

# **What is appropriate evangelism within the Methodist Church?**

- Where is the Methodist Church making more followers of Jesus Christ?
- What are the factors which enable and inhibit this evangelism?

# Methodology

- Mixed methods, empirical research
- Statistics for Mission
- Questionnaires
- Case studies

# Culture and Context

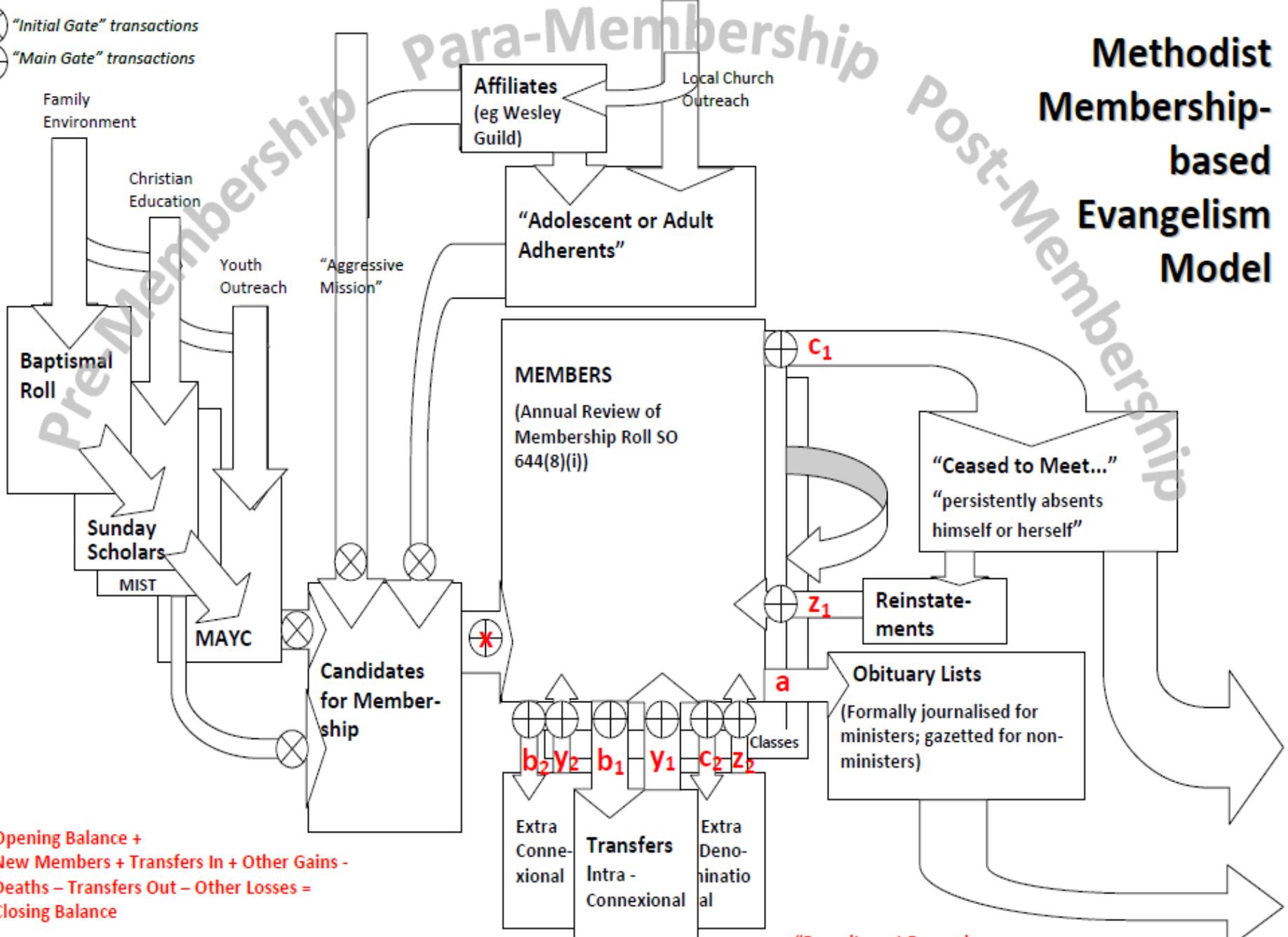
- Vocation to whole-life commitment (“discipleship”)
- Individually addressed (list *names* to count numbers)
- Purposeful invitation (“initial gate” transactions) ⊗
- Formal endorsement (“main gate” transactions) ⊗
- Periodic review (SO 054(5): “examine the roll by name... not less than once in each year”) ⊕
- Systematic reporting (“annual membership balance sheet”)

⊗ "Initial Gate" transactions  
 ⊕ "Main Gate" transactions

Para-Membership

Post-Membership

# Methodist Membership-based Evangelism Model

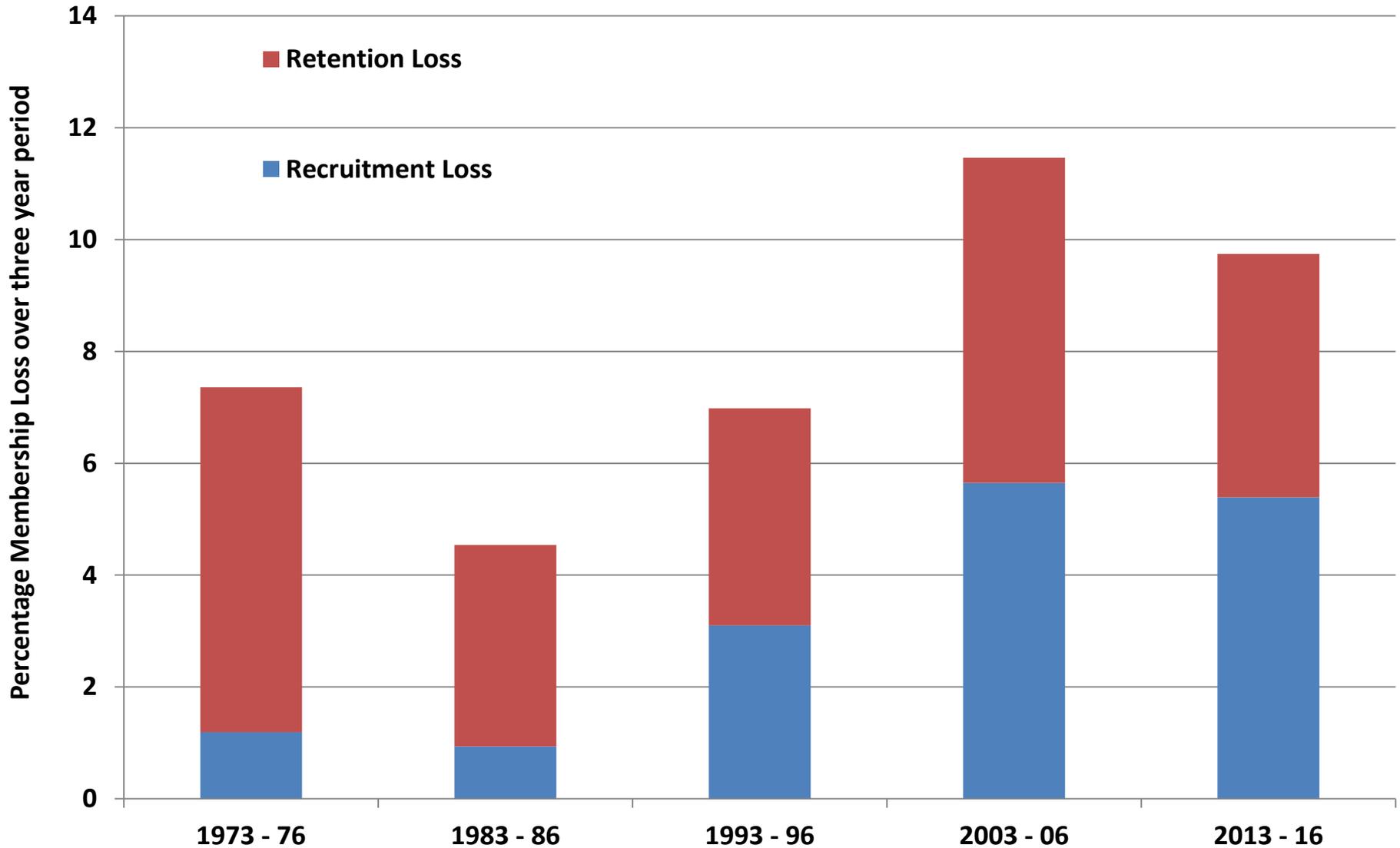


Opening Balance +  
 New Members + Transfers In + Other Gains -  
 Deaths - Transfers Out - Other Losses =  
 Closing Balance

$$A + x + (y_1 + y_2) + (z_1 + z_2) - a - (b_1 + b_2) + (c_1 + c_2) = \Omega$$

"Recruitment Dynamic":  $x - a$   
 "Retention Dynamic":  $(y_1 + y_2) + (z_1 + z_2) - (b_1 + b_2) - (c_1 + c_2)$

# Methodist Recruitment and Retention Loss for triennia 1973-76 to 2013-16



## **“Initial Gate” Transactions – *Moods and Times of Evangelism***

- **“You will.”**
  - **“Will you?”**
  - **“Please will you?”**
  - **“Will you pretty please?”**
  - **“Why won’t you?”**
  - **“Why wouldn’t you (want to)?”**
  - **“Naah, you wouldn’t want to”**
- “...we may hope by that method to gather into the fold of Christ some persons... who need special invitation and are not likely to ‘give themselves’ fully ‘to the Lord’... without more than ordinary labour and spiritual attention.”

Liverpool Minutes 1820

# Intentionality

- Vision
- Connectedness
- Willingness to change

# Community Engagement

- Deep and sustained engagement
- Culture of evangelism
- Role of the lay and ordained

# Pathways into the Church

- Intentionality and connectedness
- ‘Softer’ ways in
- The role of Sunday morning worship

# Authenticity

- Not 'bums on seats' or 'hidden evangelism'
- Not a discipleship conveyor belt
- Living as Christians every day, as part of local or dispersed communities.

# Other Factors

- Size
- Geography
- Ethnic and Linguistic Fellowships
- Ecumenism



# Conclusion

