

Evangelical Christian Humanitarian Outreach to Cuba

WWW.ECHOCUBA.ORG

A Devotional from the Editor

Singing to God is one of my favorite ways to worship. Not that I am a good singer, I stink, but, when I forget my worries and offer up simple songs of heartfelt praise to God, a connection is made with my Father on a deep level. For many years, I thought the connection I had with God through song was a one way street. I thought I was the one who did all the singing. I was wrong. In Zephaniah 3:17 it says; **“The LORD your God is in your midst, a mighty one who will save; he will rejoice over you with gladness; he will quiet you by his love; he will exult over you with singing”.**

Did you know that God, the Almighty maker of thunder, who can destroy and create with a single breath, sings over YOU? God, the perfect Father, sings over his child to quiet His precious one. The Cuban people can find refuge in the midst of chaos knowing God is singing an anthem of peace to their hearts. When the tears won't stop coming and the pain won't stop throbbing, He is there. The Lord's arms are big enough to cradle all of Cuba, and sing a sweet lullaby to mend the broken hearts of His people. If you have never let God hold you in his arms, I encourage you to do so, and be free in His embrace.

The verse also says that God “will exult” over you. The word “exult” has two meanings in Hebrew; 1) To rejoice greatly;

be jubilant or triumphant, and 2) To leap upward, especially for joy. Imagine the perfect God not only nestling you like a newborn in his arms, but leaping and dancing in utter joy over His creation! What a God we serve! This could be why Paul wrote in Philippians 4:4 **“Rejoice in the Lord always. I will say it again: Rejoice!”** Consider how much God loves you, he sings over you when you need healing, and leaps for joy out of His love for you. At ECHO-Cuba, we pray that your heart is filled with the joy of the Lord.

God is so multi-faceted and complete, we cannot even comprehend it. It's easy to put God in a box and restrict Him to our meager expectations of His power. God is infinitely more than what we expect of Him, Today take God out of the cardboard man-made box and experience the brilliance of His presence.

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In His Grace,
 Jessica E. Pineda



Jessica E. Pineda
 ECHO-Cuba
 Development Coordinator

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About ECHO -Cuba

Ministry Vision:

The vision of ECHO-Cuba is to build and empower the Cuban Evangelical Christian Church, uniting those who can help with those who need help.

Ministry Mission:

ECHO-Cuba is a mission community of Christ-centered people committed to reaching the people of Cuba with the gospel of Jesus Christ. We are strengthened by our compassion for the Evangelical Christian Church. The programs directed through our mission promote Christian education, as well as help its Cuban citizens to enhance their lives through; capital projects, social & human services, humanitarian needs, agricultural entrepreneurship, and church organizational capacity.

Want to know How to help?

Contact ECHO-Cuba at
 (305)8840441
 Or check our website
www.echocuba.org
 for more information.

Introducing the Staff of ECHO-Cuba

Hello World! The staff of Cuba would like to introduce ourselves with some fun facts:

	Teo Babun Exec. Director	Jessica E. Pineda Editor/Development	Vanessa Pino Office Manager	Gretel Rodriguez Cuban Ministries
Who is your favorite superhero?	Superman	Rogue from X-Men	Wonder Woman	Batman
What is your favorite scripture?	“At the thunder of your voice, the peoples flee; when you rise up, the nations scatter.” Jeremiah 33:3	“For I know the plans I have for you” declares the Lord “Plans to prosper you and not to harm you, plans to give you a future and a hope.” Jeremiah 29:11	“Blessed is the man who trusts in the Lord, whose trust is in the Lord. He is like a tree planted by water, that sends out its roots by the stream, and does not fear when heat comes, for its leaves remain green, and is not anxious in the year of drought, for it does not cease to bear fruit.” Jeremiah 17: 7- 8	“As far as the east is from the west, so far does he remove our transgressions from us” Psalms 103:12
Why?	This verse displays God’s total power over all the nations, governments, and systems.	This verse displays God’s perfect knowledge; it helps me to trust in my father no matter what is going on in the tornado that surrounds me.	It reminds me that if I trust in the LORD, even through the drought my leaves will remain green. I will continue to bear fruit, because I am being nourished by the stream of His love.	It reminds me of the greatness and mercy of God. That he moves our sins away from us when we ask him to wash us with his blood.
Give a random fact about yourself.	I once coached a women’s softball team to the Michigan State championship.	I once hit a parked car!	I sleep in my clothes more often than my PJ’s!	I talk to myself in the mirror.

The ECHO-Cuba Travel Journal



We are excited to begin a new column in our newsletter that features different travelers and their experiences on the mission field in Cuba.

Kelly traveled to Cuba in early May with another classmate. She was kind enough to answer a few questions about her trip (the names of our Cuban representatives have been changed):

ECHO: What exactly could you do in a closed country like Cuba?

KELLY: We walked all over Havana, from memorials, to the giant cemetery, to plazas, and churches. Maria made dinner for us, took us for ice cream and to an old fort to watch the cannons. They also took us out one night to go dancing. Her and a friend also took us around to 8 of the sick elderly they work with. This was the best part of the whole trip. They were living in deep poverty, had no one to take care of them, and were sick for various reasons like a liver problem, or throat cancer.

Experiencing that was by far the most memorable thing of the

ECHO: What memories will you carry with you for the rest of your life?

KELLY: Seeing poverty so clearly. In the streets yes, there’s poverty, but it was not until we visited the elderly in their one room homes with no light that it really hit me hard.

ECHO: How has this trip grown you as a person?

KELLY: It has further pushed my life in a direction to make this world a better place. By-standing will get one nowhere and since being in Cuba I have been very motivated to be active all around my community. Before Cuba I was very active in politics, organizing events, etc. But I would get discouraged at the pace of how long it takes to motivate *other* people. Everything I learned about the Cuban revolution while being there just makes me want to put forth all my efforts and never give up. Now whether that is on a localized level or a global one, one will just have to wait and see.

ECHO-Cuba is the oldest, most experienced ministry that is currently licensed to legally send humanitarian groups to Cuba. If you are interested in being apart of a life changing trip please contact me, Vanessa Pino, at vanessa@echocuba.org or 305-884-0441.



ECHO in the Island

Echo Cuba works closely with churches in Cuba and directs diverse humanitarian projects throughout the provinces of Cuba. For those who have not been introduced to the ministries ECHO-Cuba sustains, more information can be found in our website listed on the bottom of the page. Lately communicating with the people in Cuba has been a problem. The Cuban people have very restricted access to internet connection and email accounts. Some of them have emails but only after a long difficult process that does not give them the security of safe communication. Others have clandestine email accounts which cost approximately sixty dollars a month. The situation gets more difficult as the days go by and I'm asking you dear reader, please pray for our situation as email communication is a main source of Echo's transactions with Cuba. **We cannot help them, if we cannot communicate with them.** We received a report informing us of the progress of the ministry in the eastern part of Cuba. ECHO-Cuba's entire heart is in helping those who cannot help themselves. We hope these testimonies that follow affect your life today as it has ours; and that you may become part of this spiritual as well as physical revolution in Cuba.

In Christ,
Gretel Rodriguez
Cuba Mission Projects Coordinator



Rosalía 79, and *Emma* 84 live alone with no one to care for them. Both suffer from lymphangitis and severe anemia. Their house is in critical condition and they don't have anyone to help them; as a result of this they fall frequently. *Rosalía* says: "God bless all of you that help us one way or the other... it may not look like much to some, but this is all we have sometimes... that you remember us in

Gilmarío Manso is 46 years old and he suffers from severe mental retardation. He cannot walk and lives alone with his widowed mother who is unable to work. His mother is grateful for "the help we provide and prays that the Lord blesses the ministry and all those that help and remember the poor just like Jesus Christ did".



Prayer Requests

ECHO-Cuba is in need of constant prayer! If God has placed a burden on your heart to pray for ECHO, here are some of our immediate needs:

1. Our financial rep in Cuba needs prayer for her mother's health.
2. New project in Holguin
3. General funding for ECHO-Cuba
4. For God to continue to show us favor for US government so that we may work with Cuba.
5. For the safety of each person who takes a humanitarian aid trip to Cuba.

Donations Needed

We are in need of various donations, including;

1. Laptop Computers (new/used)
2. Vitamins
3. Medicines i.e. Tylenol, Decongestants, Allergy meds, Asthma meds, glasses etc.

If you can help, please do. Don't wait. Cuba needs all the help it can get.

trip.