

Dear Friends,

August 2010

Greetings from Liberia where our rainy season is in full swing and the city sometimes looks and feels like it is about ready to be washed away. Monrovia is built on a number of small pieces of land scattered between the ocean, some swamps and a river. This makes for big problems during a deluge!



This bridge was built by the local people but washed away in the recent rains

What a great time we've had lately. In July our son John-Mark visited for two and a half weeks and he, Melodie, Heidi and I went to Voinjama, the primary location of his previous ministry. We were able to visit a number of villages where the people had recently turned to Christ and have a service in one of the villages on Sunday. Monday John-Mark and I taught a seminar on "Folk Religion and Spiritual Warfare" and found the people very, very open to teaching. The next week we went to Cape Mount County to visit some of his ministry areas and teach the same seminar, and taught the same material a few days later in a seminar at the Monrovia "People of the Book" center.



It was a joy to see their love and appreciation for John-Mark. It was also a great challenge to me to see many new Christians in the area – sometimes whole towns that had converted to Christianity – who have no trained pastor or church leader to minister to them on even a weekly basis.



John-Mark and Sara are hoping to return to Liberia in late 2011 to continue working in this area, but for now he continues his training in South Carolina. The newest newlyweds of the family, Kevin and Melodie, spent their first months of married life in Liberia. However, as of a few weeks ago they too are gone. They will begin missionary training in September to prepare themselves for their own lifetime ministry in Africa as God leads.



Last week Nancy and I taught the Peacemaker course to a good and enthusiastic group of people in Buchanan. Given that interpersonal problems are the biggest challenge in most ministries, this material really has day-by-day benefits.

Both Nancy and I continue our Bible study ministries, including the one I am presently doing to train the leadership team for its new work in Zwedru. Pastor Alex Roberts was officially commissioned by Second Calvary Baptist Church two weeks ago and should be leaving within a few weeks.

We praise God that despite the moratorium on international adoption, one of our foster babies was allowed to go home to his adoptive family. (This was because his adoption had been completed before the moratorium went into effect). Titus' new daddy came and stayed with us for two and a half weeks, using that time to bond with his new son. We had Titus for 18 months in our home, so his absence is felt keenly.



We will continue to foster as God opens up doors, but needless to say, the moratorium makes the whole thing a bit unnerving. Recently we have had the opportunity to help several other babies who needed help to survive but did not need or were not available for foster care.

Several months ago a much-appreciated and very large gift was given to Jake Memorial Baptist College, allowing us to move forward with a much-needed student center/chapel. Presently trusses are being put in place to support the roof, which will soon be installed. The building was severely damaged in the war and only makeshift repairs done so far, but this latest project will make it useable for a wide variety of activities. With the high cost of materials, though, we still are in need of additional funds to completely finish this project. Please pray that God would answer our prayers for this need.



Speaking of gifts, several years ago we presented our prayer support family with the need for motorcycles for some of the pastors with whom we are working. There was a good response and cycles were made available to those with the greatest need. However, the money is now used up and we have a number of valid requests to continue the project. Each one costs about \$750-850. If you feel this is something you could help with, please send your gifts to the address below. Any and all gifts are much appreciated.



Pastor Amos Kangar with his motorcycle

Please pray for the following requests:

1. Two of our dear pastor friends (Pastors William Farr and Maxwell Magbinne) have had strokes. Both are making a slow recovery but still have a long way to go.
2. The building project for Jake Memorial Baptist College would go forward without incident.
3. Continued good health and safety as we travel in Liberia.
4. The moratorium on adoption would be lifted.
5. God would grant wisdom to know which ministry opportunities to accept.
6. Revival in Liberia! It is desperately needed.

May God bless you in a special way for your continued interest and support of our ministry.

In His service,

Mark, Nancy, Heidi and Jared Sheppard

Serving with:
Baptist Mid-Missions
7749 Webster Rd.
Cleveland, OH 44130

For sending gifts use the above address or go to BMM's "giving" page:
<https://www.bmm.org/BMM/Giving/stewardship+ministries.htm> Click on the "Paypal" icon on the right of the page to give online. Please mark the gift "for the ministry of the Sheppards" or "for the Liberia motorcycle project" (for online giving use the box on the Paypal page marked "instructions for the merchant").