



MALAWI MISSION PARTNER COMMUNIQUE

By Missionary John Holtz



November 2019

"Pepper Coast Plans: Moving Forward in Liberia"

Weather-wise and food-wise,
some like it hot.

Liberia is just the place for both.

This smallish West-African
country¹ is part of the "Pepper
Coast."² So named for good
reason:

The Malagueta
Pepper.³



It's prevalent up and down the coast and it's piping
hot! These elongated fire hazards scorch like the
November sun sizzling the country. Doesn't take
much at all to burn the tip of your tongue or the
back of your throat.

But some like it hot.

However, we didn't journey all the way to the West
Coast for the weather or the peppers. But that being
said, it was actually nigh unto impossible to escape
the intense heat of either one. Very thankful for
cool fans and cold water!



We made the trip to Liberia to
make plans with two groups for
moving forward with our Mission
Outreach efforts in that country.

Say, did you catch that good news?
The Lord has brought forward, not
just *one* group but *two*!

By the way, in any WELS
communications about Mission
Outreach in Africa, ever run across
these two acronyms:

CLCL and RFFI?

If you haven't yet, you probably will. More exciting
information is coming through the Forward in Christ
and the WELS Connection.

These are the two groups in Liberia:

CLCL: Confessional Lutheran Church of Liberia.
RFFI: Royal Family Fellowship International.

Each its own separate, independent body.

Each its own synod.
Each has its own official Registration with the
Liberian Government.

So, since each synod is standing on its own, and plan
to stay that way, then what brings them together as
one - as leaders of both groups are shown here?



Leaders from CLCL and RFFI

Their burning desire.
But not for Malaguetas.



Though each of these two established Synods wants
to maintain its own identity, they both have a sharp
interest in our own Synod, the WELS. After all, the
WELS does have the cool, refreshing waters of
Salvation in Jesus Christ! :) That is something that
these two groups are intensely passionate about!

Setting their sights on the possibility of a declaration
of fellowship with WELS in the future, CLCL and RFFI
have been asking loads of questions for a while:

- On what doctrines does the WELS stand?
- To what creeds does the WELS ascribe?
- What sacraments do the WELS administer?
- For what purpose does WELS exist?
- How does WELS view the Scriptures?

These Liberians love to search the Bible. They desire
to learn what God says. They want to compare what
WELS preaches and teaches to what the Scriptures
say and proclaim. They humbly but admirably check

to see if what their teachers say is true.

Hmmm...just thought of something: maybe we
could refer these Liberians as *LIBEREANS*! Listen to
the glowing commentary about the Bereans that Dr.
Luke wrote in Acts 17:11,

*“Now the Bereans were of more noble character
than the Thessalonians, for they received the
message with great eagerness and examined the
Scriptures every day to see if what Paul said was
true.”*

To our dear brothers and sisters in Liberia: *“Keep
asking, keep checking, keep searching, keeping
examining the Scriptures! Your questions are good.
All of them!”*

All of which, quite some time ago, have started to be
answered by teachers, professors and pastors of the
WELS.

Over the years, a covey of WELS Called workers⁴ has
been helping this Liberian Mission Outreach by
bringing short courses and trainings. An awesome
start! What a blessing and what an opportunity to
pause and thank the Lord for each one of them for
the faithful and hard work they’ve done in Liberia!

And by God’s grace, the work continues. Because of
the November 2019 trip, plans are now set in
motion. On deck for March and November 2020:
training for the purpose of *fellowship*.

Obviously, this venture is something that takes time,
travel and funding. A total of six trips are in the plan.
Even though all of this teaching may cover 2+ years,
both Liberian groups are ready for this undertaking.

Judging from the looks and sounds of things, there
will be lots of questions and lots of answers. Well,
what do you know, just like Luther’s Small
Catechism. Lots of Questions and lots of answers!
Good questions, God’s answers!

It is this very book, the *Small Catechism*, as well as
Know the Truth, a book authored by WELS
Missionary Dan Kroll, that will serve as the basis for

the trainings for *all* mission outreach groups in Africa – not just Liberia – on the path to fellowship.



Missionary Dan Kroll,⁵ who is currently living in Malawi, is a member of the One Africa Team (OAT), He is the OAT designated Liaison for Liberia. He and others will be making the trips. Missionary Kroll offers this insightful comment:

“Working in Liberia is like falling into a pot of stew, including the peppers. It does get hot and there is a lot of stirring that happens whenever we meet. People in Liberia are eager to know the gospel and examine regularly how it fits, not only into the culture of the land, but also into their own personal lives. The comfort of knowing – “*my sins are forgiven.*” The excitement of going – “*in the power of the Holy Spirit I can find a way to honor my Lord.*” There is work to be done in Liberia - the most exciting work ever: to make people know what a great God we have.”



Missionary John Hartmann in a Monrovia Market

Missionary John Hartmann, the One Africa Team (OAT) Mission Outreach Leader shares his **heart burn**, I’m sorry, I mean his **heart** about the Mission Outreach in Liberia:

“Those peppers sure did leave a burn on my tongue! But peppers are not the only thing burning in Liberia. Peoples’ ears are burning to hear the refreshing and comforting message of God’s love and forgiveness found only in Jesus, our Savior! His Gospel is not just a spice, but the staple food that all people need every day. In the Bible, we have the perfect recipe for joy and peace for everyone! Let’s share!”



Ah, a taste of the Pepper Coast Plans:

Moving Forward in Liberia!

Your Malawi Mission Partner

John Holtz



1. Liberia is the 38th largest country in Africa.
2. The entire stretch of coast between Sierra Leone and Ivory Coast is called the “*Pepper Coast*,” but it is also called the “*Malagueta Coast*” and also the “*Grain Coast*.”
3. Malagueta Pepper is also known as the “*Grain of Paradise*” which in turn gave rise to an alternative name to the coastal area, The Grain Coast.”
4. Thus far, the men who have made training trips to Liberia have been many. I won’t name them here but they include active WELS pastors, a retired WELS pastor, Wisconsin Lutheran Seminary Professors (who are also part of the Pastoral Studies Institute, or PSI), a District President, Stateside Liberians and missionaries from the One Africa Team (OAT).
5. Dan and Karen Kroll most recently had been living and serving in Cameroon. Due to political unrest there, they are residing in Malawi for the time being.