

Liberia

Republic of Liberia

James G. Poitras, Area Coordinator

Albert Stewart, Field Superintendent

Population: 3,400,000

Area: 43,000 sq. mi.

Capital: Monrovia

Languages: English (official) and 20 ethnic-group languages

Religions: Traditional, 40%; Christian, 40%; Islam, 20%

Missionaries appointed to Liberia: Albert and Tegeste Stewart

Freed American slaves founded Liberia in 1822 and named its capital after the then ruling U.S. president, James Monroe. This Tennessee-size nation on the Atlantic Coast became Africa's first independent republic in 1847, modeling its government after that of the United States. Two fierce civil wars that destroyed the nation and decimated its population mars Liberia's recent history. More than 200,000 people are estimated to have been killed in the civil wars. A still unsettled domestic security situation has slowed the process of rebuilding the social and economic structure of this war-torn country. Donated food, clothing, and medical supplies through Compassion Services International have eased the burden for many of the Liberian saints. The November 8, 2005 presidential runoff election was won decisively by Ellen Johnson-Sirleaf, a Harvard-trained economist. Both the general election and runoff were marked by peace and order, with thousands of Liberians waiting patiently in the heat to cast their ballots. Johnson-Sirleaf is the first female head of state in Africa.

UPCI missions efforts in Liberia date back to 1924 and the ministry of A. J. and Pearl Holmes. The civil war has affected the UPC of Liberia. Properties

52 • Insight: The Foreign Missions Directory

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have been destroyed. Thousands of saints have taken flight as refugees; some have been killed. But through it all, the church continues to grow. The church now reports 25,172 constituents, 274 ministers, and 158 churches and preaching points. It operates a Bible school, four mission stations, and several day schools. Under Stewart's leadership, Liberia has reached out to neighboring and predominantly Muslim Guinea and planted two preaching points.