

Holy Spirit Sparks Youthful Revival in Hispanic AG Churches

 Evangelist Mario Murillo said in a recent interview with Charisma News that he believes “that the wave of revival in the Latin churches in America is going to end up being the most forceful spiritual awakening that we have. It will transcend anything else.”

The Assemblies of God agrees. The AG recently took part in a Lifeway Research Hispanic Church survey as a part of what is believed to be one of the largest surveys of Protestant Hispanic congregations invited to participate in a single research study as two dozen denominations and church networks participated.

Recently, the overall findings were released, revealing that Hispanic churches are a young and growing church community that has great promise for future growth. In addition, the statistics for the Assemblies of God responses were pulled separately—some of which compared favorably with the overall Protestant results, and some that differed significantly.

“The Assemblies of God is viewed as a leader among Hispanic Protestant churches in the U.S.,” says Dennis Rivera, director of the Office of Hispanic and Ethnic Relations for the AG. “We have nearly 3,000 churches and have been involved in U.S. Hispanic ministry far longer than most Protestant denominations.”

Matches

There are many similarities between the survey results found overall as compared to the results of the AG Hispanic churches

that responded.

In the AG, 38% of Hispanic congregants were under the age of 30 and an additional 37% were between the ages of 30 to 49. Overall, the numbers were 34% and 38%, respectively. Both sets of data indicate the Hispanic church in the U.S. is relatively young—in other words, not aging out.

“We’re young and vibrant,” confirms Rivera. “In fact, I believe that the Hispanic church, especially in the Assemblies of God, is growing far faster than official numbers indicate. I’ve wondered if the next Great Awakening hasn’t already begun only we’re not as aware because it’s happening in the Hispanic and other ethnic immigrant churches and communities.”

What some may see as surprising is that nearly half of the AG Hispanic ministers participating in the survey were born outside of the United States and 37% have graduate degrees and another 31% have bachelor’s degrees.

“What we’re finding is that more and more Hispanic pastors, as their church matures, are looking to advance their education, oftentimes because the young people in the church have advanced education,” Rivera says. “I’ve been in communication with AG Theological Seminary, and they have confirmed that there has been an overwhelming response by Hispanic ministers to their new ministerial advancement courses.”

The Hispanic Church, despite efforts to reach out to and welcome other ethnicities and cultures, remains solidly Hispanic. In the AG, 93% of the congregation are Hispanic, with 51% of members originating from Mexico. This compares closely to overall findings of 94% Hispanic and 46% from Mexico. The Caribbean was second with 22% in both AG and overall statistics.

Possibly not a surprise, but more of a confirmation, was that long work hours (57%) and family gatherings (birthdays, celebrations, etc.) (45%) were the top two reasons in the AG

(and overall, 61% and 35%, respectively) that kept adults from participating more regularly in activities of the church.

“Family is generally a priority among Hispanics,” Rivera says, “and relationships are far more important than schedules, which can then conflict somewhat with church activities as those activities need to be on some kind of a schedule.”

Rivera also noted that the long work hours should not be overlooked. As many Hispanics work in the hotel, restaurant, and other service industries, he’s found that church services held on Sunday afternoons or evenings are not uncommon because working weekend morning hours or late Saturday night hours are often mandatory.

And although congregations are by vast majority Hispanic (more than nine out of 10), 91% of AG responding pastors and 88% pastors overall have heard their congregations being welcoming to those from different cultures and backgrounds, which would seem to indicate those of different cultures and backgrounds are intentionally sought out and welcomed.

What’s Ahead

In the media, it’s frequently mentioned how many mainline churches are dying because their congregations are aging out—many with a majority of members 60 and older. However, that’s far from the case for Hispanic Protestant churches according to this study.

 As noted earlier, AG responders stated that an amazing 38% of congregants are under the age of 30 and 75% are under the age of 50. The numbers are similar in the overall responses.

“We have a young, growing, Spirit-filled Hispanic AG church that God has been quietly nurturing and blessing for decades,” Rivera says. “I believe we’re now seeing signs of that church maturing and preparing to explode in growth and influence as

this next generation of Hispanic young people are empowered to take the gospel to the world."

To review all the questions and the overall results of the Lifeway Research survey, [click here](#).

For the original article, visit [.](#)