



John H. Cress
*Executive Secretary /
Ministerial Director*

About the Secretary

John H. Cress' pastoral and administrative experience includes 30 years serving as a pastor in three different conferences: Upper Columbia, Northern California and Rocky Mountain. He also served as vice president for Pastoral Ministries for five years in the Potomac Conference before moving to Southern California Conference in 2016 to serve as the executive secretary.

John has a bachelor's degree in Theology from Walla Walla College (now Walla Walla University) as well as a Master of Divinity degree from Andrews University. He is married to Dr. Karen Cress, who is an ordained minister and has served as a pastor, the Vice President of Leadership Development and Assistant to the President for Strategic Initiatives in various conferences. She currently is the owner of "Culture Shift," a business that encourages organizations to grapple with future opportunities and develop strategic plans.

The executive secretary is responsible in assisting administrative operations, recording minutes, safeguarding the integrity of the church through the development, interpretation and implementation of policy, as well as overseeing the human resource department, membership statistics and credentials and licenses.



Luz Benitez
*Executive Assistant
to the Executive Secretary*

We recognize the following changes made to churches, companies and groups. Some will need to be voted upon in the 65th Constituency Session.

Churches Organized

To be voted into the Sisterhood of Churches as new congregations:

The Place 08/24/19

New Companies and Groups

To be welcomed as new Companies and Groups:

COMPANIES

Los Angeles Cantonese 08/12/17

Light Above 03/17/18

International..... 09/22/18

GROUPS

SPONSORING CHURCH

Good Neighbor Korean Group Olympic Korean

South Bay Korean Group Cerritos Korean

Nueva Jerusalem Group..... Canoga Park Spanish

San Pedro Lighthouse Church Long Beach

Advent Movement Hollydale Filipino

Moorpark Simi Valley

New Life South Bay

Churches/Companies Dissolved

To be voted out of the Sisterhood of Churches due to being dissolved:

Moorpark 02/28/17

Silver Lake Spanish 10/23/18

Churches Merged

Journey & Pomona 11/13/16

Name Changes for Churches/Companies

New Hope Community Watts New Hope Community
Maranata Norwalk Spanish..... Adonai
Lighthouse Community Kalēo
L.A. Central City Living Hope
Santa Barbara Bilingual Santa Barbara Spanish
Canoga Park Spanish Los Olivos Spanish
Long Beach Freeman Ave. Spanish..... Long Beach Spanish

Membership Statistics 2015-2018

Jesus Christ said, “I will build my church” (Matthew 16:18). He built it and remains the head of the church (Ephesians 1:22, 4:15). He also gave the church its purpose and its mission.

Ellen White wrote about this mission, “The church is God’s appointed agency for the salvation of men. It was organized for service, and its mission is to carry the Gospel to the world” (AA, p. 9.1). The church’s mission is described in Revelation 14:6, *“And I saw another angel fly in the midst of heaven, having the everlasting gospel to preach unto them that dwell on the earth, and to every nation...”*

The Southern California Conference of Seventh-day Adventists is committed to sharing this everlasting gospel to make Christ followers of all nations. Part of our uniqueness is that the nations of the world have come to our territory. More than 224 different people groups, nationalities and languages are present in Southern California, and it is our challenge, calling and determination to share Jesus and His soon return with each one.

Chart A below shares the big picture of our membership changes over the last quadrennium, which has led to the loss of 1,321 in total membership.

CHART A

Southern California Conference of Seventh-day Adventists Membership Statistics 2015-2018

Year	Beginning Membership	Baptism	Profession of Faith	Transfers In	Transfers Within SCC	Transfers Out	Death	Apostasy	Missing	Adjustments <i>Duplicate Members or Undo Missing</i>	TOTAL MEMBERSHIP
2015	41,691	944	163	195	525	-380	-196	-180	-556	1	41,682
2016	41,682	907	151	193	504	-385	-260	-200	-1,359	-25	40,704
2017	40,704	897	168	205	530	-422	-258	-83	-278	-23	40,910
2018	40,910	800	306	181	645	-391	-293	-99	-1,032	-21	40,361
Totals		3,548	788	744	2,204	-1,578	-1,007	-562	-3,225	-70	-1,321

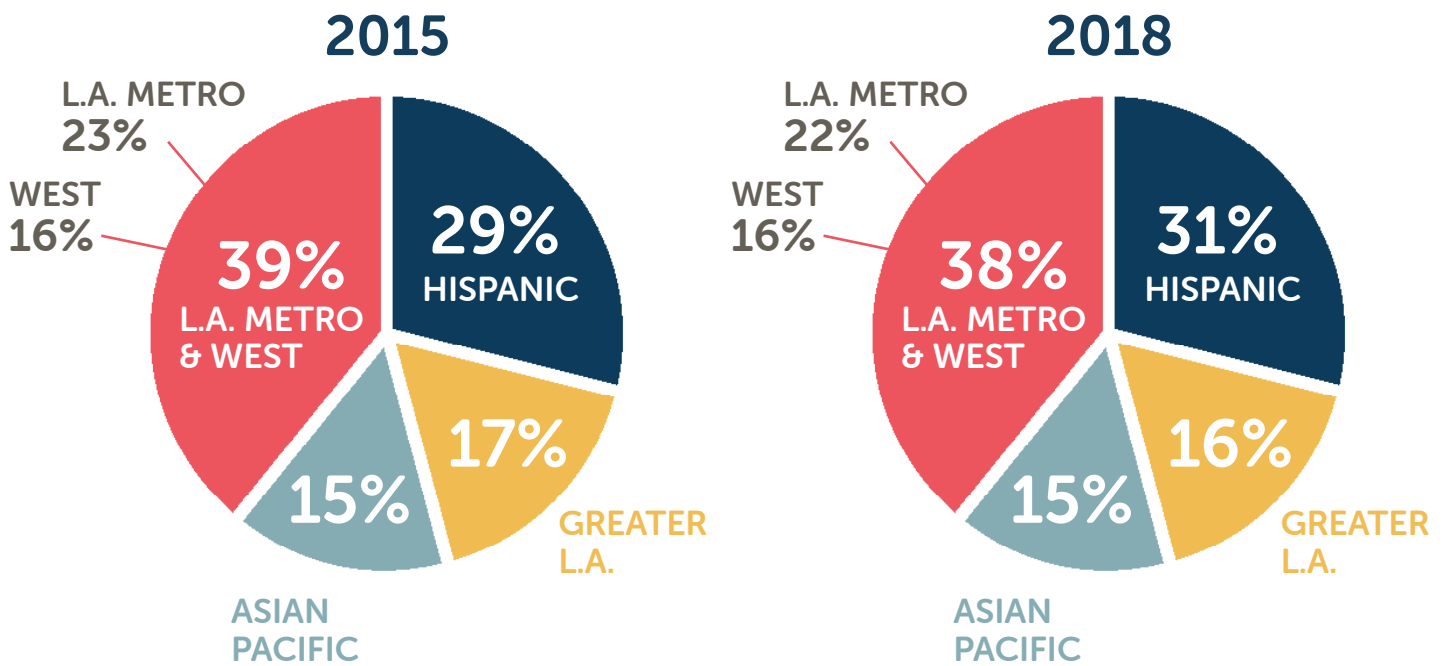
Our records show that during the last quadrennium our conference added **4,336 new members by baptism or profession of faith**. However, this is 1,154 less than we added in the previous quadrennium (5,490). While we are thankful for each one of these new members, we are challenged by this loss of mission effectiveness.

Several other factors affect our membership decline. **1)** We had almost twice as many people **moving out** of our conference than into our conference: 1,578 out versus 744 in. **2)** Our retention rate continues to be a challenge. We lost 3,787 members by **removal or reported missing**. While we are thankful that this is 1,035 less than last quadrennium (2011-2014), it continues to be a concern because it represents family members, friends, neighbors and coworkers who once were part of us but are not here today. **3)** One number we cannot control is the 1,007 members we **lost through death**. They are waiting for the day when, with us, they will look up and say to the returning King, *“We have waited for you, and you will save us.”* Let us all pray, *“Even so, come, Lord Jesus”* (Revelation 22:20).

With this loss of 1,321 members at the end of this quadrennium, the total membership of our conference is 3.3% less than four years ago. This shift in membership has slightly affected the percentile composition of the regions in the conference. L.A. Metro and GLAR have each dropped by 1%, while the Hispanic Region grew by 2% as indicated below in chart B.

CHART B

Comparison of Membership by Regions
2015 to 2018



Region	12/31/15		12/31/18		+/-
Asian Pacific	15.33%	6,391	15.21%	6,137	-254
Greater L.A.	16.92%	7,054	16.53%	6,670	-384
Hispanic	28.82%	12,014	30.93%	12,483	469
L.A. Metro	23.13%	9,640	21.59%	8,713	-927
West	15.79%	6,583	15.75%	6,358	-225
	100.00%	41,682	100.00%	40,361	-1,321

Conclusion

These numbers and statistics are only a reflection of what has happened in the Southern California Conference over the last quadrennium. They do not show the faces, families and communities that have been impacted through our networked and creatively engaged churches and schools. From health clinics to evangelistic meetings, from feeding the homeless to giving personal Bible studies, from neighborhood parties to planting groups and companies in new neighborhoods, from forming partnerships to serve our communities to inviting our communities to our churches, the Southern California Conference is determined to live the mission of Jesus.

More and more, the churches and schools of SCC are realizing the call of Jesus to His disciples: *“The harvest is plentiful, but the workers are few. Ask the Lord of the harvest, therefore, to send out workers into his harvest field”* (Matthew 9:35-38). We realize that our churches do not exist for just us; we exist for the world. The mission of Jesus has the world in its crosshairs, and we are resolute in finding ways to reach people with the hope and wholeness that Jesus offers in the abundant life of knowing Him.

Finally, I want to thank the Secretariat office team: Mrs. Luz Benitez and Mrs. Araceli Diaz for their ministry in this office serving the Conference with their administrative and clerical work. Minutes, emails, letters, statistics and even training of our clerks is done by them. And I could not effectively serve without them.



Araceli Diaz
Conference Clerk

In His Grace,

John H. Cress

Executive Secretary
Southern California Conference