

World Pilgrimage[©]

Cuba

Matanzas and Havana

February 20 –26, 2018



Join members of Atlanta's diverse faith communities for seven days of adventure, discovery, and friendship!

It is difficult to be unemotional about Cuba: it thrills our senses, befuddles our minds and tugs at our hearts. It is a romantic island, full of music and rhythm, baseball and ballet, jazz clubs and street art. The 24th World Pilgrimage will be a journey to connect with the very diverse Cuban people who are generous, hospitable, fun-loving, expressive and spiritual.



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Come on the adventure of a lifetime! By traveling on religious visas, World Pilgrims will be able to interact with grass-roots faith communities in Cuba, support their work and their people. We will be staying at seminaries and dormitories, so we can keep the price of the journey low and focus on the human-to-human encounters. This is a great pilgrimage for the adventurous and the curious.

As with all World Pilgrimages, we will celebrate the diverse religious traditions of the Pilgrims and of Cuba. We will learn the island's history, visit its museums and beaches, and better understand this country that is so close and yet feels so far.

All World Pilgrims[®] journeys have the same goals:

- To deepen the participants' personal faith by visiting some of the world's most sacred sites
- To gain an appreciation of the shared elements of the three religious traditions, as well as an understanding and respect for the differences
- To establish real friendships with pilgrims from many faith traditions, even with the complexities of today's world

All World Pilgrims[®] journeys operate from the same Guiding Principles:

1. A pilgrimage is a sacred journey—not a travel seminar or a tourist venture. We take time for personal and group reflection, meditation and sharing. Participants are asked to see these times as essential elements of the pilgrimage.
2. The journey will have a formal and very intentional structure. The purpose of this design is ensure that all participants achieve the goals of the pilgrimage. Each participant will be asked to make a commitment to follow the structure so that the shared goals can be met. This means exercising discipline and a willingness to place the interest of the group above the interest of the individual.
3. The focus is on understanding and accepting the other pilgrims and their traditions. During a pilgrimage, we discuss rather than debate, respect rather than judge, empathize rather than criticize. **We seek to understand each other not to change each other.**
4. As pilgrims on a common sacred journey, participants are expected to share personal thoughts, beliefs and experiences with each other, trusting the others to respect and appreciate their life stories.
5. Pilgrims are expected to make a commitment to continue their common experience after returning home.



Program Design

1. Pre-departure: All participants are expected to attend an orientation session that includes the following elements:
 - a) Consideration of what it means to travel on an interfaith pilgrimage
 - b) Travel logistics and administration
2. Daily itinerary: The group will be together in Cuba for 7 days and 6 nights. Group programs scheduled for each day have been designed by the Group Leaders.
 - a) Daily meditation: Time will be set aside each day for group and personal meditation. The leadership for these sessions will rotate among the faith traditions.
 - b) Worship Services: Each of the three religious leaders will identify a time and place for the entire group to participate in a worship service. Special consideration is taken for worship connected to Muslim Jumah, Jewish Shabbat and the Christian Sabbath.
 - c) Making Friends: Building friendships across faith traditions is central to the pilgrimage and is not left to chance. Therefore there is a formal structure to develop relationships, including roommate assignments, meal partners and seat mates during bus trips. It may seem to be an artificial way to get people together, but it works!
3. The return home: Pilgrims join the ranks of alumni from the 23 previous pilgrimages, who gather for reunions, times of personal joy and sorrow and to address important issues in our greater community.



DAILY ITINERARY *(tentative, specific plans and activities may change)*

DAY 1 Tuesday, February 20: Atlanta to Havana to Matanzas

Delta Flight # 639 Departing 9:55 a.m. Gather at Atlanta Hartsfield Jackson International Airport at 7 a.m. Check-in and proceed directly to our departure gate to gather before the two-hour flight to Havana. Our guide, Stan Dotson, will meet us at the airport with religious visas and assist with the Cuban Customs process. We'll get right on to our bus for a 2-hour ride to Matanzas, stopping along the route for lunch. Group gathering at dinner Overnight, Matanzas.

DAY 2 Wednesday February 21: Matanzas

After breakfast, we will go to the Slave Rebellion Museum and the Slave Route Museum. We will meet with Oden Marichal, founder of the Inter-faith Cuban Pastoral Platform, who worked to free the "Cuban Five," and continues to work for peace and justice. Dinner with Paco Rodes, a retired Baptist minister from Atlanta, who is so respected by the local churches and the Cuban government that he began the first ecumenical/interfaith chaplaincy in jails, prisons, and hospitals. He has dedicated his life to helping the people of Cuba. Overnight Matanzas

DAY 3 Thursday February 22: Matanzas

After breakfast, we will visit the community center in the Marina, populated by Afro-Cubans and is a cradle of their religious traditions. Lunch with the Kairos staff who work to connect the arts, spirituality and social justice to interfaith and diverse congregations and to the Afro-Cuban communities. Spend some time exploring the art in the area. Dinner meeting. Overnight Matanzas.

DAY 4 Friday, February 23: Matanzas to Havana

Breakfast followed by a quick view of a book studio that produces handmade books for sale (unique gifts that support local artisans). We will travel to Havana for lunch and a Jumah Prayer service at the Masjid, approved by the Cuban government in 2015. We will visit the Jewish cemetery on the way to our Shabbat dinner and service at the Synagogue. Overnight Havana.

DAY 5 Saturday, February 24: Havana

After breakfast, will visit the Museum of the Revolution, housed in the former Presidential Palace. Inside and out are many relics of the Revolution including a yacht used for 80 leaders to cross from Mexico to Cuba in 1956. After lunch, tour the National Palace of the Arts which contains Latin America's largest collection of antiquities as well as many significant paintings, left by the Batista family and officials, fleeing the revolution. Dinner together. For the energetic, late night Pilgrims, there are many small jazz clubs, a great mix of music and dancing.

DAY 6 Sunday, February 25: Havana

After breakfast and a Christian worship service experience, enjoy free-time to explore Old Havana. We can walk along the Malecon (famous seaside promenade), the Prado, an historic, tree lined promenade., built in honor of John Lennon or anywhere else the outdoor art and people may take you. Spend the day with your partner looking at the sights and sounds of Old Havana. We will gather together for the closing GALA DINNER-over-looking the harbor. Overnight, Havana

DAY 7, Monday, February 27: Havana to Atlanta

After breakfast, bus tour of Havana on the way to the Havana airport. Delta Flight #648 departs Havana at 2:38 pm, arriving in Atlanta at 4:38 pm.

Traveling to Cuba: Things to know....

1. Visa: A visa is required for travel to Cuba. World Pilgrims will be traveling with a "Religious Visa," which must be applied for several months prior to departure. The cost of the visa is \$127 per person and is included in the price of the Pilgrimage
2. Power/Electricity: In Havana and in other parts of Cuba, there are occasional planned power outages to conserve electricity. (They are planned by the government but not always announced in advance to the public.) A rechargeable or hand-cranked flashlight is a great thing to bring along.
3. Communicating with the States: Cell phones from the US do not work in Cuba. To call the US, you need to purchase a pre-paid phone card and use a public telephone. The cost is approximately \$2.00 per minute. Email is an option. You may email from a Cuban post office—approximately \$5.00 per hour. There are a growing number of internet cafes in the tourist areas for checking/sending e-mail though there is little access to the Internet.
4. Health Care: The Cuban government requires all visitors to be covered by their healthcare system. The cost is included in the price of the airline ticket.

TERMS AND CONDITIONS

COST: \$1950 per person, multiple occupancy (dormitory style).

Application with a deposit of \$500 is due with application. \$127 with religious visa application is required by October 31st. Final payment is due no later December 15th. Please make all checks payable to ICI/World Pilgrims or pay online at www.interfaithci.org/world-pilgrims

AIR FARE: Round trip economy class out of Atlanta via any IATA/ARC carrier is included based on applicable fares. Current airfares used and subject to change as well as increases for fuel surcharges. Once airline tickets are issued they are non-refundable.

MEALS: Breakfast and dinner daily and most lunches are included.

SIGHTSEEING: As per attached program. The schedule may have to vary the sequence of the tour or to make substitutions, if necessary. All transfers and sightseeing by private motor coach.

BAGGAGE: The bus is equipped with space for one suitcase and one carry one per person. Please limit your luggage. ICI/World Pilgrims is released from any liability whatsoever, resulting in loss, damage, theft, weather, delay in transit to any baggage, luggage, hand piece, etc., of the participant during any and all portions of this tour. Hotel and airport portage is included.

TIPS/TAXES: All service charges for group meals and hotels are included. Tips for the drivers and guides are not included, and are at the discretion of the traveler/group.

CANCELLATION: No cancellation fee if cancelled more than 90 days prior to departure, except a \$100 administrative fee; cancellation fee of \$1,000 per person if cancelled 45 days prior to departure.

NOT INCLUDED: Items of a personal nature such as in-room service, laundry, telephone, special food or drink, lunches and checked baggage costs

PASSPORT/VISA: It is the responsibility of the traveler to have a current passport that is still valid six months after the end of the Pilgrimage. Visas for Cuba are required. See notes in description for details.

TRAVEL INSURANCE IS HIGHLY RECOMMENDED.

ACCIDENT WAIVER AND RELEASE OF LIABILITY: I HEREBY ASSUME ALL OF THE RISKS OF PARTICIPATING IN ANY/ALL ACTIVITIES ASSOCIATED WITH THIS PILGRIMAGE/IMMERSION including by way of example and not limitation, any risks that may arise from negligence or carelessness on the part of the persons or entities being released, from dangerous or defective equipment or property owned, maintained, or controlled by them, or because of their possible liability without fault. I certify that I am physically fit, have sufficiently prepared or trained for participation in this activity, and have not been advised to not participate by a qualified medical professional. I certify that there are no health-related reasons or problems which preclude my participation in this activity. I acknowledge that this Accident Waiver and Release of Liability Form will be used Interfaith Community Initiatives, organizers of the activity in which I may participate, and that it will govern my actions and responsibilities at said activity.

In consideration of my application and permitting me to participate in this activity, I hereby take action for myself, my executors, administrators, heirs, next of kin, successors, and assigns as follows:

(A) I WAIVE, RELEASE, AND DISCHARGE from any and all liability, including but not limited to, liability arising from the negligence or fault of the entities or persons released, for my death, disability, personal injury, property damage, property theft, or actions of any kind which may hereafter occur to me including my traveling to and from this activity, INTERFAITH COMMUNITY INITIATIVES, INC. (ICI) and/or their directors, officers, employees, volunteers, representatives, and agents, and the activity holders, sponsors, and volunteers; (B) INDEMNIFY, HOLD HARMLESS, AND PROMISE NOT TO SUE the entities or persons mentioned in this paragraph from any and all liabilities or claims made as a result of participation in this activity, whether caused by the negligence of release or otherwise.

I acknowledge that ICI and its directors, officers, volunteers, representatives, and agents are NOT responsible for the errors, omissions, acts, or failures to act of any party or entity conducting a specific activity on their behalf.

I acknowledge that this activity may involve a test of a person's physical and mental limits and carries with it the potential for death, serious injury, and property loss. The risks include, but are not limited to, those caused by terrain, facilities, temperature, weather, condition of participants, equipment, vehicular traffic, lack of hydration, and actions of other people including, but not limited to, participants, volunteers, monitors, and/or producers of the activity. These risks are not only inherent to participants, but are also present for volunteers.

I hereby consent to receive medical treatment which may be deemed advisable in the event of injury, accident, and/or illness during this activity.

I understand while participating in this activity, I may be photographed. I agree to allow my photo, video, or film likeness to be used for any legitimate purpose by ICI.

The Accident Waiver and Release of Liability Form shall be construed broadly to provide a release and waiver to the maximum extent permissible under applicable law.

I CERTIFY THAT I HAVE READ THIS DOCUMENT AND I FULLY UNDERSTAND ITS CONTENT. I AM AWARE THAT THIS IS A RELEASE OF LIABILITY AND A CONTRACT AND I SIGN IT OF MY OWN FREE WILL.

ICI/World Pilgrims

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FOR MORE INFORMATION, CALL JAN SWANSON AT 404-906-7109

About Interfaith Community Initiatives

Interfaith Community Initiatives, Inc has the mission to transform the Atlanta metropolitan area into a model community for interfaith understanding and collaboration. We do this by developing and leading innovating, inviting programs that inspire deep engagement and interfaith appreciation. We are committed to developing long-term interfaith relations and collaborations through programs like World Pilgrims[®], Interfaith Immersions, Interfaith Contemplative Groups, and the Atlanta Interfaith Leaders Fellowship.

www.interfaithci.org

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