

Q&A about SIERRA LEONE

What is the Sierra Leone Initiative?

After several years of work, the Central PA Conference (UMC) established an agreement in 2006 with the Sierra Leone Conference to provide financial support for clergy in Sierra Leone. Difficult conditions after 10 years of civil war in this West African country haven't allowed local churches to provide adequate salaries for their pastors.

The flow of support from Central PA to Sierra Leone began with that agreement and continues today. Now 43 congregations from our conference are signed on as covenant partners with local congregations there, giving at least \$1,200 each year. All monies contributed to the Initiative through our conference are disbursed fairly among all needy clergy in Sierra Leone.

How is CHUMC involved?

We've supported this Initiative annually since 2006 by raising at least \$1,200 through a special missions project. Support for the Initiative can be given at any time of year by marking your contribution for **SL Initiative**. Thus far in 2009 we've given almost \$2,700.

In addition, CHUMC became partnered with Panguma UMC, located in a small interior town. Fred Clark visited Sierra Leone with a conference team in January 2009 but didn't get to Panguma itself. Through further letters and personal contacts, however, we've become much more aware of our sister church's needs for repair of its church and school buildings and for constructing a suitable home for Pastor Joseph.

What is Team Panguma?

This name has been adopted by CHUM's mission work team that's preparing to visit Sierra Leone in February-March 2010. Work team members include Fred Clark (coordinator), Shawn Berrier, Jim Foster, Beth Notarfrancesco, Carolyn Shover, Pastor Brian Sweeney and Mark Vickrey. They want to have direct contact with our sister church there, Panguma UMC.

Now our vision has expanded beyond these seven team members to become a church-wide team effort to meet the material needs of our sister church. A goal of \$25,000 has been set towards the repair and construction needs already mentioned. It's also named Team Panguma because everyone's help is welcome!

How can you support Team Panguma?

Team members have raised contributions towards their expenses for the 2010 trip, but about \$4000 is still needed by October 1. If you wish to complete their support, give an extra gift with your regular offering and mark it for **Team Panguma Trip**.

Our wider vision for helping our sister church becomes our focus for the weeks and months before the 2010 trip. Efforts are underway to achieve the \$25,000 goal. Go to www.teampanguma.org to learn more. Direct contributions may simply be marked for **Team Panguma Repairs**.

We also have a commitment to pray — for our team members and for Panguma UMC and Pastor Joseph!

