

Resignations and Removals

A Look at 20 Years of Pastors Leaving the Ministry of the WELS

1976-1996

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Resignations and removals of pastors are nothing new. Eli should have removed his two sons from their offices. John Mark resigned his call when he separated from the Apostle Paul's mission group and returned home. In Reformation times there were troubles with many pastors. Martin Stephan barely established his American residency before stumbling as spiritual leader of the Saxon immigration. Henry Muhlenberg counseled many Lutheran pastors in trouble. Around 1930, the WELS removed J. P. Koehler from the Presidency of Wisconsin Lutheran Seminary and ultimately from fellowship. In the 1950's and 1960's quite a number of pastors resigned during the intersynodical controversy (Mischke, 2).

Around 1984 many gave special attention to resignations -- what then seemed a great problem. Groups around the WELS wanted to learn all they could on the matter. Carl Voss wrote on the doctrine of the call as it pertains to resignations. Four separate groups asked Carl Mischke to present his experience and opinions regarding resignations and terminations. Oliver Lindholm presented a 38 page paper to a pastors' conference concerning the causes and remedies of resignations.

Today many again are alarmed because of the abundant resignations that are reported on the WELS Call Lists. The use of the internet has also increased the number of pastors and laymen who regularly view and consider resignation related information. District President Widmann identifies recent resignations as reaching "epidemic proportions." Therefore, the eyes of many in the WELS have again squinted to carefully examine resignations and removals. This paper, a statistical look at resignations and removals of the past twenty years, hopes to be a lens that people can use to see the current situation clearly and put it in the proper perspective.

Reasons for Resignations

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There are many reasons why resignations and removals have continued and have even increased. However, Frederic Nitz speaks well when he says, "All of the reasons ultimately have a common origin: SIN AND SATAN."

Sin and Satan fill a future pastor's head with unrealistic expectations. Many think of the pastoral ministry in terms of only the highlights and ignore the low-lights. When they step out for the first time into a real parish, their dreams are dashed and they wish to get out.

Sin and Satan often find even a more fertile ground for sowing discontent in future pastors' wives. A District President makes this observation: "... pastors know what they are getting into from vicar year, from classes, and from discussions with classmates. I'm not so sure the wives always know what is coming (namely: absentee husband and father; challenging finances for a number of years; congregations with different personalities; distances from family and school friends" (Naumann).

Sin and Satan rule this world and use its influence to frustrate pastors. The business world is more critical of its employees and quickly fires anyone who doesn't meet with their desired statistical success. Congregations may be tempted to take a similar "hire and fire" mentality. District President Gerald Free observed this even in 1985: "Near the end of my presidency ... Congregations became more critical -- due to the way the business world reviewed their people. Sometimes congregations made demands that were difficult to meet -- then pastors became stubborn or overwhelmed."

Sin and Satan have stepped up the temptations in old ways and new. Divorce and adultery are advertised as viable options all around. The love of money still has many ways to worm its way into the parsonage and tear it apart. The computer has brought many advantages to a parish pastor but with those also many temptations to sit and play (or even work) in front of it all day and not confront situations and do what really needs to be done. All of these temptations combine for a dangerous situation ripe for resignations and removals.

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Trends and Statistics

Chart 1 (Charts and Graphs p 1-16) shows how sin and Satan have assaulted WELS parish pastors in the past twenty years. Chart 2 (Charts and Graphs p 17) puts the statistics side by side for easy comparison. It is immediately obvious that the number of resignations has increased since 1976 (Graph 4, p 21). Resignations and removals have recently overtaken retirements as the most common way men leave the ministry (Graph 1, p 18).

The increase in the size of the WELS and the number of its pastors barely minimizes this numerical increase. Chart 3 (p 22) lists resignations as they represent a percentage of the number of WELS pastors. Every year it has become more and more likely that a pastor will resign (Graph 5, p 23). In 1976 less than 0.5% of WELS pastors resigned. In 1996 alone a pastor was five times more likely with a 2.5% "chance" of resigning -- that's one in forty!

Chart 6 (p 29) breaks down the resignations and removals according to district. Every district had resignations and in fairly close proportion to their size (Graph 9, p 30). Sin and Satan have made attacks all around the WELS, hitting pastors in the Midwest and outlying districts in relative proportion to their size (cf. Chart 2 and Chart 6).

No age group was immune from resignations and removals either. The average age of a pastor who resigned or was removed was 40.2, just a bit younger than what is probably the average age of WELS pastors. Chart 5 (p 26) shows the breakdown of resignations and removals by age group and Graph 7 (p 27) illustrates it. The occurrence of resignations traditionally is more likely in the early 30's and decreases as the pastor's age increases. It also seems that it takes a while for a pastor to get in a situation or a mindset that leads to a resignation. Only 8% resigned in the first 5 years of their ministry -- a time when it would seem logical for lack of abilities and common sense, or false doctrine to appear. From 1991-96 a higher resignation percentage than traditional

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appears in the 31-35 and 46-50 age ranges (Graph 8, p 28). It is hard to speculate what causes may be behind such a shift.

The reasons for resignations and removals are much the same as they were 20 years ago though some of the terminology has changed. President Gurgel supplies the current definitions of the terms used as reasons by WELS District Presidents:

Cause is "an immoral lifestyle or anti-Biblical teaching." Personal reasons "include health considerations and/or a decision to change vocation." For the good of the ministry "includes an inability, or an unwillingness of either or both the pastor and the congregation to work together as a team. The result was a total loss of confidence so that the pastor was not respected as a teacher or leader."

It is hard to document the trends of the reasons for resignations and removals. In the past, fewer than half of the resignations found at the end of the WELS Call Lists included a reason. In 1995 and 1996 there seems to have been an effort to list a reason for every resignation. Chart 1 shows a complete listing of the published reasons for pastors leaving the ministry. Chart 3 (p 22) makes it easy to compare the years.

Resigning for health reasons has remained steady, as expected, throughout the 1976 - 1996. Cause (which also includes those listed as doctrinal reasons) and personal reasons have however recently increased. In particular, there have been many recent resignations and removals over the doctrines of fellowship and the roles of men and women. One pastor who resigned over the doctrine of fellowship lists 15 men who have left the WELS ministry for the same reason and confidently predicts "the list will be growing very soon" (Pastor #1).

Personal reasons have probably increased because of the disintegration of the family in society and the added responsibilities pastors have. District President Guse speaks about one of the most common personal reasons to resign: "'Burn out,' ... most often occurs when the Spirit's fire is put out. Family and marital problems seem to occur

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most often -- not when the pastor spends too much time in ministry -- but when he and his spouse spend too little time in the Word."

Resigning "For the Good of the Ministry" is a relatively new term, only found in the Call Lists for the past 2 years. President Gurgel describes this sort of situation:

"The number ... 'for the good of the ministry,' increased over the years. The reasons might have been many, including a general lack of respect for the office of the ministry. Also, as lay people became better educated and more desirous of active involvement in the work of the church, tension increased between the role of the called worker and the place of the priesthood of all believers in the kingdom work. Rather than each assisting the other, each group, at times, resisted the efforts of the other, bringing about distrust and misunderstanding."

Many of these situations may have been aided by the lack of movement of pastors from parish to parish. Former WELS President Mischke was speaking of resignations similar to "For the Good of the Ministry" when he wrote: "In an earlier day, when workers were less plentiful, this would have been less likely to occur. The man in question probably would have been called to another field before the patience of those involved wore thin" (p 8). Perhaps in the future, when there looks to be more and more pastoral vacancies, many pastors will be called to different congregations before they approach resigning "For the Good of the Ministry."

There are many other statistics and trends that could have been looked at regarding resignations and removals. It would be interesting to look more closely at the personal background of each pastor. Would a Prep School graduate be more likely to enter the ministry just to follow the crowd and soon resign? Would a public high school graduate be more likely to enter the ministry with unrealistic expectations? Would sons of pastors have more realistic expectations of the ministry and resign less? Or would sons of pastors be more likely to enter the ministry just because their father wanted them to and resign soon because of a lack of self-motivation? Does the current synodical push of recruitment only increase the number and percentage of resignations? What effect

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does a large or small congregation have upon a pastor's chance of resignation? These are all questions that District Presidents and pastors have raised that are debatable and difficult to research.

WELS vs. Other Church Bodies

The WELS is not the only church body experiencing pastoral resignations. *Leadership*, a periodical for Christian church leaders, has recently featured many articles about pastors leaving the ministry. WELS resignations however have rather unique feature foreign to most other church bodies. Former President Mischke explains:

By the grace of God our Synod is a confessional church body. Our member congregations are committed to a confessional position. They acknowledge the supreme authority of the Bible as God's inerrant Word. They require their pastor to subscribe to the Lutheran Confessions, not insofar as, but because they are a correct exposition of God's truth as revealed in Holy Scripture. So if a pastor or a teacher takes a position contrary to Scripture and persists in it despite admonition he has disqualified himself for future service in that congregation or for any other call in the Synod' (3).

Most churches and church bodies only dismiss a pastor if he is outrageously liberal, has made a major moral lapse or if he isn't meeting their statistical approval. Few pastors other than ^{those in} WELS leave because of doctrines.

I contacted the 10 largest church bodies in America hoping to obtain their resignation statistics. I had wished to show how WELS statistics compared with the general church scene in the US. Most of these bodies however either did not keep such statistics or were unwilling to share them. Only the Assembly of God sent any usable information. Their resignation percentage over the last 20 years has roughly remained the same at 1.1% -- about equal to the WELS' percentage in the early 1980's. In contrast to the WELS they have no noticeable increase over the past two years. An important difference to consider is the Assembly of God's large number of yearly reinstatements to

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the ministry. Apparently they have a large number of men who leave the ministry for whatever reason and then return. In fact in the last two years the Assembly of God has had more reinstatements than resignations, leaving them with a -0.45% resignation rate for 1996 -- a contrast to the WELS' 2.5%.

Other mainline church bodies probably have statistics similar to the Assembly of God because they have a similar opinion of the ministry. Even formerly conservative churches like the LCMS have lowered their standards of doctrine and discipline. One former WELS pastor makes this clear when he describes how "hard" it was to become a LCMS pastor:

Soon after my removal I sent a request to the LCMS for a colloquy. I had no idea whether I would be acceptable to them or them to me. When I actually met with them, I met the most incredible group of Lutheran scholars I had ever met. They gave me synodical certification as an LCMS pastor that very same day ... I am an LCMS pastor of an independent evangelical Lutheran church (Pastor #1).

The WELS is truly blessed with its biblical view of the ministry and its biblical zealous love for the truth of God's Word. Though there be those across Christendom that point a finger at the WELS' stance and look on resignations as a symptom of its supposed sickness of rigid orthodoxy, the WELS can disregard their opinion and look upon God's Word as the source of its ministerial strength.

Impact

Resignations and removals have had quite an impact on everyone involved: pastors, their families, the congregation and the synod. The pastor who resigns affects himself and his family. One pastor looks back at the difficult time around his resignation: "My wife and I went through the greatest spiritual trial of our lives" (Pastor #1). Also, if the resignation or removal results in a pastor leaving the WELS, often other close family members in other congregations will follow suit.

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Congregations also suffer greatly when they experience a resignation. One congregation leader describes the fallout:

Approximately 15 communicants left the congregation to join heterodox churches, some almost immediately, others within the next 6 months. To this day, 9 months after his resignation, there are still a limited number of members in the congregation who appear to be not as active as before but have still retained their membership. The congregation continues to work with these individuals with the hope the breach will be healed (Congregation President #4).

Former Synod President Mischke wonders even to what degree congregations and work of the kingdom suffer from borderline resignation or removal situations (5). But God uses adversity for his glory and even in the midst of a great tragedy he blesses a congregation. A solid church leader describes one way God brings grace from trial, "The Lord has used this adversity to drive his people into the Word which strengthens their faith and confirms their convictions on the doctrines in controversy" (Congregation President #4).

This sentence should be explained

The brethren of those who resign also feel the hurt and insecurity. Many pastors and laymen often note how much of a comfort it is that the WELS is so small that people can make an easy connection with fellow members that they meet for the first time. They only have to mention a few pastors they know to find a common bond. This same smallness means that just about everyone knows of a pastor who has resigned. Chart 4 (p. 24) and Graph 6 (p. 25) show how resignations and removals have touched each graduating class of Wisconsin Lutheran Seminary since 1960. The numbers on this chart are optimistic because the graduation year of some pastors who resigned were impossible to find. Therefore the percentage of those remaining is a best case scenario. These statistics can be easily verified by talking to any Seminary graduate and asking him to look at his class picture and count those who have resigned. Not only would the number of losses from a pastor's class tell a story but so would the sad expression on the pastor's face that announces it.

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The WELS as a whole has also been greatly impacted by resignations and removals. Chart 2 (p. 17), Graph 2 (p. 19) and Graph 3 (p.20) illustrate how resignations and removals have devastated worker supply. Up until the 1990's every year meant a steady increase in the number of WELS pastors. The past three years the relatively smaller (perhaps smaller for some of the same reasons as the increase of resignations) graduating classes from the seminary have come up short in replacing pastoral losses. And the future number of seminary graduates does not look to improve anytime soon either. This loss of manpower comes at a time when generous gifts are present to expand missions. In 1996 alone, the Home Mission Board wishes to open 30 new missions. Unfortunately it may be easier to build new pulpits than to fill them with preachers.

Perhaps the scariest statistic in this study is the 8.4% rate of resignation for the last 5 years (Chart 3, p. 22). This means that of all the pastors in the ministry in 1991, 1 in 12 resigned by the end of 1996. At that current rate, a 1996 graduate from the seminary has only a slightly better than 50% "chance" of staying in the ministry until retirement age. Imagine what this percentage would be if the resignations continue to increase!

Remedies

Many remedies have been suggested throughout the years to help with the problem of resignations and removals. Oliver Lindholm does a thorough and excellent job in his 1985 paper. However resignations should not stop completely. One District President explains why:

I don't think we can stop them [resignations] altogether, I believe that would be a mistake. It does happen ... that some will discover that the ministry is not for them. When they recognize this or others recognize it, they should be encouraged to resign -- the sooner the better. By that I mean that it is better to make a career change earlier in life than later. It's bad news when a man knows he is not suited for the ministry but has nowhere to go (Nitz, Marcus).

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Many District Presidents stressed the remedy of screening out social misfits and those without the biblically prescribed gifts in high school, college and at the seminary. Currently these institutions seem to be doing an adequate job of this. Recent history has made it apparent to all students at the seminary that they will not just be moved along no matter what. These institutions wisely seem to have adopted a policy of erring to the side of letting someone "give it a shot." Many times pastors have said that they were surprised at how excellent a pastor one of their formerly struggling classmates has become.

A few District Presidents wondered if an extended vicar program might help. In such a system, after working with several pastors, a man might be 30 or older before he is finally ordained and by himself. This would be similar to the way men became Lutheran pastors in early America and how some churches still confirm their pastors, e.g. Assembly of God. This however seems hard to implement in the current WELS situation and tradition.

Some District Presidents thought that more realistic expectations needed to be taught to seminarians. The seminary currently tries to do that -- though nothing can substitute for growing up in a parsonage. Those who graduate from the seminary today get a dose of reality from President Valleskey's sobering stories about pastors in the WELS who do or say certain foolish things. All of these stories end with "... needless to say, he is no longer in the ministry." With this current resignation epidemic, perhaps even more time will be spent in Pastoral Theology classes pointing out the real danger and numbers of resignations.

The District Presidents most strongly spoke about the use of the pastoral Circuit and the Circuit Pastor as a resignation remedy. One District President says:

It is in those small groupings that pastors grow together, where they share their lives with each other and support one another. There also the pastors' wives get to share their lives with others who will understand them, in a way not possible in the parish. The circuit pastor remains a key

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person in this equation. His leadership in pastoral relations and in being a pastor to the ministers in his circuit is vital (Glaeske).

Unfortunately many Circuits do not function as they are intended to function. And often those who need the brotherhood the most are the ones who tend to find reasons to miss the regular meetings. Pastors often seem to be too proud to seek help until it is too late. They may fear opening themselves up to a bad reputation if they reveal a weakness. District President Guse rightly is as concerned about pastors who miss meetings and conferences as he is about members of his congregation who regularly miss worship.

One way to help struggling pastors might be to use called full-time pastor counselors. These men would have time to visit those pastors who find reasons to miss meetings and conferences. These men might also be less threatening than the District President or circuit pastor. They would however work in conjunction with the District President. These men would ideally be veteran pastors who have found joy in their own ministry. Former District President Free states his opinion of such an idea: "Believe we have enough 'Giving Counselors' we need 'spiritual counselors' for our pastors -- our present arrangement of Circuit Pastors -- while good -- can't do it all -- just feel we need to do more to encourage all of our pastors." Many church bodies currently have pastoral counselors like this. *Leadership* for example lists over 35 independent camps, resorts and workshops aimed at counseling the pastor and his family (Summer 95, p. 76).

In general, pastors need the law and the gospel working in their hearts and lives. They need Christian encouragement from the brethren. They need to be aware of the dangers in the ministry and to walk carefully. District President Beckmann remembers: "President Mischke used to adjourn COP meetings with the advice, 'Tell the brethren not to do anything dumb.'" That advice would still seem to be some of the best.

Today the WELS can be thankful that they are dealing with resignations and removals well. Men in trouble are not just moved so they are someone else's headache. Real problems are not just ignored indefinitely. Even one pastor who resigned for

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doctrinal reasons had to admit that the district officers and his fellow pastors acted carefully and lovingly (Pastor #1). One pastor (#2) however did not speak well of what transpired around his resignation. ^{Many} Much of his comments can be attributed to his position in the matter, but on the other side it is true that no District President is all-knowing or perfect. But anyone who criticizes a District President's actions must admit he himself does not know all the facts either and probably not as many as the District President. Christian members of the WELS therefore must put everything including the delicate matter of resignations and removals in God's hand and the hands that God himself has called to deal with such matters, the District Presidents.

The Future

Resignations and removals look as though they will increase. Sin and Satan are not planning a vacation. The situation in the US only seems to be becoming a more and more difficult place for ministers of the gospel. It may take many years for the trend of fewer and fewer seminary graduates to be reversed. More and more congregations may as a result experience pastoral vacancies for longer and longer times. The 1996 graduating class from Wisconsin Lutheran Seminary may have less than a 50% "chance" to make it to retirement still in the ministry. Humanly speaking things may look bleak.

But the gospel and God's people will prevail. The gospel is the power of God for the salvation of the world; this will never change. Jesus too will always be with believers till the very end of the age. God, through his Word and Sacraments, will continue to bless all believers just as surely as he paid for their sins with the blood of his own Son. And God will continue to call men to speak the gospel publicly. As President Gurgel said, "Trusting in his sustaining power, until the end of time, the Lord will preserve the Office of the Ministry." Spiritually speaking then, things look wonderful, eternally wonderful!

Charts and Graphs

Chart 1

Year	Name	District	M - O	Reason	Yr. Grad	Age at Res.	Comments
1976	Serwe, Cyrill	MN	M				
1976	Gruenter						Candidate
1976	Neumann, Karl	PNW	O				
1976	Gartman	NA	O				
Total	M / O	Ave. Age	Retired	Total Loss	Sem Grad	Gain	
4	1/2		8	12	57	45	
Year	Name	District	M - O	Reason	Yr. Grad	Age at Res.	Comments
1977	Lilke, R	SA	O	Personal			
1977	Voss, Paul		M				
1977	Tassler, Verdell	NE	O	Released Health			Died soon after
1977	Toepel						
1977	Bartelt	WW	M				
Total	M / O	Ave. Age	Retired	Total Loss	Sem Grad	Gain	
5	2/2		14	19	58	39	
Year	Name	District	M - O	Reason	Yr. Grad	Age at Res.	Comments
1978	Rahn, K	WW	M	Personal			
1978	Tabor	MF NW	M				Denied Candidacy Back to LCMS
1978	Burch, D	SA	O				
1978	Krause, D	MI	M				
1978	Stievert, L	NE	O				Remained Eligible
Total	M / O	Ave. Age	Retired	Total Loss	Sem Grad	Gain	
5	3/2		11	16	60	39	

Chart 1

Year	Name	District	M - O	Reason	Yr. Grad	Age at Res.	Comments
1979	Bonow	MI	M				Felt Unqualified
1979	Sommer	SEW	M				
1979	Jungkuntz	NW	M				
1979	Weigel, Crist	WW	M				Eligible for Call Back to Germany
1979	Weishan	NE	O				Released, Eligible
1979	Zehms	NA	O	Cause			
1979	Beckendrik	WI	M				
1979	Knickelbein	SC	O				
1979	Huen, Burgess	AC	O				Released, Eligible
Total	M / O	Ave. Age	Retired	Total Loss	Sem Grad	Gain	
9	5/4		13	22	54	32	

Year	Name	District	M - O	Reason	Yr. Grad	Age at Res.	Comments
1980	Band, Floyd	NW	M		76	30	
1980	Neumann, William	WW	M		54	52	
1980	Spaude, Alvin	SEW	M	Health	74	32	
1980	Lehmann, Philip	SEW	M		62	44	
1980	MacKain, Richard	MI	M		73	33	
1980	Starbuck, Victor	MN	M		69	37	
1980	Besler, William	WI	M		74	32	
1980	Schlenner, Paul	MN	M		45	61	
1980	Fuerstenau, G. A.	MN	M	Health	69	37	
1980	Carlson, Errol	PNW	O		79	27	
1980	Randall, Neal	MI	M		55	51	
1980	Gieschen, Norbert	MN	M		72	34	
1980	Wendland, Mark	World Miss	O				
Total	M / O	Ave. Age	Retired	Total Loss	Sem Grad	Gain	
13	9/2	35.7	14	27	52	25	

Chart 1

Year	Name	District	M - O	Reason	Yr. Grad	Age at Res.	Comments
1981	Filter, Herbert	SC	O	Health	66	41	
1981	Lemke, Larry	NE	O		75	32	
1981	Wendland, M?	NW	M	Health			
1981	Gieschen, Ed	DM	O		60	47	
1981	Wille, Julius			Doctrinal	69	38	To LCMS Release
1981	Micheel, Virgil	DM	O		71	36	
1981	Enser, Dennis	SEW	M		75	32	
1981	Schalow, Doug	NW	M		79	28	
1981	Welch, Roland	MI	M	Health	53	54	
1981	Hakee	MI	M				
Total	M / O	Ave. Age	Retired	Total Loss	Sem Grad	Gain	
10	3/3	35.5	21	31	55	24	

Year	Name	District	M - O	Reason	Yr. Grad	Age at Res.	Comments
1982	Weber, Ken	NW	M		59	49	
1982	Scheuerlein, Gary	AC	O	Personal	66	43	
1982	Winkel, Herman	WW	M		48	60	
1982	Frick, Michael	MI	M		78	30	
1982	Spaude, ??	WI	M				Peaceful Release
1982	Stevens, Richard	MIN	M	Health	72	36	
1982	Auferheide, Stan	AC	O	Doctrinal	81	27	To LCMS
1982	Huebner, Phil	MI	M		57	51	
1982	Lillo, James	NE	O		67	41	
1982	Shimik, Richard	NW	M		63	45	Peaceful Release
1982	Wiley, Quincy	AC	O		73	35	
1982	Mahnke, Kurt	AC	O		71	37	
1982	Beguke??			Personal			Job Change
Total	M / O	Ave. Age	Retired	Total Loss	Sem Grad	Gain	
13	6/5	41.8	16	29	63	34	

Chart 1

Year	Name	District	M - O	Reason	Yr. Grad	Age at Res.	Comments
1983	Kuske, Theodore	MN	M		55	54	
1983	Bratz, Dennis	SC	O	Health	82	27	
1983	Hella, Dale	SEW	M		82	27	
1983	Prahl, Larry	MI	O	Personal	72	37	
1983	Drews, Roger	SEW	M	Personal	65	44	Release
1983	Zeeb, ??	NA	O	Cause	47	62	
1983	Ahlborn, Marvin	MI	O		73	36	
1983	Plocher, Karl	MI	M	Health	66	43	
1983	Schmugge, Jon	AC	O	Personal	70	39	
1983	Wille, John	MI	O	Doctrinal	79	30	To LCMS
1983	Lowry, Tim	WI	M	Personal	77	32	
1983	Fuhlbrigge, Karl	SEW	M		59	50	
1983	Schmidt, James	MN	M		76	33	
Total	M / O	Ave. Age	Retired	Total Loss	Sem Grad	Gain	
13	6/5	40.4	26	39	50	11	

Year	Name	District	M - O	Reason	Yr. Grad	Age at Res.	Comments
1984	Krause, James	WW	M	Personal	81	29	
1984	Espedal, Stanford	SC	O	Doctrinal	82	28	Candidate
1984	Griep, Gary	NA	O	Personal	76	34	
1984	Schultz, David	AC	O	Personal	78	32	
1984	Dengler, Donald	DM	O	Doctrinal	71	39	To LCMS
1984	Sabrowsky, Dan	PNW	O		62	48	
1984	Durfey, Gene	AC	O		74	36	
1984	Shook, Durant	DM	O		70	40	
1984	Uttech, Robert	WW	M		65	45	
Total	M / O	Ave. Age	Retired	Total Loss	Sem Grad	Gain	
9	2/7	36.8	27	36	53	17	

Chart 1

Year	Name	District	M - O	Reason	Yr. Grad	Age at Res.	Comments
1985	Redlin, David	AC	O	Cause	61	50	
1985	Jahnke, Ken	MI	O		78	33	
1985	Frey, Thomas	MN	M	Doctrinal	74	37	
1985	Buechner, Quin	SEW	M		84	27	
1985	Radunzel, Steve	SEW	M	Personal	79	32	
1985	Stuebs, Ralph	SEW	M		71	40	
1985	Curia, Rick	AC	O	Doctrinal	78	33	
1985	Brinkman, Paul	MN	M	Personal	78	33	
1985	Wiederich, Larry	NE	O	Health	73	38	
1985	Zwieg	Home Miss.	O	Personal			
1985	Brinkmann, ??	NW	M				
1985	Haberkorn, Keith	WW	M		69	42	
1985	Stawicki, Gary	MI	M	Health	76	35	
1985	Meyer, David	MN	M		69	42	
1985	Pinchoff, Edward	AC	O		65	46	
1985	Kauffman, Shawn	DM	O		83	28	
Total	M / O	Ave. Age	Retired	Total Loss	Sem Grad	Gain	
16	8/6	36.9	21	37	57	20	

Chart 1

Year	Name	District	M - O	Reason	Yr. Grad	Age at Res.	Comments
1986	Hähnerkock	AC	M O				
1986	Bartelt, Randall	SA	O		76	36	
1986	Bare, James	MN	M	Health	80	32	
1986	Sweet	WW	M	Doctrinal			To CLC
1986	Backus, Glenway	SEW	M	Doctrinal	56	56	To Canadian Church
1986	Hennig, Richard	MI	M		69	43	To admin. Luther Hon
1986	Kahrs, Ethan	WW	M	Personal	64	48	
1986	Miller	NE	O	Personal			
1986	Johnston	Chaplain	O		80	32	
1986	Fredrich, Edward III	MI	M		73	39	
1986	Schumann, Rob L.	WW	M		51	51	
1986	Horner, Thomas	For. Miss.	O		77	35	
1986	Fager, Lloyd	AC	O	Personal	77	35	
1986	Bourman, James	MI	M		80	32	
Total	M / O	Ave. Age	Retired	Total Loss	Sem Grad	Gain	
14	8/5	40.7	17	31	53	5	

Chart 1

Year	Name	District	M - O	Reason	Yr. Grad	Age at Res.	Comments
1987	Nuckolls, Terry	AC	O	Cause	78	35	
1987	Kutil, Jeff	SEW	M		74	39	
1987	Voss, David E.	AC	O		72	41	
1987	Winterstein, Herbert	MI	M		67	46	
1987	Winkel, Herman	MN	M	Health??	48	65	
1987	Prell, Conrad	SEW	M		82	31	
1987	Beck, John	NW	M		82	31	
1987	Punke, Leland	AC	O		82	31	
1987	Flegel, Helmut	SEW	M	Cause	62	51	
1987	Gerhard	SEW	M				
1987	Peter, Henry			Health	56	57	
Total	M / O	Ave. Age	Retired	Total Loss	Sem Grad	Gain	
11	6/3	40.2	18	29	46	17	

Chart 1

Year	Name	District	M - O	Reason	Yr. Grad	Age at Res.	Comments
1988	Sullivan, Paul	NW	M		74	40	
1988	Kanzenbach, Richard	DM	O		79	35	
1988	Terrell, Brian	SC	O	Personal	74	40	To Grad. Study
1988	Tollefson, Don	NW	M		81	33	
1988	Staab, William	MN	M		57	57	
1988	Smith, Greg	MI	O/A		84	30	
1988	Trapp, John	SEW	M	Doctrinal	71	43	Removed Himself
1988	Cooper, Larry	MI	M		66	48	
1988	Spreeman, Ed	NA	O		81	33	
1988	Cloute, James	NW	M		76	38	
1988	Horner, Thomas	MN	M		81	33	
1988	Weir, Russell	SEW	M		81	33	
1988	Meier, Ed	NW	M		77	37	
1988	Albrecht, Paul	NE	O		62	52	
Total	M / O	Ave. Age	Retired	Total Loss	Sem Grad	Gain	
14	9/5	39.4	25	39	64	25	

Chart 1

Year	Name	District	M - O	Reason	Yr. Grad	Age at Res.	Comments
1989	Lemke, Gerhold	DM	O		70	45	
1989	Busse, Carl	PNW	M		81	34	
1989	Tischer, Ron	WW	M		60	55	
1989	Ehler, David	SEW	M		86	29	
1989	Pankow, Leonard	NW	M		58	57	
1989	Wendland, Luther	SEW	M		68	47	
1989	May, John	MN	M		76	39	
1989	Miller, John D.	MN	M		67	48	
1989	Hella, Dale	AC	O		82	33	
1989	Gore, John	MI	M		85	30	
1989	Jannusch, Alfred	MN	M		67	48	
1989	Goehring, William	AC	O		67	48	
1989	Lorenz, Ben	SC	O		77	38	
1989	Kolosvosky, Daniel	SEW	M		76	39	
1989	Kilcrease, Jack II	PNW	O		77	38	
1989	Klessig, Dale	MI	M		82	33	
1989	Schultz, Erhard	MI	M		58	57	
1989	Seim, Ken	NW	M		53	62	
1989	Valerio, Arthur	PNW	O		67	48	
1989	Cullen, Orval	NW	M		72	43	
1989	Nolte	SEW	M				
Total	M / O	Ave. Age	Retired	Total Loss	Sem Grad	Gain	
21	15/6	43.6	13	34	57	23	

Chart 1

Year	Name	District	M - O	Reason	Yr. Grad	Age at Res.	Comments
1990	Krause, Mark	DM	O		84	32	
1990	Varnum, Neil	PNW	O		78	38	
1990	Gerke, Rob	PNW	O		77	39	
1990	Crawford, Michael	SEW	M		75	41	
1990	Schroeder, Joel	SC	O		76	40	
1990	Otto, Rob	SEW	M		74	42	
1990	Andresen, Ron	NW	M		86	30	
1990	Grosnick, Roger	WW	M		78	38	
1990	Werner, Ed	DM	O		62	54	
1990	Lehninger, Paul	SEW	M		78	38	For grad. study
1990	Wenzel, Mark	WV	O				
1990	Neumann, David	MN	M		67	49	
1990	Domson, Andrew	MN	M		71	45	
1990	Schalow, Douglas	NW	M		79	37	
1990	Murphy, John	NW	M	Personal	60	56	Wished for parish
Total	M / O	Ave. Age	Retired	Total Loss	Sem Grad	Gain	
15	9/6	41.4	17	32	61	29	

Chart 1

Year	Name	District	M - O	Reason	Yr. Grad	Age at Res.	Comments
1991	Grams, Tim	NA	O				
1991	Martin, John	SEW	M		73	44	
1991	Hartmann, William	SEW	M	Doctrinal	77	40	
1991	Waterman, Gordon	SC	O	Cause	64	53	
1991	Kuske, John	WW	M	Health	85	32	CRM
1991	Bell, Raymond	WW	M		87	29	
1991	Schmitz, Reuben	WW	M		84	33	
1991	Hrobksy, Dan	DM	O		76	41	
1991	Shrader, James	NA	O		83	34	
1991	Sengbusch, Caroll	MN	M		59	58	
1991	Ade, LeRâÿ	NW	M	Personal	71	46	
1991	Ruppel, James	AC	O		75	42	
1991	Peterson, Karl	NW	M		69	48	
1991	Ray, Keith	WW	M		80	37	
1991	Linn, David	PNW	O		74	43	
1991	Petermann, Martin	MN	M		53	64	
1991	Martin, David	SEW	M		87	30	
Total	M / O	Ave. Age	Retired	Total Loss	Sem Grad	Gain	
17	10/6	42.8	11	28	43	15	

Chart 1

Year	Name	District	M - O	Reason	Yr. Grad	Age at Res.	Comments
1992	Baas, A. Jeffrey	SEW	M		85	33	
1992	Farley, David	AC	O	Cause	80	38	
1992	Wahl, Roger	NE	O		76	42	
1992	Behling, James	SEW	M		66	52	
1992	Busch, Rodney	SA	O		73	45	
1992	Jackson, Gregory	MI	O	Doctrinal			Colloquy
1992	Wales, Earl	SEW	M		82	36	
1992	Baise, Derrick	NW	M				
1992	Dux, Leroy	MI	M		86	32	
1992	Main, Donald	DM	O		85	33	
1992	Schaffer, Dale	MN	M		80	38	
1992	Werre, Alvin	MN	M		58	60	
1992	Miller, Rick	MI	M	Doctrinal	87	31	
1992	Hollerup, Clair	WW	M	Cause	84	??	2nd Career
1992	Arndt, Dale	MN	M		63	55	
1992	Baer, James	DM	O				
1992	Haakenson, Reed	AC	O		74	44	
1992	Neyhart, Dale	NW	M		71	47	
Total	M / O	Ave. Age	Retired	Total Loss	Sem Grad	Gain	
18	11/7	41.9	13	31	37	6	

Chart 1

Year	Name	District	M - O	Reason	Yr. Grad	Age at Res.	Comments
1993	Ehke, Cap	SEW	M		71	47	
1993	Schwag, Michael	MIN	M				
1993	Froehlich, Richard	NW	M		72	46	
1993	Kelly Voigt			Doctrinal			
1993	Vilhauer, Dwight	AC	O		79	39	
1993	Franzman, Curtiss	MI	M	Personal	71	47	
1993	Babinec, David	WW	M		78	40	
1993	Kuenzel, Karl	World Miss	O	Doctrinal	74	44	
1993	Warnke, William	AC	O	Cause	66	52	
1993	Luedtke, James	MI	O		75	43	
1993	Gawel, Alfred	SEW	M				
Total	M / O	Ave. Age	Retired	Total Loss	Sem Grad	Gain	
11	6/4	44.8	10	21	36	15	

Chart 1

Year	Name	District	M - O	Reason	Yr. Grad	Age at Res.	Comments
1994	Spriggs, Martin	SC	O		88		
1994	Weber, Rich	NW	M		66		
1994	Jones, Ralph	World Miss.	O		76	44	
1994	Cutter, Randal	SA	O	Doctrinal	87	33	
1994	Freier, Mark	SA	O	Doctrinal	82	38	
1994	Timmerman, Robert	SA	O	Doctrinal	88	32	
1994	Rosenbaum, David	DM	O		87	33	
1994	Steiner, Steven	DM	O		81	39	
1994	Schnich, Thomas	WW	M		81	39	
1994	Bratz, Dennis	PNW	O		82	38	Campus Chapel
1994	Kelm, Dan	World Miss.	O		81	39	
1994	Brunner, Mark	SEW	M		81	39	
1994	Lau, David	SC	O		88	32	
1994	Fumow, David	MI	M		85	35	
1994	Schalert, Jeff	SC			84	36	
1994	Voss, Paul	PNW	O		91	29	
1994	Styx, Randall	PNW	O	Cause	78	42	
1994	Berg, Robert	MN	M	Cause	67	53	
1994	Schlicht, Robert	MN	M	Cause	57	63	
1994	Dumma, Scott	WW	M		76	44	
1994	Schumann, Robert	MI	O		78	42	
1994	Reaume, Hugh	AC	O		61	59	
1994	Schmätzer, Dan	AC	O		82	38	
Total	M/O	Ave. Age	Retired	Total Loss	Sem Grad	Gain	
23	7/16	40.6	20	43	33	-10	

Chart 1

Year	Name	District	M - O	Reason	Yr. Grad	Age at Res.	Comments
1995	Nowicki, Steve	DM	O		86	35	
1995	Castillo, James	SEW	M	Cause	74	47	
1995	Shuerman, William	MI	O	Cause	88	33	
1995	Bartz, Thomas	MI		Personal	74	47	
1995	Henning, John	PNW	O	Health	69	52	
1995	Martin, Scott	MI	M	Cause	89	32	
1995	Freese, Stuart	NW	O	Personal	87	34	
1995	Hohenstein, Jon	DM	O	Personal	90	31	
1995	Mutterer, Tim	NW	M				
1995	Albrecht, Michael	MN	M	Cause	82	39	
1995	Johnson, Iver	MN	M	Cause			
1995	Stadler, Richard	MN	M	Cause	71	50	
1995	Mielens, Scott	NA	O	Personal	90	31	
1995	deRuiter, Richard	MI	M	Personal	77	44	
1995	Nieman, John	SEW	M	Personal	87	34	
1995	Gore, John			Cause	85	36	Candidate
1995	Kriehn, David	World Miss.	O	Cause	77	44	
1995	Meier, Tim			Cause	76	45	
1995	Schwarz ² / ₄ David	MI	M	Health	74	47	
1995	Schwab, Rodney			Gd. of Ministry	80	41	
Total	M / O	Ave. Age	Retired	Total Loss	Sem Grad	Gain	
20	8/6	38.9	19	39	29	-10	

Year	Name	District	M - O	Reason	Yr. Grad	Age at Res.	Comments
1996	Sebald, William	MI	O	Cause	90	32	
1996	Zink, Robert	SEW	M	Cause	59	63	
1996	???sek, Michael	AC	O	Personal			
1996	Persons, Steve	AC	O	Gd. of Ministry	75	47	
1996	Schwerin, Phil	NE	O	Gd. of Ministry	73	49	
1996	Ristow, August	NW	M	Gd. of Ministry	76	46	

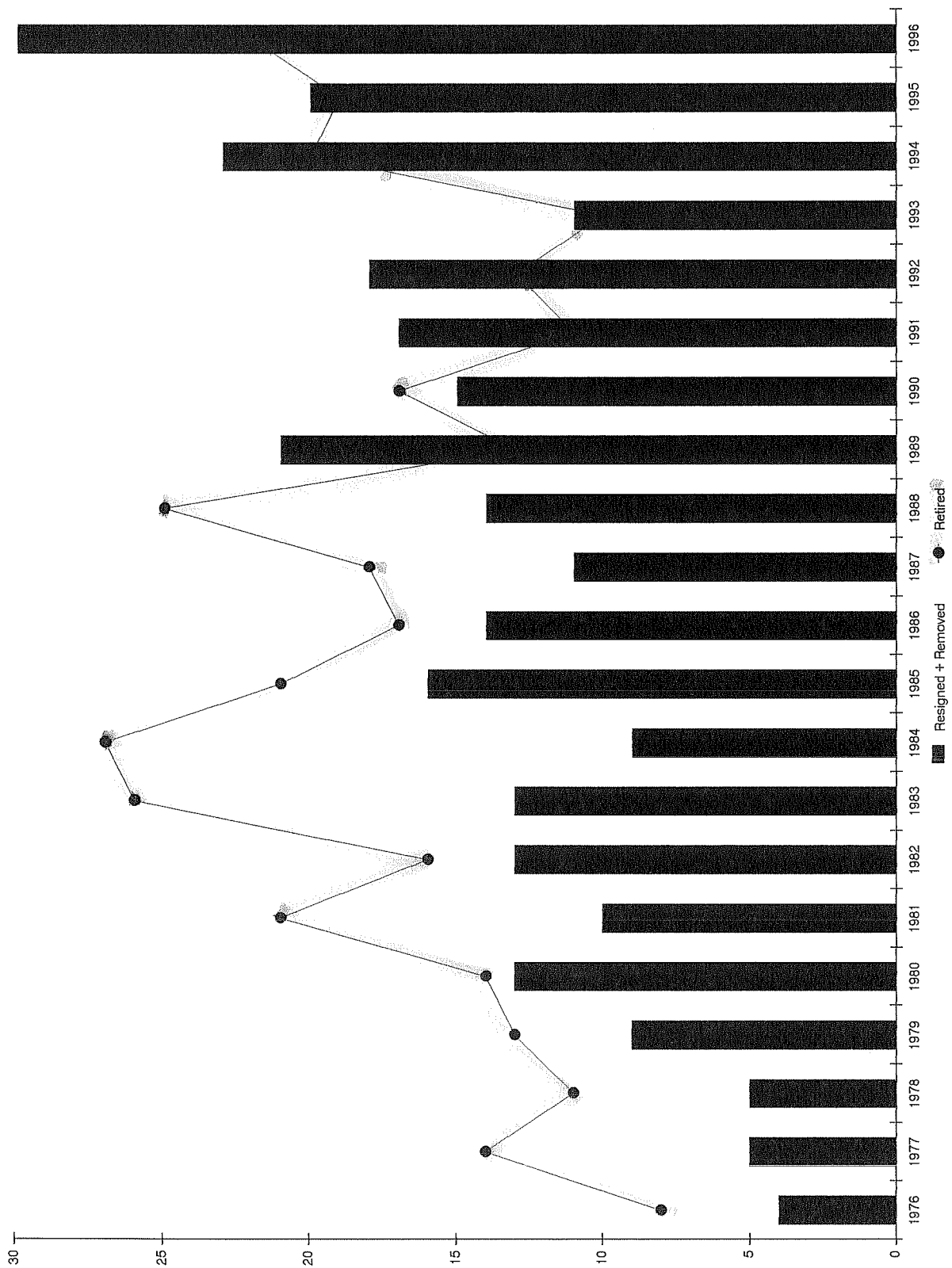
Chart 1

Year	Name	District	M - O	Reason	Yr. Grad	Age at Res.	Comments
1996	Stuebs, Erich	NW	M	Personal	90	32	
1996	Lindquist, Dan	MI	O	Personal	89	33	
1996	Zimdars, Ernest	World Miss.	O	Personal	66	56	
1996	Bendewald, Jon	MI	M	Cause	87	35	
1996	Gruen, Darald	SEW	M	Cause	73	49	
1996	Rhyme, Robert	SEW	M	Cause	81	41	
1996	Henrich, Warren	MN	M	Health	59	63	
1996	Stellick, Oscar	NW	M	Doctrinal	91	31	
1996	Frei, Thomas	World Miss.	O		91	31	
1996	Arndt, Steve	NW	M	Cause	92	30	
1996	Duford, Charles	NW	M	Personal	89	33	
1996	Grundmeijer, David	MI	M	Personal	80	42	
1996	Riley, Michael	NW	M	Personal	90	32	
1996	Winkler, Patrick	AC	O	Personal	90	32	
1996	Schmiege, Paul	PNW	O		73	49	
1996	Schoeneck, Tim	NW	M	Cause	88	34	
1996	Rakos, Joel	NA	O	Gd. of Ministry	88	34	
1996	Hasting, Kevin	SEW	M	Cause	85	37	
1996	Shuerman, William	SEW	M	Doctrinal	88	34	
1996	Peterson, Curtis	SEW	M	Cause	66	56	
1996	Klein, Scott	AC	O	Health/Personal	79	43	
1996	Richmond, Gary	MI	M	Cause	74	48	
1996	Falck, Mark	MI	M	Personal	75	47	
1996	Foley, Michael	AC	O	Personal	88	34	
1996	Halverson, Ed	AC	O	Doctrinal			To LCMS from ind.
Total	M / O	Ave. Age	Retired	Total Loss	Sem Grad	Change	
30	17/12.5	41.8	22	52	33	-19	

Chart 2

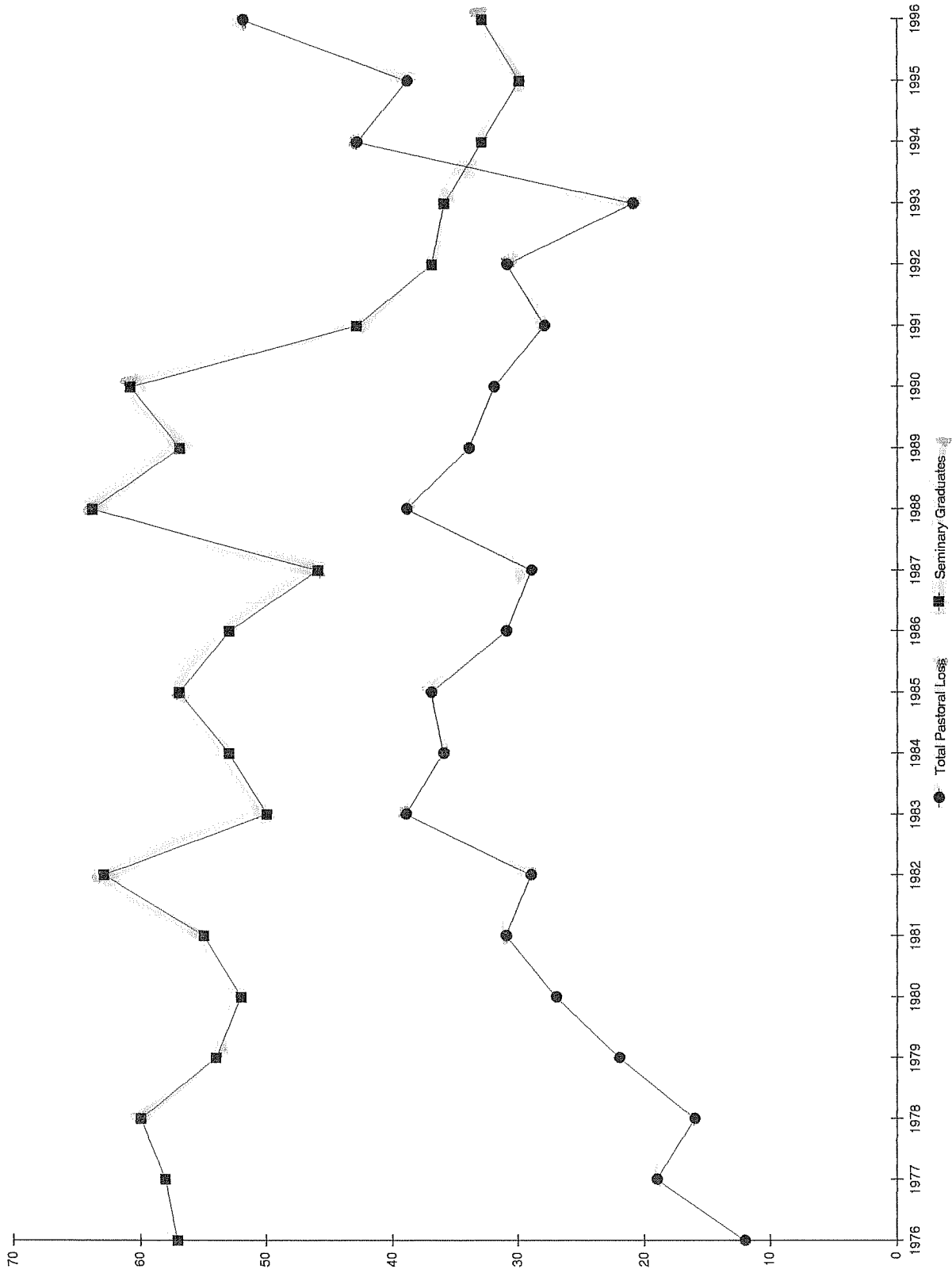
Year	# Res./Remov.	Midwest	Outlying	Ave. Age	Retired	Total Loss	Sem Grad	Gain or Loss
1976	4	1	2		8	12	57	45
1977	5	2	2		14	19	58	39
1978	5	3	2		11	16	60	44
1979	9	5	4		13	22	54	32
1980	13	9	2	35.7	14	27	52	25
1981	10	3	3	35.5	21	31	55	24
1982	13	6	5	41.8	16	29	63	34
1983	13	6	5	40.4	26	39	50	11
1984	9	2	7	36.8	27	36	53	17
1985	16	8	6	36.9	21	37	57	20
1986	14	8	5	40.7	17	31	53	22
1987	11	6	3	40.2	18	29	46	17
1988	14	9	5	39.4	25	39	64	25
1989	21	15	6	43.6	13	34	57	23
1990	15	9	6	41.4	17	32	61	29
1991	17	10	6	42.8	11	28	43	15
1992	18	11	7	41.9	13	31	37	6
1993	11	6	4	44.8	10	21	36	15
1994	23	7	16	40.6	20	43	33	-10
1995	20	8	6	38.9	19	39	30	-10
1996	30	17	12.5	41.8	22	52	33	-19
Total	# Res./Remov. 291 14.6 / Year	Midwest 151 57%	Outlying 114.5 43%	Ave. Age 40.2	Retired 356 17.8	Total Loss 647 32.35	Sem Grad 1052 52.6	Gain or Loss 404 20.2

Graph 1
Losses of WELS Pastors



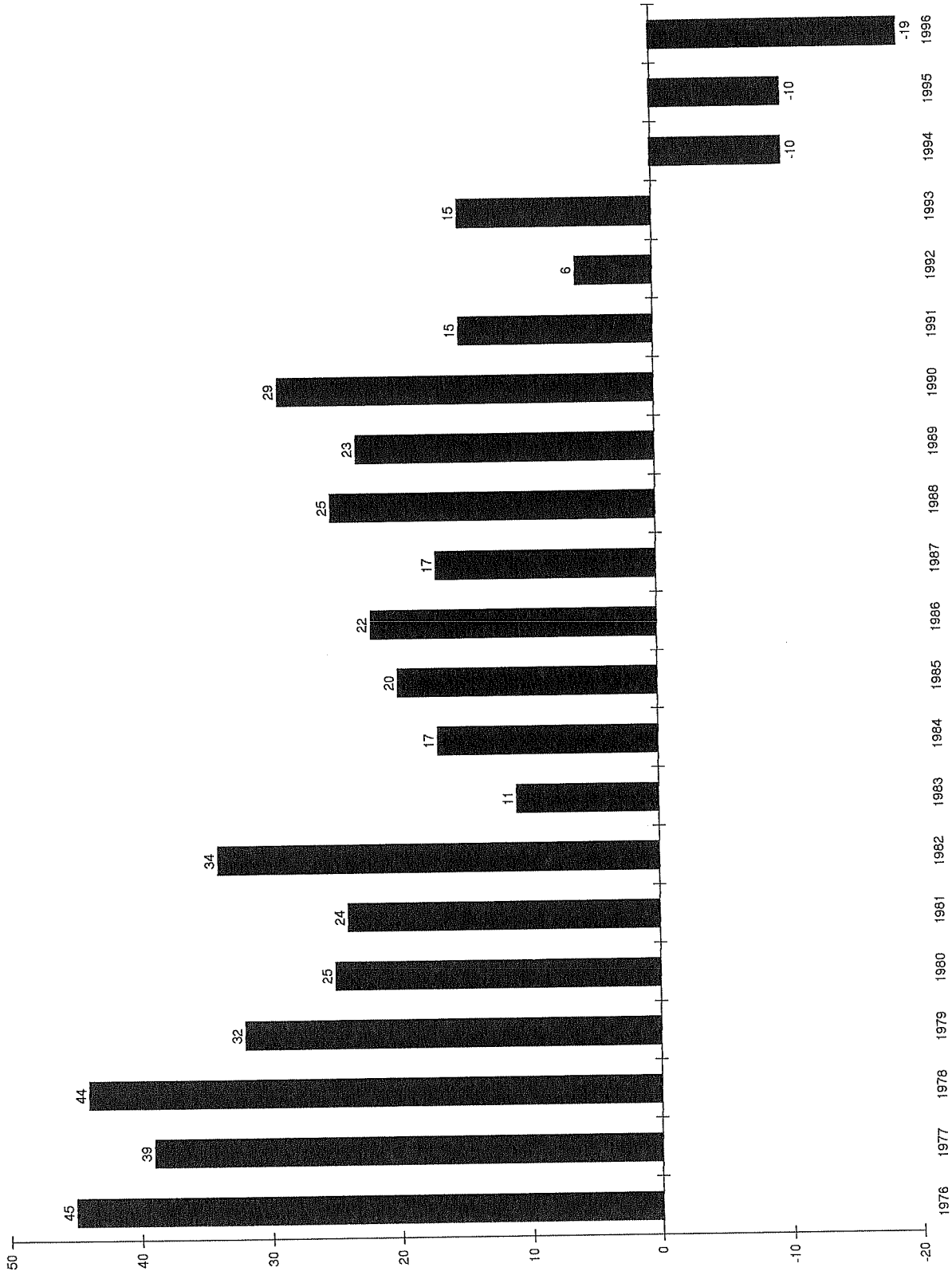
Losses of WELS Pastors

Graph 2
Gains and Losses of WELS Pastors



Gains Compared to Losses of WELS Pastors

Graph 3
Gains or Losses in of WELS Pastors



Graph 4
Resignations and Removals

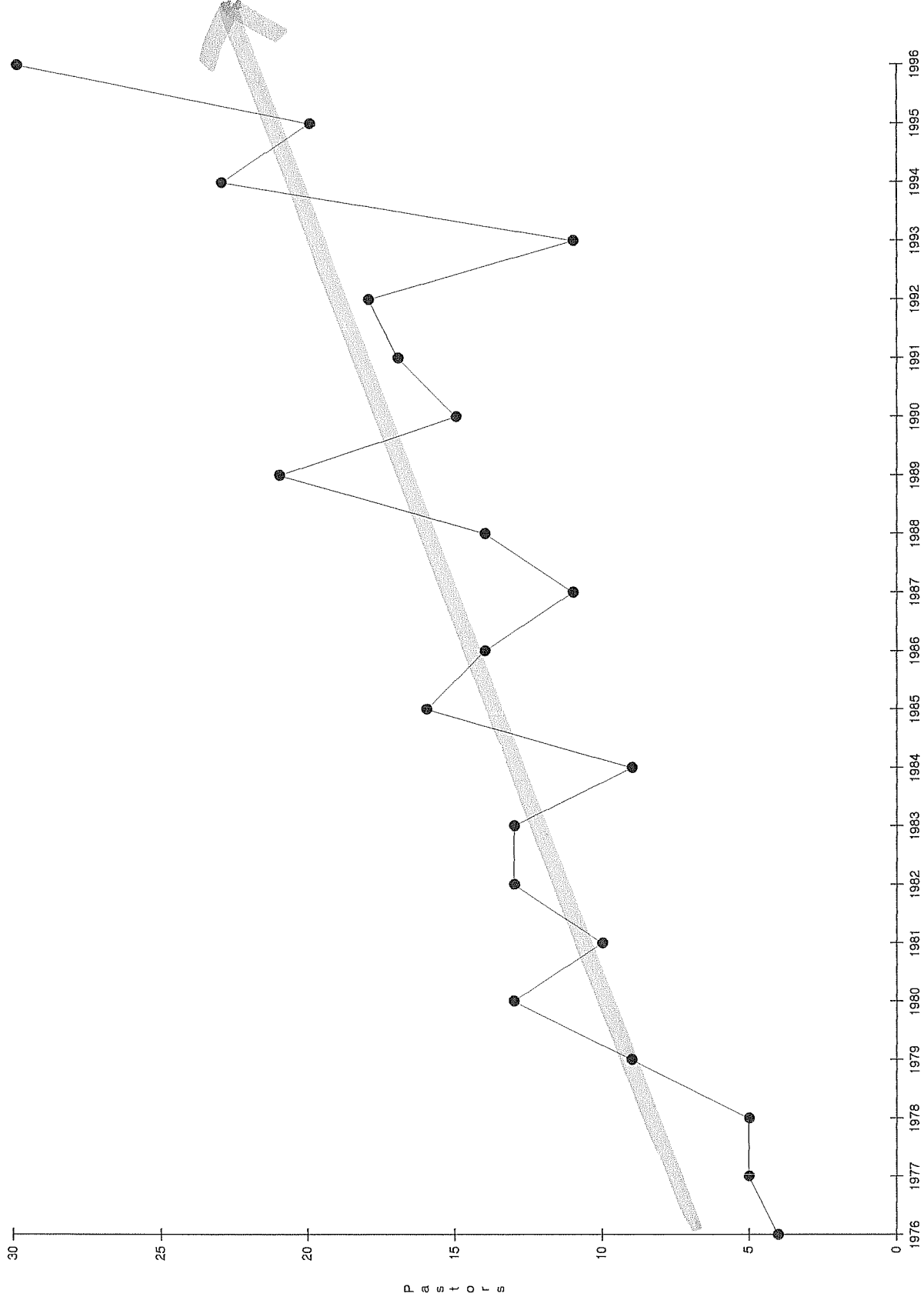


Chart 3

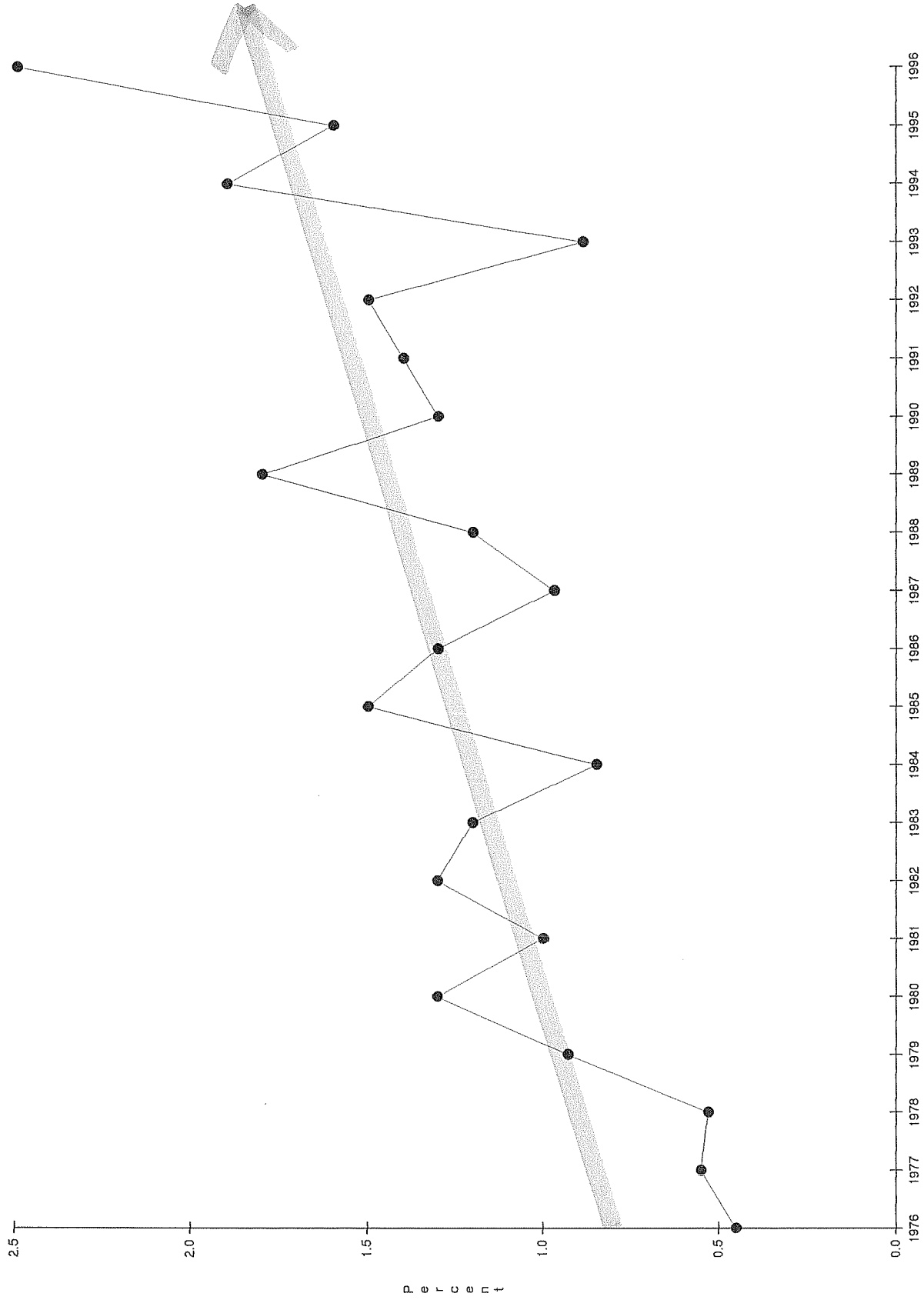
Year	Total	Synod Past	Percent	Tot - Health	Percent	Cause	Personal	Gd. Ministr	Doctrinal	Health
1976	4	885	0.45	4	0.45					
1977	5	912	0.55	4	0.44		1			1
1978	5	941	0.53	5	0.53		1			
1979	9	963	0.93	9	0.93	1				
1980	13	983	1.3	11	1.1					2
1981	10	1000	1	7	0.7				1	3
1982	13	1019	1.3	12	1.2		2		1	1
1983	13	1044	1.2	11	1.1	1	4		1	2
1984	9	1062	0.85	9	0.85		3		2	
1985	16	1081	1.5	14	1.3	1	3		2	2
1986	14	1104	1.3	13	1.2		3		2	1
1987	11	1129	0.97	10	0.89	2				1
1988	14	1140	1.2	14	1.2		1		1	
1989	21	1153	1.8	21	1.8					
1990	15	1185	1.3	15	1.3					
1991	17	1206	1.4	16	1.3	1	1		1	1
1992	18	1214	1.5	18	1.5	2			2	
1993	11	1230	0.89	11	0.89	1	1		2	
1994	23	1226	1.9	23	1.9	3			3	
1995	20	1214	1.6	18	1.5	9	6	1		2
1996	31	1205	2.5	29.5	2.4	10	10.5	4	3	1.5

5 Year Totals

	#	Ave. Pastors	Percent	# - Health	% - Health	Cause	Personal	Gd. Ministr	Doctrinal	Health
1977-1981	42	950	4.4	36	3.8	1	2		1	6
1982-1986	65	1060	6.1	59	5.6	2	15		8	6
1987-1991	78	1150	6.8	76	6.6	3	2		2	2
1992-1996	103	1220	8.4	99.5	8.2	25	18.5	5	10	3.5
Sem Grad		Retire	Resign	Gain						
1977-1981	277	73	42	162						
1982-1986	272	107	65	100						
1987-1991	263	84	78	101						
1992-1996	172	84	93	-5						

Year by Year Comparison with Percentages

Graph 5
Resignations as Percent of WELS Pastors

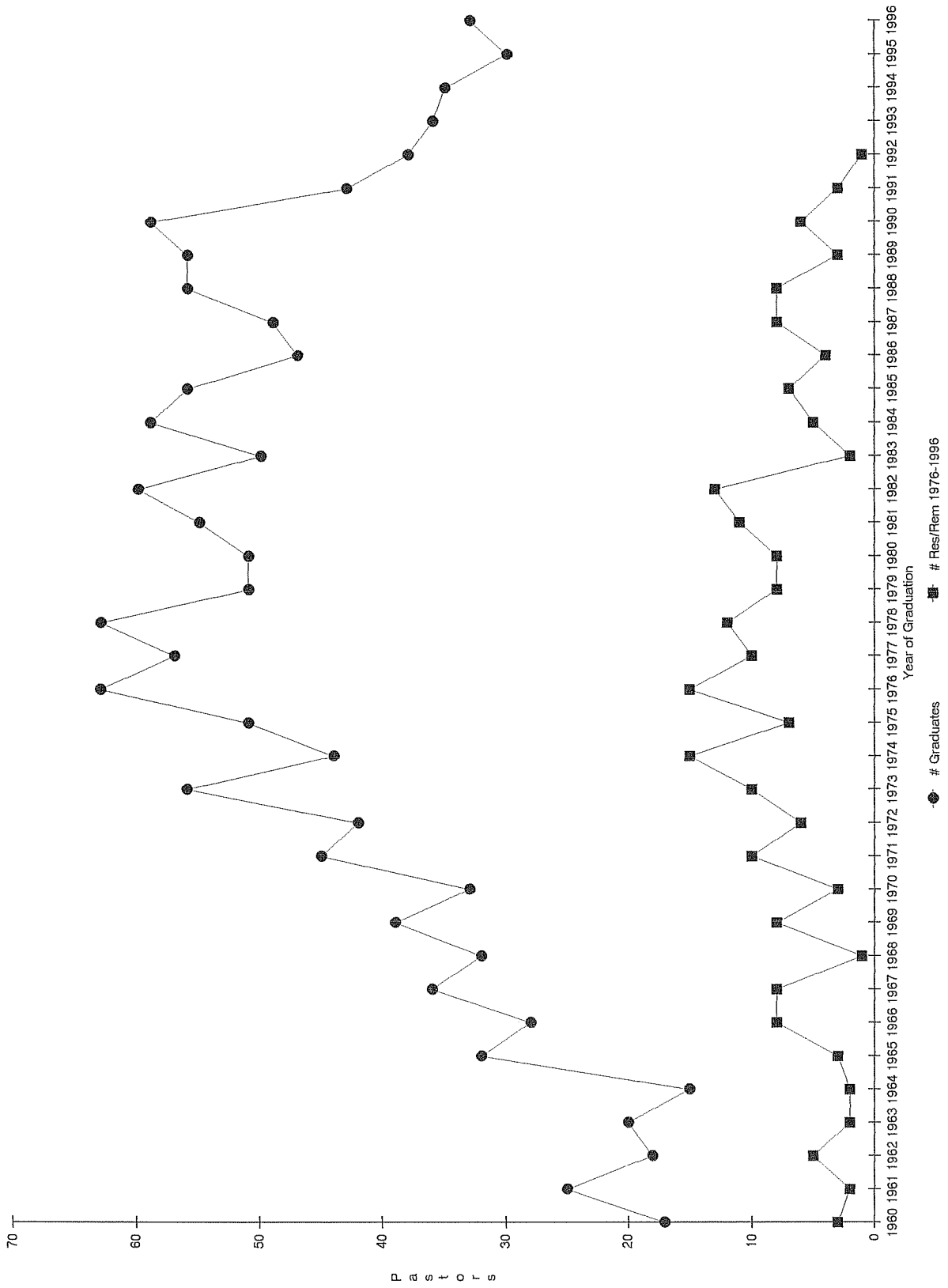


Resignations as Percent of WELS Pastors

Chart 4

Class	Grad	Res. 76-81	Res 82-86	Res 87-91	Res 91-96	Total	Remaining	% Remain
1960	17	1		2		3	14	82
1961	25		1		1	2	23	92
1962	18	1	1	3		5	13	72
1963	20		1		1	2	18	90
1964	15		1	1		2	13	87
1965	32		3			3	29	91
1966	28	1	2		5	8	20	71
1967	36		1	6	1	8	28	78
1968	32			1		1	31	97
1969	39	3	3	1	1	8	31	80
1970	33		2	1		3	30	91
1971	45	1	3	2	4	10	35	78
1972	42	1	2	2	1	6	36	86
1973	56	1	4	1	4	10	46	82
1974	44	2	2	5	6	15	29	66
1975	51	2		2	3	7	44	86
1976	63	1	4	5	5	15	48	76
1977	57		3	5	2	10	47	82
1978	63		5	4	3	12	51	81
1979	51	2	2	2	2	8	43	84
1980	51		3	1	4	8	43	84
1981	55		2	4	5	11	44	80
1982	60		3	5	5	13	47	78
1983	50		1	1		2	48	96
1984	59		1	2	2	5	54	92
1985	56			2	5	7	49	88
1986	47			2	2	4	43	91
1987	49			2	6	8	41	84
1988	56				8	8	48	86
1989	56				3	3	53	95
1990	59				6	6	53	90
1991	43				3	3	40	93
1992	38				1	1	37	97
1993	36							
1994	35							
1995	30							
1996	33							

Graph 6
 Graduates and Losses by Class

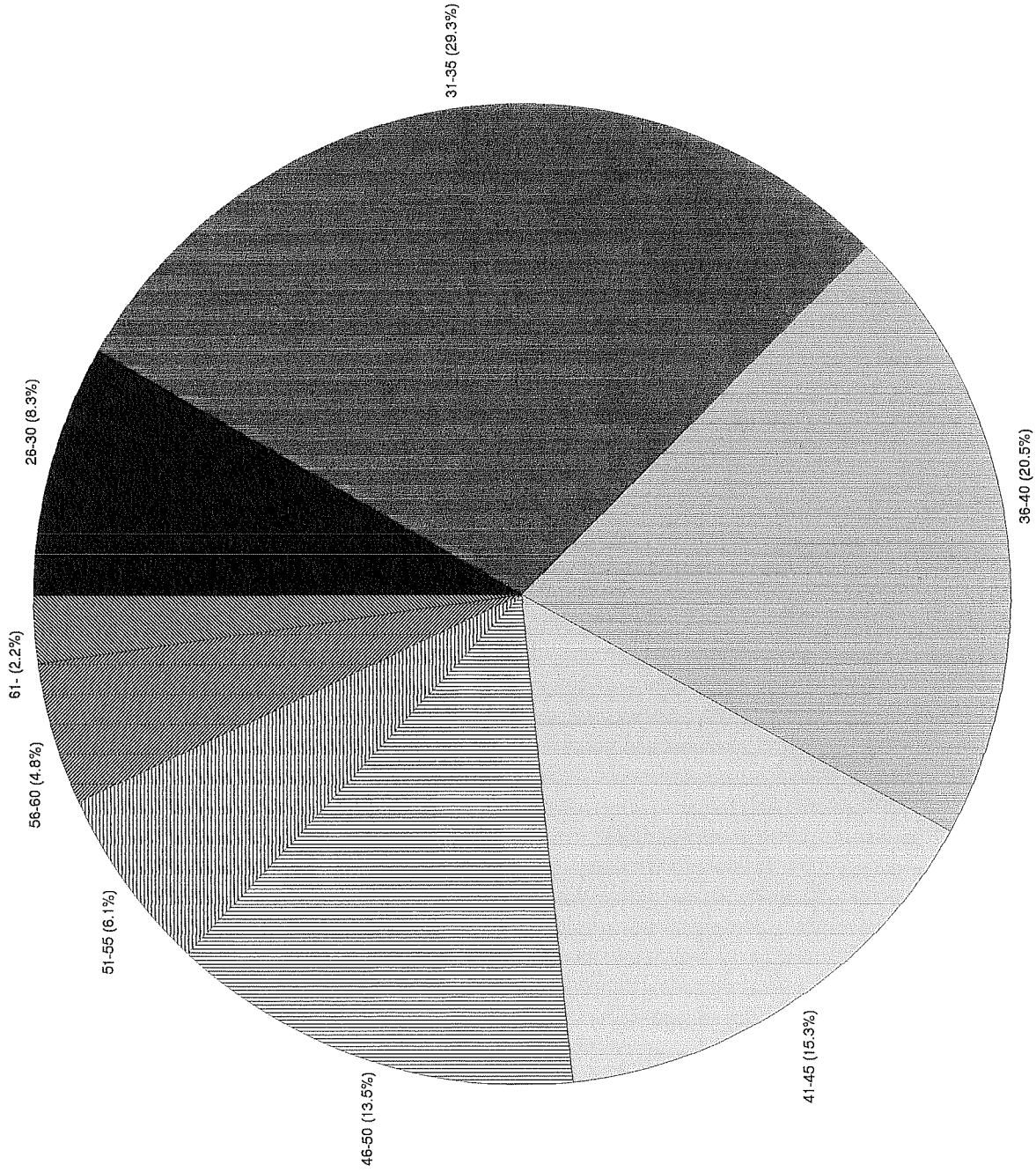


Graduates and Losses by Class

Chart 5

<u>AGE</u>	26-30	31-35	36-40	41-45	46-50	51-55	56-60	61-
1980-81	3	6	4	1	1	1		
1982-86	8	13	11	8	6	3	2	1
1987-91	6	16	17	11	10	5	5	2
1992-96	1	32	15	15	14	5	4	2
Total	19	67	47	35	31	14	11	5
% of Total	8%	29%	20%	15%	14%	6%	5%	2%

Graph 7
Resignations and Removals by Age Group



Graph 8
Resignations and Removals by Age Group

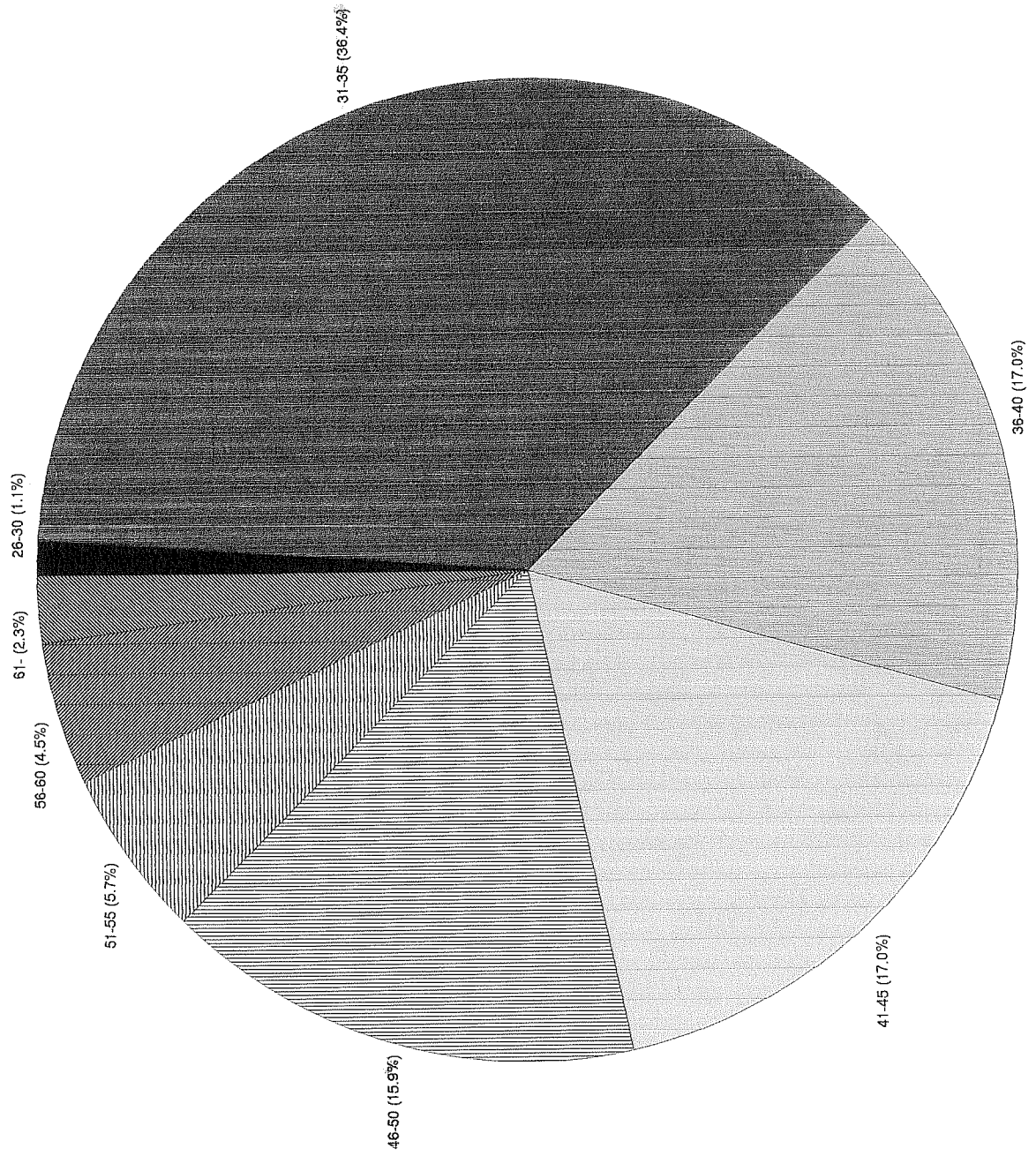
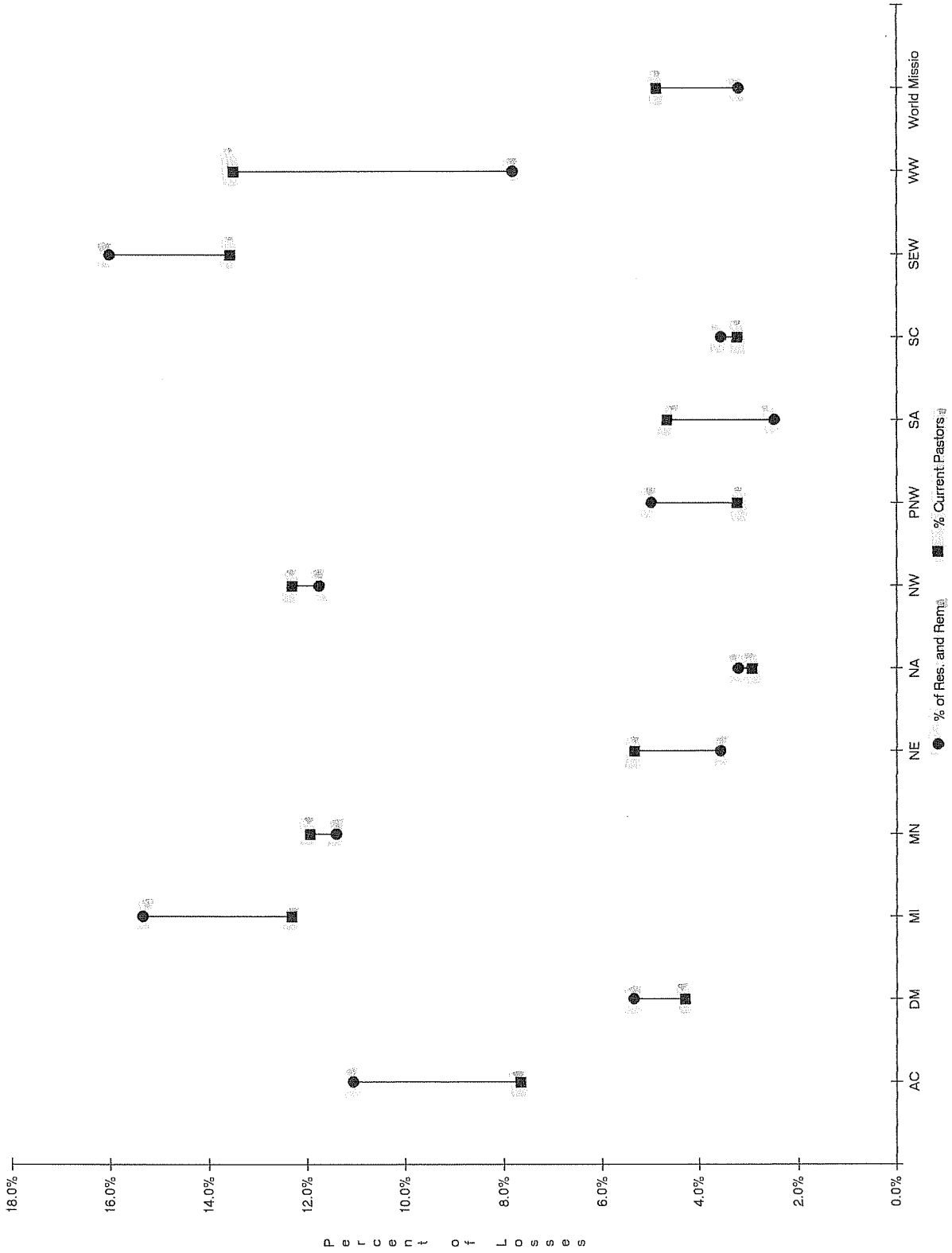


Chart 6

	<i>AC</i>	<i>DM</i>	<i>MI</i>	<i>MN</i>	<i>NE</i>	<i>NA</i>	<i>NW</i>
1976-81	1	1	7	5	4	2	4
1982-86	12	3	11	7	3	2	3
1987-91	6	5	7	10	1	3	13
1992-96	12	6	18	10	2	2	13
Total	31	15	43	32	10	9	33
Percent	11.1%	5.4%	15.4%	11.4%	3.6%	3.2%	11.8%
Total Pastors	102	57	164	159	71	39	164
Today							
Percent	7.7%	4.3%	12.3%	12.0%	5.3%	2.9%	12.3%
Of Synod							
	<i>PNW</i>	<i>SA</i>	<i>SC</i>	<i>SEW</i>	<i>WW</i>	<i>World Missions</i>	
1976-81	2	2	2	6	4	1	
1982-86	1	1	2	9	7	2	
1987-91	6		3	16	7		
1992-96	5	4	3	14	4	6	
Total	14	7	10	45	22	9	
Percent	5.0%	2.5%	3.6%	16.1%	7.9%	3.2%	
Total Pastors	43	62	43	181	180	65	
Today							
Percent	3.2%	4.7%	3.2%	13.6%	13.5%	4.9%	
Of Synod							

Graph 9
% Losses vs. % Pastor



Percent Losses vs. Population of District

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