

Greetings from Sanoyea, Liberia!

It is hard to believe this is our last week in Liberia although the telltale signs are there. Sunday was the graduation service for the teacher training workshops that took place in Harrisburg at Day Memorial Church and Tuesday was the graduation ceremony for the teacher training workshops that took place at the Kirstan Marie Jensen Lutheran School in Sanoyea. Sister Betty McCrandell was the guest speaker at both graduations where she quizzed the teachers to see how much they really learned and, more importantly, would they put what they learned into practice. The graduation ceremony at Jensen was particularly enjoyable as a large part of the audience was made up of the students of the school who loved watching their teachers being quizzed!

Gary and I are sorry we will not be able to travel to Day Memorial before we leave Liberia for we hear the roof is on, the balcony is almost complete and the painting will soon begin. From all of those we have talked to who have visited Day they say the church already looks impressive and will be beautiful when it is finished. As we get ready to leave Liberia our prayers are with the team that will see Day through to its completion and ready for the dedication ceremony in April.

Gary and I spent last week in Phebe helping to oversee the Tuition Sponsorship Program (TSP) sign-ups for the next school year. We worked along side our Liberian team, most of whom are TSP graduates now attending University, to sign-up almost 1,000 students. Part of the team also traveled to Zanzu, Totota and Monrovia to sign-up the additional 500 students that will be on the program. We also took a step in faith, given the economy, and said yes to signing up students for the first time from Sanoyea. We trust God will guide us to the sponsors who will be able to help with the tuition for these students who desperately want an education. It is always hard to tell parents our waiting list is full and they will have to wait until next year to see if any room has opened up. Gary and I are praying for God's guidance as the TSP continues to grow.

Last Sunday there was also a special celebration at Curran Lutheran Church in Sanoyea as they took the time to thank Jim & Butch Foster, and Gary and I for our help in renovating their church and parsonage and to thank God for sending us. The church is complete and the parsonage is almost done. This morning Jim & Butch left for Monrovia with tools and supplies that will be stored away for next year's projects while Gary and I remain here to finish up the remaining jobs. Last but not least Gary and I are looking forward to electricity, running water, a hot shower, a hot cup of coffee, an ice cold coke and sleeping in our own bed. We have taken to quizzing each other as to what we want our first meal to be when we get back to the States. Gary has settled on a cheese steak from Pat's and I'm torn between a mushroom cheese omelet or a nice fresh salad—we will probably stay away from anything that has rice in it for a while. It will also be good to finally talk with many of you face to face and be able to get into our email accounts again.

When we come to Liberia we always bring extra Bibles that we can give away or as the Liberians say, "gift" to someone. Every Sunday we have attended Curran Lutheran Church we have seen a young girl in a wheel chair. I can only imagine how hard it is for her to get around the hilly dirt and stone roads of Sanoyea. This past Sunday Gary and I asked her if she could read English. She said she could so we "gifted" her with a Bible. Her face broke into a huge grin as she thanked us and thanked God. We thank God for the privilege of being able to be here and for the lives we are able to touch by sharing God's love through our building projects, the Teacher Training workshops, the TSP, and through moments like these.

Thank you for all of your prayers and by the grace of God our next mission letter will be from the good old USA!

God bless, Deb & Gary