

# Cuba Current

MAY, 2017

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## MUIP Celebrating 20 Years at Both Annual Conferences

MUIP will celebrate our 20<sup>th</sup> Anniversary at both the Florida Annual Conference in Orlando (June 8-10) and the Cuba Annual Conference in Santa Clara (June 13-16). Mark your calendar to attend our three events in Orlando:

Wednesday at 1:30pm – Interview with Bishop Pereira and Task Force Chair George Reed on MUIP’s impact from the past 20 years and our plans for the future.

Thursday at 5:30pm – Dinner to celebrate MUIP’s anniversary. Bishops Carter and Pereira will speak, with several former Bishops in attendance. Seating is limited, so make your reservations now ([rkinc@tampabay.rr.com](mailto:rkinc@tampabay.rr.com)). The cost is \$15 per person.

Friday at 7:00pm – Bishop Pereira preaches.

MUIP will also have a booth on Thursday and Friday. Come and celebrate with us!

Bishop Carter will lead a delegation to the Cuba Annual Conference including Icel Rodriguez (Global Missions Director for the Conference) and husband Pastor Armando, George Reed (Task Force Chair) and wife Loree. They will celebrate MUIP’s 20<sup>th</sup> birthday during the Conference at Camp Canaan.



*Bishop Ricardo Pereira, Iglesia Metodista en Cuba preaches Friday at 7pm at Annual Conference: “Revive Us, Again”*

**BIBLE VERSE:**

*Each of you should look not only to your own interests, but also to the interests of others.*

*Philippians 2:4 (NIV)*

## New Sister Church Relationship!

Join us in asking God’s blessings upon our newest sister church relationship, CrossRoad UMC and Guanabacoa. District Superintendents Jay Therrell and Guillermo Leon have given their approval and it is time to celebrate.

Guanabacoa recently completed an extensive

building project. George Reed and Icel Rodriguez recently visited the new sanctuary and report that it is fabulous. They are a great “fit” with CrossRoad. Congratulations to Lance Sellon and Pastor Javier Diaz for making this happen.



*Worship service in the just-completed Guanabacoa sanctuary. CrossRoad’s new sister church.*

## North East District Active in Cuba

With cheaper flights and more travel options, churches throughout the District have been sending mission teams to Cuba. Ponte Vedra UMC sent a group to District Conference in February which included Pastor Greg Doss and his wife, Kim. The church sent a youth team (their first to Cuba) last month.

Linda Zelenka from Orange Park UMC and Pastor Jeff McClendon from Dinsmore UMC led groups in February. It was a return visit for Linda, and Jeff's first trip. Dee and Van Beggary took a team to visit the seminary in Havana.

It is time to plan your trips for the fall. Religious visas require 90 days'

notice (\$110); tourist visas (typically \$50) may be picked up at the airport at the time of departure. JetBlue flies nonstop into Havana from Orlando. Eight day trips are no longer required; many groups opt for four or five-day visits. Airfares have been running in the \$250 per person

range. Other options include American, Delta, and Southwest, out of Miami, Ft. Lauderdale, Charlotte, Atlanta, and Tampa. Flights now go into the main international terminal in Havana. Pick some dates and go!



*Ponte Vedra youth enjoying a meal at La Sierra in Mayabeque (plus one old guy).*

## Cuba Pastors Visit our District

Several visiting Cuba pastors stopped in recently on non-MUIP trips. District Superintendent Guillermo Leon visited Ponte Vedra, spending time with Pastor Greg and Kim. Ernesto Peña from Capdevila connected with Pastor Neal and others from Spring Glen. Pastor Enoel, Rector of the Seminary, spent time with friends from Middleburg and with Dee and Van Beggary. While here, he was hosted to a luncheon with Christ-Neptune Beach UMC.



*Pastor Enoel at Christ-Neptune Beach (far left).*

*Pastor Ernesto, Pastor Neal and the crew from Spring Glen (immediate left).*

## Task Force Meets in Lakeland

Group Area Coordinators from throughout the Conference met in Lakeland on February 25. The Task Force added three new members: Elsa Kaye (NC), Alice Matthews (AC) and Larry Rankin (SC). The group was updated on the pastor retirement fund, house church funding (see story on Page 3), seminary support, and an initiative to install water purification systems throughout the Cuba churches. The purification systems run around \$2,400 apiece.

The Florida Conference is planning

a "redistribution of districts" and a finalized plan will be presented for approval at the Annual Conference. The plan is to have eight Florida Conference districts, eliminating the South Central district. The districts/churches of the Methodist Church in Cuba have been increasing while the Florida Conference has been decreasing, and this trend will probably continue. The group discussed sectioning off the churches in a regional structure (East/Central/West) with the GAC working, not only with the same

district churches, but also within their region. This would strengthen MUIP's goal to achieve 100% partnership between the Cuba and Florida churches.

The group decided to explore a relationship with Community Bible Study International in partnership with the Cuba church for Bible study.

The Task Force will meet again on October 6 and 7, with Bishop Pereira also planning to attend.

## Helping Spread the Good News through House Church Funding

The Cuba church is blessed with fabulous growth. They do so by starting cells (study groups) which become missions after achieving a level of growth. Once a mission gets to around 25 members, they need to locate a house for meeting. These houses become new church

plants.

The Florida Conference helps fund these house church purchases through an Advance (# 110030). Matching funds are available up to \$3,000. If you would like to support this effort, you may place your donation in the offering plate (just

note the Advance number) or you can send it directly to:

Florida Conference UMC  
450 Martin Luther King, Jr. Ave.  
Lakeland, FL 33815



## What Information is Needed for a Religious Visa?

A request for a religious visa should be sent to your Group Area Coordinator at least 90 days in advance of your trip. Here is a list of the information required of each applicant:

- Name as it appears in your passport:
- Address:
- Phone number:
- Date of birth:
- Passport number:
- Country of birth:
- Citizenship:
- Marital status:
- Sex:
- Passport expiration:
- Parents' names (with your mother's maiden name):
- Profession:
- Date of visit:
- Length of visit:

*Start planning your  
fall trips now!*

## Methodists United in Prayer

149 South Roscoe Blvd., Ponte Vedra, FL 32082

<http://www.Facebook.com/Groups/MUIPNE>

<http://flumc-missions.org/muip-covenant.html>

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

### **North East District Group Area Coordinators:**

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*Cuba Current* is published for Methodists in the North East Florida District involved with or interested in "*Methodists United in Prayer*." Email [George Reed](mailto:George.Reed) to subscribe.

"*Methodists United in Prayer*" facilitates prayer, love, exchange, and mutual support between the Cuba Methodist Church 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.
- **Para orar** unos por otros y desarrollar un estudio en común de las Escrituras.
  - **Para participar** en el intercambio de los pueblos en las Conferencias de Cuba y la Florida.
  - **Para responder** a las prioridades de la Iglesia Metodista en Cuba.
  - **Para establecer relaciones** entre la Conferencia de la Florida y la Iglesia Metodista en Cuba por el apoyo mutuo y aliento.
  - **Para permitir** la formación de pastores y laicos para el equipamiento de los discípulos cubanos.
  - **Para compartir mutuamente** la historia, sucesos de actualidad, cultura y espiritualidad de las dos conferencias.

## Sister Churches



Havana District	NE Florida District
10 de Octubre/Spring of Life	First (St. Augustine) Grace (St. Augustine)
Barbosa	<b>Unconnected</b>
Calabazar	Fleming Island
Capdevilla	Spring Glen
El Guatao	Highlands Garden City New Life Community Wesley Fellowship
El Mariel*	St. Paul
Guanabacoa	CrossRoad
Guinera	<b>Unconnected</b>
Habana Central	Memorial
Jaimanitas	Arlington
La Europa*	Dinsmore Keystone
La Sierra**	Ponte Vedra
Luyano	<b>Unconnected</b>
Marianao	First UMC Jacksonville
Martín Pérez	Faith
Mayorkín*	Middleburg
Punta Brava	Isle of Faith
Regla	Calvary
San Antonio de los Baños*	First UMC Baldwin
San Antonio de Río Blanco**	Trinity (Palatka)
San José de las Lajas**	Ortega
San Miguel del Padrón	Asbury
Santa Cruz del Norte**	Swaim Memorial
Santa Fe	Orange Park
Santiago de las Vegas	Southside
Tumbadero*	Macclenny
Seminario	Christ-Neptune Beach
Vedado & Bauta*	Lakewood

\*Artemisa District \*\*Mayabeque District