
Greetings from Liberia

I just returned from assignment in the U.S. It had been two years since we had seen our children and I had been with my mother. Coming together was a great joy.

Part of the disappointment of the trip was not connecting in person with so many of you, especially the congregations that help to support my ministry here. While that is a change, I have been able to connect with some of you in new and different ways (more about that later in this newsletter.)

It seems as though those different different (as we say in Liberia) ways of connecting are going to be more and more normal for our life together as the people of God across the world. An example of this is a few Sundays ago, I preached at my congregation St. Andrew's in Monrovia, Liberia and in my home congregation of First Lutheran in Aitkin, MN. Same text, different sermon, same theology—and it worked.



SEPTEMBER/OCTOBER NEWSLETTER

ELCA Missionary to Liberia
Rev Linda Johnson Seyenkulo

Travel to and from Liberia to the U.S.

Home Assignment was different this year. The obvious difference was there were no church visits and not so much travel. However, there was a new difference that really stuck out for me.

Usually when I travel to the U.S. there is a question I am asked about Liberia everywhere I go. The question is some form of “Are you safe there?”

It is often the first question new acquaintances ask. It is asked in congregation forums and fellowship hours after the church service. It is asked by family and friends, as well as people I know through my work as a missionary.

The striking difference this year from previous years was this: only ONE person asked me the question in 2 months ----only one. It was amazing to me. It was encouraging that questions, both verbal and written, asked instead about how is the situation there in Liberia, compared to here? Some talked about what they thought the West could learn from countries like Liberia. In a few instances, people referenced some of the violence seen in the U.S. in various forms: (political, racial, gender) and asked how things are the same or different here in Liberia. Questions were asked about what effect Global Warming is having on Liberian? Questions came that centered on how life is in Liberia rather than “Are you safe?” The questions this year seemed to come from an understanding of people of faith in the world, as connected to each other.

I wondered what that mean for us as the body of Christ throughout the world. It seems to bring us together to the basics of faith, not as privileged and unprivileged, but as people whose hope and ministry and work in God’s kin-dom unite us in Jesus Christ.

We sing this hymn all the time at Lutheran Church in Liberia occasions from funerals to conventions.

My Hope is built on nothing less than Jesus’ blood and righteousness
No merit of my own I claim, but wholly lean on Jesus’ Name. On
Christ the solid Rock I stand, All other ground is sinking sand All
other ground is sinking sand.

May that hope in Jesus Christ unite us as brothers and sisters across the world, as we live in these strange and difficult times.

Things Coming Up in my Work

September Living Lutheran Article

The September issue of Living Lutheran has an article I wrote called, “Food, Faith and a Pandemic“ The article is about a on a new project of the LCL, “LIFE Liberia.” The project focuses on growing rice so that Liberia is not dependent rice imports. The Lutheran Church in Liberia and Bishop D. Jensen Seyenkulo are leading this ecumenical initiative. Check out the article. I was honored to be asked to write it.

Training Empowered by Light Group Leaders

The Empowerd by Light program provides group peer/ mentor support, scholarship assistance and solar lights to single student mothers in the Lutheran school system. The group leaders will be trained in leadership September 16-18. The program provides scholarships for about 50 student mothers and solar lights for around 90 participants.

Evangelist Training starts with arrival September 19.

Level 3 of the Evangelist Training begins the end of this month (September.) We are anxiously awaiting the arrival of 9 men and 4 women. Please pray for them and ther famlies during this school time—and for safe travel here from all over Liberia and from Sierra Leone. Classes start September 22. I am teaching Pauline Writings, Preaching and Lutheran Identity during this Level.

Prayer Concerns

Prayers for medical personnel: for doctors, nurses, and all other medical practitioners who all over the world. Pray especially for those in Liberia where the medical system struggles.

Prayers for students in schools all over the world during this pandemic time.

Prayers for the body of Christ as we learn new ways of being together in the world.

++++++

Greetings from our family in the U.S. and Liberia to you. Here are a few snapshots of the wonders of vaccinated family time--at least how it was in June and July—at least how it was at that time. The message keeps changing, we change with it for the health of the world. Stay healthy and be careful!



Staying Connected:

+++Facebook: I am the only Linda Johnson Seyenkulo on Facebook. Check out my page information about Liberia.

+++Congregation On-line Ministry: Confirmation Classes, Video or live stream sermons, Zoom Fellowship Hour, Book Discussion. I'm open to new and creative ways to be in touch.

+++Listserv: email me at Linda.Seyenkulo@elca for more information.

+++Missionary Support If you are interested in supporting my ministry here, check out the missionary sponsorship page at https://www.elca.org/Our-Work/GlobalMission/Global-Service/SupportMissionaries?_ga=2.77845010.72199263

+++Coming soon: Peer to Peer Page. Read my next newsletter for information on peer to peer support. I'm working on my page for that now.