

This July, myself and a group of six other teenagers plus two adults ventured to Cuba for a mission trip. We began our journey in Havana where once we survived the painful endeavors of passport control, we made quick stop at the national Methodist church before our four-hour drive to Camp Canaan.

Once we arrived at the camp we had a short amount of time to unpack and get dressed before we went to an amazing dinner and a life changing church service. This service was our first service in Cuba and is one of the most memorable for me personally. I had never encountered such love and passion before and to see it was extremely enjoyable for me.

The continuation of our time at camp consisted of three days; these three days consisted of amazingly energetic church services, extremely powerful workshops and recreational time to connect with other 800 teens at camp. As our time at camp began to wrap up and we approached our final night in camp, they had a campfire and jam session which for a reason which I don't quite know, that evening was extremely powerful to me, I had been able to dance with everyone all week, yet dancing that night brought me more joy than any other night that week.

Once we left the camp, we made a nine hour drive to Mayari, which is the home of Pastor Isel. This drive is one of the most memorable experiences from Cuba. I was able to connect with many of the teens that went on the trip with me which made me feel closer to them throughout the continuation of our trip. It was 2:00 AM in the morning by the time we arrived in Mayari, we slept for a few hours before we began to visit sister churches.

On Sunday, after we attended a morning church service at Mayari, we went to the river, where we swam and jumped off the bank with the locals. On Monday the entire district scheduled a trip to the beach where we went to enjoy the beauty of the Cuban water for a full day. This is also where we said our final goodbyes to most of the teenagers that we had met and grown to love that week.

Once we returned to our home at Mayari, we began to pack and some of the local teenagers came to spend our final night in Cuba with us. It was a perfect way to end our trip in a perfect place. The following morning one week after our arriving in Cuba we left Mayari and went to Holguin where we flew home.

I will always treasure the people I met and the experiences I had in Cuba, it has truly changed my life. Thank you, Dan!!!

Grant Reeher