



“Who are the people in your neighborhood, in your neighborhood, they’re in your neighborhood?  
Oh, who are the people in your neighborhood?  
They’re the people that you meet as you’re walking down the street.  
They’re the people that you meet each day.”

## My Neighbors

Remember that ditty from Sesame Street?

Over the years I have developed relationships with a number of Liberian neighbors. These people are dear to me in a number of ways.

I first met **Helena Kesselly** when she was introduced to me at her fruit stand directly across from the Bible house. She always makes sure I have good fruit and vegetables. **Her fruit stand** helps support her, her mother, and her brother who watches it when she is in school. She shares living quarters with her older sister.

I will never forget the night I came in late from upcountry and needed some food. I walked to her stand, but it was getting dark. She was so worried about my safety, she left her stand to walk me home even though it was just a couple blocks away.

She is currently 21 years old and is training to be a **nurse**. She wants to gain more knowledge and not just sell things. She recently attended her capping ceremony in her new uniform.



*Helena and I by her fruit stand*

**Edward Kesselly Gbelay**, no relation to Helena, is from the Kpelle ethnic group. Helena is from the Loma. Edward is **guest house manager and also a security guard** where I usually stay in Monrovia. He is married and has five living children. The oldest is in the tenth grade. One of his challenges is keeping up with his children’s school fees. Edward has studied refrigeration and air conditioning as a trade and now he is in school studying travel, culture and tourism. When he graduates

in six months, he wants to go back to school and make himself marketable wherever life will take him.

Edward works hard. He was selected out of all the security guards to be the supervisor of the guesthouse. He has worked here for six years. He hopes to eventually become manager. As supervisor, he takes his work seriously. He makes sure all the rooms and bathrooms are clean and in working order. Under his watch, all the rooms now have private bathrooms with water heaters, some have AC, and all have a fan. He wants all the guests to be satisfied and to make reservations whenever they are in Monrovia. He enjoys his current job because it is a very supportive work environment. Several of the security guards have been able to get training in the trades just as he has.

**Florence Smith** some of you know because you have one of her beautiful bags. She along with Alberta brought me another bundle that they have sewn. Florence has been running the **Resurrection Bag business** for 12 years. She currently has 5 employees. The business venture started out to give women without other means of support a way to make a living for themselves and their children. At one time she had as many as 13 employees, all with an hourly wage which could give them a decent and sustainable living. Ebola, Covid and other factors have forced the business to decrease in size but not in quality and beauty. It would be great if she had a steady market outside of Liberia. The market in Liberia is very limited.



*Helena at her capping ceremony*



*Edward Kesselly Gbelay*

Florence has several of her own children, but she has taken many other children under her care. Currently, she is caring for 12 children, but counts up to 17 that she still assists. She always has a smile on her face and is grateful for all God has done for her.

**John Flomo** is another friend who **makes his living selling purses and jewelry**. He has computer bags and coconut shell bags, as well as beaded bags. He sells earrings, necklaces, and bracelets. Some are made from shells, others from wood, and others from plastic beads. He even has a purse that is made from a whole coconut shell, split in half which zips together. It's very clever. I'm not sure he makes these goods, but he is eager to sell his wares.

He hopes to buy some land soon. The house he currently lives in floods so much he has had to provide rain boots for all in his household. He has two young girls at home with him yet by the names of Blessing and Favor.



*John with his wares*



*Zinneh with supplies I brought for her schools*



*Alberta, seamstress, with Florence Smith*

**Zinneh Dossen** aka Mary Frances is a good friend that goes back many years to the time I first came to Liberia in 1987. When we returned in the 90's, she was one of the people who helped care for our children and would cook and clean so we could work.

While she was a refugee in Ghana, she took advantage of **teacher** training. She has two large schools she runs with over 800 children from kindergarten through 6th grade. She has one of the few schools which teach children to read with phonics rather than by rote. They can read most anything, and so they excel.

I have spent a few weekends with her. She is special because she is a Liberian mother to some of my children. She has been trying to get a visa to come and visit, but just getting an interview has so far proven impossible. She has one daughter who lives in Canada.

These are some of my neighbors. I am thankful for their service in this community and to me. I am thankful for your service as well as we continue to put God's word in the hands of people here.

*Becky*

## PRAYER REQUESTS

- Pray for my Liberian neighbors as they continue to serve the Lord in their respective roles. Praise for the blessing they are to me.
- for peaceful elections. People are concerned for safety as the time gets closer and there can be riots and ritual activities which put people in danger.
- Praise that Charles is on the schedule to receive his prosthetic leg. Pray that the transition to using it well will go smoothly.
- Pray for complete healing for Rev. Levi, Dan translator, recovering from a stroke. He is getting stronger and walks daily.
- Pray that all the teams will meet their translation goals this year.

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*Becky is YOUR HEART IN ACTION. She serves you as a consultant for translation teams in Liberia, West Africa by using your prayers and support to fulfill your desire to "PUT GOD'S WORD IN THEIR HANDS." Becky rejoices that she is part of your Lutheran Bible Translators team and values this special relationship.*