

Southern California Conference

63<sup>rd</sup> Constituency Session

Report of the Secretary

**The Mighty Work of God through His Mighty Church**

Ellen White wrote,

*Enfeebled and defective as it may appear, the church is the one object upon which God bestows in a special sense His supreme regard. It is the theater of His grace, in which He delights to reveal His power to transform hearts. AA 4*

Being the most precious object of His confidence and loving care throughout the centuries, God has enabled the church to be effective in carrying on the enormous and sacred mission of sharing His salvation efforts of keeping His family together for eternity.

Since we met four years ago, God's church in Southern California Conference has had several challenges threatening her mission; even beyond the global financial turmoil, secularism, evolutionism and polytheism have been resistant to the mission of the Church.

However, our Almighty God has used His beloved and mighty church to communicate His love and care to the world. The Southern California Conference for 110 years has been God's instrument sharing the good news of the gospel in the Greater Los Angeles area and its surrounding neighborhoods/communities. Our work is to reach people of more than 165 different cultures and tongues in their own communities.

Since the office of the Secretary is in charge of recording and keeping information about what has been done, it is a delight for me to report what the Lord has accomplished through His faithful people.

**ENTERING INTO NEW COMMUNITIES - EXTENDING THE FAMILY**

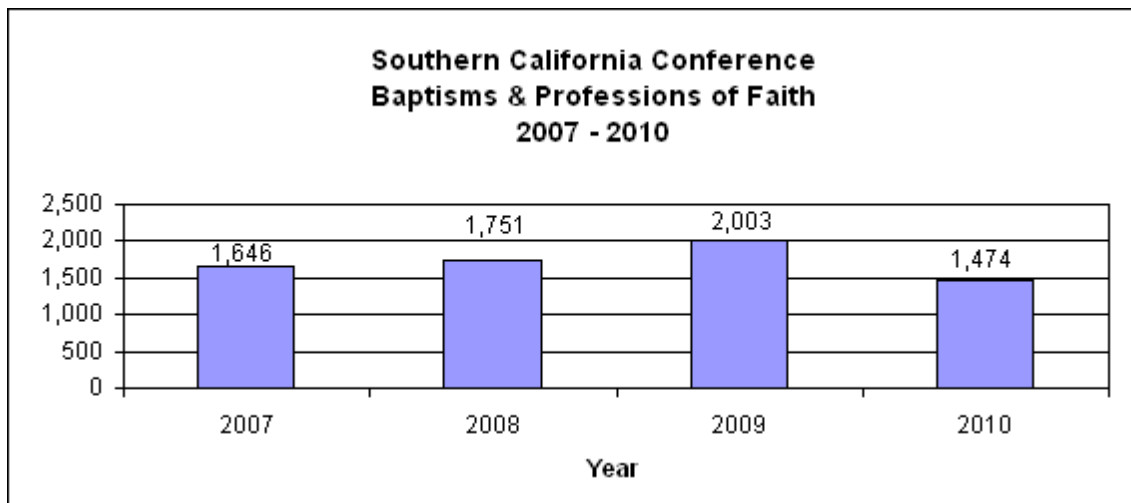
During the last four years, one of the initiatives has been to "Reach the Unreached." Two new communities have been reached through the establishing of a congregation in each of these communities: the Persian community and the Jewish community. These congregations were opened under the sponsorship of the Canoga Park Church and each of these worship centers has a regular attendance of about 35 each.

Among the already reached cultures and languages in different communities, four Groups were planted, eight attained the status of Companies, and one was organized, attaining the full status of Church.

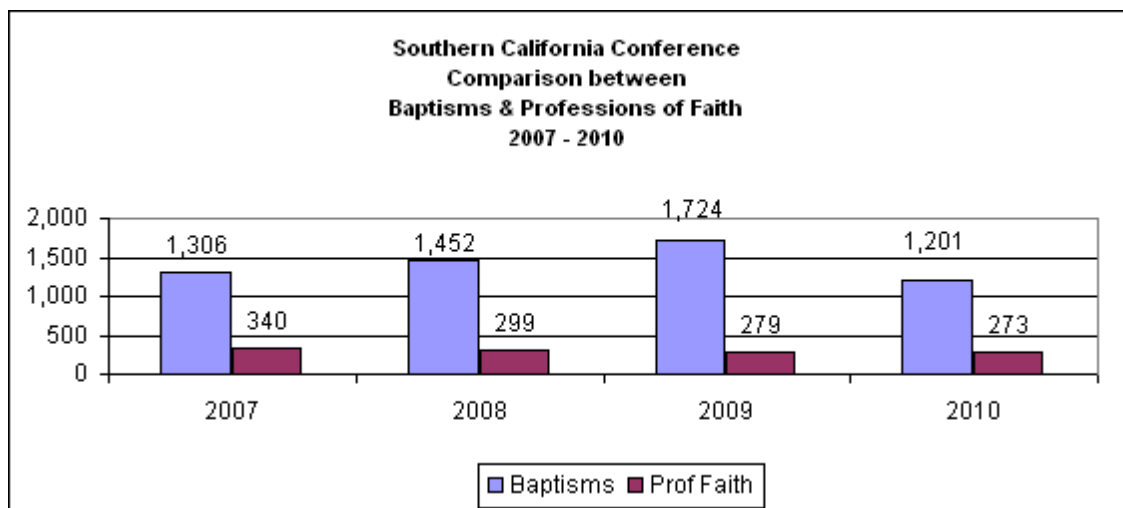
## ADDING / COMING INTO THE FAMILY

Encouraged by our conference leadership to *Tell the World* about the good news the Gospel brings when Jesus is the center of our lives, we began this quadriennium with a strong yearly rate of accessions, except for the last one (Chart A) These accessions came in mostly by baptism (Chart B)

**CHART A**

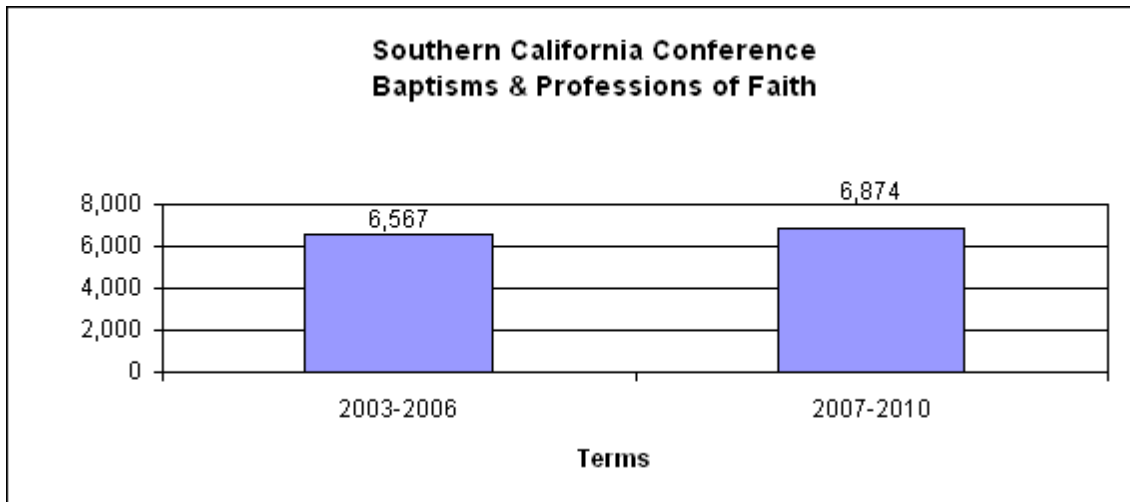


**CHART B**



Now, at the end of this four-year term we can praise the Lord for the 6,874 new members added to the Church family during this period, representing an increase of 5% compared with the previous, 2003-2006 term. These new church family members are people who have come to the Lord from among our families, our friendships, our workplace or our neighborhoods. Praise the Lord!

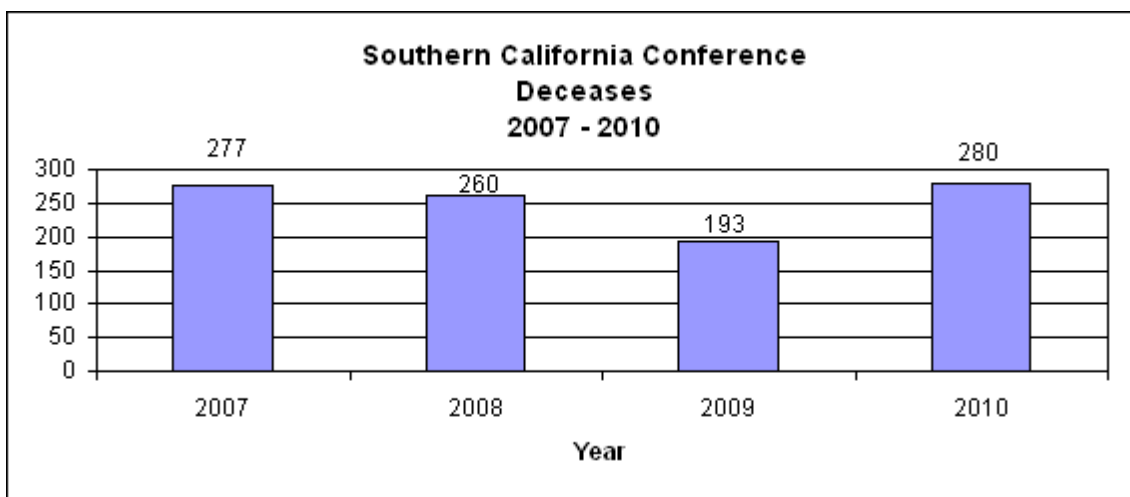
**CHART C**



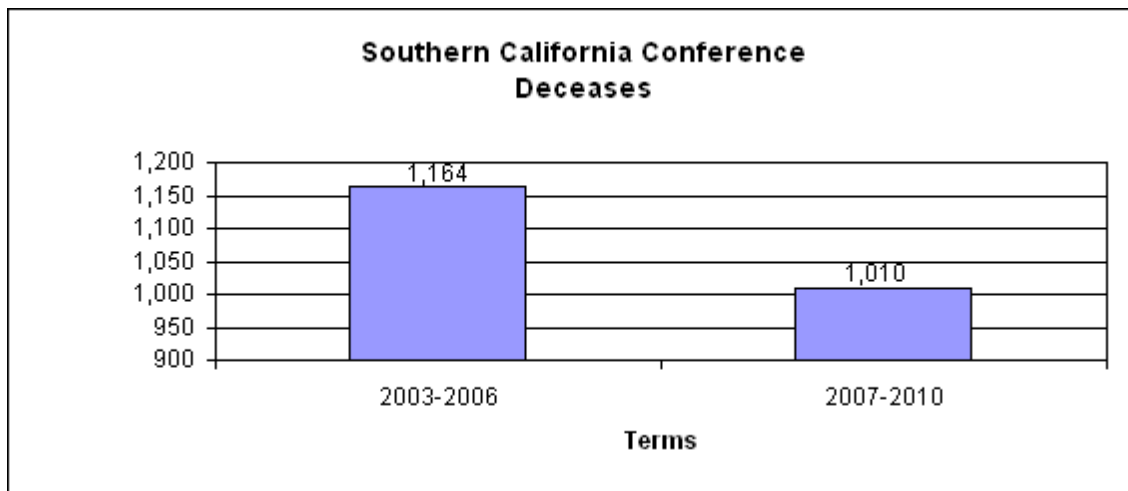
### **RESTING IN THE LORD – MISSING ONES FROM THE CHURCH FAMILY**

One record-keeping task that brings sadness every year is to record (Chart D) when some of our beloved church members pass away. However, we are comforted, knowing that this past term, as shown in Chart E, we had 13% fewer families going through the painful experience of losing a family member. We praise God for the hope we have in Jesus Christ, Who rose from the dead and has promised to raise those who believed in Him and accepted Him as His Savior.

**CHART D**



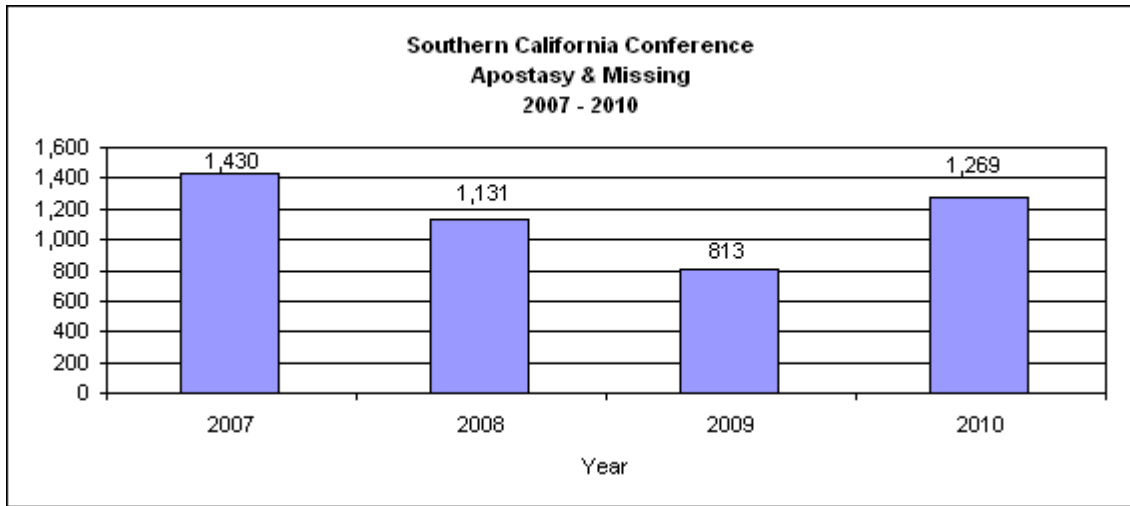
**CHART E**



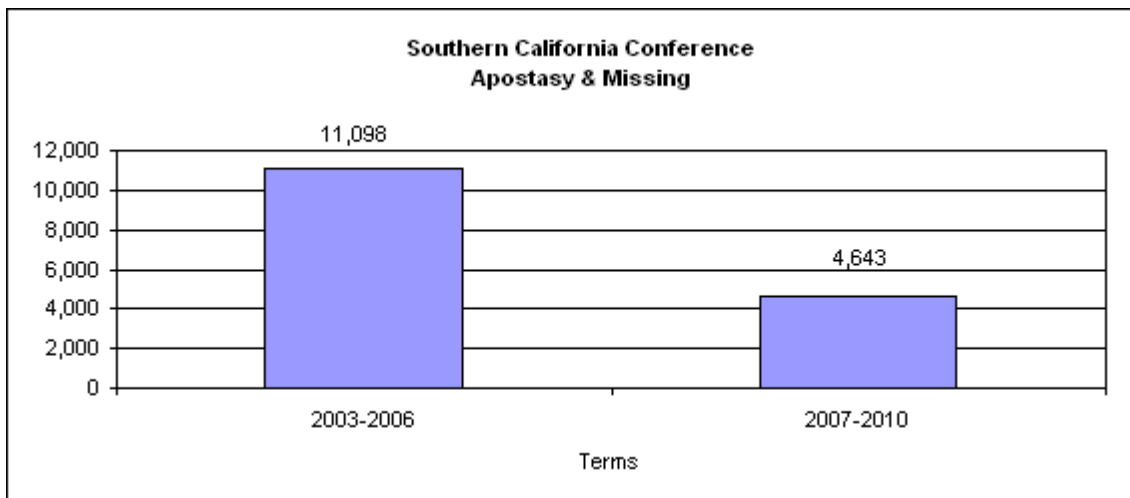
## **LOSSES IN THE FAMILY**

Four years ago, it was traumatic to inform the constituency that we were deeply hurt at the end of the term 2003-2006 by the fact that 11,098 members had decided not to continue the journey with us. At that time, I closed my report with an appeal to “close the back door” of our church and make every effort to keep every member within the family. Today, I am quite pleased to inform that the loss of members by apostasy and missing was reduced by 58% during the term we are concluding (Chart G). Although ideally this piece of the report should be “zero,” I’m happy that the “keeping the back door closed” program has been effective, decreasing this number every year (Chart F). What had happened last year? Were we going in the right direction?

**CHART F**



**CHART G**

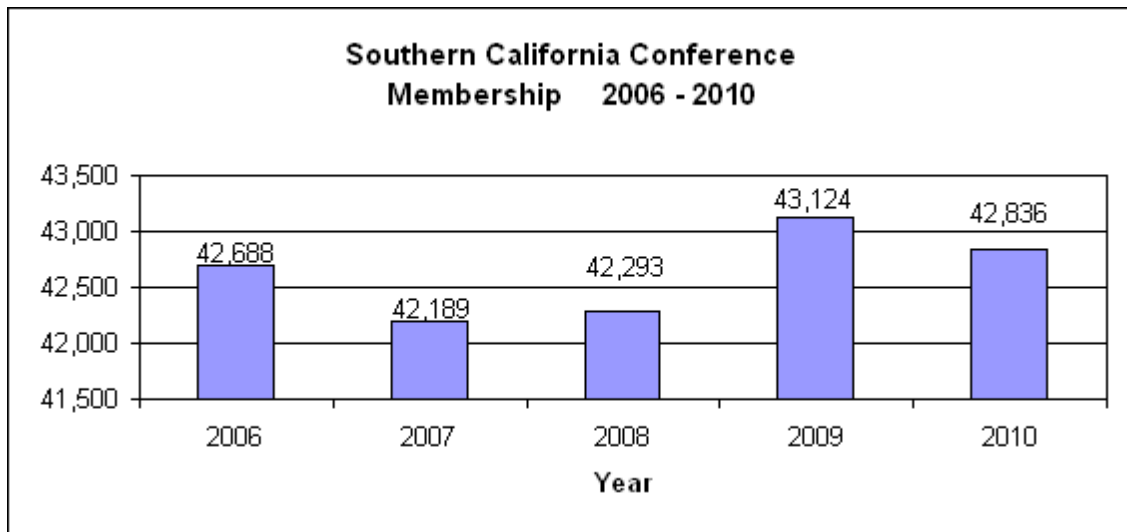


## TRAVELING ALONG WITH THE ENTIRE FAMILY

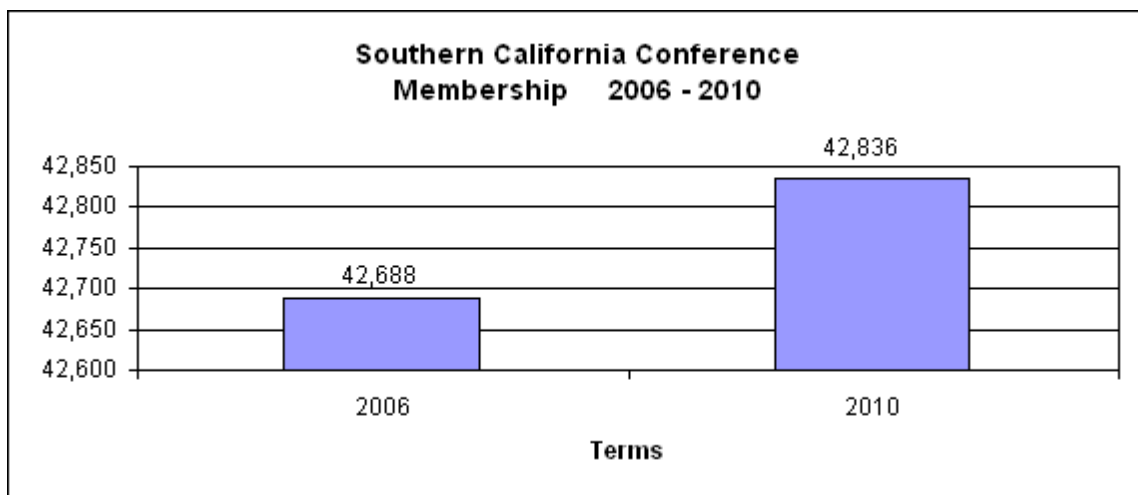
Although Chart H shows that the quadrennium started and concluded with annual losses, when the final numbers for the membership at the beginning and at the end of this four-year term were compared, we found that we had experienced a slight increase (.03%) of the total membership between the last two terms. We praise God for this turnaround, (Chart I), since membership had been in decline for the previous four Session terms.

It should be noted that we are structured by Regions in reaching our various communities. As a result, the composition (Chart J) of this united and large happy conference family still has the same distribution percentages we had four years ago.

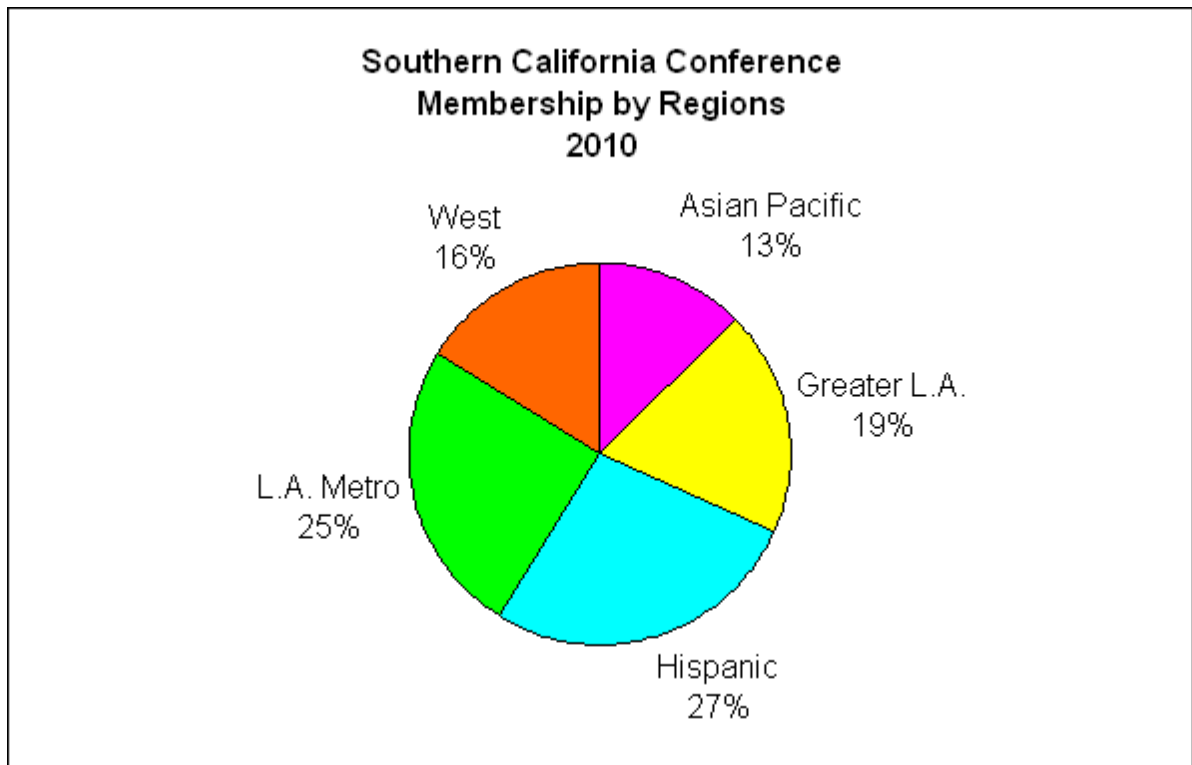
**CHART H**



**CHART I**



**CHART J**



### **A CALL TO THE FAMILY**

I conclude this report giving to God all the glory for the mighty work His church has done during the last four years.

As you have realized, we are a very diverse family housed in 152 Churches and Companies forming the Southern California Conference. Each one of its members has been brought by God from a different cultural, national and linguistic background.

Praise the Lord for His transforming grace by which His church has learned to take advantage of those differences, not to attack or belittle others but to enhance and multiply the ways in which we reach the entire territory given to us in this huge mission field in Los Angeles and its surrounding communities.

God's Church in Southern California Conference has been the depository of abundant talents and resources to communicate to our territory His love and His soon return. Let us use them willingly, wisely and with fervor. .

May the Lord keep us faithful to Him as we await his soon return. May God bless us all.

Your Fellow Traveler to Heaven,

Velino A. Salazar  
Executive Secretary  
Southern California Conference