

What Goes On In Cuba

The Rev. Lucius Walker Jr., executive director of the Interreligious Foundation for Community Organization, will make a presentation to the Deerfield Progress Forum on January 13, 2007 titled "What Goes on in Cuba."

The Rev. Walker also served as Associate General Secretary of the National Council of Churches of Christ from 1973 through 1978. In January 1979, he returned to the IFCO, which has the distinction of being the only national ecumenical foundation committed exclusively to the support of community organizing.

Through IFCO, the Rev. Walker has used his leadership and organizational skills to provide a national vehicle to serve and empower those who suffer the pain of civil rights and human rights violations. In the United States, IFCO has been involved in programs to assist the poor and people of color in the fields of education, employment, economic development, housing development, health care, voter registration and education, grand jury abuse, sterilization abuse, farm worker rights and Native American rights.

In 1998, Rev. Walker conceived the project Pastors for Peace after being shot and wounded during a terrorist attack by Nicaraguan terrorists as he led an IFCO delegation to Nicaragua's Atlantic Coast region. Pastors for Peace organize humanitarian aid caravans of aid to Nicaragua, El Salvador, Guatemala, Chiapas and Cuba. To date, the IFCO/Pastors for Peace caravans have delivered over 2,000tons of aid to Cuba.

In January 1996, the US authorities arrested Rev. Walker because he dared to take computers to hospitals in Cuba. When the computers were seized, he and four others engaged in a "Fast for Life" until the computers were released. The fast lasted 94 days and resulted in the release of the computers, which were delivered to Cuba in September that year. Cyndee Pattison