

## Thomas Schirmmacher visits Liberia's oldest church

Subsequent to his speeches at the 32nd General Assembly of the Liberia Council of Churches, Thomas Schirmmacher, Associate Secretary General of the World Evangelical Alliance for Theological Concerns, spoke with the leaders of almost all churches in the country and with several politicians. He also visited the oldest church in Liberia, the [Providence Baptist Church](#), built in 1835, which was severely damaged and threatened with decay by shelling during the civil war.

In 1839 Liberia's independence was declared in this church, where the two chambers of parliament initially met. Since 1975 the church has been a "national shrine", but Liberia has not yet provided assistance for renovation costs for the destruction during the 1989 civil war.

The Providence Baptist Church was founded by Lott Cary, a slave of a Methodist pastor in Virginia until 1813. In 1821 he came to Liberia as a liberated slave from the USA, founded the Providence Baptist Church, built the preceding building of today's church in 1825, helped to develop the colony into an independent state, and became eventually Prime Minister, but died shortly afterwards in 1828.



## Appointment as Honorary Bishop of the Pentecostals

The following Sunday, Schirmmacher preached in the main church of the Apostolic Pentecostal Church International in Brewerville in Montserrado County, the administrative district of Liberia which the capital belongs to. In a solemn ceremony he was appointed Honorary Bishop with the new name "Bishop Sengbeh". 'Segbeh' means 'strong' in the Mende language. This included a traditional costume of the region.

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