

A wonderful testimony from a previously War ravaged country – Liberia where the military was once one of the most feared and hated entities in the nation.

The 1989-1996 Liberian civil war, which was one of Africa's bloodiest, claimed the lives of more than 200,000 Liberians and further displaced a million others into refugee camps in neighboring countries. Entire villages were emptied as people fled. Children soldiers committed atrocities, raping and murdering people of all ages.

Liberia's civil war claimed the lives of one out of every 17 people in the country, uprooted most of the rest, and destroyed a once-viable economic infrastructure. The strife also spread to Liberia's neighbors, contributing to a slowing of the democratization that was progressing steadily through West Africa at the beginning of the 1990's and destabilizing a region that already was one of the world's most marginal.

The Second Liberian Civil War began in 1999 and ended in October 2003, when UN and US military intervened to stop the rebel siege on Monrovia and exiled Charles Taylor to Nigeria until he was arrested in 2006 and taken to The Hague for his trial. **By the conclusion of the final war, more than 250,000 people had been killed and nearly 1 million displaced.** Half that number remain to be repatriated in 2005, at the election of Liberia's first democratic President since the initial 1980 *coup d'état* of Samuel Doe.

http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/First_Liberian_Civil_War#Impact

From the Armed Forces of Liberia AFL-Chaplaincy comes the following report:

Overview

Like the AFL Chaplaincy, the Armed Forces of Liberia (AFL) is in its formative stage. The AFL currently consists of two Infantry Battalions and supporting Units. The 1st Battalion, 23rd Infantry Brigade was form on August 29, 2008 and the second in December the same year. The total strength of the AFL is about 2,085 troops.

Presently, we have three military installations where our troops are deployed. About 1,700 of them are stationed at the Edward Beyan Kesselly Barracks. The Chaplaincy operates from these Barracks. **Today, we give glory to God that the AFL leadership has recognized the need for Chaplain Support.** This recognition has opened many doors of opportunities for us to reach the military with the Gospel. We are now meeting three times a week for Sunday worship service, Bible studies and Prayer Service. We also have a unique fellowship for officers and Family Life programs.

God has blessed us with faithful volunteer soldiers. These men and women are truly a blessing to us. They are willing to go the extra mile to reach every soldier with the Gospel of Jesus Christ. What we need now is training for our volunteers to be more effective and efficient in carry out the Great Commission.

Because we are at the primal stage we will need all the help that we can get to reach our nation's soldiers and their families with the Good News. However, we are also at the stage to establish a firm foundation for the

future. In the next two years the AFL will have the strength of about 5,000 troops. Building the capacity of the Chaplaincy now will provide the road for the transformation of the Armed Forces of Liberia.

Activities

The Military Christian Fellowship continues to meet three (3) times a week for worship. We meet every Tuesday from 1945-2100 for our Life Development Service (Bible Study); every Thursday is Prayer Meeting from 1900-2030. Sunday Worship Service is from 0930-1100.

APRIL

In the month of April we visited few churches and Para-church organizations that have the desire to work with the Armed Forces of Liberia Chaplaincy; to help reach soldiers and their families with the Good News of Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. The Following are some of the churches and Para-Church Organizations we visited.

1. Great Commission Movement of Liberia
2. Christian Missionary Foundation
3. Philadelphia Central Church
4. The Nigerian Military Church
5. Liberia Military Christian fellowship

The purpose of partnering with these organizations is to expose our soldiers to the many programs offered by these different religious groups. We were also represented at the planning meeting for the 2009 Global Day of Prayer at the Philadelphia Central Church.

We were also able to establish and begin effective morning Devotion with the various companies and Units of the 23rd Infantry Brigade, Armed forces of Liberia. By the grace of God our interaction with the troops is helping to mold the minds of our soldiers and set them up for the mission. We are beginning to experience changes in the lives of our soldiers.

There were three (3) PAE graduation ceremonies. The Military Police Graduated on April 23, 2009. 92 Yankee graduated on the same day, and the Medic also graduated. We provided religious support and participated during these ceremonies.

Furthermore, we started working with the S5 Section (Civil Military Affairs) to help with Behavior Counseling and Character development for soldiers who need to be counsel. We were also able to visit Camp Ware (The Military Training Base) on two occasions to assess the Religious activities and minister to our soldiers in training.

MAY

During this period, we were invited by the Global Day of Prayer National Committee to serve on the planning committee for the Global Day of Prayer 2009. A team of two (2 Lt. Allison and Private Gboyah) attended the meetings and made some positive contribution to the committee. Our interaction with the Global Day of Prayer committee created a positive impression to members of the committee about the Armed Forces of Liberia. A good picture of the Civil Military operations was created.

From May 21-31, 2009 the AFL for the first time participated in the Global Day of Prayer. The EBK Barracks was used as one of the prayer centers for the GDOP. We were able to gather our soldiers every night from 20:00-21:00 to pray for our nation and the AFL.

In July 2000 God captured the heart of a South African Christian businessman, Graham Power, with a vision based on 2 Chron. 7:14. The vision had two clear instructions:

- To call Christians from all denominations for a Day of Repentance and Prayer.
- To challenge Christians across the rest of Africa to unite in a Day of Repentance and Prayer.

Today we are happy that the AFL was a part of this global event. We were together with 220 nations of the world praying to God for our individual nations and the world.

In another development, Rev. Dr. George M. Kiadii presented to us ten (10) cartoons of New Testament Bible to the Fellowship. We also had visiting us were six missionaries from the Victory Outreach Liberia.

Our morning devotion with the troops still continues, and by the grace of God our interaction with the troops is helping to mode the minds of our soldiers and set them up for the mission. We are beginning to experience changes in the lives of our soldiers. We have also established a Character Development Counseling program for our troops.



Chaplain Allison speaking to soldiers

CHALLENGES

1. Because of the 14 years of civil conflict the military lost trust and respect from the civilian population and therefore needs to restore this trust.
2. The government has not able to provide chapels for soldiers to worship. Our present place of worship is not conducive. Chairs are inadequate. Some soldiers stand around during worship service.
3. We are lacking complete Bibles and Hymnals for our soldiers.
4. Regulating our activities and operations has been a problem for us because of lack of computers (Lap Top) for records Management. The number of soldiers attending our services continues to grow, and speaking to them every week without a sound system has been difficult.

In His Service,
Dessaline Allison (Rev.)