

# Cuba Partnership Team

## Meeting Minutes

February 26, 2020

Attendees: Ken Lasseter, Kathy Mills, Randy Simpson, Pat Zinn, Fred Hoffmann, Paul Jones, John Yust

Call to Order and Opening Prayer by Ken Lasseter at 12:05 p.m.

Motion to approve minutes of Dec. 11 meeting - M/S/P

### Budget, Finance

Pat is working with Nina Wilson Jones to get updated picture of CPT finances and hopes to have full report for next CPT meeting.

We met our goals of \$3,000 for Transportation and \$5,000 for Lay Leadership Training, and that money was carried to Cuba in February.

### Report on Partnership trip of Feb. 13 -21

At Marlon's request, we tried to separate the medicines and other contributions for the churches before we left Fort Lauderdale instead of sending everything to Cabaiguán (or another church) for sorting, as we've done in the past. This was an effort to allow us to take the medicine suitcases with us to the 5 churches we visited so that fewer suitcases would need to be carried on the small bus with the Encuentro participants. We will not do it that again! After we explained the difficulties to Marlon, he agreed. It would be better to distribute the meds a bit later rather than try to separate and pack them in the U.S.

Suggestion: Ask the Cubans if anything has changed about carrying meds; i.e., can we pack a tub with them and get it through customs? (Fred said First, DeLand used to ship a big tub of meds to Nicaragua on the same plane the team took.)

Lesson learned - We need to watch expiration dates, because the medical person at some churches would not accept expired medicines.

Experience of flying into Havana - Trip to Santa Clara was 4 hrs drive time with a break for a meal at the half-way point - not too bad. We spent the last night in Havana with a little sightseeing. Next time want to plan 2 nights in Havana for a full "cultural" day. The Casa Sacerdotal facility, where we stayed, was excellent and reasonably priced.

Conditions in Cuba were worse than last year, but not obvious from the meals served to us. Medicine scarcity is worse. More general shortages varied from place to place.

Randy heard that the move to one currency could be as soon as April.

El Centro wants to hold a Young Adult Conference at CANIP July 6 – 9, 2020 for 15-29 year olds from El Centro and the four U.S. presbyteries with relationships/partnerships (Baltimore, Central Florida, Southern Kansas, Mission). This has been a dream of Edelberto for several years. A video and flyer will be provided at March Presbytery meeting and emailed to our distribution list.

#### Report on Cuba Partners Network

Either the conference date for fall 2020 or the location must be changed due to things beyond the control of the Cubans. JoElla is working with them to find a new place, preferably for the same date in Nov. Randy said we've asked Cuba to pay more attention to the visas - both getting them sooner and with fewer errors. (We received the visas for the February trip a full 2 weeks before our departure date!) Churches without pastors will be getting motos (motorbikes), and our partner churches will be asked to help support the cost (about \$1500 each). Advocacy is continuing but without hope of positive change under current administration.

#### Church to Church relationships

Pineda-Meneses and Iguará: Relationship is strong. First, Palm Bay is working with Pineda and sent someone on the two trips in 2019. Dalia is the pastor responsible for both churches. With the permission of Council, the two churches are forming a "circuit" to try to strengthen them. They will share one session and hold joint activities every other month.

First DeLand& Glenwood - Taguasco: Relationship is strengthening; U.S. participants want more time with the church (vs entire group activities such as Encuentro )

Winter Park-Santa Clara: Strong relationship, church is doing well.

Wekiva-Remedios: Church is doing well with a lot of activity. Great excitement over sanctuary roof finally being repaired. Jesús plans to sanctify the new sanctuary the first week in August and is inviting U.S. partners to join them.

First Vero-Cabaiguán: Strong partnership. Visit scheduled for Feb. 28 for baptism of Marlon and Ely's daughter.

North Lake-Cabairién: No news.

First Kissimmee-Encrucijada: No news

Graceway-Sancti Spiritus: Had 10 people on great trip in Nov. New pastor at Graceway is committed to the relationship. SS is hoping (expecting) to get a pastor from the next seminary class.

El Redentor-Camajuaní: Randy reported on a conversation with Danny Berrios, who said that he and Lillian met with Jorge Texidor (pastor of El Redentor). Jorge is strongly

interested in establishing a relationship with Camajuaní and was planning to call Marielys this week. Danny thinks that Jorge and a couple of elders, with Danny and Lillian, will visit Camajuaní sometime in 2020.

#### Presbytery Meeting March 7

Ken will talk about the February trip and will show the video with Marielys talking about the Young Adult conference. Conference flyers will be at the table. He will announce next trip for March 2021 with firm dates TBA and an extra cultural day in Havana.

Other Business - None

Next Meeting - Wed. May 20 at noon. We will try to use new Presbytery Office for it.

Closed in prayer by Randy Simpson at 1:43 p.m.