



Lutheran Bible
Translators

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the messenger

Summer 2022



LUTHER'S NEW TESTAMENT

1522 - 2022



“As I follow
along with
the written
Word in front
of me, it truly
touches all of me
— my mind, heart
and spirit.” - Jan G

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FROM THE CORNER OFFICE

Dear Reader:

Without the Word. That is a dark place.

Our human condition makes up answers in the absence of truth. I served in Africa among a remote people group. They had answers passed down from previous generations. Just consult a local religious specialist who, for a fee, would provide ritual and make 'medicine' to help you achieve your desire – a wife, children, or good fortune.



DR MIKE RODEWALD
LBT Executive Director

German people were also in a dark place **five hundred years ago**. They went to church but did not know the Word proclaimed through Latin. **They did not understand**. So they made stuff up. Priests and laity conspired for solutions to problems. They used the blessed elements from the Eucharist to put under beds and protect from evil and sickness. **They wanted solutions** but made up answers.

Then Luther's translation of Scripture into common German was published in 1522. The **Light of salvation** given through God's grace became understood. Darkness lifted and their **understanding of God's message** through German changed their world.

It is the same today for wherever the story of God's salvation through Jesus is available and understood through our own languages. **Many are still waiting. Put God's Word in their hands too.**

In Christ,

Dr. Mike Rodewald

CEO and Executive Director

On the cover, Bibles illuminated by candles bringing light into the darkness.

LIVING WATER LIVE



2 Thessalonians 3:1 ESV

“Finally, brothers, pray for us, that the Word of the Lord may speed ahead and be honored, as happened among you.”

Modern Western culture often does not engage with God’s Word outside of church services despite easy access to Scripture. Living Water – the first word-for-word translation of the English Standard Version (ESV) Bible into song – has great potential to reawaken Western culture to the richness of Scripture in their daily lives and provide a new appreciation for how nonliterate communities feel when experiencing Scripture in their heart language for the first time.

The Living Water translation celebrates the 500th anniversary of Martin Luther’s translation of the New Testament into the common German language. English speakers experience Scripture like never before and begin to understand the abundant joy of Lutheran Bible Translators’ program partners who, for the first time, receive God’s Word in their hands.

LCMS FL-GA District President Greg Walton heard Grammy award-winning Khristian Dentley and

pianist/producer Pete Prochnow share Living Water as the Gospel lesson during worship at an LEA Administrators event in Orlando. He shared, **“When Khristian finished you could have heard a pin drop. People were mesmerized by the beauty and artistry of hearing God’s Word sung this way. It is a tremendous tool for our modern day to share the truth of God’s Word, trusting that His Word will not return void, but accomplish everything He purposes it to do! We are grateful for this new tool to proclaim the Word of God!”**

Another special event, Living Water Presents Hope Darst, was held in an outdoor amphitheater, not only blessing the over 500 attendees and volunteers, but pedestrians walking nearby as well. Attendee Mueller said, “March 26 was a lovely night experiencing Lutheran Bible Translators’ Living Water Project: hearing the Scriptures through an innovative methodology. This art of singing the WORD was a powerful experience for me.”

Living Water Live is part of a year-long celebration of Bible translation. You can partner with this movement. Share **LivingWater.Bible** so others can experience Scripture.



REPORT

500 Years Ago

the Reformation had begun.

But little had changed for most who spoke common German. Picture a man looking for the right relic or how to say the right prayers thinking, “If I can only know my mother isn’t suffering anymore, I can have peace.” Or a girl to her priest, “I bought this paper from a traveling preacher. Is it enough for salvation?”

Martin Luther understood such lost and confused German speakers. He had not found peace as a priest trying to work out his salvation. Luther spent his waking hours keeping mind and body from desiring or thinking evil. He confessed each sin of thought or action, “Father, forgive me for my unworthy thoughts, words, and deeds!” He tried to sleep but would think of one more thing. Then another. Sleep was illusive. So was peace. It was Luther’s study of the Bible that showed him Jesus – not as a confusing or angry judge. But as Jesus is revealed in Scripture – forgiving, compassionate, and loving.

But most Germans could not know that the all-powerful God, who created and completed all things, was on their side. That message was not available to them.



Luther had been declared a heretic and outlaw by 1521. He was abducted by friends and locked away in Wartburg castle 'for his own safety'. Luther was shocked and disoriented but not for long. The Bible declared Jesus who, "When He saw the crowds, He had compassion for them, because they were harassed and helpless, like sheep without a shepherd (Mt 9:36)." Luther felt compassion for the lost and confused 'sheep without a shepherd' who understood only common German, and Luther moved to put God's Word in their hands.

The task was formidable. Luther wrote, "I have undertaken to translate the Bible into German. This was good for me; otherwise, I might have died in the mistaken notion that I was a learned fellow. All those who think that they are learned out to so some such work (E. Plass, What Luther Says: 105)."

The New Testament translation was published in 1522. It galvanized the Reformation. Everyone could understand the message of salvation in Scripture. They could know the truth of relationship with God without barrier.

Many are still without the Word through their own languages – lost and confused. Picture a man in Africa looking over parched land, "We are losing a lot of cattle and the rain still doesn't come. How do we know if we've prayed enough?" Or a lady in fear, "I got into an

The Reformation



ion
1522

argument with my neighbor and he put a curse on me. He says I will lose my baby by morning!”

Change the century and the players, but lost and confused is still the same.

God’s Word translated in 1522 and God’s Word translated today speaks into those who are lost and confused. The truth is the same yesterday, today and into the future. His story of salvation through Scripture reaches those who have not heard. Scripture through our own language brings light and life to all who live in doubt, darkness, and fear.

Prayer partners, missionaries, church partners, language communities and supporters all over the world serve together to put God’s Word in the hands of people in the language they best understand. The vision expressed by Luther continues, “[I shall] translate the New Testament into German... I wish every town would have its interpreter, and that this book alone, in all languages, would live in the hands, eyes, ears, and hearts of all people (LW 48:356).”

You play a part in that vision. God’s Word is a great gift. He calls you into His story of salvation. He uses your gifts and prayers so that others might also know that story through Scripture in their own languages and know the joy of their salvation. And the Reformation continues.

m.



God's Word for **EVERYONE**

The Khwe people lived off the land, traveled with the herds, the men hunted, and women gathered. The modern Botswana government has removed the right to hunt in the name of conservation, leaving the men lost and searching for purpose. Many turned to drinking. The HIV/AIDS epidemic hit hard, with a 30-60% infection rate in the villages. This is the heartbreaking world into which Lutheran Bible Translators Missionaries Reverend Tim and Lisa Beckendorf entered over sixteen years ago.


Their goal was unique: they would create a panoramic Bible translation to show the broad view of God's story as woven throughout scripture in both the Old and New Testaments. To show that God's Word is for everyone.

Translation would be a challenging project. Khwedam, the language spoken by the Khwe people, is a unique and fascinating language, which incorporates four clicks, a language style thought to be derived from the sounds of the Kalahari Desert where Khwe people traditionally hunted. The language has also never been written down. Throughout these challenges your generosity and prayers made it possible to bring the story of salvation!



Reverend Tim Beckendorf began translation by taking daily walks with villagers asking them to name plants and trees. Slowly and painstakingly, he created the phonetic alphabet. From there, he gathered with elders in the community, listening to and recording stories. He not only learned the sounds but the culture as well. The culture is one of survival and power; sin was an especially challenging concept to convey since trickery and deception are often celebrated in fables. Please continue to pray that the panoramic Bible translation will shine into the darkness and fear.

The project is nearing completion after years of countless consultations with local guides and language experts, and the kindness of financial supporters! Excitement grows in the community, as the printed panoramic Bible should be available before the end of 2022. Audio Scripture is already being shared with remote villages by team members. Having the Bible in print will transform their community from a marginalized minority into a recognized language and people. Your continued prayers and gifts will give their language recognition on earth and give the Khwe people the knowledge that God speaks their language.

Put God's Word in their Hands!
visit go.LBT.org/Khwedam 

LIGHT to Darkness

“The people who walked in darkness have seen a great light; those who dwelt in a land of deep darkness, on them has light shone.”

Isaiah 9:2

The people of the Sabelto* language group have been walking in darkness. They have been displaced, persecuted, and resettled in refugee camps. Their community languages have evolved, and previous Bible translations are no longer understood.

Aramaic Bible Translation (ABT), a partner organization with Lutheran Bible Translators, has been working diligently to bring light to the Sabelto people. Each language group has received a translation of the New Testament within the past five years. Your prayers and support made this possible.

Progress slowed with the COVID pandemic as funding and the ability

to visit the various communities declined. Translation is getting back on track, but ABT still needs much support to finish the Old Testament translation. By giving to the Sabelto project, you walk alongside the ABT translation team to put God’s Word back into their hands.

Paul speaks, in Romans chapter one, of his longing to visit fellow believers so that they may be mutually encouraged. United States-based head translators long to be reunited in person with the local Sabelto translators after a two-year hiatus due to the pandemic. In-person community testing is a vital piece of accurate and accessible translation. Executive Director Rob Hilbert shares, “Travel should be possible now coming up, at least we pray that this is the case.” Please pray that travel remains open, and translators may safely return to the Middle East!

Sabelto pastors anticipate the joy of sharing Old Testament liturgy and Bible studies without linguistic explanation. Help them walk once again in the light!

Your partnership with the Sabelto Old Testament translation puts God’s Word in their hands! Visit go.LBT.org/Sabelto.

**Pseudonym being used due to a sensitive situation.*



Lutheran Bible
Translators

ESSENTIALLY TRANSLATABLE

with Rich & Emily

Celebrate Bible translation and the 500th anniversary of Luther's New Testament with guest interviews from around the world: missionaries, international partners, and church leaders.

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LBT.org/podcast

President Thomas Egger
Concordia Seminary St. Louis
Episode 55

President Lawrence Rast
Concordia Theological Seminary Fort Wayne
Episode 35

Member Information

Lutheran Bible Translators (LBT) bylaws define who may vote and **give you a chance to participate in nominating and electing the Board of Directors** as well as participate in changes to the LBT bylaws (charter document).

To see if you are eligible to be a voting member please visit lbt.org/members.

Here you will also find:

- Information about the 2022 election for the Board of Directors
- Details on how to request nomination and voting information for the 2022 election
- Information about the Annual General Meeting

Thank you for participating in mission through your membership.

Birthdays

June

Eshinee Veith
Claude Houge
Audrey Grulke*
Jennifer Kunkel
Elijah Wagner*
Jo Ann Megahan
Chris Pluger
Sarah Rudowske

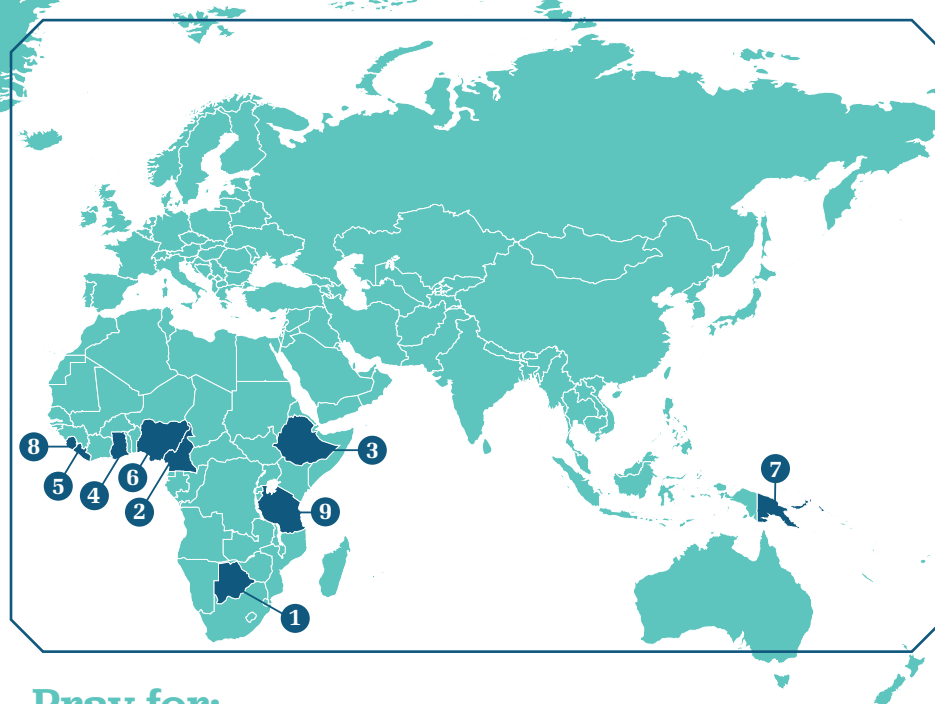
July

Aili Esala*
Jim Kaiser
Isaiah Wagner*
Josiah Federwitz*
Nathan Esala
Stephanie Luetjen
Andrew Beckendorf*

August

Susan Kaiser
Valerie Federwitz
Tim Miller
Ruthie Wagner
Kara Kuhn
Rich Rudowske
Katie Hogan
Mariah Olson*

**missionary kid*



Pray for:

1 Botswana

> Pray the **Khwedam and Shekgalagari Scripture** printing and distribution would not be affected by the international delays caused by the pandemic.

2 Cameroon

> Pray for the **Subula* translation and literacy** teams that God will guide their work.

3 Ethiopia

> Praise God for the dedication of the Bible translation training building on the campus of **Mekane Yesus Seminary**.
> Pray for Paul and Ali Federwitz and their family as they transition to serving in Ethiopia.
> Pray for Deanne Gochanour as she begins service at Bingham Academy.

4 Ghana

> Pray for the Komba translation team as they make progress in the **Wisdom literature of the Old Testament**.

5 Liberia

> Pray for the Bandi translation team as they test **Old Testament drafts** through community reviews.

6 Nigeria

> Pray for **God's blessings upon the Gokana translation** program as they work through the first five books of the Old Testament.

7 Papua New Guinea

> Pray for the process of making corrections to the book of Genesis in the Ipili translation program.
> Pray for the **Waria Multi-language Bible translation** program as they encourage community involvement.

8 Sierra Leone

> Pray for the Themne translation team as Historical books of the Old Testament are team checked.
> Praise God for the consultant checking progress that has been made in the **Mende Old Testament translation program**.

9 Tanzania

> Pray for **Tiffany Smith as she prepares** for her departure to serve alongside the Datooga language community in Scripture engagement.

United States

> Pray for new missionaries, **Rev. Tim and Deaconess Erin Schulte**, as they begin pre-field training.

Worldwide

> Praise God for the **500th anniversary celebration** of Martin Luther's New Testament into German.

**Pseudonym used due to a sensitive situation*

Gift Designations

Contributions are solicited with the understanding that Lutheran Bible Translators has complete discretion and control over the use of all donated funds. Lutheran Bible Translators will attempt to honor gifts preferenced to support particular workers, but the final decision on the use of all funds rests with the organization.

Lutheran Bible Translators is a 501 (c)(3) tax-exempt organization and your gift is tax deductible to the extent allowed by law.

To view Lutheran Bible Translators' financial reports, visit lbt.org/financial-accountability.

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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
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Executive Director: Dr. Mike Rodewald



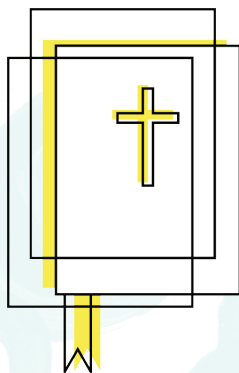
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