

WINTER 2019

the messenger

FEATURE ARTICLE

Next verse
same as the first!

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FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

A matter of understanding

Welcome to *The Messenger*, Lutheran Bible Translators' quarterly news magazine. I trust you will enjoy the new look and format. It's a fresh appearance in which we'll still share the stories of the impact God's Word has on lives throughout the world.

Would you know Jesus if you hadn't been able to access Scripture in your own language? Are you fluent enough in a second or even third language that the richness and fullness of the Bible in those languages would be clear to you?

A local translator in Botswana said: "Thank you to all those who donate to Lutheran Bible Translators. If it were not for you, we could be reading these Bibles

which we do not understand." What a huge and telling statement. Reading Scripture shouldn't be a confusing and challenging chore that leads to frustration and misunderstanding. Our Father "wants all people to be saved and to come to a knowledge of the truth." (1 Timothy 2:4)

One of the reviewers for the Gola translation in Liberia described her life without Christ. "Even though I had heard about Christ, it was like I was living without any guidance or purpose. I didn't understand He wanted to have a personal relationship with me every day. When I heard John 3:16 read in my own language, it touched my soul and my heart and caused me to take Christianity seriously."



DR. MIKE RODEWALD,
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

I can't state it any plainer than this lady in Liberia. Having Scripture in your own language matters.

Thank you for serving with us so that all may clearly understand what God is saying to us in His Word. Pray that God's Word might go forth. Give that others discover the joy found in Scripture. It's meant for all. **m**

A Bible that clicks

Khoekhoegowab is the world's most spoken of the Khoisan group of languages, famous for using click sounds as consonants. Centered in Namibia, the 200,000 Khoekhoegowab people can also be found in neighboring Botswana and South Africa.

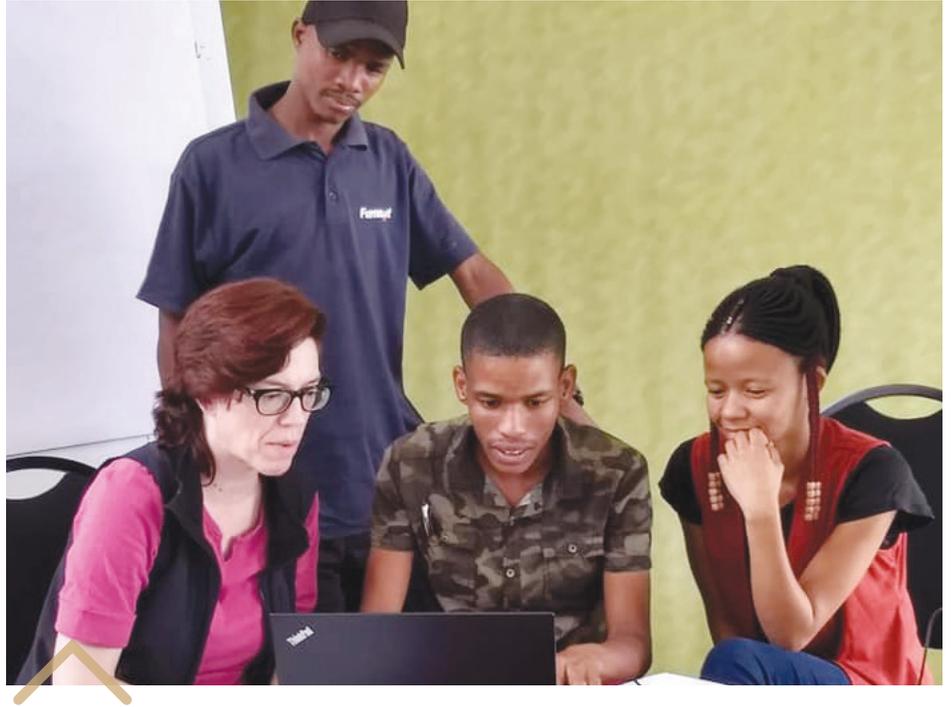
The translation of the Khoekhoegowab Bible has been completed. But many speakers of the language struggle with reading. The Bible Society of Namibia—with the assistance of Lutheran Bible Translators' missionary Rob Veith—is developing an audio version of the Bible to be dedicated alongside the print version in late 2019.

The production of audio Scripture recordings is a time-consuming task. Actual recording is done for about four hours each day. Editing to clean up mistakes

“

Actual recording is done for about four hours each day. Editing to clean up mistakes or unexpected noises can take another eight hours.

”



Eshinee trained Khoekhoegowab readers to use recording software to assist in the editing work.

or unexpected noises can take another eight hours. That makes for twelve hour days plus weekends for any catch-up work. “If you are thinking this sounds like a grueling schedule,” Rob says, “Then yes, it is!”

Since Rob's visa was for only three months, he trained some of the readers to also be recordists so that the work can continue even while he is working on

other projects in other countries. Rob's wife, Eshinee, who serves as training coordinator, joined Rob in Namibia for a few weeks to help with the training process.

The Bible Society of Namibia expects the audio Bible will be very well received. **m**

FEATURE STORY



Next verse same as the first!

My name is Zangapse Jeremiah. **I was a thief.** When people weren't home, I would come and take away their honey, peanuts, even goats. Several times, people have brought me before the village chief, but I denied the accusations even though it really was me."

You don't know Zangapse, but you may have contributed to what happened to him next.

"One day I was passing by and I saw people gathered. I went to see what was happening. **I found they were listening to a little machine that speaks my language.** I was astonished and I also sat down to listen. **As I listened, I started to feel uncomfortable.** When I heard the passage which said you should never steal, it really touched my heart.

"After the portion to listen to for the day was finished, the group leader asked if anyone was touched. I got up and told all that I had done in front of the group. From then on **I have stopped stealing**

and I am regular at church and at the Scripture listening group."

This is just one of a countless number of stories from people who have been impacted by God's Word. That's what Bible translation is all about. **This complicated process, challenging to execute, is at heart about people.** People reaching out for God's Word and the people who join together to make sure they receive it.

In the next 18 months, people in Nigeria, Liberia, Cameroon, Namibia, Ethiopia and Botswana will receive Scripture in their languages.



A new project is beginning in Tanzania while several others will reach milestones in the next 18 months.

Some will have revised Scripture translations, others will have access to audio Scripture, churches will have lectionaries to help organize and focus worship. **None of these projects would have reached completion without your prayer and financial support** and those who committed their time, talents, and resources to bring Scripture to people who need it, desire it, and will cherish it.

There's also a new translation project starting up in Tanzania. You may remember reading

about it in the last *Messenger*. In just a few months, missionaries Andrew and Alexis Olson and their two young daughters will travel to Ukerewe Island in Lake Victoria to join the Kerewe translation team.

An old song has a shout out that says, *next verse same as the first!* **If you want to sum up how Lutheran Bible Translators serves in mission, you could follow the same line of thought.** Our mission to translate God's Word for people who do not have it in their languages is the same

as it has always been. **And the need for active participants—be they missionaries, consultants, prayer partners or those who give gifts—** is absolutely essential if Scripture is to reach those who are eagerly waiting to welcome it into their families and communities.

Bible translation. It's complicated. But also simple.

We respond to those reaching out for God's Word in their language. Hearts can change. Thieves can reform. The Church grows. **m**

“

As I listened, I started to feel uncomfortable. When I heard the passage which said you should never steal, it really touched my heart.

”

The day of salvation

This year the Gola people shall celebrate the dedication of the New Testament in their language!

About 182,000 people in western Liberia and Sierra Leone speak the Gola language. Liberia was one of the first countries where Lutheran Bible Translators worked, and Gola one of the first language projects.

Translation began in the 1970s. Illness and then civil war slowed progress. The project took on new life in 2014, with Lutheran Bible Translators' missionary Becky Grossmann serving as translation advisor to a new Gola translation team.

A Gola speaker said, "We cannot go through life thinking that tomorrow I will change and give my heart to the Lord. We think that we have so much time in which to make our lives right with the Lord, but the Word of God says, 'Today is the day of salvation.'"

Give thanks that the Gola people will soon have the Words of salvation to have and hold in their hearts.

m



Impatient for God's Word



Paul met the class enrolled in the new program at Mekane Yesus Seminary.

"He wanted the Bible in his mother tongue so badly he tried to start the translation himself," writes Paul Federwitz, IT Coordinator for Lutheran Bible Translators. "He soon realized he did not have the necessary knowledge and training."

Paul was referring to one of the students enrolled in the four-year Bachelor of Theology program at Mekane Yesus Seminary in Ethiopia. Introduced last year, the new program is a joint project between the seminary and Lutheran Bible Translators. It combines a concentration in Biblical languages

with studies in Bible translation. "This man already has a teaching degree in chemistry but has now returned to school to earn a degree from the seminary so that one day his people will be able to read God's Word in their language. He was one of forty who applied for the fifteen available openings!"

The visit to the seminary was a highlight for Paul and several colleagues from Lutheran Bible Translators, who traveled to Ethiopia to meet with partner organizations. The group also spent time in the southern region of the country, where

most of Lutheran Bible Translators' work is done in partnership with the Southwest Synod of the Ethiopian Evangelical Church Mekane Yesus, the largest Lutheran church in the world. Over the course of two days, they visited seven translation projects.

"It was especially exciting to speak with the Konso translation team," says Paul. "The Konso full Bible is nearing completion. People are anxious to receive it since several reprints of the New Testament have sold out." **m**

Birthdays

March

- 1 Lisa Beckendorf, Botswana
- 2 Levi Federwitz*, Ghana
- 9 Maila Davies, Papua New Guinea
- 12 Lydia Derrick*, Cameroon
- 13 Tilahun Menedo, International Offices
- 18 Selah Olson*, Tanzania
- 22 Hannah Federwitz*, Ghana
- 24 Danny DeLoach, United States
- 26 MaryJane Grulke*, Botswana

April

- 13 Tim Beckendorf, Botswana
- 17 Annaka Esala*, United States
- 20 Elliot Derrick*, Cameroon
- 25 Tom Holman, United States
- 26 Nancy Burmeister, United States

May

- 6 Carl Grulke, Botswana
- 9 Berhanu Ofgaa, Ethiopia
- 11 Mike Rodewald, International Offices
- 12 Tobias Kuhn*, Cameroon
- 13 Nathan Federwitz*, Papua New Guinea
- 13 Julia Federwitz*, Papua New Guinea
- 15 Janet Borchard, Papua New Guinea
- 15 Michelle Miller, Southeast Asia
- 15 Emily Wilson, International Offices
- 17 Ali Federwitz, Ghana
- 19 Wesley DeLoach*, United States
- 22 Angela Tayloe, International Offices
- 25 Mike Kuhn, Cameroon
- 28 Ken Bunge, United States

*missionary kid

Gift designations

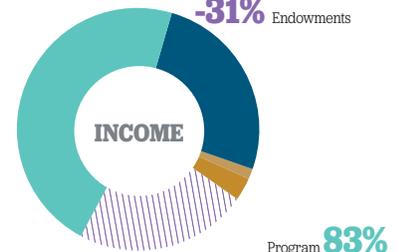
We make every effort to honor donor designation preferences, however, all gifts are subject to the discretion and control of Lutheran Bible Translators.

FINANCIALS

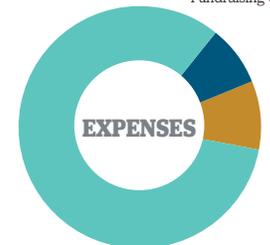
October 1—December 31, 2018

| | Unaudited 4th Quarter | Unaudited Year-to-date |
|------------------------|--------------------------|---------------------------|
| INCOME | | |
| Designated | \$ 836,617 | \$ 2,424,940 |
| General (Undesignated) | 501,469 | 1,223,853 |
| Restricted Funds | 60,701 | 995,789 |
| Bequests | 139,149 | 870,812 |
| Endowments | (366,852) | (302,321) |
| TOTAL INCOME | € 1,171,083 | € 5,213,074 |
| EXPENSES | | |
| Program | € 875,010 | € 3,400,189 |
| Administration | 88,870 | 372,229 |
| Fundraising | 94,312 | 365,795 |
| Total Expenses | 1,058,192 | 4,138,212 |
| NET TOTAL | \$ 112,891 | \$ 1,074,861 |

General (Undesignated) **43%** 5% Restricted Funds
Designated **71%** 12% Bequests
-31% Endowments



Program **83%**
General & Administration **8%**
Fundraising **9%**



Pray for:

Cameroon > Pray for the continued progress on the new **Bible House** that is being built in Ngaoundéré. It will be used for training and as a central location for translators in Cameroon to meet and collaborate.

Ethiopia > Pray for the **students in the Bachelor of Theology in Bible Translation program** at the Mekane Yesus Seminary as they finish up their first year.

Liberia > Praise God for the consecration of the **LIBTRALO** headquarters administrative wing. Pray for continued fundraising and construction of their auditorium that will be used for teacher training and income generation. > Pray for **the formation of literacy classes** in the Dan and Maan communities, the registration of students, and for a successful first phase of classes beginning the end of March.

Nigeria > Pray for a successful checking of the book of Exodus for the **Kukele translation team**. > Pray for the **Mbe and Obe language groups** as they continue to show the Jesus Film in their languages throughout this year.

Sierra Leone > Pray for **successful training for the Limba language** centers and churches, that their volunteer teachers will feel equipped and ready to implement new literacy classes in their locations.

Zambia > Pray for the **Nsenga team** as they wrap up the review of the drafted books of Joshua, 1 Kings, and Psalms.

United States > Pray for **Emily Wilson**, LBT mission mobilization coordinator, as she continues to plan for Crossroads 2019, a trip designed to introduce prospective missionaries to life overseas.

the messenger

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Volunteers assisted with the assembly of this mailing!

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Lutheran Bible Translators, an independent mission group founded in 1964, is the only Lutheran organization dedicated to making God's Word accessible to those who do not yet have it in the language of their hearts. LBT actively recruits Lutherans to serve as Bible translators, literacy or vernacular media specialists and support missionaries. The LBT ministry is supported by the prayers and contributions of fellow Christians. It is not subsidized by any church body or sponsoring agency.

Executive Director: Dr. Mike Rodewald



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BEAUTIFUL FEET CONFERENCE

Not your typical dinner

Since 1997, the Concordia universities have gathered together annually for the Beautiful Feet Conference, its name inspired by Romans 10:15. Each year, mission-minded college students and faculty travel to one of the Concordia schools to be challenged: “How do we live a missional life in Christ?”

Lutheran Bible Translators has attended the conference since its inception to share about the need for Bible translation ministry and to mobilize students for participation in God's mission. Held at Concordia University Texas, the opening evening of this year's event featured a mission dinner hosted by several Lutheran Bible Translators' staff, led by Emily Wilson, mission mobilization coordinator. With over 200 students and staff in

attendance, Lutheran Bible Translators had the floor!

The evening was designed to be experiential. Participants enjoyed ethnic food from Africa, Asia, and Papua New Guinea. Guests were required to follow unique cultural traditions for dining (such as only eating with the right hand, eating very small bites, etc.) “Lutheran Bible Translators' dinner event was a great way to expose students to the cultural awareness needed to serve successfully in

any mission setting,” Concordia University of Nebraska's Director of Global Opportunities Julie Johnston Hermann commented.

The audience was challenged with a translation simulation, a quiz of proverbs from Botswana, and sharing stories of lives impacted by Scripture in the heart language. Throughout the course of the event, attendees saw the impact of heart language in missions. **m**



LBT has an ongoing need for career missionaries serving internationally! To learn more, please contact recruiter@lbt.org.

Students enjoyed ethnic food and a presentation from missionaries and staff.