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April 8, 2012

Seventh-day Adventists in Jamaica plan to distribute more than 250,000 copies of the book "The Great Controversy" over the next six months. The planned distribution was outlined during a launch at the Falmouth Seventh-day Adventist Church in Falmouth, Trelawny, on Saturday, Mar. 31, 2012.

Dubbed "The Great Controversy Project", each church member is asked to purchase at least one book for $100.00 and give it to a family member, friend, neighbor or work colleague.

The book, written by the church's co-founder Ellen G. White, encapsulates the church's view of end-time events and what would trigger them. First published in 1888 and revised in 1915, it has been circulated worldwide in many editions and translations.

In a rallying charge to the membership, Pastor Everett Brown, president of the church in Jamaica, said the world is in turmoil and earthly leaders cannot find the answer.

He said "here in Jamaica, the Minister of National Security does not have the answer to our crime problem. President Barrack Obama and the leaders of Europe do not have the answer to the economic problems that the global economies face at this time; only Jesus is the answer, and so this book is to give people hope in Him."

Prior to the launch, over 200 copies of the books and the Adventist Christian literature, "Priorities" were distributed in the town of Falmouth to individuals and businesses.

"If I was concerned about whether or not people want this book, my sojourn in the town of Falmouth this afternoon dispelled that fear, said Pastor Brown. "They were well received and we pray that these books will bring about the necessary change in individuals lives, as they read them"

The Falmouth Fire Station was recipient of some of the books on Saturday and according to District Officer, Oneil Bryson, it was well appreciated.

"We are grateful for the time you took today to give members of our team copies of this book, said Bryson. "It will become part of our devotion and shared with those who are not on duty now."

The project falls under the Revival and Reformation initiative of the Adventist World Church and the Inter-American Division. It is estimated that the Global Adventist membership will distribute hundreds of millions of copies over the next two years.

For more on the Seventh-day Adventist Church in Jamaica, visit http://www.jmunion.org/
Pastor Everett Brown (right), president of the church in Jamaica, presents a copy of "The Great Controversy" and a "Priorities" magazine to District Officer Oneil Bryson of the Falmouth Fire Station during a community distribution drive on Mar. 31, 2012.
Jamaica: Vision One Million celebration draws thousands of visitors throughout Adventist churches

Thousands of visitors including government, and business leaders joined Seventh-day Adventists across Jamaica in what the Church dubbed "Vision One Million" celebrations on Mar. 31, 2012.

April 7, 2012 - Mandeville, Manchester, Jamaica...Nigel Coke/JAU/IAD

Thousands of visitors including government, and business leaders joined Seventh-day Adventists across Jamaica in what the Church dubbed "Vision One Million" celebrations on Mar. 31, 2012.

Congregations welcomed visitors with special gifts and warm fellowship, including the more than more than seven hundred and sixty new believers who were baptized into the church.

The main site for the celebrations in the Jamaica Union (JAMU) was the Falmouth Adventist Church in Trelawny where Dr. Myrna Costa, vice president of the church in Inter-America was the main speaker.

In referencing Romans 5:15 she said, "Jesus does not give us His grace and say, 'What will you do in return?'. He gives us grace to save us. He wants us to accept His grace that is freely given to all of us. He died for us and He wants us to serve Him because He forgives us and He just wants us to love Him back."

Costa then challenged the members to make a difference in the lives of those with whom we come in contact to "show our appreciation of the grace that God bestows on each one of us."

In a brief address at the Falmouth Church also, Pastor Everett Brown, president of the church in Jamaica said the Church, collectively, must catch the vision and recognize the end times.

"The Church has embarked on an initiative to prepare the people of God for the second advent of Jesus Christ," added Brown. "God's church, as described by John in the book of Revelation, is in a state where she needs to be prepared in order to finish the work that God has entrusted to her so that Jesus Christ can come."

At the Cedar Grove Adventist Church in Mandeville, Manchester, hundreds of visitors came out for the celebration almost equaling the number of members in attendance.

"We praise God for His bountiful blessing," said Judith Forbes, first elder for the Cedar Grove Church.

According to Forbes, approximately three hundred members attend every Sabbath, yet on today, said Forbes, "all these members had to sit on both sides of the Church outside and view the service via close circuit television while close to three hundred visitors took their place inside."

"We are happy that twelve persons were baptized coming out of a two-week evangelistic series by Elder Bancroft Barwise, Treasurer of JAMU," added Forbes.

The Mandeville Adventist Church also in Manchester renamed their 'Vision One Million' celebrations 'Mission 500', which set a target to have 500 visitors in Church on March 31. It also included an anti-violence march and the distribution of the book, 'The Great Controversy' in collaboration with other Churches in Mandeville.
"What we wanted to do was to reach 500 persons in and around the Mandeville area for our morning service," said Church pastor, Greg Baldeo. "We had nearly three hundred and that I believe was fantastic even though our goal was not met."

Later in the afternoon, the members took to the streets to impact another 200 or more persons with the gospel. The Pathfinder Marching Band, pathfinders and members in that order left the Church and marched to the Park with banners bearing anti-violence message, which Baldeo said was very timely for Mandeville. Approximately 360 copies of The Great Controversy were given away.

At the Andrews Memorial Adventist Church in Kingston several government officials including the Minister of Justice, Senator Mark Golding were on hand to celebrate the day. Each visitor received a copy of 'The Great Controversy' which was the main gift for the day.

"One aspect of our 'Revival and Reformation' initiative in East Jamaica is 'The Great Controversy Project' where we will seek to place fifty thousand copies of the book 'The Great Controversy' in fifty thousand homes," said Pastor Adrian Cotterell, president of the Adventist Church in East Jamaica.

"Beginning today, and as part of our initiative in the celebration of Jamaica's fiftieth anniversary as an independent nation, we will distribute these books up to Aug. 4, when we will have the annual 'Day of Prayer for the Nation.'"

'Vision One Million', which is part of the World Church's 'Revival and Reformation' initiative, was launched across the Inter-American Division (IAD) and JAMU on Sep. 3, 2011. Its aim is to recruit a minimum of one million, or 75,000 in JAMU, passionate disciples to share the love of Jesus with non-believers and former members of the Church.
Nearly 6,000 Seventh-day Adventists and visitors packed the Parque de la Industria Convention Center in Guatemala City, Guatemala, to celebrate Inter-America's Vision One Million discipleship program during a special satellite event held Mar. 31, 2012.

April 7, 2012 - Guatemala City, Guatemala....Libna Stevens/IAD

Nearly 6,000 Seventh-day Adventists and visitors packed the Parque de la Industria Convention Center in Guatemala City, Guatemala, to celebrate Inter-America's Vision One Million discipleship program during a special satellite event held Mar. 31, 2012.

The event commemorated the six-month-old program, which was launched throughout the Inter-American Division (IAD) territory in an effort to recruit and train church members to witness in their communities.

"Today is a very special day for the church in Inter-America," said Pastor Israel Leito, president of the church in IAD, during the live program. "We estimate that more than one million visitors are attending our churches today."

The program marked an important phase in Inter-America's history as the church intends to train one million disciples, bring one million visitors to church on the last Saturday of the first quarter of every year, and baptize one million people by the year 2015, leaders said.

Vision One Million is designed to motivate church members to intensify their evangelistic efforts to baptize new members into the church each first quarter.

Some 125 new members joined the church through baptisms during the live program at the convention center, adding to the hundreds of baptisms being held throughout Guatemala and thousands more throughout Inter-America.

During the satellite event, Pastor Balvin Braham, associate director of the ministerial association for the church in Inter-America and organizer of the event, announced that 68,187 baptisms took place throughout the IAD during the first quarter of this year, the most baptisms recorded in the IAD in a three-month span. The final tally of baptisms was reported at 72,629 baptisms. In recent years, due to the efforts of the Pentecost and More program, baptisms reached between 48,000 and 58,000 in the first quarter.

Vision One Million, said Pastor Braham, "has the intent of assisting each believer to live in readiness for the coming of Christ." According to Braham, essentially it's recruiting members who want to be committed to living a spiritually renewed life, fostering functional relationships with whomever they come in contact with and addressing specific needs within the church and in the community."

Already, the Vision One Million initiative has mobilized pastors, administrators, directors and members in an orchestrated venture to motivate each believer into a personal spiritual revival through a daily prayerful life and study of the Bible which leads to sharing the good news of salvation in their communities, said Braham.

The two-hour celebration brought top church leaders of the IAD as well as evangelists from...
throughout the division territory, to participate during the live satellite program transmitted through The Hope Business Channel, Esperanza TV, and 3ABN Latino.

Evangelist Robert Costa, associate ministerial secretary for the Adventist world church, was the keynote speaker. Costa addressed church members and especially the more than 2,800 visitors brought into the convention center as well as television viewers to seek God's rest and be ready for eternity.

"God has something special for you," said Costa. "Happiness begins with faith and following what the Bible tells us for it shows us the way to follow," added Costa as he appealed to members and visitors alike to commit to a life in Christ and to sharing the gospel.

Costa was viewed via satellite downlink at hundreds of churches in Guatemala, as dozens of districts throughout the country concluded their week of campaigns, numbering 1,000.

"In Guatemala, we are happy that some 19,000 visitors have been brought into our 650 temples today," said Guenther Garcia, president of the church in Guatemala. With its Vision 60,000 in Guatemala, church leaders have already seen what a difference the recruiting and training initiative has done throughout the country.

In the span of six months, the church has trained some 35,000 disciples as part of the Vision One Million initiative since it began in October 2011. As a result, the new disciples have been responsible for preaching, giving Bible studies and retaining a total of 6,093 new members, according to Garcia.

"We are thankful for our own Vision 60,000 because it has brought a new push, a new sparkle to train our committed laypeople," said Garcia. He said the program has accomplished more in the last six months when compared to other efforts in the last 10 years.

Local leaders highlighted the work of Vision One Million during the program and honored 25 laypeople who have been active in evangelism work in the 30, 40, or 50 years since they were baptized.

A group of newly baptized members also received a special commemorative medal for being part of the more than 6,000 new believers who joined the church up to that day in Guatemala.

In South Mexico, more than 77,000 visitors were reported to have been attending churches across the region during the day and over 16,000 baptisms as a result of the evangelistic efforts in the first quarter, church leaders reported.

In Jamaica, nearly 14,000 visitors made their way across dozens of Adventist churches to join the division-wide efforts of Vision One Million. Government officials were among the visitors in Kingston. About 300 community leaders, friends and neighbors attended the Mandeville Adventist Church in Central Jamaica.

The church all across the island took to the streets as part of the initiative and distributed hundreds of Great Controversy books. The church in the central region also marched through the streets with messages of hope and anti-violence. Leaders in Jamaica hope to have some 75,000 trained disciples by 2015.

So far the church throughout the IAD accounts for some 526,000 trained disciples under the Vision One Million initiative.

As the church in Inter-America continues its Vision One Million discipleship program throughout its territory, leaders will continue to encourage and strive to involve more and more church members active in the more than 100,000 small groups to expanding the church and the community with a message of hope.

The church plans to celebrate next year's Vision One Million initiative at the end of March through a special celebration program in Colombia.

Nigel Coke contributed to this article
Evangelist Robert Costa, associate ministerial director for the Adventist world church speaks to thousands of members and visitors during the Vision One Million satellite event held at the Parque de la Industria in Guatemala City, Mar. 31, 2012. The dev

For more on Inter-America’s Vision One Million discipleship program, visit http://visiononemillion.org/

View our photo gallery of the event at http://www.flickr.com/photos/interamerica/6887942890/in/photostream

Resources:
Vision One Million: http://visiononemillion.org/

Revival and Reformation webpage: http://praying4revival.org
In Spanish: http://estamosorando.org
French: http://praying4revival.org

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