Inter-America: Church sees spiritual revival initiative take off; efforts to focus on urban evangelism begin

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For nearly a year, Seventh-day Adventist Church leaders throughout the Inter-American Division (IAD) have conducted a comprehensive spiritual revival and reformation effort to motivate church members to lead a prayerful life immersed in the daily study of the Bible and to share the good news of salvation in their communities.

Several territory-wide activities have taken top church leaders from Inter-America's 21 major church regions to publicly commit to developing the type of spiritual revival that can ignite the more than 3.4 million members to prepare others for the second advent of Jesus Christ.

It's the type of comprehensive initiative which has become one of the IAD's major strategic plans for the next five years and beyond, church leaders said.

Inter-America's activities follow the Adventist world church's recent appeal for revival, reformation, discipleship and evangelism around the globe.

Several major satellite and online events have connected Seventh-day Adventists to Inter-America's revival and reformation initiative in the Dominican Republic, El Salvador, and from the IAD Headquarters in Miami, Florida, in the United States.

"It is important that we pray, study the Word of God and share its truths," said Pastor Israel Leito, president of the church in Inter-America. "We want the world to know that the Adventist church is a church that believes and shares the Bible."

The church participated in an initial 160-day prayer journey during the initial phase of the effort, coined "Constant In Prayer". Constant In Prayer promoted a prayer revival throughout Inter-America for children and young people, students and adults, and within the church, home, school, and community.

The second phase, launched six months ago and called "Heeding the Word", continues as a clarion call to spend time with the Bible.

"It's about listening to what God has to say in His Word, understanding the significance of His message and be willing to follow His instructions as they appear in the Bible," said Pastor Leito.

Although leaders recognize that it usually takes a year or two for an initiative to reach the local church, evidence of a praying church has been seen throughout the region during the past months, according to leaders.

"Never have our church leaders in each department and ministries been so involved in intense unified efforts to promote a personal spiritual revival among its membership," added Pastor Leito.

Leaders hope to measure the true impact of revival and reformation in Inter-America by the end of the effort, estimated to last for the next five years.
of 2015.

In the meantime, leaders believe that the revival and reformation initiative was inspired by the Holy Spirit in becoming the launching pad to what the church in Inter-America and around the world will be focusing to reach the large cities and isolated people groups throughout the territory.

"We have lined up programs and activities to call the attention to our large cities," said Pastor Leito. "We are gearing our efforts toward urban evangelism not abandoning traditional evangelism but looking at ministries and ways to reach every urban area and ensure that each church becomes a center of influence in the community."

It's not just about preaching but about demonstrating and showing people how to live an abundant life in Christ Jesus, said Pastor Leito.

Plans are underway for an intense urban evangelism training for administrators, pastors and evangelists throughout the IAD in the coming months.

The year 2012 will also see the health ministries department teaching members and people how to live a healthful life and promote it in their communities.

Publishing ministries will see a restructuring focused on achieving its mission to ensure that every colporteur knocking on house and company doors becomes a missionary and not just a book seller.

Educators and teachers at Adventist universities and schools will continue to work towards improving the educational system to offer high quality Christian education.

Pastors with graduate degrees throughout the IAD will continue to be enrolled at the Inter-American Theological Seminary to address the growing educated membership throughout local churches.

Church leaders will soon focus on a third phase of the revival initiative in March called "That the World May Know"-- an initiative which will seek to motive church members active in spiritual revival to share the good news of salvation to the world.

Part of That the World May Know will include the launch of hundreds of evangelistic campaigns throughout the territory as well as discipleship training of one million members to fulfill the gospel commission through Vision One Million evangelism plan.

Inter-American church leaders will continue to push towards the type of spiritual revival that will further prepare leaders, pastors, and laypeople to work together in creating an environment that can aid members in preparing them for eternal life in rural areas and urban areas, according to Pastor Leito.

For more news on Inter-America's Spiritual Revival and Reformation initiative and upcoming events, initiatives and activities, visit us at www.interamerica.org

Resources:
Vision One Million: http://visiononemillion.interamerica.org/
Revival and Reformation webpage: http://praying4revival.org
In Spanish: http://estamosorando.org
French: http://praying4revival.org

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