

THE NETHERLANDS

Pentecostals Set Precedent in Merger

Two are better than one. That was the consensus of the Netherlands Pentecostal leaders at a merger of the Dutch Assemblies of God (Brotherhood of Pentecostal Churches) and the Full Evangelical Churches in Amsterdam.

The two groups, ranking largest among numerous Pentecostal and charismatic groups in the Netherlands, joined forces under the name United Pentecostal-Evangelical Churches in February, setting legal precedent for future alliances. "The merger sent a message of unity echoing through the Dutch culture," says Tim Southerland, U.S. A/G missionary to the Netherlands. The unification surprised some non-evangelical groups, which have been unable to unite after 40 years of separation.

Other Pentecostal groups could join the United Pentecostal-Evangelical Churches now that the unification has taken place. "The leadership is convinced this is the first step toward revival in the Netherlands and all of Europe," Southerland says.

Following the consolidation, Dutch Pentecostal leaders laid out a 10-year plan to develop more leaders and plant churches.

"The merger of these two Pentecostal movements is a visible sign of the Spirit of God at work across Europe," says Greg Mundis, Europe regional director for the U.S. Assemblies of God. "This is not a man-made or programmed solution to problems, but rather the Holy Spirit is bringing people of faith together to accomplish His purpose to evangelize Europe and the world."

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