

## **Liberia**

The Lutheran Church in Liberia was founded April 28, 1860.

The Upper Susquehanna Synod is the only ELCA synod that is partnered with the Lutheran Church of Liberia (LCL).

First Lutheran Missionary to Liberia was Rev. Morris Officer.

Trained at Missionary Institute (currently Susquehanna University) David A. Day and his wife, Emily followed Officer upon his death.

Muhlenberg was the first Lutheran mission and school for this community along the St. Paul River.

During the Civil War (1990-2003) and years after, the USS sent over 25 containers of medical and school supplies for use in LCL churches.

Our involvement turned to work teams helping to rebuild areas destroyed by the Civil War and offering empowerment programs for women to learn a skill in order to help provide for their families and the communities in which they lived.

Most recently Hand in Hand tours were offered to help USS participants to see the history of faith in Liberia and accompany the mission and ministry of the LCL.

This year, Bishop Craig Miller and Pastor Karen Ward went to Liberia in April for an international conference sponsored by the ELCA. More information will be shared at Synod Assembly this year. Gifts were offered and an agreement was signed showing mutual support as companion synods.

## **Kirchenkreis Ansbach-Wuerzburg**

December 1996 our partnership with Kirchenkreis Ansbach-Wuerzburg (AWK) was formalized when the ELCA approached USS for a second companion synod. However, our roots go much further back as many of our congregations and its members came from Germany.

In 2001 the first official Partnership Agreement was signed by then Bishop Bezzel and Bishop A. Donald Main at the Bishop's Retreat in Wellsboro. The agreement was renewed in 2006 at the Hesselberg Bavarian Kirchentag.

In the past there have been youth and choir exchanges and the exchange of deans. There have been AWK camp counselors at Mount Luther and seminarians from Augstana-Hochschule at Neuendettelsau.

The covenant agreement of mutual support was signed last year at our assembly and sent to Kirchenkreis Ansbach-Wuerzburg. We have received their signature copy and it is on file at the synod office. This year, our German brothers and sisters continue to work in resettling thousands of refugees from Ukraine.

Our future hope in a post pandemic world is to have more opportunities to accompany our partners in AWK.

Check out our Global Mission page on the Upper Susquehanna Website under the "unity" tab.