



## JOINT MISSION TO FREETOWN, SIERRA LEONE JANUARY 29 – FEBRUARY 12, 2013

A joint mission of members of the FSSG Ex-pupils Association, New York Metropolitan Area and the Committee on Religion and Race of the United Methodist Church of Hempstead was undertaken to Sierra Leone from January 29 to February 12, 2013.

In January 2012, Mrs. Phebean Parker, a long time member of the United Methodist Church of Hempstead (UMCH), passed away. Mama Parker, as she was known to members of the Association, was an active alumnus of the Freetown Secondary School for Girls. Her daughter, Sarian Parker, also an active member of the Association, together with family members decided to hold the one year anniversary of the death of her mother in Freetown. The Chair of the Committee on Religion and Race saw a real connection between celebrating the memory of Mama Parker and helping her alma mater by way of a mission.

The Ex-Pupils Association has been actively involved in the rebuilding of the school after the country's 11-year tragic war. The Association partnered with UMCH in the building of a security wall and painting of the health. During the visit to the school, the UMCH donated school supplies to the students. The Association brought in basic medical supplies and presented cash award of \$150 each to 5 students. It costs US \$150 per year to educate a pupil at the school. This amount covers fees, uniform, school bag, school books, pens and pencils, lunch and transportation. For less than 50 cents per day the life of a girl from the school can effectively change. The quality of the education she receives is vital to successfully breaking the cycle of poverty. The physical conditions of their learning environment are also critical. Our partner intends to establish a long term commitment by providing ongoing support directly and through the FSSG Ex-pupils Association, New York Metro Chapter.

***"You educate a man; you educate a man. You educate a woman; you educate a generation."***  
— ***Brigham Young***

The Mission trip was a great success and exceeded the group's expectations. Activities undertaken included meetings with:

- our Alma mater's two principals, teachers and students
- Ex-pupils' local Association
- President Dr. Ernest Bai Koroma,
- Minister of Education, Science & Technology, Mr. Minkailu Bah
- Mayor Mr. Sam Franklyn Gibson
- Theological College

Participation at worship services at the Zion Methodist Church and College Chapel Church.

There was also observance of the Methodist Girls High School Thanksgiving Service.

Two radio talk shows were held with members of the mission participating as panelists.

The group's visit and its activities were broadcasted on TV and radio.