

Antioch Baptist School Building Project – a summary

Multiple factors – historic, cultural, and even relatively recent national civil wars and health epidemics (Ebola and COVID-19) – have conspired to disrupt the educational system in Liberia, to the point of putting Liberian children (and adults, too!) at a crippling disadvantage in terms of adequate education and access to appropriate resources. Antioch Baptist Church is endeavoring to stand in the gap by seeking to provide quality education for children and young people – to improve the learning environment for close to one-hundred-fifty students, who have been meeting in cramped quarters, or outside, when the weather permits. Majority of the students are still meeting in cramped spaces (some classes combined) or under trees, where they are at the mercy of the elements, including frequent tropical thunderstorms during the rainy season, which lasts half the year!

In the 2021-2022 school year, Antioch Baptist Elementary and Junior High School had 146 students – 69 female and 79 male; and 24 teachers and staff – 9 female and 15 male.

One Great Hour of Sharing (OGHS) grants and local resources have resulted in the construction of the ground and first floors of a four-floor school building – providing eight classrooms. (Pictures below.) This is attracting additional students – which in turn creates a need for more space! A good “problem” to have.

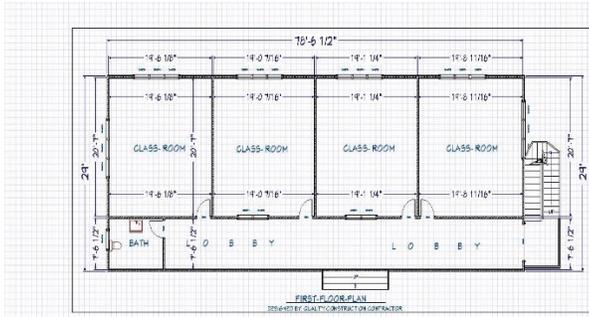
A grant of USD\$30,000 will provide for the construction of the second floor of the building – bringing the building to three-fourth completion of construction! This is critical to the long-term vision of upgrading the school to include Senior High grades and vocational training classes, thus enhancing its relevance to the local community and the nation. Completion of the construction will serve as leverage and motivation to secure funding for finishes and furnishings for this second floor – desks, chairs, tables, boards, plumbing, etc.

International Ministries has partnered with the Liberia Direct Baptist Missionary Conference since 2000; and we have prioritized this school building project out of our mutual commitment to the dignity, liberation, and productive citizenship that require a solid educational foundation and nurture.

This project has significant ownership and involvement from the community: local volunteers are critical to keeping costs down. A collaboration between parents, the community, the local church (which owns the school and is a member of the Liberia Direct Baptist Missionary Conference), and the national Ministry of Education will ensure a supply of qualified teachers and administrators. The impact of the school and church is noticed in the fact that the community is now being called the Antioch Community!



Wind-swept old classrooms



Architectural drawings of new school building



Construction and completed ground floor



Construction in progress on first floor



With balustrades