



VIBRANT CONGREGATIONS

Taking Fresh Steps in Ministry and Mission

An Introduction

Our Next Two Days

Goal: Gather Insights to discern God's Best Next Steps for Sharon RCA

1. Our Stories
2. God's Big Story
3. Hearing what God said in prayer
4. Discovering where we are in our lifecycle and why it matters
5. One Page Vision Statement
6. Following God's Call: Exploring our Loves and Joys
7. Vibrant Voices
8. Vibrant Listen
 1. Note: Interactive discovery

Conclusion: What have we learned, discovered...where do we go next?

Our Stories

God calls us — sending us into the world, connecting us to one another and to him.

- An outward story: A story of a time God sent us into the world on God's mission
- An inward story: A story of a time when God called us to connect to one other: raising our children in the faith, helping people grow in discipleship, or building loving relationships
- An upward story: A story of a time God called us to connect more deeply with him: his word impacted us as a congregation, a time when worship was particularly transforming
- A Timeline Story: How Sharon Reformed Church interacted with Sharon Springs historically.

Holy Indifference

- What I already know
- Set it aside for the moment to listen to the community's insights

Rooted in God's Big Story

God's Big Story

Story teaches us facts about the world; influences our moral logic; and marks us with fears, hopes, and anxieties that alter our behavior. . . . Research shows that story is constantly nibbling and kneading us, shaping our mind without our knowledge or consent. The more deeply we are cast under a story's spell, the more potent its influence.

Jonathan Gottsall says in *The Storytelling Animal: How Stories Make Us Human*

God's Big Story

The more deeply we are cast under a story's spell, the more potent its influence.

What story deeply influences your congregation?

- The story of loss
- The story of conspiracy
- The story of materialism
- The story of being bigger
- The story of being right
- The story of if we just had _____ everything would be great

What's the story that has you under its influence?

God's Big Story

The more deeply we are cast under a story's spell, the more potent its influence.

- Followers of Jesus long to under the influence of a certain story. A story that we proclaim is the one true story of the whole world.
- A story that is the Big Story under which all other stories live and by which all other stories are held in account.
- The Big Story: is a story of wonder, hope, despair and finally renewal.
 - A strange story: evil cosmic powers, miracles, resurrection etc.



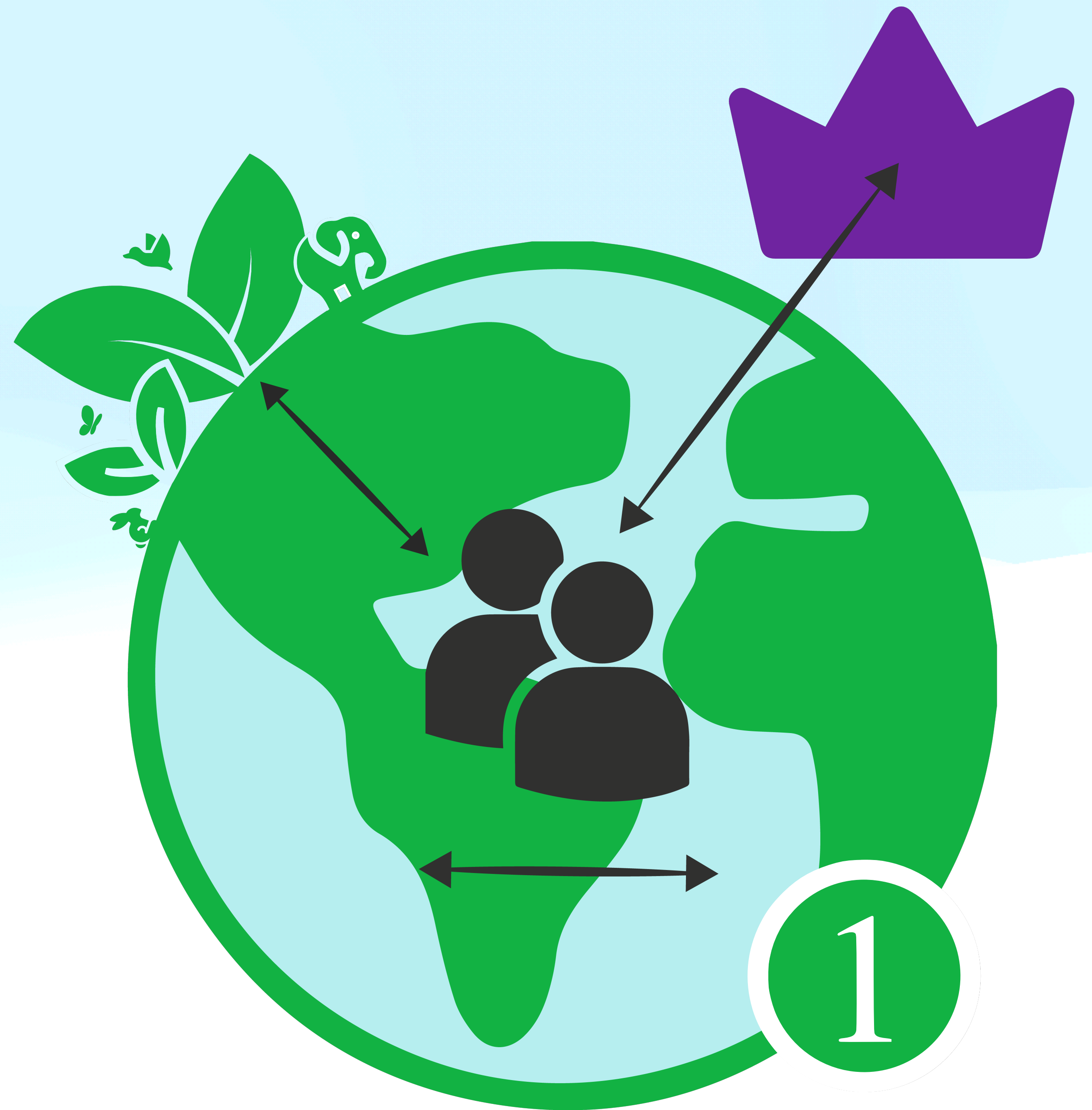
THE BIG STORY

UNFOLDS IN SIX ACTS



ACT ONE

The loving king,
God, establishes
his kingdom





ACT TWO

Rebellion in the
Kingdom

ACT THREE

The Loving and
Gracious King
chooses Israel





ACT FOUR

Jesus comes
as King



The Bible tells the story of the cosmic renewal of all of human life in the context of the nonhuman creation.

- At the center of this cosmic story is a chosen community called to embody the end of the story.
- All people are personally invited into and within that community to participate in the cosmic salvation of the biblical story and to play their role as part of the community to make it known
- Faithfulness to the biblical story means that one moves precisely in that order: cosmic, communal, personal.

ACT FOUR

- Leslie
Newbigin

Jesus
comes as
King

ACT FIVE

Spreading the
King's Good
News



ACT FIVE

Spreading the Good News
The church is nothing less than the new
humankind incorporated into Christ, a sign and
foretaste of the coming kingdom.

- As the one new humankind, the church cannot be reduced to a religious body that carries out religious rituals.
- The mistake of the enemies of the early church is that they classified the people of God as private religious communities concerned with individual and otherworldly salvation. It was precisely the concern to maintain the public nature of the church as the new humankind that led them to adopt the word ekklesia. Newbegin



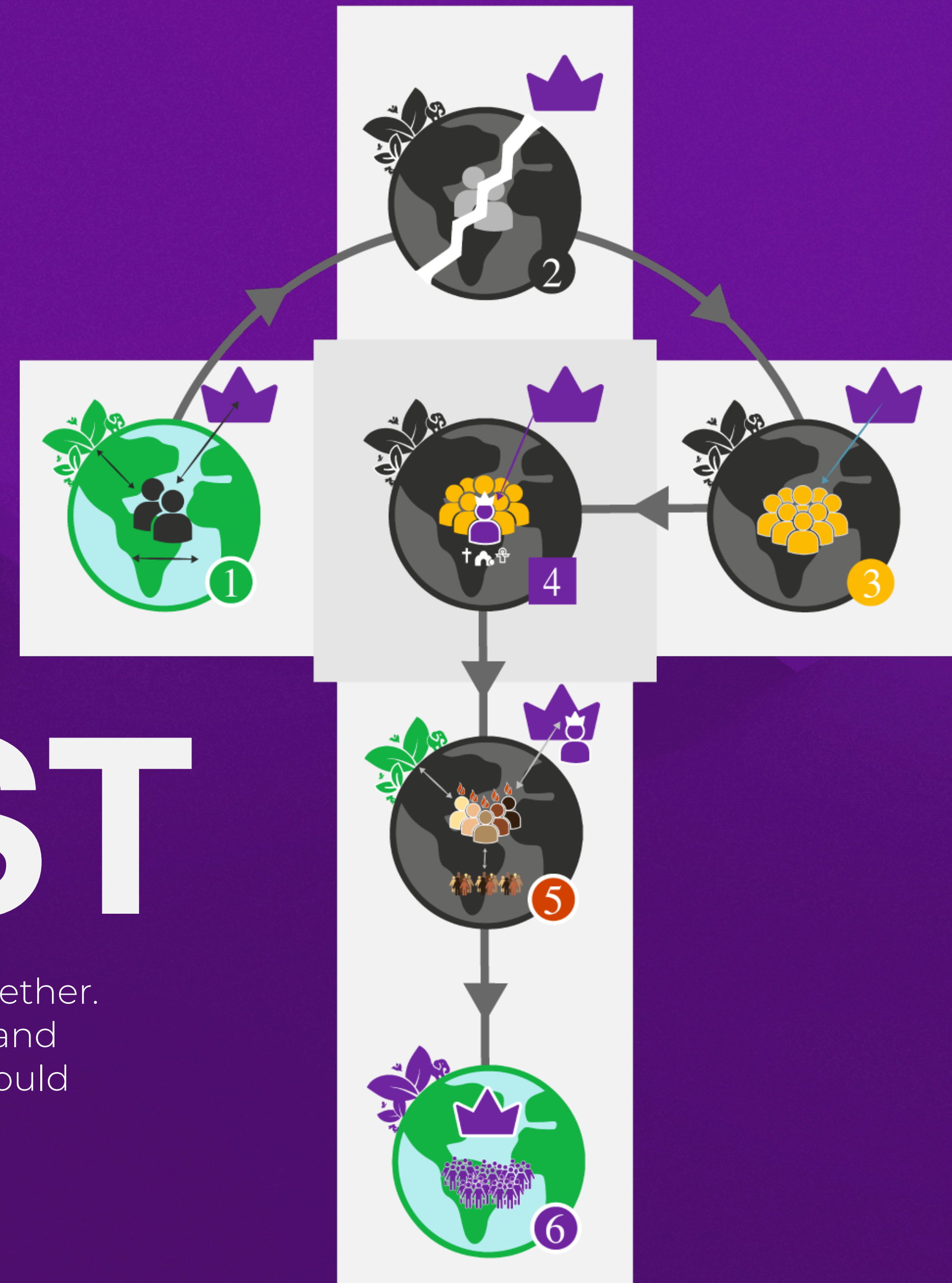


ACT SIX

The Return of
the King

THE CROSS OF CHRIST

The death of Jesus on the cross connects the entire story together. Without Jesus' death on the cross that defeated the powers and his coming to life three days later in the resurrection there would be no big story.





Becoming a Part of God's Big Story

Why the big story matters

What story we tell matters for it shapes the way we live in the world. The BIG STORY shapes our mission, our ministry and our lives as a community of faith and as we step into the world.



What we will do: Vibrant Hear

1. Pray
2. Focus Questions
3. Find Common Themes
4. Have Conversation
 1. Common themes
 2. Outliers
 3. What we need to pay attention to
5. Next

Pray

Focus us on God and our God-given, hope-filled future

Pray

Glory to you, God, in the highest and on earth peace, and good will among all. We praise you, we bless you, we worship you. We glorify you, and we give you thanks for your great glory: Lord, the heavenly King, Lord, the only begotten Son, Jesus Christ, and the Holy Spirit.

Receive our prayer, you who sit at the right hand of the Father, and have mercy on us; for you alone are holy, you alone are Lord, Jesus Christ, to the glory of the Father.

Amen

Pray

Lord have mercy, Christ have mercy, Lord have Mercy.

May Almighty God have mercy on us, forgive us our sins, through Jesus Christ our Lord, and strengthen us to live in the power of the Holy Spirit, all our days. Amen.

Pray

Almighty God, Father, Son and Holy Spirit, You reach into the darkness with hope, truth and light. Stretch out your strong hand in our world that longs for hope. Let your almighty love move mountains, cross seas and breathe life into the darkest places.

Light that redeems.

Light that restores.

Light that heals.

Light that protects.

Light that saves.

There is nothing higher, stronger or greater than your love in Jesus Christ. We trust in you. Amen.

Pray

Almighty God, You are author of life. We are in awe of your creation. The vast oceans reflect your majesty. The ever changing skies renew our lands. The deep valleys carry your peace and shelter. You are Savior of the world. We are amazed at your grace. The nations find peace in your forgiveness. The sufferer hope in your healing hands. The burdened rest in your promise of heaven. You are unconditional love. We are privileged to be filled by your presence. The youth are filled with your vision. The old are filled with your wisdom. The oppressed are unchained by your freedom. Almighty God, Father, Son and Spirit We worship you!

Imagine being...

1. A church that loves her enemies
2. A church faithful in suffering
3. A church shaped by the name
4. A church that has a good year
5. A church that is [in]complete
6. A church on mission
7. A church out of control

Sticky Notes

1. What are two things you discovered in prayer?
2. What's one way the Spirit prompted you to imagine differently about Sharon RCA?
3. What's one thing that resonated with you in your time of prayer?
4. What's one thing you are wondering about?

Thoughts/Reflections

Vibrant Congregations

Taking fresh steps in
ministry and mission





VIBRANT CONGREGATIONS

Taking Fresh Steps in Ministry and Mission

Next — Church Lifecycle

In the Right Seat



In the Right Seat



Vision

A clear and compelling statement of God's hope-filled future for our congregation. This vision is known, central to the life of the congregation, and owned by the congregation.

In the Right Seat



Relationships

The relational process by which people become followers of Jesus, are continually discipled as part of a local community of Jesus, and utilize their gifts and skills in the church gathered and scattered.

In the Right Seat



Programs

Providing organized ministries for people connected to the congregation to nurture others and be nurtured in their faith. These programs focus on both word and deed—with the goal of strengthening relationships and moving the vision forward.

In the Right Seat



Management

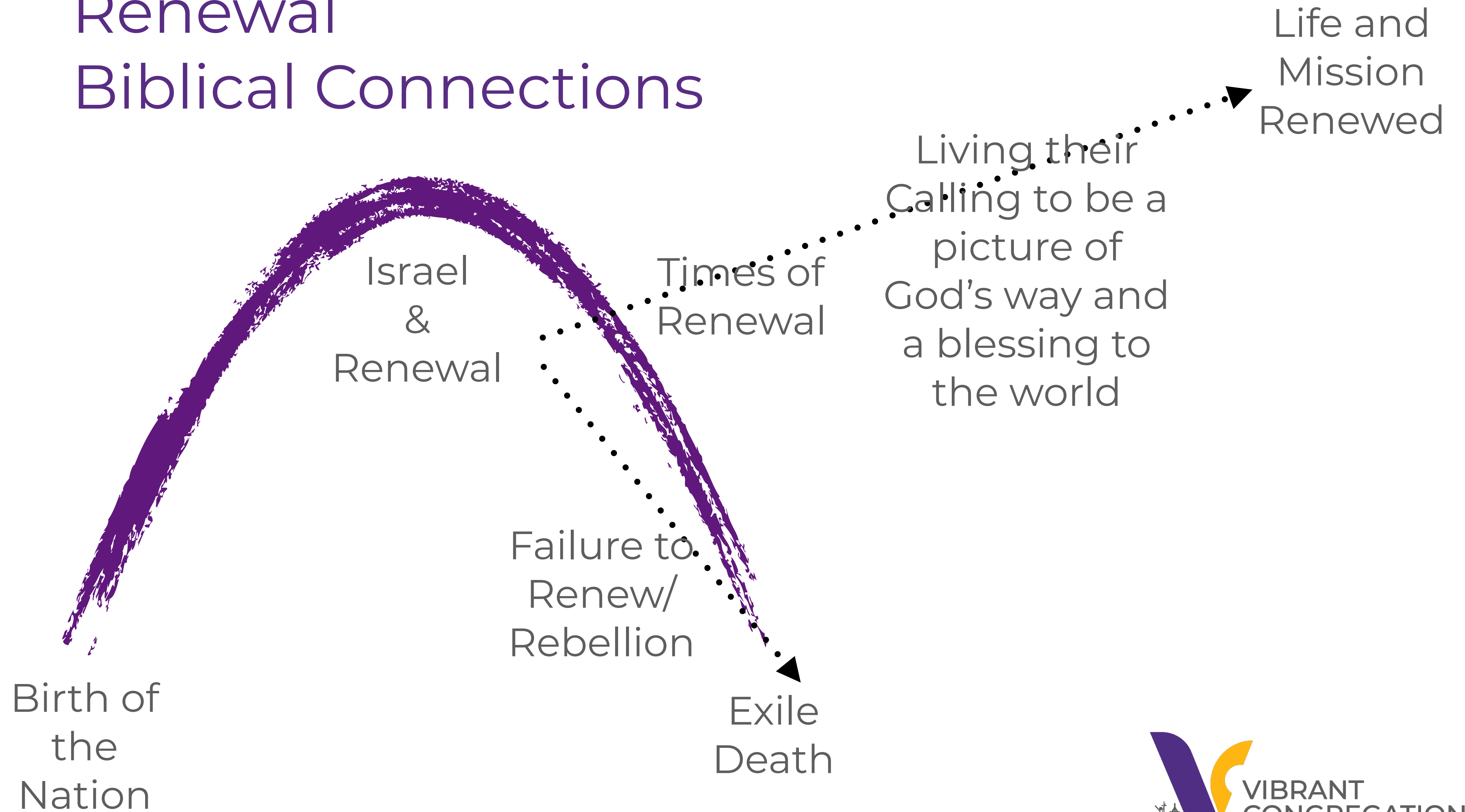
How decisions are made, resources are allocated, the formal and informal culture of the congregation, and the openness of the congregation to change and grow

In the Right Seat

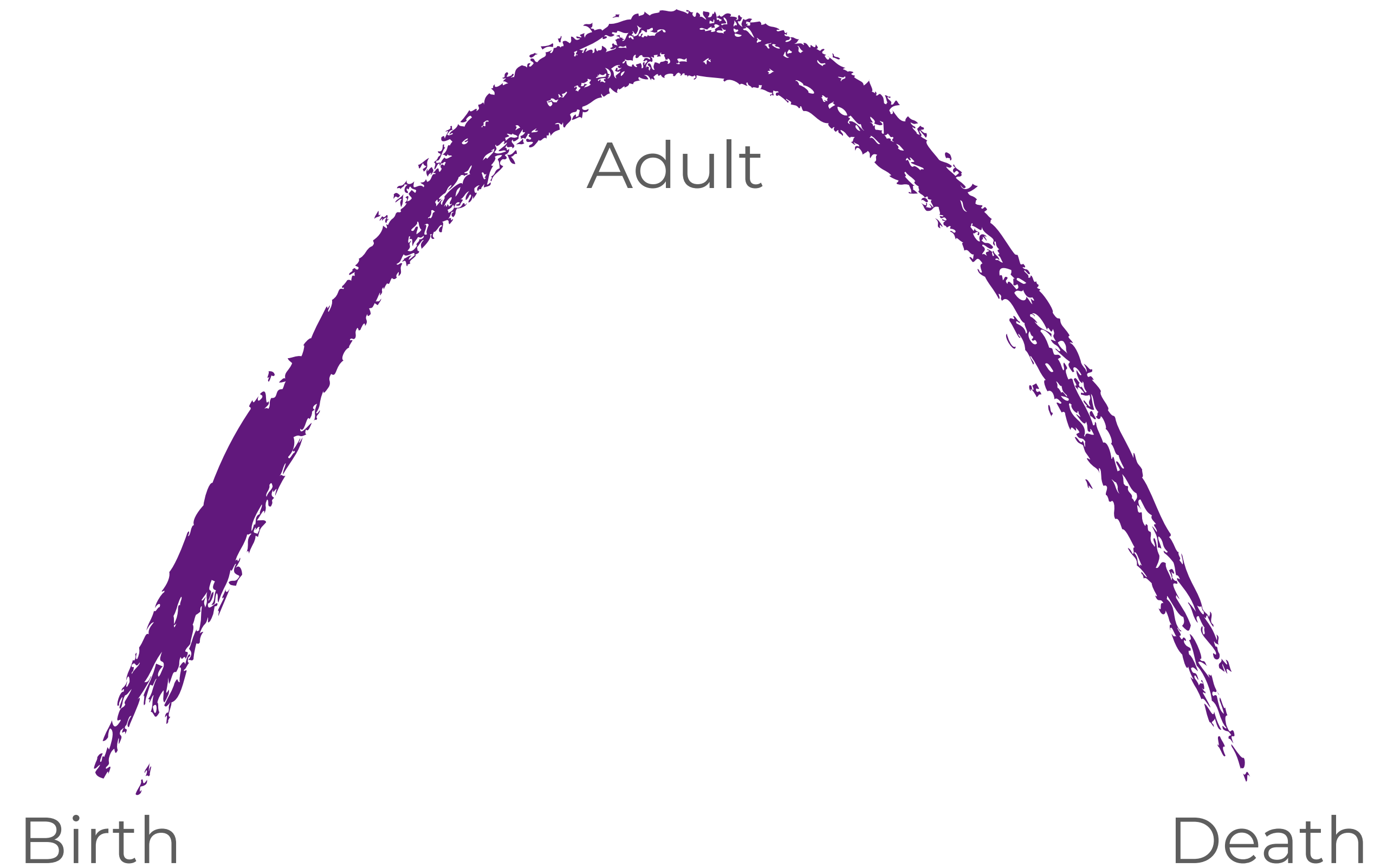


The Church Lifecycle

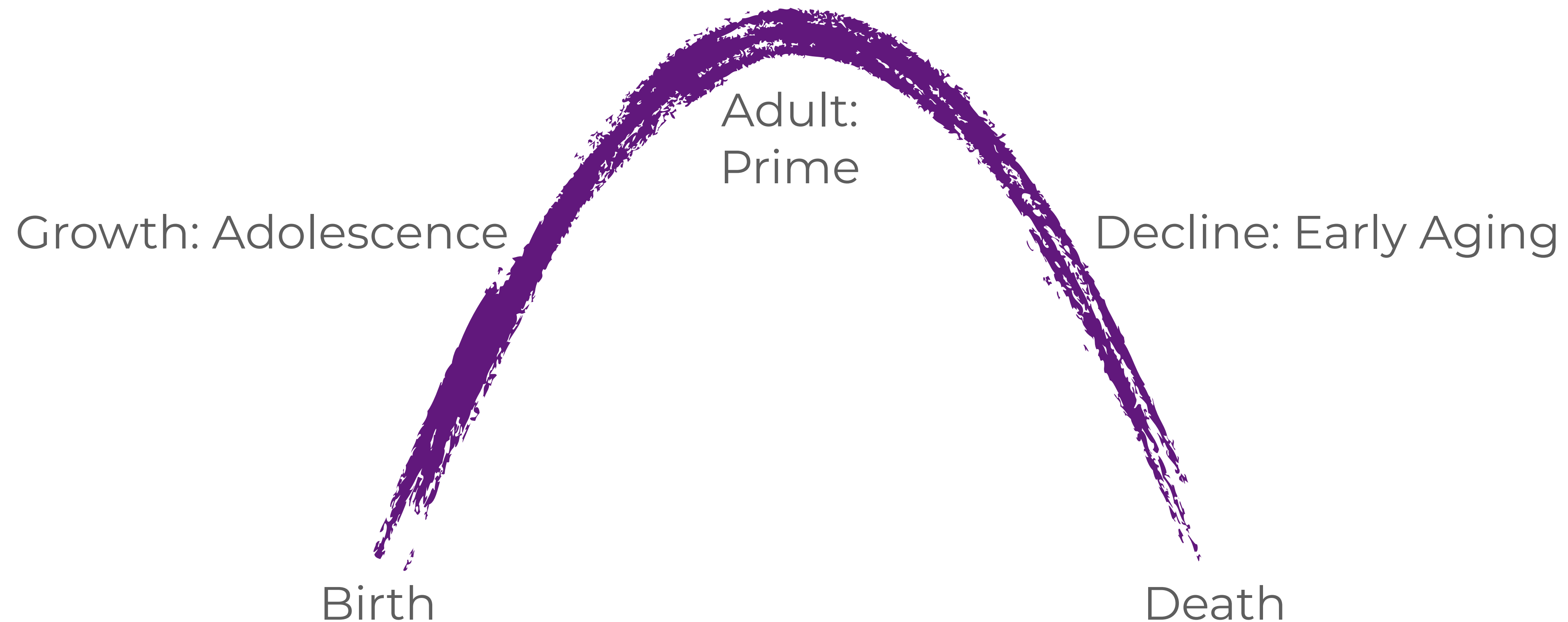
Renewal Biblical Connections



The Church Lifecycle



The Church Lifecycle: No Renewal

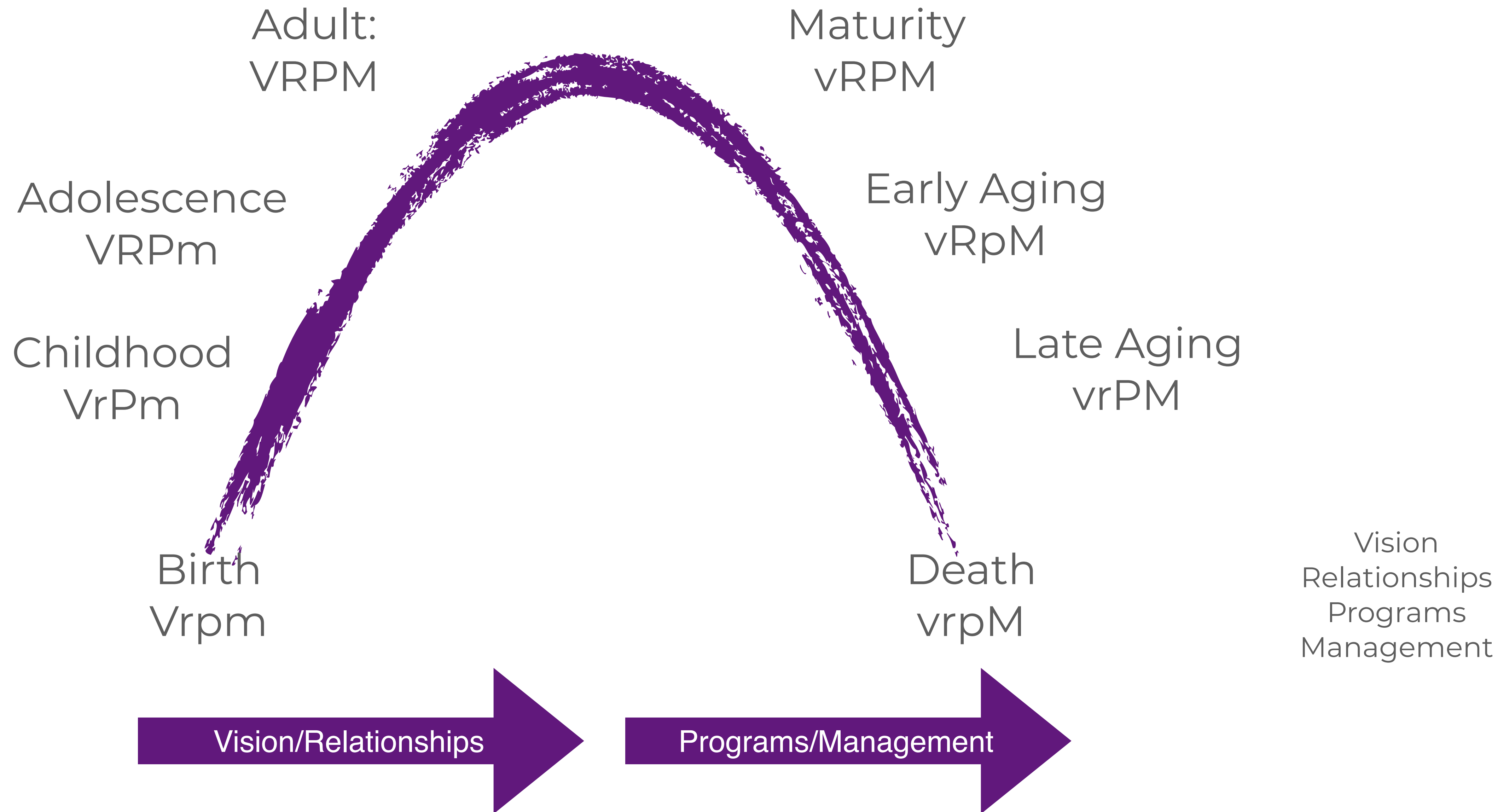


Congregational Life

Four Parts of Congregational Life VRPM

Vision	Relationship/ Inclusion	Program	Management
Mission	With God	Ministries	Administration
Dream	With Others	Worship	Policies
Energy	Assimilation	Outreach	Resource allocation
Purpose	Discipleship	Activities	Decision-making
Core Values	Evangelism	Education	Staffing Choices

The Church Lifecycle: No Renewal



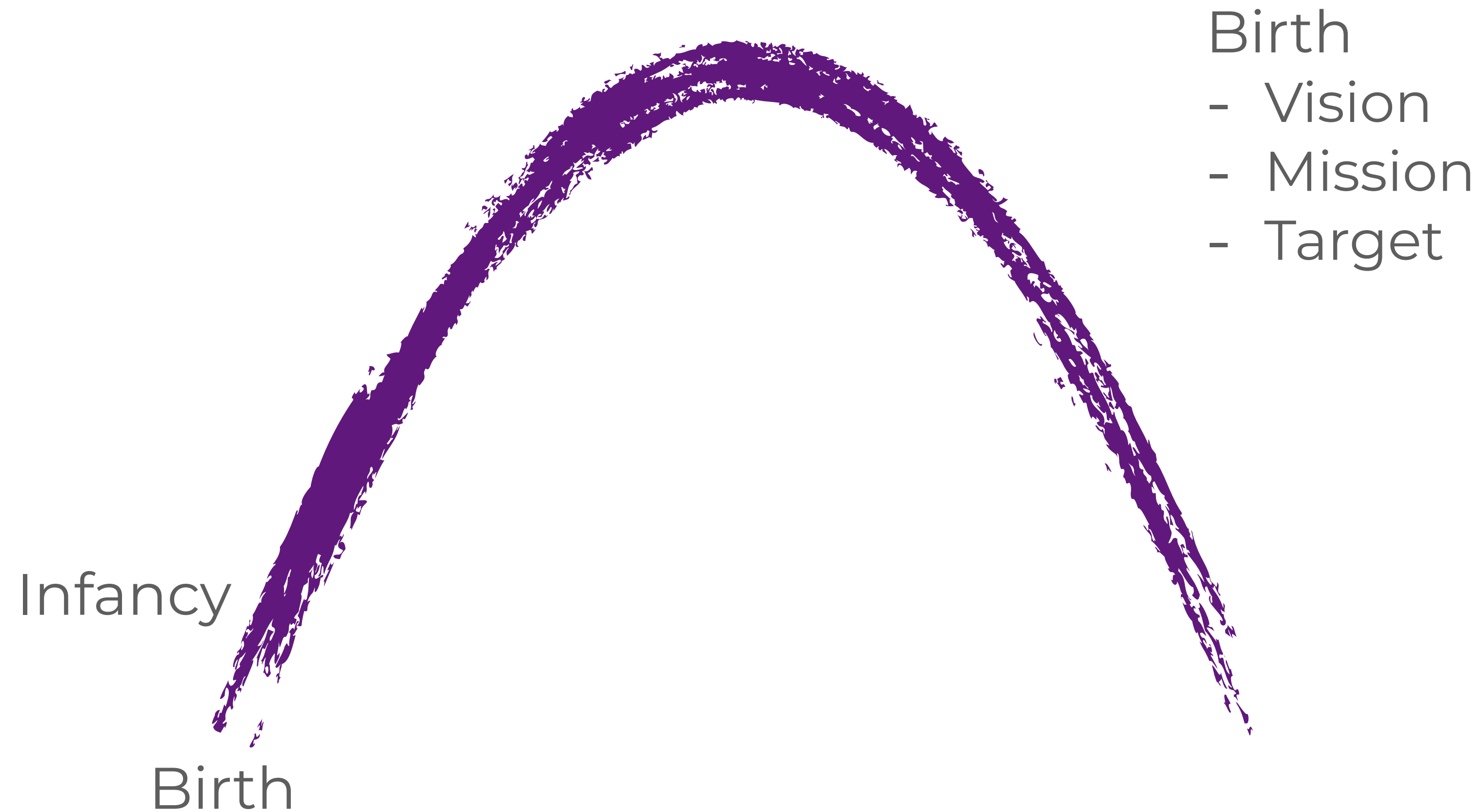
The Church Lifecycle

Naming Reality

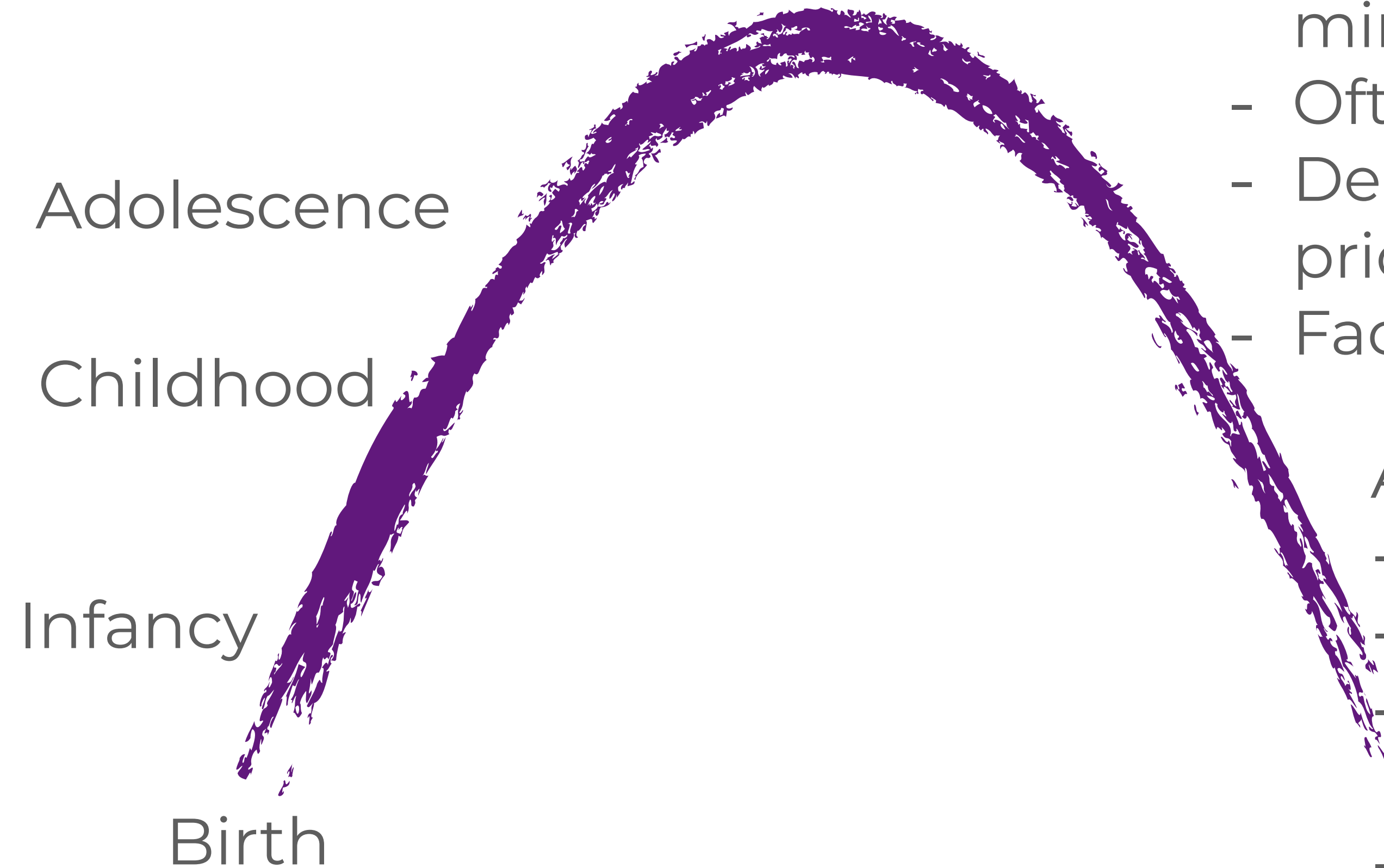
Churches often underestimate

1. The level of decline
2. How much change is required to put the church on the growth side of the lifecycle

The Church Lifecycle



The Church Lifecycle



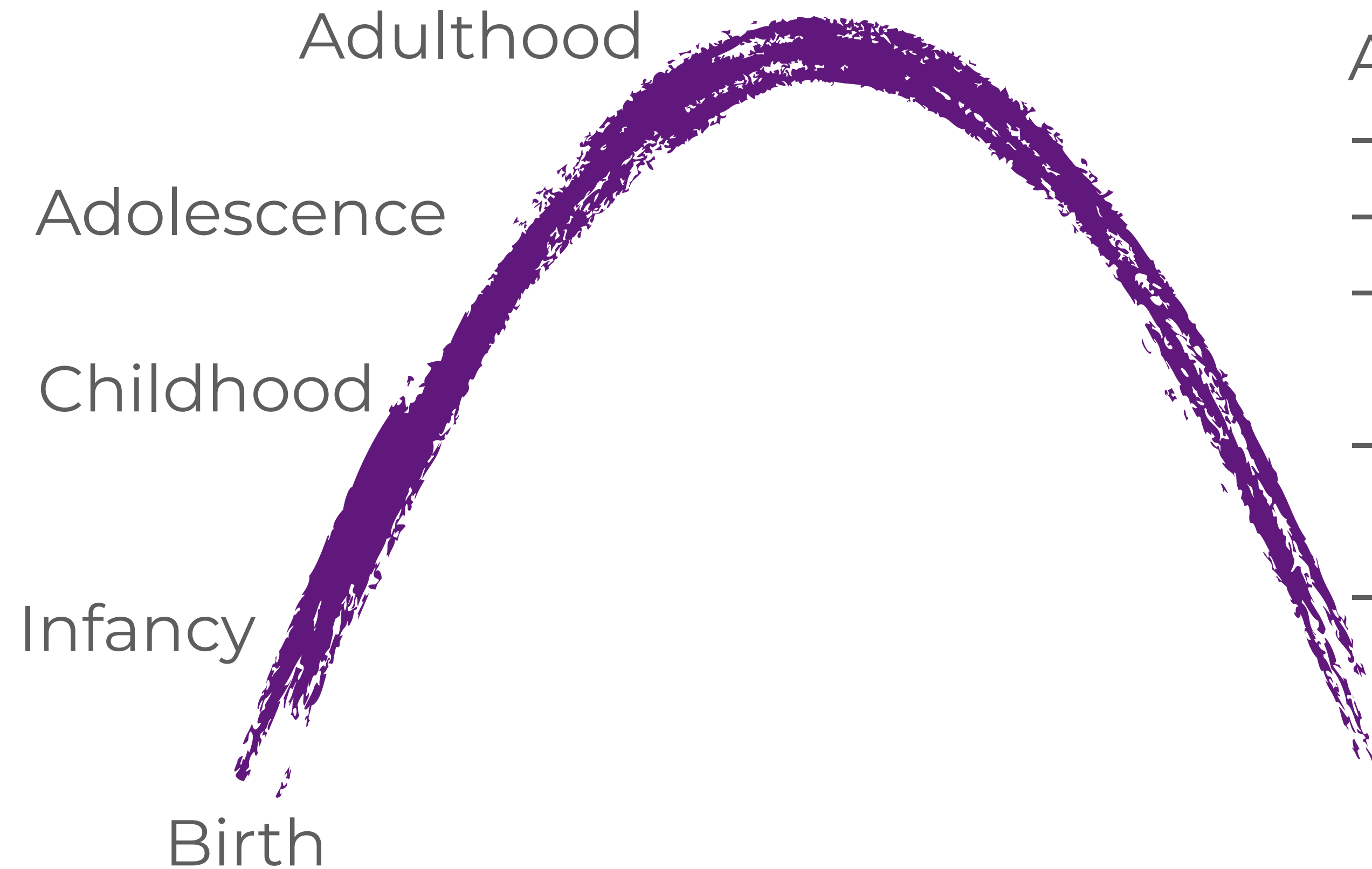
Childhood

- Broadening scale of programs, ministries and activities
- Often focus on ministry to 0-18
- Decisions on staffing and staff priorities
- Facilities

Adolescence

- VRPm
- Live out vision & target
- To fulfill vision higher quality and quantity of ministry
- Awkward transitions
- Management

The Church Lifecycle



Adulthood

- VRPM all fully developed
- Highest worship attendance
- new members equal those leaving
- Spiritual growth throughout congregation
- People are overwhelmingly positive and feel good about the church

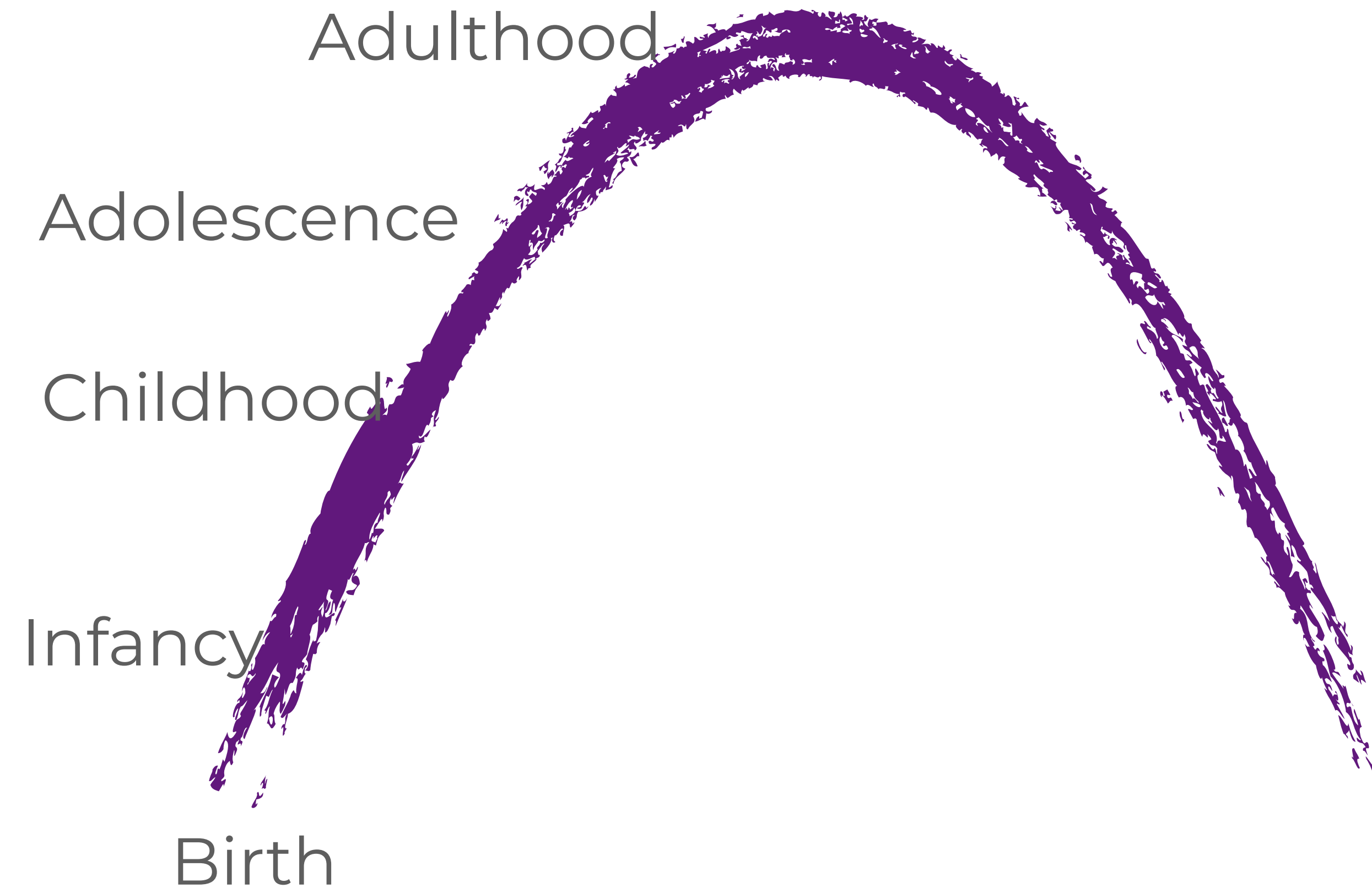
The Church Lifecycle



Pause

- The importance of beginning now to think about the next phase of Vision and Mission
- Decline follows this high point if nothing is done
- Vision & Relationships will be moved to back seat

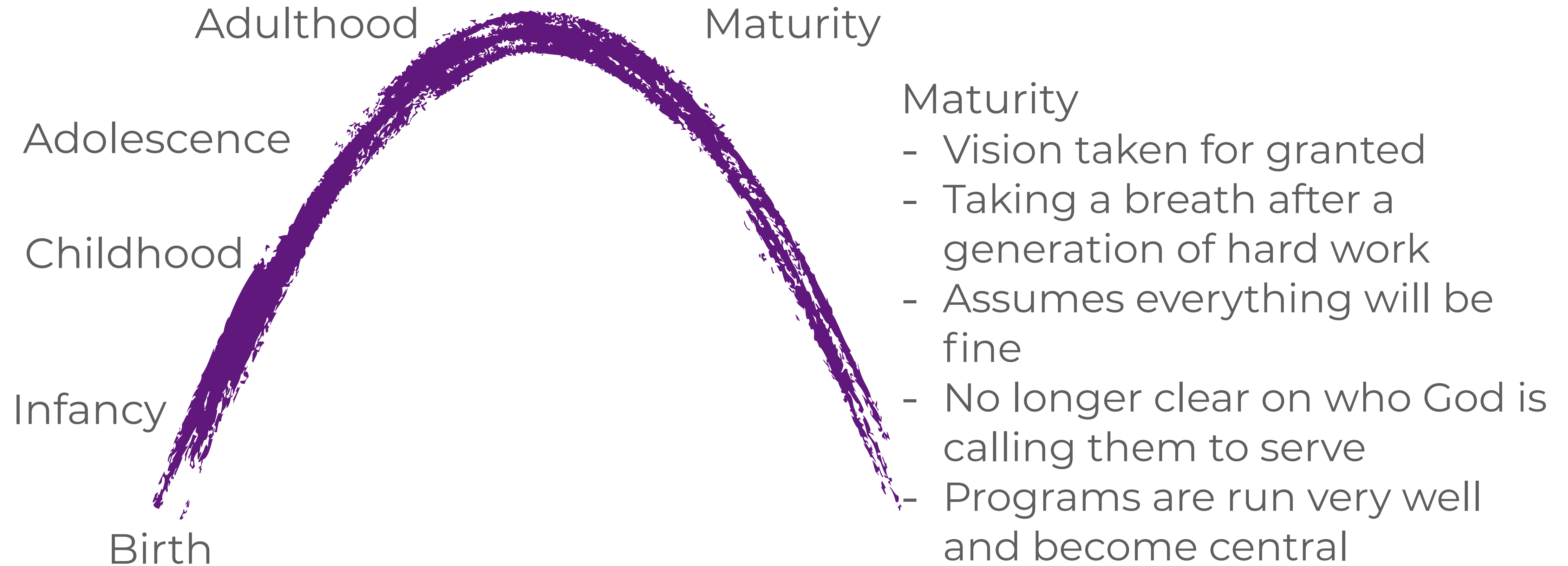
The Church Lifecycle



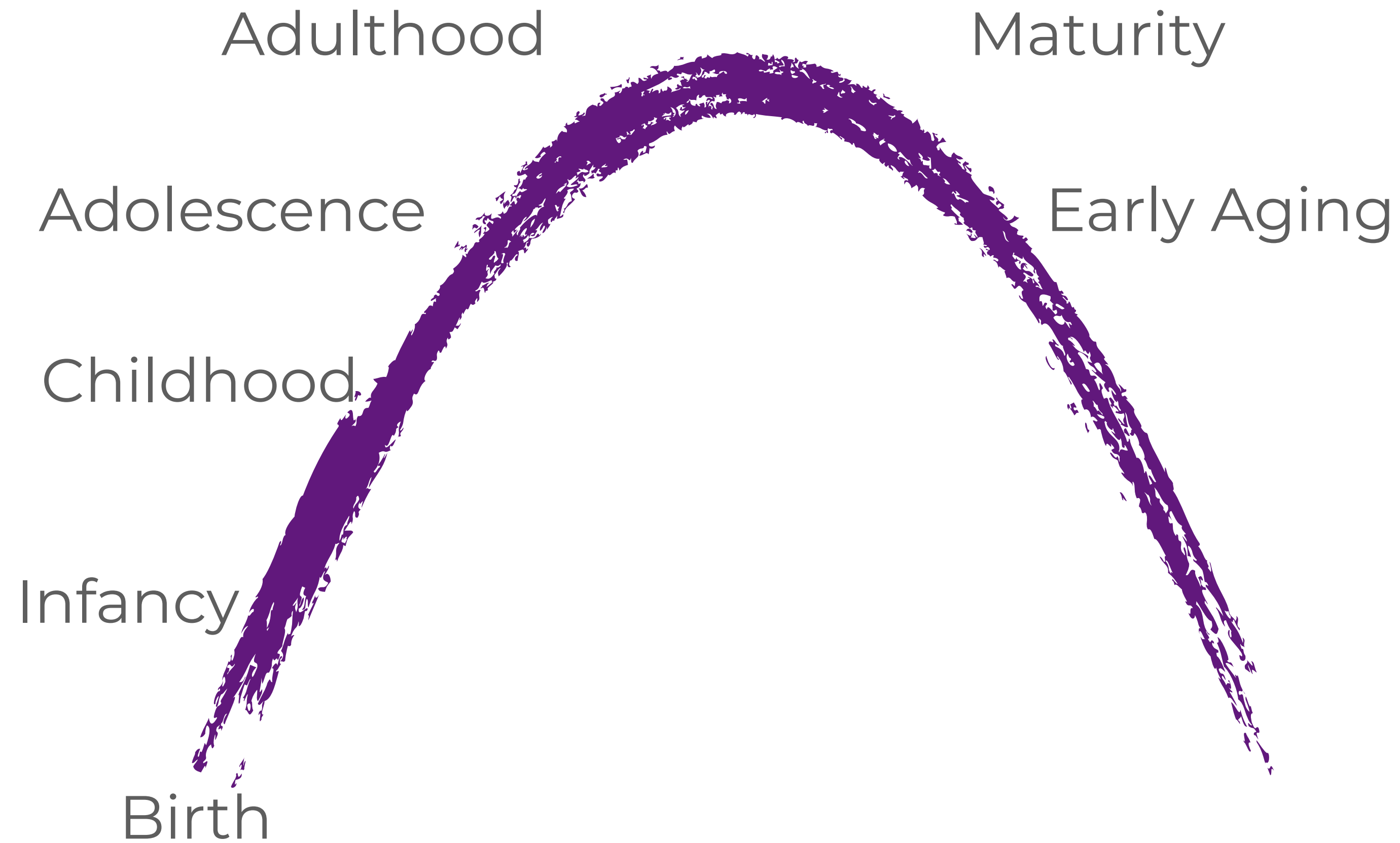
Naming Reality

- Once a ministry is in decline there is still the possibility of new life —- but the cost is greater

The Church Lifecycle



The Church Lifecycle



Early Aging

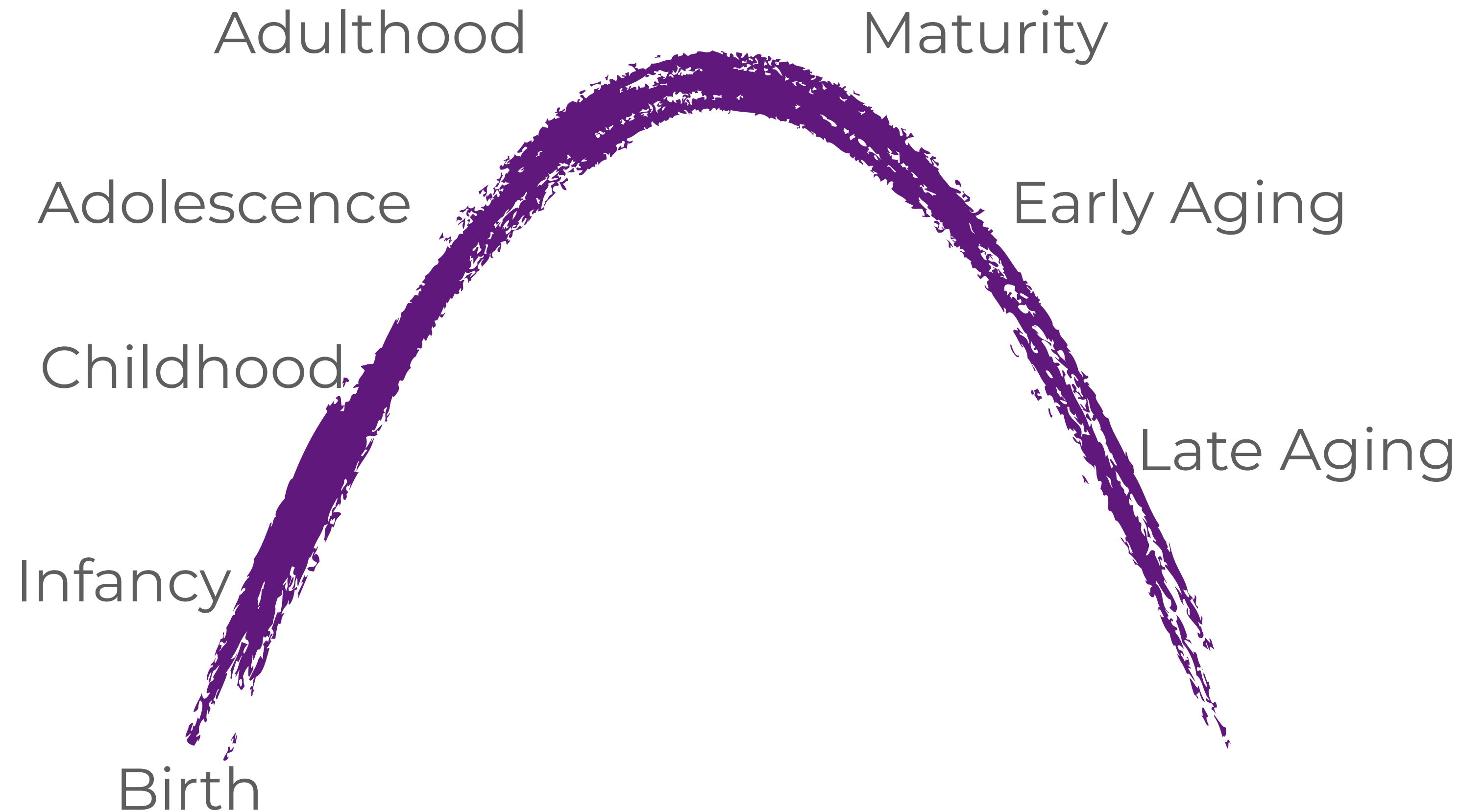
- No empowering vision
- Seeks to hold on to past gains by empowering management systems
- Management controls the direction of the congregation

In the Right Seat



Vision	Relationship/ Inclusion	Program	Management
Mission	With God	Ministries	Administration
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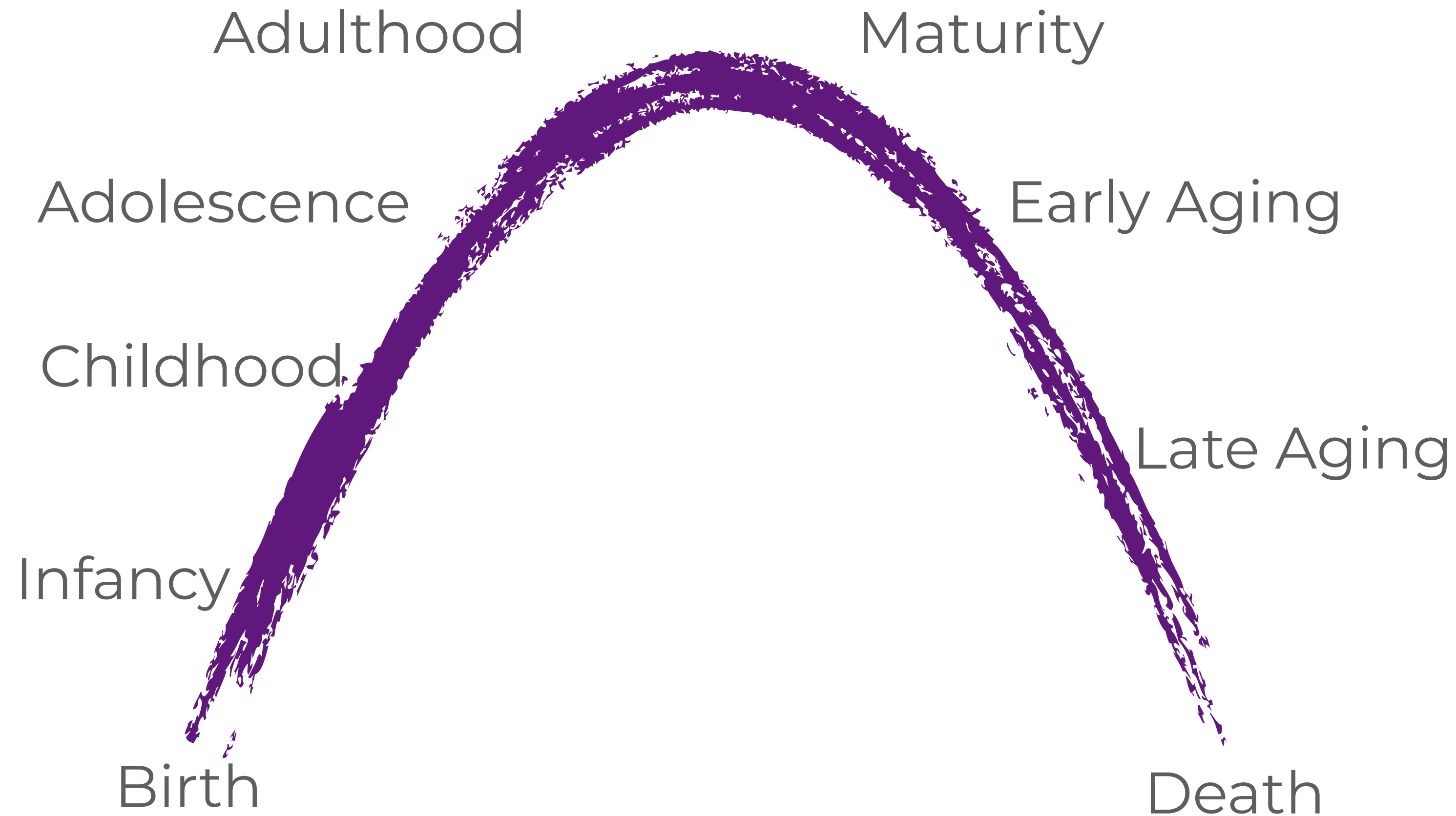
The Church Lifecycle



Late Aging

- Despair sets in
- Don't believe our church is a good place to invite people
- Hesitant in Ministry to those outside the congregation
- Programs and Management are dominant

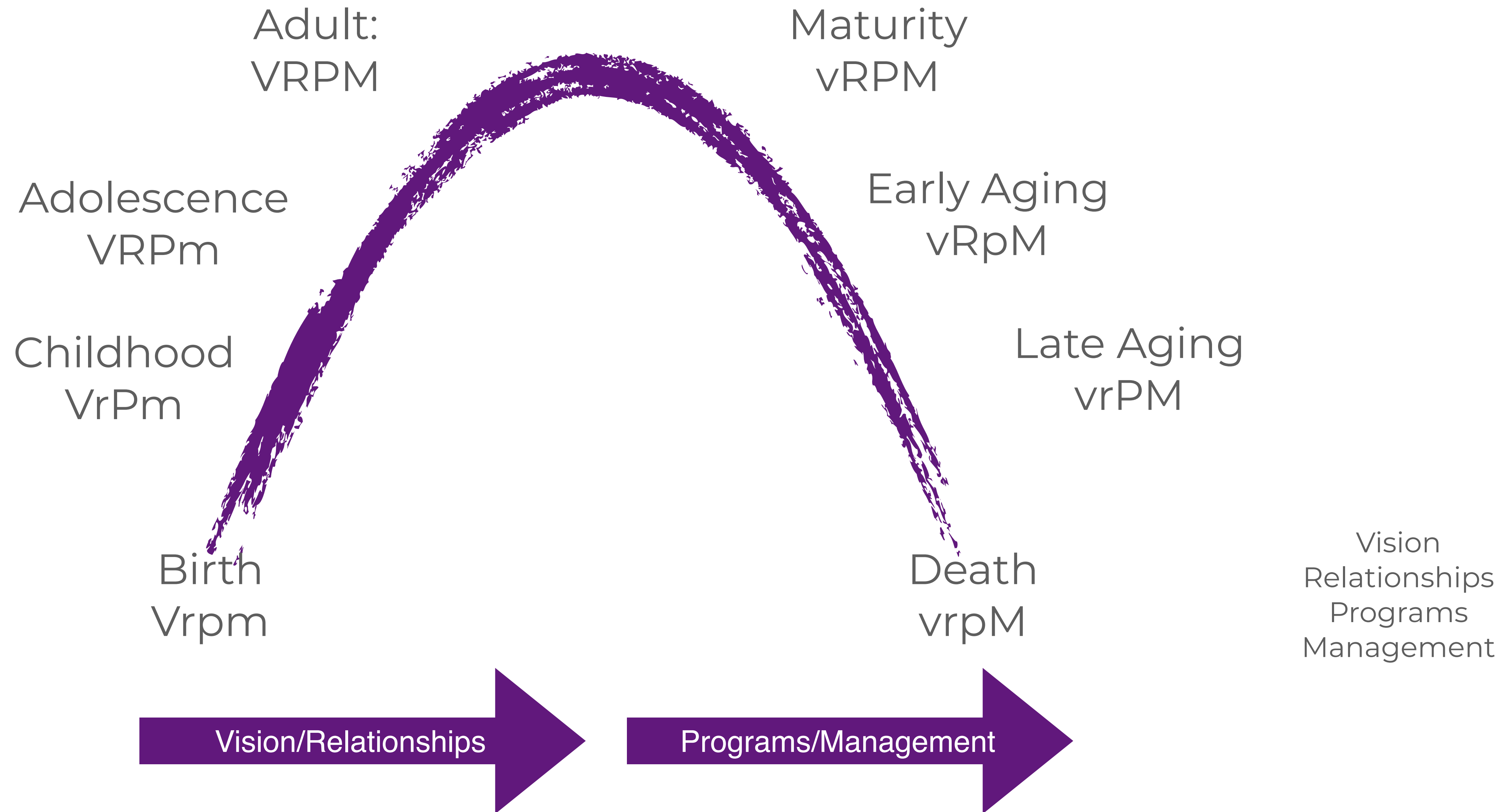
The Church Lifecycle



Death

- Giving up on new initiatives
- Church is a preaching station and chaplaincy
- Management alone survives

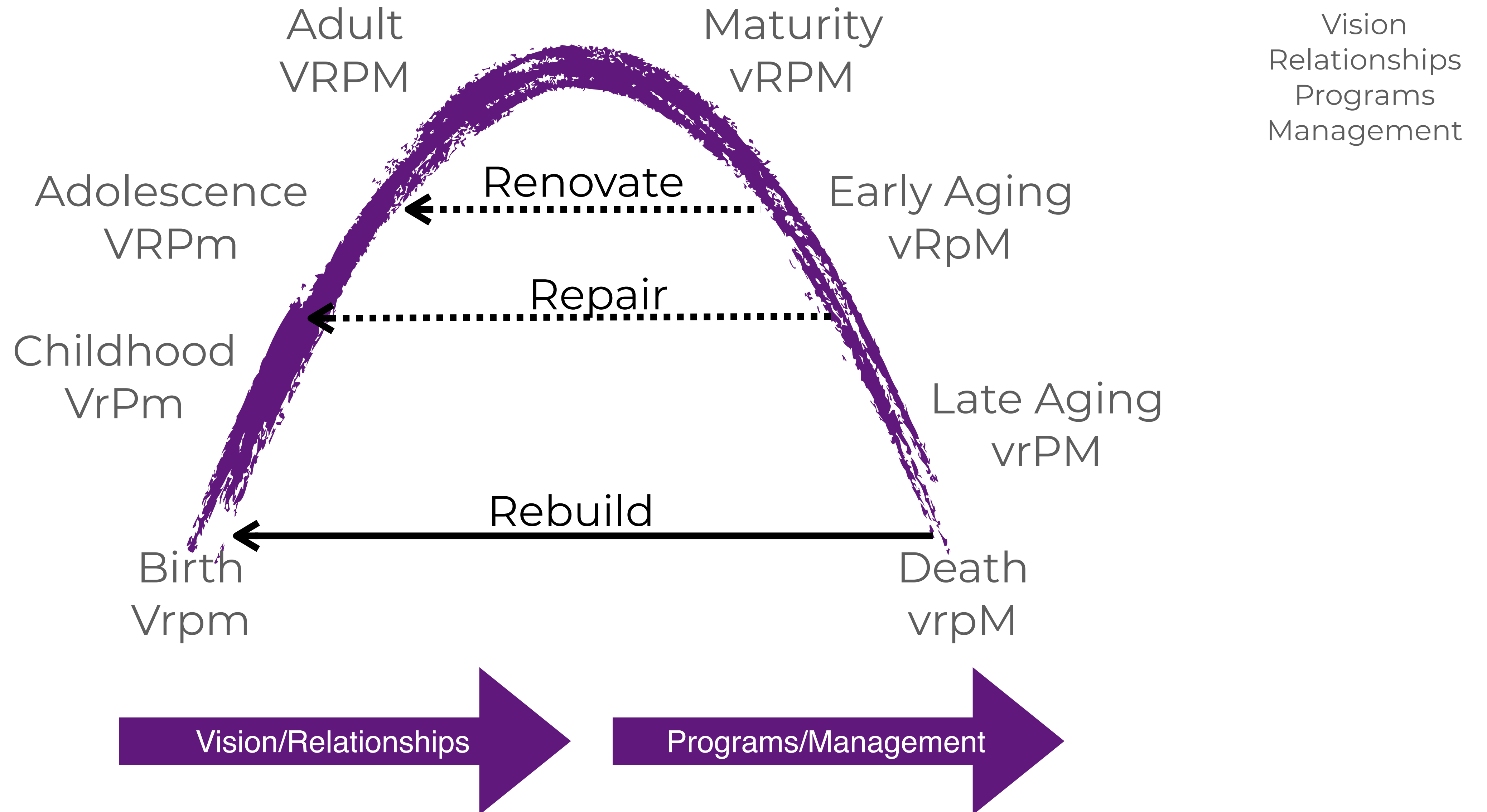
The Church Lifecycle: Where is your Congregation?



At Sharon RCA who is Driving?



The Church Lifecycle



The Church Lifecycle

Renovate

The congregation continues in its present direction. New information for community and culture is incorporated into the present direction of the church. The church reviews its relationships, programs, and management to assure they fit with God's ongoing vision for them.

Repair

A new path forward for the congregation. In this path the church writes a new vs. They either clarify present vision or they discern a new God-given vision. Relationships, Programs, and management are brought into alignment with the new vision.

Rebuild

Doing a new thing with new and different people. A new story of the congregation is begun, the old is let go.

In the Right Seat



In the Right Seat



Vision

A clear and compelling statement of God's hope-filled future for our congregation. This vision is known, central to the life of the congregation, and owned by the congregation.

In the Right Seat



Relationships

The relational process by which people become followers of Jesus, are continually discipled as part of a local community of Jesus, and utilize their gifts and skills in the church gathered and scattered.

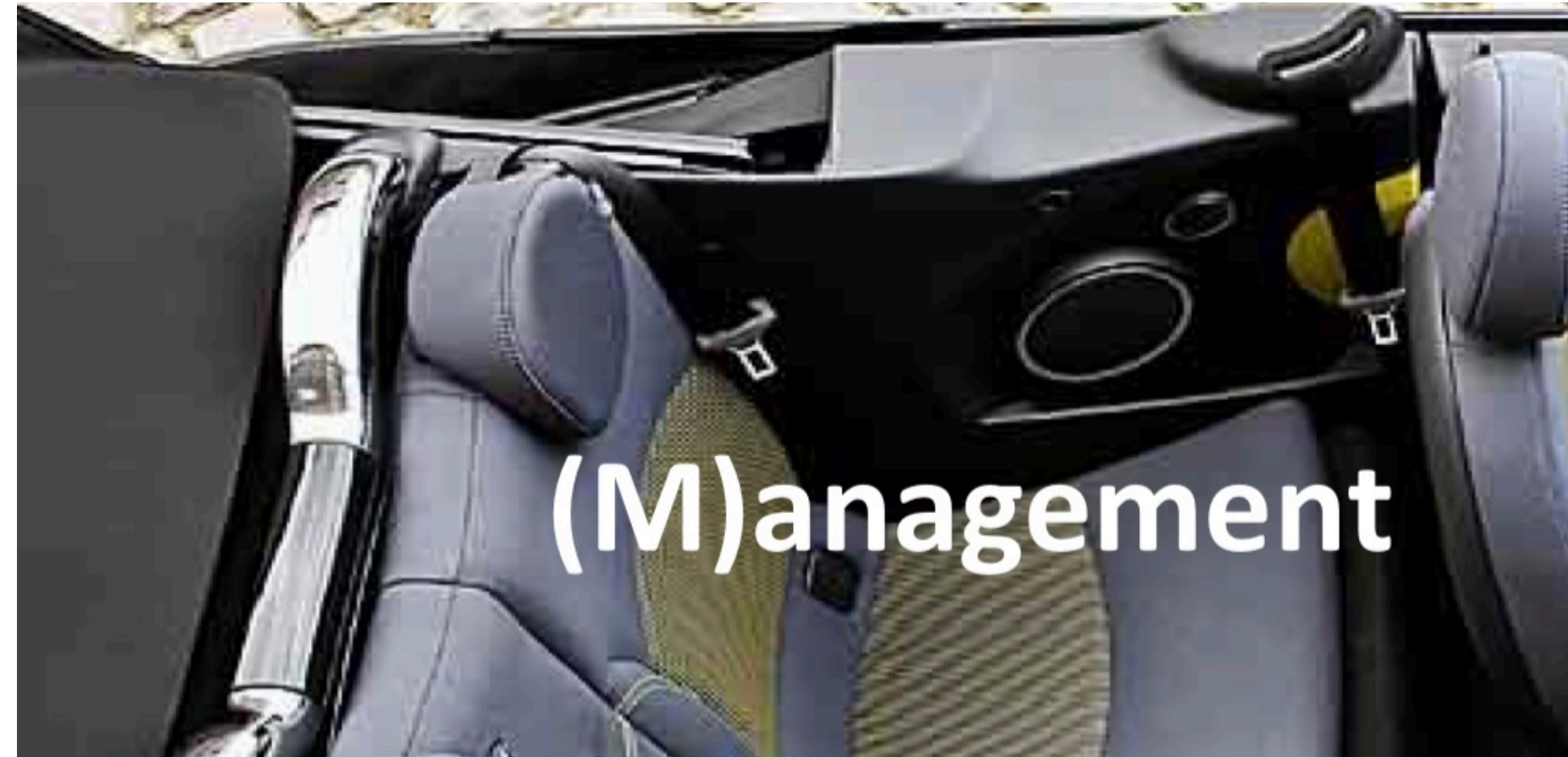
In the Right Seat



Programs

Providing organized ministries for people connected to the congregation to nurture others and be nurtured in their faith. These programs focus on both word and deed—with the goal of strengthening relationships and moving the vision forward.

In the Right Seat



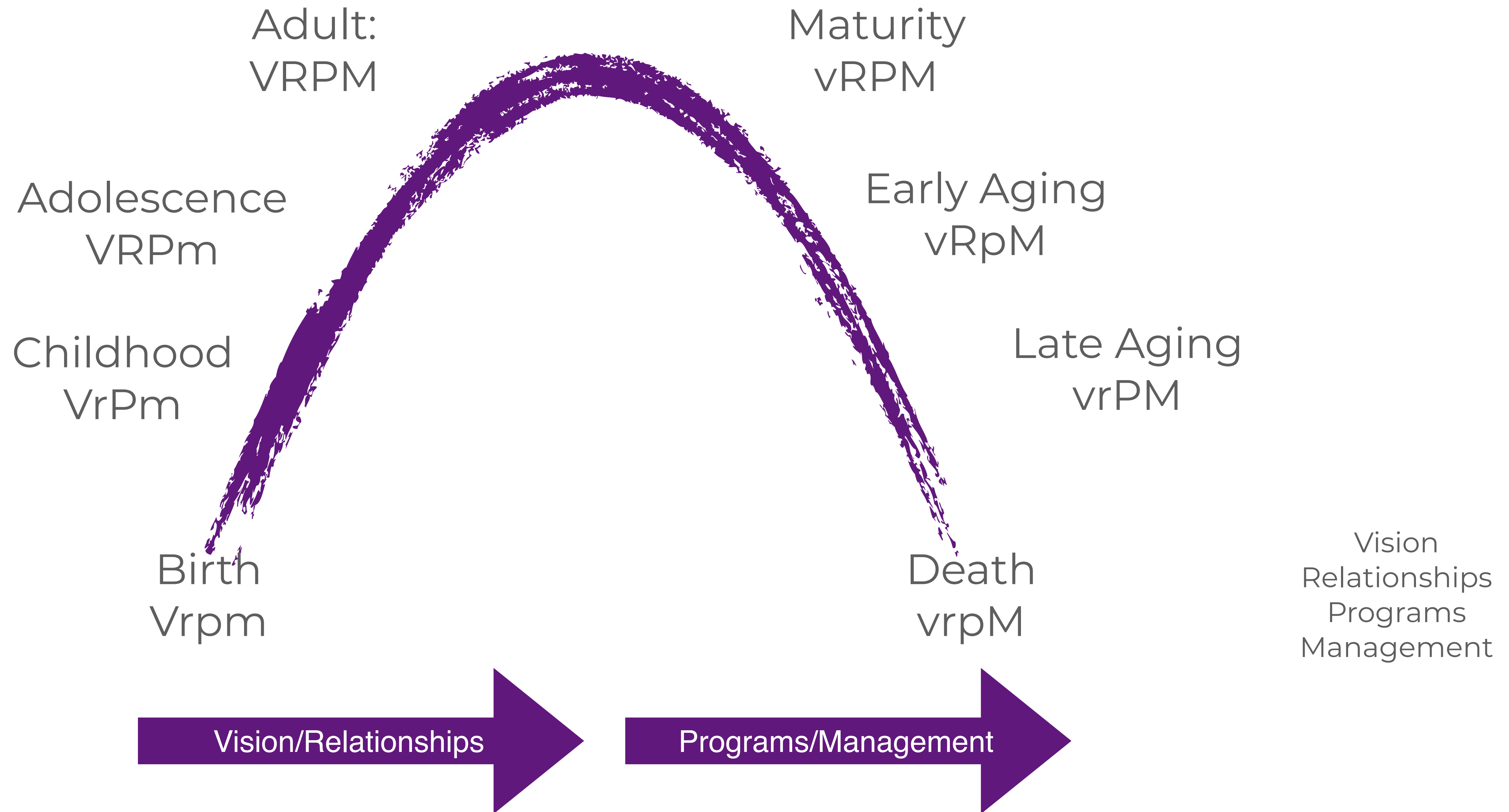
Management

How decisions are made, resources are allocated, the formal and informal culture of the congregation, and the openness of the congregation to change and grow

In the Right Seat



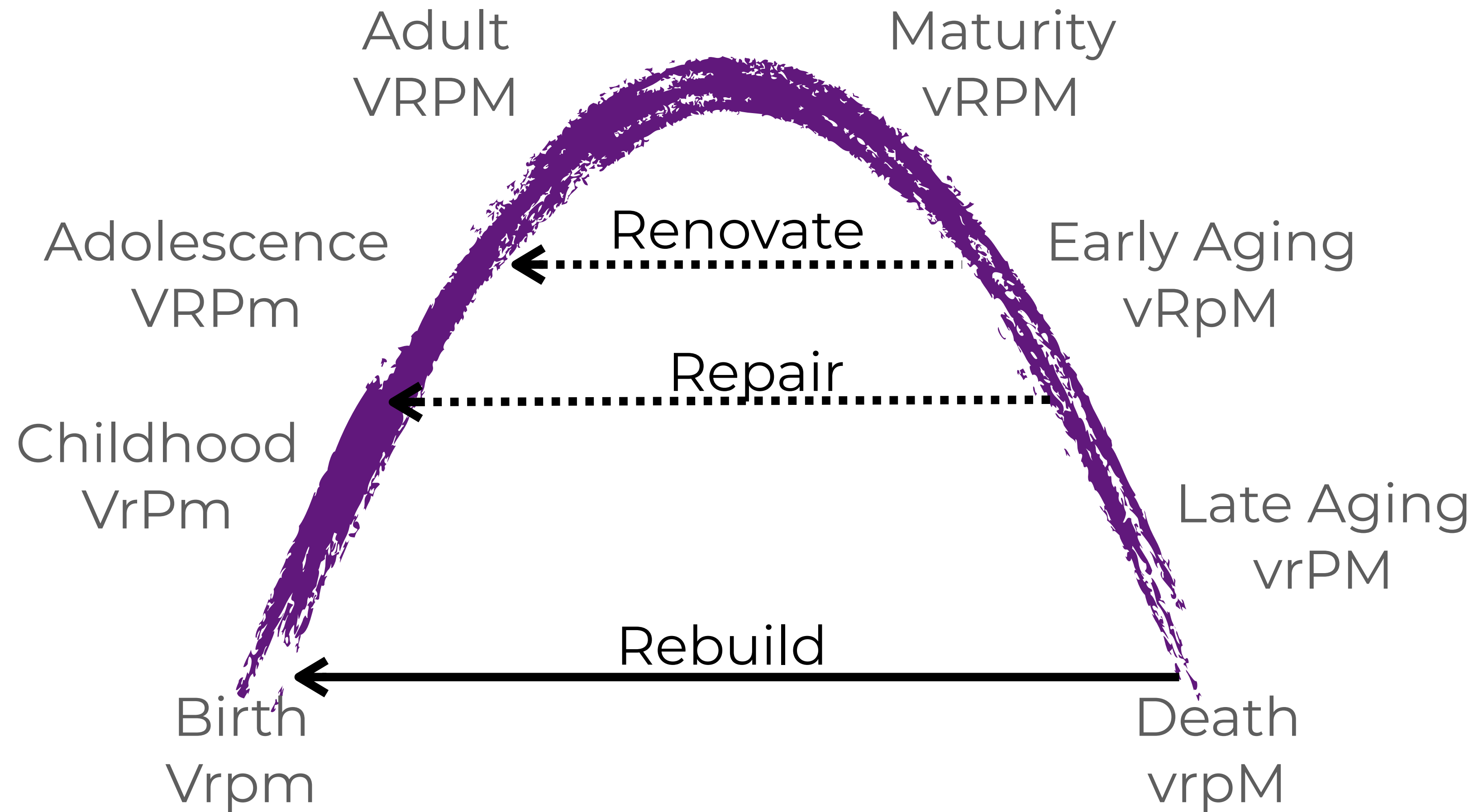
The Church Lifecycle: Where is Sharon RCA?



At Sharon RCA who is Driving?



The Church Lifecycle



Vision
Relationships
Programs
Management

Vision/Relationships

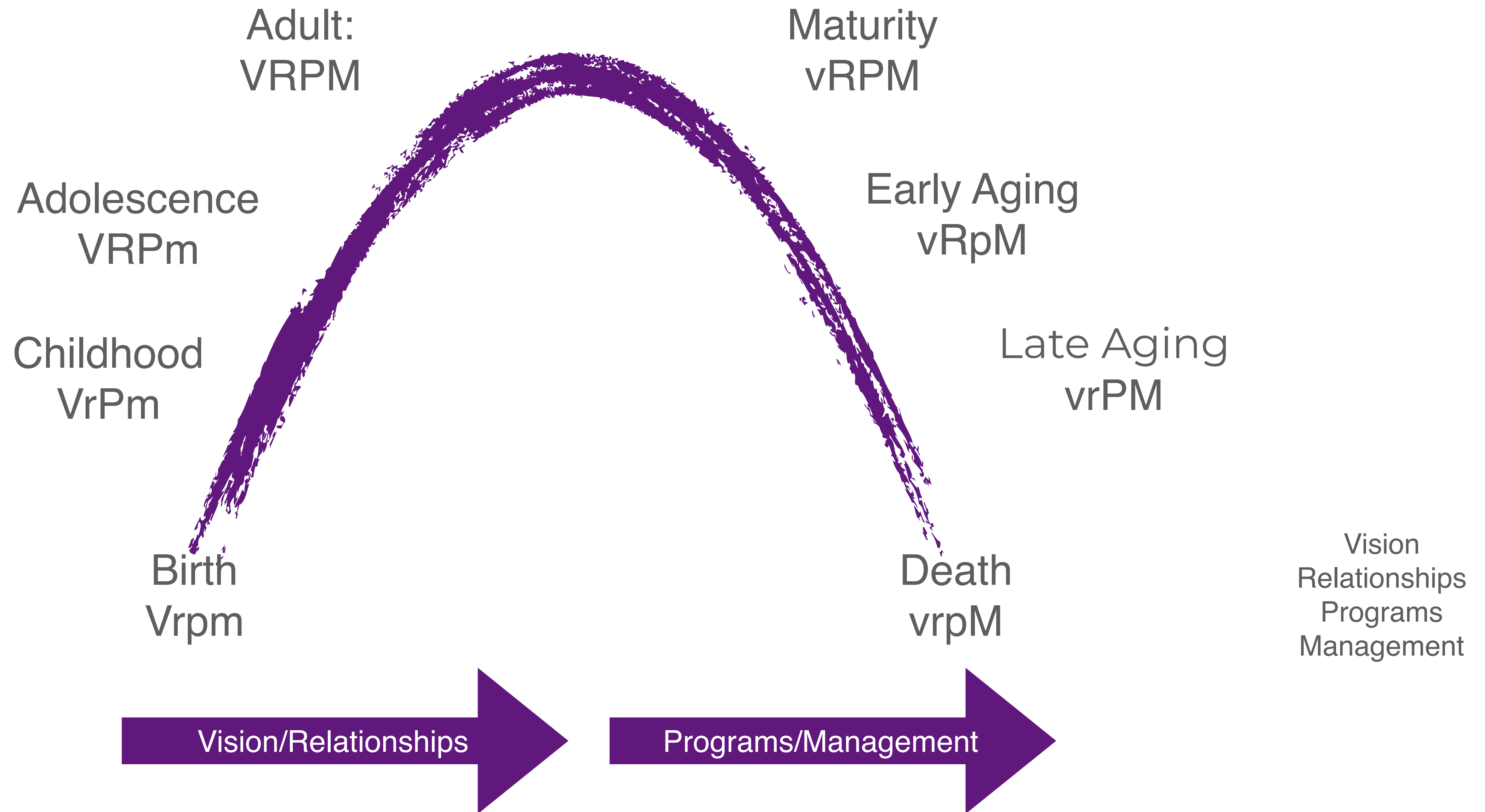
Programs/Management

The Church Lifecycle

Which statement best fits your congregation?

Mission and Purpose	Involvement	Programs & Structures	Change	Morale
Our congregation has a positive attitude and gives support	All members are willing to work	We have minimal organization	Our members are receptive to change	Our moral is high
Our congregation has a strong sense of purpose and mission	A high percentage of an individual's time and identity is committed to the church	Structures are created in response to needs	Changes are easily adopted and integrated into the life of the congregation	Morale is growing
There is a high visibility and understanding of our mission in the congregation	New members quickly find a place to become involved in ministry and mission	New programs are created to responds to new needs	New proposals are given serious consideration	Moral is at its highest point in the life of our congregation
New Members do not sense the church's purpose	We are hiring more staff to "enhance" ministries	Few, if any, new programs are added	Few changes are proposed in our congregation	Moral is polarized in our congregation into groups of high and low
The mission of our church is not understood	We are eliminating programs because of lack of participation	Programs ended because of lack of funds	The words we usually hear are, "We've never done it that way before."	Few have high moral
We have a visionary team with a high commitment level	We require everyone to be involved, or leave	There is spontaneity in decision making	Change is quickly accomplished in our congregation	Our positive outlook is easily impacted by circumstances and short term successes/ failures
We have a high level ownership of our goals	We find volunteers easily	We are seeing Tradition beginning to form	Suggestions for change come from all levels of membership	Our positive outlook is being more deeply formed
There is a common purpose throughout the ministries of our church	There is a high level of enthusiasm among members to participate in ministry	Wa are forming new roles and responsibility formed	Church leaders are responsible for initiating and implementing change	The positive attitude in our congregation is the highest it has ever been
We see a continual decline in the number of church members who understand our purpose	Original and older members feel they have done their part	Our structure creates needs rather than responding to needs	Few changes are considered in our congregation that radically depart from the status quo	We are seeing positive attitudes decline in our congregation
Our church has no real purpose	10% of members do 90% of the world	Our primary goal is preservation/survival	We rationalize why changes can't happen	There is frustration and despair as we can stem our decline

The Church Lifecycle: Where is Sharon RCA?





VIBRANT CONGREGATIONS

Taking Fresh Steps in Ministry and Mission

Joys and Loves

Adding a piece to the conversation

Discovering God's Call Through Our Congregations Joys & Loves

“Wherever I am carried, my love is carrying me.”

St. Augustine

What we love as a congregation carries us in a certain direction. What do we love and where are or loves carrying us?

Core Loves

- Those loves people both inside and outside the congregation say are deeply imbedded in the life of our congregation. These loves are like a beach ball that someone tries to hold under water. Whenever we try to hold down this love it bursts back to the surface.

We do what we
Love
&
find Joy in



"I'm sorry for doubting you're sick.
I guess I can shop by myself."

Sharon RCA

Joys & Loves

Where does your church find great joy in and loves the most?

You will be going through 4 parts each with 8 statements.
You will rank each statement according to what YOU believe your church finds the most joy in and loves the most.

Got It, I'm ready

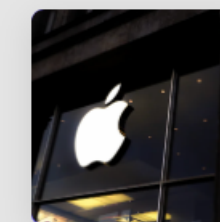
 Takes 5 minutes

 Search



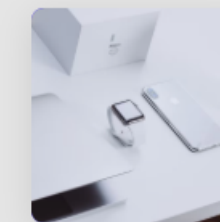
SEP. 27, 2022

Should you focus on Union?



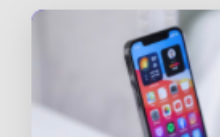
SEP. 20, 2022

Is Your Church Running at the Speed of Apple? Part 3



AUG. 15, 2022

Is Your Church Running at the Speed of Apple Part 2



AUG. 08, 2022

Is Your Church Running at

<https://vibrantcongregations.org/sharon-rca/>

Our Loves
& Joys

Our Story

Our Life
Together

Our
Formation

The Roots: Creeds, Confessions

The Foundation: Scripture - God's Big Story

One Page Loves/Story

Our Foundations

Our Loves

Our Story
Our Difference

Our Formation
Our Daily Practices

Ministry & Witness
Priorities

Measures and
Counts

<https://vibrantcongregations.org/sharon-rca/>

Sharon RCA's Vision

We Worship - Sunday mornings, and in special season services in cooperation with area churches, through music, prayer and preaching of the Word of God.

We Learn – In Church School and Small Group Study, in seasonal studies, in prayer and various interest groups.

We Share – We uphold one another in prayer, whether in our community or to the far reaches of the world. We carry out community-wide mission, caring for the sick, the poor, the hurting, providing pastoral care for all kinds of needs.

Sharon Reformed's Mission

As disciples of Christ, we are empowered by the Holy Spirit to join together to worship God, to study his Word, and use our gifts to extend God's grace and love to others.

Vibrant Congregations

Taking fresh steps in
ministry and mission



Pursuing God's Call to Sharon RCA

Our motivation for living out God's call is not legalism, fear, or compulsion rather it is the overwhelming gratitude of those who experience the wondrous exchange and knowing that we serve a good Father. The commands of the Father then are not burdensome, but a joyful pathway to life. As we read in 1 John 5,

“Everyone who believes that Jesus is the Christ has been born of God, and everyone who loves the Father loves whoever has been born of him. By this we know that we love the children of God, when we love God and obey his commandments. For this is the love of God, that we keep his commandments. And his commandments are not burdensome (emphasis added). For everyone who has been born of God overcomes the world. And this is the victory that has overcome the world—our faith. Who is it that overcomes the world except the one who believes that Jesus is the Son of God?” (1 John 5:1–5)

Pursuing God's Call to Sharon RCA



When we begin to conceive of God as he truly is, that is, in his justice, integrity, wisdom, virtue, and righteousness, we will only want to accommodate ourselves to him. John Calvin

We pursue God's call as joyful, playful children of our Father king who are learning how to live that status well and how to live in God's house.

Prayer for Stepping into God's Vision

Do not be Afraid

The Shalom of Jesus the king will go with you wherever he may send you

He will guide you in the wilderness, protect you in the storm

He will bring you home rejoicing at the wonders he has shown you

He will bring you home rejoicing until we see one another

Do not be Afraid

Sharon RCA's Vision

We Worship - Sunday mornings, and in special season services in cooperation with area churches, through music, prayer and preaching of the Word of God.

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Summary so Far

We will test this summary today as we dig into Sharon RCA's Loves, Vibrant Voices and Vibrant Listen... we will see what needs to be added, subtracted, refined...

Prayer and Scripture Insights

The task before us is not simple, it calls for wise investment of our God given gifts and energy. As we pursue this task:

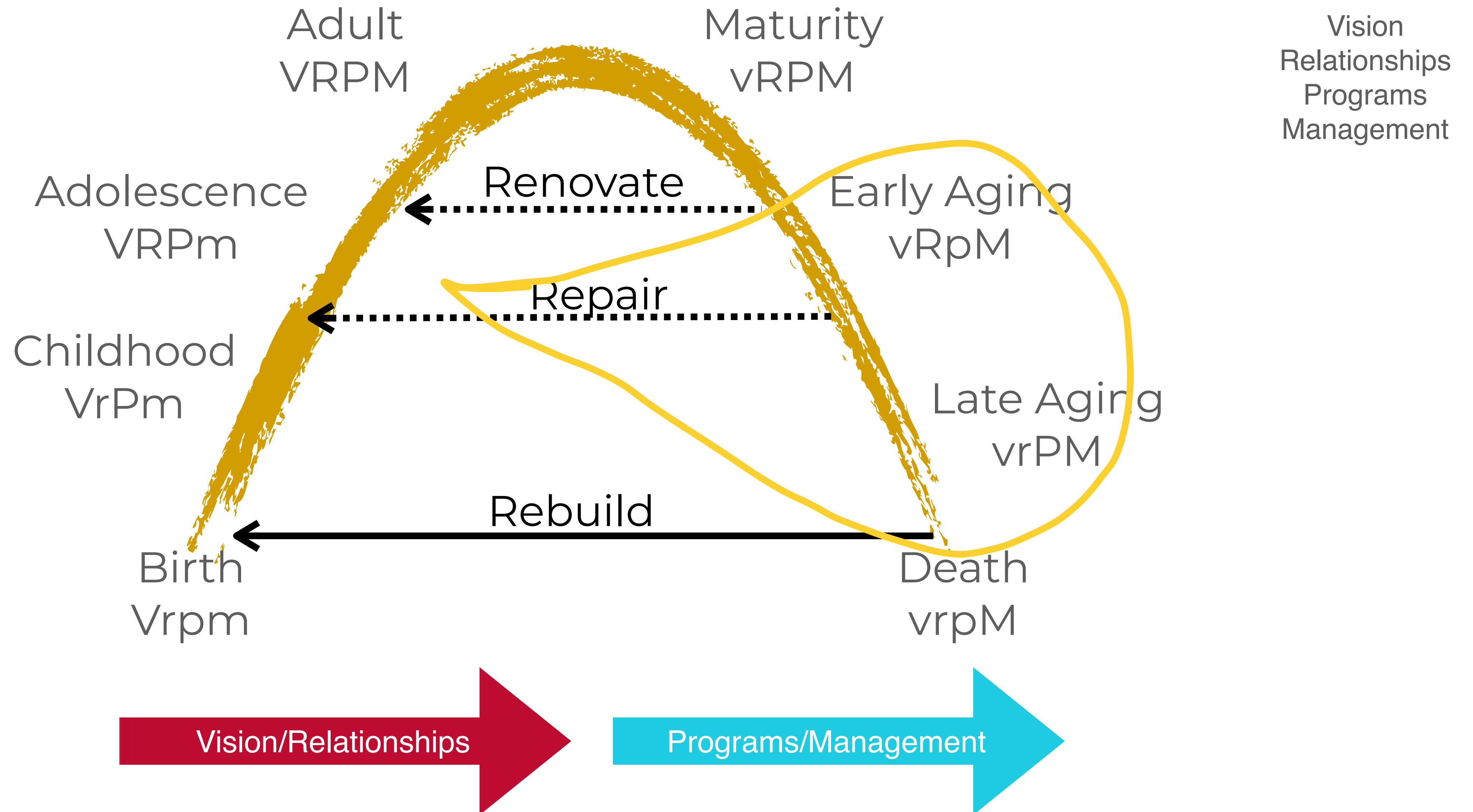
1. We need to listen to God's call -especially through times of prayer- and follow that call
2. We need to continue to live as community of faith that enjoys and supports one another
3. We must take up our missionary calling learning from those outside SRC and welcoming all

Pursuing this task we have a sense of God's peace, grace and hope as he carries us forward.

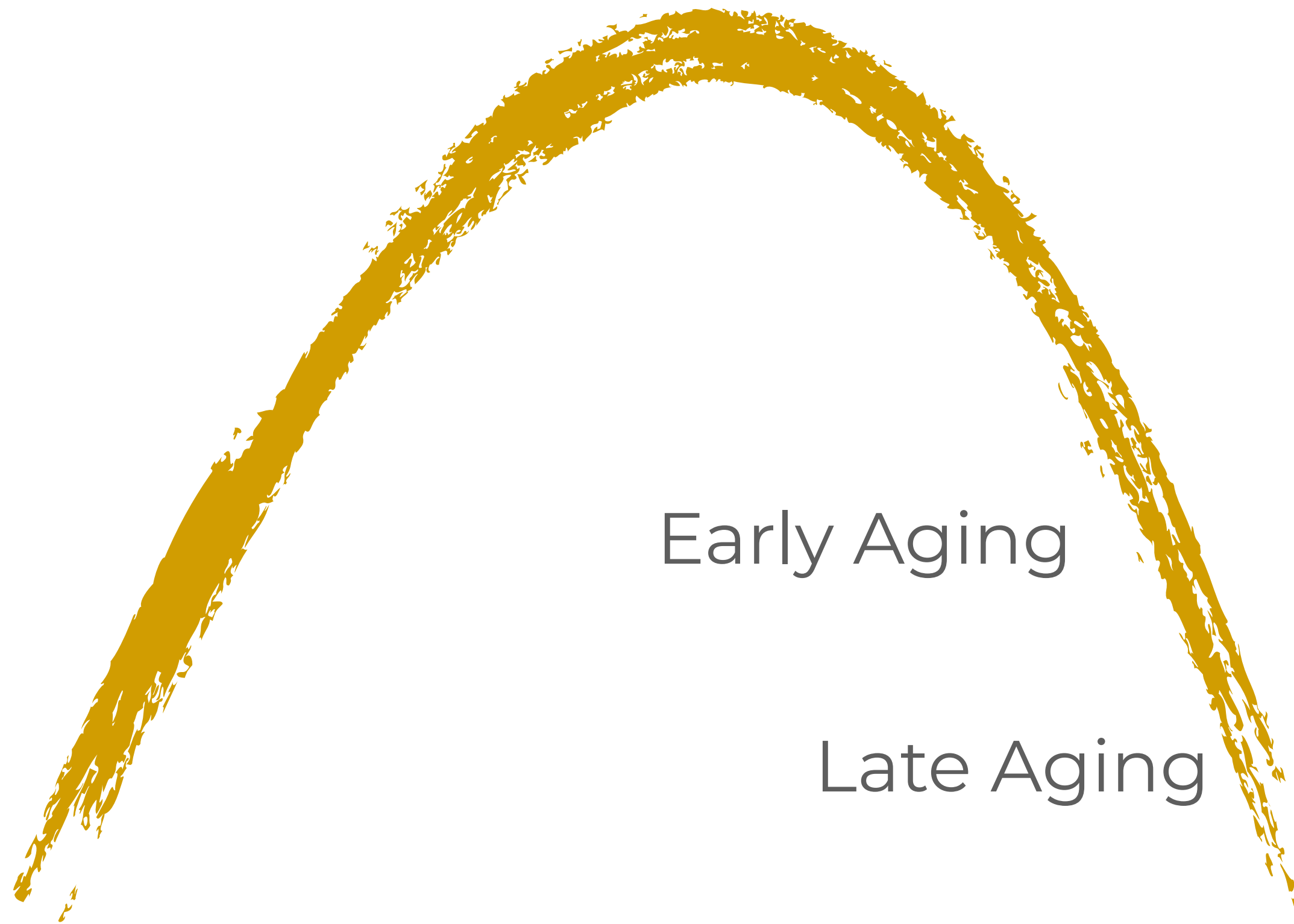
We are Still Wondering About

- How we move forward with the size of our congregation?
- How do we find God's plan for our future?
- How might God bring revival for Sharon/Sharon Springs?
- Is God disappointed with us?
- What would it look like if we weren't here?
- How do we stop being in control and have God take over control?

The Church Lifecycle



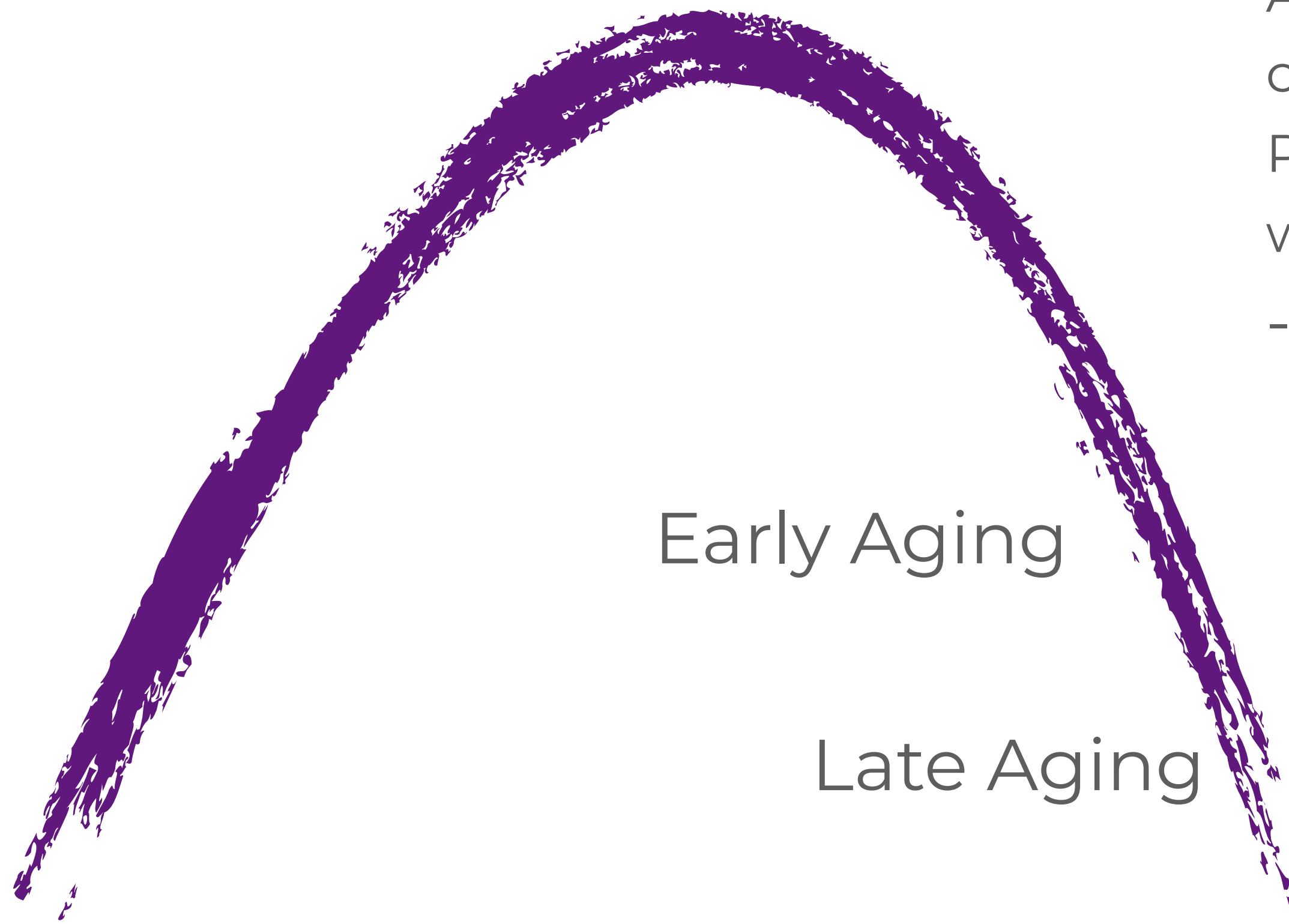
The Church Lifecycle



Some Characteristics of this season

- Morale is polarized into groups of high and low
- People do not sense the church's purpose
- Few changes are proposed in the congregation
- Original and older members feel they have done their part
- primary goal is survival
- Our structure creates needs rather than responding to needs
- We rationalize why changes can't happen
- Positive attitudes are declining

The Church Lifecycle



Early Aging

Late Aging

A new path forward for the congregation. In this path the church discerns a new God-given vision. Relationships, Programs, and management are brought into alignment with the new vision.

- In this process the church needs to discern
 - Who God is calling the congregation to reach
 - What difference God wants the congregation to make inside the congregation and in the community/world
 - What needs to end and what needs to begin
 - How to live fully into loves and joys of the congregation, moving beyond a partial engagement
 - Discern where programs and management have taken the front seats

Prayer and Scripture Insights

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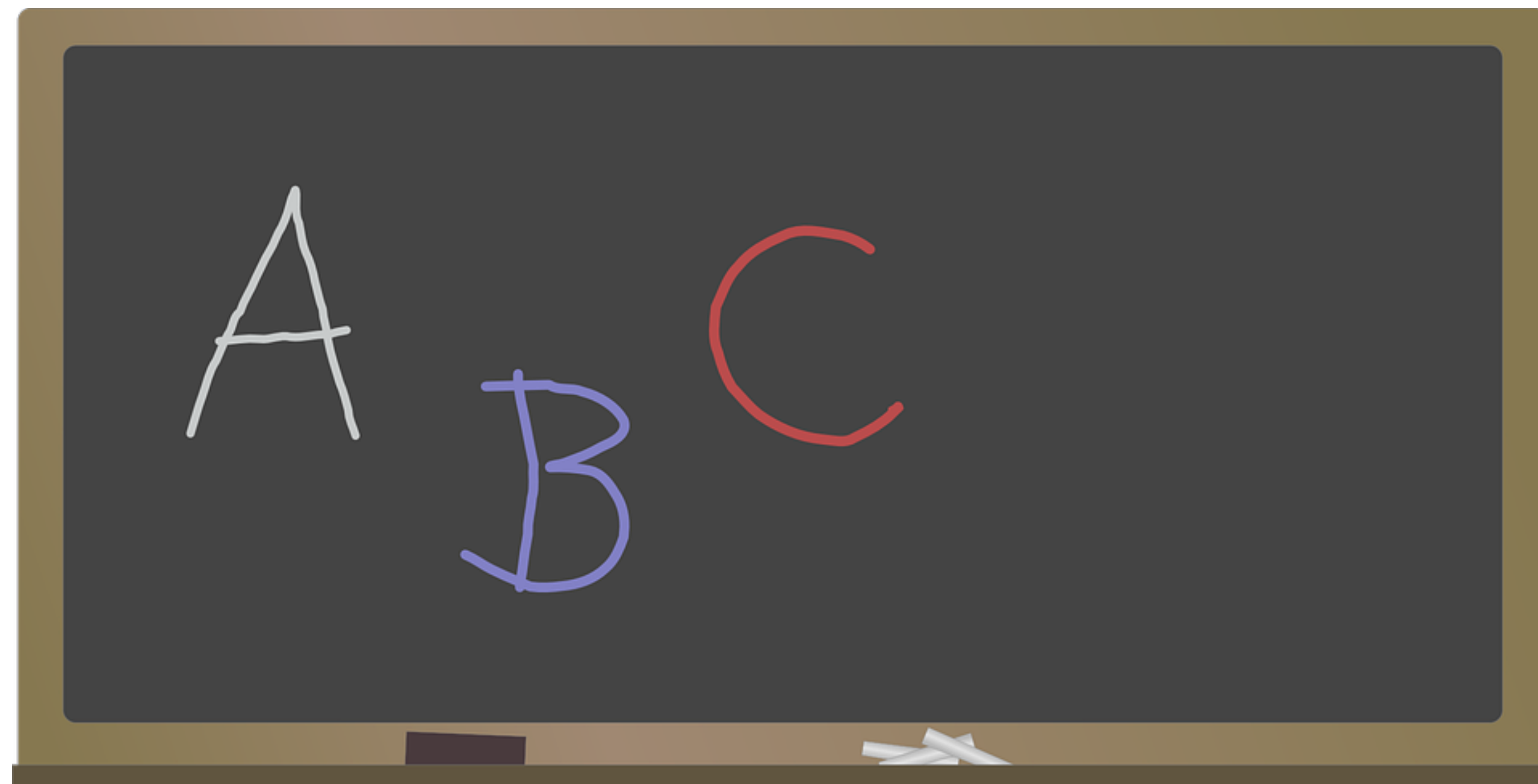
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Joys and Loves

Adding a piece to the conversation

Following God's Call

Moving from the ABC's to Joys and Loves



Joys and Loves Emphases

Eight Love & Joys Emphases

A Community of Love

A Whole Gospel Community

A Community of Personal and Corporate Transformation

A Community of Difference Makers

A Community of Excellent Leadership

A Story Telling Community

A Worshipping Community

A Shalom Focused Community

Being a Certain Kind of Community for God's glory and the world's good

Some Marks of Different Types of Communities

A Community of Love

1. Relationships with those far from God
2. Celebrating gains and lamenting losses
3. Practices one another passages of the New Testament
4. Moves from “me” to “we”, from individualism to community
5. Humility to serve rather than being served
6. Sharing our gifts
7. Radical Equity based hospitality
8. A Centered Set Community

Being a Certain Kind of Community for God's glory and the world's good

Some Marks of Different Types of Communities

A Whole Gospel Community

1. Church as school of kingdom discipleship
2. Connecting the whole gospel to the whole of life
3. Growth in diversity
4. A vision larger than the local congregation
5. A heart for justice
6. Connecting vocation and faith
7. A community of reconcilers
8. Acknowledging power imbalances and moving toward justice

Being a Certain Kind of Community for God's glory and the world's good

Some Marks of Different Types of Communities

A Community of Personal and Corporate Transformation

1. Creates a framework for corporate transformation
2. Creates a clear discipleship pathway for all
3. New commitments to Christ are a regular occurrence
4. Increased Christ-likeness in the members of the congregation
5. From church as building to church as incarnational presence in the world
6. Practicing the New Testament Virtues e.g. hospitality
7. Congregation engages with Spiritual Practices
8. Telling faith stories to each other

Being a Certain Kind of Community for God's glory and the world's good

Some Marks of Different Types of Communities

A Community of Difference Makers

1. Lives as advocates and allies
2. Serves within the local community
3. Measures difference made not activities done
4. People are not alone, they belong and are safe
5. Embedded in the local community, a cheerleader for the community
6. Brings hope to the community
7. Creates a healthy and hospitable environment
8. Makes visible the reign and justice of God

Being a Certain Kind of Community for God's glory and the world's good

Some Marks of Different Types of Communities

A Community of Excellent Leadership

1. Leaders admit they don't know everything
2. Leaders are participant coaches, shaping the culture with a bigger picture in view
3. Leaders guide community to be rooted in prayer, scripture and to be attentive to the Spirit
4. Leaders shaped by following the leadership ways of Jesus
5. Leaders are a wise, prophetic voice
6. Leaders hold community accountable to shared vision and story
7. Leaders embrace complexity and let go of simplicity, calling the congregation to do the same
8. Leaders are attentive to their own emotional health leading with clear insight into their own challenges

Being a Certain Kind of Community for God's glory and the world's good

Some Marks of Different Types of Communities

A Story Telling Community

1. Knows and shares God's big story
2. Listening to and learning from the stories of children
3. Hears and is shaped by the stories of other communities (worldwide)
4. Tells a better story than the culture, engaging hearts and minds with a fresh view of the gospel
5. Tells and connects with our complicated generational and ethnic stories
6. Imagines and tells the story of our congregation's future
7. Helps people wrestle with their stories and competing versions of the good life
8. Tells the story of the good life as revealed and rooted in scripture

Being a Certain Kind of Community for God's glory and the world's good

Some Marks of Different Types of Communities

A Worshipping Community

1. Finds deep joy in gathering in worship to hear God's word proclaimed
2. Celebrating the sacraments is central to community life
3. Weekly worship is a priority for members of the community
4. Central to all is spreading God's glory into the world
5. Worship is carefully planned to engage and influence hearts, minds and actions of those committed and not committed to Christ
6. Sees and understands the world through the lens of worship where Christ is king and rightful ruler of all the earth
7. Comes to worship at the invitation of the King not on their own initiative
8. Worship is designed to shape loving engagement with the world

Being a Certain Kind of Community for God's glory and the world's good

Some Marks of Different Types of Communities

A Shalom Focused Community

1. Seeks to visibly live the way of God's shalom in the world
2. Discovers where God is already at work and joins him there
3. Serves as God's ambassadors in every area of life
4. Works to give the world a taste of God's shalom
5. Works to restore broken systems in the church and world
6. Pursues creating relational wholeness in all spheres of society
7. Focuses on bringing flourishing for people, communities, and creation
8. Calls everyone to a restored relationship with their creator through Jesus Christ.

Being a Certain Kind of Community for God's glory and the world's good

Our
Joy & Loves
scan
reveals

We are a community focused on being a

1. Being a Shalom Community 3.6
2. Worshipping Community 3.8
3. Difference Makers 3.8

4.6 Community of Transformation

4.8 Community of Love

4.9 Community of Excellent Leadership

5.0 Whole Gospel Community

5.6 A Story Telling Community

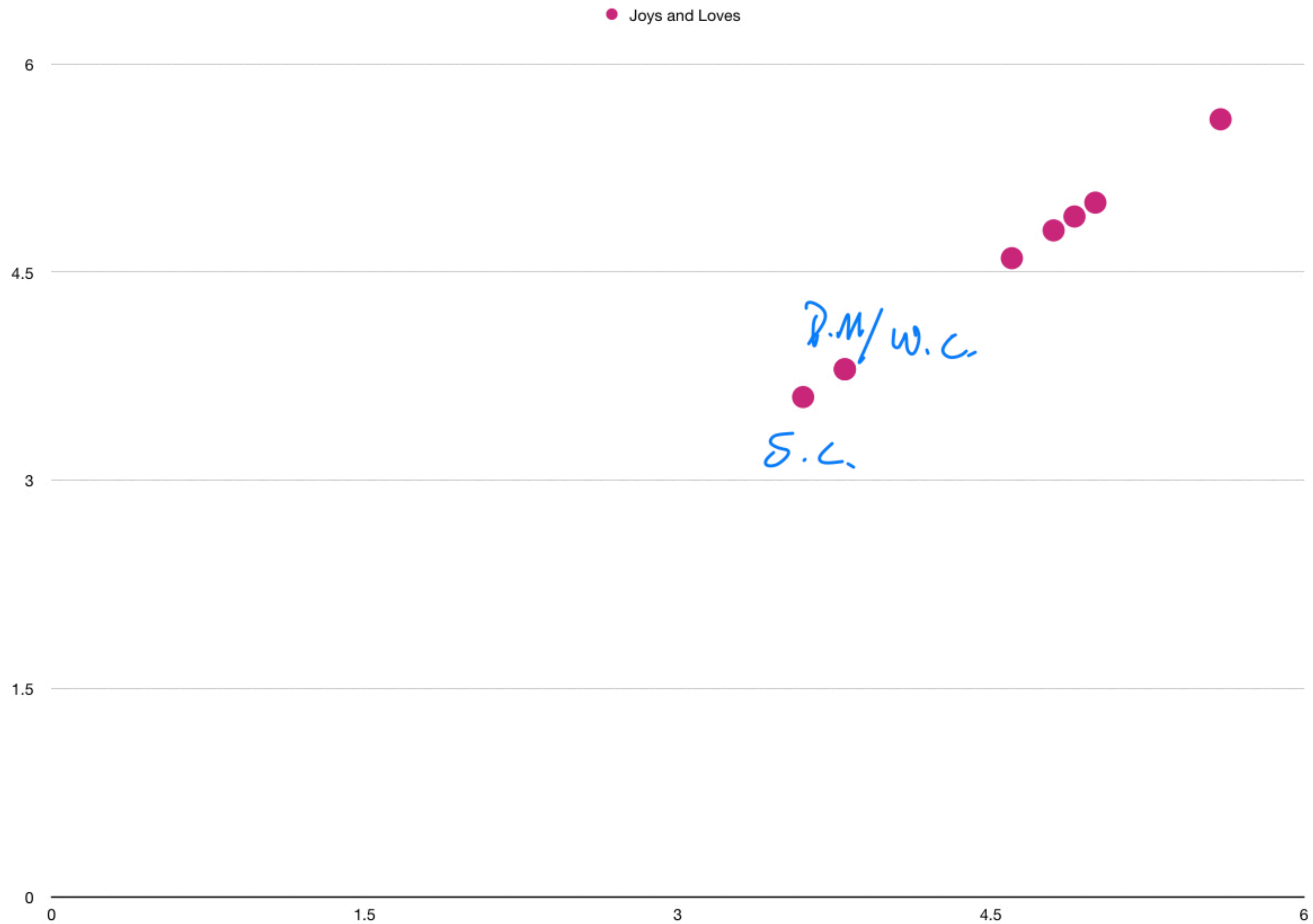
Being a Certain Kind of Community for God's glory and the world's good

Our
Joy & Loves
scan
reveals

Top four things we love from survey

1. Gathering in worship to hear God's word
2. Serving rather than being served, using our gifts for others
3. Joining together in weekly worship
4. Bringing Hope to our Neighborhood and City

Being a Certain Kind of Community for God's glory and the world's good



On the Journey

1. How will you explore the implications of your joys and loves for your next chapter?
 - What will change in ministry focus if you focus on joys and loves?
2. What's happening in the culture that will impact how you live your joys and loves effectively?
3. What are problems you need to solve along the way? How will living out your joys and loves help solve those problems?
4. What problems did you think you had to solve but now you can ignore them?
5. Is solving certain problems more important than living out your loves and joys? If yes, why?
6. What hopes does your congregation have? Are they tied to your joys and loves? Why or why not?
7. How will congregation live out your joys and loves together (practices)?

Vibrant Voices

MissionInsite

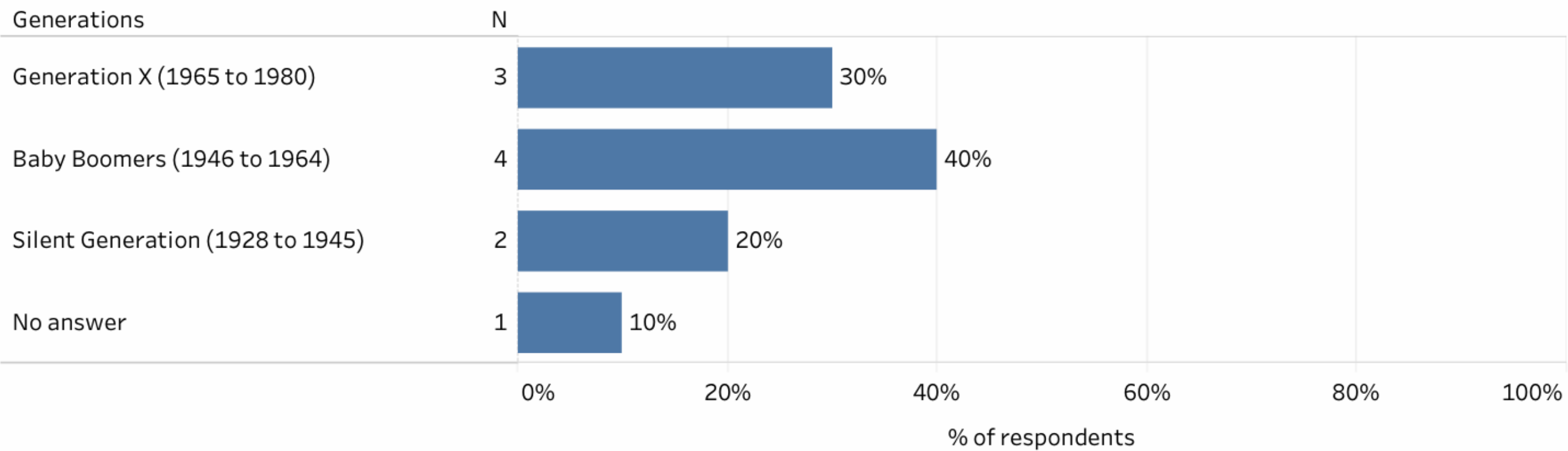
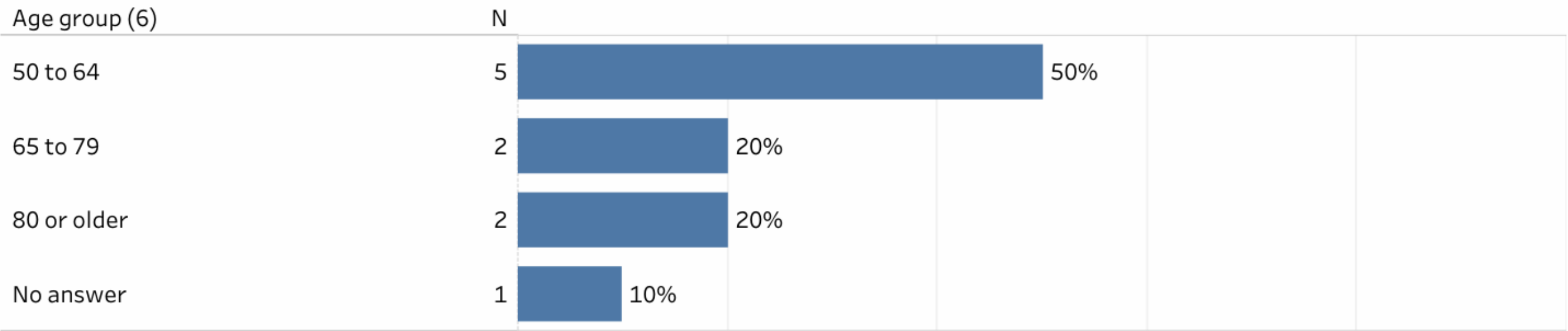
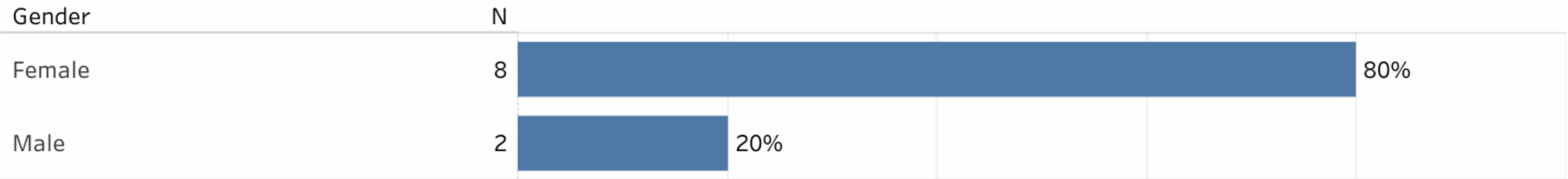
Three Big Findings

1. People are looking for community - warm and friendly encounters
2. People don't see Jesus followers acting like Jesus
3. People don't have a good understanding of the Jesus of the Bible
 - Is there a way to confirm these findings?

Vibrant Voices

VV Results, Sharon Reformed Church, Sharon Springs, NY, 2022

Demographics



Vibrant Voices

- The Health of our
 - Upward Life
 - Outward Life
 - Inward Life

Outward

- MV (Mission/Vision)
- GS (Generous stewardship)
- KE (Kingdom Extension)
- JR (Justice and Righteousness Advocacy)

Inward

- LR (Loving Relationships)
- CY (Children and Youth Ministry)
- DM (Intentional Disciple Making)
- SL (Servant Leadership)

Upward

- CB (Centrality of the Word)
- AS (Authentic Spirituality)
- TW (Transforming Worship)

Vibrant Voices Conversation

What do we discover about our congregation in

1-3

4-8

9-11

Focus Outward, Upward, Inward?

Vibrant Voices Conversation

- We give our time and attention to what we value, what does the ranking of this item tell us about how the congregation sees what we value?
- One insight we have about this area because we know our congregation
- One thing we wonder about as we reflect on this statement
- According to the “chart” this statement is an: outward, upward, or inward
- Something else we want to say...

Vibrant Voices Conversation

What do we discover about our members in

1-3

4-8

9-11

Focus Outward, Upward, Inward?

Vibrant Voices Conversation

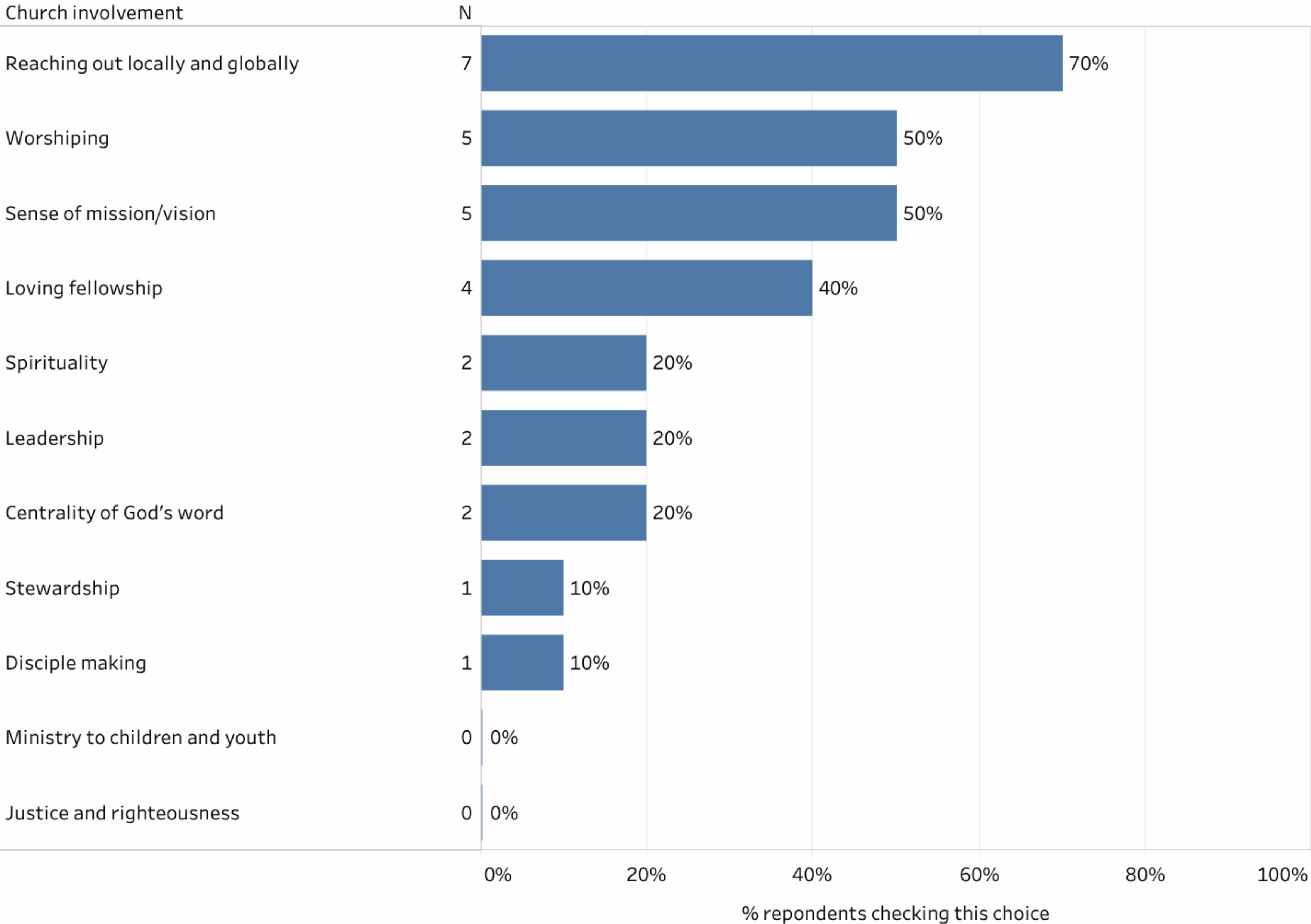
- We give our time and attention to what we value, what does the ranking of this item tell us about what our people value in their lives?
- One insight we have about this area because we know our congregation
- One thing we wonder about as we reflect on this statement
- According to the “chart” this statement is an: outward, upward, or inward
- Something else we want to say...

Vibrant Voices

- The Health of our Upward Life
- The Health of our Inward Life
- The Health of our Outward Life

Vibrant Voices

Church Direction



Vibrant Voices

Definitely UNTRUE

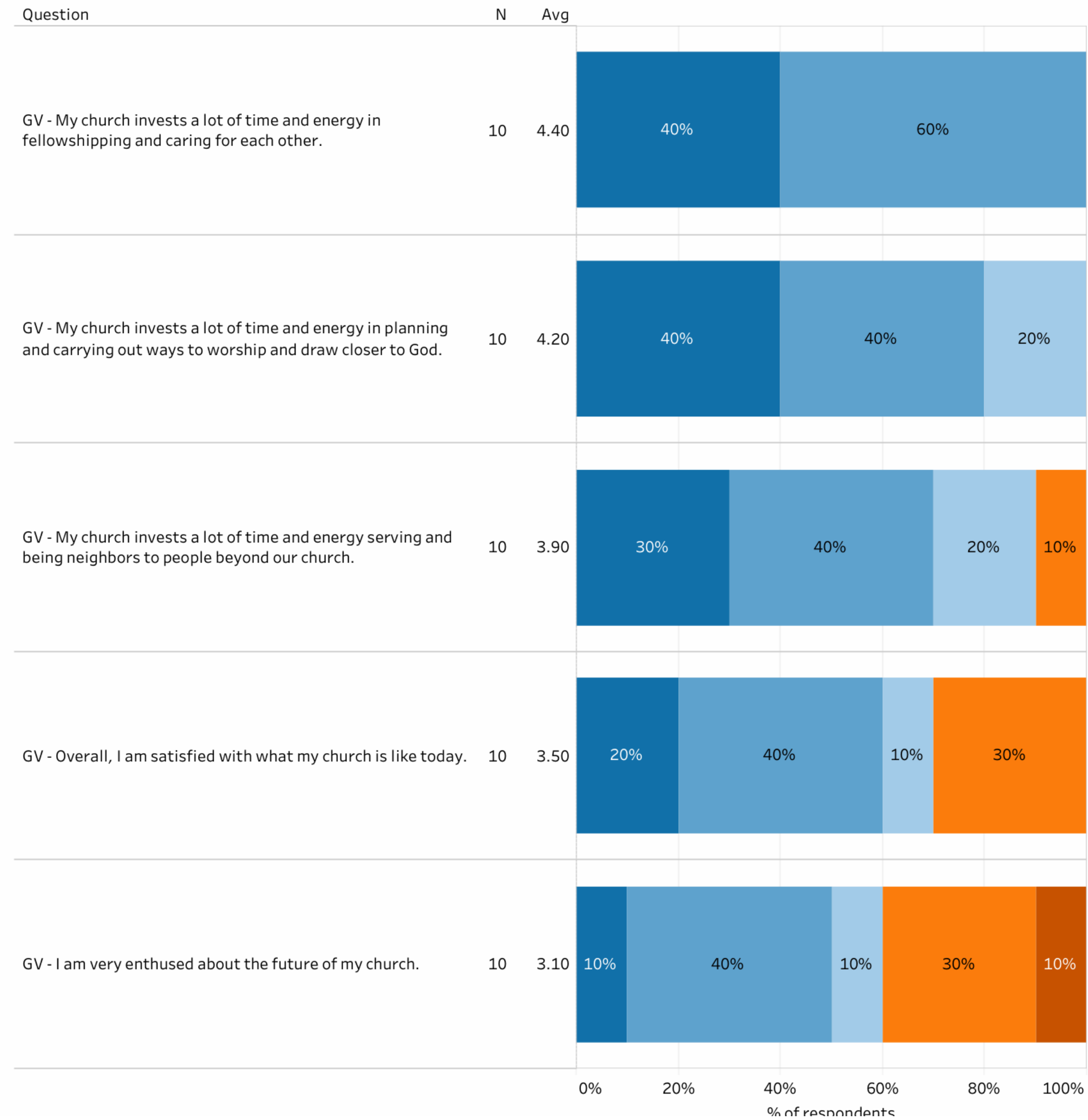
Hardly True

Somewhat True

Mostly True

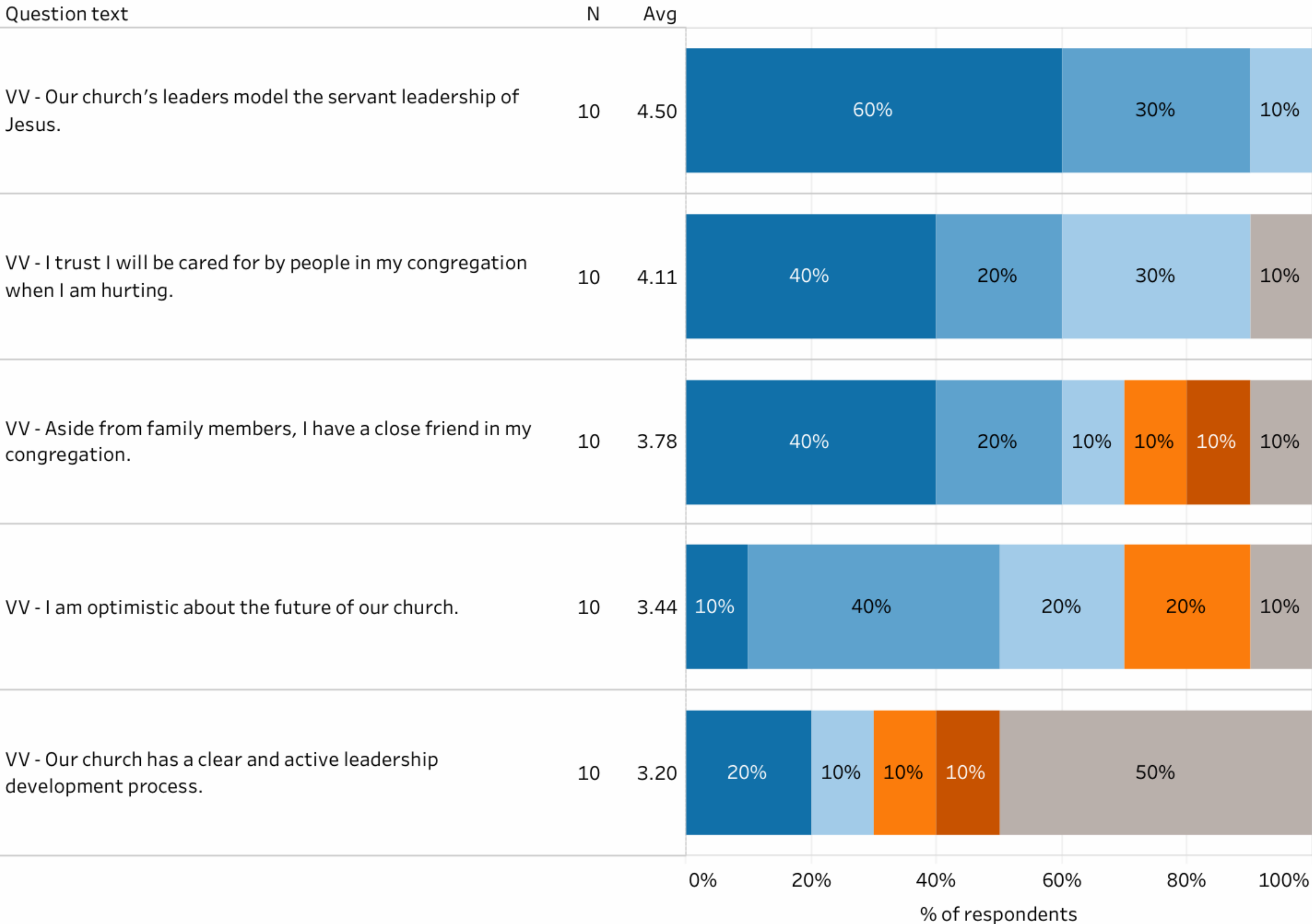
Definitely True

General Views



VV Results, Sharon Reformed Church, Sharon Springs, NY, 2022

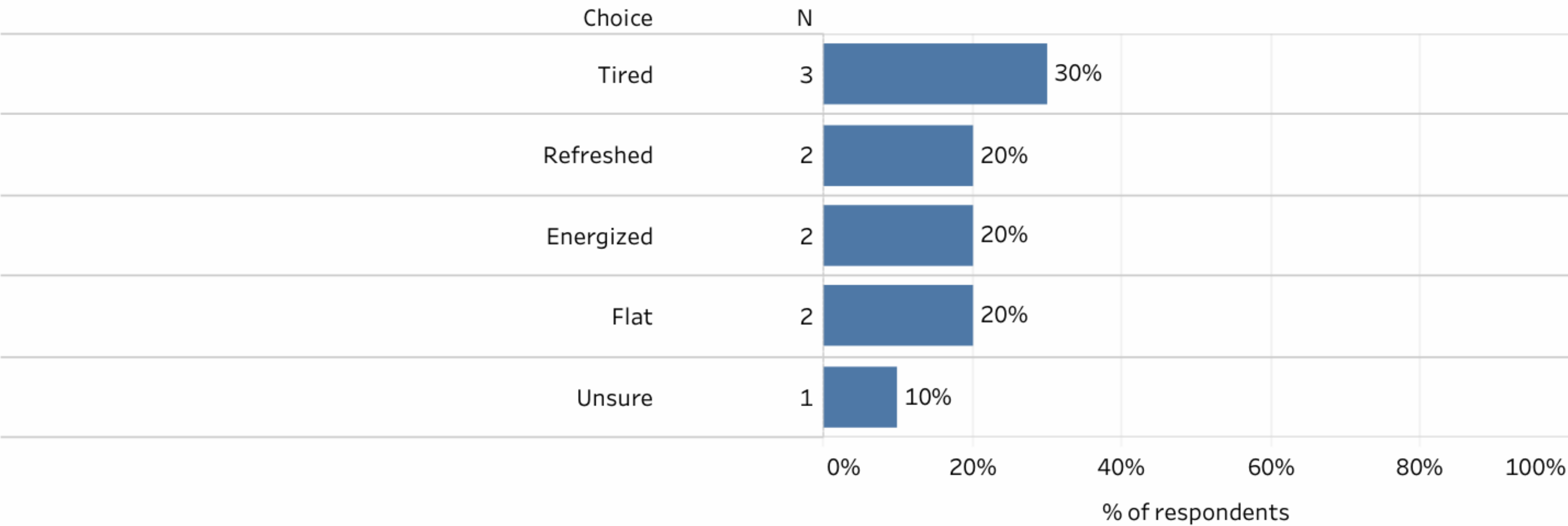
Additional Statements



Vibrant
Voices

Vibrant Voices

Which word best describes how the people of your church feel about your life together as a congregation?



A Challenge Before Us - The Changing Landscape

- We are in an era of change and transition
 - We **were** in a time of loss of participation in religious institutions
 - Our solution: increase our reach by providing resources to people — reach eventually exhausts us; reach is an escalating game and competition game
 - Note: People leave when we don't provide the resources they want for the life they are pursuing for themselves or for their children (contrast: lifelong members)
 - We **are** moving into a time of an absence of belief; God no longer is part of life
 - Our Direction:
 - Find ways to enliven belief, to connect people to the Sacred
 - From resources to telling and living a better story; inviting people into the story, success
 - Reject idea that people are resources to increase our reach, instead they are people who walk with us through life
 - Embrace being out of control — we can't control the outcomes, what we can do is create context
 - Putting together emotion (hearts stirred) and affection (moving toward others in love)

Four Essentials

what people need from leadership

1. Trust
2. Compassion
3. Stability
4. Hope

Vibrant Listen

Vibrant Listen

Let's Look at:

1. Things that are true of our congregation
2. Needs of our congregation
3. Needs of our congregation 2
4. Connection to our neighborhood
5. Willingness to take risk for Vision

Vibrant Listen Conversation

Q 6 What do we discover about what's true of Sharon RCA?

Q 10 Are there any clear spiritual needs in the congregation? Are there any clear differences of needs?

Q 25 What do we need to know about the willingness to engage in taking fresh steps in ministry and mission?

Q 7 Are there any clear needs expressed? Are there any clear differences of what the needs are?

Q 11 What do we discover in the community connections section?

Q 26 What do we need to know about the willingness to engage and risk in taking fresh steps in ministry and mission?

What's Next?





VIBRANT CONGREGATIONS

Taking Fresh Steps in Ministry and Mission