

Atheist Deception Drives Believers Out of This Church in Drove

A record number of Danes have left the state church this year and a campaign by the Danish Atheist Society is getting the credit.

The group set up a webpage to make it easier for Danes to quit the church.

So far, 10,300 have cancelled their membership in the second quarter, the highest quarterly figure since 2007 when official statistics began being kept.

reports that figure was twice as high as the first quarter and more than four times higher than the same period last year.

The Atheist Society launched a national ad campaign that included bus banners asking, "Why believe in a god?" and "Why should faith cost something?"

Danish church members have to pay a church tax, which is up to 1.5 percent of their income. Seventy-seven percent of Denmark's 5.6 million people are church members.

Baptized Danes are automatically made members of the church, making them liable for the church tax. Although just 2.4 percent of members attend church regularly.

The second largest religion in Denmark is "none." *Kristeligt Dagblad* reports that the most common group to quit the church is men between the ages of 18 and 25.

The chairman of the Danish Atheist Society, Anders Stjernholm, said he was "immensely happy" that their campaign has led to

so many leaving the church.

A similar campaign in neighboring Norway caused the state church to lose 25-thousand members last month. {eo}

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