



Lutheran Bible  
Translators

# Proclaim to Every Nation

## The Plugers in Ethiopia

Christmas 2023

### Meet Ephrem

This is Ephrem. He is from the south-west part of Ethiopia. His mother tongue is Zargulla.

Ephrem has always been interested in ministry, and has always wanted to help translate the Bible into his language. By the grace of God, it “just so happened” that the year Ephrem decided to enroll at Mekane Yesus Seminary was the first year that Bible Translation courses were offered. Our program was a perfect fit!



Chris was Ephrem’s teacher for two classes in his final year of the program. Ephrem was a top student, graduating #2 in his class out of all of the Bachelor of Theology students in the school (not just in the translation program)!

After graduation, Ephrem was retained by the Seminary as a faculty member-in-training. He is now the coordinator for the translation program, working closely with Chris and others to develop and teach classes to the next cohorts of students. He helps place students with BT projects for their internships, tries to keep Chris organized, and is also a full-time MA student!

Ephrem’s heart is still with his Zargulla people, and he still wants to see a Zargulla Bible Translation project begun. He has started collecting Zargulla stories, proverbs, and folktales as part of the research for his MA Thesis, which Chris will supervise.

His thesis topic involves studying Zargulla narratives to use as a model for translating Biblical stories into Zargulla. He will begin with the parable of the Prodigal Son, crafting a translation that has the proper “discourse markers” of a natural-sounding Zargulla text so that the message of that powerful story comes through clearly, accurately, and naturally to Zargulla speakers.



Please pray for Ephrem and his wife Ruth, who were married this past summer. Your prayers and support are such a blessing to Ephrem (and all of our BT students), as well as the communities who, through their labors, will have access to God’s Word in the languages they know best.



## Out and About

In October, we had the chance to attend a continuing education conference in Rwanda hosted by a group of confessional Lutheran missionaries serving all over Africa.

The main academic topic of the conference was what we can learn from the past generations of missionaries — not only *how* they did their work, but perhaps more importantly *why* they did their work.

For example, most Christians today see the “Great Commission” of Matthew 28:18-20 as a key text about mission work. But we learned that some Christians, even in the time of the Reformation, did not see the Great Commission as binding on the church. They counted that command fulfilled at Pentecost! But now the shift to “Great Commission” ministry motivates and inspires countless Christians to “make

disciples,” not only in foreign fields but in their own back yards. We were blessed to travel to beautiful Rwanda to enjoy fellowship and scholarship (and some nice shopping!) with other missionaries.



We also got to spend Thanksgiving week at a beautiful campsite outside of Addis in the mountains. The clean, quiet and chilly woods were a welcome getaway from hectic city life.



## PRAYER REQUESTS

- For Ephrem and all of the students in the Bible Translation program at Mekane Yesus Seminary
- For all languages still waiting for Scripture
- For peace and security in Ethiopia

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The Plugers

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*Then I saw another angel flying in midair, and he had the eternal gospel to **proclaim** to those who live on the earth—to every nation, tribe, language and people.*

—Revelation 14:6