

# FAST FACTS ON THE UNITED METHODIST CHURCH OF LIBERIA

## THE COUNTRY

Liberia was bought by the American Colonization Society from six tribal kings in 1821 to promote a "back to Africa" movement among freed American Negro slaves. The first settlers arrived in 1822 and it became an independent country in 1847. Its constitution is modeled on the American pattern and its capital is named after American President James Monroe. Firestone, Goodrich and Uniroyal all had large rubber plantations there.



In the late 1970's the majority of people became dissatisfied with the elite so a reign of tribal unrest followed plunging the country into civil war. In the aftermath of this war, the Liberia U.M. church has devoted a great deal of its financial and personnel resources to recovery. Most people work in subsistence agriculture.

## THE LANGUAGE

This is an English speaking country with tribal dialects spoken in various parts of the country.

## THE CLIMATE

Liberia enjoys a tropical and very humid climate with November through March being the best times to visit since this is the dry season.

## THE UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

The United Methodist Church of Liberia, under the Episcopal leadership of Bishop John Innes, is the largest Christian denomination in the country. Methodism was planted in Liberia on January 7, 1822, the day the ship Elizabeth landed on the coast.

There are many mission stations located in Liberia including Ganta Mission, site of Ganta Hospital, a dental clinic, leprosarium, Nursing School and Miller-McAllister Church.

## GANTA UNITED METHODIST HOSPITAL

This was the first hospital in northern Liberia and only the third hospital in the whole country. It was also the first in Liberia to establish an ongoing leprosy and prosthesis program. It was well built, well equipped, well staffed and well run before the war, now its staff and supporters are struggling to rebuild and refurbish this historic institution.