PILGRIMAGE TO CUBA
LIGHT OF THE WORLD CHRISTIAN CHURCH
November 30 – December 7, 2019
Reflections by Ann Gray

Cuba couldn’t sleep at all last night,
        Just thinking of Cuba.
The weather isn’t helping our plight
        This will be a long, wet flight.
        On the first day of Advent
        The streets began to fill,
We were in Old Havana
        Another City on a Hill
        Our choir performed a concert
        That brought the church to cheers.
        If any of them were nervous,
        El Senor removed their fears.

Anxiety at the airport,
        We’re moving kind of slow.
Hope Delta gets it together,
        For to Cuba we must go.
        A choir of African medical students
        Joined the concert, as well.
        They sang in another language,
        But you couldn’t even tell.

Pastor Janae is at the airport
        Encouraging her flock
The Richardson’s came as well,
        To help us watch the clock.
        The Spirit must be universal,
        For we felt it everywhere.
        Different languages...a barrier?
        We didn’t even care.

Only half of us made it on the plane.
        The rest would take another.
But Pastor did not leave us,
        Protective like a mother.
        Good food is an understatement,
        And fellowship galore.
        And the Voices of the Light
        Would WOW us even more.

Father God was on our side,
        As always, don’t you know.
We all met in Atlanta,
        Now to Cuba we will go.
        Our spare time was spent looking
        For WIFI service.
        Sending pictures and calling
        Back home was our purpose.

Our first hotel was modest and
        Beautiful at the same time
Indoor courtyard, rocking chairs,
        So peaceful and sublime.
        We spent a day with the
        Cuban Council of Churches.
        They spoke of their mission
        And explained their purpose.

Fresh fruits and vegetables
        Were just beyond compare,
Rice and beans were
        Staples everywhere.
        It
Then off to the MLK, Jr. Memorial Center
And we knew where we were
From the time we could enter.

Artwork and sculpture
Lined the entry door.
We took pictures
Until we could take no more.

We were told of their beginning
And their mission.
We visited one of their projects,
And purchased gifts from women of vision.

The leaders of the Pentecostal Church of Cuba, welcomed our teams,
Sharing their mission and their future
and their dreams

We toured Old Havana,
Saw shops, restaurants and bars.
But the highlight of this tour,
Was seeing the old vintage cars.

They are shined and polished
To look like new.
And driven with great pride,
For everyone to view.

The embargo prevents them
From getting new parts,
So these cars are kept running by
The owner’s inventive hearts.

At a modest Pentecostal Church,
hospitality shown bright.
As they welcomed and received
The Voices of the Light.

The church was the size of a Trailer, maybe 15 by 50 feet.
And in the entire place
There was not an empty seat.

A crowd gathered outside
When they heard all the noises.
Soon they found out
It was all of the “Voices”.

A group from the church
Sang some selections.
The Voices of the Light
Followed with their collections.

The young pastor was moved to tears,
You know, that emotional cry.
He felt he had no purpose,
And let his enthusiasm die.

But after experiencing the concert,
God opened up his heart.
He can see now, that God
Wants him to play a part.

His confession and conviction,
brought us all to tears.
It showed us one more way
God can relieve our fears.

The choir had us all emotional,
bringing us to tears.
Their awesome, moving performance,
Also brought on cheers.

I asked Dir. John Wray how
He chose a choir, so perfect in their tone.
He said, “I didn’t choose them,
It was God and God alone.”
We had lunch at a beautiful Restaurant on a scenic hill.  
We took pictures and delighted 
In the food, what a thrill.

The “Voices” have been transformed,  
They are no longer the same.  
God has touched them in a mighty way  
And their genius is hot as a flame.

We bussed on to Matanzas to the Evangelical Theological Seminary.  
Another hill full of breathtaking foliage,  
Teared gardens, overlooking a Bay.

At a museum/center called Muraleando,  
Made completely out of trash,  
They made art objects  
And sold them for cash.

We watched the audience arrive,  
Cordial as they came.  
But when they left this awesome place  
They would not be the same.

They all were anxious  
To show off their wares,  
And doubly pleased  
That somebody cares.

Our choir sang as if anointed.  
And by the second song,  
That statue stiff audience  
Began to sing along.

We met people like our friends at home  
Reminding us of our kin  
Young and old, happy and glad  
Beautiful and every color of skin.

The Cuban German Gospel Choir,  
Joined in and sang along.  
Their members made bowing gestures  
As the “Voices” sang their song.

Minister April reflected  
That we are all the same  
More alike than different  
Not returning the way we came.

The universal quality of the Spirit was seen,  
As the audience crossed the aisles,  
Holding hands and singing loudly  
The stiffness had turned to smiles.

With our sisters and our brothers,  
We must continue to pray  
We must strengthen the bonds between us.  
And end the blockade one day.