

Cuba Current

July 2009



Heading to Work

in a
Havana
Neighborhood

There's Good News and There's Not-So-Good News

The relationship between the Florida UMC and Cuban Methodist Church is shifting. The good news is that the freeze on travel instated May 2008 on Cuba/Florida Covenant Methodists is over. A team has just traveled to Cuba June 15 – 22.

The no-so-good news is that new rules imposed on FLUMC travelers by Cuba reduce the number who may travel annually, and alter where travelers may go. The intention is to center the relationships not between sister churches, or even districts, but between the conferences. Therefore,

The Cuba-Florida *former* Covenant

The name of the Covenant will also be changed to satisfy concerns of the Cuban government. The word "Pacto," as the "Covenant" was called in Cuba, suggested that formal agreements were being made between entities outside the government's purview, in this case between the Methodist church of Cuba and the United Methodist Church of Florida. The new name must remove that word. It will likely be finalized as "United in Prayer" or "Methodists United in Prayer."

Florida United Methodists will be granted Cuban visas to attend Conference-wide events in Cuba, not to spend 7 or 8 days with a sister church. Because there are a limited number of such events each year, there will be fewer caravans, and those will still be limited to 12 people.

Many important details as to how this will play out and what you can do will be provided at a NE Florida District-wide meeting advertised on this page. Each sister church and all others interested in Cuba should attend.

A New Cuba Team for the North East District: Editorial

It's time for me to photograph, muse, and travel (especially to grandkids' homes), so I have sought and found a dynamic new District Cuba team, whom I will happily assist and you will greatly enjoy.

Co-coordinators: George Reed (Ponte Vedra) and Pete Perez (Lakewood)
Team: Betty Perez and Loree Reed
Pastoral Leader: Joe Allinder (Highlands)
Cuban Pastor Travel Coord: Glen Drummond (Lake Shore)
Info and Aid: Linda Zelenka (Orange Park)

Come meet and hear from them Aug. 9th.

Need to Know

Cuba



New "Covenant"

New Travel Rules

New District Team



What will change for you and your sister church? For all details...

Join us August 9th
3:00 p.m.
at Orange Park UMC

All are welcome. To help us count attendees RSVP to George Reed at george@mediaservicesgroup.com by July 26.

Thoughts on the church in Cuba, spoken to my sister Church June 21:

"As a deer longs for flowing streams, so my soul longs for thee, O God." Psalm 42:1

When I come here to see you (or even think of you) I drink from those deep pools as your love of Christ, your profound faith and soaring Spirit fill me to overflowing.

Linda Zelenka

