

**The
Pan African Orthodox
Christian Church**



Mission to Liberia ~ 2011

How It All Began

A Brief History of the Pan Orthodox Christian Church, Inc. (Liberia) As Chair of an international NGO which has satellites across Africa, Dr. Sophia Crocheron (who is a member of the mother Shrine of the Black Madonna in Detroit) had been working with volunteers in Liberia to firmly establish the organization there. However, Preston P. Jackson, then president of the organization in Liberia, sent the following email to her in September, 2009: "*request for assistance in finding a Christian Institution or Church that will be willing to assist the Power of Faith Evangelism Team in becoming a full time Church in Liberia that is to help the Christian Communities.*" Having worked with Preston since the inception of (Peace of the World International) POWI in Liberia in 2008, she was not shocked to receive such a request from him. He was one of the founding members of this 'Evangelistic Team' and felt strongly that it could do more if they were assisted/supported and functioning under a larger body outside Liberia.

With many emails and phone conversations, Dr. Crocheron approached several local and national ministries to work with the Liberia group; however, it was not until she introduced Preston and the Evangelistic Team through tears and compassion one Sunday morning to the members and leadership of the Shrine of the Black Madonna did any real progress take place. It was the following email that drove Dr. Sophia to make an emotional appeal; 30 March 2010:

"Hi Dr. Sophia, please be informed that The Power of Faith Evangelistic Team (PFET) in Liberia is depending on you to make all of the necessary contact with the Shrines of the Black Madonna of the Pan African Orthodox Christian Church in serving as a cover Church in West Africa/Liberia. Pastor John Sumo and all of the members extended greetings to you. Thanks, Preston P. Jackson"

Due to the earlier appeals to ministries, since November 2009, the officers of the Power of Faith Evangelistic Team had already been prepared to present themselves as a serious body of people looking for affiliation. They had been requested to compose many official documents including a listing of officers, their church work background and position held in the ministry. Even a 1 year, 3 year and 5-year plan had been designed along with an annual budget per the request of one of the ministries. The membership at this earlier stage numbered 90 people. On 2 April 2010, a formal letter was composed by Dr. Crocheron with supporting documents and was sent to Cardinal Mbiyu Chui regarding the Power of Faith Evangelistic Team in Liberia. In the period leading up to their introduction to Cardinal Chui, this band of Christians had gone through much frustration and sacrifice.

May 6, 2010, an email over the signatures of Pastor John Sumo and Preston Jackson was sent to Cardinal Mbiyu Chui with a Draft copy of Articles of Incorporation for a PAOCC (Liberia) whose officers at the time were Pastor John Sumo, Thaepan Jarbo, Preston Jackson, and Naomi Bodeyour. The email read in part: *"After reading more information's about the PAOCC, we were opportuned to have prepared an Articles of Incorporation that is to be use in registering the Institution under the Not-For-Profit Business Act of the Republic of Liberia. The draft Article attached was prepared according to the information received about the PAOCC and in line with the Liberia Constitution under the Business Act of 1977 that is highly honor."* The name of the proposed not-for-profit corporation to be formed was **"Pan African Orthodox Christian Church (PAOCC), Inc."**

The Evolution of the PAOCC ~ Liberia

Cardinal Mbiyu Chui has been corresponding with the officers of the PAOCC Liberia (via email, text, telephone, etc.) since May regarding its direction, growth, program and ministry development. In all of these area's the church has seen remarkable progress. A youth ministry was instituted in July 2010, providing educational and religious training for over 200 children and young people. Also a Women's Ministry was formed in July which is developing in relation to the Women's Ministry at Shrine #1 in Detroit. In August of 2010, Pastor John Sumo informed me via email that he would be unable to continue to serve as the Head Pastor for the church, because of other responsibilities, and thus with the approval of Cardinal Chui, Pastor Debah was named to take his place. During the month of October the church has been shadowing our Anniversary Month celebrations here in the U.S.A., and incorporating some of the events into their Worship services. Meanwhile preparations are being made to formally present the P.A.O.C.C. to the Liberian local and national authorities, as well as the community at large. The PAOCC of Liberia is currently looking to identify land for possible purchase for use by the church which includes: church building, offices and meeting space, as well as space for youth programs.

The threefold purpose of our mission to Liberia (January 8th – 23rd) is to:

- 1) To formally induct the former Power of Faith Evangelic Team as a Shrine of the Black Madonna of the Pan African Orthodox Christian Church of Liberia
- 2) To meet with the church officers and implement a year-long ministry plan for 2011 which includes the major religious observances, and well as plans for church growth, purchasing land/building/meeting places, and other related ministry goals.

- 3) To identify sister organizations both governmental and non-governmental that we can collaborate with regularly, to make an impact upon the well being of Liberian youth (particularly health and education) in Monrovia, and to serve as community outreach opportunities for the PAOCC of Liberia, and to introduce the PAOCC to the local and national community.
- 4) To provide some financial assistance to enable the church to build a solid foundation both physically and spiritually, as it moves into the future.

Itinerary for Liberia Mission

January 8th ~ Departure for Liberia from Atlanta, GA

January 10th ~ Arrive in Monrovia, Liberia/Informal Reception

January 11th ~ Meetings with church officers/local officials

January 12th ~ Visit historic sites around Monrovia

January 13th ~ Meet with Pastor/and with members of the Presidents Cabinet

Mr. Walter Gweningale - Minister of Health & Social Welfare

Mr. Amara Konneh – Minister of Planning & Economic Affairs

Mr. Olubanke King Okerele – Minister of Foreign Affairs

Ms. Etomonnia Tarpeh - Minister of Youth & Sports

Mr. Eugene Shannon – Minister of Land, Mines & Energy

Mr. Othello Gongar – Minister of Education

Ms. Florence Chenoweth – Minister of Agriculture

January 14th ~ Visit other cities around Liberia/additional meetings if needed

January 15th ~ Workshops with church officers/meet with church ministries

January 16th ~ Worship Service/Formal induction ceremony/Unity Feast

January 17th ~ MLK Observances

January 18th ~ Workshops with church officers

January 19th ~ Visit and meet with ngo's, schools and civic organizations

January 20th ~ Closing session with church officers/depart for Ghana

January 21 -22nd ~ Visit local organizations, site seeing, historic sites in Accra

January 23rd ~ Departure for USA

*Although this is the outlined itinerary, it is entirely flexible in regards to the days/times these things take place.