

Telling the story of God's continuing work in the land of Cuba. The International Church Planting Center assists through training of leaders by translating, contextualizing and conducting intensive modules in such a way that leaders train others.

Dear Friends,

Since moving to Cumming, GA in the last month we have been busy unpacking, finding our way in north Atlanta, and doing all things necessary to settle in. It has been much more involved than we had thought!!

Then in the beginning of December we welcomed Pastor Alfredo on his first visit to the U.S. We knew he was coming, but had little time to make arrangements, book interviews and make his time here productive. We were trying our best. . . but our best was not good enough! Then in a bizarre sort of way God stepped in.

Alfredo is pastor of a young church in Holguín, third most influential city in Cuba. A year ago a seminary colleague, now in Miami, invited him to the States. Miracle of miracles within days Alfredo was called to the US Interest Section in Havana and given a 30-day tourist visa for December 2010. This started a whirlwind of preparation and intense prayer by the 80 members of his congregation. What might God do for Cuba through this contact with American Christians!

Marilyn and I attempted to scope out possibilities. But we were unable to do much. Then things began to explode. I flew down to Miami, picked up Alfredo and spent two great days with David Nicholas taking in his gospel boot camp. From there we flew to Atlanta. Tom Wood had arranged for a dinner at a Cuban restaurant bringing church planters together for a talk. Then, like popcorn, one leader after the other invited Alfredo to see their situations and compare notes. He toured the city, visited churches, shivered endlessly and saw how Hispanics plant churches!

From there Alfredo rushed to NYC. Assisted by Gary Watanabe and Lois Kehlenbrink the gusher of opportunities broke: a visit to a foundation with a proposal to train pastors, conversations with leaders of City-to-City, making friends and sharing his vision for Cuba. Luis Iza, a Cuban businessman wrote: "Allen you only send us choice leaders. My wife and I spent wonderful time with Alfredo. Thank you for your example of love and work for the salvation of Cuba."



For two years Alfredo has been studying Tim Keller's materials that have been translated into Spanish and brought into Cuba.

"The explanation of the gospel that Tim teaches," Alfredo said, "has been used by the Holy Spirit to awaken and pierce my heart deeply. I am using his book *The Prodigal God* to train my believers. What a joy to meet him."

Culture Shock

What is it like to come out of Cuba where a pastor or doctor earns \$20-25 a month and walk into a super Wal-Mart?

I asked Alfredo, “tell me what do you do the first hours of the day in Cuba.”

“I shower, dress and spend the next several hours looking for food for my family. I stand in line perhaps an hour to buy bread...when the bakery has flour...and I get in the front of the line. Then I look for staples -- rice and beans, sugar, etc. Of course, if I have dollars sent from family abroad I can buy more necessities. But usually the shelves are empty.”

I asked, “Can I buy some shoes for your kids at Wal-Mart?” “No,” he hesitated, “let’s go to Good Will.”

Our January Trip (1/8-17)

Terry Gyger, chairman of the International Church Planting Center, will be travelling with me to Cuba. The purpose of the trip is to continue exploring needs through conversations with key leaders in central Cuba and in Havana. Both Terry and I will be sharing publicly and teaching since both have religious visas. I will be teaching on Kingdom-centered prayer using John Smed’s *Seven days of praying with Jesus*. The studies aim to base praying using the Lord’s prayer. We will be doing much praying throughout the studies. PRAY that this teaching will ground the churches in humble and confident intercession.

Prayer Items

1. As we meet with leaders ask God to be able to understand their hearts and “give a word in season to those who are weary.”
2. Need full provision of finances to cover the translation and printing of *Seven days praying with Jesus*. Goal: \$2,000 for 1000 copies. \$1,000 has been given.
3. We are seeking to purchase a used but super tractor for the 24-acre farm that subsidizes the training of leaders in Holguín. Need: \$10,000. This is an attempt to help start micro businesses to provide resources for church expansion and bolster self-support. Ask for further information if interested in assisting with this need.
4. We desire to build a base of intercessors for Cuba. God is developing a number of churches and leaders both Anglo and Hispanic that are praying for evangelization and renewal of the church in Cuba.

Thank you for your interest and intercession for the Cuban church.

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