

CRGA Newsletter

December | 2021 |

Announcement

As you receive this newsletter a team from CRGA will be travelling to Cuba for the first time since the fall of 2019. Please be in prayer for their health and safety, and that they would be an encouragement to all the pastors in Cuba.

Inside This Issue

PG. 2

An update from our Executive Director, Werner Peters.

PG. 3

President's Report

PG. 4

News from Pastor Michel Oduardo Garcia and Pastor Osiel Matos Hernandez

PG. 5

A message from our Treasurer

“Our gospel did not come to you in word only, but also in power, and in the Holy Spirit” ~ 1 Thess 1:5

Did you know that the Apostle Paul gave us the secret to his success at church planting and evangelism? He really did.

To the Thessalonians he wrote *“For you yourselves know, brethren, that our coming to you was not in vain.”* (1 Thess 2:1 - NKJV) Paul then proceeds to list the principles that he lived and ministered by in the next 12 verses. He ends that section with these amazing words-

13 For this reason we also thank God without ceasing, because when you received the word of God which you heard from us, you welcomed it not as the word of men, but as it is in truth, the word of God, which also effectively works in you who believe.

“But the Word of God is not bound. We trust that it has free course, even during these days of restriction.”

Paul rejoices because the Word of God has had a powerful effect in those who believe.

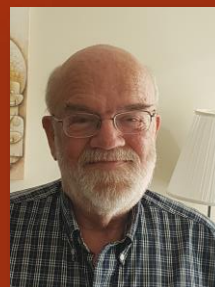
This is what it’s all about. At CRGA, we want always to be a part of that kind of work. We believe that by enabling and freeing up pastors, missionaries and church planters in Cuba to be fully devoted to ministering that powerful and effective word, we will see change come about in that land. How desperately they need that change!

Naturally we have not been in Cuba for a long time now because of Covid. Churches have not been able to meet face to face for almost the same amount of time. But the Word of God is not bound. We trust that it has free course, even during these days of restriction.

Please pray for our team as we go in December. We are excited as we anticipate meeting up with our long-time friends, as well as meeting new friends. We continue to look for qualified pastors whom we can support so that they in turn are encouraged to give it their all in preaching the word. One day (imagine this) these pastors will be able to say -

⁶ And you became followers of us and of the Lord, having received the word in much affliction, with joy of the Holy Spirit, ⁷ so that you became examples to all ...Your faith toward God has gone out, so that we do not need to say anything (1 Thess 1:6-8)

That would be a great demonstration of the power of the gospel to change lives. Pray that this will be so in our beloved Cuba.



Werner Peters

werner1950@gmail.com



President's Report

~Dave Ross

What a year it has been! I know that most people have struggled with the pandemic challenges, but as much as we have been challenged here in Canada, we really have to stop to imagine how much more Cuba has been impacted than we have.

For our brothers and sisters in Cuba, it has been a tough year. As you recall we advised, Cuba unified its two currencies (convertible, US-dollar-linked CUC and the local CUP peso) into one (CUP) currency on January 1, 2021. As predicted, inflation has run rampant all year, currently running at 300%. Although the general wage scale was increased on January 1 from USD\$20 per month to USD\$50 per month, prices increased 4x on that same date. So, the “higher” pay not only didn't keep pace, but since then, Cubans have fallen significantly farther behind. We can only imagine the stress this would put us under; however, our Cuban friends just see this as more of the same thing they have endured for many decades now. We have attempted to blunt this inflation for our Cuban pastors by changing our subsidy to USD and increasing another USD\$10 per month. In Cuba a US dollar still has good purchasing power (on the black market, where food often must be purchased due to outages in the government stores), so this has helped our pastors. For 2022, it looks like we will need to increase our sponsorship again, and we will be reverting to CAD, as the USD is now officially not exchangeable in Cuba (but “unofficially”, USD is still prime for black market trading). Really, the only thing one needs to understand about the many changes to Cuban economics is that with every change, the people lose.

We have started to have some food price inflation lately; but in addition to food price inflation, our Cuban friends are experiencing extreme shortages of food supply. As God would have it, we were recently able to partner with another Canadian ministry (ASSIST) to ship a container of pinto beans to eastern

Cuba. This container is presently sitting in Jamaica waiting for transshipment to Cuba; please join us in praying that this container, and the 3 with it sent by friends in Texas arrive in Cuba before Christmas.

This ministry we share with our brothers and sisters in Christ in Cuba is only possible because God touches the hearts of you our supporters and channels the funds you give through Calvary Road to our dearly loved Cuban pastors, churches and people. We have zero payroll in Canada; all our Leadership Team are volunteers. With no formal office, we also have very low overhead costs so that the greatest portion possible of your support goes directly into God's work in Cuba.

On behalf of our Cuban brothers and sisters in Christ, we thank you from the bottom of our hearts for your generosity and faithfulness to this ministry. May our God whom we serve find us all faithful. We pray God's richest blessing over you and your family for a grace and peace-filled Christmas season, and health and purpose for the new year.



“This ministry we share with our brothers and sisters in Christ in Cuba is only possible because God touches the hearts of you our supporters and channels the funds you give through Calvary Road to our dearly loved Cuban pastors, churches and people... On behalf of our Cuban brothers and sisters in Christ, we thank you from the bottom of our hearts for your generosity and faithfulness to this ministry.”



Beloved brethren in Christ

I'm Osiel Matos Hernandez, pastor at Guantanamo Baptist Church, Cuba. I rejoice in being able to communicate with you and greet you in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, whom we know through the prophet Isaiah, as the Admirable, Counselor, strong God, eternal Father, and the Prince of Peace.

I wish you a Christmas full of the joy and peace that comes from heaven. We live in very complex times, in which our lives are shaken by different circumstances in which it seems to us that everything will be lost, but our trust and security depends on the God from whom the existence and salvation that we enjoy today comes. It is our prayer, that no affliction, trial or difficulty will destabilize the spiritual life of each one of you, but that the most serious situation will become a stage to grow in faith and learn perseverance as children of God.

I want to tell you that, in the month of August, I lived a very difficult experience, my wife and I were infected with Covid 19. We spend days of great anguish, fears and inner battles. It was a time when many people called us, prayed for us, sent us something we needed, but none could be by our side. In the midst of that process, God's presence was very significant and His intervention in our lives lifted us from the condition we were in. Today we feel good and are again serving the Lord, grateful for His goodness and the manifestation of His power and faithfulness on behalf of our lives.

We are pleased to share what the Lord has done, and we encourage you to continue waiting in Him, all the time, His promises remain faithful and always, He is working for the good of each of those who love and seek Him, we can have the certainty that Jesus Christ is the same yesterday today and forever and ever.

... cont'd pg 5

Good news

Luke 2:8-14

We are amazed, as in the midst of so much chaos, our God always has good news for humanity.

The historical scene that received Jesus on earth does not differ much from what we live today: eagerness, greed, unrepentant cities, authoritarian governments that distort justice; robberies even in His house, many sick and demonic people, people who follow God for selfish interests, doubting and demanding signs to believe in Him.

That is why we join in the angelic song:

*"Do not be afraid,
there is Good News of great joy."*

That joy does not depend on circumstances, but on God's strength in weakness.

There is a Savior, Jesus, the only Salvation and Solution to the root of evil (sin).

Praise God! Because despite so many deaths, many continue to be rescued from hell. And on earth peace, this is only possible by being at peace with God.

So, my brothers and sisters at Calvary Road may receive our gratitude and affection and the joy and peace of having a common Savior.

Merry Christmas!

Pastor Michel
Oduardo Garcia

First Baptist
Church, Holguin



Hallelujah, Christ was born, lived, died and rose again so that we may have abundant life, his presence and his peace every day in our lives.

God bless you!

Osiel Matos Hernandez



Ways to Give

Send a cheque to:

Calvary Road Gospel Association
P.O. Box 50209 Sunnybrook P.O.
Toronto, ON M4G 0B5

E-transfer:

CalvaryRoadGospelAssociation@gmail.com
(Please indicate your name and email address in the transfer message)

Via Canada Helps:

<https://www.canadahelps.org/en/dn/4454>

All cheques postmarked by Dec 31 will receive a receipt for the 2021 tax year.

2021 donation receipts will be mailed before the end of January 2022.

If you no longer wish to receive this newsletter, please advise us by way of email:
waltnoordam@outlook.com

A Message from our Treasurer

Like many people in North America, my spending habits have been drastically changed by the pandemic restrictions. By God's grace, it has allowed me to clearly see where I have been spending money, money from God that I am to be a steward of. This has spurred me to contemplate what I truly value on earth and the importance of storing up heavenly treasures and not earthly ones. There are many ways we can participate in the expansion of God's Kingdom here on earth and I am blessed to see the continuous support from our donors and the constant stream of new supporters.

As I reflect on the past year, I am reminded of God's steadfast love and of His mercies which never end. The world we live in has been turned upside down but those abiding in Christ can rely on and find comfort in His truths and promises!

Although we have not been able to take a trip to Cuba since the start of the pandemic (and at the time of this writing), Calvary Road has still been able to financially support our pastors, which is our main mandate. This enables pastors to focus their time on ministering at their local church and mission field!

As we enter the last months of 2021 and we face the "donation rush", would you consider blessing a Cuba pastor or supporting a special project via a financial gift? Every dollar will be used towards His Kingdom!

Blessings and Grace be with you all,

Austin D. So

