Inter-America: Church leaders continue planning for spiritual revival

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Jamaica: NCU Lecturer, among hundreds baptized in Pentecost and More program

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March 24, 2011 – Miami, Florida, United States...Libna Stevens/IAD

Committed to promoting a spiritual revival and reformation throughout the vast region of the Seventh-day Adventist Church in the Inter-American Division (IAD) territory, top church leaders met yesterday to discuss the progress of the ongoing Constant in Prayer initiative—a call to all members throughout Inter-America to seek personal spiritual revival through constant prayer—which was officially launched last month (see Feb. 12 story).

Leaders also discussed plans for the second phase of the spiritual revival program due to continue later this summer.

Already, the church in the IAD has held Constant in Prayer revival programs focused on fostering children and the youth to having a stronger connection with Jesus through prayer during a division-wide program held on Mar. 12 (see Mar. 12 story).

“We are thankful for the positive impact that this Constant in Prayer initiative has had in our territory so far,” said Pastor Israel Leito, president of the church in Inter-America as he addressed two dozen department directors at the IAD Headquarter office in Miami, along with a group of directors which connected via video conference.

Plans are underway for schools and universities to hold a special day of prayer and consecration program on April 6 and April 26 for students across thousands of schools spread out in the 21 IAD unions, or regions. In addition, the initiative will focus on the constant need of spiritual prayer revival for pastors on April 30, focus on families on June 10, and a large division-wide satellite event to be held in El Salvador on July 23.

“The celebration program in El Salvador will not be the end of the Constant in Prayer initiative,” said Pastor Leito. “It will the time for the second phase of the revival emphasis which will focus on the Study of the Bible, the second of three columns we presented when we launched the spiritual revival initiative.” The third phase will be focused on the witnessing and testifying that comes as a result of a prayerful life and study of the Bible, explained Pastor Leito.

Leaders discussed aggressive initiatives to strengthen the two remaining phases of the initiative which is expected to be on going during the next five years and beyond, church leaders said. Specific initiatives will be implemented as soon as the church’s Executive Committee Meeting approves them during IAD Mid-year meetings in May 2011.

Church leaders also discussed ways to allow for closer connections between congregations, networking and inter-connectivity among its educational
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March 22, 2011 - Mandeville, Jamaica...Sherrefa Burchell and Nigel Coke/IAD

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Under the theme "Come Holy Spirit" more than seven hundred and fifty persons responded to the wonderful message of God's grace and were added to the Seventh-day Adventist Church in Jamaica. It was broadcast live to thousands via the internet, NCU Radio and NCU TV from the church's main site at the NCU Gymnatorium.

"It is a good feeling" said Kate Asmond, who is also a registered nurse and mid-wife. "I am happy because this is something I wanted for a while and so I am overjoyed that it is now a reality." Kate was the first person to be baptized at the JAMU main site and hers was also the baptism that was carried live in Venezuela during the Inter-American Division's (IAD) broadcast from the various Unions. "I look forward to serving God in His church" Kate added.

Also, among the more than twenty persons baptized at NCU was a couple, Carl and Kadeon Siddon, who were married just a few days before. They are both returning to the church after months of absence.

"I never intended to stay out of the church forever," said Carl. "I wanted to get married and return to the fold, so today I am happy that I have given my life back to God."

Like her husband, Kadeon was also a member of the church for many years, left, but had no desire to remain outside of Christ because she believes that "one cannot know what is right and insist on doing the wrong." They are now very happy to have recommitted their lives and look forward to a beautiful life and marriage with Christ as the center.

Pastor Everett Brown, president of JAMU, delivered the main message for the program. In it he reminded the church that though we may have "Unfulfilled dreams and expectations, with God nothing is impossible".

Referencing Matthew 16: 24-26, Pastor Brown said "I sense, my brothers and sisters that there is an air of complacency, a lack of urgency, that exist in our church and the wider society to respond to the call of Jesus Christ for sinners to surrender their life to Him before it is eternally too late. The call, therefore, is for us to surrender our lives to Jesus so that we can receive the power and salvation that is available to all; to the murderer, to the person who believes God has turned His back on him, to those who are on the verge of giving up and to all who exercise faith in Jesus Christ."

Earlier in the service, music was provided by the Inspaye Praise Mass Choir from NCU, the group Seeds of Love, and a group of young people from Pennsylvania, "The La Sonnette Ensemble", playing the bells. Prayer concerts were conducted in which supplication was made for the infilling of the Holy Spirit, the outpouring of the Latter Rain, the financing of the Mission, for family and friends to return to the fold, among other things.