

Monthly Update

February 2013

Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ:

This edition of the “Monthly Update” continues with information on some of the past actions that a lack of space precluded our printing until now. We believe that you will find them informative and helpful in knowing the myriad of things happening in our United Methodist Church and around the world.

From January 3 – 5 Concerned Methodists had an exhibit at the Congress on Evangelism that was held in Dunwoody, Georgia – a suburb of Atlanta. We take these gatherings as an opportunity to share with people our ministry and the information we accumulate. We generally display the books that have been published, newsletters, information sheets, and evangelical material. The morning of the first day is spent in setting up the display followed by the registration of the participants.

Dr. Eddie Fox, the World Director of the World Methodist Council was the featured speaker. He was very, very powerful in his messages – as he frequently is. He is a dynamic, enthusiastic servant of the Lord Jesus Christ. After reminding us about the printing of the “Faith-Sharing New Testament with the Psalms” (financed by a U.M. layman in the North Georgia Conference), he told us about the worldwide Methodist church with 80 million members in 150 countries around the world. He then reminded us of the Methodist layman Harry Denman’s book *Evangelism in the Wesleyan Spirit* in which he pleads for a third Great Awakening similar to the first one in this country in 1787 when John Wesley was still alive. He then recalled that out of the second Great Awakening in the 1800s 1 out of every 3 Christians in this country was a Methodist. Let us pray that just that will happen – that we will have revival that will be so profound that it will transform our country – resulting in such a third Great Awakening!

I thank the Lord for the opportunities that he presents us! Those of us in Concerned Methodists strive to be obedient to what the Lord has called us to do. We try to do as much as we can as efficiently as possible. We also thank the Lord that the work that needs to be done is too great for the human effort; this forces us to our knees to seek His guidance as to his priorities.

We appreciate so much the support you provide – both prayerfully and financially. Please continue to partner with us as we “contend for the faith” that the Lord has entrusted to our care.

In His service,

Allen O. Morris,
Executive Director

February 2013 Update

Bits and Pieces from across the United Methodist Church

In my many years I have come to a conclusion that one useless man is a shame, two is a law firm,
and three or more is a congress. – John Adams

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Of Interest

+ *“Trick or treat for UNICEF”?*

New York — For more than 50 years, UNICEF and the United Methodist Board of Church and Society have worked together to save and improve the lives of children around the world. Last year, United Methodist trick-or-treaters raised more than \$150,000 for UNICEF. [Note: A recent survey I read gives UNICEF very poor marks in terms of stewardship in that it translated very little money given by donors into what is its purported mission. I for one would not support this with even one dollar of my money. – AOM]

– UMNS Digest, October 17, 2012

+ *College Students Fight Modern-day Slavery*

No one really talks about it. Most of us probably don't even know that there are more slaves now than ever in human history. Depictions of human trafficking are often seen in movies and television shows, but we don't think of it happening in the United States. Regan Kramer, a Florida native, didn't either until she attended a Passion conference that highlighted the topic of domestic human trafficking. From there, Kramer said God led her on the path to bringing awareness of the issue to the campus of Florida International University (FIU) in Miami, where she serves as the associate director of the Wesley Foundation. She soon learned that Miami has the third-largest number of human trafficking cases in the United States. Sarah McKay, a US-2 missionary working with FIU's Wesley Foundation, partnered with Kramer because of her passion for social justice.

The number of adults and children currently in forced labor, bonded labor and forced prostitution is 12.3 million, UM Women (UMW) reports on its factsheet, citing figures from the 2010 U.S. Department of State Trafficking in Persons Report. Trafficking involves sex, labor and organ harvesting, and it's one of the fastest-growing crimes in the world, according to the U.S. State Department. Only drugs are now a larger criminal enterprise. The global market of child trafficking is reportedly at more than \$12 billion a year, with more than 1.2 million child victims. According to the National Center for Missing and Exploited Children, about 2.8 million U.S. children run away each year, and within 48 hours of hitting the streets, one-third of these children are recruited into prostitution and pornography.

After hearing the facts, Kramer knew she had to do something, so she launched FIU 4 Freedom on her college campus. The group is a network of students and clubs at Florida International University that partnered with organizations in South Florida working to bring awareness and stop “modern-day slavery,” according to the organization's website. To bring awareness, FIU 4 Freedom set up a “Freedom Week” in March and then again in October 2012 in which there were informational events across campus. Katarina Rosenblatt, another Florida native, regularly shares her story of survival. She formed an organization, There is H.O.P.E., that works to get victims out of sex trafficking and lead them on a path to recovery. The Rev. Paul Massingill, Wesley Foundation executive director, said the student response to the events sponsored by FIU 4 Freedom has been “amazing.” “Many students are shocked, horrified and angered that so much slavery still exists and exists in their own city,” he said. “Raising awareness has already led to students getting more educated and involved in these issues locally.”

Kramer said she isn't sure where she wants to go next with her mission. At first, she wanted to be on the streets and in strip clubs saving girls herself, but she soon realized that she could make a difference by bringing awareness to college students. Other college campuses already are following FIU 4 Freedom's lead and starting their own groups. [Another source of information states that there are more people in various forms of slavery at this time than ever before in the history of the world. – AOM]

– Erin Edgemon, for UMNS. As reported in UMNewscope, vol. 41, issue 3, January 23, 2013

+ *Faith Leaders Demand Action on Gun Violence*

On the birthday of the Rev. Martin Luther King, Jr., UMs joined more than 40 other religious leaders in sending a letter on gun violence to President Obama and Congress. The letter calls on political leaders to require every person who buys a gun to pass a criminal background check, remove high capacity weapons and ammunition magazines from our streets and make

gun trafficking a federal crime. [It would seem that our church leaders would speak out in areas where they would have a more centered perspective. AOM] – UMNS. As reported in UMNewscope, vol. 41, issue 3, January 23, 2013

(UM) General Board of Church and Society. Jim Winkler will depart this year as the top executive for the General Board of Church and Society. GBCS has set Mar. 18 as the deadline for applications for the position.

– UMNS. As reported in UMNewscope, vol. 41, issue 3, January 23, 2013

(UM) General Board of Global Ministries.

+ ***GBGM COMMISSIONS MISSIONARIES.*** The General Board of Global Ministries (GBGM) commissioned eight missionaries on Oct. 23, during its semi-annual board meeting in New York. The eight commissioned missionaries come from diverse backgrounds and will be deployed to diverse communities. [Note: It will be good if these are the traditional missionaries, but all too often they tend to be luke-warm Christians or political activists. – AOM]

– UMNewscope, October 31, 2012

(UM) General Board of Higher Education and Ministry's (GBHEM).

Methodist Education's Legacy of Accessibility

Methodist education cannot afford to forget its legacy and heritage of making education accessible and available for the poor and underprivileged, the Rev. Dr. Kah-Jin Jeffrey Kuan told the General Board of Higher Education and Ministry's (GBHEM) Board of Directors during the Oct. 10-12 fall meeting in Nashville. "In our attempts to prepare leaders for global challenges, we need to ensure that this population is not left out and left behind. Are we willing to make available an educational opportunity to them that they otherwise will not have? Are we willing to honor the social covenant required of our church-related institutions?" asked Kuan, dean of The Theological School, Drew University.

The Willson Lectures are designed to contribute to the spiritual and intellectual enrichment of people associated with the boards and agencies of The UMC. The lectures also present the scholarly contributions of distinguished leaders in higher education and educational philanthropy to the Nashville community. Kuan reminded the group that education for Methodists has always been about ministry first, about formation of the total person. Two other distinctive features of a Methodist education are service and inclusiveness-encouraging students to see themselves as stewards of a community who should use what they have received in their education to give back to the community and the world.

Kuan asked the directors to consider what it would mean for UM higher education to take on the challenge of rethinking education not only in terms of individual formation but also of communal formation.

It was the vision of making higher education accessible to all that led Methodists to found many of the historically Black colleges and universities, as well as Africa University, and many other schools all over the world, he said. The shifting realities of the increasingly diverse and racial-ethnic population in the U.S., the decline among those in the U.S. who identify themselves as Christians while the number of Christians in Africa and Asia grows, and the mergers and closing of theological schools require shifts in theological education, too, he said.

"A theological education that is attentive to the shifting realities must also pay attention to the changing religious landscape in the United States. If our societies and communities are no longer religiously homogeneous, but increasingly pluralistic, should we not be preparing religious leaders that have knowledge of and are conversant with other religious traditions?" he asked.

– Vicki Brown, GBHEM, as reported in UMNewscope, October 31, 2012

(UM) General Conference 2012. 2012 General Conference follow-up.

2012 General Conference approved a 2013-16 budget that was 6.03% less than the amount apportioned for the current quadrennium, the UM boards and commissions that depend on the World Service Fund accepted the challenge to sharpen their priorities. They also expressed gratitude for the opportunity to reach out in new and different ways in 2012. Many of their activities demonstrated commitment to the denomination's Four Areas of Focus, which include developing principled leaders for the church and the world, creating new places for new people and renewing existing congregations, engaging in ministry with the poor and stamping out killer diseases of poverty by improving health globally. Here are some highlights of the year, as reported by agency representatives:

The General Board of Church and Society (GBCS) undertook a new venture to increase grassroots organizing within annual conferences and local churches. A team of national organizers spread out across the United States and Africa to develop advocacy capabilities on issues such as addictions, health care, immigration, economic justice, criminal justice and human trafficking. Monthly conference calls, featuring experts on organizing and authorities on various advocacy issues, reinforced the regional training. This venture proved successful; it was greeted so enthusiastically that the agency has

reorganized its staff to seek a full-time grassroots organizing coordinator next year. [Note: If they focus on engaging in political activities, perhaps they should be eliminated. – AOM]

Through consultation, training and resource development, Path 1 (new church starts) at the General Board of Discipleship (GBOD) helps The UMC move toward starting one new church a day in the United States by 2020. Since January 2008, the New Church Starts staff has consulted with 56 different annual conferences, helping the denomination plant more than 620 churches. In 2012, the team launched a new connectional database for sharing churchplanting best practices and tracking progress.

On Aug. 3, the General Board of Global Ministries (GBGM) commissioned its 61st class of US-2s and its 35th class of Mission Interns at Aldersgate UMC in Arlington, Va. The 34 young adults, ages 20–30, are from the United States, the Democratic Republic of Congo, the Philippines, South Korea, Peru, Ukraine and Liberia.

The 2012 General Conference approved a \$7 million Young Clergy Initiative. In August, the Rev. Kim Cape, top executive of the General Board of Higher Education and Ministry (GBHEM), hosted a Young Clergy Summit to help determine the path forward for the initiative. The importance of mentoring was a primary issue raised by a group of younger-than-30 clergy candidates and clergy attending the summit. GBHEM is collaborating with the Fund for Theological Education to conduct group-mentoring training. General Conference approved group mentoring legislation as one solution to the concerns.

Highlights for the General Commission on Christian Unity and Interreligious Concerns (GCCUIC) were two General Conference events—the Act of Repentance on Healing Relationships with Indigenous Persons and approval of the Pan-Methodist Full Communion proposal—and the restructuring of the commission into the new Office of Christian Unity and Interreligious Relationships of the Council of Bishops.

Since Imagine No Malaria was launched, UM Communications (UMCOM) has helped to raise more than \$23 million to end preventable deaths from the killer disease of malaria. By Dec. 31, 1.3 million nets will have been distributed across Africa. The campaign's objective is to eliminate deaths and suffering from malaria in Africa by 2015 through prevention, education, communication, treatment and advocacy. Earlier this year, the World Health Organization announced that malaria's impact has been cut in half from a death every 30 seconds to a death every 60 seconds.

Because of the campaign's life-saving efforts in Africa, new churches have been planted, advancing church growth. The General Commission on Religion and Race (GCROR) sponsored two events that offered training and support to pastors and churches in cross-racial/cross-cultural appointments. These have led to ongoing conversations within annual conferences about supporting local churches as they build relationship with their communities in new and dynamic ways. In late November, the commission hosted a summit, where more than 100 participants exchanged ideas about how to help nourish vital, multicultural congregations in the United States and around the globe. [Note: This is one commission that was almost eliminated at GC-2012 – and it should have been. – AOM]

The General Commission on the Status and Role of Women (GCSRW) marked its 40th year by making women in the central conferences a priority. In February, top executive M. Garlinda Burton met with UM clergywomen from across Africa during a conference sponsored by GBHEM, with support from GCSRW and other groups. The largest-ever such gathering was an opportunity for women to network, inspire and support one another. The group elected an international steering committee to monitor and lobby for expanded rights and representation of women in their conferences and throughout the church. [Note: This is another that was almost eliminated at GC-2012 – and it should have been. – AOM]

The General Commission on UM Men (GCUMM) recruited and trained nearly 200 scouting ministry specialists and 30 men's ministry specialists to help churches explore ways to enrich the lives of men and young people.

During its first year as an agency of The UMC, UM Women (UMW) awarded over \$1 million in grants and scholarships nationally and internationally. Over \$1 million was also invested in insurance and improvements at half of the national mission institutions. UMW awarded 61 new scholarships to students across the globe. Members helped persuade Hershey's to use 100% certified chocolate by 2020, reducing child labor in cocoa production in West Africa. UMW has 120 language coordinators in UM Conferences reaching women who do not prefer to worship in English. An August event enlisted 200 youth, young adults and mentors helping the organization reach young people.

The UM Publishing House (UMPH) launched a new children's Sunday school curriculum for fall. Grow, Proclaim, Serve! is already being used in all 50 U.S. states and Canada. The Common English Bible Deep Blue Kids Bible published in September has been enthusiastically received with strong endorsements from educators, pastors and parents. In November, The UMPH Board of Directors announced the launch of CokesburyNext, for its retail division. Cokesbury is expanding and enhancing products and services at Cokesbury.com, the Cokesbury toll-free Call Center (1-800-672-1789),

and Cokesbury Sales Representatives, many of whom will live in the communities they serve. As part of this transition, Cokesbury will close its 57 local stores by Apr. 30, 2013.

– Barbara Dunlap-Berg, UMCOM and Newscope, as reported in UMNewscope, vol. 40, issue 51; December 19, 2012

(UM) General Council on Finance and Administration (GCFA). GCFA Board Convenes

Helping the connection work differently was a major theme in the work of the Board of Directors of the General Council on Finance and Administration (GCFA), which met in Tampa in late November. Among the items on the agenda was approval of the GCFA spending plan for 2013, which includes a significant investment in services designed to further GCFA’s work in administrative ministry to the denominational agencies and annual conferences. Bishop Michael Coyner, president of the Board of GCFA said, “GCFA is working in a new way with our reduced board size and a clearer focus upon our mission. In particular, this meeting included a great spirit of cooperation and collaboration with the annual conferences, local congregations, and other agencies of The UMC.”

GCFA General Secretary Moses Kumar reported to the board his top three priorities for 2013, which include supporting the board’s effectiveness; increasing collaboration for administrative and financial ministries through shared services and stewardship; and continuing GCFA’s work in strengthening the global connection through shared support of apportionments. The board discussed ways of continuing to work collaboratively with the Council of Bishops and Connectional Table, and listening to and addressing the needs of annual conferences.

A presentation on the Permanent Fund of The UMC was made to the board. Established in the late 1800s, the Permanent Fund creates a consistent source of additional funding for ministries of the church. The World Service Fund is the main beneficiary of the Permanent Fund, receiving over \$3 million to fund ministry in the last several years. UMC Global Impact will become the new face of the Permanent Fund and will promote how the fund truly makes a global impact around the world.

In the first full meeting of the board for the new quadrennium, members and staff were guided through training and conversation on effectively working together, approved spending plans for the general agencies and other entities that receive general church funds, adjusted some investment policies and reviewed the audits of entities receiving general church funds. In other business, the board elected Scott Brewer as associate general secretary for Connectional Relations. The promotion expands Brewer’s responsibilities to work on services that seek to enhance ministries and streamline administrative processes, thereby saving time and resources throughout the connection.

– GCFA, as reported in UMNewscope, vol. 40, issue 51; December 19, 2012

(UM) Judicial Council. The UM Judicial Council has posted the docket for its April meeting on the council’s website. The meeting will take place in the denomination’s U.S. Western Jurisdiction, but the exact location has yet to be determined. Here is a summary of the issues.

□□ Docket 0413-1—IN RE: Review of a Bishop’s Decision of Law in the Desert Southwest Annual Conference Regarding the Resolution Entitled “Inclusiveness Resolution”

□□ Docket 0413-2—IN RE: Review of a Bishop’s Decision of Law at the Western Jurisdictional Conference Regarding the Relationship Between ¶ 2711.2 and the Resolution “The Sense of the 2012 Western Jurisdictional Conference”

□□ Docket 0413-3—IN RE: Review of a Bishop’s Decision of Law at the Northeastern Jurisdictional Conference Regarding Rescission of Resignation from the Episcopal Office

□□ Docket 0413-4—Review of a Bishop’s Decision of Law in the Congo Central Conference Regarding Mandatory Retirement Age for Bishops in Light of ¶¶ 50, 408, and 543.3

□□ Docket 0413-5—IN RE: Request from the Western Pennsylvania Annual Conference for a Ruling on the Legality of Certain Financial Actions and the Complaint Process Regarding the East Africa Annual Conference in Light of ¶¶ 258.4f, 413, and 613.13

□□ Docket 0412-6—IN RE: Request for a Declaratory Decision by the Northern Nigeria Annual Conference and the Southern Nigeria Annual Conference as to the Meaning, Effect, and Application of ¶ 405 in the Election Process of the West Africa Central Conference

For further information, contact F. Belton Joyner, Jr., 1821 Hillandale Road, Suite 1B, PMB 334, Durham, NC 27705; judicialcouncil@umc.org. – The Judicial Council, as reported in UMNewscope, vol. 41, issue 3, January 23, 2013

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I contend that for a nation to try to tax itself into prosperity is like a man standing in a bucket and trying to lift himself up by the handle. – Winston Churchill

Global Outlook

A government which robs Peter to pay Paul can always depend on the support of Paul. – George Bernard Shaw

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Africa. Support for two Ph.D. programs in Africa, an online peer-review journal, and exchange programs for both students and faculty are among the plans for meeting the needs, challenges and opportunities facing theological educational institutions in Africa. Fifteen participants from 10 African countries gathered for the second meeting of the Africa Association of UM Theological Institutions (AAUMTI). During the Sept. 2-5 meeting in Nairobi, Kenya, members of the association shared the vision of coordinating and guiding all UM theological institutions in Africa by offering relevant studies for Christian leaders of the African church. “Strengthening African theological institutions is liberating African churches,” said Dr. Kasap Owan, chancellor of the University of Mulungwishi and president of AAUMTI, who chaired the meeting. He noted that it was just one year ago that the association was officially launched at Africa University in Mutare, Zimbabwe.

The association supported two possible Ph.D. programs needed to educate faculty for the African institutions. One program would be offered in French at the University in Mulungwishi. Another program would be offered in English at Africa University, which is partnering with The Theological School, Drew University, on the program.

The 2012 General Conference established a \$5 million fund for Central Conference Theological Education and approved a commission to oversee it. The Rev. Rena Yocom, assistant general secretary for global theological education for the General Board of Higher Education and Ministry (GBHEM), gave the group information about the survey that each institution will be asked to complete to help the commission assess needs and establish priorities.

The French Course of Study is being used in new areas. Representatives from the North Katanga episcopal area gave a report on the most recent training session for local preachers, deacons, and laity. These resources will continue to be used as teaching resources in other annual conferences. A Course of Study for Portuguese-speaking Africa in Angola and Mozambique is expected to be finished soon, Yocom said. The English-speaking conferences are working with their bishops to write and publish contextual materials that will be relevant to the African churches.

Participants named common priorities for developing human and printed resources and strengthening opportunities for faculty development: a common approach in terms of infrastructure and Internet access in order to improve the educational system in Africa. The association talked of the importance of exchange programs within African theological institutions, both faculty and students. This would build trust and leadership across national boundaries and strengthen the theological curriculum.

The AAUMTI voted to establish a peer-review journal. The online publication will enable seminaries around the world to benefit from the insights of African Christian leaders. The Rev. Sidney Cooper from Sierra Leone will chair the editorial board. The goal is to have articles available in English, Portuguese, and French.

The association also exhorted its members to center on the quality of education in Africa so that individuals do not think they have to leave the continent for their training.

– Betty Kazadi Musau, North Katanga Annual Conference communicator, as reported in UMNewscope, Nov. 14, 2012

Angola. On Oct. 12, residents of Bom Jesus, Angola received 9,000 insecticide-treated mosquito nets to help protect them from malaria. The nets were delivered house-to-house throughout the community by a locally trained cadre of community educators who will also host a delegation of UMs from the U.S. and the West Angola UMC. The local NGO Africare has been a significant partner in planning this program, the first for The UMC in Angola.

The West Angola Annual Conference of The UMC, with the support of the Angola Ministry of Health, identified Bom Jesus as a place with a high incidence of malaria. Most of the population lives along the Kwanza River, where conditions are conducive to malaria and other diseases.

The Rocky Mountain Conference in partnership with the West Angola UMC provided the funds for the nets. Under the leadership of Bishop Elaine J.W. Stanovsky, both the Rocky Mountain Conference and the Yellowstone Conference have committed to raise additional funds for Imagine No Malaria.

This net disbursement honored Dr. Abel da Silva, a medical doctor who served as the health board coordinator for the West Angola Conference and practiced at the Bom Jesus Clinic prior to his death in 2012. The UM Committee on Relief (UMCOR) is providing financial and logistical support for this program. Africare, a humanitarian organization that provides logistical and distribution support, coordinated the distribution of nets. The entire project has been done with the full support of the Angola Ministry's National Malaria Control program in collaboration with the West Angola UMC.

– UMNS, as reported in UMNewscope, October 31, 2012

Haiti. *Hope of hearing restarts in Haiti*

A three-member team led by Gil Hanke, top staff executive of the General Commission on UM Men (GCUMM), conducted hearing tests on 415 children in three schools in Haiti, Nov. 3-10. During the trip, the team fit 30 children with hearing aids, and they made ear mold impressions for 55 children who will receive hearing aids and batteries when a second team comes to Haiti in January. Restarting the project required the coordinated efforts of the Methodist Church of Haiti, the UM Committee on Relief (UMCOR), UM Volunteers in Mission (UMVIM), the General Board of Global Ministries (GBGM) and Haitian schools. "Our primary focus was to return to the schools where we had worked in the past," relates Hanke. "We also wanted to help schools that were not getting any assistance from other sources."

Donated hearing aids of any kind and any condition or financial donations can be made to The Hope of Hearing; 3644 Burwick Place; Antioch, TN 37013. – UMNS, as reported in UMNewscope, November 21, 2012

Israel. With a spirit of ecumenism, the new Methodist Liaison Office opened on Oct. 11 in Jerusalem "to engage the world Methodist family in Christ's ministry of peace, justice, truth and mercy among all peoples living in this land in partnership with the Palestinian Christian community." The office is a partnership of the World Methodist Council, the Methodist Church of Britain and the General Board of Global Ministries (GBGM). [Note: If this is a true peace ministry seeking to pacify the land around Israel, but all too often, our church officials have a record of siding with those who hate and would destroy Israel. We need to be aware of any attempts to oppose the existence of this country. – AOM]

– UMNewscope, October 31, 2012

Liberia.

+ *New School Brings New Hope to Liberia.*

Liberia's newest school, the New Hope UM Women Elementary School in Mount Barclay, Liberia, officially opened for the academic year on Sept. 10. "This is a hopeful sign for the parents of the Mount Barclay community. We want to link parents with the Monrovia District Women in removing the children, especially girls from the streets," Madam Margretta Sieh, principal, stated. The eight-classroom school was constructed to provide educational opportunities for the children of the Mount Barclay community. Classes begin with 105 students enrolled. The institution, though new, is helping parents get kids off the streets.

"You might be the next president of Liberia or a doctor saving lives, or a teacher shaping minds of the children of Liberia," said Rev. Dr. Jerry P. Kulah as he encouraged the students beginning classes. Kulah, district superintendent of the Monrovia District Conference, called on the students to look up to God as they go through their lessons. Speaking on the theme, "Your Future is in God's Mighty Hands," Rev. Kulah said the school is a fulfillment of the mission and vision of The UMC in Liberia. The UMC has a long history of education beginning with the College of West Africa in Monrovia.

"The children of Liberia thank the UM Women of Decatur, Georgia for your help in providing an educational opportunity for our community," the Monrovia District UM Women's president said. Thanking the Oak Grove UMC of Decatur, Georgia for their partnership with Liberia, the women's president praised Zoe M. Hicks and Madge Watson for their role in coordinating the partnership between the two women's groups. The New Hope UM Women Elementary School was dedicated on Feb. 18, 2012 by Bishop John G. Innis of the Liberia area. The school has eight classrooms, offices for the principal and vice principal, the secretary and registrar. The building is also equipped with teachers' lounge and modern bathroom facilities. The school cost about \$100,000. This new school brings to 81 the number of UM schools in Liberia.

– UMNS, as reported in UMNewscope, October 3, 2012

+ This past summer Emory student Amanda Stine traveled with a fellow Emory University student and his family to Liberia to learn about the UM school system. Stine reports on what they discovered: "With each school we visited, one thing is constant: There is no money. No money to buy new supplies, no money to fix and update facilities, and no money to pay the teachers."

Before the country's civil wars (1989-2003), students were required to pay tuition to attend both public and private schools. This, in a way, leveled the playing field between public and private schooling. In fact, the majority of schools at this time were private, often mission-founded institutions. Since the passing of the new Education Reform Act in 2011, public school is now required and free for all Liberian youth. Only about one-third of the children of Liberia are attending school as they should be, according to Helen Roberts-Evans, director of the Department of General Education and Ministry for The UMC in Liberia. Teachers at public schools receive the equivalent of at least \$100 U.S. per month. In some villages, the only established schools are UM schools. This is most prevalent in extremely rural areas, where no government

schools are available. In these villages, very few people can afford full tuition, but the schools continue to run, using whatever income they can generate to pay the teaching staff.

Many towns the group visited included both a UM school and a public school, but parents chose to send their children to the UM school. When asked the reason, parents cited the importance of the child learning Christian morals or getting better discipline or more individual attention than at the government school. Several said they believe many public schoolteachers are concerned only about the guaranteed pay and that “the teachers here really care about their students.”

Only two of the schools the group visited had high schools for students to continue after the ninth grade. Many school leaders voiced their desire to add a UM high school for students to attend but acknowledged their inability to fund these projects. Some students are able to transfer to government schools after the ninth grade to continue with their high school education.

– Amanda S. Kline, for UMNS, as reported in UMNewscope, November 21, 2012

Nigeria. *Students Shot to Death in Apparent Boko Haram Attack.* Just after midnight, men in military uniform entered a residence hall and called some students by name. The students were marched out of their rooms and lined up outside the building. Some were shot, and others were [killed in other ways]... – Voice of the Martyrs; received by e-mail.

Sudan. The boys ranged in age from 5 to 11. There were 35,000 when they left the Sudan on foot, in search of a life free from violence. By the time they reached Kenya, more than half had died. James Makuac is one of the survivors. Now living in the United States, Makuac uses his artwork to tell about the painful journey of the Lost Boys of Sudan. A video of his work can be accessed through www.umc.org. – UM News in Brief – May 18, 2012

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If you don't read the newspaper you are uninformed, if you do read the newspaper you are misinformed. – Mark Twain