

State of Our Church Leadership Survey Results

2014 NAD Administrators Conference

Dulles, VA

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Outline

1. Why Study Leaders' Perceptions?

2. Methods: Instrument and Sample

3. Results

- Internal and External Influences
- Education
- Need for Change
- Leadership Training, Church Structure, and Collaboration
- Evangelism

4. Key Observations

Background

The general purpose of the survey was to obtain **Church Leadership perceptions** on key issues facing the Seventh-day Adventist Church in North America.

ability (28) able (10) accountable (13) authentic (10) building (9) caring (10)
character (10) christ (24) church (28) collaborative (18)
commitment (22) communicator (37)
compassionate (12) competent (16) courage (9) decisions (15)
experience (9) faith (12) G o d (29) humble (20)
humility (34) integrity (46) Jesus (15) lead (16)
leader (18) leadership (33) listener (15) love (26)
mission (32) organizational (9) organized (12) others (12)
passion (11) pastors (13) people (57) person (25)
relationship (13) sense (9) servant (21) skills (50)
spirit (20) spiritual (101) strategic (11)
strong (32) team (20) transparency (22)
understanding (15) vision (53) visionary (38)
work (13)

Why Study Leaders' Perceptions?

“Leadership [is] a process of motivating people to work together collaboratively to accomplish great things.”

V. H. Vroom & A. G. Jago, 2007

1. The process of motivating people depends on the situation; different situations call for different approaches (Vroom & Jago, 2007).
2. The “great things” exist in the minds of leaders and followers before they are accomplished (Vroom & Jago, 2007).
3. The same person can be both leader and follower simultaneously (Hackman & Wageman, 2007)—especially in the Church.
4. We need to know what “great things” can or need to exist in the minds of Church leadership.
5. We need to know what possibilities there are for collaboration.
6. We need to know whether or not Church leadership is motivated.

Background

The general purpose of the survey was to obtain the perceptions of Church Leadership on the key issues facing the Seventh-day Adventist Church in North America.

The questionnaire was developed by Paul Brantley with later input from Duane McBride, Karl Bailey, & Alex Bryant.

- 73 Quantitative Items
- 13 Short Response Items (10 optional)
- 2 Demographic Items (Role, Age)

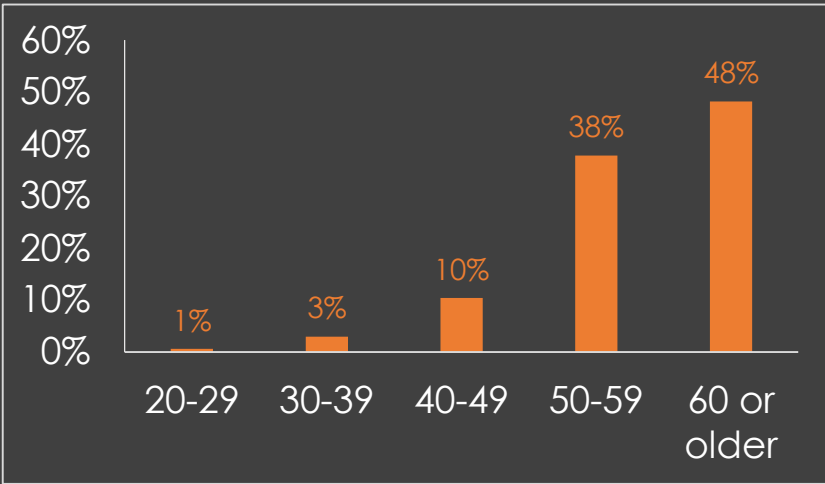
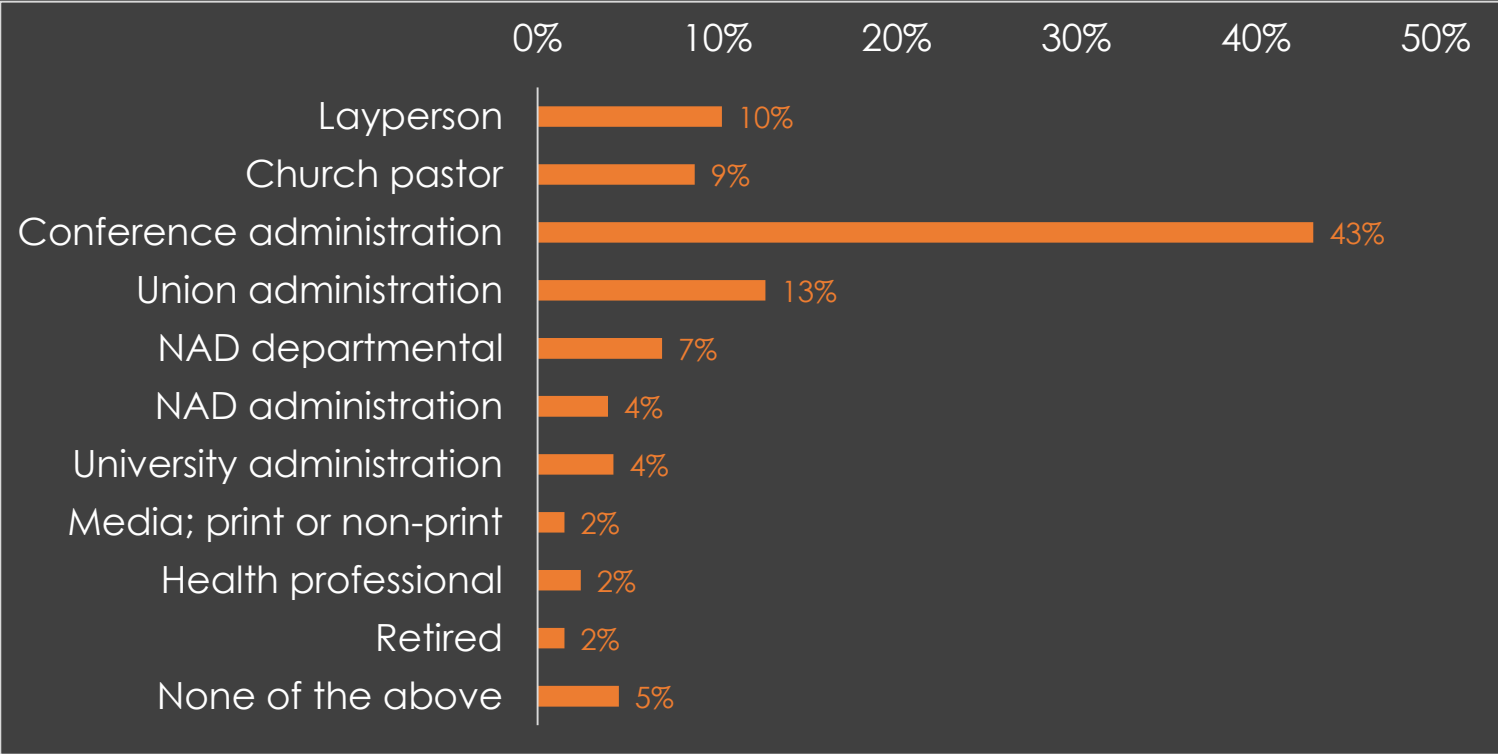
Methods

Sample Selection: The sample was drawn from 470 church leaders, who were contacted by email.

Survey Distribution: The questionnaire was presented online using a dedicated installation of LimeSurvey 2.05+. An invitation e-mail was sent to potential respondents through the NAD Secretariat, along with 3 reminder emails.

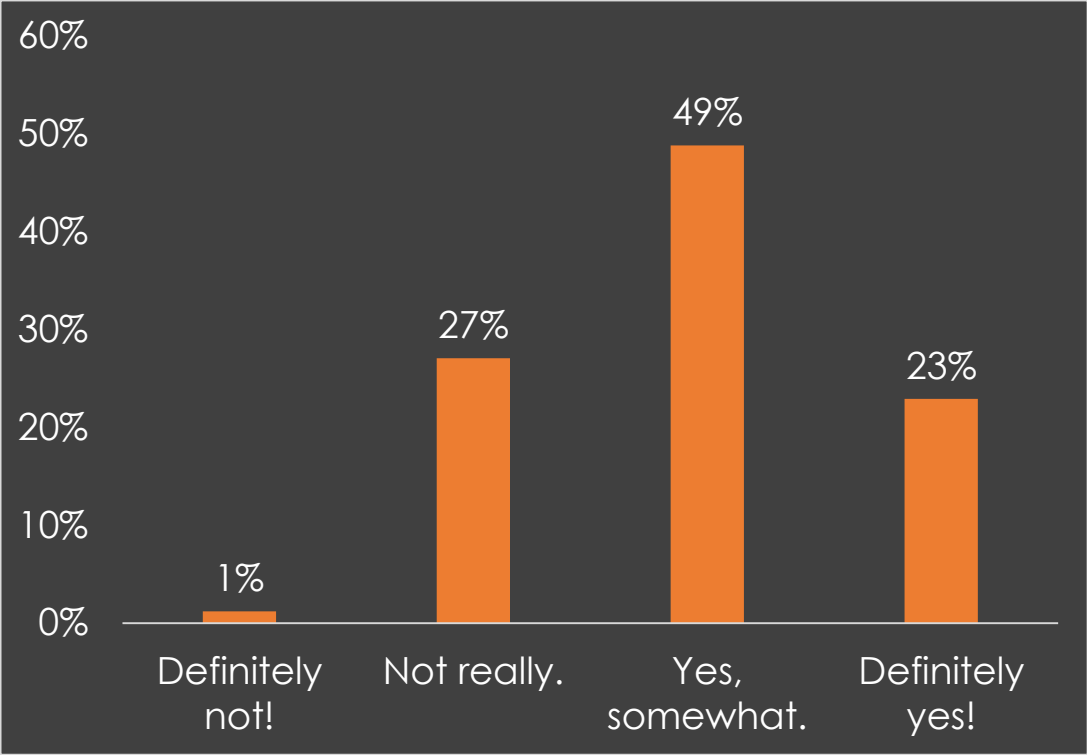
Response Rate: Data was collected between March 18 and May 9, 2014. 336 respondents completed the entire survey. This was a 71.5% response rate—considered excellent for this type of survey.

Role in the Church



Age

Do **you** feel that some things of lasting significance will result from this meeting on church structure?



Reasons for Confidence?

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Leaders are willing to change.

Leaders are willing to talk openly.

Confidence in leadership.

Leaders must rely on God/Holy Spirit.

Leaders care about this Church

Reasons for Skepticism

Leaders may want to protect their “turf”.

There is history of inaction and ineffectiveness.

The NAD does not have any impact in local church life

Talk does not lead to action.

Conditional Reasons for Confidence

Leaders must show humility.

Leaders must show courage.

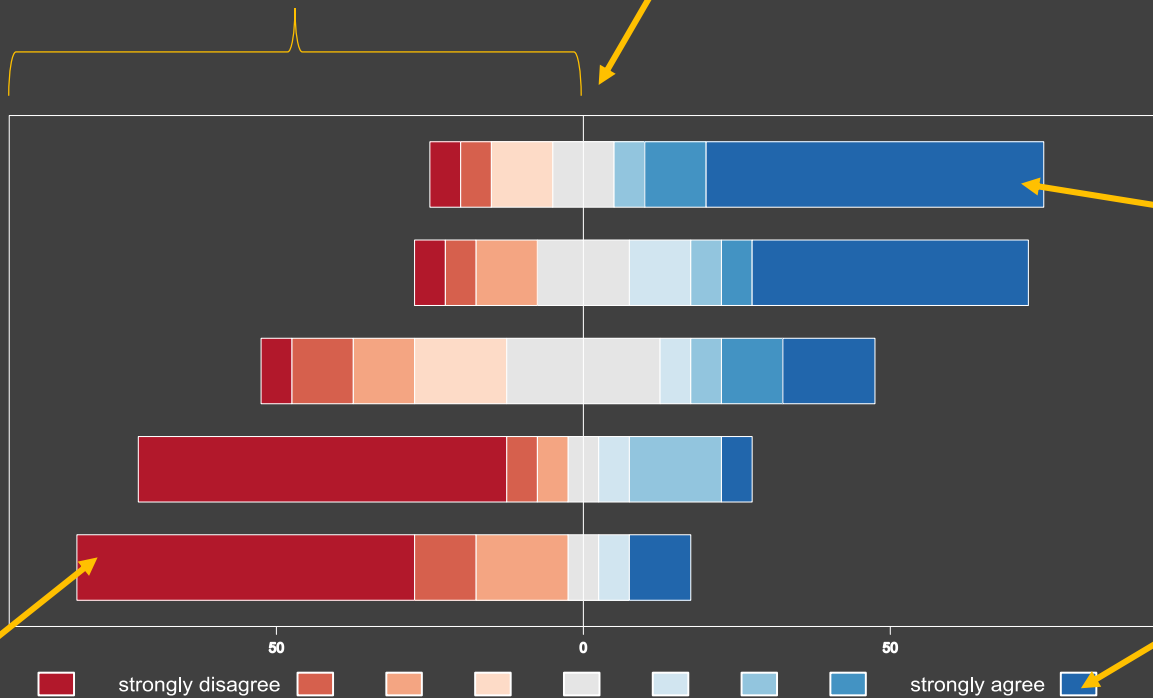
Survey Sections

1. Consent Document
2. External Issues and the NAD Church (9 items)
3. Internal Issues and the Church (15)
4. Rough Estimates (6)
5. Change or Maintain? (16)
6. Church Structure (7)
7. Collaboration and Unnecessary Duplication (9)
8. Evangelism and Church Growth (6)
9. Education (6)
10. Leadership (7)
11. Upcoming Conference (2)

How to Read Diverging Stacked Bar Charts

Each side of the display extends to 100%

All bars are anchored to the central response in the scale.



Bars are ordered from top to bottom by the proportion of the graph on the right side.

The length of a given bar indicates the proportion of that category of response.

Displacement of the whole bar to the left or right indicates the tendency toward one or the other pole.

Colors for categories are indicated in the legend.

50 0 50
■ strongly disagree ■ ■ ■ ■ ■ ■ strongly agree

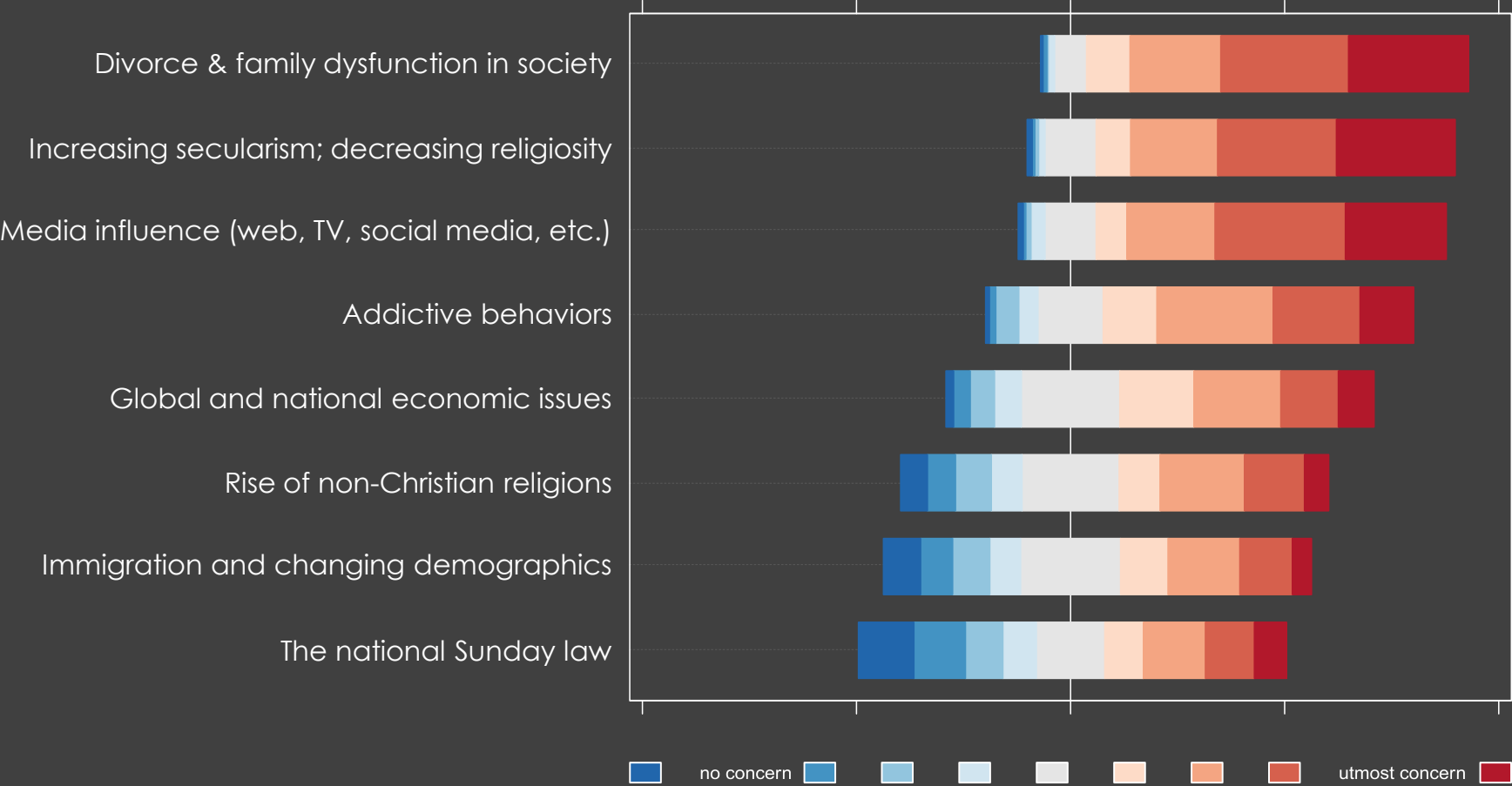
disagree ■ ■ ■ ■ ■ ■ agree

low concern, urgency, or need to change ■ ■ ■ ■ ■ ■ ■ high concern, urgency, or need to change

Internal and External Influences

Indicate to what extent **you** feel concern about the following societal issues and their possible impact on the Church.

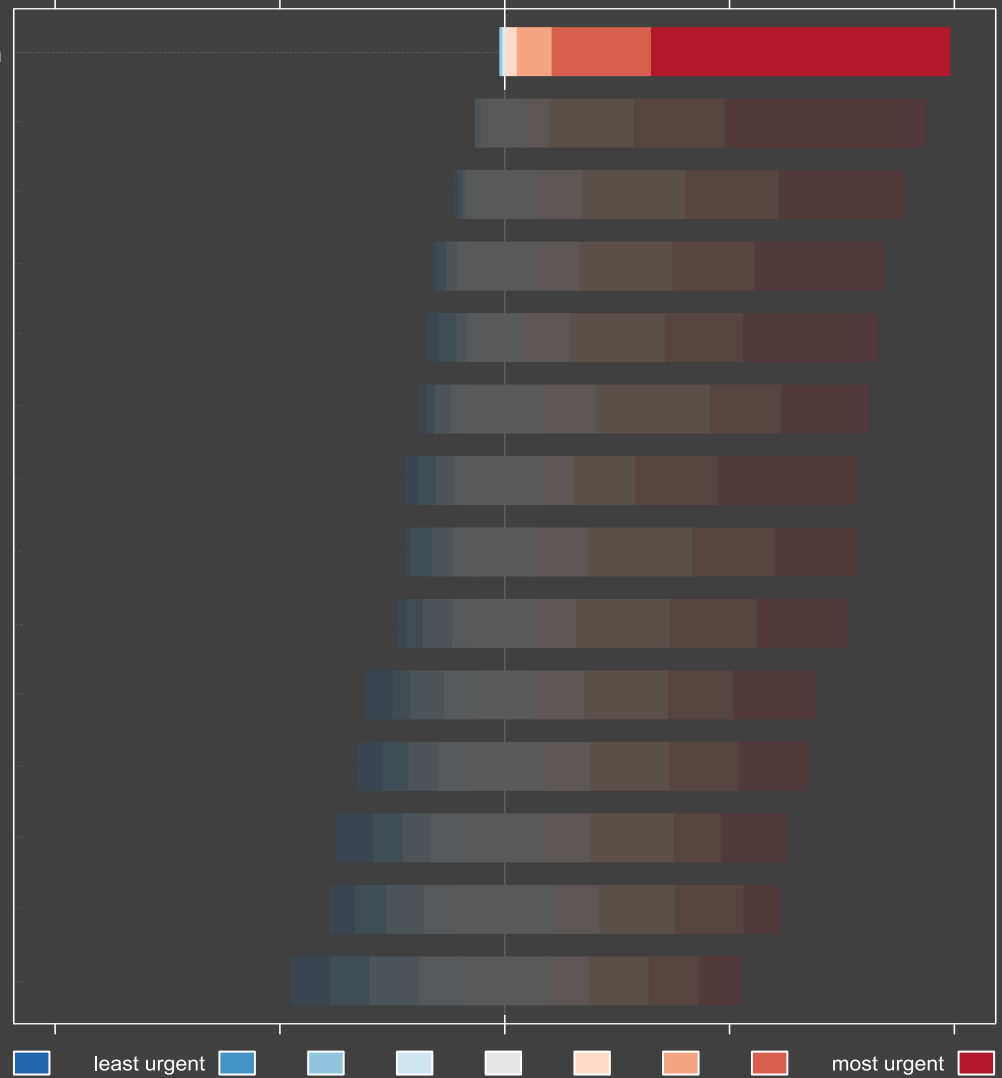
Indicate to what extent **you** feel concern about the following societal issues and their possible impact on the Church.



Indicate with what extent of **urgency you** feel the Church should be addressing the following. Which issues within the Church need **urgent** attention?

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Loss of youth and young adults to the Church

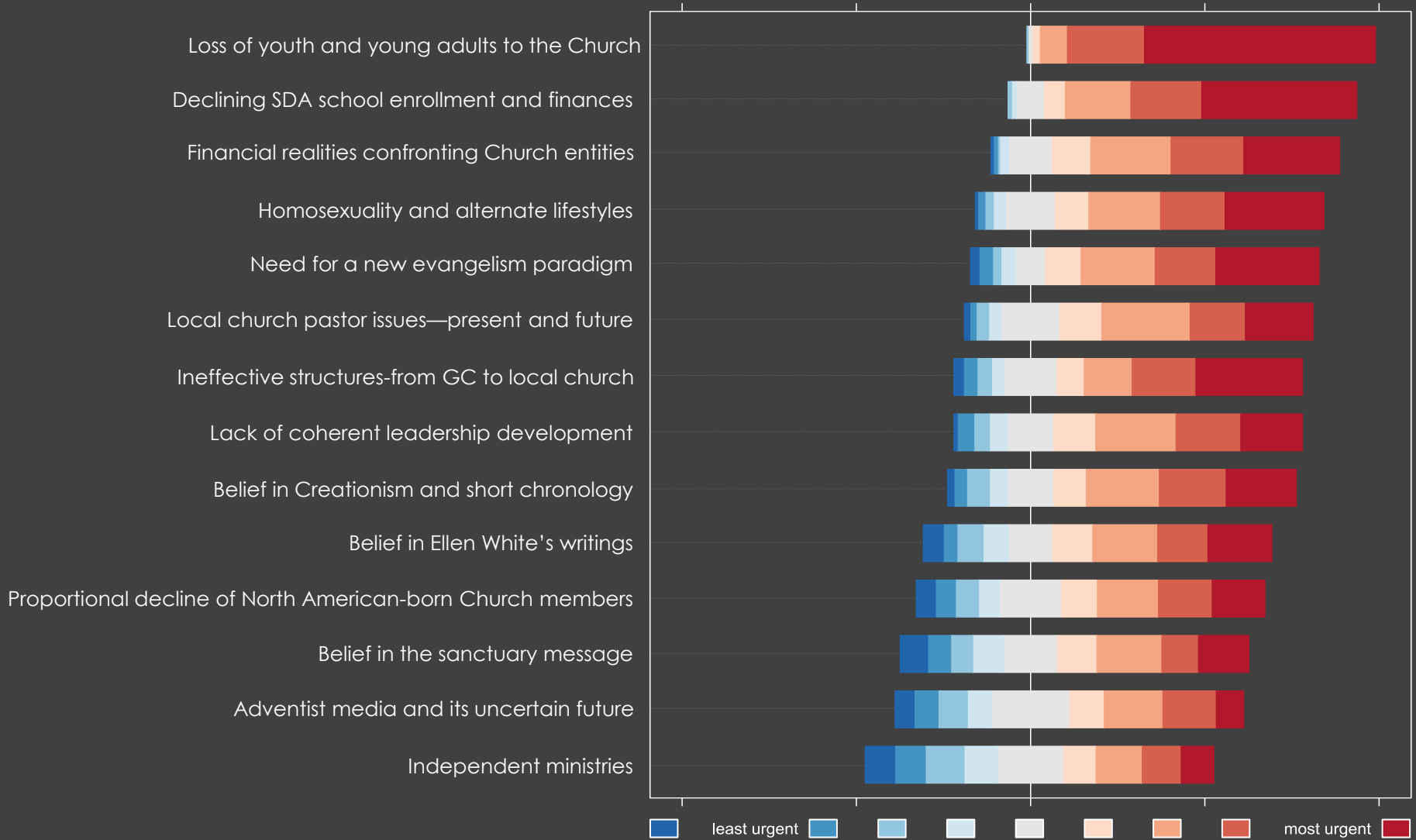


1. Leaders are most concerned about macro-level secular trends that impact individual church members, especially through pressures on the family.

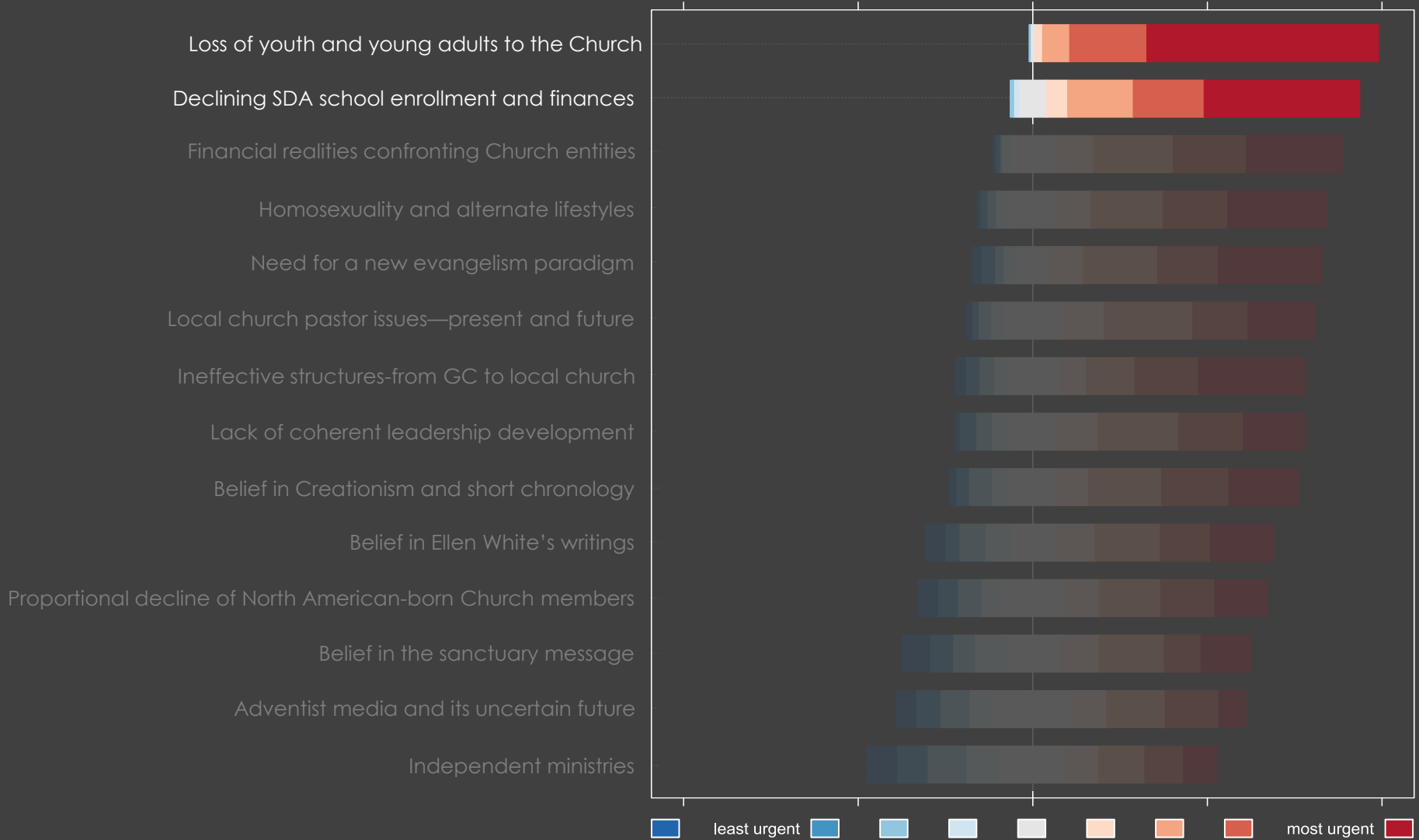
Leaders in the NAD are most concerned about the trends in society that impact the family (divorce), general secularism, the overwhelming impact of the media and addictions. The data imply the highest concern for the family and youth.

Indicate with what extent of **urgency you** feel the Church should be addressing the following. Which issues within the Church need **urgent** attention?

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2. Leaders have urgent concerns about children, youth, and young adults.

Leaders in the NAD indicated the most urgent issues facing our Church are the loss of our youth and declining enrollment in our schools.

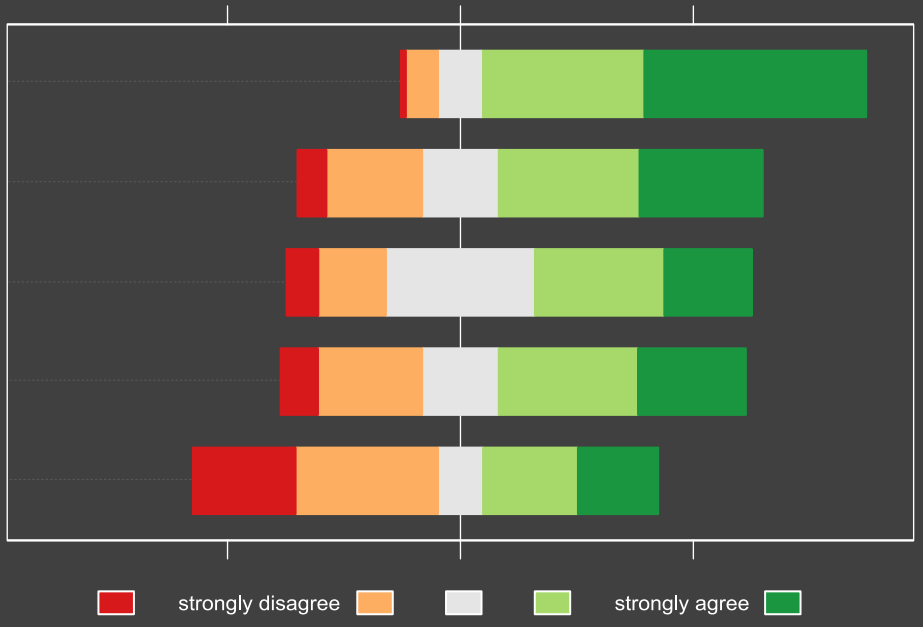
However, there are many urgent issues facing the church, including finances, structural issues, societal norms, evangelistic fit, and leadership development.

Education

A sizable amount of church funds goes toward Adventist education. Some question whether the investment is bringing in the desired dividends. What do you think about each of the following statements?

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- Adventist colleges and universities within the NAD definitely help the Church achieve its mission.
- Too many colleges and universities are trying to operate all at the same time in the North American Division.
- Consolidation of academies and elementary schools is a good way to help them survive and remain strong.
- Colleges and universities within the NAD pay more attention to their own regional accreditations...
- The strain on local churches to finance schools drains resources that should be [re]allocated...



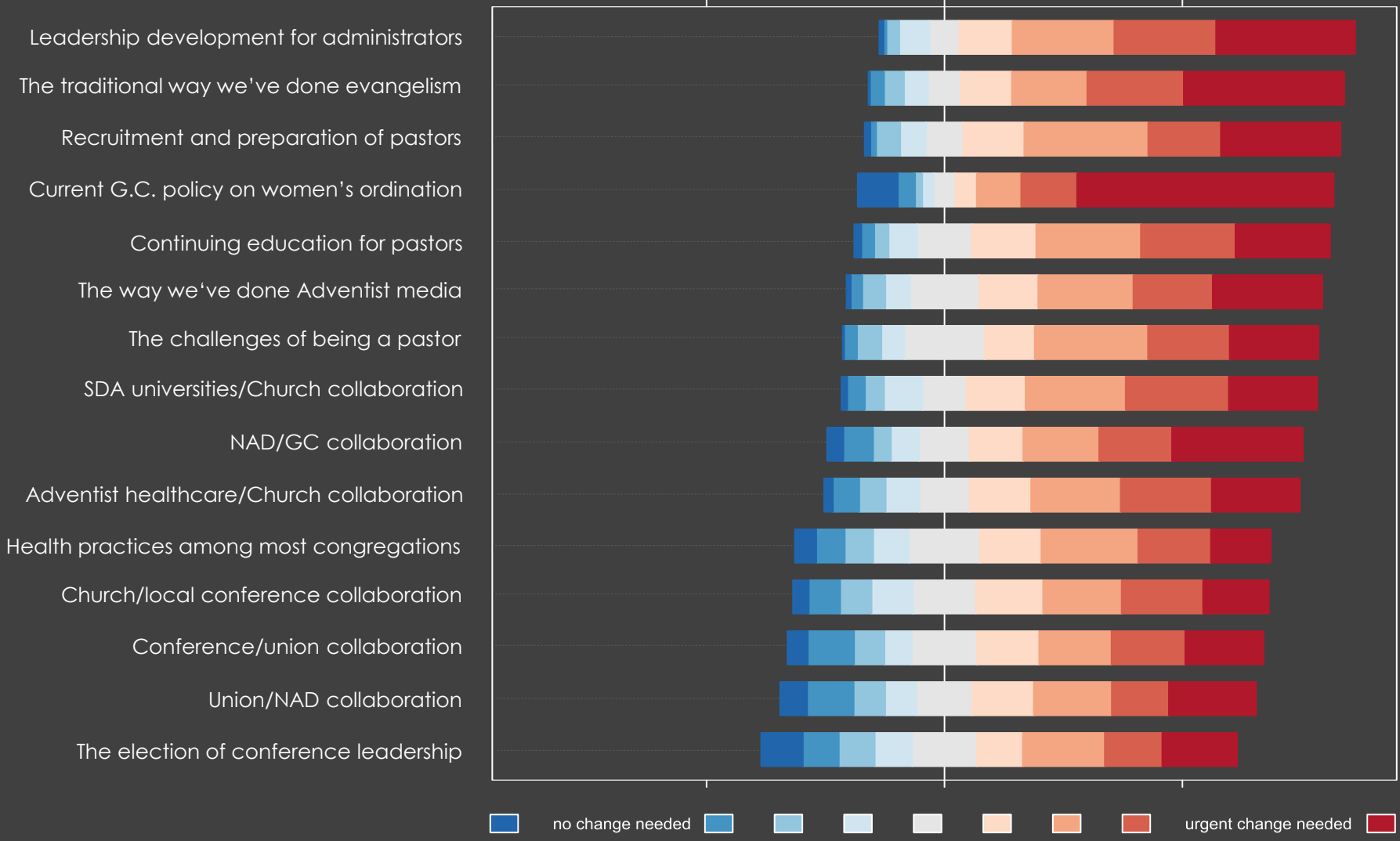
3. Leaders strongly support the role of Adventist education in the Church, but are divided about how to proceed.

NAD leaders believe that our educational system helps fulfill the Church's mission, but are ambivalent about reducing the number of schools at all levels. There is less support for reallocation of educational funds than for other adjustments.

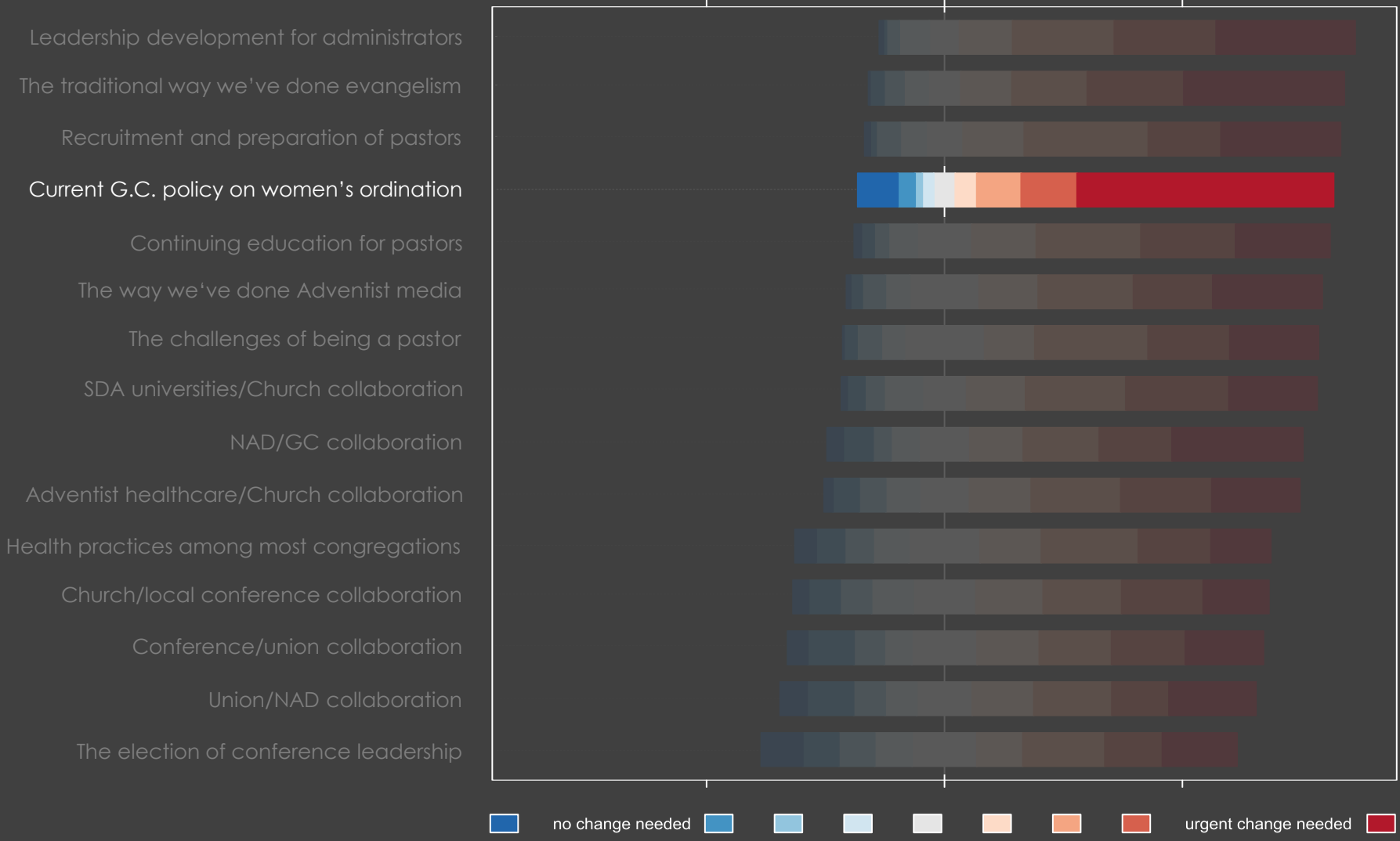
Need for Change

Looking at our system as a whole across the NAD, to what extent is there a need to **change** the following from what we have now?

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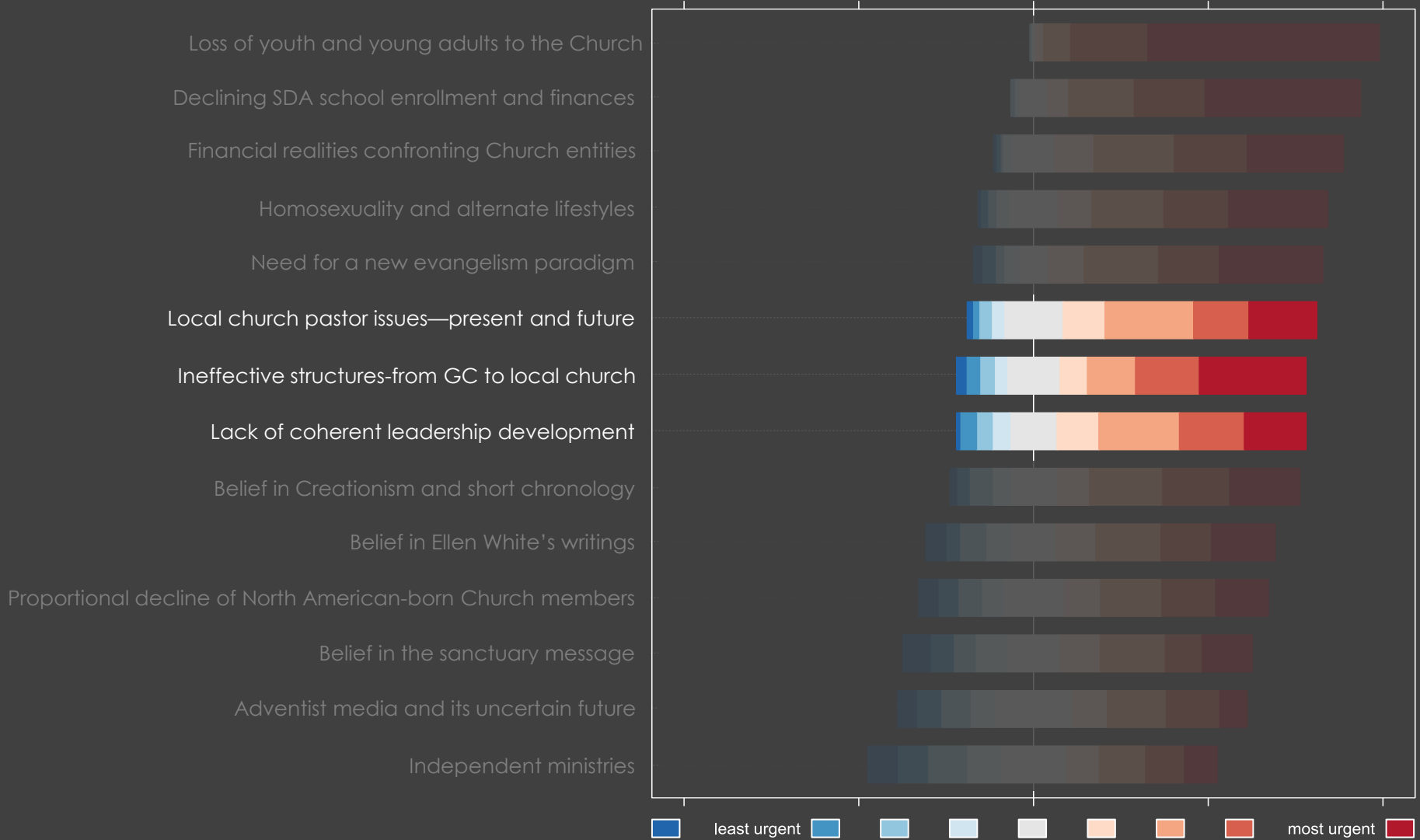


4. A large majority of leaders feel that a change in GC policy on the ordination of women is necessary; almost all respondents felt strongly about their response.

NAD leaders were most likely to feel (and felt very strongly) that change is needed to the GC policy on the ordination of women. However, it is important to note there were respondents who felt very strongly that no change is needed.

Leadership Training, Church Structure, and Collaboration

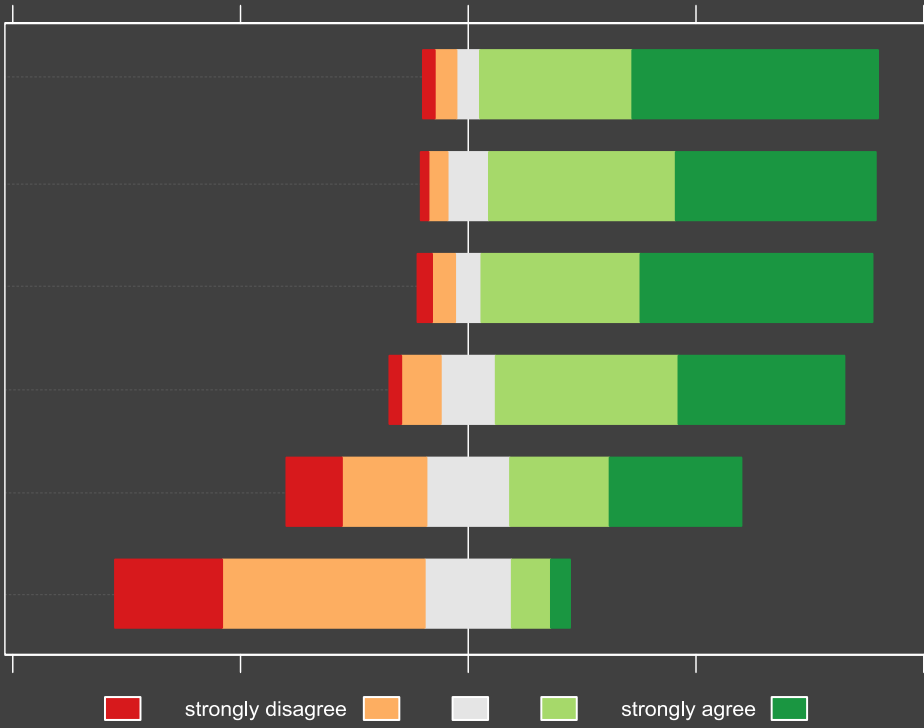
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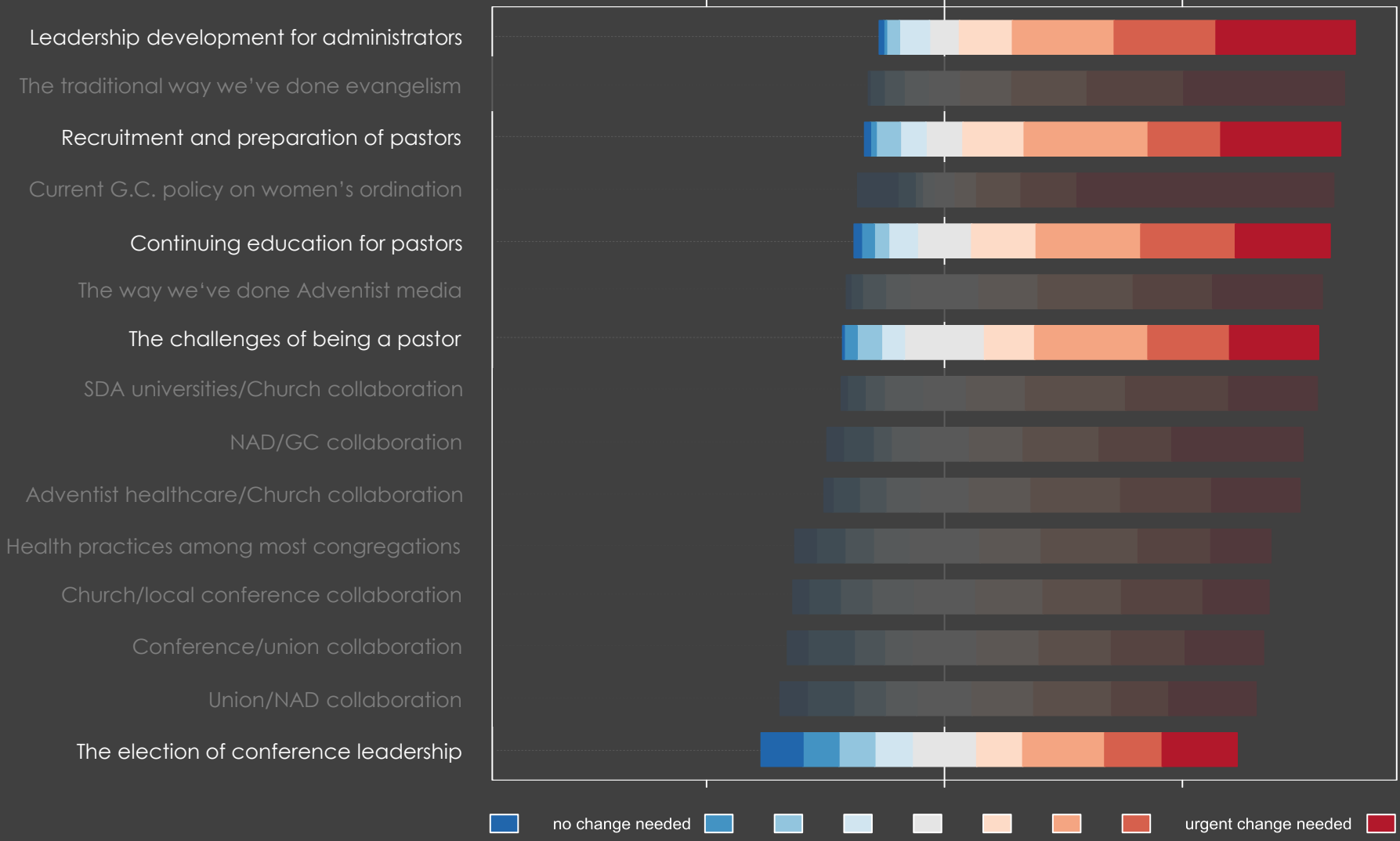
No organization advances higher than the level of its leaders. We feel that the church has been haphazard in the way that we select prepare and grow our leadership. What do you think?

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- Administrators within the North American Division need a system by which they can be professionally developed...
- Pastors within the North American Division need a system by which they can be professionally developed...
- There should be greater concern and strategic planning regarding the number and type of pastors...
- ...nurture a pool of exceptionally promising young persons to be considered for administrative-track positions...
- There should be term limits for conference presidents.
- Most conferences within the North American division have a strong system of pastoral assessment and growth.



Looking at our system as a whole across the NAD, to what extent is there a need to **change** the following from what we have now?



5. Leaders desire training and perceive a current lack of structural support for training.

The data clearly show that the respondents support improved assessment of the need for pastors and ways of developing and training leaders, but perceive few organized approaches in the Church currently.

(There is some support for term limits for conference presidents, but it is not widely seen as a very urgent issue.)

The basic structure of the Seventh-day Adventist Church has remained essentially the same for the past 100 years. Do you feel this structure is appropriate for today?

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Presently, there is too much unnecessary duplication in our present Church structure.

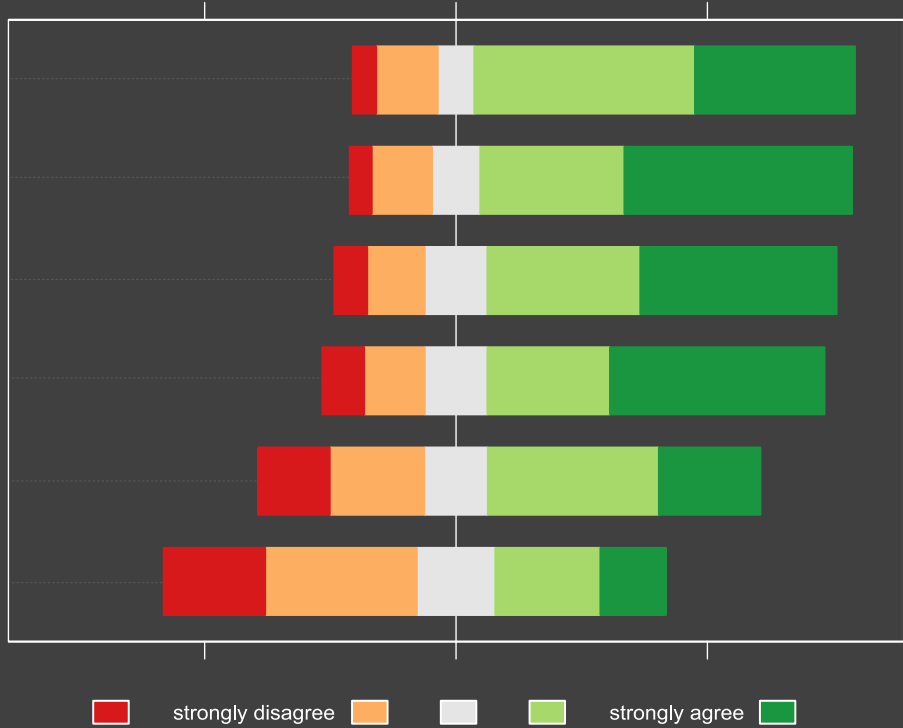
This basic structure of our Church (GC, NAD, unions, conferences) has served us well in the past.

Unions should function for administration and coordination rather than for departmental ministries.

The North American Division should be a primary resource center for our Division-wide territory.

Unions are necessary Church structures and need to remain intact in some form or another.

The number of local conferences in the NAD is about right; there's no need to merge.



6. Leaders believe that the current Church needs a more streamlined structure.

NAD leaders reported that Church structure had served well in the past, but that things need to change with less duplication, not having departmental functions at the Union level and having the NAD focus on providing resources.

There is some support for consolidation at the conference level.

Much is written in scripture and Ellen White's writings regarding the importance of collaborative effort. Do you feel duplication and lack of collaboration is a challenge that needs to be addressed by Church today?

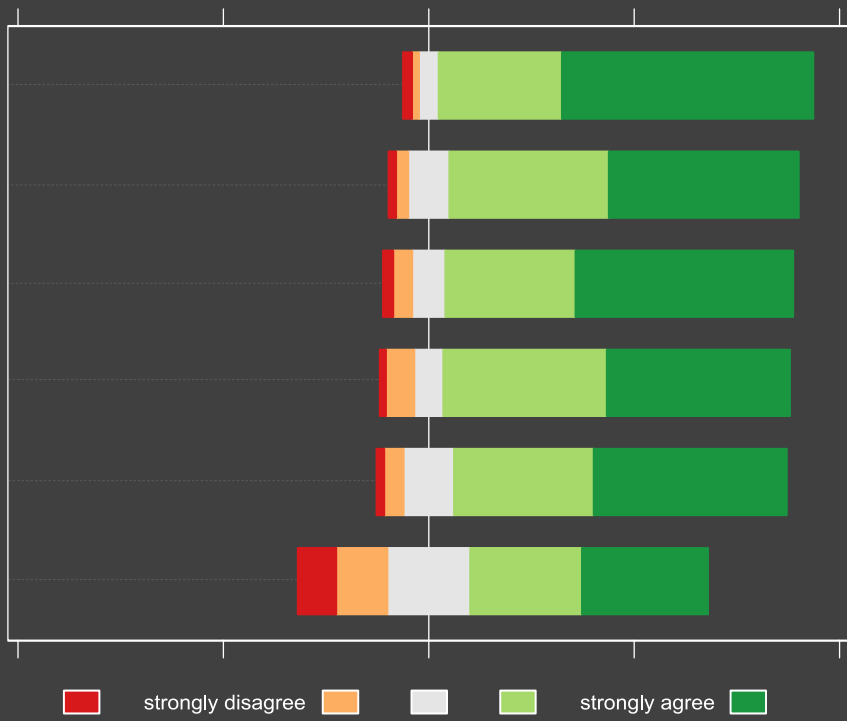
If yes: What do you feel is the best way to address this concern?

91.1% YES

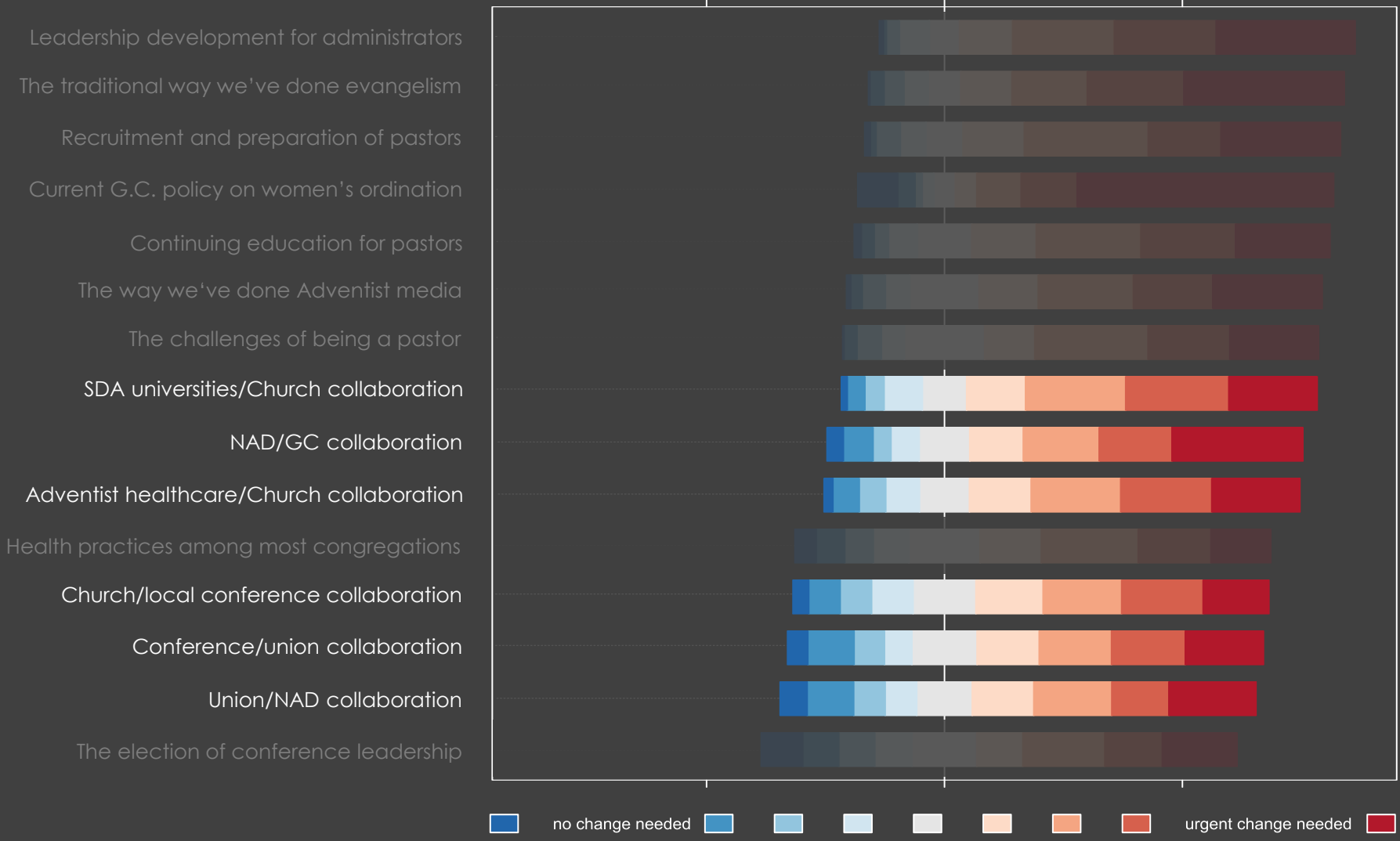
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If yes: What do you feel is the best way to address this concern?

- Create a warm environment of collegiality within our Division that sets a climate for collaboration.
- ...come to agreement on basic elements of mission and then diversify according to distinctive needs of each entity.
- Make revisions in the Working Policy in ways that encourage collaboration.
- Show how collaboration is directly related to conversion and spiritual well-being.
- Provide greater transparency so that constituents will be able to identify and help prevent costly duplication.
- Provide Division-wide financial incentives to encourage entities to collaborate.



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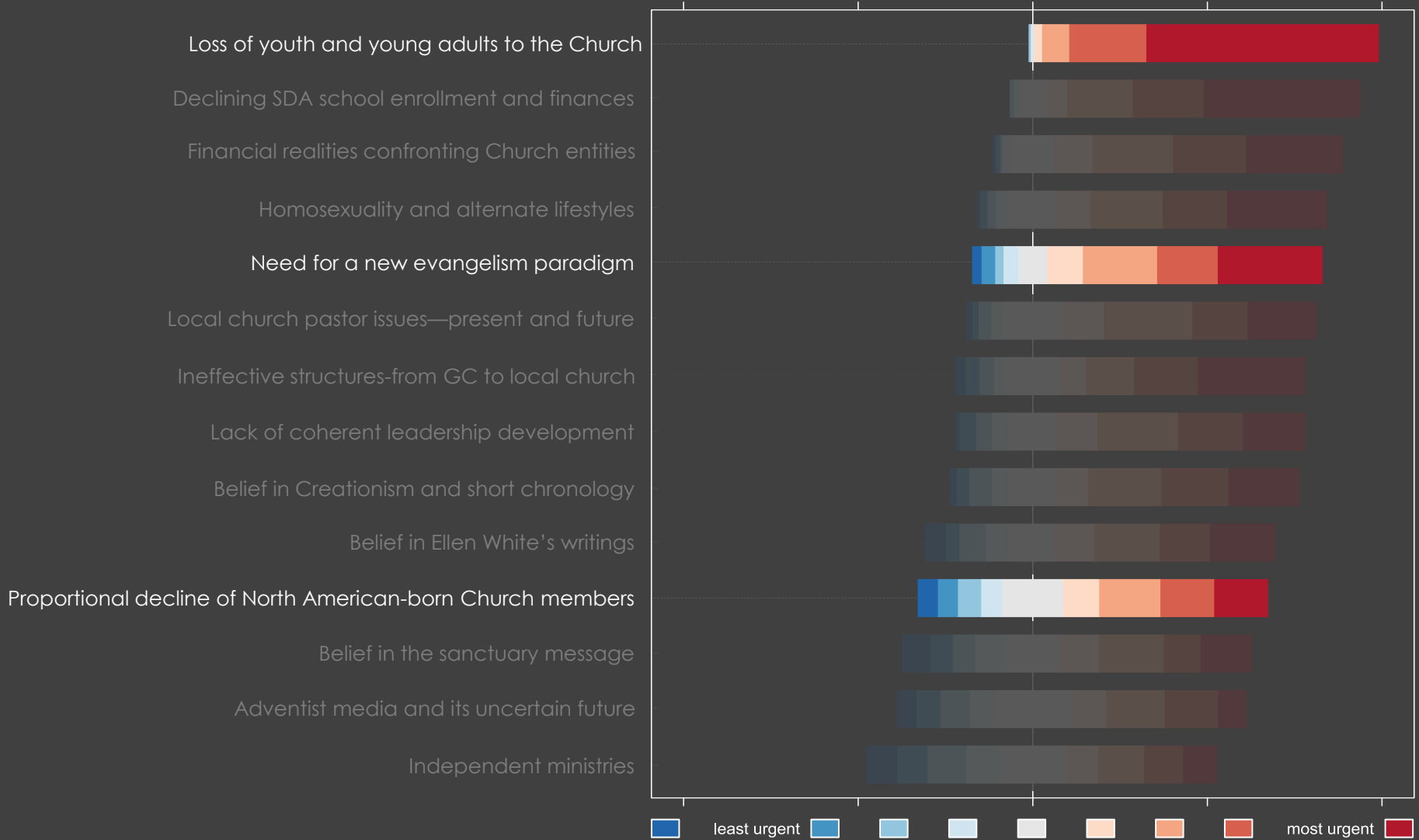
7. Leaders are strongly in favor of multiple methods for enhancing collaboration.

NAD Leaders felt strongly that the NAD needs to be more collaborative and all possibilities to encourage collaboration should be explored except perhaps financial inducement.

There is support for innovations in collaboration at all levels, with a slight preference for collaboration outside of traditional hierarchical structures.

Evangelism and Mission

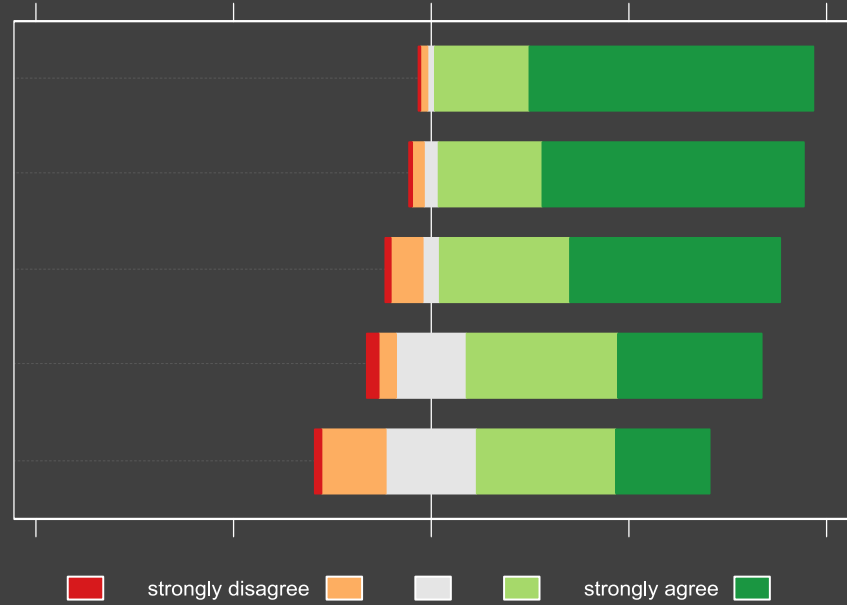
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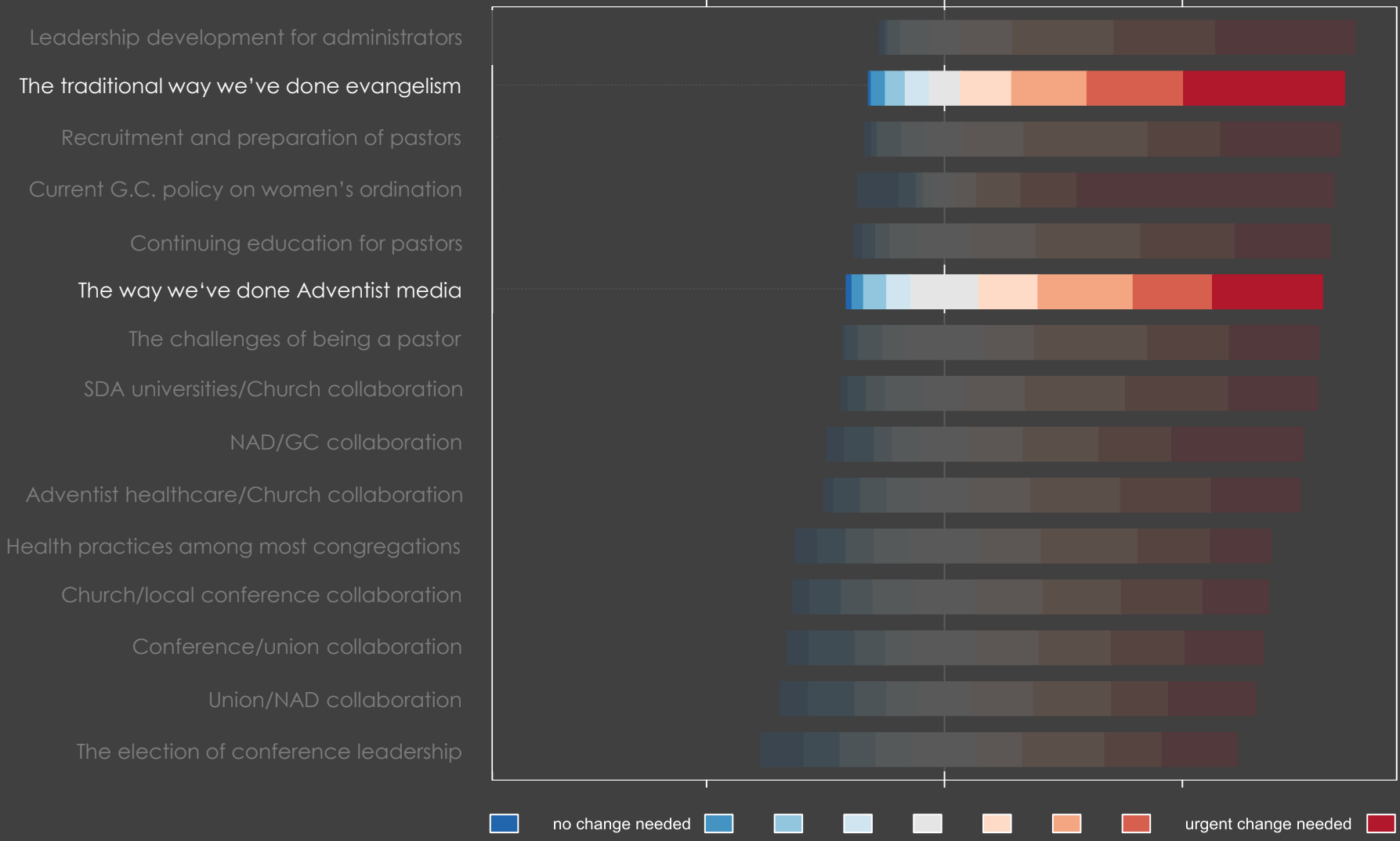
Some think that we need to alter some of the evangelistic approaches that have been traditionally used in the past. What do you think about each of the following statements?

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- The Church... has treated evangelism too much as an **event**... and not ... [a] continuous way of church life...
- The Church needs more effective strategies of reaching North American-born persons of all races...
- The Church... has relied too much on big-name evangelists and not enough on getting the local church engaged.
- Transformational Evangelism is the NAD's mission in "work clothes" and could be the unifying force...
- The Church needs to do far more for non-English or limited-English speaking members than it is doing now.



Looking at our system as a whole across the NAD, to what extent is there a need to **change** the following from what we have now?



8. Leaders recommend less spectacle in evangelism and more focus on North American-born persons.

There is a perception that the Church has been too focused on evangelism as a spectacular event (as opposed to an on-going function of every church), and there is a need to develop more effective approaches to those born in North America (this may be consistent with concerns about societal secularism).

Key Observations

1. Leaders are most concerned about macro-level secular trends that impact individual church members, especially through pressures on the family.
2. Leaders have urgent concerns about children, youth, and young adults.
3. Leaders strongly support the role of Adventist education in the Church, but are undecided about how to proceed.
4. A large majority of leaders feel that a change in GC policy on the ordination of women is necessary; almost all respondents felt strongly about their response.
5. Leaders desire training and perceive a current lack of structural support for training.
6. Leaders believe that the current Church needs a more streamlined structure.
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What Should We Do?

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