

Liberian Champions' Report #25
March 2020

Recently Daniel and I had the privilege of attending a groundbreaking ceremony for a new church/school facility in the village of Ginnebale. If you have followed our activities for very long then you have heard me speak of this village before, although I might have had the name spelled differently! The Liberia Evangelical Mission has had a presence in this community for several years now. The Pastor Henry Wennie has a heart for children as reflected in his past post-civil war involvement in reintegrating child soldiers into society. Now he pastors the LEM church in his small community and operates a primary level school. For some time the church/school has been meeting in a borrowed facility. The end of January, however, was the groundbreaking for a building that will belong to the church. By building do not picture in your mind a modern church with walls, windows, floor, bathrooms, and classrooms. This church facility will likely be one room that will serve as sanctuary and classroom, with no bathroom, water, lights, or any other “modern” conveniences. But it will belong to the church and will be a testimony to the community that LEM is there to stay, to put down roots in the community, and to minister to the community and other surrounding villages, through school and church.

The ceremony began like a regular LEM church service, with lots of singing. One highlight was a special song presented by a lady who acted out the story of David and Goliath as she sang. I don't really know what the words were as she was singing in Kpelle, but her motions during the song made it very clear what the main thrust of the song was about. Besides the singing, we were greeted in true Liberian fashion with the small presentation of kola nuts, money, and rice. Greetings were also given by the various people who were at the ceremony as well as by LEM acting national superintendent, Rev. Alex Morlu. Somewhere in the middle of all this, Pastor Morlu called me aside to inform me that I was to preach a small message. I had not expected this to be a part of that day's activities so I had brought nothing along with me. However, I decided that a Bible story would serve the purpose better than a sermon so I told a story and related it to the importance of knowing the Bible as God's word and the importance of learning to read the Bible. Following the message there was an offering and then the meeting was dismissed. I wondered when they were going to break ground, but nothing was said and our lunch was brought.



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As we were finishing our lunch, we noticed that a small group had gathered outside the shelter where the meeting had been. Curious to see what was happening, I went over. This was where they were doing the groundbreaking. In the States we have these elaborate rituals that we use, but they were unneeded that day in Ginnebale. Everyone who wished to participate was allowed to shovel three symbolic scoops of dirt, one each in the name of the Father, the Son, and the Blessed Holy Spirit. Then they put their offering in the collection for the construction of the new church. I don't know what was the final amount collected but it gave everyone a sense of participating.



Please pray for Pastor Wennie and the Ginnebale church and school. Pray that the school will be effective in teaching children how to read and write, study and analyze. Pray that the church will be a light in the community.

LEM has a vision for eventually expanding its ministry in this village to a children's home and agriculture training program. Please pray for the needed resources to make this vision a reality.

There are neighboring villages without schools and churches. Pray for LEM to be able to expand into these villages with the Good News of Jesus.



In addition to these prayer requests, I would ask you to pray for Daniel, Naomi, and children as they plan for their deputation time in the States beginning in July. Niki, Mark, and I will follow them in September. Pray that both our families will be able to raise the needed financial and prayer support to return to Liberia in good timing. If you would like to have either of us visit your church, please feel free to contact us directly or through the mission office.

Please share these prayer requests with your local congregation in whatever way is most appropriate for your church. Thank you for being a Liberia Champion. We appreciate your prayers and interest very much.

Gordon

