



RED DEL CAMINO

Para la Misión Integral en América Latina

## **Brief description of the Del Camino Network for Integral Mission in Latin America and the Caribbean**

During the mid 90's a small group of churches in Latin America and the Caribbean began to dream about networking together into a diverse yet at the same time united group of communities of faith committed to following God's call to be a living presence of His Kingdom living out and participating in His mission to restore all things.

The Del Camino Network (Red del Camino RdC) is a community of local churches who participate as servants in the life of the Kingdom of God in response to Jesus' radical call to "love one another, as He has loved us."

The local churches and leaders connect in friendships committed to accompanying and serving one another in what is collectively understood to be God's mission, *Missio Dei*, for the restoration of all things (Integral Mission in Spanish). The network is joined as well by pro-church organizations that identify with and form a part of this same spirit of church based participation in *Missio Dei*. Pro church organizations in contrast to para churches, view the church as God's primary agent of transformation in the world and strategically come alongside the work of the local church to equip and accompany her through their carried areas of expertise in community transformation. The network perceives itself as being part of a "movement". It is intentional about avoiding formal institutionalization. Rather, it hopes to develop and grow as stimulated by the Holy Spirit as the participants passionately carry out God's mission in such a way that inspires and encourages other local churches to serve integrally for God's Kingdom purposes.

The core focuses of the Del Camino Network are:

**Praxis:** the living out of mission in such a way that a distinct and alternative community emerges manifesting God's Kingdom of love and justice here on earth. Integral Mission does not flow from theory to practice but rather from faith driven practice and obedience to the call of God to reflection to more action.

**Community:** The body of Christ, as it lives out her call to love one another and our neighbors, united in our diversity and by our common call to be God's agents of transformation, becomes an attractive community to those far from God. We are to reflect God's nature in who we are, what we say and what we do together, as the Triune God is in essence community.

**Priesthood of all believers:** identifying and releasing all the gifts and unique talents of each member missionary actively participating in God's restorative plans.

Network churches are characterized by their powerful presence in the life of their communities and their commitment to be inclusive as they are living out a Kingdom alternative to the exclusive practices of the world.

As they are called to manifest God's love and justice in all areas of life, they fulfill this call by denouncing all injustices or systems that represent the anti kingdom while announcing life in the Kingdom characterized by hope, love and faith. In small but powerful ways the network churches are confronting the powers that exclude the weak and vulnerable by welcoming them into community and empowering them to fulfill God's promise in their lives, seeking alternative economic systems that return to the commons and escape from the enslaving forces of global economic systems based on self destructive consumption.

Network churches are diverse in terms of their denominational backgrounds. But, while their church traditions are very different from one another, from Baptist to Pentecostal to independent and everything in between, the churches that form a part of the movement tend to follow the beat of a different drum that draws them closer to one another. This rhythm of life moves them to take risks, invest in their communities and the marginalized, creatively identify their own gifts and talents and then put them at the service of the greater community for the Kingdom's sake. This unity in the vision of the Kingdom and God's all encompassing mission is what knits the network community together. Many network churches sense a greater sense of acceptance and belonging in the network than in their own denominations.

The network basically exists to create those spaces for the practitioner churches in process to meet, share, learn from one another, and be and encouraged and inspired to continue following the way of Jesus in the world...