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## LOCAL CHURCH FELT NEEDS '95

- 1. <u>Understanding our Communities</u> We need to do a better job of identifying and addressing the felt needs of our communities. We need to be more involved in social action programs such as programs for the homeless, single parents, teen pregnancy, the poor, and those who grieve.
- 2. <u>Children in Worship</u> We need to find more creative ways to involve our children in Sabbath School and Divine Worship Services.
- 3. <u>Stewardship Education</u> We need to teach a more holistic approach to stewardship. We also need to find better ways to affirm members in their financial support.
- 4. <u>Spiritual Parenting</u> We need to find ways to help parents become more involved in the spiritual nurture of their children. This would include emphasis on encouraging consistent Christian behavior, and better spiritual communication between family members and family leaders.
- 5. <u>Family Support</u> We need to find ways to help the church support families of all types. This includes doing more to help those members who live in single parent homes and/or blended families where there are stepparents and stepchildren.
- 6. <u>Reclaiming Lost Members</u> We need to find ways to reach out to members who have been dropped because of apostasy or lack of interest in the church.
- 7. Evangelism for the 21st Century We need to explore alternative approaches to evangelism for the world we live in now. This includes finding ways to reach the secular mind.
- 8. <u>Involving Members in Outreach</u> Church leadership needs to better communicate with the members as regards soul winning opportunities. We need to find ways to better motivate, enlist, and train members in the area of personal evangelism.
- 9. <u>Strengthening the Devotional Life of Members</u> We need to strengthen Christ centered attitudes in our members. We need to find ways to communicate in a better way the blessings that come from careful attention to the spiritual components of prayer, meditation, and personal study.
- 10. <u>Spiritual Gifts Education and Utilization</u> Every member ought to be encouraged to discover his/her spiritual gifts and to use those gifts to help further the work of God in their family, church, workplace, and community.
- 11. <u>Strengthening Spiritual Approach to Youth</u> We play with kids more than we pray with kids. We need to do a better job of helping them recognize the personal disciplines of study, prayer, and spiritual reflection.

- 12. <u>Understanding Felt Needs of Youth</u> We need to do a better job in helping the members in our congregation understand and meet the felt needs of our young people. We need to strengthen the relationship between the youth and the adult membership.
- 13. <u>Youth Involvement in the Local Church</u> We ought to have youth involved in more leadership positions within the church.
- 14. <u>Young Adult Involvement in Denominational Committees</u> There needs to be a better representation of those in the twenty to thirty age group on all denominational administrative and lay committees.
- 15. <u>Passing on Church Values and Doctrines to Youth</u> Our message needs to be made more relevant to our youth. We need to find better ways to transfer a sense of mission, doctrine, and SDA culture to the next generation.
- 16. <u>Help for Hurting Members</u> We need to better minister to the emotional needs of hurting members. Our churches need to become "safe" places where there is unconditional acceptance member to member, and with new members. We need to do a better job at fostering kindness, social interaction, and hospitality among members.
- 17. <u>Ministry Strategy to All Ages</u> We ought to have a ministry strategy that targets every age level in the church in a more comprehensive way. We need to better identify the felt needs of members at every stage of life, and then identify ways to meet those needs.
- 18. <u>Resistance to Change</u> In these times of change we need to discover ways to help members handle changes in methodologies occurring in the church without them becoming critical or discouraged.
- 19. <u>Lack of Vision and Strategic Planning</u> We need to do a better job at sharing the vision for mission with our members. We should be able to develop and effectively communicate a comprehensive ministry plan at the local church through a shared "visioning" process.
- 20. <u>Relevant Sabbath Services</u> We may need to explore alternative approaches to worship. We need to rethink how we do Sabbath morning services, perhaps even do a little "reinventing." We may need more resources for intergenerational services.
- 21. <u>More Member Involvement in Church Activities</u> More of our members need to be involved in the workings and ministry of the church. We need to find ways to better enlist, or encourage, members to hold church office and/or be part of the church infrastructure and program.
- 22. <u>Support Groups</u> We need to have a greater number and variety of Support Groups in the local church. We also need to find ways to better encourage members to join a cell or small group. This would help "build" the church.
- 23. <u>Updating the "Old Truths"</u> We need to do a better job of explaining our fundamental beliefs in the context of today's culture.

- 24. <u>Discipling Program</u> We need to develop a Discipling program for the local church that is intentional and easily understood.
- 25. <u>Lack of Commitment to Church Attendance</u> There seems to be a lack of commitment to one's own congregation. Many simply stay home on Sabbath morning. We need to address this issue.

## LOCAL CHURCH FELT NEEDS '97-98

- 1. <u>Attendance at Prayer Meetings</u> We need to update the traditional mid-week Prayer Meeting at the church, and have a strategic plan for getting members to attend.
- 2. <u>Body Life</u> Church members need to interact with each other more. We need to be more genuine with each other, have more fellowship, and be of greater encouragement to one another.
- 3. <u>Crisis Hotline</u> We need a toll-free Crisis Hotline for members to call when they feel the need for special prayer or someone who can be of encouragement during a tough situation.
- 4. <u>Discipleship Training</u> We need a mentoring program in the Christian life that is easily understood and intentional. Members need to invest some time personally training other members in outreach and lifestyle.
- 5. <u>Follow-Up Programs for New Members</u> We need a program that allows for the continued nurture and training of a person once he or she joins the church.
- 6. <u>Hospitality Ministry</u> Greater emphasis needs to be placed on how we treat visitors. We need to give more director to the greeters, as well as the Hospitality Committee.
- 7. <u>Involving Teens and Young Adults</u> We need to find ways to keep our young people interested. We need to strengthen the relationship between the youth and the adult membership. We need to explore what we can do to help youth recognize the relevance of the church and its mission in today's world.
- 8. <u>Lack of Reverence</u> There is too little respect given to the sanctity of worship space. We should put some time and effort into training the membership, young and old, to be more reverent in worship and in the church building.
- 9. <u>Marriage Counseling and Support</u> We need to have in place an organized strategy and program with steps that can be taken to help members whose marriages are falling apart.
- 10. <u>Men's Ministry</u> In recent years much has been done to foster Women's Ministries in the local church. Efforts should be made to build up the community of men in the congregation as well.
- 11. <u>More Focus of Families</u> A Lot of resource material currently exists to help families, but we need more help. Given the diversity of family types represented in today's society we need to be broader in our approach to ministry to family-life needs.
- 12. <u>New Zeal for Outreach</u> We need to do more to encourage the missionary spirit in our members. New and creative approaches need to be developed to help members share their faith.

- 13. <u>Church Officer Training</u> In many places cut-backs at the conference office have resulted in less training available to local church leaders. Resources such as video seminars and self-help courses would help.
- 14. <u>Outreach to Inactive and Former Members</u> Materials and programs that target those who used to be Adventists need to be developed. It would also be good to have materials that help out members understand how they might reach out to members of their own families in a redemptive way.
- 15. <u>Restructuring the Traditional Worship and Sabbath School</u> Attention needs to be given to what we do on Sabbath morning. In many churches there has been little change in decades. This issue needs to be studied to see if optional approaches might help broaden the appeal of the local church to its community.
- 16. <u>Sabbath School Teacher Training</u> We need to help our teachers more. We need more workshops and training opportunities, and they must be affordable.
- 17. <u>Support for Single Parents</u> We need to be more intentional in helping single parents. Special programs and resources need to be developed for this group.
- 18. <u>Strengthening Commitment to the Church</u> Whether we are talking about attendance, giving or volunteer leadership responsibilities, many members are not participating. We need to do a better job of sharing local church needs and member responsibilities.
- 19. <u>Young Adult Ministry</u> There needs to be more evangelism targeted to young adults. We need to address their concerns and, where possible, make changes that will help make the furch relevant to their needs.
- 20. <u>Support for Members Married to Non-believing Spouses</u> There appears to be a growing number of these men and women in the church who need practical help in knowing how to maintain their spiritual life without destroying their marriages.

## LOCAL CHURCH FELT NEEDS '98-99

- 1. <u>Help for Hurting Members</u> Our churches need to become "safe" places offering unconditional acceptance and emotional support to regular and new members—doing a better job at fostering kindness, social interaction and hospitality.
- 2. <u>Discipling Program</u> We need to develop a disciple-making program for the local church that is intentional and easily understood—giving particular attention to incorporating new members into the life of the church.
- 3. <u>Ministry to Men</u> In recent years most conference constituencies have established a women's ministry to provide retreats, resources, and in some cases a help line. It is felt something especially targeted to the spiritual needs of men needs to be developed.
- 4. Evangelism for the 21st Century We need to explore alternative approaches to evangelism for today's world. This includes finding ways to reach the secular mind and express the Adventist message and mission in relevant and contemporary ways.
- 5. <u>Youth Needs</u> We need to strengthen the relationship between the youth and the adults—meeting the felt needs of our young people and intentionally finding ways to keep them in the church.
- 6. <u>Help for the Local Church Elder</u> Many wrongly look at this position and "Honorary." It would be good to have a resource and training available that would clearly identify the responsibilities associated with this position.
- 7. <u>Involving Members in Friendship Evangelism</u> Church leadership needs to find better ways to motivate, enlist, and train members in the area of informal, unstructured, personal witnessing among friends, work associates, neighbors, relatives.
- 8. <u>More Member Involvement in Church Activities</u> We need to find ways to better involve, motivate and train members to hold church office and/or be a volunteer worker in the church infrastructure and program.
- 9. <u>Support Groups</u> We need to have a greater number and variety of support groups in the local church—finding ways to better encourage members to join a cell or small group. This would help "build" the church.
- 10. <u>Resistance to Change</u> In these times of rapid change we need to discover ways to help members handle changes in methodologies occurring in the church without them becoming critical or discouraged.
- 11. <u>Relevant Sabbath Services</u> We may need to explore alternative approaches to worship—rethinking how we do Sabbath morning services, perhaps even doing a little "reinventing." We need more resources for intergenerational services.

- 12. <u>Adult Sabbath School Quarterly</u> This study tool should be made less complex and easier to understand for the members and teachers.
- 13. <u>Conflict Management</u> Pastors seem to be regularly involved in arbitrating disputes between members. An outline of steps that should be taken by members to bring healing and peace in such situations would be helpful.
- 14. <u>Professional Referral Services and Resources</u> Given the great strides in technology, we should be able to help our pastors be better "networked" with Christian professionals who are available to serve the needs of hurting members.
- 15. <u>Children in Worship</u> We need to find more creative ways to involve our children in divine worship in ways that are meaningful to all.
- 16. <u>Family Support</u> We need to find ways to help the church support families of all types. This includes doing more to help those members who live in single parent homes and/or blended families where there are stepparents and stepchildren.
- 17. <u>Understanding Our Communities</u> We need to do better at identifying and addressing the felt needs of our communities—getting involved in social action programs such as for the homeless, single parents, teen pregnancy, the poor, and those who grieve.
- 18. <u>Including More Single Adults</u> We need to do more to recognize the contributions single adults already make in the local church and determine ways to include more non-active single members in fellowship and leadership.