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PROFESSIONAL DISSERTATIONS DMIN

Strategy To Retain Second Generation Immigrants at the Bethlehem French Seventh-day Adventist Church in New Jersey

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Abstract

Problem

Bethlehem French Seventh-day Adventist Church in East Orange, New Jersey, has been facing the challenges of any typical church located in urban environments in this post-millennial world. The church is confronted with member depletion in general, and the young people, in particular. The problem of retention has plagued our congregation in a manner that stagnated our exponential growth. A large percentage of the children who were born and raised in the church is leaving the Seventh-day Adventist faith after college. The Bethlehem French Seventh-day Adventist Church has not been exempted.

Method

To resolve the problem, I have put in place a series of five seminars to instruct the parents about their duty of transmission of the spiritual values to their children, to instill in the young people their self-value and identity awareness, and to train the church elders to offer a spirit-filled worship environment susceptible to nurture spiritual growth in the church. During a period of five months, from April through August 2018, 18 young people from 14 to 21-years-old participated in a research project to measure their religious

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involvement before and after the implementation. Quantitative data recorded before and after were collected, compared, analyzed, and evaluated to establish a diagnostic of the problem, and to propose tentative solutions.

Results

The study revealed that most of the young people do not live in a home where strong parent involvement is part of their spiritual formation, and none of them attended Seventh-day Adventist schools. The results of the surveys also highlighted the fact that there are disconnect and trust issues between the youth and the church leadership. Only a small percentage of them see the adults as spiritual role models. However, their faith in Christ and their likeliness to stay in the church seemed to increase from the pre-implementation survey to the post-implementation survey.

Conclusions

Therefore, I recommended several actions plans to address the problem. I encouraged the parents to improve their parent/child relationship through better parenting skills, and a daily home devotion schedule. I also increased, through subsequent training, the elders' awareness of youth mentality, and I invited them to be more open-minded regarding contemporary styles of worship. A loving spiritual home environment, a caring and supportive church community, and a better preaching and uplifting worship services would contribute to keeping the youth close to Jesus until he comes back to introduce eternity.

Subject Area

Bethlehem French Seventh-day Adventist Church (East Orange, N.J.); Seventh-day Adventist youth--New Jersey; Church work with youth--Seventh-day Adventists

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The Creation Seventh Day (and) Adventist Church began as a small group that broke off from the Seventh-day Adventist Church in 1988, and organized its own church in 1991. It has been involved in court cases with the General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists over trademarks and internet domain names. The Creation Seventh Day Adventists broke away from the official Seventh-day Adventist church in 1988, because of doctrinal disagreements; specifically, as a response to the acquisition and enforcing of Seventh-day Adventist believe that White had the spiritual gift of prophecy, but that her writings are inferior to the Bible, which has ultimate authority. According to the 28 Fundamentals the core set of theological beliefs held by the Seventh-day Adventist Church, states that Adventists accept the Bible as their only creed and can be read online on the website of the Seventh-day Adventist Church. [1]. The 18 of the 28 Fundamentals states the Adventists viewpoint on the Gift of Prophecy Alberto Timm, rector at the Latin-American Adventist Theological Seminary in Brasilia, Brazil, believes that since the passing of Ellen White, "as far as we know, there is no genuine prophet alive in our days".[7]. History. The Seventh-day Adventist Church is a Christian denomination that is best known for its teaching that Saturday, rather than Sunday, is the Sabbath. In addition, the group believes that the second coming (or Advent) of Jesus Christ is imminent. Seventh-day Adventists are also known for their groundbreaking teachings regarding diet and health, their assertion than the dead are in an unconscious state, and the belief that Jesus is currently performing an investigative judgment in heaven. The denomination