



THE CARIBBEAN AND NORTH AMERICAN AREA COUNCIL

CANAAC is the regional expression of the World Communion of Reformed Churches in the region of the Caribbean, USA, and Canada

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Message to the Presbyterian – Reformed Church in Cuba on the occasion of its XII Synod
February 2nd 2019

Greetings in the name of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ as you celebrate in faithful fellowship and Christian love the XII Synod of your church, the Presbyterian – Reformed Church in Cuba.

Here in CANAAC we closed our biennial General Assembly 30th October 2018 with the presence of your church represented by Pastor Jesus Oscar Rodriguez who arose from that meeting, called by his fellow delegates to serve on our CANAAC Steering Committee. In this ecumenical space we seek to discern how we can support our member churches at the grassroots level here in our region of WCRC (World Communion of Reformed Churches) as we live out the teachings of Jesus that we should all work together for the good of his Kingdom.

We, your fellow Christians of the Reformed faith around the Caribbean, the USA and Canada which make up the CANAAC regional expression of WCRC come in solidarity with you over these days as you gather to hear God's Word afresh, to discern what is God calling your Church to do in these perilous times in Cuba and, to seek His approval of the plans you have brought to this Synod.

Over the last two years, your island nation has been significantly affected by weather occurrences. Hurricane Irma in 2017, Hurricanes Alberto and Michael which wreaked havoc in 2018 and more recently last month, the rare tornado which ripped thru Havana leaving 4 persons dead and many more injured. Your people are hurting more than ever. For many, what little they had, has been ripped away.

These weather events are much more than damaged homes and businesses. They cut to the core of human life and a family's ability to survive in already difficult times. They tear apart a sense of what it means to live in community.

In the Gospel of Mark 6:6-7 and in Luke 10:1 we see that Jesus designed his Gospel ministry to be a team effort. He sent his disciples out, not alone, but each person with another. Jesus in so doing, has taught us that it is in fellowship as we go out among the people we are called to serve that we live and work as one church across our different spaces. In so doing, we are able to help the other where they are weak, encourage them when things get difficult and learn from each other as each one of us brings our gifts and talents as bestowed by God upon each of us. It is by working in this way that our reformed faith is a powerhouse of possibilities.

Today we join our hearts with yours as we pray for your nation and its safety in the hurricane season ahead of you and as you seek to use the time of this Synod to review the state of life and times in Cuba after all this devastation, the work carried out by the church thus far and in spite of all the challenges, your plans to go out among the people of Cuba with the Gospel of Jesus Christ, ministering to them physically, emotionally and spiritually.

We remind you that it is the combined force of all your peoples' gifts and talents (not just your pastors), which will ensure that the work that God has laid out for your Synod is successfully carried out going forward. We enjoin all members of your church gathered at this Synod to recommit to go out from this place into the many spaces of pain, grief and worry of Cuba. God is there in the margins, he will provide all you needs as you minister to His people in community.

We come praying God's divine blessings over all the proceedings of this Synod.

Yours in His Service,

Angela Martins (Ms.)
Convener, CANAAC Steering Committee