Inter-America: C. Dionisio Christian, former IAD leader, dies

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April 3, 2012 - Miami, Florida, United States...Libna Stevens/IAD

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Dr. Christian served as Public Affairs and Religious Liberty director and field secretary for the Inter-American Division (IAD) headquarters office in Miami, Florida, from 1985-1991. He began serving the church at the age of 19.

Born in the Dominican Republic, Dr. Christian served as district pastor, education director, youth director, theology professor, mission secretary and union president in the Dominican Republic, Panama, Honduras, and Puerto Rico, from the late 1940s to the 1980s.

Dr. Christian earned his undergraduate degree from Antillean College in Santa Clara, Cuba. He obtained a master’s degree in theology and a doctorate in pastoral ministry from Andrews University, in Berrien Springs, Michigan.

Dr. Christian retired in 1991 with 44 years of service in Inter-America.

Pastor Israel Leito, president of the church in Inter-America, remembers Dr. Christian as a leader who touched many lives.

"He was influential in moving this division forward at many levels of the church," said Pastor Leito. "Inter-America is grateful for preparing the church and his family to continue serving."

Pastor George W. Brown, former president of the church in Inter-America, who worked closely with Dr. Christian for seven years at the IAD, speaks highly of Christian.

"Our working relationship was always very close," said Pastor Brown. "I knew him to be a reliable, supportive and productive colleague, one who provided insight and vision for the work in Inter-America."

After retiring in 1991, Dr. Christian continued serving at Avon Park Spanish Adventist Church as an elder and Sabbath School teacher. He also obtained a doctorate in philosophy from Columbus University, in 2002.

Christian is survived by his wife of 62 years, Melba, four children, 10 grandchildren, and eight great grandchildren.

The Avon Park Adventist Spanish church in Avon Park Florida will hold a special service tomorrow, April 4, at 1:00 p.m. Following the service he will be interned at Lake View Memorial in Sebring, Florida.

To view the service live online, go to www.apsda.org