

The Virgin Islands Consortium

Jehovah's Witnesses Host Regional Convention On St. Croix

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ST. CROIX -- Jehovah's Witnesses will convene at the Assembly Hall of Jehovah's Witnesses 23C North Carlton Road, Frederiksted this Friday through Sunday for their regional convention, a release the faith issued Tuesday makes known. The Witnesses welcome all who wish to attend the services, where, according to the release, there will be no collection of money. The program runs from 9:30 am until 4:50 p.m.

The theme, which the release says is based on the Bible, is "Don't Give Up". Over 400 are expected from St. Thomas, St. Croix, Virgin Gorda, Tortola, St. John, the mainland and Puerto Rico.

"In these hard and violent times, we Jehovah's Witnesses gather at such conventions to be spiritually motivated and strengthened to continue serving Jehovah God with endurance," stated Willmar Acevedo, spokesperson for the convention.

There will be video presentations of how the Bible and even nature teach lessons about how to endure, says the release. Family life will be included in the presentations and a feature film that explains what Jesus meant when he said: "Remember the wife of Lot."

Two conventions have been held at the same venue already in the last two weekends, with over 700 attending. "We warmly welcome all who attend. Some have been baptized also," said Mr. Acevedo.

According to the release, assemblies meet three times a year: two small one-day assemblies and one large regional convention that lasts three days. The Witnesses base this decision on Deuteronomy 16:16. ("Three times a year all your males should appear before Jehovah your God.")

"These gathering create an opportunity to meet and associate with witnesses from other congregations or even from other lands. At every assembly, a baptism is held for those who want to symbolize their dedication to God. We feel that the program helps us to be better citizens, better parents and acts as a positive influence for the entire community. We welcome all. We never ask for collections nor charge an entrance fee," said Mr. Acevedo.

The beliefs of Jehovah's Witnesses are based on the Bible teachings of Charles Taze Russell—founder of the Bible Student movement—and successive presidents of the Watch Tower Society, Joseph Franklin Rutherford, and Nathan Homer Knorr.

Since 1976 all doctrinal decisions have been made by the Governing Body of Jehovah's Witnesses, a group of elders at the group's Warwick, New York headquarters. These teachings are disseminated through The Watchtower magazine and other publications of Jehovah's Witnesses, and at conventions and congregation meetings.

Jehovah's Witnesses teach that the present world order, which they perceive as being under the control of Satan, will be destroyed by a direct intervention of Jehovah (God), who will use Jesus Christ to fully establish his heavenly government over earth, destroying existing human governments and non-Witnesses, and creating a cleansed society of true worshipers.

They see their mission as primarily evangelical (disseminating "good news"), to warn as many people as possible in the remaining time before Armageddon. All members of the denomination are expected to take an active part in preaching. Witnesses refer to all their beliefs collectively as "the truth".

Recently, Jehovah's witnesses [were banned in the Russian Federation](#). There are 170,000 witnesses there.

"We were accused as being extremists and violent and a threat to the government. We appealed the first verdict, but the appeal was rejected on July 17, 2017. This became world news and now the Witnesses in Russia cannot meet freely at their Kingdom Halls and our main offices were seized and closed. A Witness there could go to prison if he is

doing door-to-door work with the Bible or even at meetings. Some have been arrested already," Mr. Acevedo said.

Feature Image: Young Delfín Nyszael Encarnación being baptized as a minister at Jehovah's Witnesses convention on Saturday, July 22 at an Assembly Hall of Jehovah's Witnesses.

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