Inter-America: Church to hold first territory-wide virtual council

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Inter-America: Church to tackle difficult-to-reach populations with the Gospel

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Seventh-day Adventist leaders from throughout the Inter-American Division (IAD) want to bring the gospel to the unreached areas of its vast territory.
The Seventh-day Adventist Church in Inter-America will hold its first ever virtual council on Wednesday, Oct. 26, when it connects to its 3,000 ministers in 116 conferences and mission offices throughout the territory via the internet. The church's headquarter office in Miami, Florida, will serve as the hub of the meeting.

"It is so exciting to be able to connect with our pastoral team who inspire our churches and members to seek God and share the Gospel," said Pastor Hector Sanchez, ministerial secretary for the church in Inter-America. Pastor Sanchez was able to connect to 78 conference offices at one point during a test run last week.

The virtual ministerial council is part of the church's second phase of its revival and reformation initiative coined as "Heeding the Word". The initiative seeks to inspire and motivate church members to the in-depth study the Bible.

According to Pastor Sanchez, the objectives of the ministerial council are to strengthen the spirit of unity between the different levels of the church in Inter-America, allow for pastors to have a closer connection with their leaders, address questions and concerns, and motivate local leaders to engage in similar linking events at every level of the church.

Inter-American Division leaders want to ensure that the aggressive spiritual revival initiative which took off earlier this year has every minister on board with guiding the membership into a deeper relationship with Jesus, leaders said. "This virtual council will be the opportunity to continue striving in unity with this initiative and others," explained Sanchez.

The two-hour virtual event will feature a short message from Adventist World President Pastor Ted N.C. Wilson, a spiritual message from Inter-American Division President Pastor Israel Leito, several running initiatives taking place division-wide, a Q&A section, music, prayer and more.

Pastor David Javier, president of the church in South Mexico, said he and fellow administrators and colleagues arranged for 320 ministers in the territory to participate in the online event from the church's Linda Vista Adventist University.

"We thought it was a great opportunity to gather our pastors together on the
Seventh-day Adventist leaders from throughout the Inter-American Division (IAD) want to bring the gospel to the unreached areas of its vast territory. This was the main focus during the opening ceremony of the first-ever territory-wide Adventist Mission Summit held last night.

The ceremony, which took place at the IAD church headquarters in Miami, Florida, United States, set the tone for the next three days of meetings as top leaders, hungry to plant churches in isolated populations as well as the large modern cities, will create new strategies to accomplish new goals.

"We know you have been struggling in your union to reach the unreached in your unions, but we want to come together to find ways of helping you," said Pastor Israel Leito, president of the church in Inter-America, as he addressed dozens of regional Adventist Mission coordinators and church presidents.

The unreached in Inter-America represent some 100 people groups such as the Hindus in the Caribbean, the Mayans in Guatemala, the Aztecs in Mexico, the Arabs and Amerindians in Venezuela and more. Among these groups, there are some 700 languages represented in about 1,000 areas, church leaders said.

"No more running away from the difficult, we will look for the most difficult places in Inter-America and attack those places with the truth," vowed Pastor Leito as he challenged leaders to establish action plans to reach those in need of salvation.

The summit will feature a number of speakers from the Adventist Mission Office of the Adventist World Church who will share the new structures and policies, explain the mission context, teach urbanization and church planting, focus on funding for the IAD's Global Mission project, how to witness to specific people groups, outline mission marketing strategies, and more.

"We want to make a turn for the better in fulfilling the mission of the church," added Pastor Leito as he reflected on the how much more needs to be done even in Inter-America, which has one of the largest Adventist memberships in the world.