

Christians Rise Up in Venezuela

Venezuelan President Nicolas Maduro insists he will hold an assembly to rewrite the country's constitution—despite a vote where 98 percent of more than seven million voters rejected making constitutional changes.



The country's evangelical Christians are speaking out, asking God to restore unity and prosperity to the nation. Opposition parties say a constitutional assembly is just an attempt by the socialist president to impose a dictatorship in Venezuela. Many are at a breaking point after suffering for months from food shortages and heavy-handed government control.

The crisis has motivated Venezuela's churches to action. Leading up to the vote, public plazas around the nation echoed with the prayers of Christians.

"I believe the church has awakened to how difficult the Venezuelan situation is, and that each of us Christians needs to become active in this process of change," explains Hugo Diaz of the Movement for the Defense of the Constitution. Many Venezuelan Christians believe their country will prosper only as people look to God, not politicians, for solutions.

"We have been fasting before the Lord, asking Him to turn the heart of the people to Him. We had this idea to participate in this activity because it's not a matter of giving support to any political party," says Pastor Jose Rivero of Alliance Youth Leadership. He says the government should submit to the authority of God and the constitution.

With possible economic sanctions and more hardship ahead, Christians are stepping into the conflict to pray and shine a

light of hope in the midst of economic and political upheaval. Evangelical Council of Venezuela spokesman Juan Maraver urged Venezuelans to take heart.

“This is your hour. This is your time,” he said. “While many are seeing chaos, while many are seeing that Venezuela has no solutions, that restoration will take a long time. God says: ‘I will raise you up. I will bless you!’”

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