

# Cuba Current

JANUARY, 2010

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## Why we go to Cuba

- Treasury license for the church? CHECK
- Passports? CHECK
- Cuba visas? CHECK
- Currency in Euros? CHECK
- Insurance? CHECK
- Charter flights booked? CHECK
- Letters to Customs from our pastor? CHECK
- Emergency contact info circulated? CHECK
- Cuba transportation and accommodations confirmed? CHECK

Preparing to travel to Cuba is a lot of work. We're going for a week on February 4 representing Florida Methodists with our brothers and sisters in the Cuba Methodist Church at their District

Conference in Havana. Hopefully, we will get to spend some time with our friends, Pastor Damián and his wife Samira, at our sister church la Sierra.

This is our second trip. The first was two years ago. A dozen of us flew to Havana. We split up once we arrived, each going to our sister churches in and around Havana. There were a lot of unknowns: would we be allowed to bring in the 200+ pounds of medicine, clothes, and items for our sister church? Would we be able to communicate with our limited Spanish? Would our visas be at the Havana airport as required? Who would pick us up? What would we do for eight days? And on and on.

A very long story made short, we were received in Cuba with tremendous love. Pastor Damián met us at the



airport and arranged our transportation for the 75 km trip to la Sierra in a '56 Ford. Thus began a week that would change our lives and cement friendships which will endure a lifetime.

For our upcoming trip, we have a much better idea what to expect. We have a sense of returning home. There are still questions of travel logistics, but we know one way or another, by God's grace, we'll get by.

We go to Cuba to help other people, strangers a couple of (continued on page 2)

**BIBLE VERSE:**

- *Let us then pursue what makes for peace and for mutual up building. (Ro. 14:19)*

## Cards, letters, pictures

Now is a great time to communicate with your sister church. Loree and I will be attending the District Conference, leaving Jacksonville on February 3 (and flying to Havana the next day). We hope to see most, if not all, of the pastors from the Ha-

vana District and would be happy to deliver a letter or small package for you.

Please get your letter to us as soon as possible. All of our contact information is on the back page.

Pray for us and our Cuban hosts.

George

## Why we go to Cuba (*continued*)

years ago, friends today. We got to share our faith with other Christians. We go because it is the right thing to do. In many small ways, we touch others' lives. And in many big ways, they touch ours.

The "Methodists United in Prayer" relationship is important. Please consider your commitment to your sister church and your brothers and sisters in Cuba. Pray for them and pray that we might better respond to their needs, using our many blessings to further God's kingdom on Earth. Your District Coordinators (Loree, me, Pete and Betty Perez) stand ready to help in any way we can. And we have a great team

(including our District Superintendent, Tim Smiley, who "gets it" and could not be more supportive):

- Joe Allinder, Pastor Leadership
- Glen Drummond, Pastor Visits
- Linda Zelenka, Special Advisor

Our contact information is on the back page. Let us know how we can serve.

George



*Our arrival in Havana, December, 2007*

## Email from Pastor Onay: Moved to the new building

Dear friends all over the world:

you cannot be with us here.

I am sending you a picture of the house, the temple is to the right and to the left the pastoral house.

I have good news: After 5 years Last Friday Dec 19 we moved to the new building. God is so good. We thank to all our brothers and sisters in our church who contributed with this work. We know without the help of you it had not been possible, thank you for your love and contribution. Finally the inauguration will be on December 30, Bishop Ricardo Pereira, main leader of the Methodist Church in Cuba will be with us that day. We so sorry someone of



We wish to all a Merry Christmas and a Prosper New Year

We love you

Onay, Odaisy, Gabriela and Consolacion del Sur UMC

## Another email and picture from Pastor Onay

Glorious Service of Inauguration! 150 people attended and Bishop Pereira preached.



*Pastor Onay is the second from the right*



Our brothers and sisters at la Sierra

## Jacksonville sister church needed

We need another Jacksonville Methodist church!

sister church relationship with a Cuba church, please let us know.

I learned today that we have a church in Cuba with no sister church in the North East District of Florida.

*“A relationship between the Methodist Church in Cuba and the Florida Conference of the United Methodist Church”*

If you are interested in a

## New website

Task force Secretary Renee Kincaid reports that the new website is up and running. It replaces the old Cuba-Florida Covenant site (which reflects our new name. Go to:

[www.methodistsunitedinprayer.org/](http://www.methodistsunitedinprayer.org/)



**Methodists United in Prayer**  
**Metodistas Unidos en Oracion**

*Check out our new website*

## Methodists United in Prayer

149 South Roscoe Blvd., Ponte Vedra, FL 32082

<http://www.Facebook.com> Search Groups:  
"Methodists United in Prayer North East District" and  
"United in Prayer—Cuba & Florida Methodists"

<http://www.methodistsunitedinprayer.org/>

<http://groups.yahoo.com/group/larednetwork/>

### **North East District Cuba Coordinators:**

George and Loree Reed, 904-285-3239

[george.reed@pv-umc.org](mailto:george.reed@pv-umc.org)

Pete and Betty Perez, 904-996-9336/904-874-7482

[pbperez007@comcast.net](mailto:pbperez007@comcast.net)

### **Specialist in getting pastors from Cuba:**

Glen Drummond, 904-348-5352

[glen.drummond@ferguson.com](mailto:glen.drummond@ferguson.com)

### **Pastor Leadership:**

Pastor Joe Allinder, Highlands UMC

904-751-2130

### **Advisor:**

Linda Zelenka, 904-269-0943

*Cuba Current* is published for Methodists in the North East Florida District involved with or interested in "**Methodists United in Prayer.**" "Methodists United in Prayer" facilitates prayer, love, exchange, and mutual support between the Cuba Conference and the Florida Conference. We hope to increase the relationship between sister churches in the two conferences and focus on these priorities:

- **To pray** for one another and develop a common study of Scriptures.
- **To engage** in the interchange of peoples at Cuba and Florida Conferences.
- **To respond** to the priorities of the Methodist Church in Cuba.
- **To build** relationships between the Florida Conference and the Methodist Church in Cuba for mutual support and encouragement.
- **To enable** the training of pastors and lay people for the equipping of Cuban disciples.
- **To mutually share** the history, current events, culture, and spirituality of both Conferences.

## Sister Churches



Havana District	NE Florida District
Barbosa	SISTER CHURCH NEEDED
Bauta	Oak Crest
Capdevila	Glynlea Grace Harmony Chapel Spring Glen
Central	Avondale
La Europa	Keystone
Guanabacoa	Mandarin
El Guatao	Highlands Garden City New Life Community Wesley Fellowship
Jaimanitas	Murray Hill
Loma de Cañita	1st UMC Starke
Marianao	CrossRoad
El Mariel	St. Paul
Mayorkin	Middleburg
Playas de Santa Fe	Orange Park
Punta Brava	Isle of Faith
San Antonio de los Baños	Lake Shore
San Antonio de Rio Blanco	Trinity (Palatka)
Santa Cruz del Norte	Swaim Memorial
Santiago de las Vegas	Southside
La Sierra	Ponte Vedra
Tumbadero/Callazo	Macclenny
Martin Pérez	River of Life
Vedado / University	Lakewood
Artemisa	Community (Lake Como)
The Retirement Home	1st UMC