

Congregational Conversation #2

First Baptist Church, Greenville, SC

February 5, 2023

David Hull



Q1 - What Attracted You to First Baptist?



Q1 - What Attracted You to First Baptist?



- Music
- Children/youth ministry
- Inclusivity
- Staff
- Family

Q2 - What Engaged You at First Baptist?



Relationships

Progressiveness

Getting involved

Sermons

Core Traits



Core Traits



Senior Minister Search Committee

Doug Girvin, Chair

Pat Booker-Christy

Ralph Bouton

Pam Davis

Deb Richardson-Moore

Leslie Rodwell

Kevin Treu



Our Mission:

CHC is devoted to improving the spiritual, emotional and organizational health of churches and ministers. We bring hope, help and healing in the spirit of Christ.

www.chchurches.org

What is the transition process?

- Phase 1 - Preparation: Selecting a Senior Minister Search Committee and a Guide
- Phase 2 - Self-study: Laying the Foundation with Preparation
- Phase 3 – Profile writing
- Phase 4 - Active Search: Consider candidates, Contact/Interview/Discern/Call

Our work in
Phase 2 will unfold
around three
primary
congregational
conversations over
several weeks.

- **January 22:** We looked at our **PAST**. Where did we come from? What do we bring with us as we face the future?
- **Today:** Let's look at where we are **TODAY**. How do we accurately describe our congregation? Our ministry context?
- **February 26:** Let's look into the **FUTURE**. Where do we sense God leading us as a church? What/who do we sense our next pastor will need to do/be? What do we discern are the essential traits and qualities of that person?

The First Baptist Congregational Self-Study

- Two outcomes will emerge from the Self-Study:
 - A **CONGREGATIONAL PROFILE** that accurately describes your church, its history, current reality, and future orientation.
 - A **SENIOR MINISTER PROFILE** that broadly describes the type of Senior Minister you believe God intends to lead you into the next season of life as a church

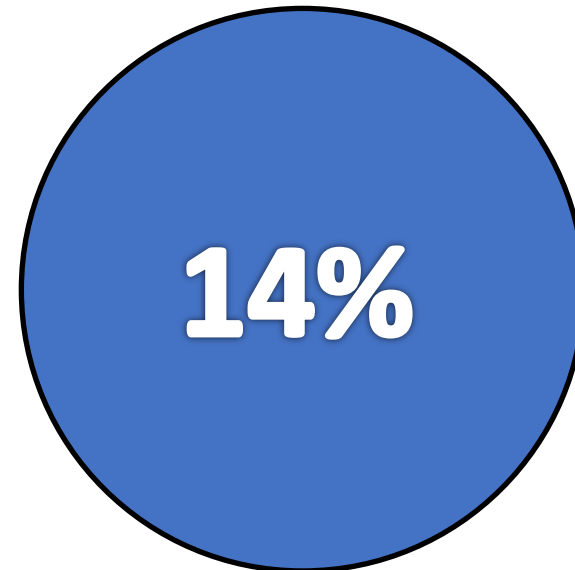
Looking out the Window – Looking in the Mirror



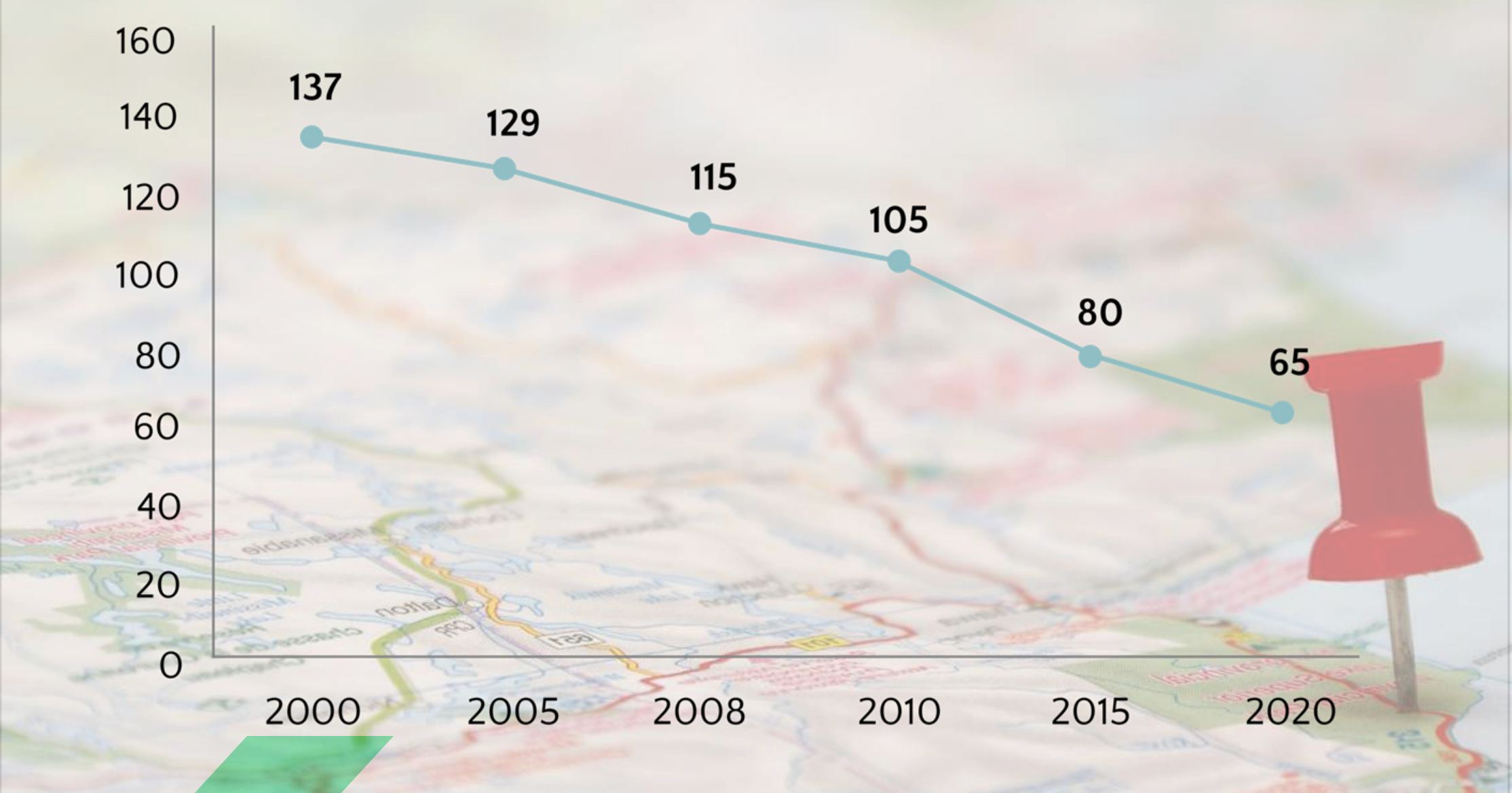
The State of the Church

The percentage of people that attend a Christian Church on any given weekend is far below what pollsters report (40%-47%).

Actual counts in Christian churches show that 14% of the population actually attended.



Median Worship Attendance = Steady Decline





1000
ACTIVE
MEMBERS



MONTH
750 AVERAGE ATTENDANCE

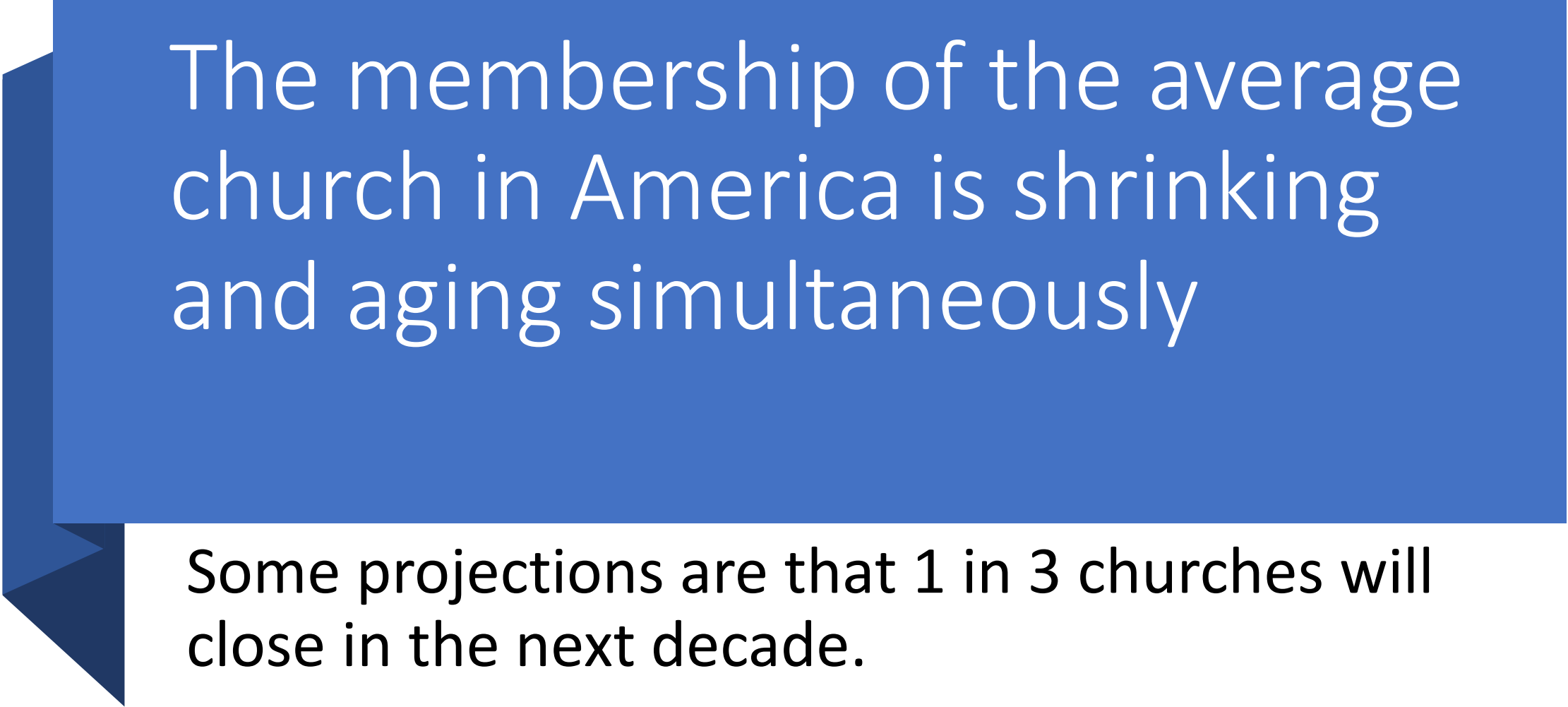


MONTH
500 AVERAGE ATTENDANCE

WHY IS FREQUENCY DROPPING?

- Youth sports leagues, competitions of all kinds
- Vacation homes, timeshares
- Collegiate and professional athletics/events
- The dramatic increase in the number of “holiday” weekends
- Illness (as people live longer, they are more likely to be seriously ill and unable to attend)
- Aging parents
- Exhaustion
- Ease of travel
- Work – 1/3 of Americans work on Sunday
- Commitment Level



A blue ribbon graphic that forms a large rectangular box for the main text and a smaller box for the secondary text. The ribbon has a 3D effect with a darker blue shadow on the left side.

The membership of the average church in America is shrinking and aging simultaneously

Some projections are that 1 in 3 churches will close in the next decade.

And all of that was
true before the
pandemic!!

Now what??

Study: Church attendance still suffering since pandemic's start



BY ASHER WILDMAN | ORLANDO
PUBLISHED 4:30 PM ET JAN. 28, 2023

ORLANDO, Fla. — A recent study released by the Survey Center on American life shows nearly one out of three Americans say they have stopped attending religious services since the COVID-19 pandemic began.

What You Need To Know

- One in three say they stopped attending services since the COVID-19 pandemic began
- Before the pandemic the number was one in four
- Despite the COVID-19 pandemic, religious identities in Americans remain practically the same



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The Survey Center of American Life is a nonpartisan, nonprofit organization that dedicates itself to understanding the way cultural, political and technological changes are now shaping the lives of Americans.

Some local pastors in Central Florida say they are seeing the same dip at their churches.

"It's heart wrenching, because I take seriously the word that tells us to forsake for not assembling of ourselves together," Pastor Leonard Wilson from the St. Matthews Missionary Baptist church in Sanford says. "I'm presently now struggling, with getting my people back to bible study in person."

Stay at home mom Jennifer Friedline has had the same Sunday morning plans all her life.

"Growing up my family went to church every Sunday," Longwood resident Jennifer Friedline begins to explain. "It's a pattern my husband and I have had since childhood, we chose to continue forward with it for our family."

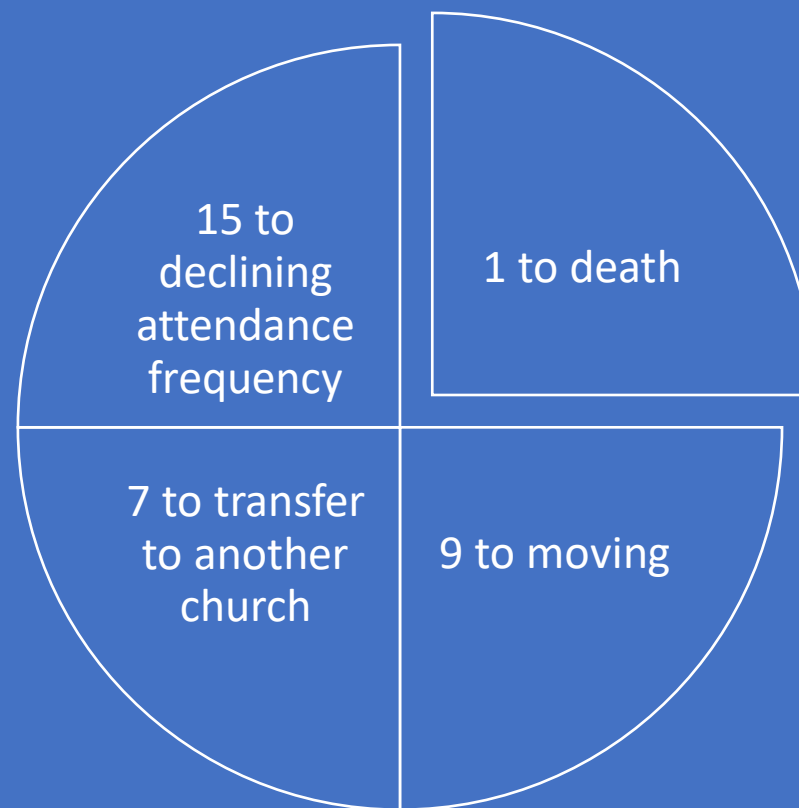
In a way, you can say going to church is her happy place.

"We don't see church just as something we do on Sundays," Friedline says pointing at a calendar filled with her church's events. "We see church as a community that we are a part of."

The family calendar includes not just after school activities, but all the events and prayer groups at the Lifepoint Christian Church in Longwood.

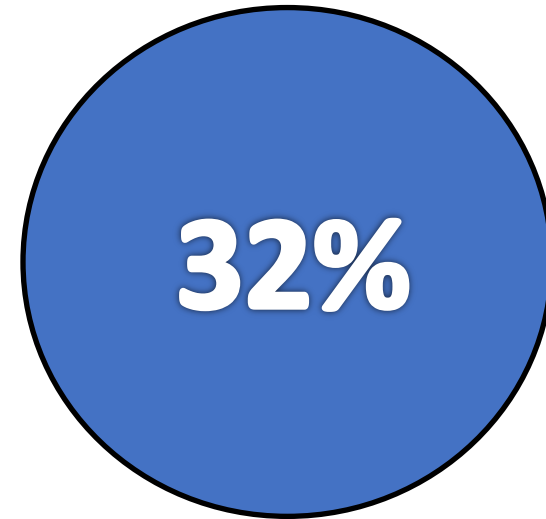
The State of the Church

For every 100 persons in attendance in your church, you will lose each year:



The State of the Church

**Percentage of Attenders to replace
every year to maintain attendance:**



Pandemic Signs of Hope

When March 2020 began,
only 40% of American
churches had any online
worship presence

Within 3 weeks, 92% had
some form of online worship
presence!

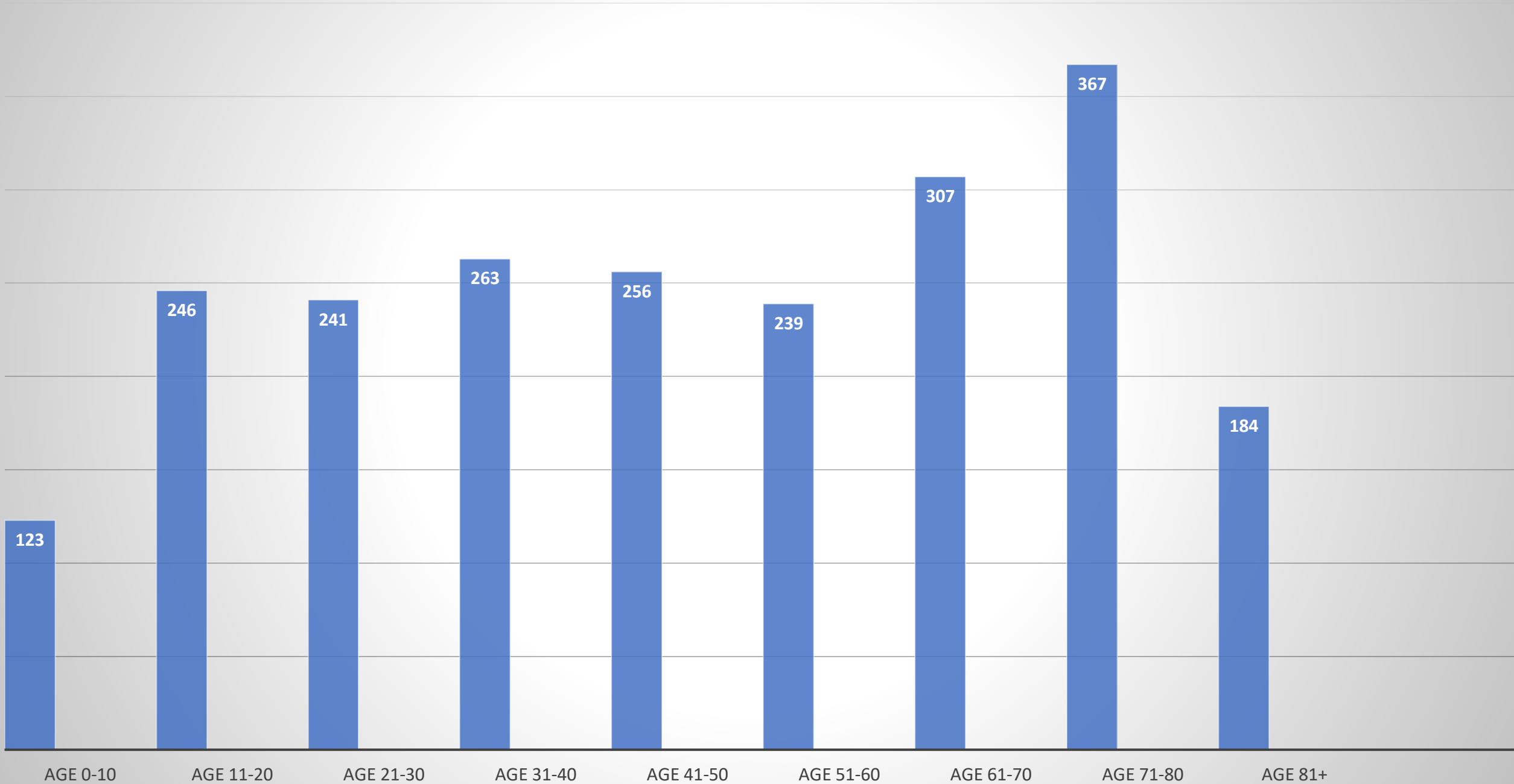
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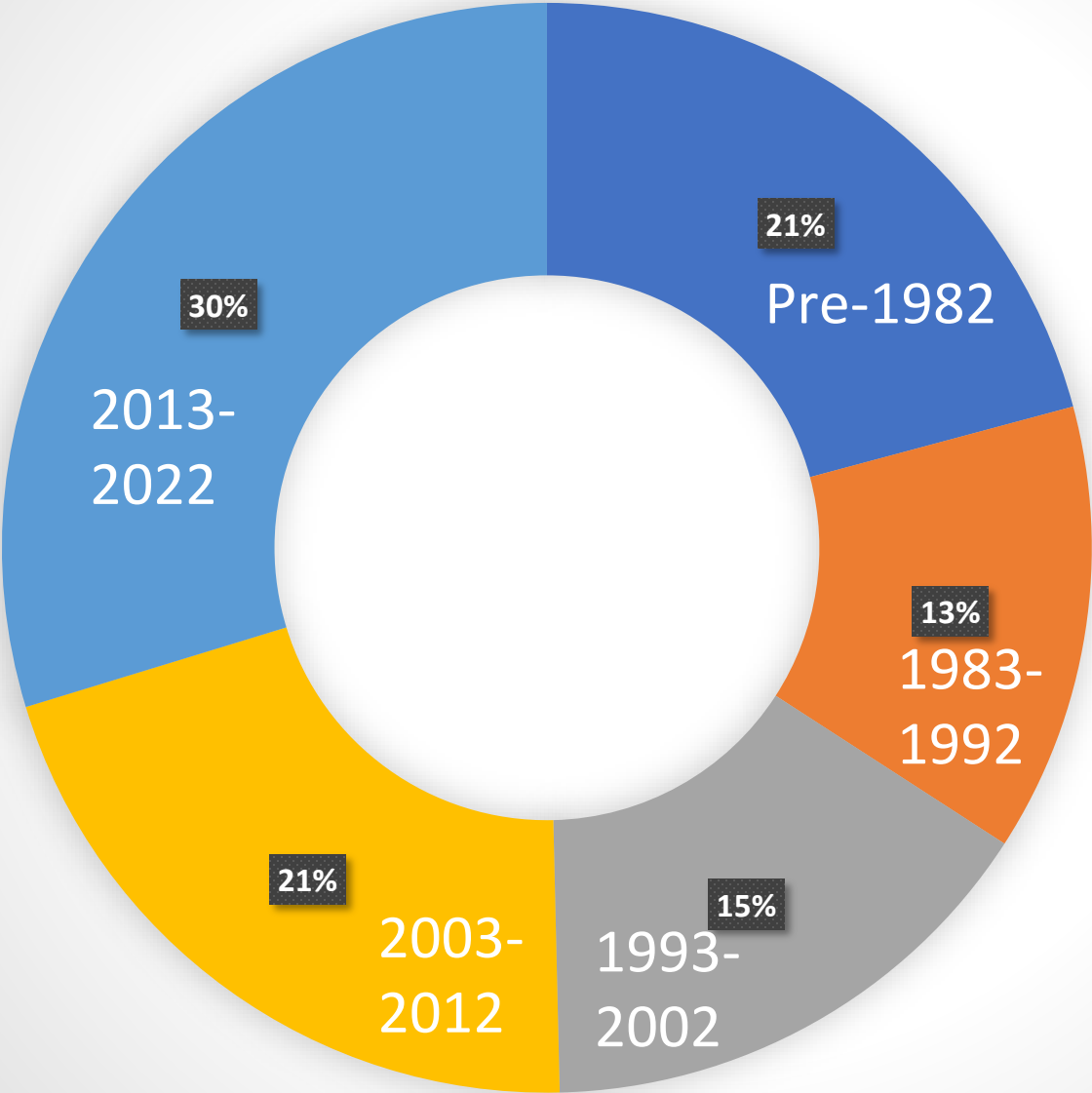
Church Membership Today

- Total Membership of First Baptist Church is 1731
- Watchcare membership is 14
- Sunday School only membership is 525

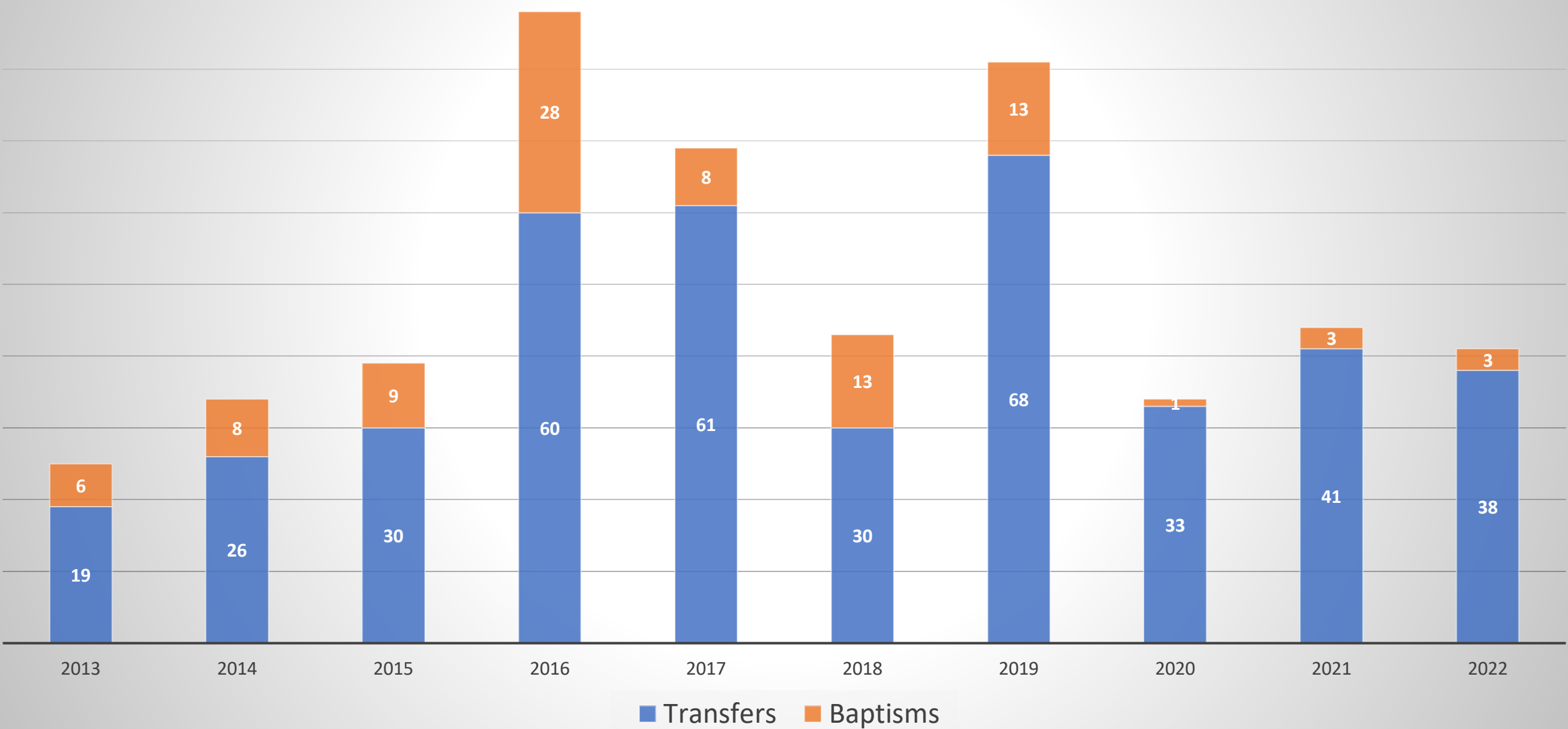
Ages of Sunday School and Church Members



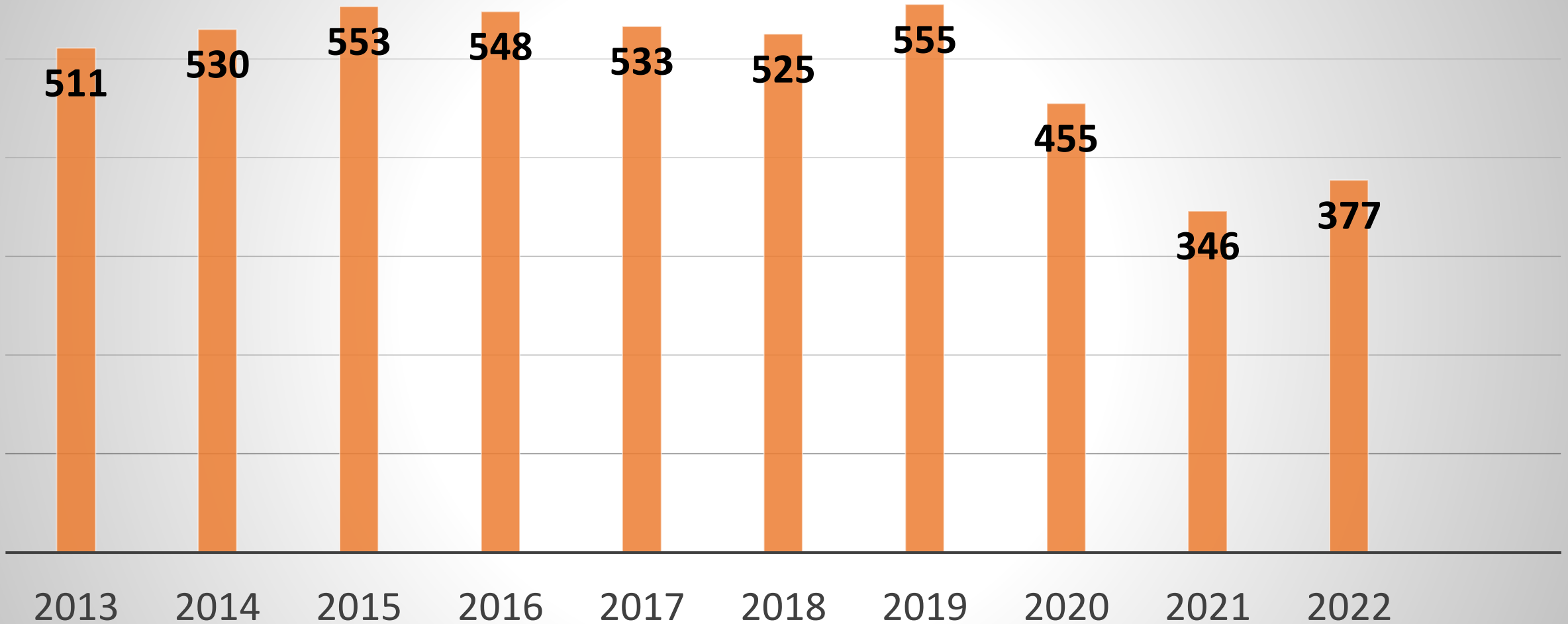
When did our members join?



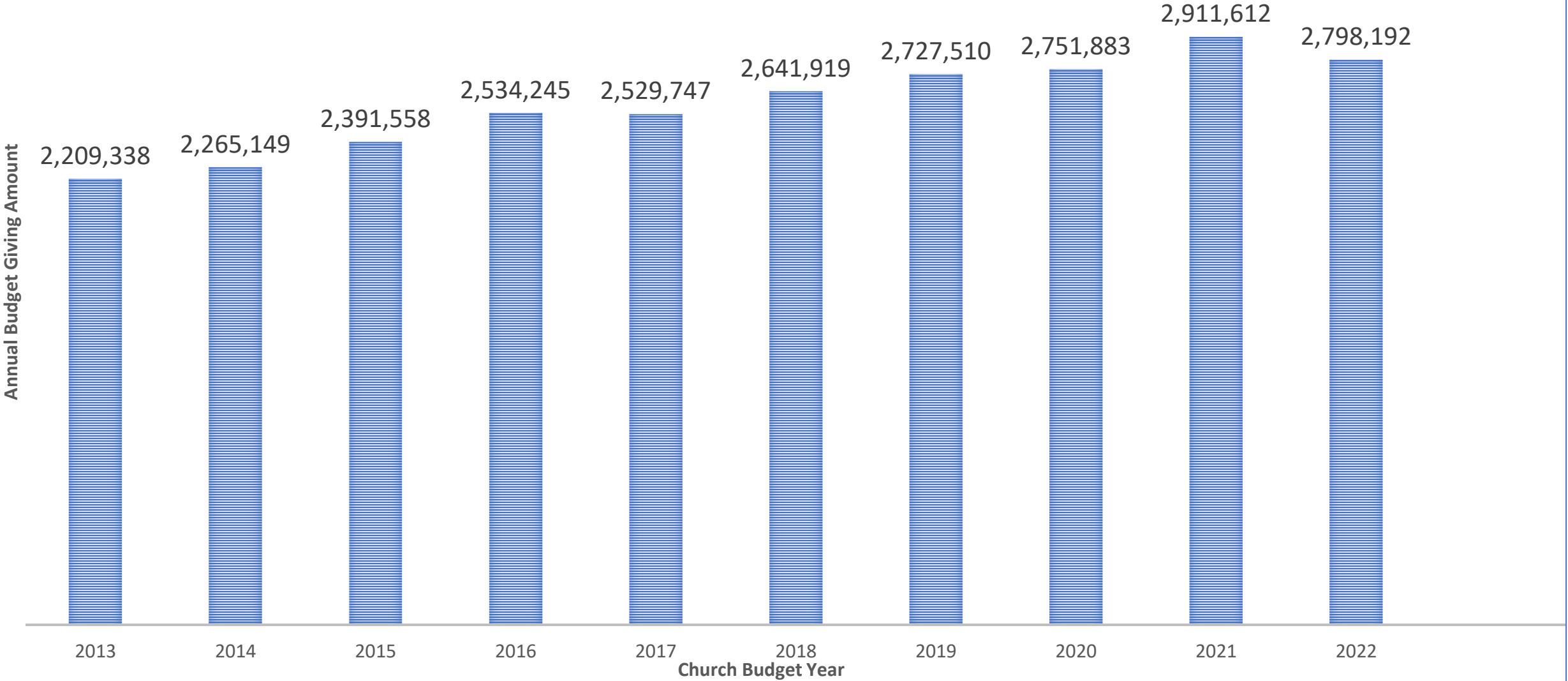
New Members Each Year



In Person Worship Attendance Trend



ANNUAL BUDGET GIVING



Looking out the Window – Looking in the Mirror



Time for discussion:

Do we need to combine some tables?

Time for discussion:

- 1. What are the greatest opportunities facing First Baptist over the next five years? (List no more than three please.)**
- 2. What are the greatest challenges facing First Baptist over the next five years? (List no more than three please.)**

ANIMAL FARM



THIS EXERCISE WILL HELP YOU
TALK FURTHER ABOUT :

FIRST BAPTIST
CHURCH

ANIMAL FARM

#PEACOCK

**What about FIRST BAPTIST
makes you proud as a peacock?**



ANIMAL FARM

#SACRED COW

**What do we treat as that which
cannot be 'messed with'?**



ANIMAL FARM

#ELEPHANT IN THE ROOM

**What issues need to be
acknowledged and discussed
that we are afraid to tackle?**



ANIMAL FARM

#GUARD DOG

**What is holding you back
from full engagement in
the church?**



ANIMAL FARM

#DINOSAUR

**What is extinct, or needs
to die in order for us to
move forward?**



ANIMAL FARM

#SQUIRREL

**What distractions are
keeping us from our task?**



ANIMAL FARM

#ROADKILL

**What are our epic failures as a
church that we need to name
and embrace?**



INSTRUCTIONS

- JOT DOWN your thoughts regarding an answer for each question.
- CREATE a “summary sheet” of responses as you discuss around the table.
- "VOTE" for the 1 answer for each animal/question that you most resonate with.



Thank you for
your input!

The next conversation will be Sunday afternoon, February 26, at 3:30 p.m. We will share a summary of the feedback that you have given, and we will then talk about the FUTURE of First Baptist and the characteristics of a Senior Minister for your next chapter of ministry.



Senior Minister Search

Welcome!

Transparency is a fundamental principle of the Senior Minister Search Committee at First Baptist Greenville. To that end, the committee will be providing resources at this site throughout the process. Please check here often for announcements, updates, and opportunities to participate. There is much more to come!



CONGREGATIONAL CONVERSATIONS

Three independent congregational conversations will be held in the Fellowship Hall on the following dates and times:

- Sunday, January 22—3:30-5:00pm
- Sunday, February 5—3:30-5:00pm
- Sunday, February 26—3:30-5:00pm


These conversations will focus on our church's past, present, and future, respectively, as we develop a *congregational profile*—capturing who we are as a church family, and a *pastor profile*—capturing the qualities that we as a church believe would make the perfect match in our new senior minister. When completed, these documents will be shared here at this site and elsewhere.

The conversations are designed to build on each other, so we invite you to attend all three. However, if you have a conflict or two, please plan to attend as many as possible. *Everyone* will have a chance to talk and to be listened to. Childcare will be provided for ages birth through 5th grade.

We want to hear from our youth as well! Please stay tuned for information about a separate set of youth conversations also.

Please mark your calendars for these special and important events, so that our church family can benefit from your wisdom and insight.

SENIOR PASTOR SEARCH COMMITTEE

| | | | | |
|---|---|------------|--------------------|--|
| Pat Booker-Christy | Ralph Bouton | Pam Davis | Doug Girvin, Chair | |
| Deb Richardson-Moore | Leslie Rodwell | Kevin Treu | | |
|  | Pat has been a member of FBG for 15 years and during this time has been on multiple committees. She has served as a deacon and most recently as a Foundation Trustee. She is a member of the Johnson class in which she is one of its teachers. She is also a Stephen Minister. | | | |

CONTACT US

You can contact the committee members at any time via the email address seniorministersearchcommittee@gmail.com, or the following form. Your ideas, feedback and suggestions are always welcome.



seniorministersearchcommittee@gmail.com

Name *(Required)*

First

Last

Email *(Required)*

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