IAD News

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Posted: 13 Jun 2011 09:00 PM PDT

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After serving for 20 years as president of the Seventh-day Adventist-owned Northern Caribbean University (NCU), Dr. Herbert Thompson has requested retirement as an active employee of the Seventh-day Adventist Church. His retirement was announced by Pastor Everett Brown, president of the church in Jamaica during a special constituency meeting held at the NCU Gymnatorium in Mandeville, Jamaica earlier today. The retirement became effective June 13.

Dr. Thompson, who has served the Northern Caribbean University, one of the largest institutions of the Seventh-day Adventist Church in the world, for more than 38 years will pursue personal interests in his retirement.

"My profound gratitude goes to Dr. Thompson and by extension, his family for their outstanding contribution to NCU over the past decades," said Pastor Everett Brown, chairman of the university's Board of Governors. "NCU under his visionary leadership has been a beacon of light to thousands who have graced its walls from Jamaica, the Caribbean and other parts of the world. The University has grown tremendously under his leadership. On behalf of the Board of Governors I wish him all the best in his future endeavors."

A meeting of the University's Board of Governors will be convened to start the process to replace Dr. Thompson, church leaders said.

As the longest serving president in the Institution's 104-year history, Dr. Thompson spearheaded the transition of the West Indies College to its present university status in 1999. NCU has a current enrolment of approximately 5,600 students.

Pastor Israel Leito, president of the church in Inter-America, who is in Jamaica for other church related business, expressed appreciation for the years of service Dr. Thompson served in Jamaica, the Inter-American Division and the world, especially in the area of education.

A highly respected member of the Jamaican community, Dr. Thompson is a Justice of the Peace for Manchester, and is a recipient of the National Honor, Commander of the Order of Distinction (CD) awarded by the Government of Jamaica.

Presently, NCU is co-owned and co-operated by the Jamaica Union Conference of Seventh-day Adventists (JAMU) and the Atlantic Caribbean Union Mission of Seventh-day Adventists (ACUM), both of which came out of the reorganization of the former West Indies Union Conference on Nov. 29, 2010. On that day the various stakeholders of the institution signed 'the NCU Accord', formalizing their commitment to its sustainable growth and development.

NCU, one of the largest Seventh-day Adventist University world-wide, operates four campuses across Jamaica.
Outreach is the fuel for revival

Inter-American Division > Communication Department

Libna Stevens
Jun 14, 2011

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14 Jun 2011, Portland, Oregon, United States...Mike Jones/ANN

Calls for revival coming from our denomination's leadership are gratifying, but we must never forget the importance of outreach.

I'll never forget a revival that swept my home church back in 1969 in Worthington, Ohio. I had just left the ranks of cultural Adventism, having made an adult decision for Christ at the age of 30. Adventist businessman-turned-revivalist Emilio Knechtle had become my mentor, and at my suggestion, the church invited him to hold a weekend series of meetings. The result? A revival broke out.

That revival resulted in our launching approximately a dozen small prayer-study groups. Some groups studied various books of the Bible, while others used Christ-centered books such as church co-founder Ellen G. White's Steps to Christ. A new spirit permeated the church and lives were changed for the better. It was wonderful. For a while.

But a year later, our revival had mostly ended.

Why? Because our focus was mostly on us. We wanted to strengthen our walk with Jesus -- a good thing. But, regrettably, we weren't doing the works of Jesus -- not a good thing. You see, outreach is the fuel that keeps revival fires burning, and outreach wasn't happening with us.

There's nothing new about this. White once reported on a revival that happened in Battle Creek, Michigan in 1893, which faded when the students didn't engage in outreach. I will never forget the revival that swept the campus at Andrews University in 1971, my first year as an instructor there. It was powerful, impacting both students and faculty. But it didn't last, either.

Jesus underscores the importance of outreach: "Heal the sick, raise the dead, cleanse lepers, cast out demons," he says in Matthew 10:8. But those ideas simply weren't on our plate back in 1969. We weren't impacting our community. We were so happy enjoying our sweet little revival and the new closeness many of us had with each other that we didn't do much else except maintain our groups.

Regrettably, it wasn't long before we were back in our Laodicean twilight zone. We liked what had happened and didn't want to lose it.

Jesus warned in Mark 4:18 that "the cares of this world and...the desire for other things" would, if permitted, choke the Word, causing it to be unfruitful. That's what happened to us. Over time, some of us even left the church, including me.

Today I'm back and believe I have revival in my life. But outreach is what's keeping it alive. As I encounter people in my church and community with fractured relationships, some homeless and others mentally ill, among other issues, I come face to face with a huge problem. I'm not up to the task. I'm inadequate.

But that inadequacy is proving to be quite a blessing. Because my sense of inadequacy these days drives me to my knees and to God's Word. Every morning I tell Jesus, "It's your son Mike down here in the war zone of Planet Earth, and I am desperate for your presence in my life."
Inter-American Division: Church leaders and staff seek to be “Renewed by the Spirit”

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Amid the Seventh-day Adventist spiritual revival and reformation sweeping throughout Inter-America during the past five months, church leaders and staff of the Inter-American Division (IAD) pause for prayer and spiritual emphasis this week at its headquarters in Miami, Florida.

"Renewed by the Spirit" has been the focus of the special week of prayer which is being led by guest speaker, Steve W.A. Riley, pastor of the Stanmore Seventh-day Adventist Church in Port-of-Spain, Trinidad. He reminded the leadership that God has called each one to serve Him.

"God called you because of Him, because of what God can do through you," said Pastor Riley, as he addressed the more than 75 church employees. "It's not because of who you are that He called you, it's because of who He is and what He can do for you just as you are, wounded, discouraged, discomforted. It's not because of you but because of Jesus," he added.

Pastor Riley also focused on the important call God has made to each to serve Him completely and bear fruit regardless of human praise.

"It's not what we do because other people are looking that matters to God. It's what we do when no one will find out," stated Riley. "So when the master is out, our integrity must not take a vacation, our honesty must not go on retirement, and our morality must not go in retrenchment. We are working with God in mind, regardless of the office we hold," he continued as he emphasized the responsibility of each leader to give an account of the work entrusted by God.

It's a renewal of the Spirit that church leaders seek at the IAD headquarters office which oversees a territory of more than 3.4 million members.

"For years, the IAD office has dedicated one week out of the year for a special week of prayer," said Pastor Balvin Braham, associate director of the ministerial association for the church in Inter-America. "It's an important pause during the year to gather as a team to pray and worship God," said Pastor Braham.

"We here at the headquarters office are human beings like everyone else and need to be vertically connected with the Lord in order to be effective on horizontally as we seek to lead others to a saving knowledge of Jesus Christ," explained Braham.

"It's important to pray and worship collectively during the designated week of spiritual emphasis," said Braham. "We recognize that no man stands alone. Like the Apostle Paul we should build each other up and so corporate worship and prayer is the act of taking responsibility for building each other within the team. Paul says in Hebrews 10:25 that we should not forsake the assembly of ourselves together; and Jesus mentioned in Matthew 18:20 that where two or three are gathered in His name, He is there to bless and save."

The IAD staff will continue to pause for Bible readings and prayer throughout each day this...