

Mission trip to Cuba Report

The Rev Brian McVitty, [Celebration Church](#), Barrie, ON
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I have just returned from a five day trip to visit ACNA church plants in Cuba. The first objective was to deliver medical supplies – which were very gratefully received by church leaders. It will be distributed through the churches as part of their ministry of compassion.

The other key objective was to deepen our friendship and partnership. I stayed at a B&B near one church and ate most of my meals with the rector and his family. These meals quite often included the bishop and some of the other clergy. It was a wonderful time to be with them, to get to know them better, and to experience some of "real" Cuba.

The last time I was there was three years ago and I am pleased to report that the kingdom of Jesus is being extended by these congregations. The first worship service after my arrival was an ordination service, held in a living room where the church meets, of a young clergy couple.

The next worship service was a Saturday evening confirmation service in the apartment living room of an older clergy couple. This felt like an Acts 20 moment with people jammed in the living room, in the kitchenette, and out on the balcony (but thankfully no one fell off). Finally, on Sunday morning we were at the church near my B&B. I was invited to preach, the bishop spoke, and we had testimonies and Communion. It was a wonderful time of worship.

Medicine and the Hand of God

On my last day, we spent several hours organizing the medicine I'd brought. Providentially, the associate minister's wife had experience with distributing medicine. As we talked about how to get the medicine to where it was most needed, it became evident that we already had the right person to handle the medicine and arrange the distribution through churches as part of their ministry.

This whole sequence of events seems to be evidence of divine timing:

- Michael Tweedle, of ANiC, knew how to apply for the medicine
- The Rev Dr Onayemi, also of ANiC, was the Canadian doctor to sign off on the application
- I was able to take the medicine down with no problems
- God had prepared the right person in Cuba to handle the distribution through the churches

Praise the Lord!!

Needs of ACNA churches in Cuba

The Bishop reports that since being flooded by Hurricane Matthew last fall, the New Eden farm project has been replanted. This year, the harvest has been great! 3000 kgs of yucca have been harvested. There are about 7000 bushels of tomatoes, 1000 of quimbombo, 70,000 vines of sweet potatoes. The sow gave birth to ten piglets. They are also working on other initiatives including the sale of cow's milk.

Bishop Charles Dorrington (the Canadian ACNA bishop who oversees the mission work in Cuba) has recently written: *“The year 2016 began with 32 churches and church-plants and by the end of 2016 this number had grown to 42 congregations. There are now nearly 900 people attending our churches on a weekly basis which is an increase of about 28%. Thank you for being a part of this ministry on the island of Cuba.”*

At the Ordination I shared briefly from 1Thess. 1:3: *“We always thank God for all of you and pray for you constantly. 3 As we pray to our God and Father about you, we think of your faithful work, your loving deeds, and the enduring hope you have because of our Lord Jesus Christ. 4 We know, dear brothers and sisters, that God loves you and has chosen you to be his own people”.*

These were some of the key characteristics that I observed in their life and in their ministry!

Thanks again for your prayers.

Blessings,
The Rev Brian McVitty
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