

Liberia Education Update

June 2020



When I come home from the office, before going into my apartment, I stand on the beach for a few moments watching the waves and thanking God for the beauty of His creation and the constancy of His love. It is well with my soul.



The Ministerial Complex in Congo Town, Monrovia opened in December 2019. The Ministry of Education is housed in the building on the right. I took this photo on June 8, 2020 after the meeting with the Minister of Education.

Give to Advance Projects

Construction of New School Buildings
#3020670

Missionary Support #3021129

Operation Classroom # 3020494

Scholarships #15125B

The New Normal

When I came to Liberia in 2008, people referred to the way life was before the war as *normal days*. During the time of the 2014-2015 Ebola crisis in Liberia, people wanted life to return to normal- the way life was before Ebola. The State of Emergency has been extended from June 22 to July 21. Now with schools closed, the requirement of wearing masks in banks, supermarkets, and other public places, the 6:00 pm curfew, and travel restrictions, people are again looking forward to life returning to normal- the way life was before COVID-19. What is *normal* in this world keeps changing, but God's Word never changes. I am trusting in God's unchanging Word.

12th Grade Students Return to School in June

The 5 West African anglophone countries (Nigeria, Sierra Leone, Liberia, Ghana, and The Gambia) are part of the West African Examinations Council (WAEC) and students in grades 6, 9, and 12 take exams that are intended to determine promotion from elementary school to junior high school, junior high school to high school, and high school graduation. The 12th graders' exam is called the West African Senior School Certificate Examination (WASSCE) and the subject tests are given at the same time in all 5 countries. The exams scheduled for April and May 2020 were postponed due to COVID-19.

Representatives of the private schools in Liberia were called to a meeting at the Ministry of Education on June 8, 2020. At the meeting, the Minister of Education, Professor D. Ansu Sonii, informed us that the WAEC member countries decided to have the WASSCE in August and 12th grade students must return to school to complete the 2019/2020 Academic Year and prepare for the WASSCE. After the meeting, members of the Association of Christian Mission School Systems in Liberia (ACMSSL) agreed to join in prayer everyday at 12:00 pm. We pray for the schools, the Ministry of Education, and the Republic of Liberia.

We are very grateful for the gifts of scholarship support sent through The Advance. It is difficult to tell students to return to school when they cannot pay the school fees and to ask teachers to return to work when they are not paid.

On June 29, 2020, classes began at the 707 high schools in Liberia and on June 29, 2020, I attended the Ministry of Education's Official Back to School Program held in the library of William V. S. Tubman High School,



The Ministry of Education's Deputy Minister for Instruction, Alexander Duopu, and Alton V. Kesseley, Deputy Minister for Planning, Research, and Development at the Official Back to School Program on June 29, 2020.



12th grade students in class at J. J. Roberts UMS on the first day of school since March 2020.

“The grass withers, the flower fades,
But the word of our God stands
forever.” Isaiah 40:8 (NKJV)

Stand on God's Word. Be well and safe in God's Kingdom.

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a government high school in Sinkor, Monrovia. I spoke on behalf of the United Methodist Schools and ACMSSL, assuring the Ministry of Education that our schools would follow the health protocols and work in collaboration with the Ministry of Education.

Immediately after the program, I began my visits to the 27 United Methodist high schools beginning with J. J. Roberts United Methodist School (UMS) which is a short walk from Tubman High School. I wore a mask, washed my hands, and had my temperature taken before entering the building. The students were in class wearing masks. To comply with the social distancing rule, the classes of senior students were each divided and the students were well spaced.

My next visit was to College of West Africa (CWA), in downtown Monrovia. CWA is our only United Methodist school that is exclusively a high school with only grades 10, 11 and 12. Our other high schools also have elementary and junior high school classes. As at J. J. Roberts UMS, the students were divided into 6 classrooms and the same health protocols were followed. The students were glad to be back in school and look forward to passing the WASSCE and graduating.

Former Camphor Mission Students Support Their School

On June 2, I had the pleasure of seeing former students of the J. F. Yancy UMS (the elementary and junior high school on Camphor United Methodist Mission Station in Grand Bassa County) come together in support of their school. It was like being at a school reunion. These adults brought rice and other food staples, toilet paper, and cleaning products to the Central Office of the Liberia Annual Conference. The supplies were loaded in a pickup truck and they headed to Camphor Mission to give back to their school. This was a great example of joyful giving.



12th grade students in class at College of West Africa on June 30, 2020, the second day of class.