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Posted: 14 Aug 2012 09:00 PM PDT

Tune in to Inter-America’s 12th Annual Adventist Laymen’s Services and Industries (ASI) Convention opening program today beginning at 6:00 p.m. Guatemala Time or 8:00 p.m. Eastern Daylight Time. The program will be streamed live over the internet from Hot

Adventist Church president appeals for unity in television interview

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This year's four-day event themed "That the World May Know," is expected to draw hundreds of Adventist professionals and church leaders from throughout the Inter-American Division territory.

Dr. Robert Folkenberg of Share Him Ministries, Dr. Bertram L. Melbourne of the Howard University School of Divinity in Washington D.C. and additional speakers from Guatemala's Chamber of Commerce will be featured during the convention.

To view the 12th ASI Inter-America Annual Convention opening program and keynote speakers online, click here

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Seventh-day Adventist world church President Ted N.C. Wilson appealed to the world church family to remain united in the face of issues that threaten to create dissension and distraction.

Wilson made his appeal in a one-hour interview televised on 3ABN, a private network supportive of the church, and also carried on the denomination's official television network, Hope Channel. The discussion took place last week at the 2012 Adventist-laymen's Services & Industries convention in Cincinnati, Ohio.

Acknowledging that recent actions by constituent union conferences on the question of the ordination of women are "causing considerable distraction" in the church, Wilson said he would not address that issue, but instead called for the movement to remain united.

"All of us need to show respect to each other," he said. "We need to work together in unity and submission - submission to each other and to the Lord."

Wilson noted that despite earnest appeals for unity from the worldwide church leadership - officers of the General Conference and 13 division presidents - several union conferences either have voted or are planning to vote actions contrary to policy established by the General Conference in Session. He said this goes against the counsel of Ellen G. White, a pioneering co-founder of the Church, whom Adventists believe exercised the gift of prophecy during her ministry.

Wilson quoted White's statement in Testimonies to the Church, Volume 9, pages 260-261: "But when, in a General Conference, the judgment of the brethren assembled from all parts of the field is exercised, private independence and private judgment must not be stubbornly maintained, but surrendered."

He added that submission to the collective decisions of the world church is an essential part of living in unity. "We have a worldwide administration; we have working policies - agreements we abide by collectively to provide for a strong push for the mission of the church. When we don't see unity in what we are doing, then we see a fractious and divided spirit," Wilson said.

Mark Finley, a special assistant to Wilson and a longtime Seventh-day Adventist evangelist and broadcaster, added, "Unity comes as the church together in counsel mutually agrees, and as that mutual agreement takes place, and [we] put aside differences for what's good for the church and the mission of the church."

However, Wilson noted, unity does not mean cookie-cutter uniformity. "We do not have to do everything in lockstep when it comes to particular areas that may differ in certain particular situations or settings," he said. "Unity helps us understand that definitely [in] the action of bringing us together with major doctrinal or Biblical themes, and the understanding that what I do may affect another part of the body." Wilson urged that the entire world church needs to work
The world church leader, who was elected to the position in 2010 at the General Conference Session in Atlanta, Georgia, concluded the interview with an appeal for unity: "We need to keep in mind the vision of who we are as a people. That God has called us to be His remnant church. He's called us to be faithful to the Word of God. He's called us to proclaim the Three Angels' Messages of Revelation 14. ... My appeal to the Church would be to keep that vision in mind. Look beyond just the challenges of that immediate crisis or situation."

Following the interview, Wilson called attention to the practice of the apostolic church as described by Seventh-day Adventist Church co-founder Ellen White:

"The order that was maintained in the early Christian church made it possible for them to move forward solidly as a well-disciplined army clad with the armor of God. The companies of believers, though scattered over a large territory, were all members of one body; all moved in concert and in harmony with one another. When dissension arose in a local church, as later it did arise in Antioch and elsewhere, and the believers were unable to come to an agreement among themselves, such matters were not permitted to create a division in the church, but were referred to a general council of the entire body of believers, made up of appointed delegates from the various local churches, with the apostles and elders in positions of leading responsibility. Thus the efforts of Satan to attack the church in isolated places were met by concerted action on the part of all, and the plans of the enemy to disrupt and destroy were thwarted.

"God is not the author of confusion, but of peace, as in all churches of the saints." 1 Corinthians 14:33. He requires that order and system be observed in the conduct of church affairs today no less than in the days of old" (Acts of the Apostles, 95-96).
Jamaica: Local police station and post office get makeover from Adventist Churches

What began as one community project for the Grange Hill and Word of Hope Seventh-day Adventist churches could have been counted as two at the end of a community project day, in Montego Bay, Jamaica late last month.

Both churches began an initial project of painting the Morgan's Bridge Police Station, and ended up also painting the Grange Hill Post Office as well.

Members of these two Westmoreland churches worked to give back to the men and women who spend their lives protecting the community. Church members cleaned and painted the exterior and interior of the two-story building and cut grass and cleared debris on the compound.

Detective Inspector sub-officer in charge Noel Laing, said, "My team and I are elated with the work done by the church members. We got more than a face-lift. It was a total make-over. They cleaned from the floor to ceiling. The place looks and feels different."

"It was a joy to come to work in a comfortable, clean environment," he continued. "This will certainly boost the moral of the men and women here. The impact was also felt by the community folks who visited the station after the work was done."

The inspector, noting the impact of the work on the community also remarked, "This is what community life is about, citizens coming forward to interact and assist the police as we build-up our community. We really appreciate the work of the church, and look forward to continued partnership."

Flecon Moodie, pastor for the Grange Hill District of Churches, said, "As Adventist Christians we believe in law and order, so there is a natural synergy with the police and us, as we work to preserve law and order in the community. We wanted to make their work environment more comfortable. It was a wonderful experience and we enjoyed it."

"The church is not only interested in the spiritual well-being of the community, but in all areas of community life. This was evident, as the members came out and sacrificed their time and money to realize the project," Moodie added.

After completing their work on the police station the members then turned their attention to the exterior of both floors of the Post Office. Even late in the afternoon and with rain clouds above, they could still be seen working feverishly to get their second project done. They were hampered only by the unavailability of specific color needed for the building.

The Post Office and Police Station share the same building and serve some 29 communities in the Grange Hill area.

The project was part of the West Jamaica Conference 50th celebrations of its relocation from Mandeville to its current
A Church member cleans the outside wall of the Grange Hill Post Office in Westmoreland during outreach activities on July 15, 2012 location in Mount Salem, St. James.