



Cuba project update



Imagine if your bishop had to visit churches spread across 1100 kms, but he had no vehicle. Imagine he had to ride in the back of an open truck, or on slow, unreliable, crowded buses, or by horse-drawn carriage, or even by hitch-hiking. That is how Bishop William Suarez travels as he oversees ACNA's REC Mission Diocese in Cuba, which is comprised of 46 churches and church plants.



As missionary bishop, Bishop William is responsible for shepherding and training relatively new clergy, encouraging these recently planted and forming congregations, and ensuring sound doctrine. The work in Cuba has grown rapidly – from 4 churches with 2 priests and 2 deacons in May 2010, to 46 churches and church plants, with 933 members today.



Renting a vehicle is beyond the churches' ability. The Rev Brian McVitty, rector of Celebration Church, Barrie, ON, recalled that when an earlier mission team visited Cuba, the cost of their rental van worked out to \$400/ per team member – expensive even by Canadian standards.

The second-hand van we are fundraising to purchase will give the bishop and the churches reliable transportation, be used to transport produce to market from the churches' farm, and provide another means of income for the churches when used as an airport taxi. The farm, and soon the van, will enable the Cuban churches, clergy and evangelists to become increasingly self-reliant and less dependent on outside funding.



Even second-hand vans are pricey in Cuba, however. Because of the long-term trade embargo only foreign embassies and UN agencies are able to bring new vehicles into the country and, with high duties, these are very expensive. As a result, second-hand vehicles are scarce and costly. Our audacious goal is to raise \$60,000 by mid-May to fund the purchase of this van. We are closing in on the half-way point of this goal and will soon be able to send an initial installment of \$25,000.

- For more information on our **ARDFC project** to purchase this van for our sister ACNA REC churches in Cuba, [see the ARDFC website](#).
- For more background on these churches in Cuba, which were founded by Bishop Charles & Claudia Dorrington, [see the website](#) of the **Reformed Episcopal Church (REC)** of Western Canada & Alaska and the Mission District of Cuba.
- For information on how **Anglican Network in Canada (ANiC)** churches are partnering with churches in Cuba to support church planters and clergy training, [see the ANiC website](#).



South Sudan famine



There is a saying in Africa:

"When two elephants fight, the grass gets hurt."

The South Sudanese – already desperately poor and struggling to survive the “fighting elephants” in the three-year civil war – now face famine. The UN **has declared** that the combined famines in east Africa, northern Nigeria and Yemen are the worst humanitarian disaster it has faced in its history – and yet we hear almost nothing of this from our news media!



Our strong relationship with the South Sudan Episcopal Church enables us to send aid directly to where the famine is most severe and support their work of feeding and caring for those who need it most. In 2015, ARDFC raised funds to drill 3 deep water wells in partnership with the Diocese of Wau. Recently, Bishop Moses Deng (Diocese of Wau) wrote saying that starving refugees were literally dying on his doorstep. He had spent all his diocese's resources feeding these refugees and was now going into debt to get food from local merchants.

ARDFC just sent \$4000 to the Diocese of Wau to help purchase emergency food, but we'd love to do more.



If you'd like to help, ARDFC has set up an **emergency appeal fund**. Donations can be made through your church, **online** or by mailing your cheque to ARDFC, c/o Box 1013, Burlington, ON, L7R 4L8.

- For some context and a firsthand account from Bishop Moses, **see his appeal here**.
- You can learn more about how the Diocese of Wau is responding – with a strong focus on peace and reconciliation – **here** and **here**.

Prayer & Praise items

- Praise God for the good crop harvested from the Cuban churches' farm recently!
- Pray for the funds to come in for the Cuban project by the end of May, when a mission team – including an ARDFC board member – visits the churches in Cuba
- Pray for even more donors to commit to supporting the work of ARDFC
- Pray for those in areas hit by war, terrorism and famine, especially in South Sudan, Somalia, Yemen and Northern Nigeria
- Pray that the international community will act wisely and in time to save many lives