IAD News

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Inter-American Division  >  Communication Department

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Jun 2, 2011

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June 2, 2011 - Montego Bay, Jamaica...Libna Stevens/IAD

Seventh-day Adventist communicators from around the world church are gathered this week in Montego Bay, Jamaica, for the annual Global Internet Evangelism Network Conference (GIEN). The five-day conference began yesterday and will continue through Sunday, June 5, and is focused on using online social networks as an effective media for spreading the gospel.

GIEN is an organization that aims to foster the mission of the Adventist Church through the creative use of internet technology. This week's conference is the first to be held in the Inter-American Division (IAD) territory since GIEN was organized in 2004.

"This is one of the things I love about our church: The willingness to use technology for the advancement of the gospel," said Pastor Leito, president of the IAD, via Skype, an application which uses the internet to connect people through live chat and video and audio conferencing. Pastor Leito is currently in the Netherlands. "Christianity has been keen on gathering, storing and disseminating information. We must continue to use the technology available to keep people connected."

"Unless we as a church are open to technology in helping us preach the Word, we could be left behind," said Pastor Leito. He added that the IAD fully supports the use of technology to bring the age-old gospel to the world in the current digital age.

"Are we ready to make the [gospel] message a social one using the social media here and beyond?" asked speaker Bryan Collick. Attendees discussed and planned ways of bridging the gap between an older generation of church leadership and the younger generation working in the church.

Day one of the conference featured presentations on using Twitter and Facebook as active platforms to engage with a growing church audience. Other topics from today's presentations included how to tailor the message of salvation for today and tomorrow, and how to involve, initiate, and train Adventist university students to support the vision of GIEN.

For more information on GIEN 2011, visit  http://gien.adventist.org/
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June 2, 2011 - Kingston, Jamaica...Nigel Coke/IAD

Ten individuals gave their life to Christ to climax the preaching series for "Project Hope West Indies" which ended on Saturday, May 21, 2011 at the Andrews Memorial Adventist Church in Kingston, Jamaica.

The series, dubbed "Footprints of Hope" - a Nine-day Revival, started last month with Pastor Glen Samuels revisiting the theme "From Eden Lost to Eden Restored."

"Personally, my soul was watered during the series," said Pastor Samuels. "I am happy that the words still bring hope to persons from different ages and stages of life that they could respond to the leading of the Holy Spirit. It is my ever fervent wish and prayer that, as the wind is given a mighty voice the nations of the earth will rejoice in receiving the word of hope."

The preaching series involved the recording of 13 programs and is one of 118 programs covering eight series which are being recorded in Jamaica for broadcast on The Hope Channel.

"I benefited everyday from the messages that were delivered by Pastor Samuels," said Christopher Brown, one of the ten who were baptized. "It was not my intention to be baptized at the time, but the Holy Spirit worked through Pastor Samuels, and his messages gave the conviction. Baptism is a very big thing for me and I feel very good about it. I look forward to serving God through His church and learning more about Him."

The overall project, which will cost approximately $162,000 dollars, is a collaborative effort between Hope Channel; the Inter-American Division (IAD); the Jamaica Union Conference (JAMU); and the Atlantic Caribbean Union Mission (ACUM), which represents Adventists in the Islands of the Bahamas, Turks and Caicos and Cayman. It showcases the talents of individuals and groups and also some of the beautiful sceneries of all the islands involved.

Since the start of the recording in February, six series on family life, gender issues, children, youth, the Church in the community and preaching have been completed. The health series is presently underway at the Northern Caribbean University (NCU) studio in Mandeville, Jamaica, while the completion of the music series will on June 6, 2011.

This is the first major undertaking by NCU since the launch of its Media Group in November 2010. Most of the production team was drawn from the faculty, staff and student body of the University.

Project Hope, generally speaking, is a creative, cost-effective production done on short -term basis, using many volunteers to assist in the production of more than 100 television programs in less than one month. So far more than 2,000 programs have been produced in places such as Africa, Australia, India, the Philippines, Europe and North America.
Executive President of the Cooperative Republic of Guyana, the Honorable Bharrat Jagdeo, joined members of the local Adventist Church at the commencement of their third quadrennial church session last week. June 2, 2011 - Georgetown, Guyana...Barbara Savory/IAD

Executive President of the Cooperative Republic of Guyana, the Honorable Bharrat Jagdeo, joined members of the local Adventist Church at the commencement of their third quadrennial church session last week. The head of state, who was recently given the 'Champion of the Earth' award by the United Nations, not only delivered the feature address at the opening exercise on May 25, but also received an award from the church for his contribution to the nation.

As he proceeded to deliver the keynote address, Dr. Jagdeo made it clear that his acceptance of the appointment was not merely a matter of formality. Rather, although he was still in preparation for his appearance at the nation's independence anniversary to be held later that evening, the president declared, "I wanted to be here because I wanted to personally say thank you to the Adventist Church for the tremendous work it has done in keeping faith alive in Guyana and for assisting with the complex social task we have set ourselves as a country."

Dr. Jagdeo had some salient reminders and admonitions for both leaders and constituency. He recognized the role of the church in national development, noting that "Guyana will never be able to achieve its potential unless there is a partnership between the government and the church." He emphasized that modern hallmarks of development and progress - such as better access to quality health care and education and better paying jobs - are inadequate to satisfy the core of intrinsic human need. National moral revival is essential to enable citizens to truly enjoy economic progress. He encouraged the Adventist church to seek "to strengthen the character of every Guyanese - both those who fear God and those who do not."

President Jagdeo is a practicing Hindu, but he confessed, "The bible has all the lessons we need - whether we are Christian or non-Christian." In speaking to the gathering, he used a number of biblical references and principles to outline his expectation of the Adventist church as a part of the Guyana society.

The Adventist Church's community focus was mirrored by the president when he mentioned "Jesus' life was characterized not just by prayer, but by service; so we need not just to pray in beautiful edifices, but go to the communities where the people are." In order to transform the country, he said, the church needs to do more than preach to the converted every week. It needs to go to those who need the Gospel most.

The president further encouraged the church to intensify its role as a support entity for individuals at the crossroad. He cited the power of sources of negative influences in society that impact those who, faced with various social and economic challenges, are indecisive on the course they should take.

At times like these, "The church has to be there at that moment; the church has to be there to lend a helping hand," he said.

The occasion was used by the head of state to promote better relationships between citizens and