

What is the ACP?

Annual Church Profile (ACP)

A brief questionnaire that when it is answered tells the story of your church year

Keeping records has become passe' to some. Churches increasingly do not see the importance or need for recording and/or sharing their yearly information. Who Cares??

Well, God cares! Throughout the Bible, God is continually instructing his people to take a count, write it down, record it for generations to come. And we care too - we care what is going on in your church. How you are doing and what needs you may have. Dr. Horn has often asked our churches to share all about their activities and what is happening. We want to celebrate your victories, pray with you over any challenges, and partner with you to find ways to reach those who need Jesus. ...Let us know your story!

ACP is one of the vehicles that helps to tell that story. It is your church's story or 'testimony'. And the testimony of your church empowers the Louisiana Baptist State Missions Services to serve your ministers and your church. Our teams review the data from each year's ACP to see how best to engage, encourage, serve, and train church leaders around the state.

Since its beginning in 1845, there has always been information collection from the churches in the Southern Baptist Convention. It's part of our cooperative commitment. At its beginning, there were 350,000 members of the SBC. As of 2024 statistics, the membership level is 12,722,266, which is trending down over the past few years from a high in 2016 of over 14 million.

But my question is – does this decline only respresented by fewer people or is it possible that it is lower because fewer churches are choosing to share that information? Are there more stories out there that are not being told? When a church does not report, they are not represented in that final total, and this has a multi-dimensional impact.

Imagine trying to bake a cake with 20% of the recipe missing. It is not practical and therefore not accurately possible. That is what we have with ACP reporting. In Louisiana, only 80% of our churches are reporting. Of that number, 30-35% only report minimal info (approximately 3 statistics). Imagine if you had to do a report on a book and 20% of it was missing and of the part you did have, 30-35% was just chapter headings without content. It would make reporting very difficult and the final outcome incomplete.

After Nehemiah completed the wall around Jerusalem, God directed him to stop, assemble the people together, and take a count (Nehemiah's words: "God put it into my heart"). This count was not just a simple headcount to make sure they had all survived - this was a testimony to God's faithfulness in preserving His people and fulfilling His promises to Israel. In much the same way, when we stop and take account each year, our hope is that we would understand that the ACP is part of our testimony to the Lord's work among us and our labors for His kingdom.