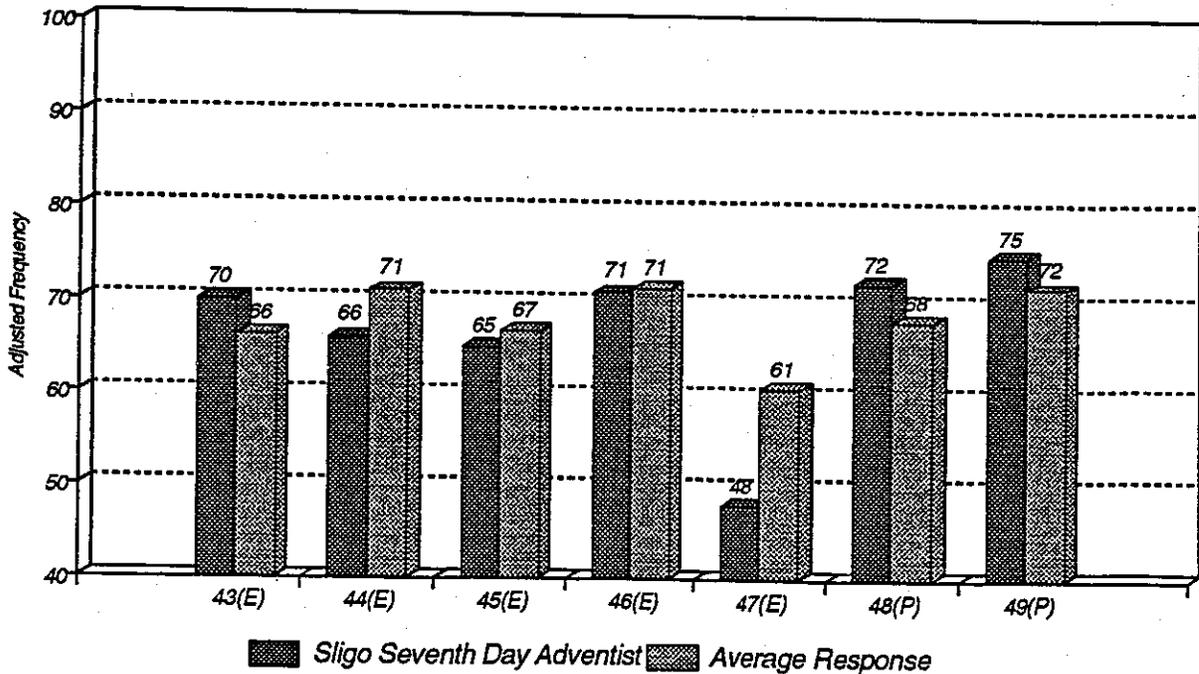
Leadership-Senior Pastor



LEADERSHIP - ELECTED & APPOINTED

Strength of Support for Each Item: Total Survey Response	Total # of Responses	Average Response	Adjusted Frequency
43. Our church leaders are providing effective leadership in their ministry roles.	415	2.5	70
44. Our church leaders are responsive to our members' needs and concerns.	408	2.7	66
45. Our present organizational structure supports the effective use of the time and talents of our church leaders.	361	2.8	65
46. Our church leaders work well together in directing the ministry of the church.	368	2.4	71
47. Our church leaders provide for adequate visitation of our members.	374	3.6	48
48. Our church leaders need to provide more visionary leadership in directing the ministry of our church.	371	2.4	72
49. Our church leaders need to improve their communication with the members of the congregation.	424	2.2	75

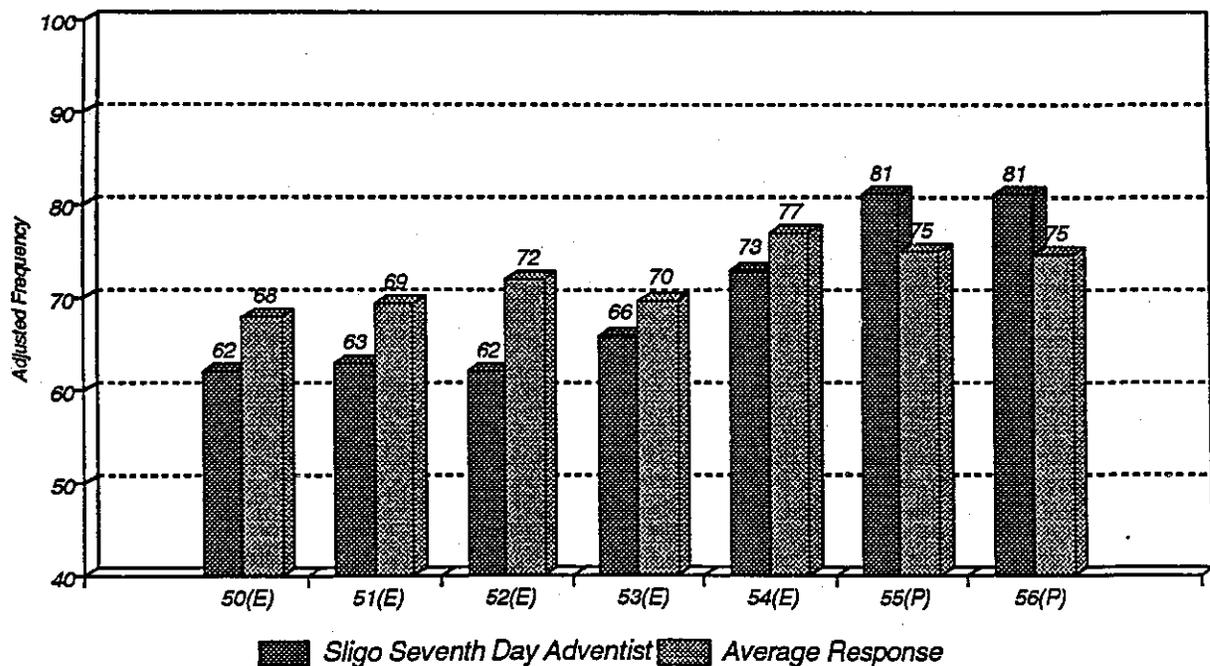
Leadership-Elected



MINISTERING BODY - SPIRITUAL LIFE

Strength of Support for Each Item: Total Survey Response	Total # of Responses	Average Response	Adjusted Frequency
50. Our church is growing spiritually.	390	2.9	62
51. Our church life demonstrates an active dependence on the guidance of the Holy Spirit.	396	2.9	63
52. Our church has an effective prayer ministry.	363	2.9	62
53. Our church does a good job of studying and applying the Bible to the issues we face.	410	2.7	66
54. Our leaders pray and discern what God's will is as they provide leadership for our church.	325	2.4	73
55. Our church ministries need to be further developed to help support the spiritual growth of our church.	402	2.0	81
56. Our church needs to spend more time in prayer and meditation to discern the will of God for our ministry.	403	1.9	81

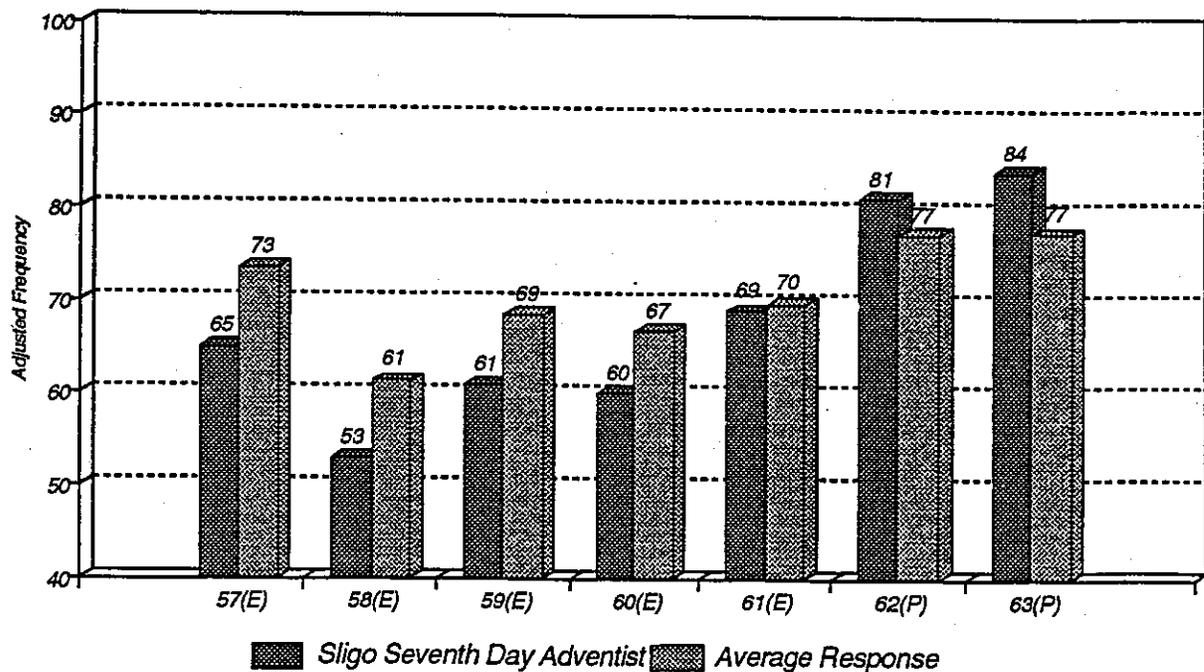
Ministering Body-Spiritual Life



MINISTERING BODY - GIFTS

Strength of Support for Each Item: Total Survey Response	Total # of Responses	Average Response	Adjusted Frequency
57. All members are encouraged to discover, develop, and use their gifts for ministry.	423	2.7	65
58. Our members are adequately trained to use their gifts in the ministries of our church.	402	3.4	53
59. Our church provides clear information on how members can be involved in the ministries of our church.	433	2.9	61
60. Our present organizational structure does a good job in involving people in our church's ministries.	417	3.0	60
61. Our church provides support and encouragement to volunteers who work in our church's ministries.	378	2.6	69
62. Our church needs to increase the number of volunteers who are involved in the ministries of the church.	388	1.9	81
63. Our church needs a more effective process for recruiting, training, placing and supporting volunteers.	385	1.8	84

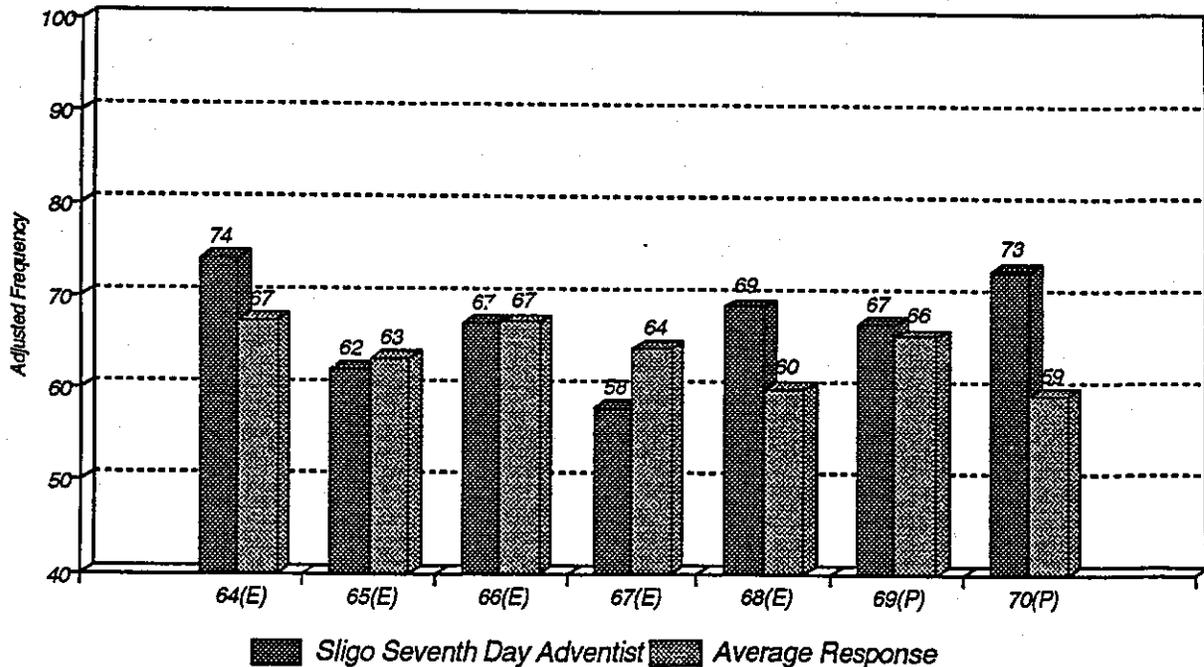
Ministering Body-Gifts



MINISTERING BODY - GROWTH

Strength of Support for Each Item: Total Survey Response	Total # of Responses	Average Response	Adjusted Frequency
64. Our congregation is open to adopting new ideas which might improve our ministry.	396	2.3	74
65. Important decisions facing the church are openly discussed by the leaders with the members.	381	2.9	62
66. There is a good balance between the influence of church leaders and the pastor(s) in decision making.	302	2.7	67
67. Most decisions made about the life of our church represent the majority of members' views.	328	3.1	58
68. Our congregation provides freedom for members to express their theological viewpoints.	373	2.5	69
69. Our church needs to be more accepting of members and visitors who have different values and life styles.	418	2.6	67
70. Our church should actively encourage more participation by women in leadership roles in the life of our church.	425	2.4	73

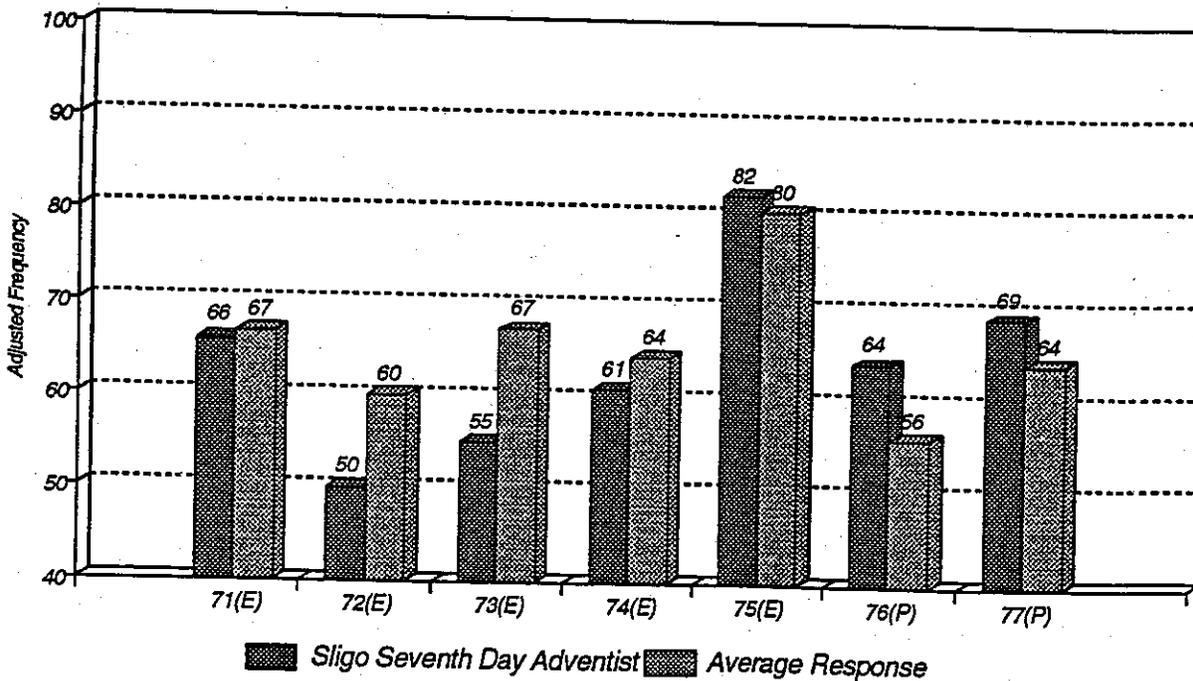
Ministering Body-Growth



MINISTERING BODY - EFFECTIVENESS

Strength of Support for Each Item: Total Survey Response	Total # of Responses	Average Response	Adjusted Frequency
71. Our church has great potential to grow in membership through its present ministry.	391	2.7	66
72. Our church has an effective follow-up program for those who have visited our church.	271	3.5	50
73. New members are effectively incorporated into the active life of the congregation.	349	3.2	55
74. We are flexible in adjusting our ministries to meet members' needs.	338	3.0	61
75. The church's support staff (secretary, custodian, etc.) are effective in supporting our church.	412	1.9	82
76. Our church needs to add more support staff to help our leaders effectively carry out their ministries.	330	2.8	64
77. Our church needs to develop a more flexible style of ministry which can respond to the changing needs of our members and community.	384	2.5	69

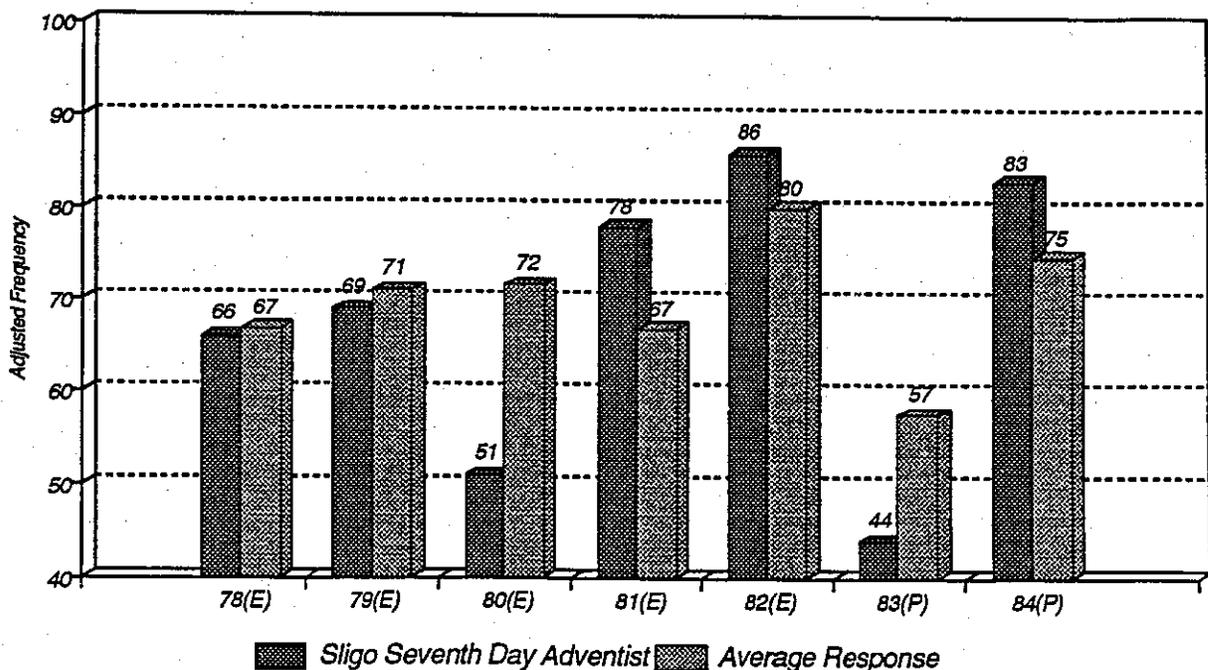
Ministering Body-Effectiveness



RESOURCES

Strength of Support for Each Item: Total Survey Response	Total # of Responses	Average Response	Adjusted Frequency
78. Our church has an effective stewardship program for developing and promoting membership giving.	394	2.7	66
79. Our church uses its financial resources well to support strategic ministry priorities.	355	2.5	69
80. Our church has adequate parking for all who attend.	435	3.4	51
81. Our present facilities are adequate for carrying out our church ministries.	428	2.1	78
82. Our church location is a good one for serving those our church is trying to reach.	431	1.7	86
83. We need to expand or renovate our present facilities in order to maximize our ministry potential.	405	3.8	44
84. Our members need to be more generous in financially supporting the work of the church.	418	1.8	83

Resources

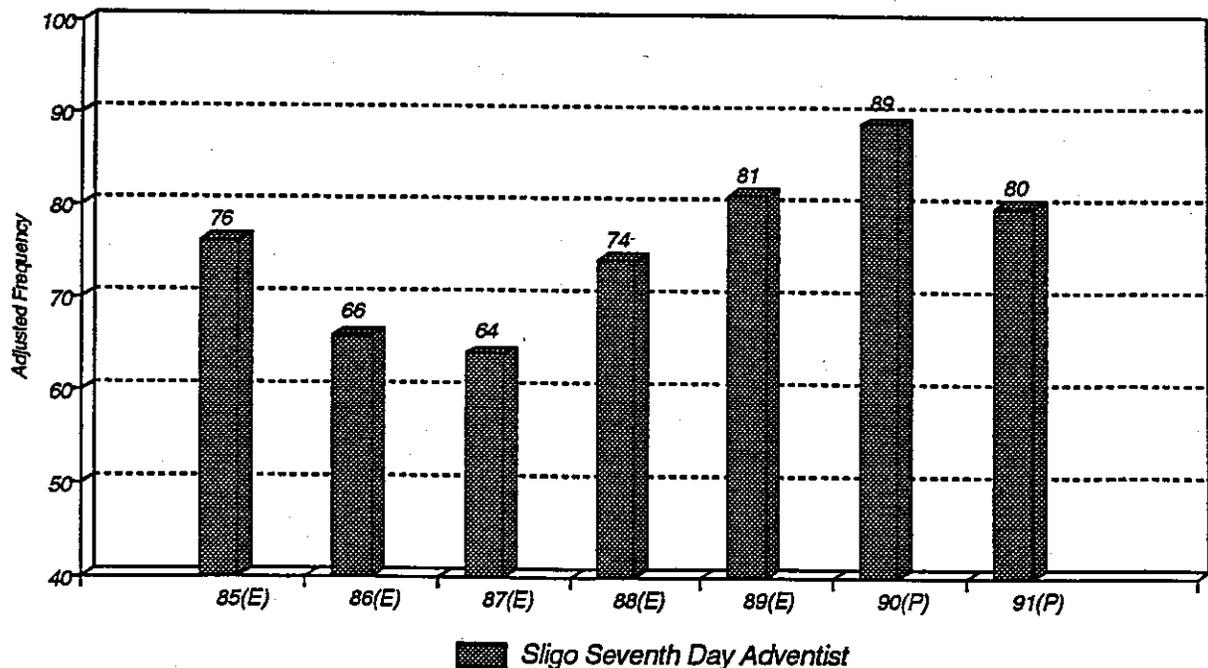


Appendix A

ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS I

Strength of Support for Each Item: Total Survey Response	Total # of Responses	Average Response	Adjusted Frequency
85. Our pastoral staff has the skills and vision to meet the challenges and opportunities of the next five years.	399	2.2	76
86. When I have a spiritual concern or need I have someone with whom I can share it.	423	2.7	66
87. I feel needed and included in the mission of the Sligo church.	418	2.8	64
88. I feel accepted socially in this church.	441	2.3	74
89. The Sligo church has a strong commitment to the beliefs of the Seventh-day Adventist Church.	440	1.9	81
90. I have a a strong commitment to the beliefs of the Seventh-day Adventist Church.	461	1.5	89
91. The changing ethnic make-up of the Sligo church is positive.	429	2.0	80

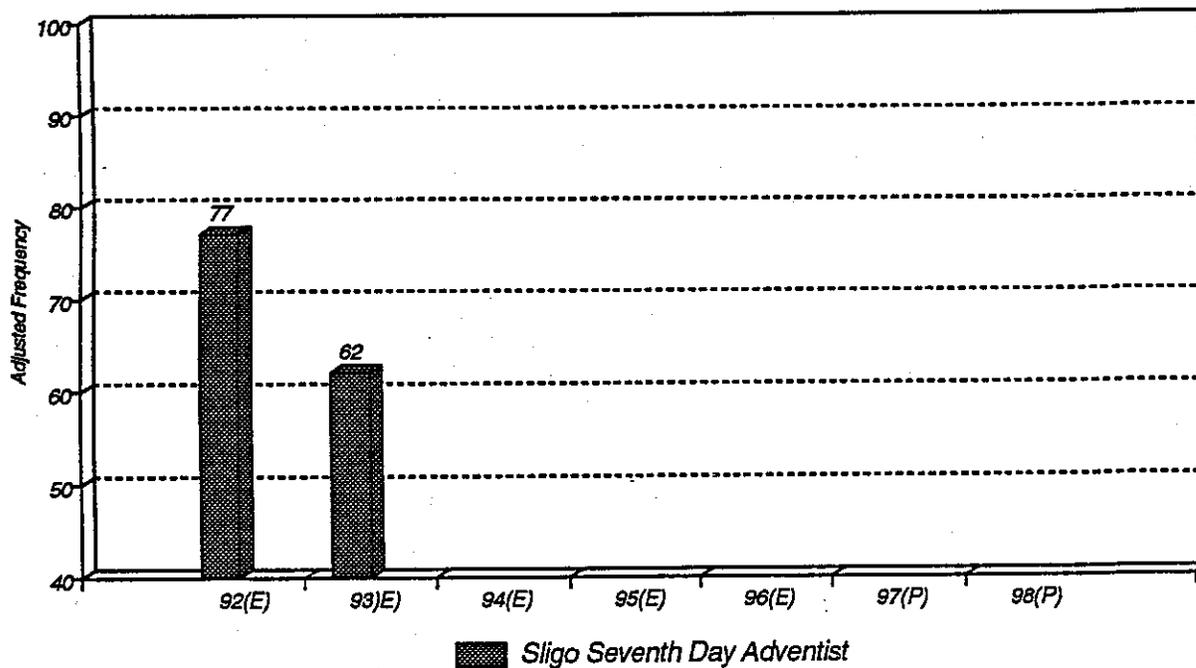
Additional Questions I



ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS II

<i>Strength of Support for Each Item: Total Survey Response</i>	<i>Total # of Responses</i>	<i>Average Response</i>	<i>Adjusted Frequency</i>
92. There is adequate sensitivity to the ethnic concern/needs in our church.	414	2.2	77
93. The concerns and needs of our youth are sought and heard.	396	2.9	62

Additional Questions II



APPENDIX C

EXIT SURVEY

Exit Survey of Former Sligo Members

Years: 1990, 1991, 1992, 1993

From 1990 to the end of the first quarter of 1993 240 members have transferred out of Sligo to another SDA Church in the general area. Forty-three households were polled randomly. Some gave more than one reason for leaving. The questions with the tally follow.

Hello, my name is _____. I am calling from Sligo Church. Our church is currently doing a study of Sligo church; and Dr. Larry Evans from Potomac Conference has been asked to check with the members who have transferred elsewhere to find out if they would be willing to share why they chose to join another church.

Was it because:

(1) you moved and there's a church closer to where you live?
[4 said yes]

(2) your needs were better met at your new church?
[26 said yes]

Would you care to share what those needs were?
[See below]

(3) your needs were not met at Sligo; you became dissatisfied.
[3 said yes]

Would you share why you felt this way?
[See below]

(4) The ethnic make up of Sligo's congregation was a concern to me.
[3 said yes]

(5) Other [See below]

Qualifying Comments: Reasons Given for Transferring Out

1. Friends (11)
2. Wanted more involvement, felt needed (7)
3. Be with own kind (7)
4. School reasons (5)
5. Too big, impersonal or wanted smaller church (4)
6. More Bible teaching wanted, sermons Christ-centered (4)
7. Too liberal (3)
8. Senior pastor of new church (3)
9. Felt lonely (3)
10. Children (2)
11. Seating uncomfortable (1)
12. Other church more friendly (1)
13. Uncomfortable with promotion of women's rights (1)
14. Felt rejected, wrongly judged (1)