

THE SIERRA LEONE CONNECTION

Newsletter - Fall 2018



We thank and praise God for His grace and mercies. To our friends, we say thank you for obeying God's call to support His work through this ministry. Your prayers, financial and in-kind support enable us to continue to share His love with people who would have never heard. Your support is making a big difference in lives of the adults, children and the whole community of Baiima.

Sheila returned on October 2nd after spending four months on the mission field. Three short term missionaries; Scott Phillips, Christine Phillips and Antonio Harris, visited Sierra Leone this year and returned safely in August. Praise God. During this mission trip, SLCM observed the 10th anniversary of service to the Baiima community.

Short-Term Missionaries

Baiima was blessed to have three short-term missionaries visit them summer. Scott & Christine Phillips and Antonio Harris spent two weeks working with the teachers, church staff, children and church members in Baiima



Scott, Christine, Emmanuel, Sheila & Antonio

Upon arrival in Sierra Leone, the group spent a day in Freetown, the capital, before traveling to Baiima, which is about a 6 hour journey.

Scott & Christine designed all the buildings on the campus – the church, the primary and secondary schools and the teachers' quarters for free. They were very delighted to see the professional work they have done for the ministry.

Missionaries Presented to Chiefs

According to local custom, all visitors to the town should be presented to the chiefs. The day following their arrival in Baiima, the group was presented to the chiefs



Baiima Chiefs and Missionaries

and elders of the town. They were received in the traditional setting and both sides introduced members of their delegations. In the absence of the Paramount Chief, the Deputy Paramount Chief welcomed the missionaries and wished them an enjoyable stay in Baiima.

Each morning, after devotions, which is conducted by the students, one missionary gave a short advice to the teachers and students. Christine taught the students some new songs that they have continued to sing even in her absence.

A workshop on: “How God is in Every Subject and in Everything We Do” was conducted by Christine. It was very informative and was attended by all the staff.



Antonio, Scott & BCA

Antonio and Scott conducted the Friday weekly Bible study. They played soccer with the boys and interacted with the students every day.

Revival In Giehun

A revival was held in Giehun, a village three miles from Baiima. Scott delivered the message, Deacon Senesie interpreted in Mende. The small hall was overcrowded with people standing outside the building. We walked to and from Giehun. The tropical rain soaked us both ways, but we enjoyed the walk with the students, teachers and church members. Each missionary was given a local name: Christine is Baidu, Scott is Bockarie and Antonio is Musa.

To end the visit, the teachers, church members, Adult Literacy Unit and BCA students had a special musical farewell for the missionaries. A special song was composed for the missionaries by the music director.



BCA Teachers and Missionaries

The Missionaries spent eleven days on the field including the last two days in Freetown for site seeing. They visited the US Embassy, the lovely natural beaches and local markets where they bought souvenirs.

The Church

The church continues to grow with an average attendance of 160 people on Sundays. Majority of the numbers are children. We thank God that we see people giving their lives to Christ and we see some changes in their lives. Visitation is on Thursday starting at 4:00 pm. Bible study on Friday from 5:00 – 7:00 pm is attended by the teachers and students with few church members.

The School

All the students who sat for the National Primary School Examination (NPSE) passed with over 55 points above the national passing points. The last grade in the Middle school, JSS-3 (9th grade) was added. These students will be taking another public examination, Basic Education Certificate Examination (BECE), in 2019 to transition to the Senior Secondary School in the 2019/2020 Academic year.

The government has introduced free education for all government schools and has promised to increase the salary of the teachers. This caused us to lose some teachers, but God blessed us with experienced replacements. Five new teachers were hired as well as a Principal for the High School.

Kindergarten Graduation and School Closing Program

On July 16, 2018, the school held its closing program and the kindergarten graduation. The Adult Literacy Unit joined the ceremony. 27 students graduated and have started the 1st grade.

Adult Literacy Unit

The Adult Literacy Unit graduated 22 students who will start the second stage of their learning. All the adult students who never attended school can now spell, write and sign their names. They can even speak English by saying “good morning” and “my name is Mamie Vandy”. Most of them can recite the alphabet and count from 1 to 100 with a big smile.



Adults Students

Reflections on Sierra Leone

After landing in Freetown and getting acclimated, we were amazed by how beautiful the country was as we travelled to Baiima. Tropical and mountainous, Sierra Leone was very lush due to the rainy season. It was a blessing to see our architectural training come to fruition in the buildings we had designed for the mission in its infancy and as it grew. To see the children assembled for morning devotions and to interact with them during recess and over the weekend made quite an impression on us. They made us feel special by giving us Mende names - Baindu and Bockarie. Christine was able to lead the teachers in a workshop about integrating subjects and Scott was able to lead several Bible studies. We thoroughly enjoyed our time with Antonio, the Senesies, and Pastor Daniel's family.

Our favorite memory was our visit to Giehun. We left for the village around mid-afternoon, but soon it started to rain. We were quickly surrounded by girls from the school choir who escorted us to the village even though they were soaked. God answered our prayers and the rain stopped while Scott preached. Otherwise, they would not have heard him due to the zinc roof. Once we were finally finished, it was dark and it started to rain again. We walked the three miles home in the pouring rain, singing God's praises. The girls looked out for us and made it a special memory.

We took several important things away from our first time in Baiima. First was the generosity of spirit that the people

shared with us. From cooking for us, heating our bathing water, giving us gifts from their little, making special trips to see us, and looking out for us, we felt their genuine friendship and care. Second, we were impressed with the commitment of the pastor, teachers, and staff of the mission to their church, students, and work. Their dedication is not tied to their compensation, but to serving the Lord and each other. Finally, the unexpected blessing we got from the trip was seeing the smiles on the Senesies faces as they dropped us off the airport. We knew that they felt encouraged and validated for their ten-plus years of hard work, which made the trip totally worth it for us.



Sierra Leone may not have all the advantages that we have in the US, but they have family loyalty and pride for their country. The world felt smaller as we worshiped with the believers at the Baiima

Community Bible Church. We came home energized and full of ideas for supporting the Sierra Leone Christian Mission. We have increased our support for the ministry and hope to return to visit our friends there. The Senesies are doing a good work and we hope to help spread the word so they can continue to impact Sierra Leone for Christ.

Charity Walk
for the children of Baiima Christian Academy
Sierra Leone, West Africa
May, 2019