

Liberia Education Update

February 2020



Students and principal, Rev. Emmanuel Bentil, at Janice Lee Mclain UMS, Marshall City, Margibi County.

The school was established in 1984 and named in honor of Janice Lee Mclain, a former General Board of Global Ministries Area Financial Executive who served the Liberia Annual Conference.

The current mayor of Monrovia, Jefferson Koijee, was a student at Janice Lee Mclain UMS.

Michigan Area Team visit

Rev. Duane Miller and his wife, Diana Miller, have visited Liberia many times. In February, they returned with members of their home conference- the Michigan Area Conference. The Millers, along with Rev. Ava Euper, Rev. Paul Perez, Rev. Alex Plum, Rev. Jon Reynolds and his wife Rev. Lindsey Hall and his grandfather Rev. Mike Seymore, and Jill Woodward, attended the Liberia Annual Conference (LAC) held on the Ganta United Methodist Mission Station in Nimba County. The team also visited LAC ministries including Gretta Moffat UMS in John Dean Town, Grand Bassa County and Janice Lee Mclain UMS in Marshall, Margibi County.

I joined the team on their visit to Marshall, a small coastal city where fishing is a major source of income. Due to the low intake of school fees, over the years, Janice Lee Mclain UMS has declined in its ability to maintain the building and provide adequate teaching materials. The school currently has 175 students ranging in age from 4 to 23 in nursery through 9th grade. The teachers are members of The United Methodist Church and serve at the school as part of their commitment to the church. The team encouraged the students with footballs for the school and church and a scholarship payment for a student whose father is unemployed.

Give to Advance projects

#15125B Scholarships

#3020670 Construction of New School Buildings

#3021654 Sheltering the Children of Gretta Moffat United Methodist School

#3021129 Missionary Support



Janice Lee Mclain UMS Motto:

Strive for a better future through education.



Playground at J. J. Roberts UMS in Sinkor, Monrovia, Montserrado County.

J. J. Roberts UMS Playground

In contrast to Janice Lee Mclain UMS, J. J. Roberts UMS in the Sinkor area of Monrovia has 812 students in nursery through 12th grade. J. J. Roberts UMS has a strong Parent Teacher Association (PTA) and the families pay much higher and more realistic school fees to attract qualified teachers, purchase learning materials, and maintain and upgrade the buildings and grounds. In February, the students in the Early Childhood division of the school, began enjoying the long-awaited playground equipment.



First grade class with Liberia Reads! Red Word Wall and alphabet posters.

Liberia Reads!

Dr. Geri Melosh, a former Peace Corps Volunteer (1972) who taught in Pleebo, Maryland County, developed the *Liberia Reads!* literacy project to help teachers teach children in kindergarten through third grade how to read. The project began in 2009 and now has trained teachers in 30 schools in Bong, Margibi, and Montserrado Counties. Teachers and principals participated in 65 hours of initial training and then in refresher trainings. *Liberia Reads!* materials reflect the culture of Liberia and are now made in Liberia.

Rev. C. W. Duncan UMS in Clara Town on Bushrod Island in Montserrado and Ganta UMS participated in *Liberia Reads!* training several years ago and the teachers continue to use the materials and implement the teaching methods. On each of my unannounced visits to Ganta UMS, I am delighted to see second grade teacher, Helena Ashaira, and her students sounding out words and reading. But Ganta UMS lost touch with Dr. Melosh and has not been part of the refresher trainings. Fortunately, while Dr. Melosh was in Liberia in February to follow up with schools and plan for the *Liberia Reads!* training scheduled for July, we were able to meet and re-connect Ganta UMS to this effective literacy project. The Ganta UMS vice principal, Rev. James Korlorblee, and early grade teachers will be part of the July refresher training.

Thank you for your prayers, messages, and financial support.

I wish you the love, joy, hope, and peace of Jesus Christ during this Season of Lent and always.

Helen Roberts-Evans

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Second grade teacher, Helena Ashaira, and student at Ganta UMS