



The PEACE Plan Launches in Costa Rica

Thousands of Costa Rican Christian Leaders Gather to Hear from Pastor Rick as a Movement of Community Transformation Begins Across Latin America

Over 2,000 pastors and church members from 13 Latin American countries came together on August 9th in the Centro de Convenciones de Costa Rica to partner with Pastor Rick Warren’s Saddleback Church for the official Latin American launch of the PEACE Plan, Saddleback’s mission model that brings healthy churches together around the world to create transformation in their communities.

Pastor Rick encouraged the Costa Rican audience to serve their churches and communities in new ways by working in unity to meet their neighbors’ most pressing needs, offering church members a fresh perspective on the unique role they are called to play.

“We looked for a nation that would be a base for this continent, so that every other nation in Latin America can study,” said Pastor Warren. “So we began to pray and talk with church leaders, and the Holy Spirit made very clear that the base for this continent would be Costa Rica.”

The PEACE Plan is a vision which began nearly 15 years ago when Saddleback partnered with local churches of all denominations in the country of Rwanda, a nation historically marked by genocide, to inspire and train ordinary church members to make an impact in their communities. Through the PEACE Plan, the Rwandan churches were able to impact clean water, HIV/AIDS, and literacy as well as move all institutionalized children out of orphanages and into family care, with the country down from 3,000 children in orphanages to less than 200 in a span of 6 years.



Because of The Peace Plan's success in Rwanda, 61 other African nations have replicated Saddleback's model to partner with International Partnering Churches to receive training through the PEACE Plan.

The Aug. 10 conference represents the start of a similar movement throughout Latin America, with Costa Rica serving as Saddleback's Latin American model nation and training hub for the rest of the continent.

The conference, the first Christian event at the Costa Rican Convention Center, brought together church members and volunteers from over 600 churches of all denominations. In a testament to the cross-denominational unity that has already begun, 200 volunteers from 8 different Costa Rican churches worked alongside Saddleback to coordinate the historic launch.

Pastor Rick emphasized that churches must pursue not just programmatic or numeric growth, but a commitment to developing disciples around the various



purposes for which God designed the church, a focus on church health that ultimately manifests in service to others. Many Costa Ricans saw the timing of that message as providential.

“The PEACE Plan will help us to be more than just a church that meets inside the buildings, but the Church that Jesus calls us to be outside of our building,” said Pastor Arturo Campos of the Evangelical Alliance.

“We aim to be the Church that makes the hands and feet of Jesus visible in the community. The Church will be known not just for what we say, but for what we do.”

“This conference is strategic in timing because there are a lot of political, social and economic challenges in our country. It’s great to see the PEACE Plan is beginning now because it’s what Costa Rica needs now.”

“The people of Costa Rica are lacking hope,” echoed Pastor Mauricio Solis of Vida Abundante Oeste. “The PEACE plan is an opportunity to address the issues, confront them, and find solutions, working alongside the government and the private sector. A lot of people need spiritual hope and we, the local churches, have it.”

Leaders from Puerto Rico, Mexico, Argentina, Panama, Nicaragua, Venezuela, Brazil, Peru, Colombia, Cuba, Guatemala, El Salvador, and Honduras are returning to their countries, motivated by what they witnessed and experienced in Costa Rica as a catalyst for their own nationwide movements.

“The PEACE plan is not just a program, it’s a movement,” remarked Campos. “I’m sure that Pastor Rick’s visit and the conference will mark a difference in the Church in Costa Rica, and bless not only the pastors here, but the pastors across Latin America.”