



Praises & Prayer

Requests:

Continue to pray for those affected by the Coronavirus, here in Liberia and around the world!

Praise God the children's school sponsorships were provided and then some. I have been able to add another little girl, the daughter of one of my national co-laborers. Pray for the children in school, that they will learn.

Pray for the Faith Baptist Church Mission School set to begin Sept. 2021. Pray for the teachers to be hired and some upcoming training.



Julie Alexander

Missionary to Liberia West Africa

PRAYER LETTER— MARCH 2021



Greetings from Thinker Village in Liberia! As I start too many of my prayer letters, I apologize for not updating you sooner! I can't believe 7 months have passed since my return to Liberia. This has been my easiest transition so far. I attribute it to my new home with its security, more consistent utilities and greater ease of access. It has brought a greater peace of mind and a true sense of home. I enjoyed making memories with Titus over the holidays.

Titus continues to be here with me and you may not be aware that after much prayer and counsel, I have decided to adopt Titus legally. Making that "official" in my heart and mind has made Liberia "home" in a way I didn't expect. He is precious to me and gives me a great sense of purpose and is such great company. I'm very excited to see where God will take this exceptional and tender-hearted young man! He is enrolled in the Rafiki school and is excelling despite losing about a year of pre-school education during my absence and due to COVID and he is on track to be promoted to Kindergarten at the end of the upcoming quarter. He turns 5 in May so he is right on track.

We have had some bad battles with illness. We both came down with COVID after being exposed at a MK birthday party and then we (asymptomatic) passed it on to a few other friends! That was a tough time but praise God our symptoms weren't too severe. I suffered from heart palpitations for a short time after but they too have gone away, for the most part. I know COVID is here but it is pretty much business as usual in Liberia. Some wearing of masks required at Supermarkets and Restaurants, but most of the Liberian employees wear theirs on their chins. I suspect Liberians are so used severe illnesses and seldom seek timely medical attention, so whether it is not as severe here or just not recognized, I don't know. It continues to cause travel headaches with expensive testing required for coming in and out of the country. I suspect with the money that can be made in that, it may be a while before COVID is officially declared "gone" in Liberia! Just recently, I came down with malaria again. This was by far the worse case I have had, requiring 2 treatments and I am still suffering with some fatigue.

The Liberian weather has been very unusual. The Liberians claim "climate change". We should be in our hottest and driest part of dry season, but it has continued to rain weekly. While this provides some relief from heat and dust, it will prove to be a real challenge for Liberian farmers who need the dry season to clear land and plant. It will be interesting to see how this plays out in the months ahead as rainy season is supposed to start towards the end of April and be in full swing by June!

I was able to complete the 12-week Trauma Healing class with the adult Sunday School class at Faith Baptist Thinker Village. We had 41 participants with 14 attending classes faithfully enough to earn certificates. The feedback from the class has been so positive with many testimonies of deliverance from bitterness and unforgiveness and admissions of a misunderstanding of how God can work through suffering. The response was so good, they have asked to continue with additional topics and we are starting with how children respond to suffering. I am thankful for this wonderful discipleship tool.

The children's ministry is doing well. We had a Christmas program scheduled when I came down with COVID. This put me out for several weeks right up to the day of the program. My national co-workers had followed through and done an excellent job of preparing the children and the program was enjoyed by all. The children who faithfully attended during the Christmas promotion (attendance, memory verses, and inviting visitors) received certificates and a Bible storybook. We have developed a schedule and are working on a rotation so that those involved in the children's ministry can be in church under the preaching of God's word. We have formally divided the Sunday School time from the Children's Church time, with the nationals covering Sunday School and myself, Children's Church. Please pray we can get enough interest so that we can further divide some of the children by age groups.

I continue teaching at Brookhaven Baptist Bible College. We completed a bookkeeping class. The students have been asking me for further training in Accounting so I brought some curriculum with me and have started teaching 17 students on Saturday afternoons. It has proved a challenge for some but others are really doing well. As I have said before, I didn't anticipate accounting becoming an important part of my ministry here, but God knew. In the next few weeks I will be sharing the bookkeeping program with a

friend and her ministry in a rural area. Please pray for that area and all of Liberia, where the bush societies are conducting their traditional initiations of young boys and girls. There are many wicked practices associated with these practices and it is a real tool of the devil to keep people in bondage and fear.

Things are really progressing on the addition at Ma Bessie's house. Her sons are doing the labor and not "taking pay" so the money I brought is stretching. The walls are up and they are working on the roof now. We need to get that completed before the official rainy season begins. There will be some finishing touches left undone for completion later, but it should be livable and the children will be able to move in. We are working at repairing all the beds and buying our new mattresses with the funds generously provided at Christmas time for that purpose. They have been in a tight space and all are looking forward to stretching out!

Due to COVID, schools here did not resume until January. The last few weeks of December and the beginning of January were a busy time of visiting the various schools, paying fees and buying and delivering all the school supplies. The children were so happy to be back to a sense of "normal" with their return to school. There was some "take home" work, but there is really no recovering the time lost for these children. All have had their first grading periods and some are doing exceptionally well, thanks to your generous support. Tutu is the "deuce" (ranked number 1) in her class. James, who at 8 years old, could not even write his alphabet when he first came to us, is now in the 1st grade and received a perfect score on his hand-writing and spelling page which he was happy to bring to me. Pertina is in the 6th grade and Nancy in the 9th, so fees were paid for them to sit for the West African Standardized testing. Pray they will do well. Thank you for the sense of dignity and purpose you provide to these young children by being able to put on a uniform and attend schools with their friends!

I have had two outside speaking engagements. At one conference I was invited to speak to the children. I spoke for 4 days that week and one day we had as many as 98 children and that day, no helpers showed up! We also had some neighborhood children coming in with sharp metal objects (to slash people). I was teaching on the life of David and while some were trying to listen and participate, it was overwhelming and discouraging. I truly didn't want to return on the last day, but when I did, the group was small and the Holy Spirit moved and 15-20 children responded to the gospel. After counseling, I believe 12 had a good understanding of their need for a Savior and I was able to give them a "Little Bible" and a gospel tract. This is not ideal as I don't have means of follow-up, but I encouraged each child to speak to their parents and their pastor and to show them the tract and explain what happened. I asked someone later how they kept the neighborhood kids out, how did the numbers come down to a manageable level? I was told, no one knew, nothing was done, nothing was said. I don't know how God did it, but he set up that day to ensure the children that were ready could hear and respond. God is good!

I was also able to travel out to the bush to speak with the group of ladies at a conference in Nimba county. This is the fourth time I have addressed these mostly Kpelle women. I always enjoy these engagements immensely. I enjoy going out into "true Liberia" and this one was way out! A full hour and 1/2 off the main highway. There was no established church there. A man from that village (Pastor Moses) returned there to try to lead his people to Christ and he was hoping the conference would encourage some of the local people to come. When these conferences are held, as many as 10-15 churches will travel there with their members. They sleep on the floors of the churches and homes on mats. They carry their own food to cook over coal pots and wood fires. It no small things. I taught on Law and Grace and the question answer time was so encouraging. My teaching is translated into Kpelle, and the questions asked demonstrated that they were really getting me, praise God. There were 50 plus women there but one woman from the community that came to hear my teaching. I pray that this church in the bush will grow and the community will be reached!

I think that gives a pretty good synopsis of #myLiberianlife over the last several months! Titus is on a three-week vacation from school and we are enjoying some fellowship with good friends. I am hoping we can fit in a few days of "vacation" at a beach spot. I celebrated my 56th birthday with malaria a few weeks ago but was able to have a small celebration at home with my birthday buddies Fatu and Martha and then some dear friends took me out to dinner at a lovely restaurant. I have also been blessed with a few care packages from home that have recently come with those traveling here. As if I didn't have enough going on, I have started Kpelle lessons (one of the 16+ tribal languages) and taking those online classes in education. Pray for this Oma's brain to comprehend and retain all this new information! Due to COVID concerns, I had to cancel a trip home to attend a family wedding. I would have been home for my twin granddaughters' birthday, but I had to disappoint them and others when I had to make the difficult call to not come. These moments tear at your heart. I appreciate every one of you who prays for me and for my ministry here. It gives me the strength and perseverance to press on here!

Your Servant for Liberia, *Julie Alexander* Psalm 68:5-6



Delivering school supplies



Progress on Ma Bessie's house