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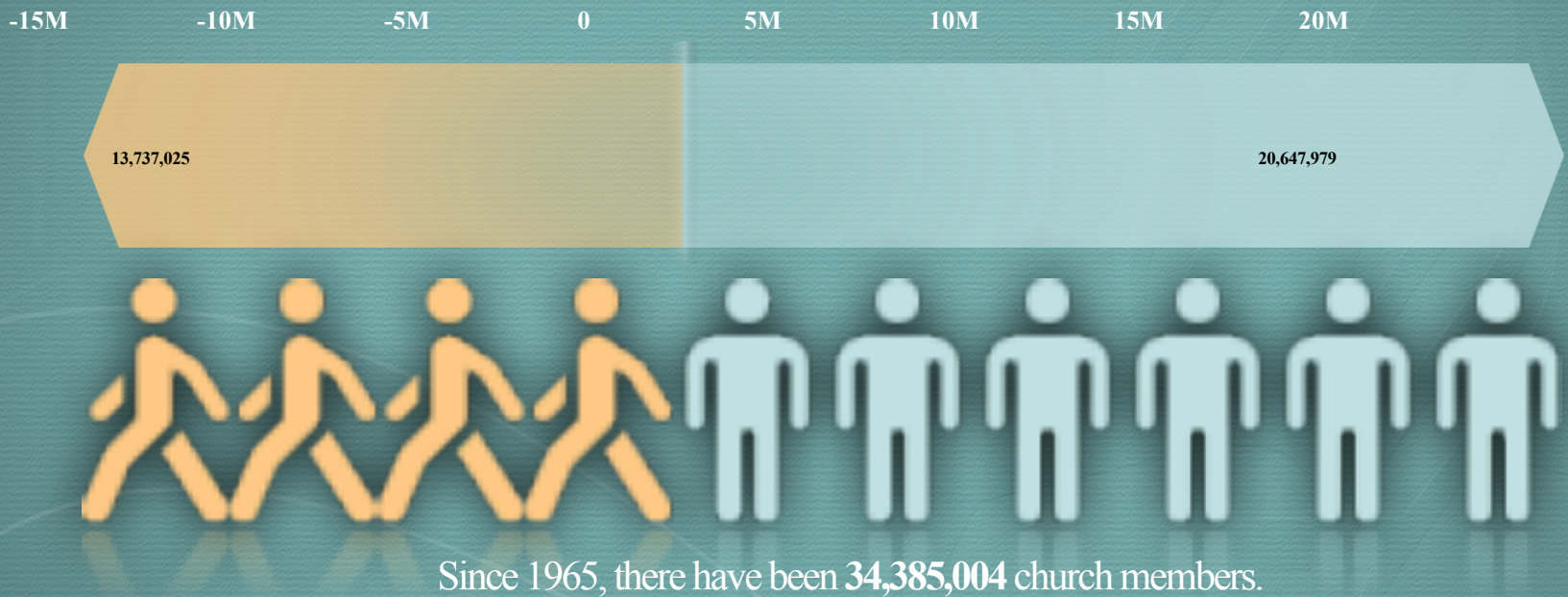
Data on youth retention, non-retention and connectedness to the Church

David Trim
Director of Archives, Statistics, and Research

Data from different sources

- Church statistics
- World survey of church members, 2012-13
- Studies of ex-members, 2012-13
- Survey of members of Japan Union Conference, 2012
- Survey of recent graduates of Adventist colleges in the United States, 2013

MEMBERS WHO LEAVE



Members who left

Members who stayed

Since 1965, there have been **34,385,004** church members.
Of those, **13,737,025** (or more) have chosen to leave the church.

Our net loss rate is 39.95%

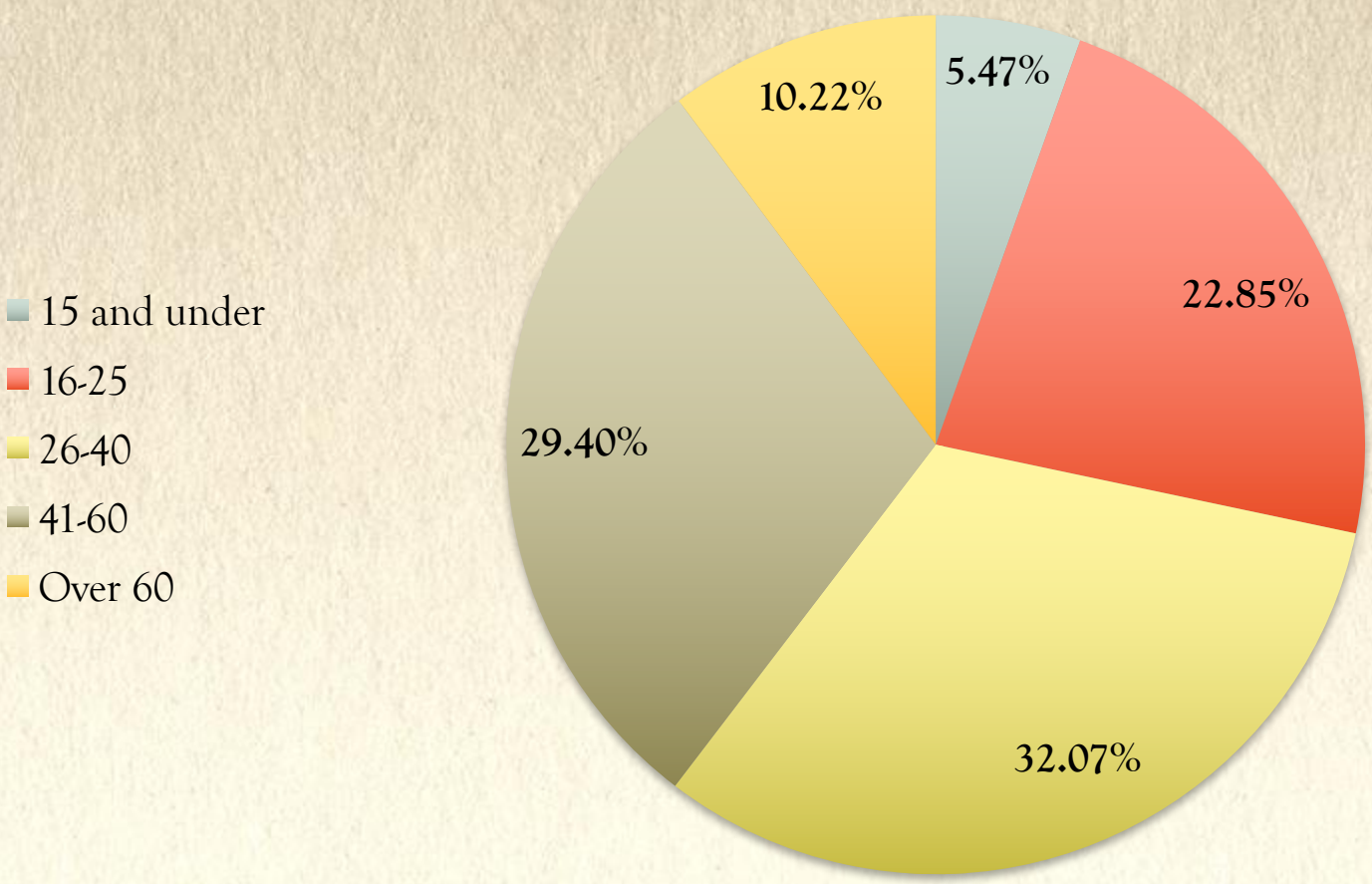
In effect, at least four members have slipped away
for every ten who were in the church.

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What percentage of that 40% are young people?

- We don't know for certain because we don't currently collect and report age data in statistical reports
- That can be done with membership software and so that is another reason for membership software to be adopted and implemented very widely–better insights!
- But surveys reveal that young people make up a very large proportion of the 40%, though it varies around the world

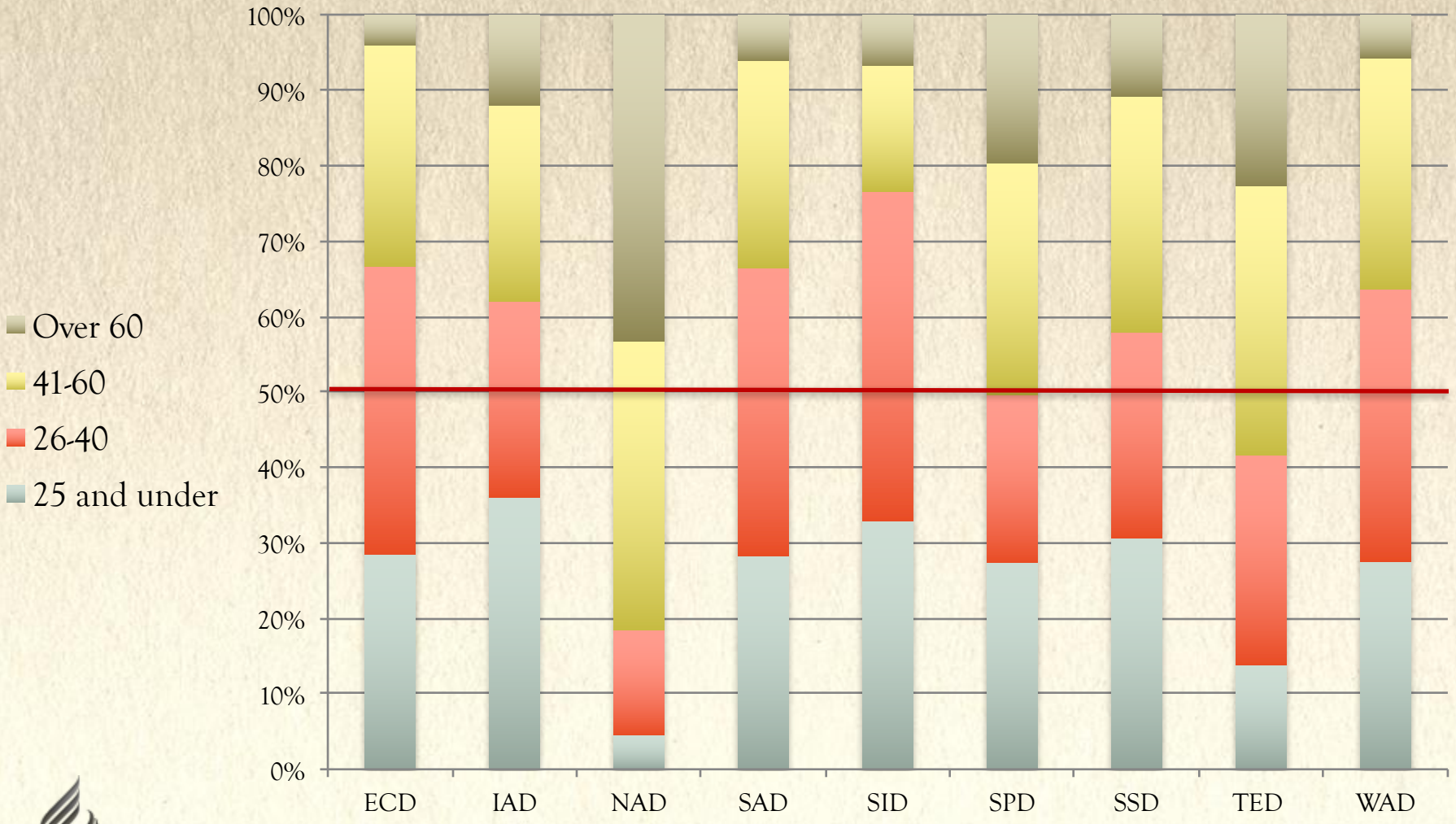
Total age distribution (2013 survey)



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Age distribution by divisions (2013)



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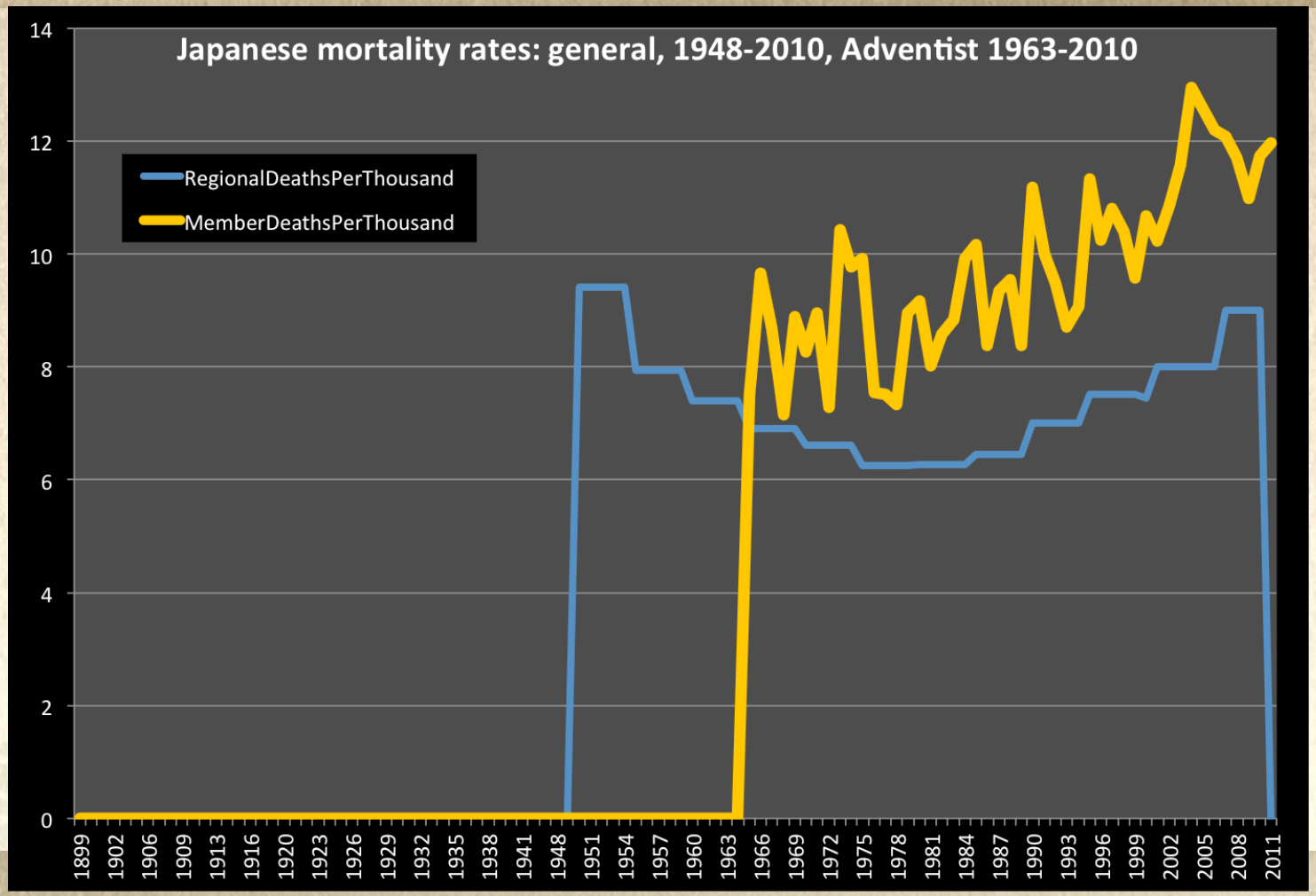
Demographics, World and North America

- The median age of a Seventh-day Adventist worldwide is 32
- In a 2008 study, the median age of a North American Seventh-day Adventist was 51
- In contrast the median age of the population in North America was 37

Demographics, Japan

- Japan is the oldest society in the world
- But the Seventh-day Adventist Church's mortality rate has exceeded general mortality in Japan since 1973
- In other words, Japanese Adventists are older than Japanese society as a whole

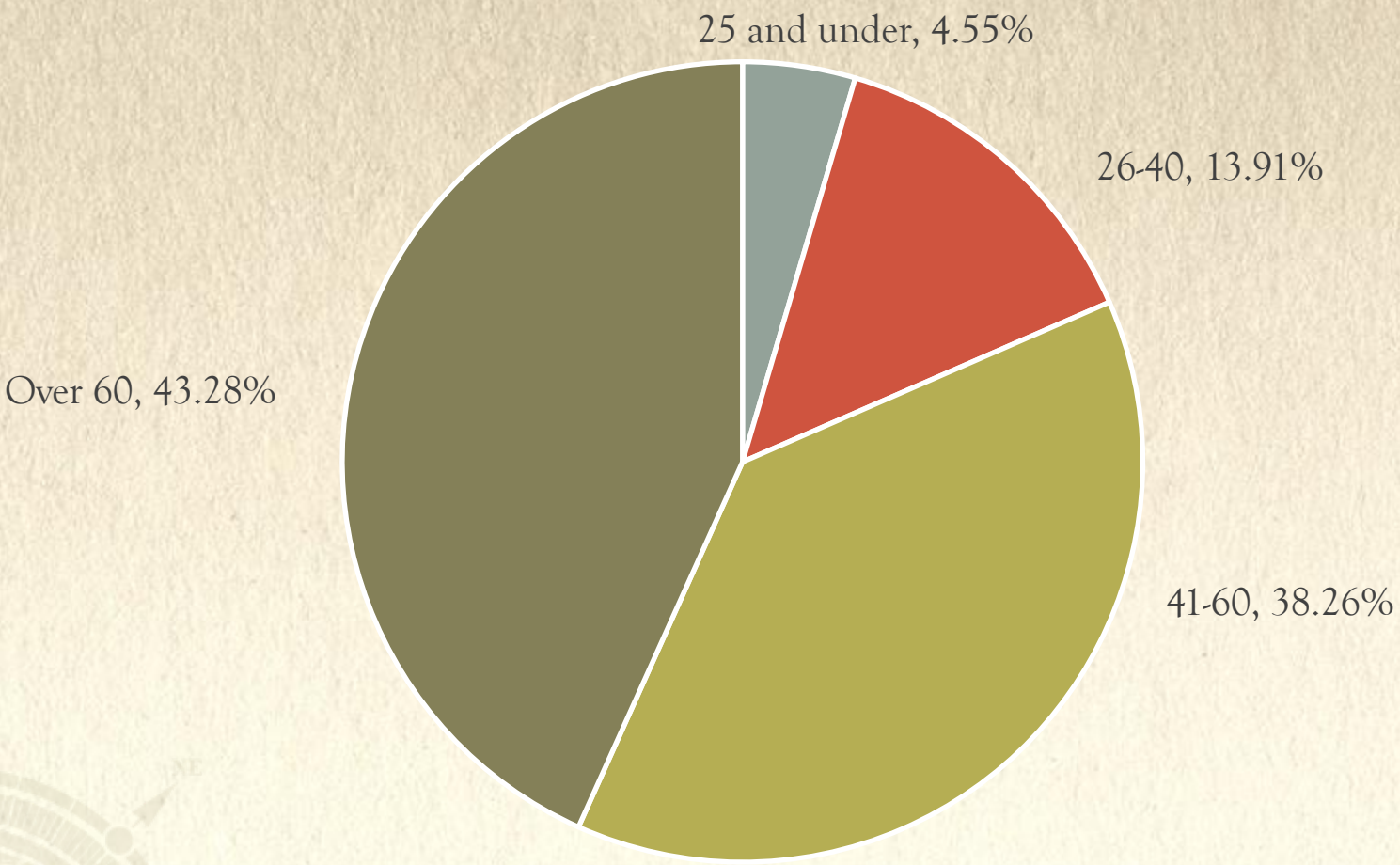
Demographics in Japan



(2013 survey)

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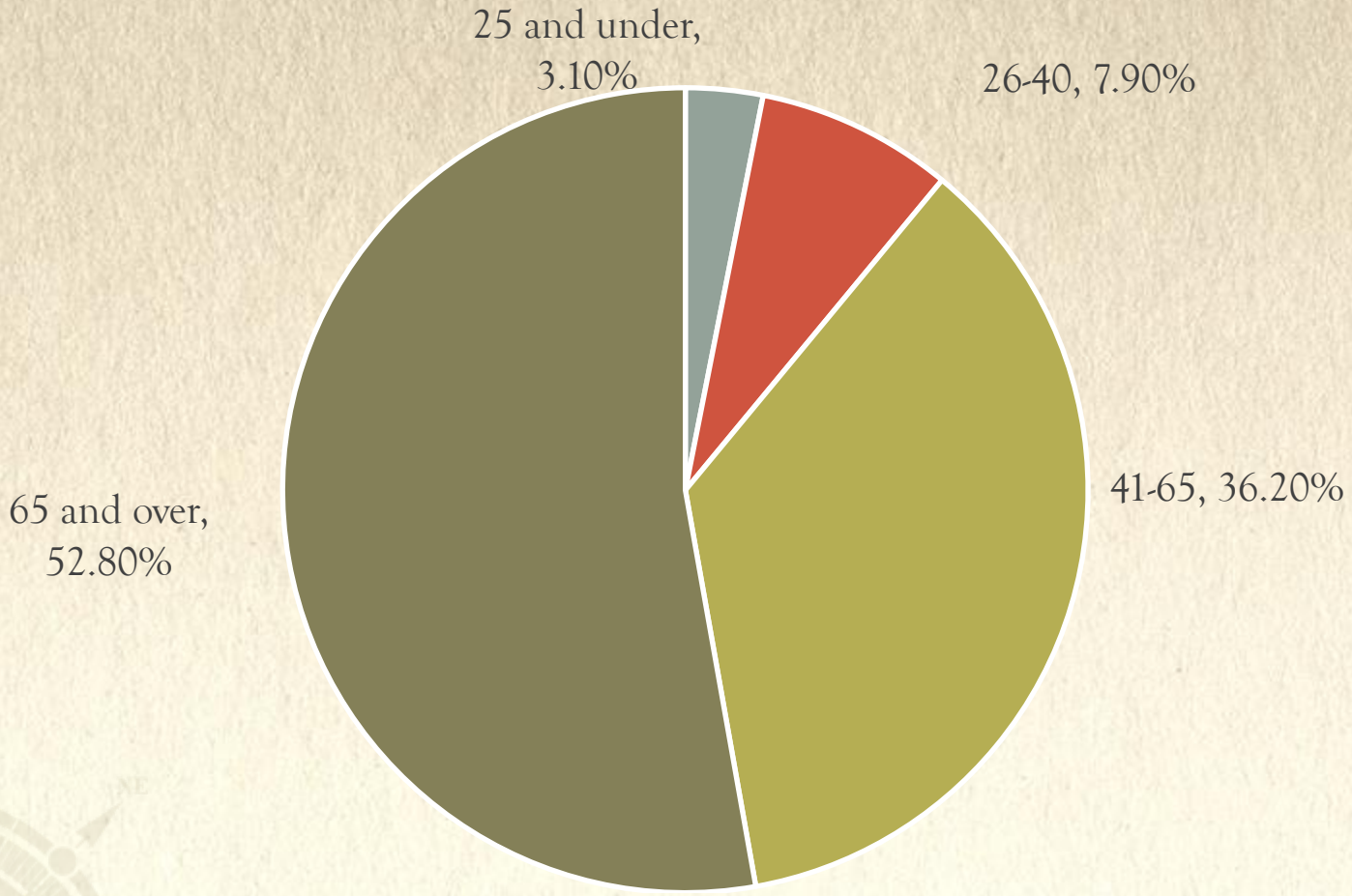
Age of Church Members, NAD



(2013 world survey)

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Age of Church Members, Japan Union



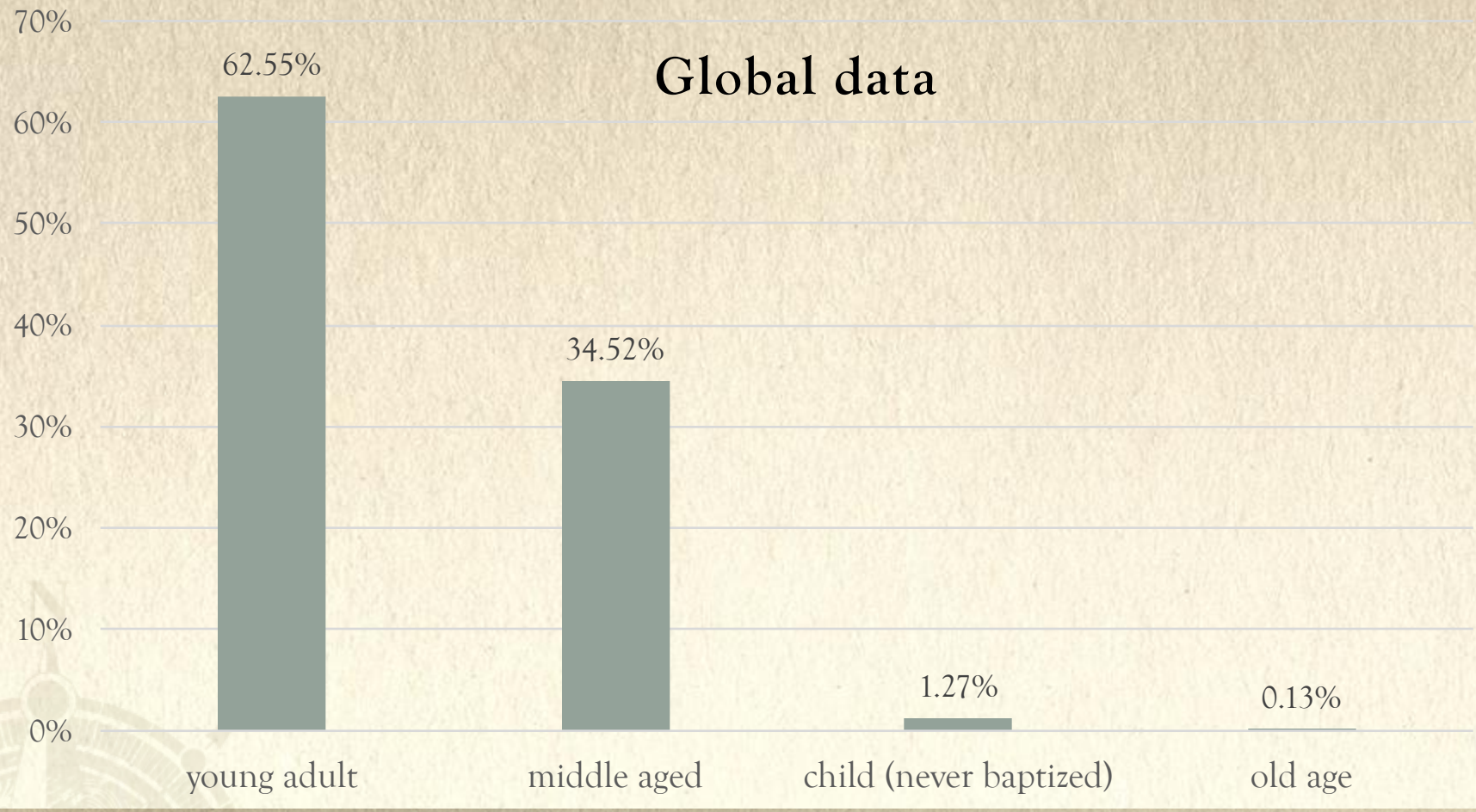
(2012 Japan Union survey)

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Where are the young people?

- Young people are being born into the church and some being won into the church—so why are our demographics in some parts of the world so tilted towards older people?
- The young people have left!
- And **not only** in NAD, Japan Union, or other entities (e.g. in Europe) with aging memberships: of the 40% who are leaving around the world, the surveys of ex-members show that a large proportion are our youth

Where are the young people?



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(2012 survey of former members)

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Why did they leave? (1)

2013 qualitative study of ex-members: "Most Important Reasons"

28% No big issue; I just drifted away
25% Lack of compassion for the hurting
19% Moral failure on my part
18% I did not fit in
14% Too much focus on minor issues
13% Conflict in the congregation
12% Moral failures of members
11% Moral failures of leaders
11% Pressure from family or friends
10% Race, ethnic or tribal issues

Why did they leave? (2)

2012 study of ex-members—results true across all age groups

