

LIVING is GIVING



Burchills Overwhelmed by Liberian Welcome

Tim and Christine Burchill, two of the board members of Living is Giving Inc., were welcomed by a crowd of over 50 well-wishers at Roberts International Airport near Monrovia, Liberia the evening of February 10, 2023. Most were LIG volunteers and their family members, led by Living is Giving Liberia Director, Bill M. Woyah. A busload of children from Bible Talk Organization Careysburg branch also made the long trip to the airport, greeting and singing to the Burchills as they prepared to head

for a hotel in Monrovia after 25 hours of travel. “We were overwhelmed by their warmth and enthusiasm. I’ve never experienced anything like it!”, said Tim. Christine quickly added, “We felt like movie stars!” This welcome set a great tone for the 11-day visit, a fact-finding trip to meet and get to know those involved in LIG’s agricultural project, to see Bible Talk Organization children and families from four different locations, and to make potentially beneficial contacts with key individuals and organizations.

Fast Facts about Liberia, West Africa



AREA: 43,000 square miles (similar to Virginia)

POPULATION: 5.36 million (2022 est) **CAPITAL:** Monrovia, pop. ca 1.5 MM

CAPITAL: Monrovia, population \$1.5 million

OFFICIAL LANGUAGE: English (with many tribal languages spoken)

CLIMATE: Humid tropical, warm year-round, with rainy and dry seasons

GDP PER CAPITA: \$735.00 vs \$75,180 US GDP per Capita

GDP RANK: 178th of 195 countries

POVERTY RATE: 88.9% (2016)

RELIGIOUS AFFILIATION: Christian 86.2% Islam 11.7% Other .7%

Major Gift Results in Purchase of Fourth Acre

Last December, generous donors gave a significant monetary gift to enable LIG to purchase another acre of land adjacent to the current farm. When contacted, the owners of the land seemed uninterested in selling except at an exorbitant price. These are the same owners who sold LIG the first three acres. As a result the Board of Directors made a decision to prayerfully put the matter in God's hands and wait upon Him. On February 14, with Tim and Christine present, Bill Woyah received a phone call from the owners saying that they had had a change of heart. They agreed to sell the plot to LIG for 1/3 less than the original price! Coincidence? Not likely. Only God could have arranged the perfect timing of these circumstances and events. There are two more adjacent acres which the Board would like to acquire. With these two, LIG would have a rectangular plot, one side of which would be appropriate for more lowland crops such as corn, rice, vegetables, or beans. If God has placed on your heart to help LIG purchase these two acres please contact us. More information can be found elsewhere in this newsletter.

LIG Inc. Board of Directors

Christine Burchill: President

Tim Burchill: Secretary/Treasurer

Debora Denny: Recording Secretary

Bill Woyah

Ryan Kingsriter



Tim and Christine Burchill were able to experience life on the farm, Liberian style, on Wednesday, March 15. Volunteers from the Careysburg and Paynesville areas converged on LIG's three-acre farm, about 22 miles from Monrovia, near the small village of Frank Town. The field is planted to cassava, a root crop which is used to make a type of flour and other food products. Cassava is a staple of the Liberian diet. The women volunteers made quick work of weeding, using their small hoes to cultivate around the cassava plants, talking and laughing as they worked. A couple of the volunteer women prepared food for a mid-day meal which was eaten in the field. This meal consisted of white rice with a sauce of potato greens and red palm oil and was very spicy. This field of cassava will help feed the families of the volunteers, and we hope that production can be increased enough to sell part of the crop on the market.



LIG to Adopt "Farming God's Way" Methods

On March 20, Living is Giving board members Tim and Christine Burchill and Bill Woyah visited Liberia International Christian College (LICC) in Ganta to meet with Rev. Bill Sebold, an instructor in the Farming God's Way (FGW) agricultural program. FGW is a conservation-based farming method developed by Christians

in Africa and is based on six Scriptural spiritual principles. FGW teaches farmers not to plow the soil, to minimize waste, and to make use of a natural cover of mulch and plant materials (called "God's blanket") which holds in moisture and keeps out weeds. This method is now being taught by missionaries and volunteers across Africa and has spread to other continents as well. Pastor Sebold is from Indiana and spends nine months of the year teaching agriculture at LICC. Bill Woyah, Liberian Director, is making arrangements for Sebold to come to Careysburg to train LIG volunteers the principles and practices of Farming God's Way. This will help them to be good stewards of the land, while hopefully maximizing crop production.

Opportunities for Giving

Vehicle

For volunteer transport & farm use
\$10,000

Bible Talk Organization

Equipment

\$2000 per each of 4 sites:
100 Resin stacking chairs \$750
Sound System inc. microphone \$850
Electric generator \$300
Bibles: (\$100 or more)

Additional two acres of land

approx. \$4,000--\$6,000 per acre

Ways to Donate

By Check (no fees):

Payable to Living is Giving Inc.

Send to: Tim Burchill

1422 9th Avenue NE
Jamestown, ND 58401

VENMO: @Livingisgivinginc

Zelle (no fees) Living is Giving Inc.

if you don't have Zelle through your bank you can register through the Zelle app for IOS or Android

Zelle QR Code: Christine N Burchill
701-721-2328



Bible Talk Organization

Bible Talk Organization ministry (BTO) attracts hundreds of children. Bill Woyah started BTO in Paynesville, Liberia in 2021.

Bill noticed that on Sunday afternoons there were many youths who had nothing particular to occupy their time. His idea was to provide an opportunity for these kids, ages pre-K through teens, to gather, learn about Christ, and become a positive influence in their community. Bill structured a program which includes praise and worship singing, Bible teaching, Scripture memorization, drama, and even dance—something for nearly everyone! The response was overwhelming. Today several hundred kids in four communities gather every Sunday. BTO is non-denominational, and all kids are welcome. The original group meets in Paynesville is going strong and there are now also groups in the outlying areas of Careysburg/Frank Town, Soul Clinic, and Buchanan. In three of the locations there are no chairs or sound equipment, and the children must stand or sit on the ground. The Paynesville group is utilizing a church building that may soon be unavailable. Speaker systems are also needed, as are more Bibles. About \$2,000 will pay for 100 chairs, a sound system and microphone, and an electric generator for each of the four sites. This would be a good project for a church group, individual, or family with a heart for kids, to adopt.



A Brighter Future For Their Children

The 26 or so volunteers who take part in the agricultural facet of LIG are remarkable in many ways. Most are females who became single parents, having lost their spouses to war, Ebola, or other tragedy or illness. Some sell charcoal on the street to provide for their families,

others catch and sell fish, and still others make things to sell in the marketplaces. Life is a constant struggle, yet they have agreed to be part of Living is Giving without any promise of short-term gain. Fortunately they were able to share in the first cassava harvest in December, and will reap some of the benefit of the upcoming harvest. However, their main goal is a better future for their children with accessible education being at the top of the list. They are women with strong Christian faith. God has given these women to LIG as partners as we try to make a difference, even in a limited way, in this profoundly needy country.



Rampant Poverty



In the late 20th century, the Liberian people were caught in the middle of several long struggles for wealth and political power. Two devastating civil wars between 1989 and 2003 brought the nation to its knees. A president

and his entire cabinet were assassinated by a rival group. Atrocities were committed by military strongmen. Nearly a million people fled to refugee camps in neighboring countries. Decades of progress were undone almost overnight, and around 90% of the Liberian economy was destroyed. The country has never recovered. Today, Liberia is one of the poorest nations on earth. While the country has stabilized and at least in theory is a democracy, corruption is rampant, and it holds the nation back. Bribery plagues many government agencies and institutions. Monetary assistance provided to the Liberian government by other nations doesn't always get to the people it is intended to benefit. Most humanitarian efforts today are conducted by private nonprofit organizations like Living is Giving and others. Yet over 85% of Liberians continue to live in poverty. Hope is hard to find in such a place. LIG exists to give hope where there seems to be none.

Liberia: Land of Liberty?



The first independent republic on the African continent, Liberia began with a movement to return freed black American and Caribbean slaves to Africa. Colonization societies ultimately transported approximately 13,000 of these freed slaves to what is now Liberia,

beginning in 1822. These people faced an uphill battle to gain acceptance into American society, where no one considered blacks equal to whites. It made some sense for them to start over in a new location, away from the discrimination and bigotry of America. But nothing is ever that simple; these people had roots in many parts of Africa, not just in what is now Liberia. Sixteen native tribes were already living in the area and were not thrilled about sharing their land and limited resources with the newcomers. The parties were eventually able to work things out, but there have been conflicts ever since. Liberia declared its independence in 1847 and is unique in that it was never colonized by European nations as was most of Africa. Its capital, Monrovia was named after U.S. President James Monroe. Its constitution, government, and even its flag are modeled after ours. Liberians love all things American, and consider themselves a close ally of the U.S. Even today, America is thought of as a sort of "promised land", with many aspiring to move here.