

The Center for Community Change

The Seventh-day Adventist Theological Seminary
at Andrews University

*FINDING THE HARBOR I HAVE HOPED FOR:
A MINISTRY SELF-REFLECTION*

**CHURCH IN THE VALLEY
NOVEMBER 18, 2025**



John 21:3

Simon Peter said to them, “I am going fishing.” They said to him, “We will go with you.” They went out and got into the boat, but that night they caught nothing.



John 21:3

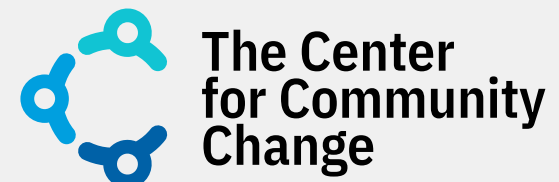
*Simon Peter said to them,
“**I am going fishing.**” They
said to him, “We will go with you.”
They went out and got into the boat,
but that night they **caught nothing.***

*“**I am going fishing**” – present
active indicative + present active
infinitive*



My “WHY”

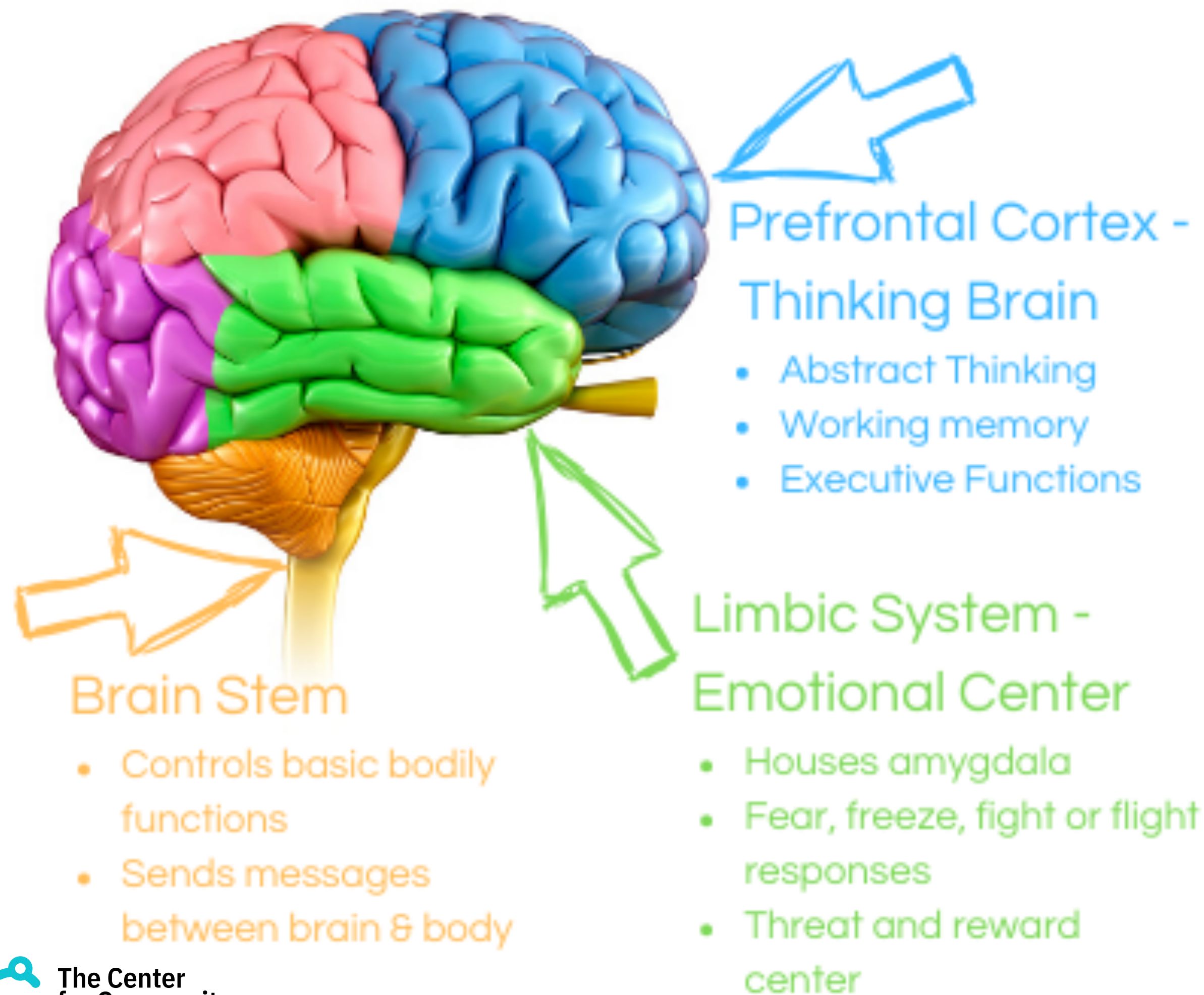
After 23 years
of ministry...
I KNOW THERE
ARE MORE
“VADIMS”
OUT THERE



“Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind and with all your strength.’ 31 The second is this: ‘Love your neighbor as yourself.’ There is no commandment greater than these.”

Mark 12:30, 31

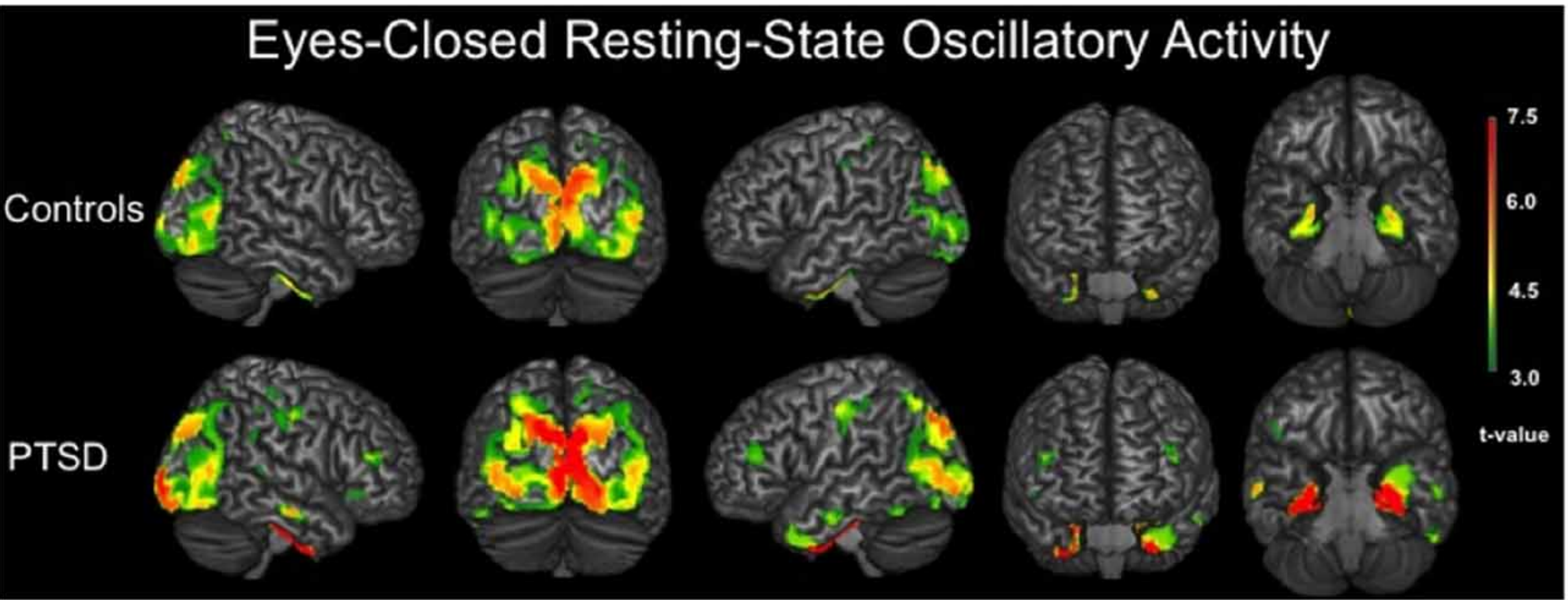
Let's Get a Little Heady



Basic brain functions:

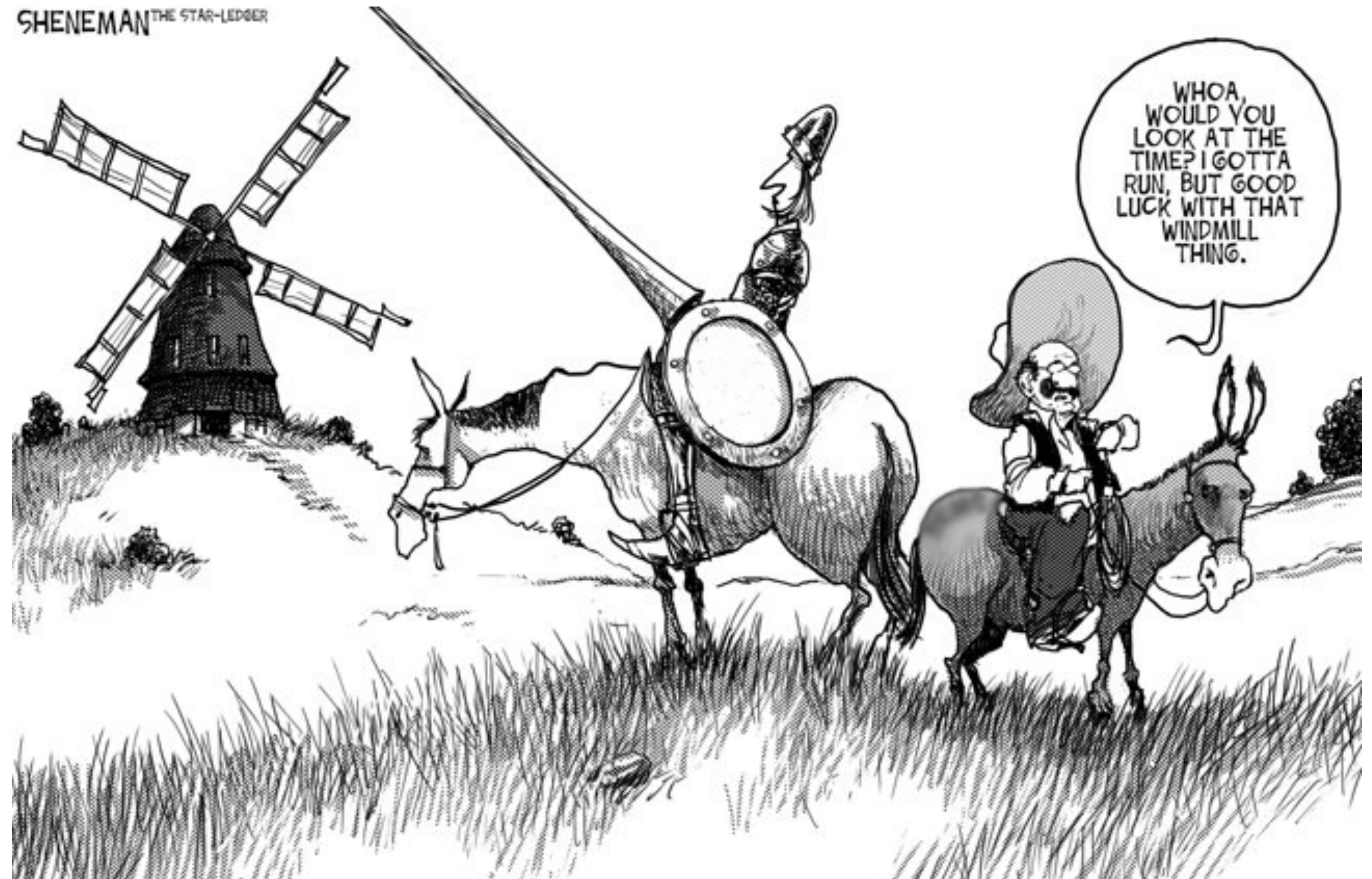
1. generate internal signals that register what our bodies need, such as food, rest, protection, sex, and shelter
2. create a map of the world to point us where to go to satisfy those needs
3. generate the necessary energy and actions to get us there
4. warn us of dangers and opportunities along the way
5. adjust our actions based on the requirements of the moment

The House on Fire: Trauma and the Divided Brain



Traumatized Brain vs. Healthy Brain

When an organism is operating in survival mode, its energy becomes solely devoted to fending off perceived threats. For human beings, this entails that as long as the mind feels under attack from unseen dangers, our closest relationships suffer, along with our capacity for creativity, forward planning, enjoyment, learning, and attending to the needs of others around us. **The single-minded focus on self-preservation leaves little room for nurturing, caring, and loving behaviors.**



Trauma Responses



Trauma fragments us—the heart, soul, mind, and strength (body) are divided

Putting Pieces Together: Self-Leadership

The challenge of recovery is to reclaim ownership of your body, mind, and self - feeling free to know and feel without becoming overwhelmed, enraged, ashamed, or collapsed. For most, this involves:

- (1) finding a way to become calm and focused,**
- (2) learning to maintain that calm when reminded of the past,**
- (3) being fully present and engaged,**
- (4) not keeping secrets from yourself, including survival strategies.**

Self-Leadership Strategy: Self as 2 Systems

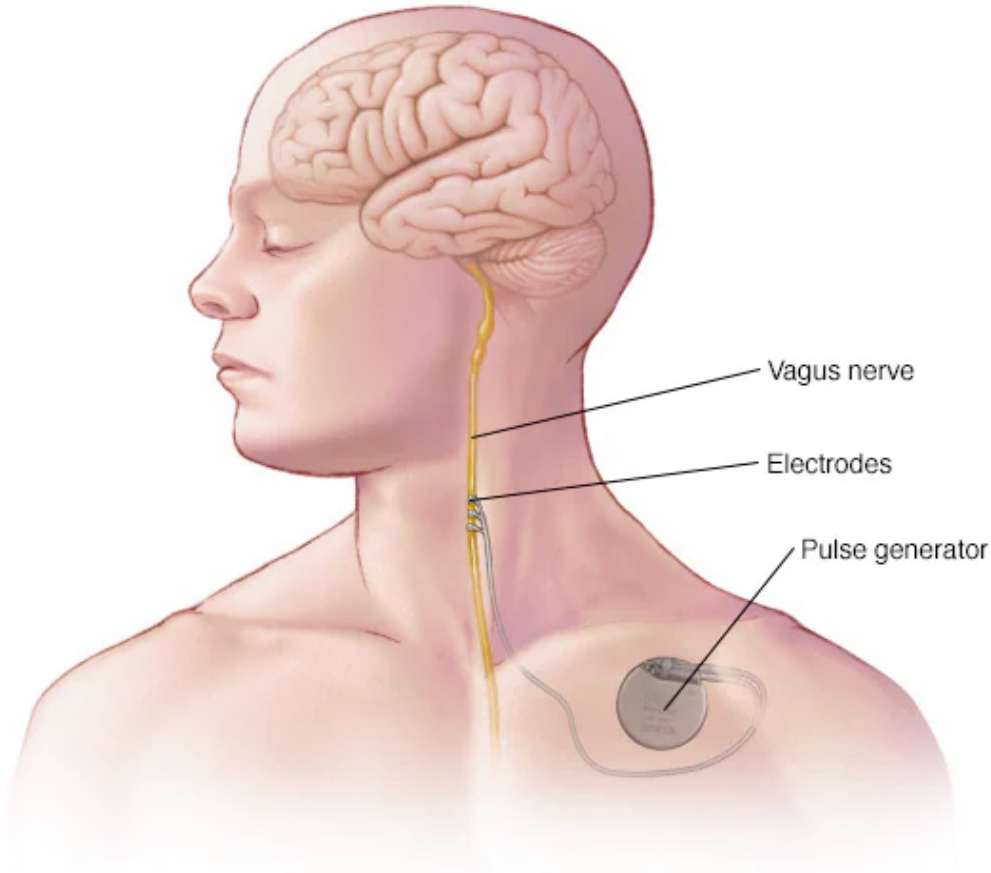
Self across the time



Self in the present

Self-Leadership Strategy: Strength and Mind

Exercise



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Mindfulness

Self-Leadership Strategy: Heart and Soul

Caring Relationships



Power of Play (<http://learnimprov.com>)

Self-Leadership Strategy: Soul and Mind

Tell your story to self—journaling



**Tell your story to someone
you can say it all—therapy**

THE BODY KEEPS THE SCORE

BRAIN, MIND, AND BODY
IN THE HEALING OF TRAUMA



BESSEL VAN DER KOLK, MD

“The single most important issue for traumatized people is to find a sense of safety in their own bodies.”

—Bessel van der Kolk

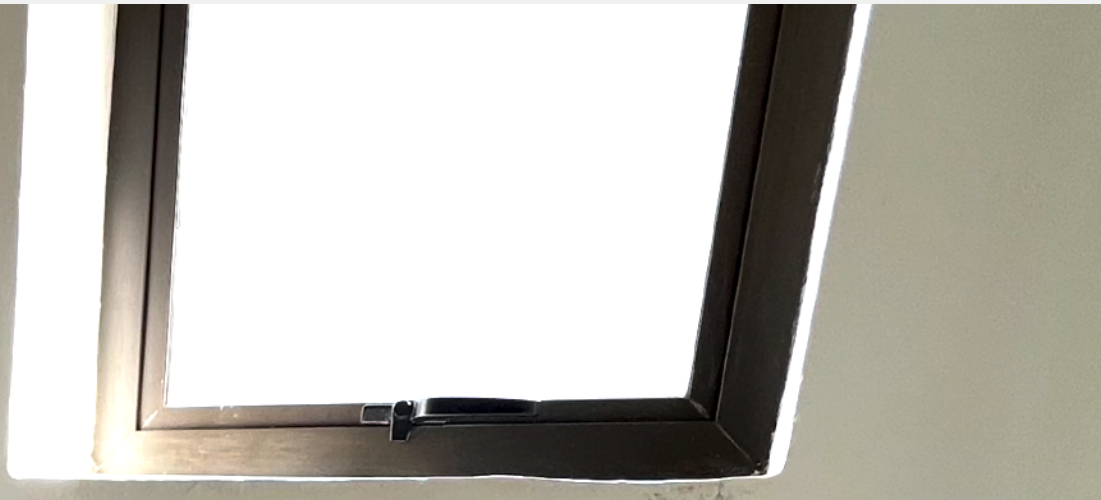


“Or do you not know that your body is the temple of the Holy Spirit who is in you, whom you have from God, and you are not your own? For you were bought at a price; therefore glorify God in your body and in your spirit, which are God’s.”

1 Cor. 6:19,20

Lilongwe for Christ, Malawi









Something is missing

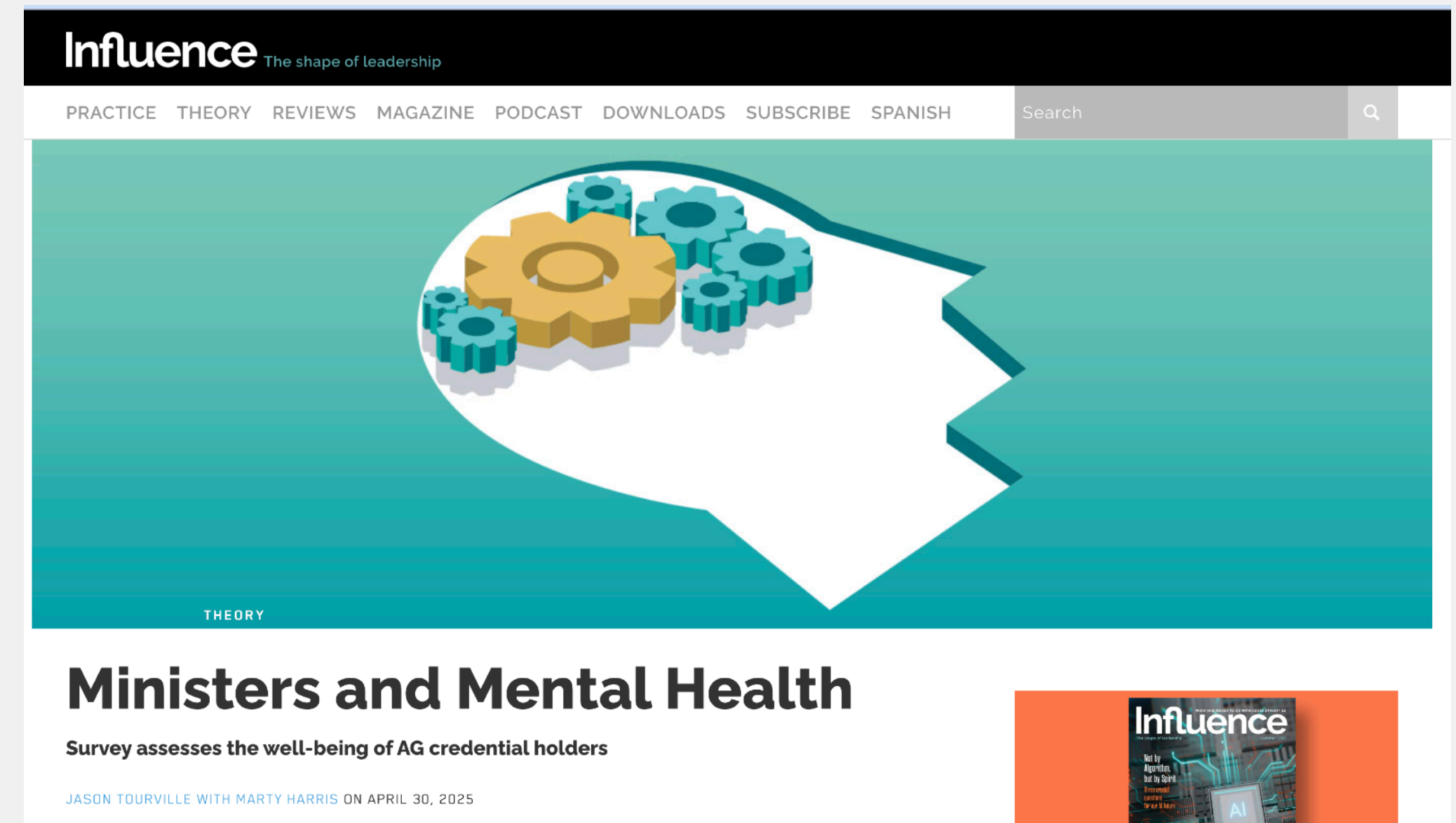


Self-Leadership—managing heart, soul, mind, and strength

6,864 respondents (over 18% of all credentialed ministers), 67.4% were men and 32.6% women. More than 8 in 10 (81.6%) were aged 40–60

53.8% stress and anxiety & **26.9%** sadness and depression as reasons for seeking help

other reasons: aging and life stage (**25.8%**); finances (**21.9%**); marriage (**20.9%**); sleep problems (**17.3%**); health issues (**16.3%**); past trauma or PTSD (**16.2%**); work (**15.9%**); grief or loss (**15.2%**); parenting (**15%**); and purpose or identity (**14%**)




Self-Leadership—the only ministry role that can't be delegated

Barna About Explore Events Shop Solutions **Barna Access Plus** 🔍

Culture Leadership Sep 12, 2024

Pastors, Too, Grapple with Thoughts of Suicide, Self-Harm

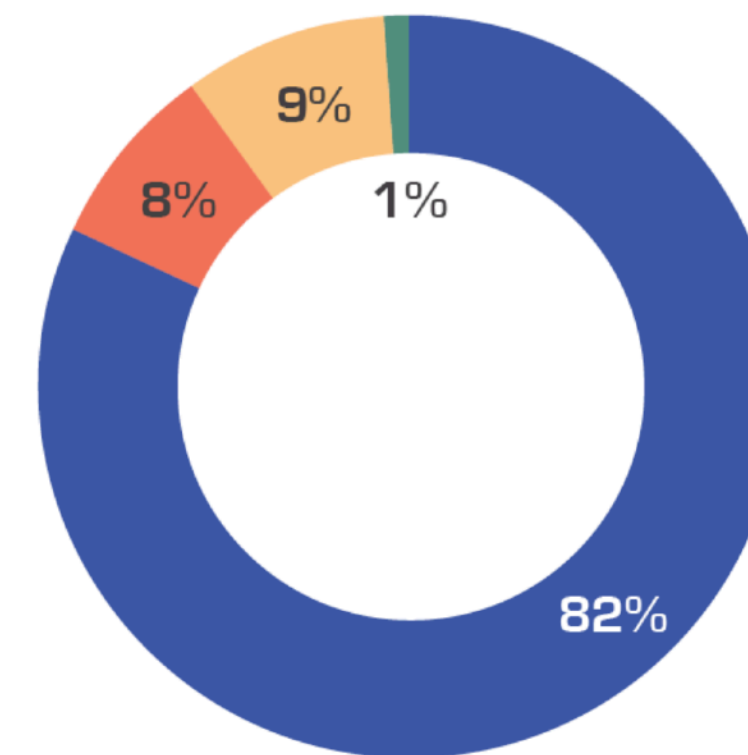
Share [f](#) [X](#) [in](#)



PASTORS' REPORTS OF CONSIDERING SELF-HARM OR SUICIDE

During the past 12 months, have you had any thoughts of harming yourself or taking your own life?

- No, not at all
- Yes, but they were fleeting and passed quickly
- Yes, I've had occasional thoughts, but they weren't severe
- Yes, I've had frequent and distressing thoughts



n=523 U.S. Protestant pastors, August 28–September 18, 2023.

Self-Leadership—subverting cultural individualism

Leadership Jul 12, 2023

7-Year Trends: Pastors Feel More Loneliness & Less Support

Share f X in

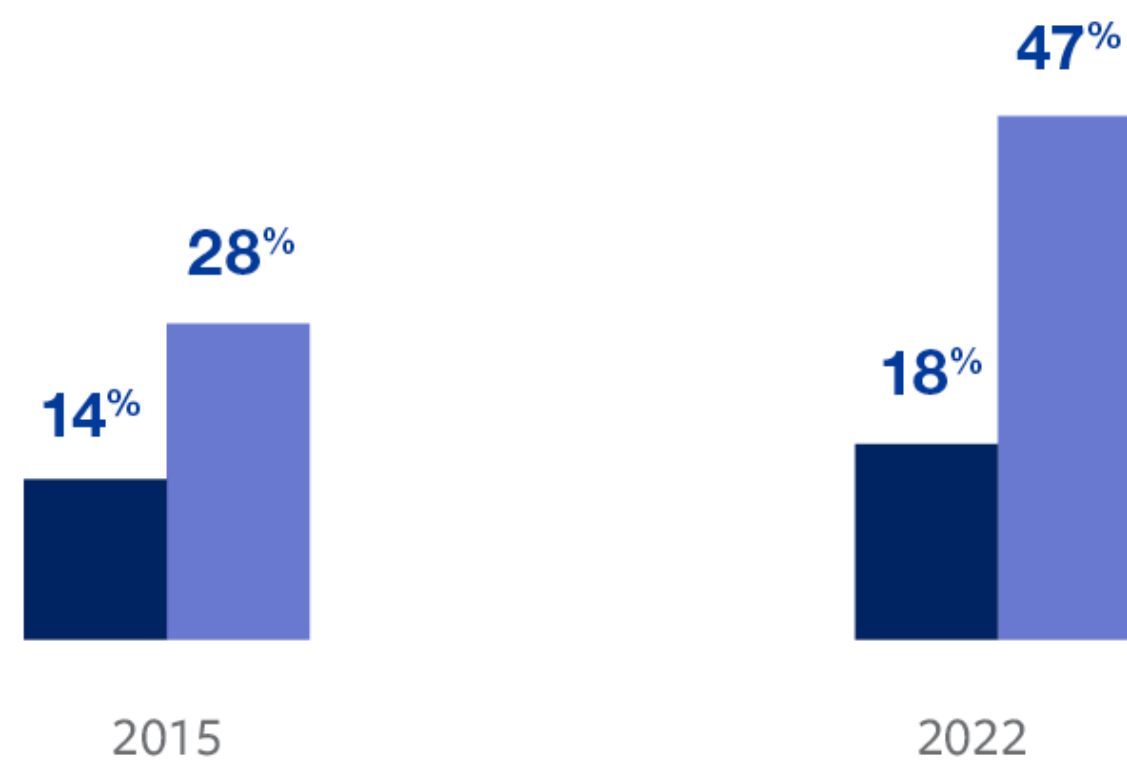


FEELINGS OF LONELINESS & ISOLATION, AMONG PASTORS

Barna

How often, if ever, during the past three months have you felt lonely or isolated?

● Frequently ● Sometimes

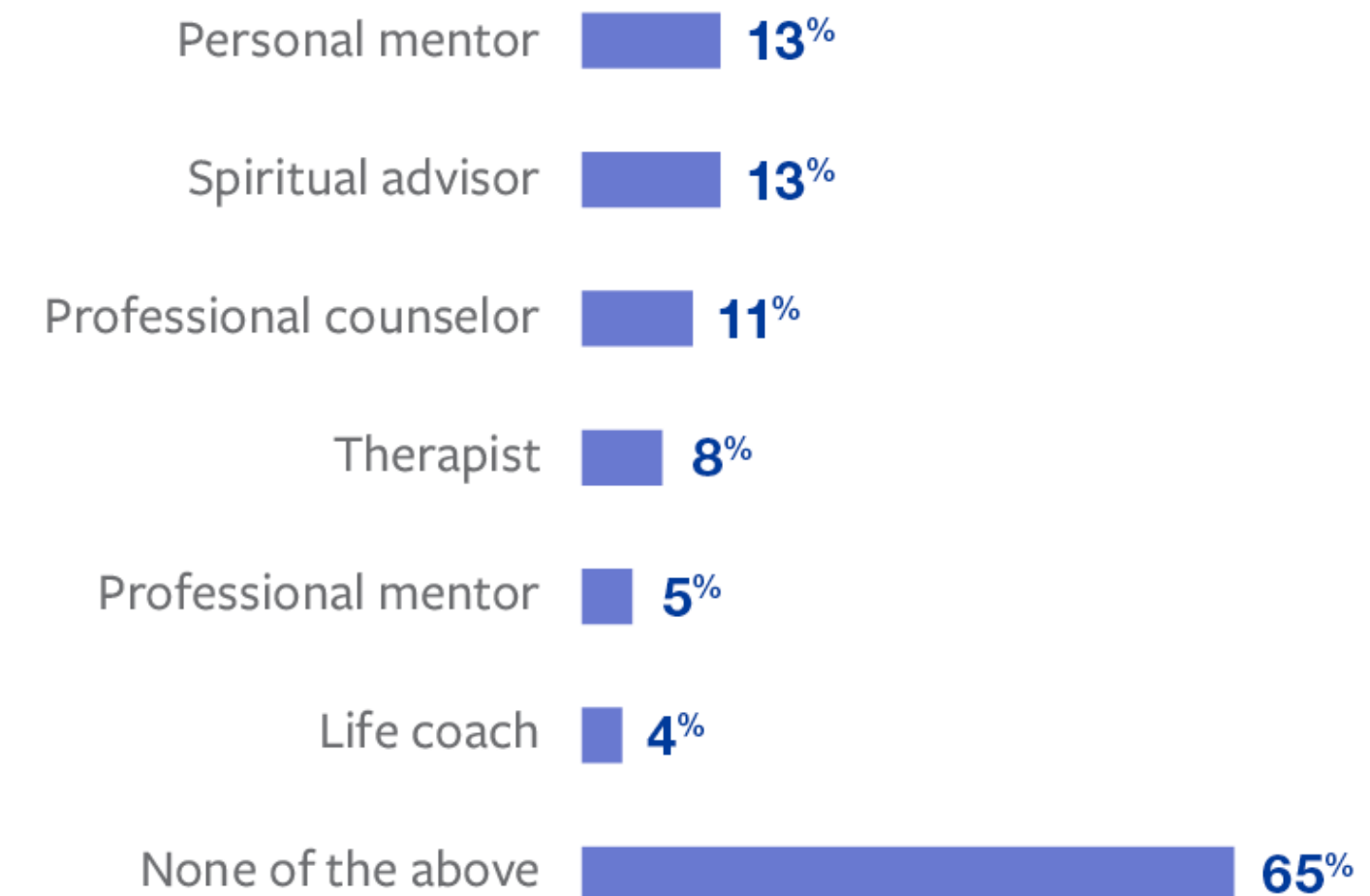


n=901 U.S. Protestant senior pastors, April–December 2015; n=584 U.S. Protestant senior pastors, September 6–16, 2022.

FREQUENCY OF SEEKING PROFESSIONAL SUPPORT, AMONG PASTORS

Barna

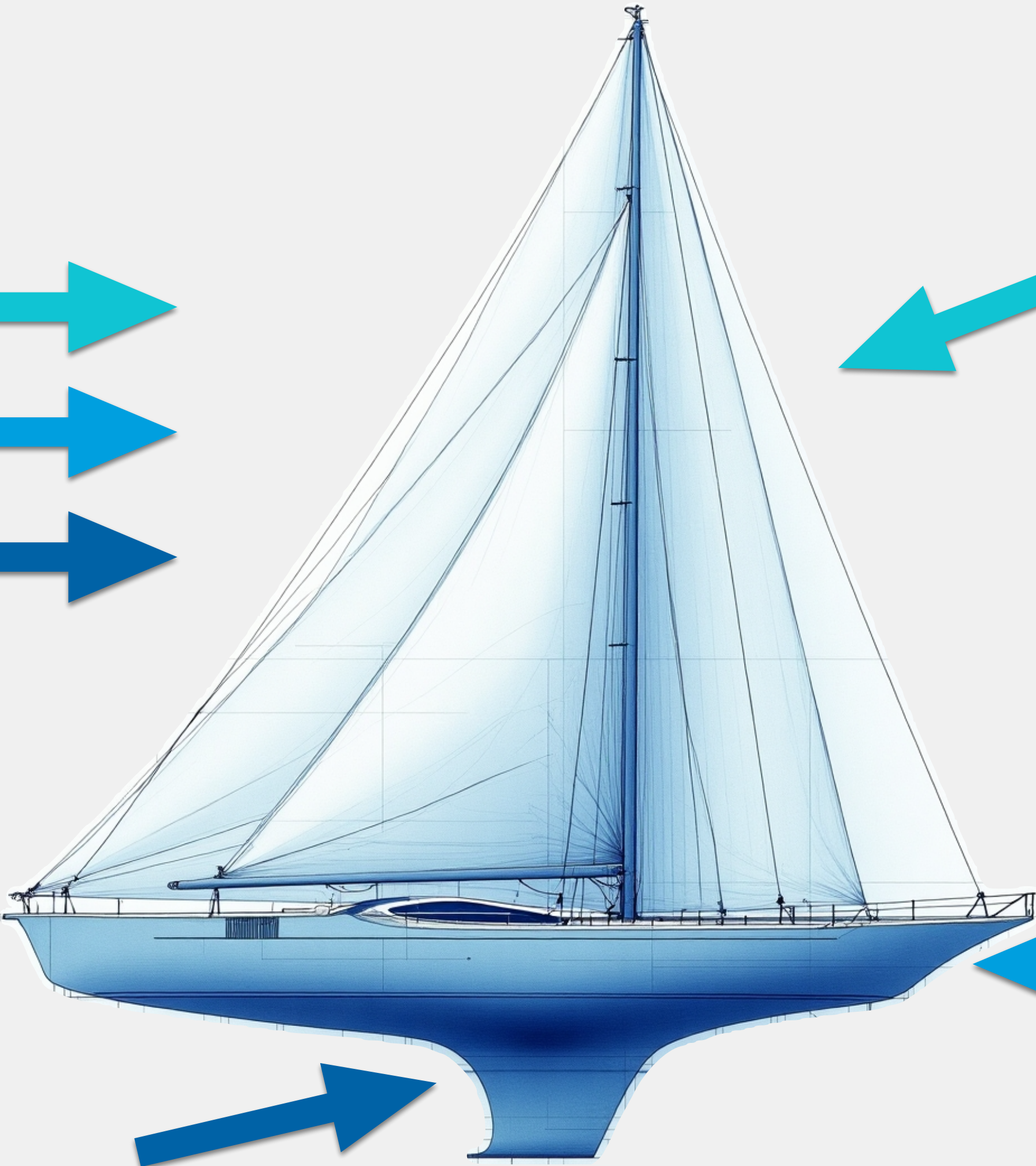
If you don't mind sharing, do you currently use the services of any of the following? Please select all that apply.



n=901 U.S. Protestant senior pastors, April–December 2015; n=584 U.S. Protestant senior pastors, September 6–16, 2022.

What Floats Your Boat?

**HOLY
SPIRIT**



**03. COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT:
SAILS**



**02. HEALTHY CHURCH:
THE HULL**



01. WHOLE-PERSON CARE OF A PASTOR: THE KEEL



Church and Ministry Trauma I



- Dr. David Sedlacek—a longitudinal study (2019–2025) on Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs) among pastors and seminary students (607 seminary students, 94 pastors, conference leaders)
- 87% of SDA pastors reported at least 1 ACE compared to 67% of the general population
- 24% of pastors had 4 or more ACEs (high trauma), compared to only 12.5% nationally
- Individuals with 4+ ACEs face exponentially higher risk of chronic illness, mental health challenges, addiction, and early death

Church and Ministry Trauma II



- Emotional Abuse: 35.78% of pastors vs. 33.46% nationally .
- Physical Abuse: 23.41% vs. 17.5% nationally .
- Sexual Abuse: 19.41% vs. 11.31% nationally (71% higher than the general population) .
- Parental Separation/Divorce: 33.38% vs. 28.24% nationally .
- Household Mental Illness/Suicide: 22.94% vs. 16.16% nationally (42% higher)

Church and Ministry Trauma III

- 30% of seminary students suffered family dominance/control issues
- 20–34% experienced spiritual abuse within home or church settings
- About 25–33% faced bullying from siblings, peers, or church members
- 20–36% felt pressured to perform for love or acceptance
- 23–33% report trauma from conference leadership, other pastors, or their own congregations
- Ministry itself can become a source of re-traumatization without proper support systems



Church and Ministry Trauma III

- Chronic fatigue and illness rates significantly higher among high-ACE pastors
- Depression and anxiety prevalent, with documented cases of suicidal ideation
- Anger issues, especially directed at abusive authority figures or difficult church members
- Addiction used as coping mechanism: alcohol, work addiction, other compulsive behaviors
- People-pleasing syndrome: Reluctant to say 'no', constantly striving for congregational approval
- Perfectionism and performance orientation: Driven by childhood need to prove worth
- Marital distress was identified as the strongest theme in the research data
- Deep struggle to reconcile personal suffering with theological message of God's goodness



5 “i”s of Personal Vision & Mission



Imagination—What can God do here and now in and through me?



Identity—Who am I in relationship to God and my social spaces?



Impact—What do I ultimately want?



Intentionality—What do I know God wants me to do?



Implementation—What is my plan to complete God’s vision for my life?

MY “WHY”

Personal Vision Statement

I envision a world where those who feel misunderstood or out of place discover their true belonging in the Kingdom of God, embraced by the transformative love and grace of Jesus Christ.

Personal Mission Statement

Daily, I commit to selflessly sharing the Good News and exemplifying Christ's method-alone principle, touching the lives of all I encounter.

5 “i”s of Personal Vision & Mission



Imagination—What can God do here and now in and through me?



Identity—Who am I in relationship to God and my social spaces?



Impact—What do I ultimately want?



Intentionality—What do I know God wants me to do?



Implementation—What is my plan to complete God’s vision for my life?

Let's Pair Up

Personal Vision Statement
Personal Mission Statement

Let's Share

Share with the group your partner's VS and MS

Let's Pray

Back to the pairs and pray for each other's VS and MS

(Re)Thinking Community Engagement:

23 Some of the redeemed had gone out on the ocean in ships, making their living on the high seas.

24 They saw what the LORD had made; they saw his wondrous works in the depths of the sea. 25 God spoke and stirred up a storm that brought the waves up high. 26 The waves went as high as the sky; they crashed down to the depths. The sailors' courage melted at this terrible situation. 27 They staggered and stumbled around like they were drunk. None of their skill was of any help. 28 So they cried out to the LORD in their distress, and God brought them out safe from their desperate circumstances. 29 God quieted the storm to a whisper; the sea's waves were hushed. 30 So they rejoiced because the waves had calmed down; then God led them to *the harbor they were hoping for*.



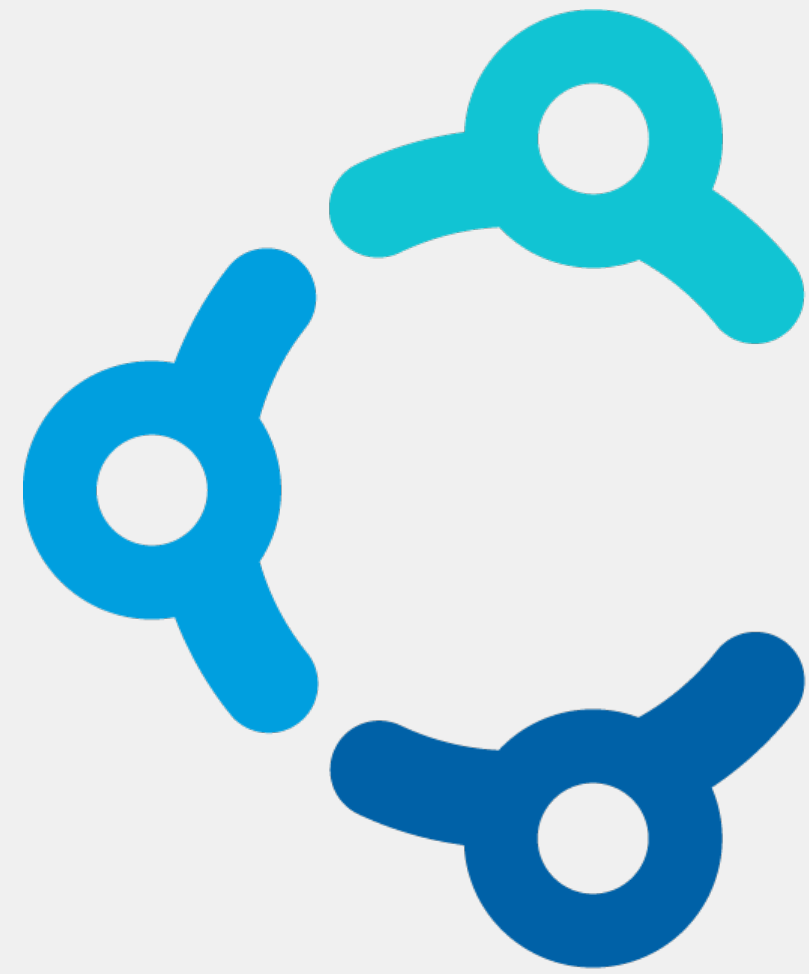
Ps.107:23-30



Praying for the Divine Voyage

- Some of the redeemed had gone out on the ocean in ships,
- They staggered and stumbled around like they were drunk. None of their skill was of any help.
- God quieted the storm to a whisper; the sea's waves were hushed. So they rejoiced because the waves had calmed down;
- God led them to the harbor they were hoping for.





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*PASTORAL SELF-LEADERSHIP: FROM
SURVIVING TO THRIVING IN MINISTRY*

CHURCH IN THE VALLEY

NOVEMBER 18, 2025



Modern Times © Roy Export S.A.S.



“I was looking at job listing in my town...”



Pastor Hope Dike:

“I don’t know if I would still be in ministry without the Center for Community Change.”

Our “WHY”

**There are a lot of
Jakes and Hopes
out there...**



Our “WHY”



And there is “more”



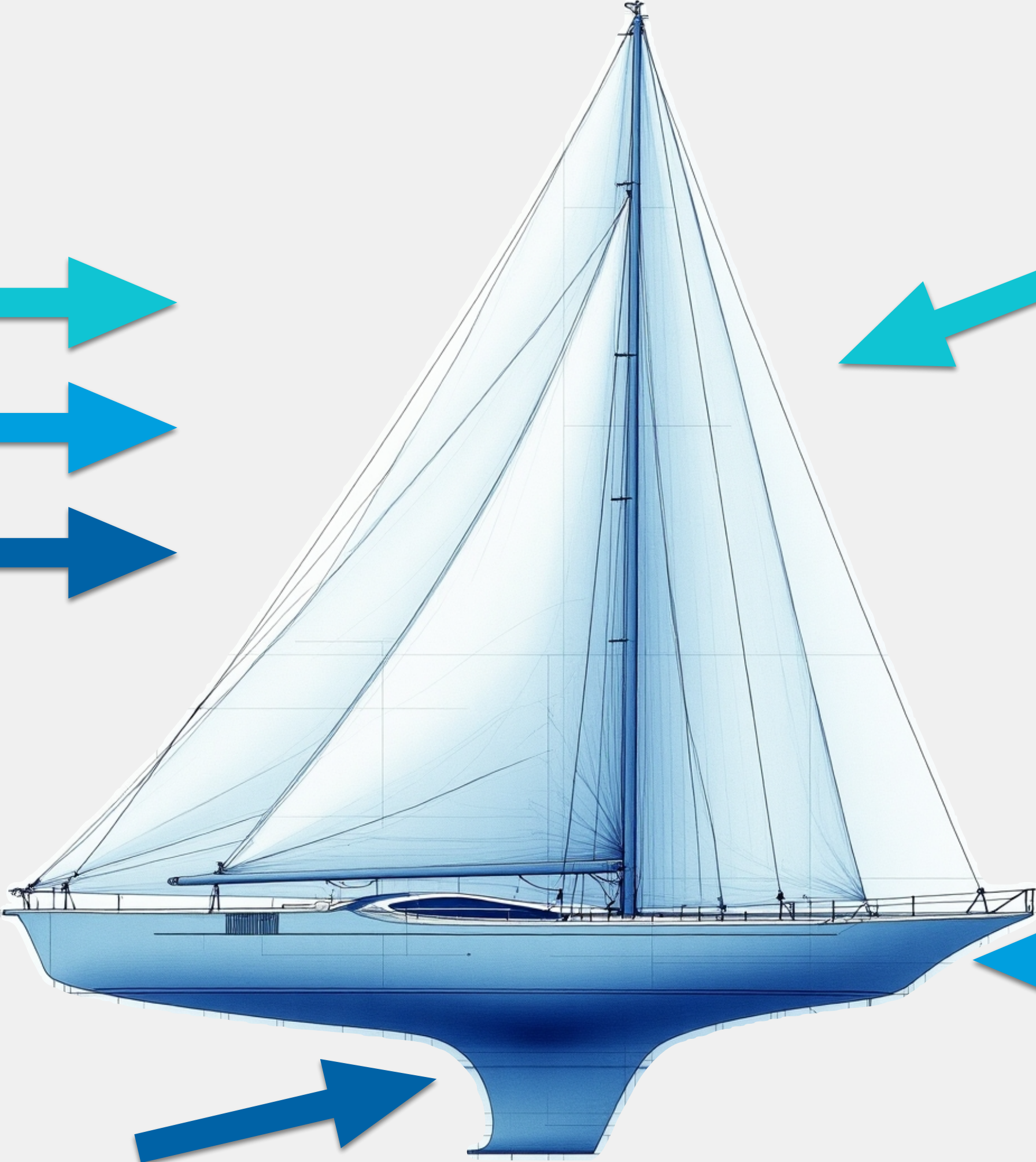
Challenge to God's people



Above all, the faith traditions must reclaim their prophetic voice regarding the health of populations...They must live up to their sacred charge to act prophetically—to call citizenry and secular governments out of their complacency and neglect in the name of justice and mercy—to address the needs of the underserved and to promote an ethic of prevention and communitarian concern for the health and well-being of all people.” (Jeff Levine)

What Floats Your Boat?

**HOLY
SPIRIT**



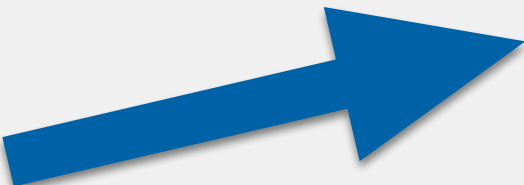
**03. COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT:
SAILS**



**02. HEALTHY CHURCH:
THE HULL**



01. WHOLE-PERSON CARE OF A PASTOR: THE KEEL





Luke 8:40-55

Listen one more time, imagining that you are the person with whom you have identified.

What is happening between you and Jesus?

[What is He saying to you?

Is He looking at you?]

Luke 8:40-55

Luke 8:40 Now when Jesus returned, the crowd welcomed him, for they were all waiting for him. 41 Just then there came a man named Jairus, a leader of the synagogue. He fell at Jesus' feet and begged him to come to his house, 42 for he had an only daughter, about twelve years old, who was dying.

As he went, the crowds pressed in on him. 43 Now there was a woman who had been suffering from hemorrhages for twelve years; and though she had spent all she had on physicians, no one could cure her. 44 She came up behind him and touched the fringe of his clothes, and immediately her hemorrhage stopped.

Luke

45 Then Jesus asked, “Who touched me?” When all denied it, Petera said, “Master, the crowds surround you and press in on you.” 46 But Jesus said, “Someone touched me; for I noticed that power had gone out from me.” 47 When the woman saw that she could not remain hidden, she came trembling; and falling down before him, she declared in the presence of all the people why she had touched him, and how she had been immediately healed. 48 He said to her, “Daughter, your faith has made you well; go in peace.”

Luke 8:49 While he was still speaking, someone came from the leader’s house to say, “Your daughter is dead; do not trouble the teacher any longer.”

Luke

50 When Jesus heard this, he replied, “Do not fear. Only believe, and she will be saved.” 51 When he came to the house, he did not allow anyone to enter with him, except Peter, John, and James, and the child’s father and mother. 52 They were all weeping and wailing for her; but he said, “Do not weep; for she is not dead but sleeping.” 53 And they laughed at him, knowing that she was dead. 54 But he took her by the hand and called out, “Child, get up!” 55 Her spirit returned, and she got up at once. Then he directed them to give her something to eat. 56 Her parents were astounded; but he ordered them to tell no one what had happened.

Luke 8:40-55

**What has happened between
you and Jesus right now?**

What is the difference?



Smoke Alarm

vs



Lighthouse



**The Center
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What is the difference?



The **reactive approach** is like a **smoke alarm**: it only activates when there is an immediate crisis or danger, sounding an alarm after smoke is detected—responding quickly but only after a problem has already begun



The **reflective approach** is like a **lighthouse**: it provides ongoing guidance by helping the church understand where it is (spiritually and contextually) and intentionally choose a direction for the future, enabling proactive and wise navigation rather than simply reacting to emergencies as they arise



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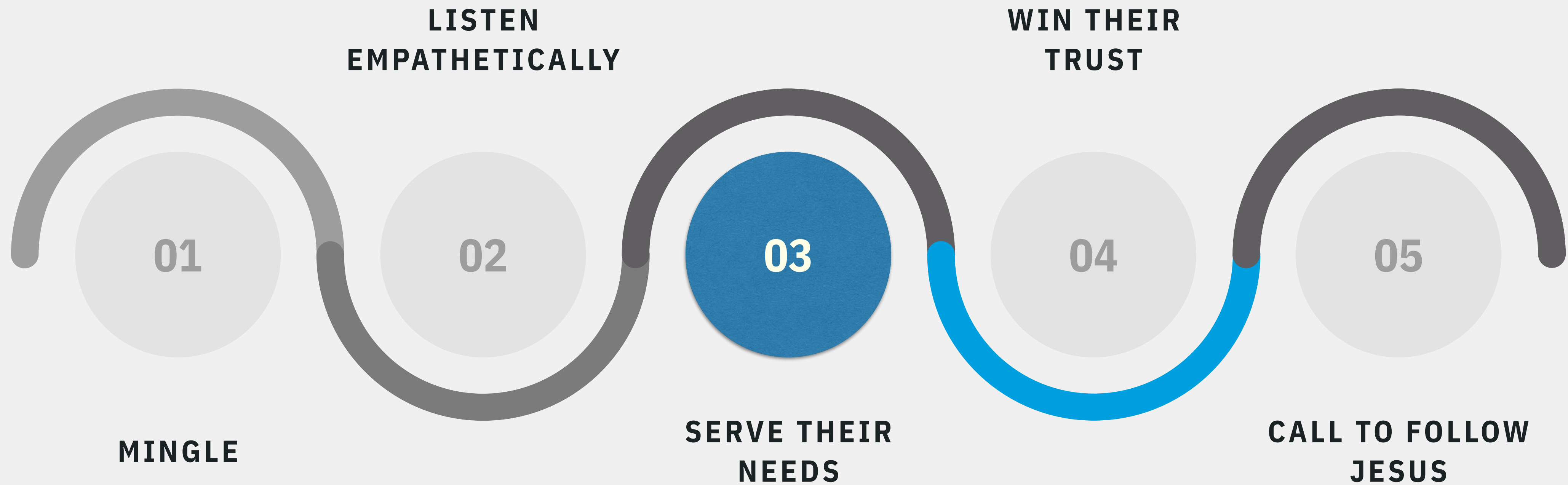
Reactive vs. Reflective Engagement

Table 1

Engagement Aspects	Reactive Approach	Reflective Approach
Motivation	Urgent, crisis-driven	Discerned, intentional
Planning & Strategy	Unplanned, transactional	Strategic, inquiry-driven
Relationship Depth	Surface interactions	Builds authentic trust
Theological Basis	Pragmatic, not rooted	Prayerful, faith-based
Learning & Growth	Repetitive, crisis-bound	Adaptive, ongoing

The Ministry of Healing, pp. 143, 144

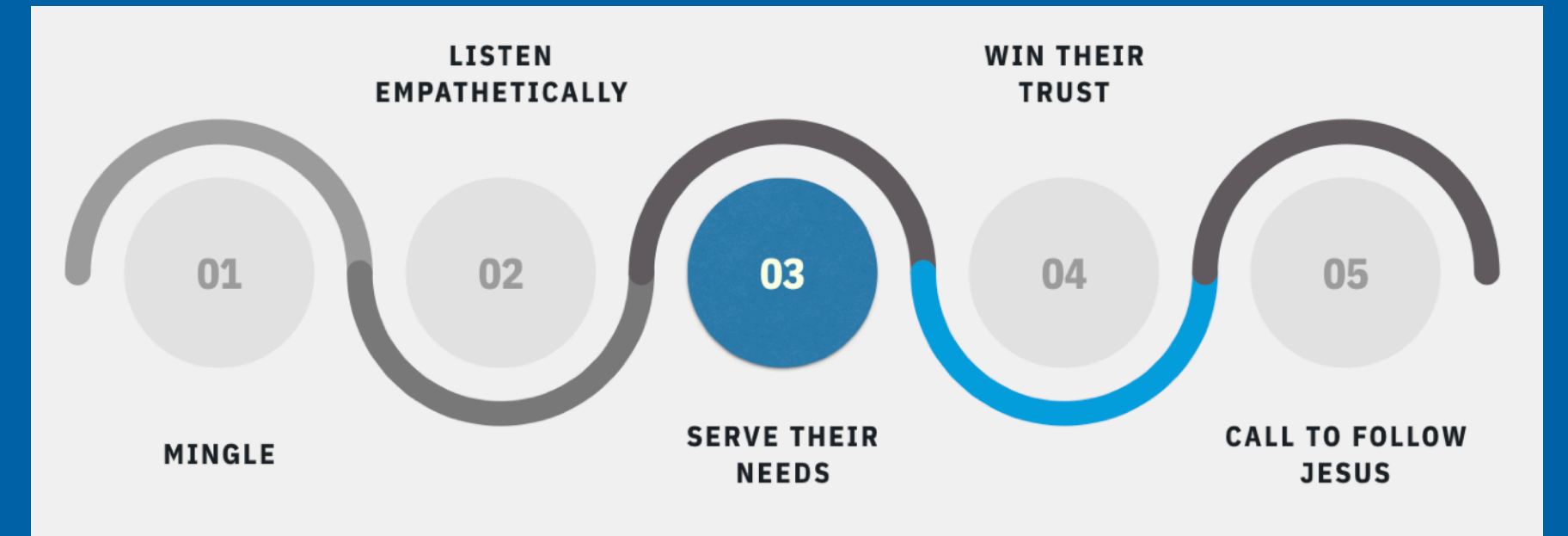
“Christ’s method alone will give true success in reaching the people. The Savior mingled with men as one who desired their good. He showed His sympathy for them, ministered to their needs, and won their confidence. Then He bade them, ‘Follow Me.’” . . .



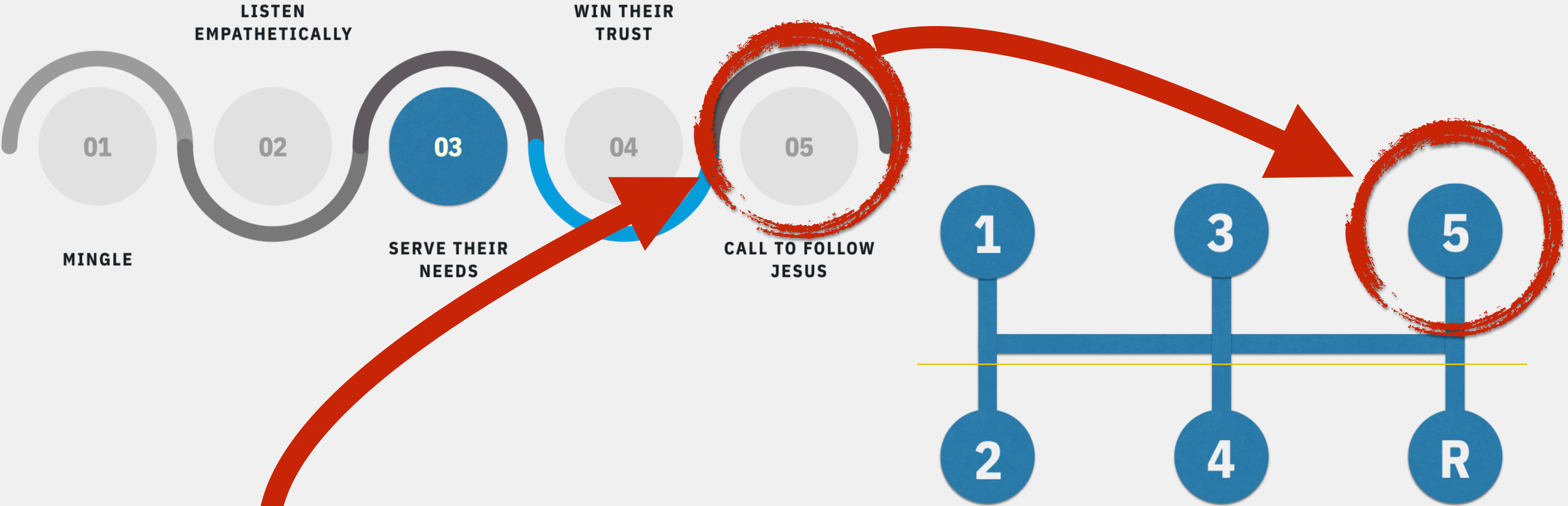
Christ's Method Alone Principle in Action

Our Core Values:

- **Belonging before believing**
- **Connecting before correcting**
- **Discipleship vs. membership**
- **Evangelism is inviting people into your life, not your church**



Ministry is like driving a stick shift

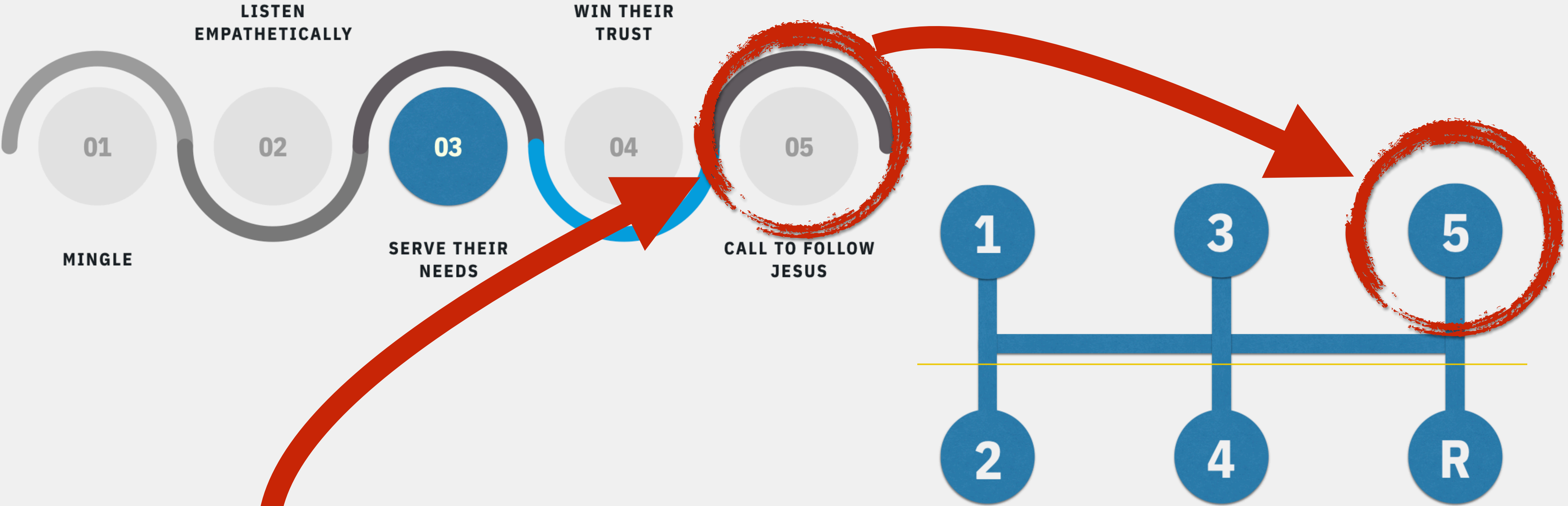


Unfortunately, we often start with the 5th gear.



**PROFESSIONAL DRIVING SCHOOL
OF THE AMERICAS INC.
212-375-1111
800-NOW DRIVE**

Ministry is like driving a stick shift



Unfortunately, we often start with the 5th gear.

The Road from Cold Feet to Burning Hearts



Luke 24:13–35 ”

13 On that same day, two disciples were traveling to a village called Emmaus, about seven miles from Jerusalem. 14 They were talking to each other about everything that had happened. 15 While they were discussing these things, Jesus himself arrived and joined them on their journey. 16 They were prevented from recognizing him.

17 He said to them, “What are you talking about as you walk along?” They stopped, their faces downcast.

18 The one named Cleopas replied, “Are you the only visitor to Jerusalem who is unaware of the things that have taken place there over the last few days?”

19 He said to them, “What things?”

Luke 24: 13-19 (CEB)

The Road from Cold Feet to Burning Hearts



Luke 24:13–35 ”

What was on Their minds?

20 But our chief priests and our leaders handed him over to be sentenced to death, and they crucified him. 21 We had hoped he was the one who would redeem Israel. All these things happened three days ago. 22 But there's more: Some women from our group have left us stunned. They went to the tomb early this morning 23 and didn't find his body. They came to us saying that they had even seen a vision of angels who told them he is alive. 24 Some of those who were with us went to the tomb and found things just as the women said. They didn't see him."



Luke 24: 25-27 (CEB)

What was on Their minds?

20 But our chief priests and our leaders handed him over to be sentenced to death, and they crucified him. 21 **We had hoped he was the one who would redeem Israel.** All these things happened three days ago. 22 But there's more: Some women from our group have left us stunned. They went to the tomb early this morning 23 and didn't find his body. They came to us saying that they had even seen a vision of angels who told them he is alive. 24 Some of those who were with us went to the tomb and found things just as the women said. **They didn't see him."**



Luke 24: 25-27 (CEB)

What was on Their minds?

**Political defeat—what they thought should
had been the product of Jesus' work**

**Personal discomfort with the outcome—a
disappointing program**

Have you been on the road to Emmaus?



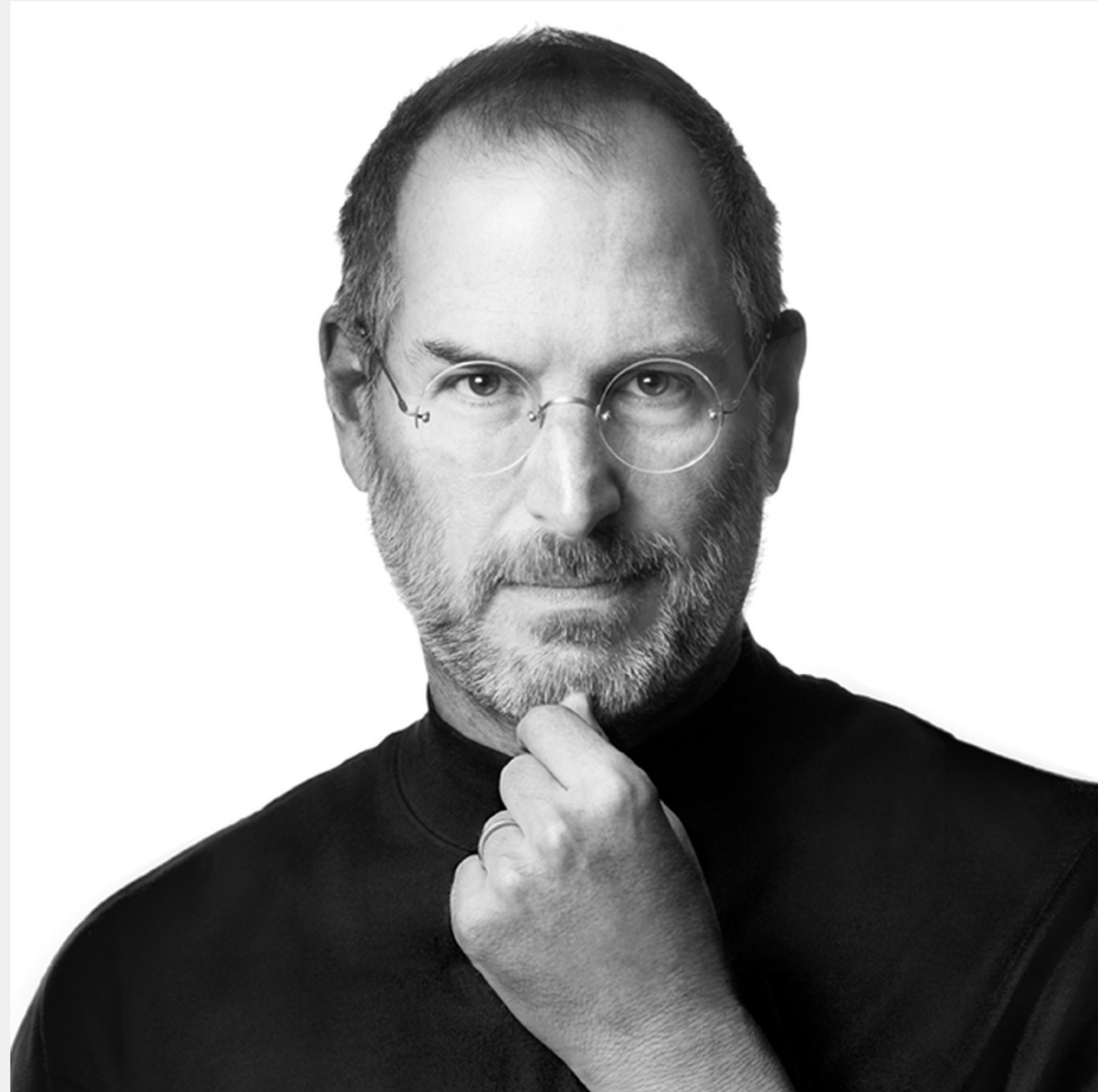
Product – “demonstrating numbers”
(attendance, baptisms, and giving)



Program – “enjoying service”
(feeling satisfied at a church)

How do we typically boost “product” and “program”?

Do you recognize these individuals?



Steve Job

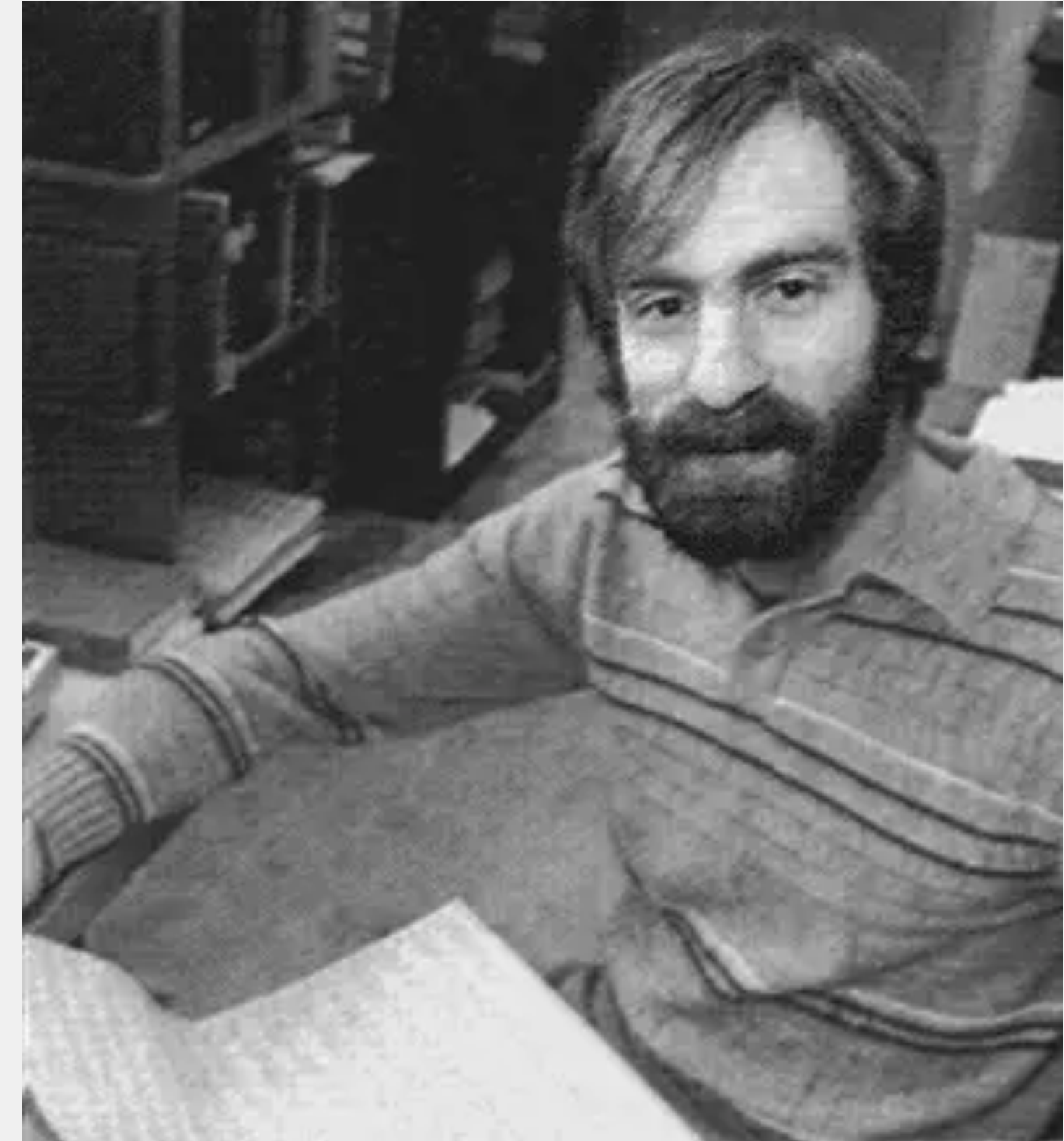


Steve Wozniak

Do you recognize these individuals?



Bill Gates



Tim Paterson

Do you recognize these individuals?



Elon Musk



**Martin Eberhard and
Marc Tarpenning**

Traditional Methods:



Product = money(investment) + Personality



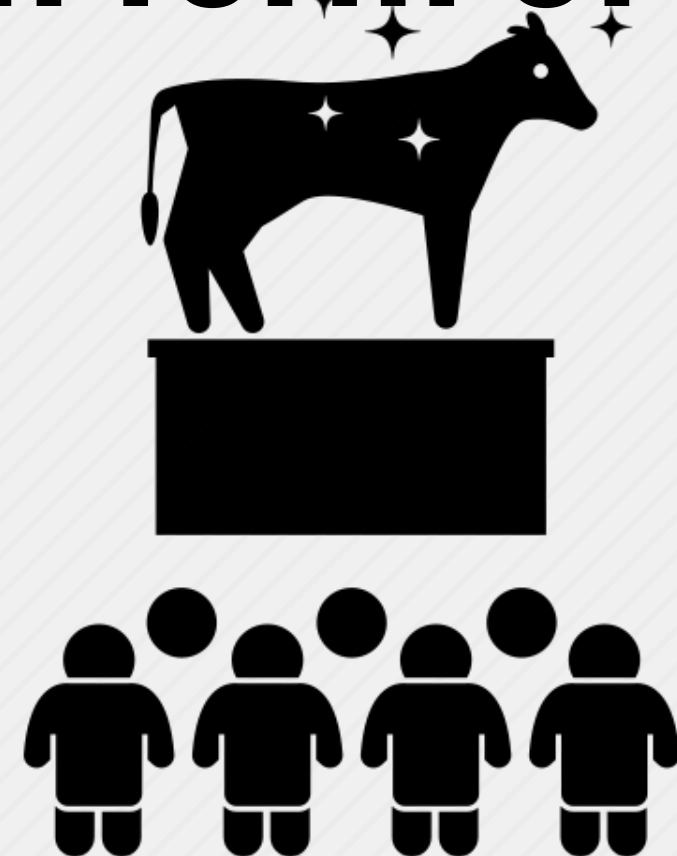
Program = Personality + money(investment)

Modern Idolatry



Product and Program – human-made categories

**Preoccupation with “Product” and “Program”
is a modern form of idolatry**



What is the most frequent word in Jesus' response?



25 Then Jesus said to them, “You foolish people! Your dull minds keep you from believing all that the prophets talked about. 26 Wasn’t it necessary for the Christ to suffer these things and then enter into his glory?” 27 Then he interpreted for them the things written about himself in all the scriptures, starting with Moses and going through all the Prophets.

Luke 24: 25-27 (CEB)

What word is the most frequent in Jesus's response?



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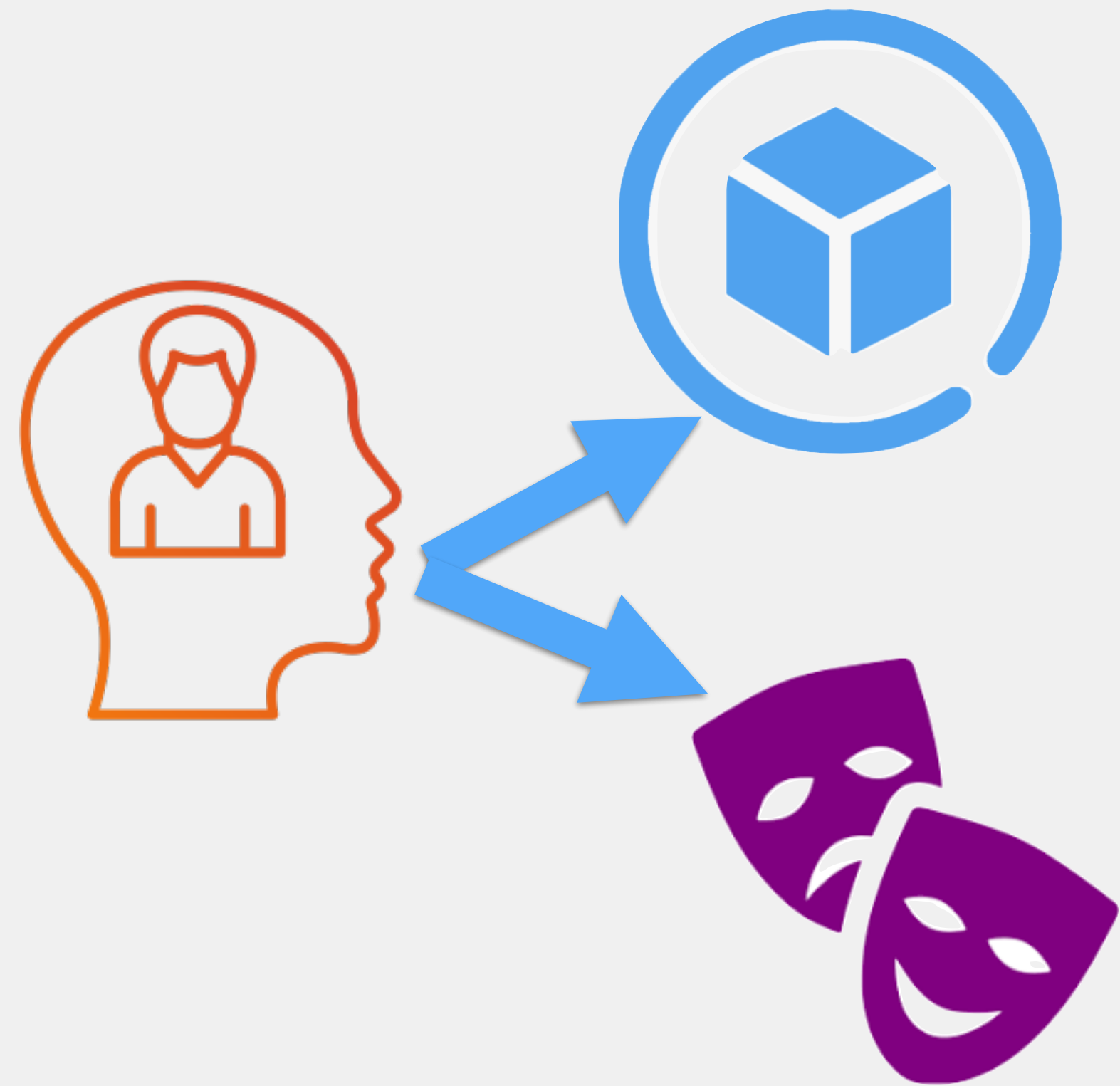
Luke 24: 25-27 (CEB)

What is “All”?

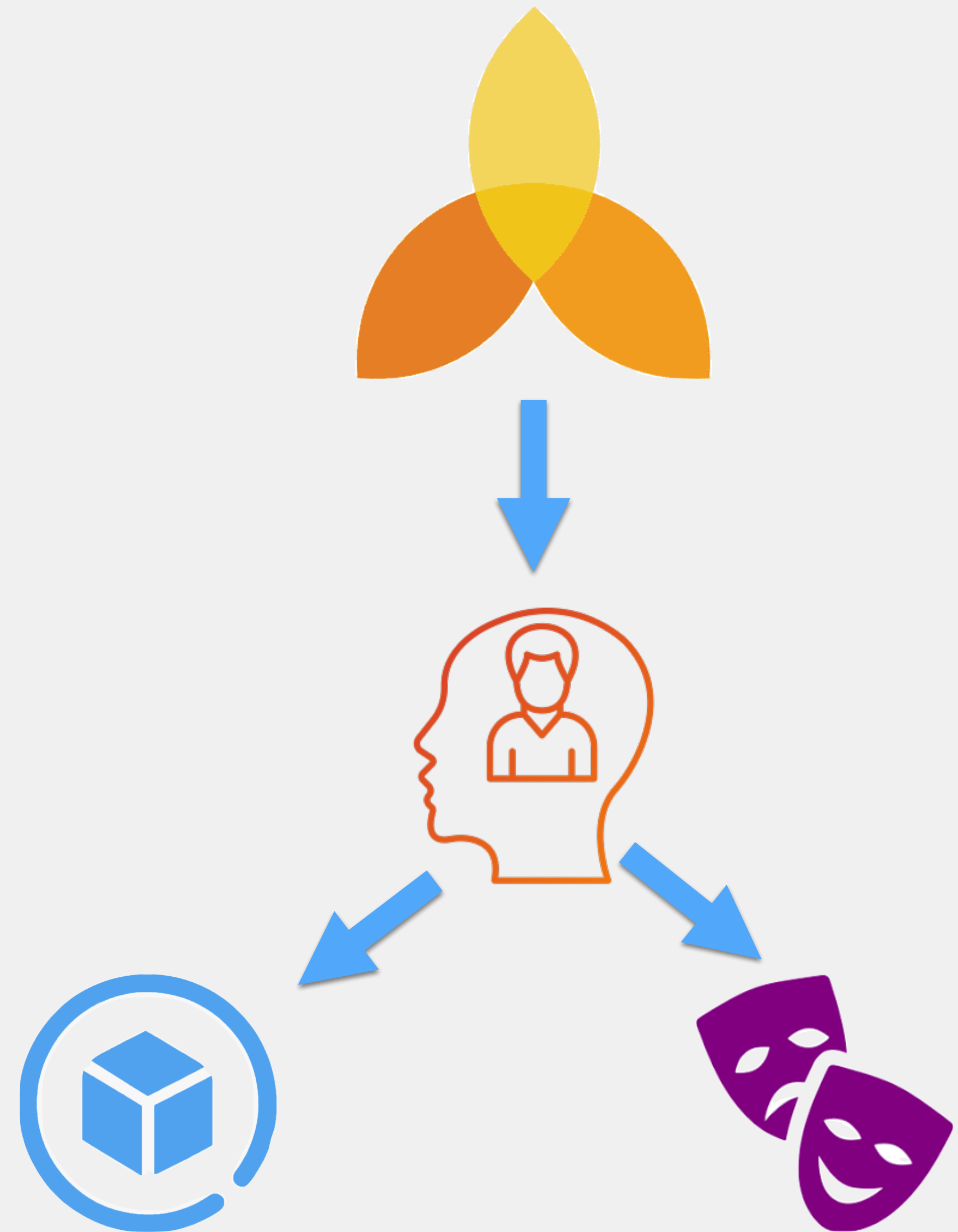
**“All” is the entirety of
the Divine work—
process**



Traditional Methods



Christ's Method



Where did Christ go when he disappeared?

30 After he took his seat at the table with them, he took the bread, blessed and broke it, and gave it to them. 31 Their eyes were opened and they recognized him, but he disappeared from their sight. 32 They said to each other, “Weren’t our hearts on fire when he spoke to us along the road and when he explained the scriptures for us?”



Luke 24: 30-32 (CEB)

Where did Christ go when he disappeared?

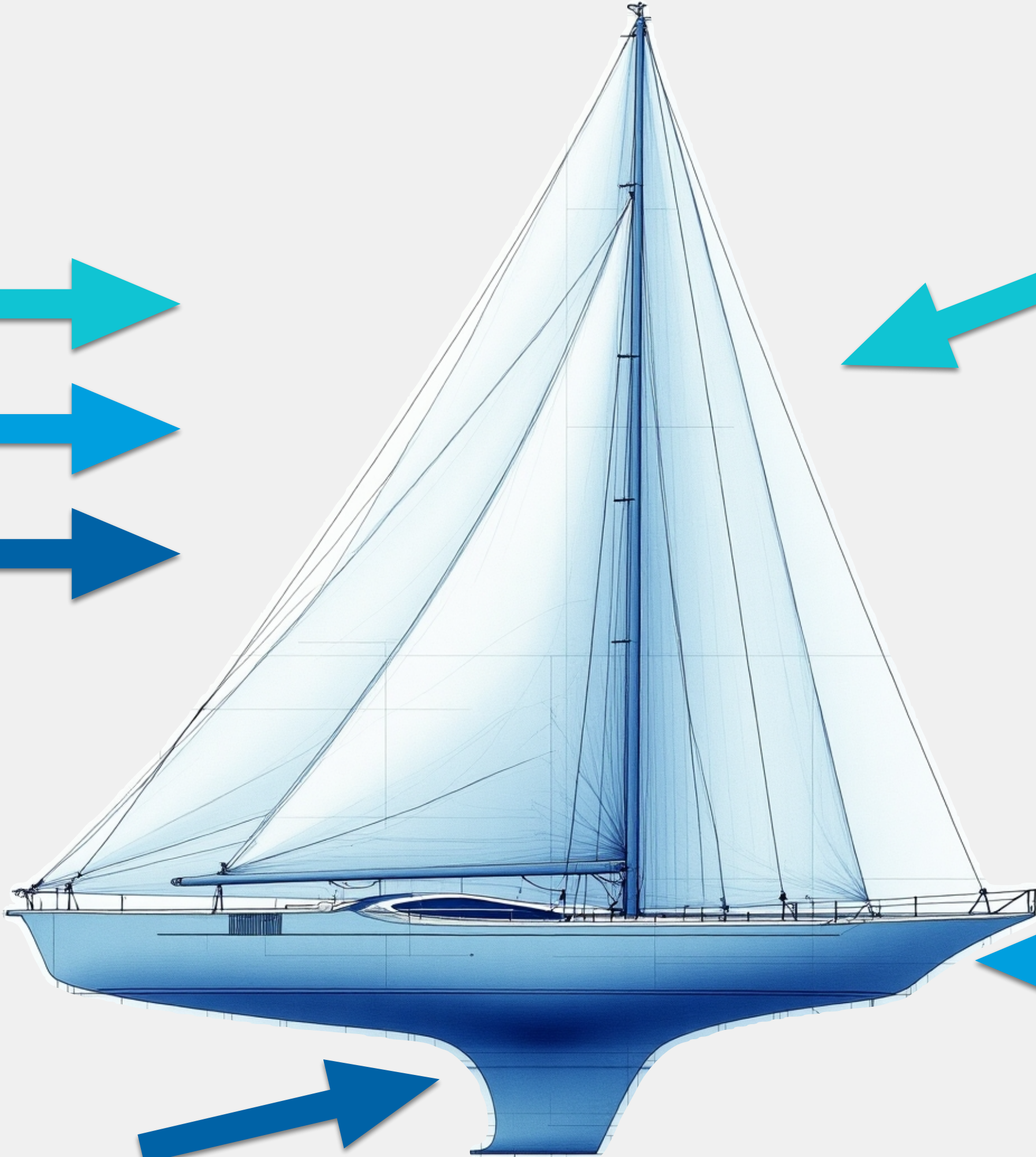
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Luke 24: 30-32 (CEB)

What Floats a Boat?

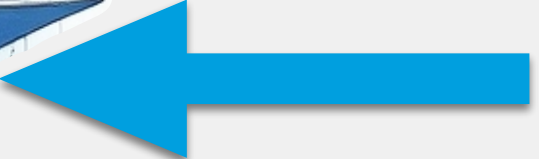
**HOLY
SPIRIT**



**03. COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT:
SAILS**

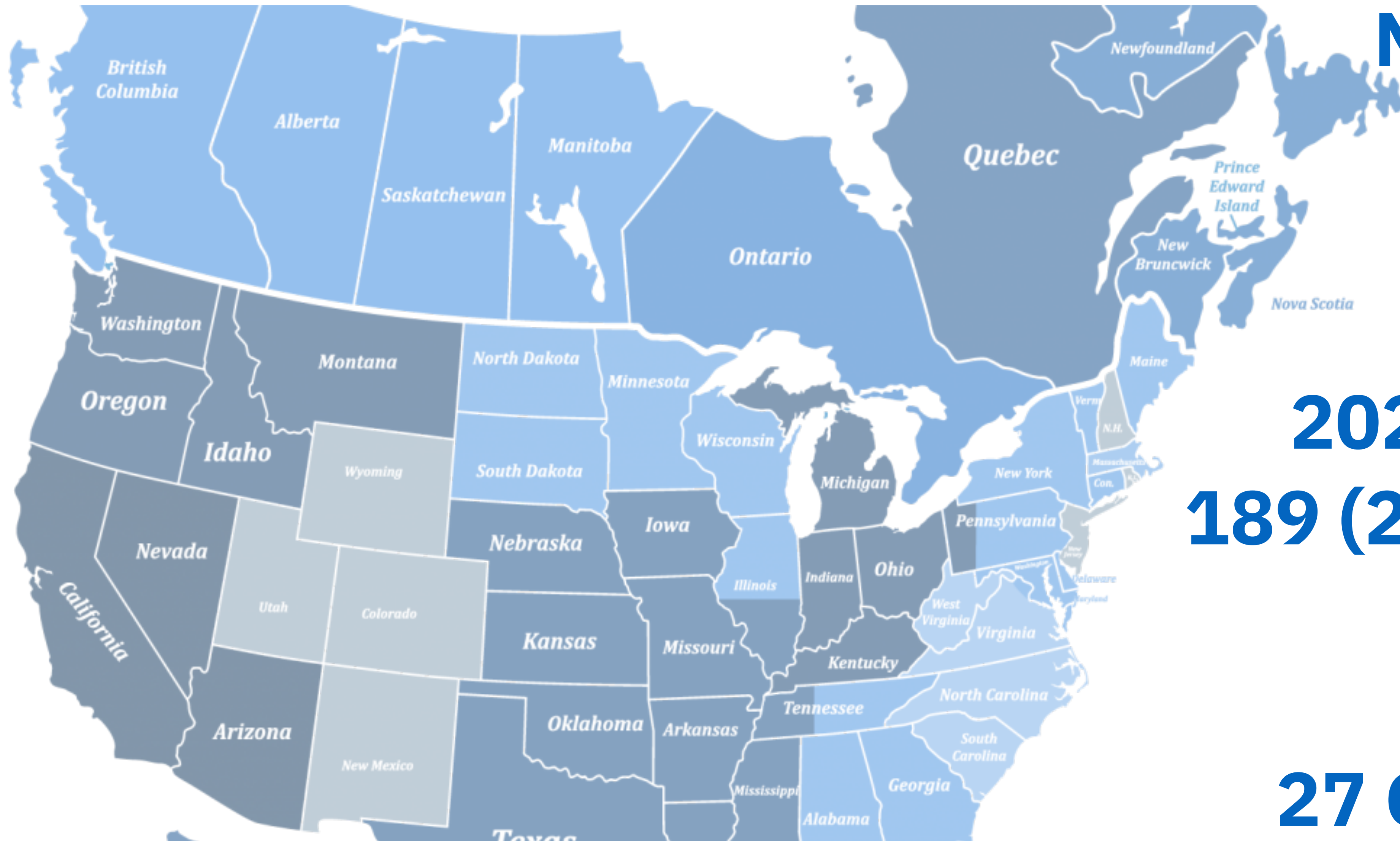


**02. HEALTHY CHURCH:
THE HULL**



01. WHOLE-PERSON CARE OF A PASTOR: THE KEEL





NAD Cohorts

2023: 51

2024: 71

2025: 67 + (32)

**189 (221) Pastors/
Churches**

27 Conferences

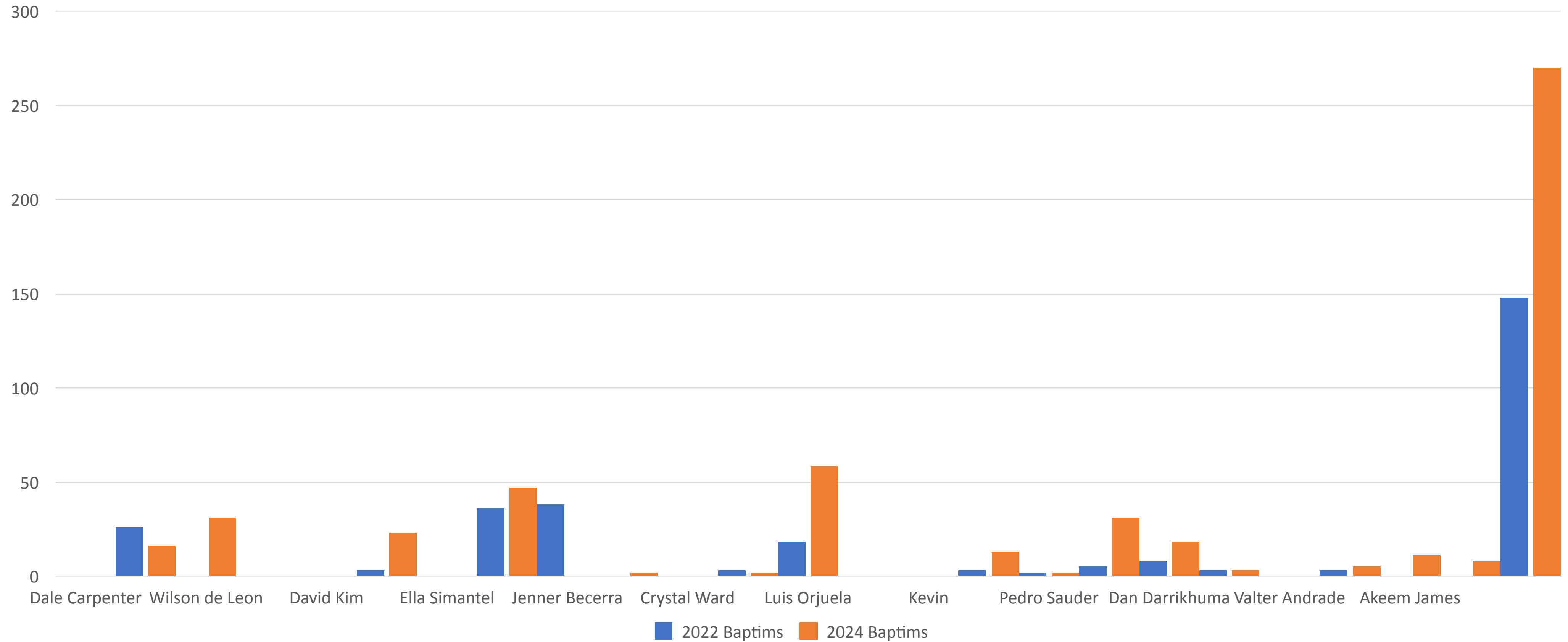
Chesapeake Conference celebrates record-breaking baptisms in 2024

🕒 January 23, 2025 [📁 News](#)

647 new members joined Chesapeake Conference churches in 2024 through baptism/POF, marking a historic milestone



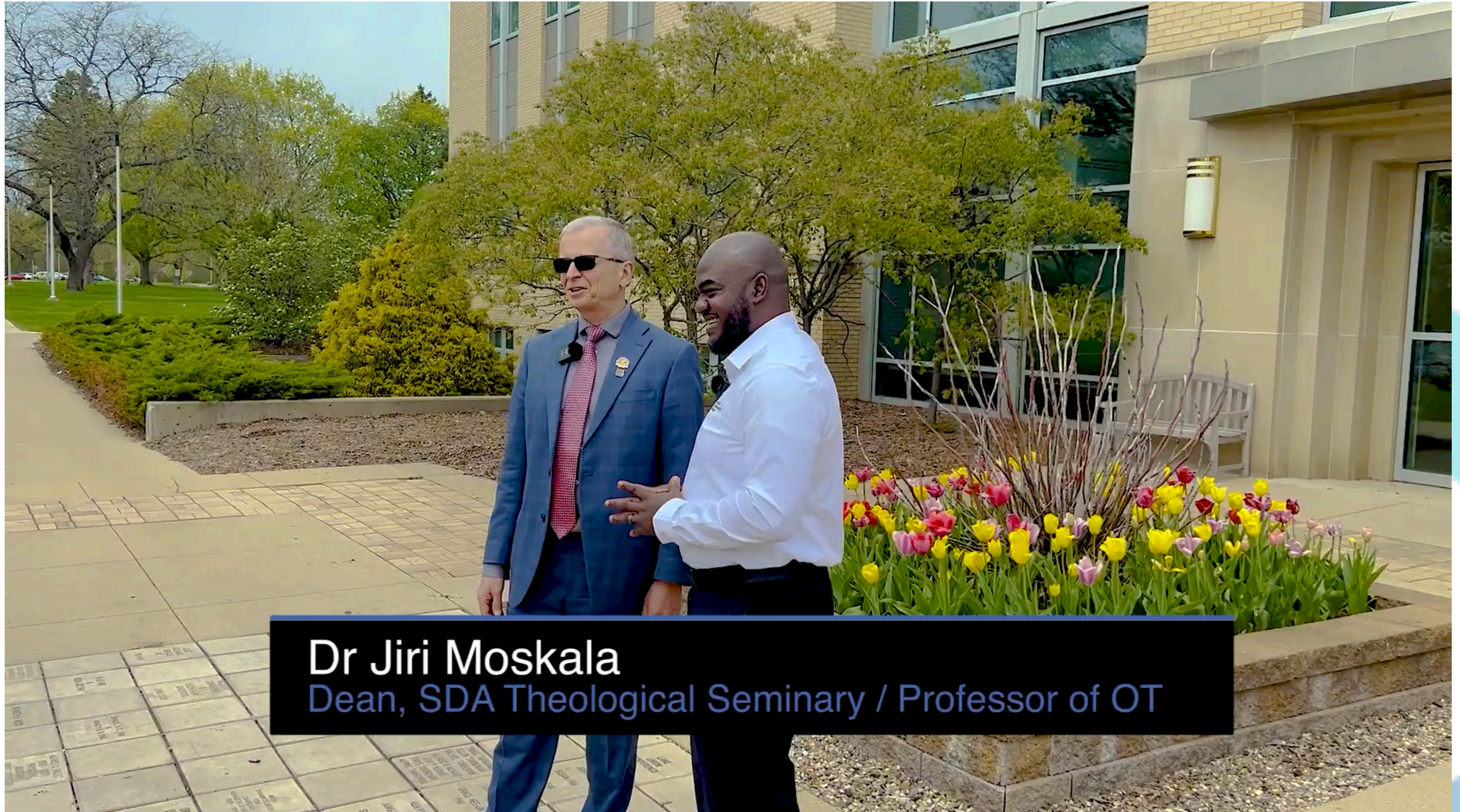
Chesapeake Conference Baptism Impact per Pastor: Total from 148 in 2022 to 270 in 2024



Follow up 2025 analysis by Church/Company: Retention + Stewardship strategies



01. WHOLE-PERSON CARE OF A PASTOR: THE KEEL



Dr Jiri Moskala

Dean, SDA Theological Seminary / Professor of OT



01. WHOLE-PERSON CARE OF A PASTOR: THE KEEL





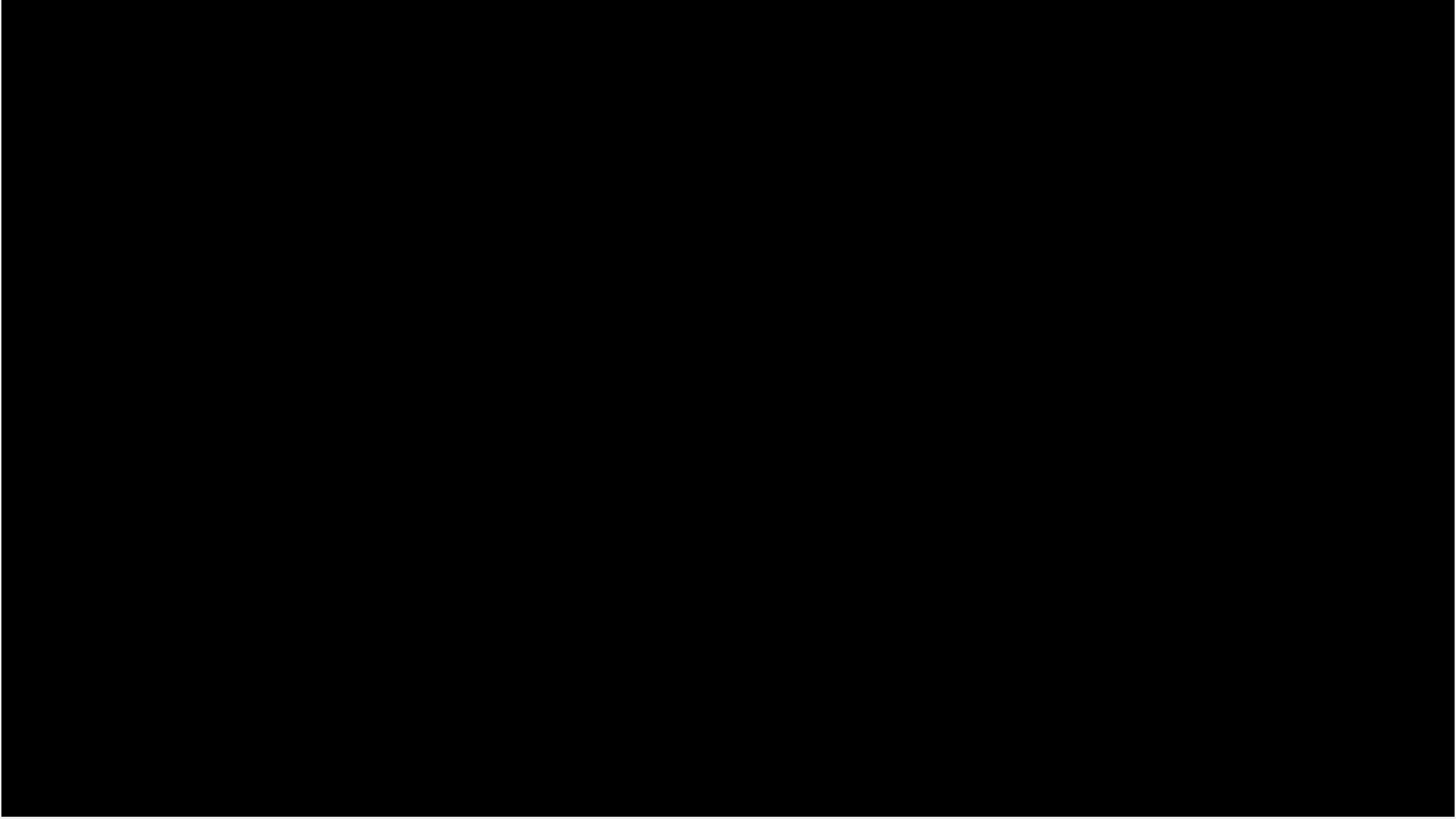
02. HEALTHIER CHURCH: THE HULL





03. COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT: SAILS



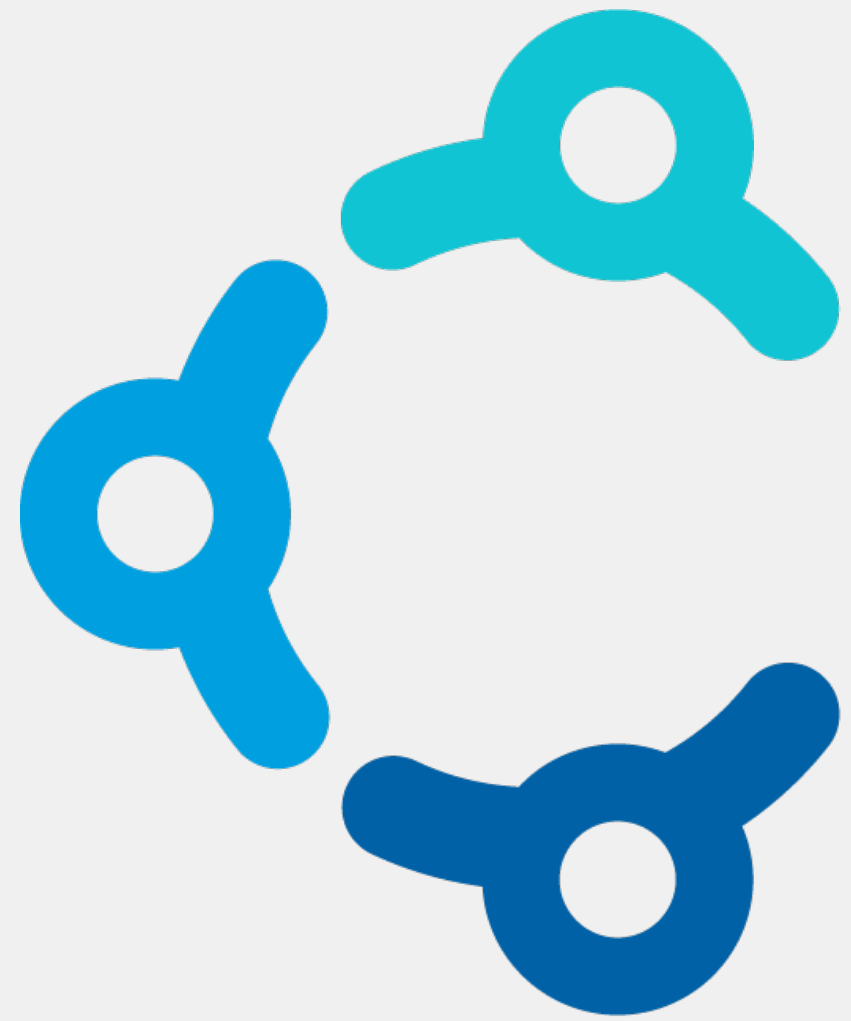


Our Partners



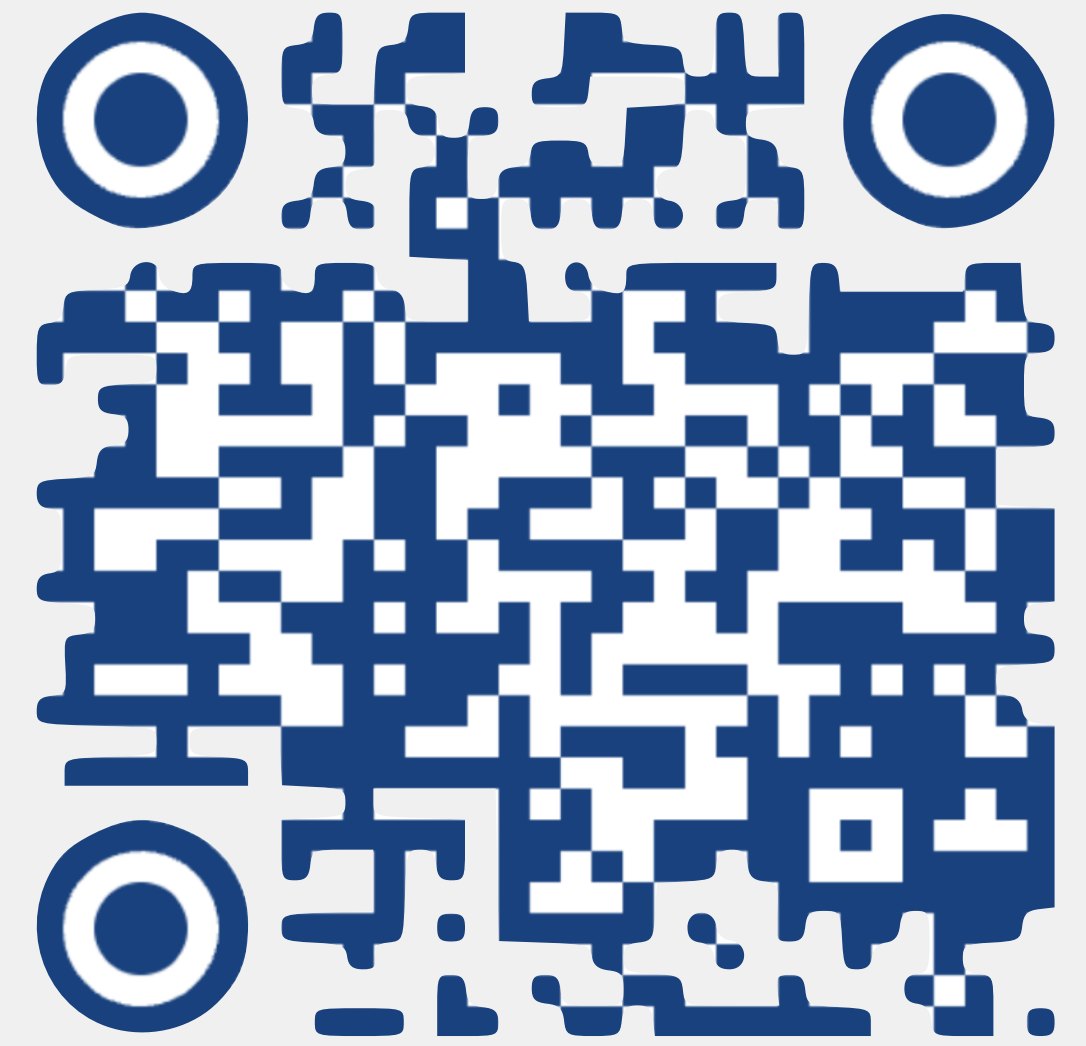
questions?





The Center for Community Change

The Seventh-day Adventist Theological Seminary
at Andrews University



www.communitychange.world