

Saturday, March 6

Day 4

Cuba Mission 2010

I was able to sleep last night. For a Friday night it was relatively quiet here in Guines. There were few trucks and motorcycles buzzing up and down the streets. The morning is sunny and bright – it's about time for some warmth!

Today, we are going to be visiting some of the church members in their homes. Rob Stuart, the retired pastor from Amagansett, and I visited them together with an interpreter. Others teamed up to visit other members. As we sat down in their homes with them we talked about life, about the church, about family, about faith. We talked with Maria, a dentist, who lives alone but has an adult son that visits her everyday to eat and to bring his laundry – sound familiar? We talked with Orlando. His nephew died just yesterday from a stroke; he was in his 40's. A few years ago his wife died and now his nephew. Here in Guines he is alone. He cherishes the church and their love and support of him but life is difficult and his eyes were filled with tears.

Ishmael and Isabelle Madruga, the former pastor of the church for 43 years, joined us for lunch at the church. Each day the elders of the church have been working non-stop from sun up to sun down preparing our meals for us. They have all been very good but they really are feeding us too much. I am eating more here than I do at home. Of course, the Cubans do not eat like this every day, or any day for that matter, when we are not here. It is as much an honor for them to serve us such an abundance of food as it is a blessing for them to have it to eat.

After lunch, the teams continued their visits with church members. I stayed at the church to prepare for the Sunday service, as I am the one preaching. It is difficult to preach with an interpreter. In preaching you get a rhythm going in your speaking. When there is an interpreter it is far more difficult to find that rhythm and to get into the preaching of the word. But, I am fortunate on this mission trip that my interpreter is a student of the theater and is very good at what he does. I am looking forward to the morning.

This evening, after our dinner, we sat at the table for a couple of hours talking to Yampier about politics and the future of Cuba. The future is not bright here. The people do not have any hope of things changing for the better. Keep the people of Cuba in their prayers.

It is late now. The streets are quieting down.

Buenos noche!

Pastor Tom

