

Discovering in Cuba a joyful faith that cannot be squelched by adversity!

The Youth Mission Group stepped back into the 50's: Charming beautiful cars meticulously maintained since the 50's; a warm friendly people not addicted to their cell phones; alive with music: Salsa, Cha-Cha-Cha, Mambo, Rumba; 17th century architecture in the downtown; some of the world's best, pristine beaches. However, weighing on this was the heavy burden of a communist dictatorship and a 57 year embargo that has left the country extremely impoverished. Pushed down also was the church. Since the Revolution of 1959 it has been illegal for the church to expand. New churches met in secret in house churches, slowly growing under the radar of the government. Pastors would expand on their house with a new "living room" in order to accommodate the growing church. Up until recently if you were a Christian you could not hold a government job and you were persecuted.

This is the situation our Youth Mission Group stepped into during their trip to Cuba July 13-21. The wonderful Group consisted of Kris, Hazel, Ian, Izabel, Jordan and Rev. Hoffman; they went with the Experience Mission agency working alongside local churches near Veradero, Cuba and got the honor of meeting "Bennie", (name changed to protect him) a Cuban pastor.

The Youth Mission Group did a kids club for special needs persons, worked on a concrete foundation for a ministry center, and listened to and prayed for the many house church pastors.