

# Liberia Education Update

June/July 2022



Gala Day week worship service at First UMC in Greenville was followed by an African costume contest at the school, July 22, 2022.



Students preparing to leave the campus of Harrison Grigsby UMS in formation for the Gala Day parade.



Harrison Grigsby UMS students paraded with a band on Mississippi Street in Greenville on Gala Day.

Greenville City in Sinoe County is not only my base in Liberia, but also where I am part of community—the community of the Harrison Grigsby United Methodist School (UMS), the community of First United Methodist Church (UMC), and the community of the neighborhood in which I live. The first Saturday in June, another link was added to my connectedness to Greenville. I began weekly Bible study at the Greenville Central Prison. The prison supervisor is a United Methodist pastor and asked me to be in ministry with the inmates. Several years ago, the New Testament letter of First John changed my life when I read it and realized that if God is love and I am created in the image of God, then I am love. We are reading through the five chapters of First John a few verses a week with great discussion and questions. It is my prayer that the Word will transform each person. I am thankful for this new ministry and am filled with joy as we study God's Word together.

Toward the end of each school year, students in grade six (the last year of elementary school), grade nine (the last year of junior high school), and grade twelve (the last year of high school) take a national exam. Last school year the third graders took a national exam for the first time. This was the second year for the third graders. The exams were in June and ended before the Harrison Grigsby UMS Gala Day celebration. June was the month for Gala Day celebrations for schools in Greenville. The students at Harrison Grigsby UMS spent June 20-23 practicing for the big Gala Day parade on Friday, June 24. The students took the practice and parade very seriously and the streets were lined with spectators. It is rainy season in Liberia and people usually don't go out in the rain, but the rain did not stop the parade. The band kept playing and the students kept marching for over two hours, even in the rain.

With the national exams and Gala Day, we had less time for classes in June and we also received news from the Ministry of Education that the school year, that was scheduled to end on August 19, would now end on July 31. July 31 is on a Sunday and Liberia's Independence Day, a national holiday, is on July 26.



Flying into Zwedru, Grand Gedeh County on the way to Greenville, July 14, 2022.



Flying over forest in Grand Gedeh County.

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G. Umaru Sheriff presenting a certificate of appreciation to the Department of General Education & Ministry Director, Rev. Christopher G. Marshall, July 13, 2022.

I'm still teaching Chemistry for grade ten and Biology for grades ten, eleven, and twelve. Another three weeks subtracted from our class time! So much to learn and so little time.

Every three months, I fly with the Mission Aviation Fellowship Cessna plane to Monrovia for a few days of meetings at the Central Office of the Liberia Annual Conference. On July 13<sup>th</sup>, I was at the chapel service which included an appreciation program by 4-H Liberia for the Liberia Annual Conference. 4-H Liberia, under the leadership of the National Director, G. Umaru Sheriff, was housed in the office space of the Department of General Education & Ministry for the past ten years. When I first met Umaru Sheriff, he was a volunteer with a vision for positive youth development in Liberia but had no physical office or address. 4-H Liberia has outgrown our space, but we will continue to work together. We have 4-H clubs at our United Methodist schools in Gbarnga, Bong County and Weala, Margibi County. I hope we will have clubs in more United Methodist schools. It is a pleasure to work with Bro. Sheriff. He is my brother in Christ and we share the hope of developing character, developing minds, and developing agriculture in Liberia.

*Be well and safe in God's Kingdom.  
Helen*

***Helen Roberts-Evans***

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