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Spring Ministry Update

Countering Hopelessness in Liberia



Hope Thrives in the Face of Adversity

Our goal for this year is to provide seeds and tools for one hundred gardens for one hundred families. **We have already funded twenty-six of them!** Work is underway, as some families are brushing and clearing their garden spots while others are tilling the soil and planting seeds.



The donations of seeds we received from Peachtree Church in Atlanta, and the tractor from Haddock Baptist Church are being put to good use! If all goes well, most of our gardens are expected to begin yielding in April.



Relieving the food crisis has motivated us to expand our work at the Coal Pot Queens (CPQ) Training Restaurant in Paynesville. CPQ offers job training, including cooking and baking classes that empower women who might find it difficult to get a job elsewhere. The program gets its name from the coal pot – a corrugated metal stove and grill that is fire-heated by using locally produced charcoal. Using this coal pot, the women cook and bake everything from scratch with locally produced ingredients.

This training program undergirds food security in this underserved community by offering nutritious meals at breakfast, lunch, and dinner time for modest prices at the restaurant. The program generates revenue to help fund some of the operating costs of the Coal Pot Queens Compound.



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We would like you to meet two people at CPQ who have been instrumental in its operations.



Mrs. Pamela Seward-Greene is the newest member of our team. She joined our team in January of 2021 and has incredibly transformed the food program. Pamela holds a Bachelor's Degree in Sociology from the United Methodist University with a minor in Public Administration, and brings more than five years of experience with local and international nonprofit organizations such as USAID. Pamela is a devout Christian and a gourmet cook who wants to mentor and empower women through cooking. As a result of her team's hard work and commitment, CPQ has increased revenue, as plates of food have doubled in price. Through her management, our food staff morale has increased and the community reaction has never been more positive.



Franklin Sirleaf teaches baking at Coal Pot Queens, helping students in the baking program

learn basic pastries like breads, cakes, cookies, and pies. Besides his cooking and baking skills, Franklin is a seminary student who is passionate about empowering others. Hospitality is definitely his gift. He also enjoys sharing his faith and leading devotions. Students in the baking program describe Franklin as creative, friendly, kind, and able to communicate across boundaries.

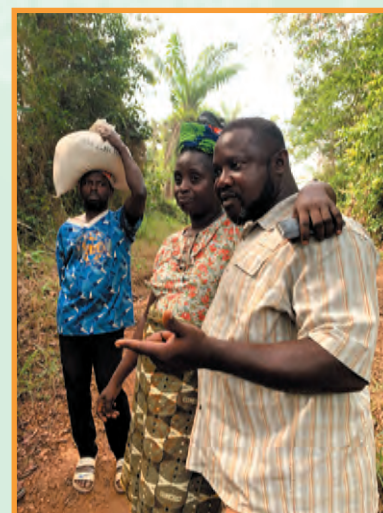


The Gardening Program not only supports CPQ with fresh produce, but also serves alongside farmers to help them become food secure.

We do so by providing seeds, tools, and training to enhance their skills. We also provide "Food for Work" to help recovering addicts cultivate gardens that they can use for food, sell the surplus to earn money for other living expenses, and maintain a sense of purpose.



Since the dry season (October to April) makes upland farming impossible due to arid soil conditions, farmers are now utilizing swamplands and waterways for growing vegetables. They are able to control moisture contents of the soil by digging channels and building ridges and mounds. These gardening techniques are considered general knowledge for most rural gardeners. The wetland garden season is expected to last from January to April.





The food crisis in rural Liberia has been temporarily relieved with the harvest of upland rice and vegetables in November and December of 2020. Farmers in Gbansue and Gou harvested, processed, and stored the surplus of their rice, cassava, vegetables, and other staples. This should last them through June or July of 2021. In the absence of electricity and refrigeration, farmers have preserved the excess of their harvest by sun-drying or smoking, and will ration their reserve until the next harvest is ready.



*"If you spend yourselves in behalf of the hungry and satisfy the needs of the oppressed, then your light will rise in the darkness, and your night will become like the noonday."
Isaiah 58:10 (NIV)*





Sustainable Liberia's dream of making rural communities food secure would have been impossible without the help of our partner churches and individuals. **Please know that we are grateful for the seeds, tools, and financial gifts.** Please do not forget to pray for our gardeners as they sow their individual seeds of hope. Thanks for your partnership in mission!

Looking to the Hills,

Brother Jessie

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