IAD News

Using online social networks to spread the gospel discussed at GIEN

Posted: 01 Jun 2011 09:00 PM PDT

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Inter-American Division   >   Communication Department

Libna Stevens   |   June 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/