

Liberia Education Update

October 2023



Harrison W. Grigsby UMS graduates at First UMC, Greenville, Sinoe County, Oct. 7, 2023.



Graduates of the 2022/2023 school year at the baccalaureate service, Nimene Nah UMC, October 1, 2023



Abraham Swen giving valedictory address, Oct. 7, 2023.



Graduation's guest speaker, T. Romeo Quioh, Oct. 7, 2023.

Harrison W. Grigsby United Methodist School's 15th Graduation

In Liberia, to qualify for high school graduation students are required to pass their classes in the school and to pass the West African Senior School Certificate Examination (WASSCE). The 12th grade students for the 2022/2023 school year took the WASSCE in May, but we are still waiting for final exam results. Since a new school year started, the Ministry of Education and the West African Examination Council gave schools the go ahead to have graduations based on students meeting the school's graduation requirements.

Before a graduation program, schools in Liberia have a baccalaureate service in a church's sanctuary. Harrison W. Grigsby United Methodist School (UMS) had its baccalaureate service at the Nimene Nah United Methodist Church (UMC) in Greenville on Sunday, October 1, 2023. During the service, the students stood at the front of the sanctuary, and I prayed for them.

Twenty-five graduates participated in the graduation exercises held at the First UMC on Mississippi Street in Greenville on Saturday, October 7th. Melvin Geegbe, the second dux, gave the salutatory address. The first dux and quizzing team member, Abraham Swen, gave the valedictory address. Both Abraham and Melvin were Operation Classroom Scholars. In his speech, Abraham thanked Operation Classroom for the scholarship that made it possible for him to graduate from high school.

The guest speaker for the graduation was T. Romeo Quioh, Dean of the College of Agriculture for United Methodist University's Gbason Town campus in Sinoe County and a candidate to be our district representative. Mr. Quioh started school when he was 14 years old, but through his hard work and determination, he did well in school and life. He encouraged the students to pursue careers that match their interests and skills.



Louisiana UMC, Oct. 15, 2023.



Clinton Railey paddled the canoe as we went from the mangroves in Greenville to Louisiana, Oct. 15, 2023.

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 Scholarships #15125B
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Louisiana Creek flows into the Sinoe River, Oct. 15, 2023.

National Elections

Schools throughout Liberia were closed from October 9 through 13 to give citizens a chance to vote in the national elections on Tuesday, October 10. Election day in Sinoe was peaceful. Five classrooms of the Harrison W. Grigsby UMS were used as polling sites for Greenville. The National Election Commission (NEC) reported that a record high number of voters (78.86% of 2.4 million registered voters) went to the polls. Elections were held for representatives, senators, and the president. In Sinoe County the bad roads delayed the delivery of ballots to some areas and voting in Sinoe continued until Friday, October 13. NEC announced the results on October 24.

To become president, a candidate must receive at least 50% of the votes plus one vote. None of the 20 presidential candidates met this requirement, so the top 2 candidates, the current president, George Weah, with 43.83% and the former vice president, Joseph Boakai, with 43.44%, will be in a run-off election on November 14. We are waiting for the second round of the presidential election, but in Sinoe, T. Romeo Quioh is our new representative.

Louisiana

In my September update, I wrote about going to Louisiana in Montserrado County. On Sunday, October 15, I bypassed the muddy roads and went by canoe to church in Louisiana, Sinoe County. Like Greenville, this town was founded in 1838. Clinton Railey, one of the Harrison W. Grigsby UMS graduates, paddled the canoe from the mangroves near the United Methodist school out to the Sinoe River and onto Louisiana Creek. It was a beautiful trip and I enjoyed worship with one of our teachers and his grandson who live in Louisiana and canoe to school 5 days a week. In Sinoe, canoes are our water taxis. I am thankful for the peaceful elections and for the peaceful rides on the creeks. I am thankful for God's peace.



Banner for fair and transparent voting, Greenville, 2023 campaign season.