

...to prepare God's people for works of service, so that the body of Christ may be built up.

CONSTRUCTIVE WORD

The Esala Prayer Letter—July 2021

...attaining to the whole measure of the fullness of Christ. Ephesians 4:12-13



DEAR FRIENDS,

“Little by little, a little becomes a lot” (Tanzanian proverb), and that’s what I hope has been happening to my knowledge base these past few months as I learn all kinds of “little” things. In April I took my first official trip as the Regional Director for Southern and Eastern Africa. I traveled to Tanzania where I met our partners at the Bible Society of Tanzania and at the East of Lake Victoria Diocese (ELVD) which is part of the Evangelical Lutheran Church of Tanzania. Jim Laesch, whose job I am learning, traveled with me to coach and guide. We joined Dr. Michael Megahan who had gone a week earlier to lead a training workshop with the translation team on Ukerewe Island; he is the consultant guiding the Kerewe project. LBT missionary Andrew Olson is also on that team but was in the United States on furlough during our visit. Overall, this was a fantastic trip.



Here I'm with the Kerewe translation team, Jim Laesch, and Dr. Megahan. Their enthusiasm and commitment to translation is inspiring. They have managed to engage the community and are always looking to build this important relationship.

*Joy in the journey,
Sarah (for Nathan too!)*

P. S. By the time you read this, Nathan will have given a presentation on his dissertation topic to missionaries at Concordia Mission Institute, which we attend annually with others in Lutheran Bible Translators and Mission of Christ Network.

Then in May Jim and I set out for Botswana. The goals were similar—to introduce me to partners and to help me see and hear first-hand what’s going on in the projects and with the missionaries. It was a joy getting to know the Grulke and Beckendorf families better. It’s amazing how being in a place suddenly makes sense out of so many things.

I’m going to let the pictures and their captions share most of this letter’s highlights. Your prayers are greatly appreciated as I learn and grow into this job. Thank you so much for your support!



Getting places was half the fun. We took a ferry to Ukerewe Island which is located in Lake Victoria. Can you find it on a map of Tanzania? I also got the opportunity to drive on the left side of the road in Botswana—a first for me.



Regional directors do all kinds of things. While in Tanzania, we recorded a podcast episode with Bishop Gulle from the ELVD for LBT's *Essentially Translatable* podcast.



The Beckendorf family lives in northern Botswana, and Tim works with the Khwedam project. Along with meeting the translation team and community advisory committee, I got to see their home set-up and what kinds of hobbies they enjoy. Getting a glimpse of all these types of things help me understand and support them and their team better.



In this picture Missionary Carl Grulke is playing the Weyyi audio version of the Gospel of Mark from an app on his phone for Dr. Lydia Saleshando. This is a milestone she has been looking forward to for years.



Jim and the general secretary of the Bible Society of Botswana, Ofenste Maruping, hold newly published copies of the Setswana Bible. Bible Societies are important for distributing Bibles within a country in the various languages as well as assisting translation projects directly with their expertise in publishing, translation software, and consulting.



I learned a new game from the Grulke boys--*Go Nuts for Donuts*. My time with the missionary kids was a highlight.



Lutheran Bible Translators