



# Mission

## An update from our sister Church in Cabaiguan, Cuba\*

by Marlon Irrarragorry, Pastor

"In Cuba, the situation is increasingly complex, since we cannot recover money earned from tourism our economy is very precarious. In Cabaiguán it is a little better than in larger cities, since at least agricultural products, although they are very expensive, can be found in the outdoor markets. In bigger cities, many times, even if you have enough money, you can't find what you need. As for the rest of the products, there is a little more supply, although as I told you months ago, most people do not have access to those products, because you have to buy them directly with US dollars. However, people buy dollars at more than 3 times their official value on the black market and access this market to the that it is possible, to be able to guarantee, above all, toiletries that do not exist anywhere else. This will no longer be possible as of next Monday, since Cuban banks will not be able to receive more dollars in cash. If you came, for example, you would have to come with euros, because the dollar will no longer be accepted by Cuban banks.

*[Pastor Irrarragorry notes that the recent Presidential decrees and subsequent lack of review in labelling Cuba as a country that is "sponsoring terrorism" have adversely impacted the church and its community in their ability to use hard currency for basic goods. Most basic goods can only be purchased in Cuban currency (CUC's).]*

As for COVID, the situation is very complex both in the country and in Cabaiguán. Records of daily infections are not available and we have some mutations of the virus that are very lethal and more infectious than the original. Fortunately, 1/4 of the population has already been vaccinated and progress is being made in vaccinating the entire population over 19 years of age.

In church we are forbidden to meet, but on Sundays we meet in small groups and although we cannot sing or do other things that give us away, we reflect on the word and pray. Last month they raised the church's electricity rate even more and now it is more than double from the previous rate which was five times more than that of last year's. In other words, today the current rate is 10 times more expensive than last year.

At the moment we cannot do anything about the COVID situation, but we are planning to develop a gym to improve the economy of the church. There are many expectations, but we will have to wait for the conditions of the virus to improve and hopefully restrictions will cease."

"I have told you these things, so that in me you may have peace. In this world you will have trouble. But take heart! I have overcome the world." John 16:33

*Though we cannot financially give at this time, please pray for our sister Presbyterian Church in Cabaiguan, Cuba as they are suffering not only from COVID but from the political decisions of vying governments.*

*-Your Mission Team*



\* Some contents of this letter have been redacted to fit within this month's newsletter