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- They wanted community ... **and got judgment**
- They wanted to affect the life of the church ... **and got bureaucracy**
- They wanted conversation ... **and got doctrine**
- They wanted meaningful engagement with the world ... **and got moral prescription**

WHAT DONES WANT is a *church home* in the truest sense of the word: A place that's safe, supportive, refreshing and challenging. An identifiable place, embedded into a larger community where they both know and are known by those around them and where they can work together to have a meaningful impact on the world.

They value **community** above all else in a church. They want a group of people with whom they can talk and exchange ideas, get together on a regular basis and do life together. **They dream of a church that organizes people to do things together that they can't do alone.**

People who are leaving say the thing they miss the most and have greatest difficulty re-creating when they leave is a sense of community.

As detailed in [Briefing 9](#), the **Dones** are a sub-category of the **Nones**. *Church Refugees* explains why this segment of the population is growing so fast and why it holds the greatest opportunity for strong and rapid church growth. Here are some excerpts from the book:

DONES

(done with church but not done with God)

DECHURCHED / REFUGEES. These are people who've been forced from their homes – where they'd prefer to stay – for fear of persecution. That, in a nutshell, describes the *dechurched*. They remark time and again that they worked diligently for reform within the church but felt that the church was almost exclusively focused on its own survival and resistant to change.

The story of the *dechurched* – the **Dones** – is the story of modern religious organizations and institutions stifling people's ability to engage with each other and their communities.

The **Dones** are people who make explicit and intentional decisions to leave organized religion.

They're dissatisfied with the structure, social message and politics of the institutional church. They've decided that the church is no longer fulfilling or even sustaining, and that their spiritual lives are better lived outside of organized religion.

SOCIAL SHIFT. The church is being caught up in the larger social shift away from institutionally organized life.

Dones believe the structure, not the people, is the problem.

Dones often use corporate comparisons; like the person who said: 'It was like the senior pastor had 51% of the stock in the company. And nothing we wanted was really going to overrule what he wanted. So our only real choice was to either agree with him or disagree, but the same things were going to happen either way.'

They think pastors are mostly interested in their money and telling them what to do. They think pastors should be more involved in doing things with them, not

simply proclaiming things. They view the church as defensive and inwardly focused and consumed by the politics of survival.

In general, the **Dones** are not angry. **They're just no longer interested.** Leaving simply reflects firsthand experiences that led them to conclude churches are ill-equipped to support the flourishing life they hope for.

THE DOERS. The **Dones** were once among the most dedicated people in their congregations. They were the doers. They didn't stop doing things to advance what they believed to be the work of *God*; they stopped doing things to advance the work of the *church*.

Their substantial energies and skills are now poured into structures that happen completely outside the purview of organized religion. They've opted for relationship over structure, doing over dogma, and creating *with* rather than creating *for*. In short, they've created a new religious home.

They're leaving to do more, not less, and they're doing it within a broader and more diverse community.

BRIDGE. **Dones** can build strong bridges to the other **Nones**.

There's good reason to believe that religious activity in the future will increasingly happen outside the bounds of the institutional church.

Dones still have a strong desire for a church, but no longer a need a church.

There's no agency or body or organization that tracks the **Dones**, reaches out to them, convenes them, or supports them. Instead it's a loose, informal network of people supporting each other.

– **There are approximately 220,000 Dones in the Twin Cities metro** –

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