

Example of assignment of compare decadal graphs of two churches  
(Church Growth and Christian Mission)

Church Growth & Christian Mission  
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### Church Growth Graph

These two churches show quite a variance in both attendance and membership over the ten-year period shown here. Some of this I know and understand and parts I will only be able to guess. Both churches had a single pastoral change during the time on this graph. Shreveport changed pastors at the end of 1986. Kingfisher changed pastors in 1989 and again in 1996, though that is after the time plotted on the graph. I chose to plot both membership and morning attendance in this graph, as I think that helps to explain some of the fluctuation.

It is clear that a pastoral change inevitably brings about a decrease in membership. I know that in Shreveport there was a great deal of strife before we moved there in 1986 (there is likely an increase in attendance at other Nazarene churches in the area, but I cannot confirm this). As a result, the next two years show significant decline, though the first year is clearly the worst. 1991 saw a significant spike in attendance, due in large part to an active youth group that year. Unfortunately, many of these people stopped attending upon graduation and going to college. With this loss of leadership, several others also stopped attending. However, I do not think this accounts for the whole drop here. I am not sure what other factors are involved, though. The membership rolls were slowly pared down over these years, accounting for many of those who left the church in 1986 and 1987.

Kingfisher is not as familiar to me, though again, one of the sharpest declines is attached to a change in pastoral leadership. A steady decline before this likely was the

cause of the pastoral change (an average loss of 30 people in attendance per year cannot be sustained long). It would appear that there was a significant clean up of membership rolls in 1990, but the membership number quickly returned to roughly the same point it was before that.

Both of these churches are running roughly in the middle of the ranges charted here. I believe Kingfisher is reporting 190 in attendance this year. I know that Shreveport First is in the 90 range, also. Another interesting statistic would be the percentage of members who actually attend. It seems that one measure healthy church would be that a large (and growing) percentage of its members attend and are active in the life of the church.