

Tribute Paid in Havana to U.S. Reverend Lucius Walker on 7th Anniversary of his Death



Havana, September 8 (RHC) -- The seventh anniversary of the death of Reverend Lucius Walker and the 50th of the organization that the U.S. pastor founded, the Inter-religious Foundation for Community Organization (IFCO) Pastors for Peace, were marked at the Cuban Friendship Institute on Thursday.

Friendship Institute President Fernando González, Hero of the Republic of Cuba, presided over the tribute, alongside Gail Walker, Pastors for Peace executive director; Reverend Raúl Suárez, director of the Martin Luther King Jr. Center, and other Cuban government representatives.

"For Lucius, the caravan would not be an economic rescue, but a humanitarian aid that would also make it possible to spread the word about Cuba's reality to the American people, and thus build a movement that advocated the elimination of hostile U.S. policies to the Greater Antilles," said Fernando Gonzalez, Hero of the Republic of Cuba.

The president of ICAP referred to Lucius' efforts to achieve greater support from the churches to progressive organizations and to the struggle for social justice, especially in the most disadvantaged communities such as African Americans and Latinas.

He commented that on November 20, 1992, IFCO through Pastors for Peace broadened its solidarity with Cuba in organizing the first caravan across the U.S.-Mexico border to Cuba. With that platform, Lucius Walker drove 21 Friendshipment Caravans, from 1992 until his death on September 7, 2010.

In addition, he said that the Inter-religious Foundation participated in the actions for the return of Elián González, integrated the worldwide campaign for the release of the Five Heroes imprisoned in the United States, and concretized the dreams of Commander in Chief Fidel Castro and Walker to extend the range of nationalities of the Latin American School of Medicine (ELAM).

The executive director of the organization, Gail Walker, said that Lucius was a teacher, pastor, community organizer, but the first thing she knew about him was his "dad" role.

She said that one of the projects Lucius contributed to was the ELAM scholarship program, so that U.S. students with limited resources were able to study medicine in Cuba.

During the meeting, representatives of the Cuban Institute of Friendship with Peoples (ICAP), religious leaders and American students of Medicine, recalled the work of this pastor and defender of human rights, creator of the Inter-religious Foundation for Community Organization (IFCO) - Pastors for Peace, which emerged five decades ago.

Cuban Reverend Raul Suarez, director of the Martin Luther King Center, alluded to the fact that IFCO emerged in the mind and heart of a US pastor, who had a close relationship with the communities and worked for the well-being of the people.

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