



the messenger

Spring 2024

60 YEARS of

Partnership

Driving Bible Translation Forward Together



Learn more on page 4

PRAYER IS THE STRATEGY

"God is able to do immeasurably more than we could ask or imagine."
-Ephesians 3:20

We lay our plans at His feet, trusting in His will and inviting His guidance into every aspect of our mission and operations. Through prayer, we find the wisdom to navigate challenges and the assurance that every language community will experience the transformative power of God's Word in the language they understand best.

PRAY FOR:

As Lutheran Bible Translators seeks to increase the number of language communities we are engaged with to 144 (135 currently), we pray for good relationships with partners and open doors to new communities.

1. Botswana:

Celebrate with the Bakalagari language community. After 15 years of partnership with Lutheran Bible Translators, they are dedicating the Shekalagari New Testament.

Pray the Bakalagari language communities will be equipped to engage with Scripture in the language they understand best.

2. Ethiopia:

Pray for the ongoing translation work in seven language communities within the Southwest Synod of the Ethiopian Evangelical Church Mekane Yesus and for doors to open in the other language communities waiting for translation to start.

Pray for the 20 Bible translation and mission students finishing courses in preparation for graduation from the Mekane Yesus Seminary in June.



3. Papua New Guinea:

Praise God that delegates voted to affirm the Evangelical Lutheran Church council's decision to make Bible translation an official ministry of the Church.

Pray for Dr. Nathan Esala, Dr. James Maxey, Steven Ttopoqogo, and Stephen Moyaru as they support Bible translation efforts at the national church level.

4. Liberia:

Pray for good communication between the Grebo groups and subgroups, many who do not yet have God's Word available in their language. Pray for Adjunct Missionary Jim Laesch as he shares his insights as a Lutheran Bible Translators partner.

Pray for the Maan and Dan translation teams striving to complete Bibles this year.



Members of the Suena language translation teams working through Genesis and Exodus.

MORE THAN WORDS

Konso Full Bible Dedication

page 2

Ministry Technology

page 3

Partnerships

page 4-5

Become a Partner

page 6

Field Notes

page 7

Member Information

page 8

New Website

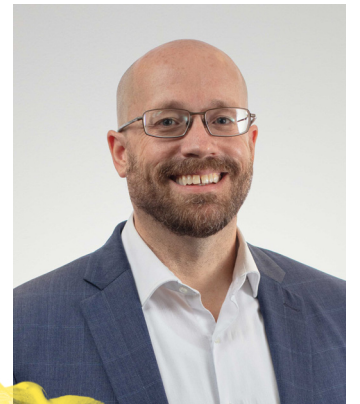
page 9

FROM THE CORNER OFFICE

Dear friends:

2024 MARKS THE 60TH ANNIVERSARY OF LUTHERAN BIBLE TRANSLATORS.

It's a milestone that prompts both reflection and anticipation. Over the years, we've witnessed extraordinary changes, from the unprecedented global connectivity afforded by the internet to technological advancements that push the Bible translation movement forward. Yet, amid these transformations, our core mission has remained unwavering: **to make God's Word accessible to all in the language they understand best.**



REV DR RICH RUDOWSKIE
 Executive Director + CEO

We also recognize a fundamental truth – the success of our work depends on partnership. From organizational collaborations to the relationships we forge with community leaders and the faithful support from individuals like you, every milestone is a testament to the power of coming together with unified purpose.

We are profoundly thankful for God's guidance over these six decades, marveling at what has been accomplished while eagerly anticipating future endeavors. The wisdom of an old African proverb rings especially true for us: "If you want to go fast, go alone; if you want to go far, go together." Thank you for walking this journey with us. Your prayers, your support, and your partnership make all the difference. Together, let's continue to bring the light of God's Word to every corner of the world.

In Christ,

REV. DR. RICH RUDOWSKIE

Executive Director + CEO

On the cover, Paul Federwitz and Mr. Gumachew Kussie, who works for the EECMY and is a Konso speaker. The Bibles in their hands are the result of nearly a decade in partnership.
Photo credit: Seth Hinz

Konso Full Bible Dedication in Ethiopia

From Dr. Jim and Susan Kaiser

“Sunday, February 11th was a very special day. Konso Christians gathered at Mekane Yesus Church in the central town of Karat to celebrate the dedication of the first completed Bible in their language. On the welcome banner at the Bible Inauguration celebration was written Psalm 126: 3, “The LORD has done great things for us and we are filled with great joy.” We joyfully celebrate the completion of the full Bible for the Konso people and continue to pray that the Word of God will do its transformative work in their hearts.

Visit lbt.org/konsobible to learn more.



Konso community members receiving newly printed Bible at the Bible Inauguration Celebration on February 11th, 2024.

Celebrations

Evangelical Lutheran Church Papua New Guinea formally includes Bible translation in their ministry as a national church body.

Ethiopian Evangelical Lutheran Church Mekane Yesus declares 2024 as “The Year of the Bible”

Ministry Technology

...easier collaboration throughout the translation process.

Providing essential technology for our Bible translation partners equips them to not only work more efficiently and effectively, but allows for easier collaboration throughout the translation process.

Laptops enable teams to be mobile, traveling for workshops and community checking while keeping all of their resources and communication tools on hand.

Built-in Batteries allow work to continue even if electricity is intermittent.

Phones allow teams to document their translation projects and the impact of Scripture engagement in their communities.

Having the right tools not only builds momentum, helping translators get projects up and running quickly, but also improves the quality of translation and Scripture engagement materials.

As translation team members are trained to use their laptops and phones, they in turn share their knowledge with new team members and neighboring language community programs. lbt.org/techfund



PARTNERSHIPS AND THE CHURCH

During this interview, Dr. James Maxey and Dr. Nathan Esala share their eagerness for this new exploration of partnership between Seed Company and Lutheran Bible Translators.

Listen at lbt.org/podcast.





PARTNERSHIPS

DRIVE THE BIBLE TRANSLATION MOVEMENT FORWARD

In an era when technological advancement and global connectivity are at their peak, Seed Company and Lutheran Bible Translators have embarked on a groundbreaking partnership to accelerate Bible translation and accessibility around the globe. This alliance is underpinned by a shared vision of **MAKING GOD'S WORD ACCESSIBLE TO THOSE WHO LACK IT IN THEIR NATIVE LANGUAGE.**

Former translations coordinator for Lutheran Bible Translators, Dr. Nathan Esala has joined Seed Company as part of the strategic alliance between the two organizations. He and James Maxey, director of strategic



"ACCELERATE BIBLE TRANSLATION AND ACCESSIBILITY AROUND THE GLOBE."

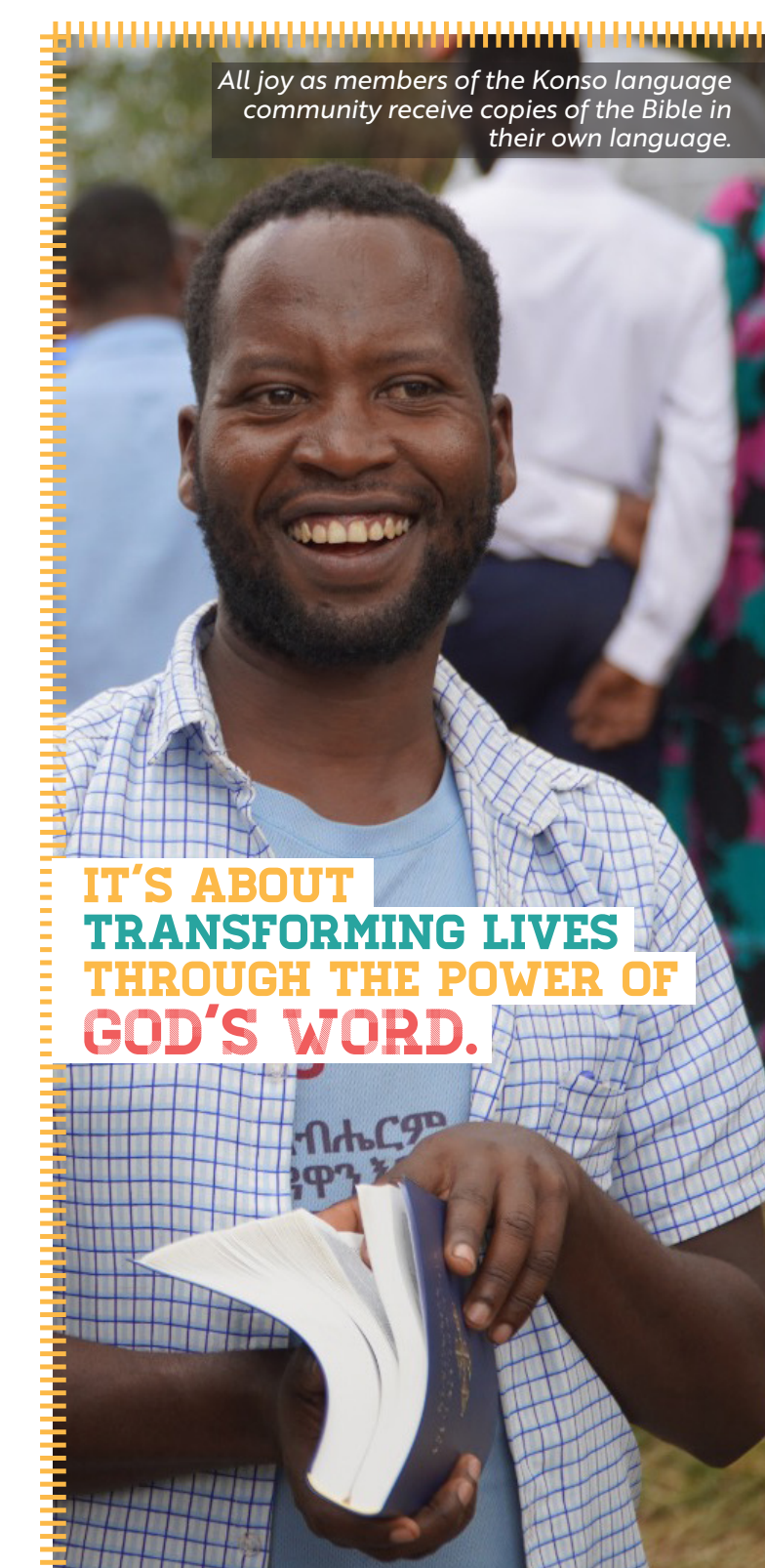
alliances at Seed Company, are the embodiment of the collaborative spirit that drives this partnership. Their work focuses on leveraging each organization's strengths – **LUTHERAN BIBLE TRANSLATOR'S RICH HISTORY AND DEEP CONNECTIONS WITH LUTHERAN CHURCHES WORLDWIDE AND SEED COMPANY'S EXPERTISE IN FOSTERING EFFICIENT CONNECTIONS BETWEEN LANGUAGE COMMUNITIES AND DONORS TO ACCELERATE BIBLE TRANSLATION.** Seed Company, known for its strategic use of technology and data to streamline translation processes complements Lutheran Bible Translator's long-standing tradition of meticulous, community-engaged translation work. Together, we are pioneering new methodologies that respect linguistic diversity while embracing the efficiencies of modern technology.

ENSURING THAT THE LIFE-CHANGING MESSAGE OF THE BIBLE IS ACCESSIBLE TO ALL...

These collaborative efforts underscore a commitment to not just coexist but to thrive together, leveraging our unique strengths for a common goal. **AS WE JOIN FORCES, THE PATH TO TRANSLATING GOD'S WORD INTO EVERY LANGUAGE BECOMES CLEARER AND MORE ATTAINABLE.**

The significance of this partnership goes beyond the practicalities of translation. It's a testament to the power of unity within the Christian community, embodying the principle that more can be achieved together than apart. Through their alliance, Seed Company and Lutheran Bible Translators are setting a new standard

for mission-driven collaboration, ensuring that the life-changing message of the Bible is accessible to all, in every tongue, in every nation. This partnership is not just about translating words; it's about transforming lives through the power of God's Word. **m.**



All joy as members of the Konso language community receive copies of the Bible in their own language.

IT'S ABOUT TRANSFORMING LIVES THROUGH THE POWER OF GOD'S WORD.

How You Can Become a Partner in the Bible Translation Movement

Pray

“I have so much to do today that I shall spend the first three hours in prayer.” -Martin Luther

As we celebrate 60 years of ministry, we look forward to the future and the work that God has prepared in advance for us to do. We know that He is already working in places where we have not yet arrived. So, in all things, in planning and preparation, we pray.

Help us reach our goal of 2 million prayers raised over the Bible translation movement this year.



lbt.org/pray



Give

“But I trust in your mercy. Grant my heart joy in your salvation, I will sing to the LORD, for he has dealt bountifully with me.” -Psalm 13:6

Being grateful for what God has given us opens our hearts to be generous in our giving to others. Consider partnering with Lutheran Bible Translators through recurring monthly giving. Your ongoing support helps with anticipating funding needs and planning.




lbt.org/give



Advocate

Scripture is more than words: it brings hope, life, and transformation.

Learn more about the inspiring work of one of Lutheran Bible Translators’ youngest advocates: Lucy. When Lucy heard that there were people living without access to God’s Word, she knew that she could do something to help. With the support of her parents, Lucy started fundraising for the Kerewe-speaking community in Tanzania. 



lbt.org/project/lucy



Field Notes

In January, Lutheran Bible Translators’ missionaries traveled through Papua New Guinea to visit language communities and attend the Evangelical Lutheran Church PNG Conference.

1 MEETING LUTHERAN FRIENDS ON THE ROAD

As the team drove up the mountain to the ELC PNG Conference, there were various stopping points along the way where local fresh fruit, snacks, and cold sodas could be purchased. During the trip, a bus with a Lutheran flag passed by the Lutheran Bible Translators team and when the American Lutherans and PNG Lutherans recognized each other, they began to call out, “See you in Ialibu!” (Ialibu was where the conference was held.)




2 FLOODING CREATES UNIQUE CHALLENGES

During the trip from Lae into the SIL highlands of PNG, the Lutheran Bible Translators team encountered significant flooding caused by heavy seasonal rains and worsened by a dam breach along the Markham River, making many roads in the area impassable. The team was very grateful for the blessing of a 4WD vehicle sent by the Bible Translation Association to pick them up and bring them safely to their destination.



3 SHARING A VISION IN THE ZAKA CIRCUIT

The Lutheran Bible Translators team visited with the president and other leaders of the Zaka circuit who shared their vision for Bible translation as well as some of the challenges they are facing. Lutheran Bible Translators supports three language projects in the Zaka circuit: Suena, Yekora, and Zia. 



MORE THAN WORDS

87.2%

38.3 MIL
as of 2/20/24

60 YEARS OF GOD'S PROVISION

In 2024, we celebrate not only the 60th anniversary of Lutheran Bible Translators but also the **5th and final year of the More Than Words Campaign**. At 87% funded, we eagerly anticipate finishing the campaign strong and looking forward, with the Lord's never-failing guidance, towards the work ahead. We join with our ministry partners around the world to push the Bible translation movement forward.

Your partnership is a blessing to this ongoing mission. We thank God for your dedication and faithful support through both your financial giving and time spent in prayer.

Member Information

Lutheran Bible Translators 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 Lutheran Bible Translators bylaws (charter document).

To see if you are eligible to be a voting member please visit [LBT.org/members](https://lbt.org/members). Here you will also find:

- Information about the 2024 election for the Board of Directors
- Details on how to request nomination and voting information for the 2024 election
- Information about the Annual General Meeting

Thank you for participating in mission through your membership.

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 preferred to support particular workers, but the final decision on the use of all funds rests with the organization.

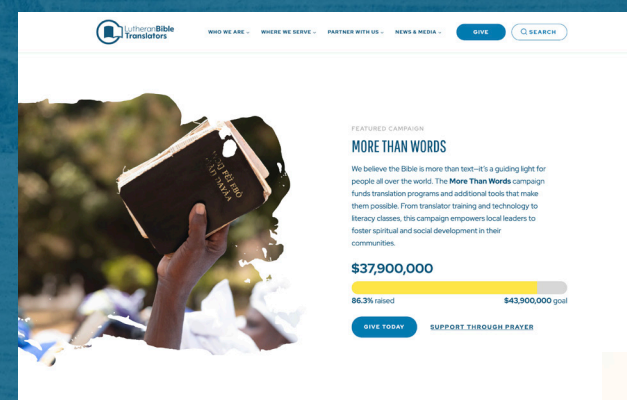
Lutheran Bible Translators is a 501 (c)(3) tax-exempt organization and your gift is tax deductible to the extent allowed by law.

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

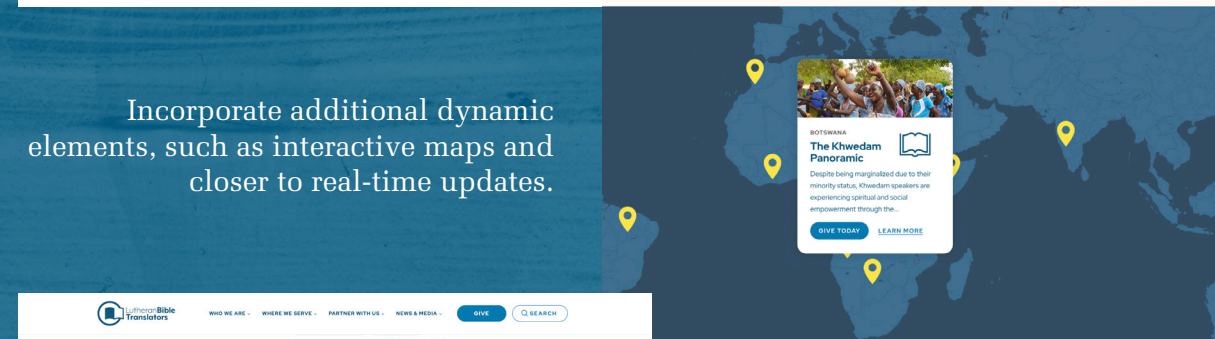
SNEAK PEEK: NEW WEBSITE FOR LUTHERAN BIBLE TRANSLATORS

Lutheran Bible Translators is a ministry of relationships. Our field programs team forges relationships with the local leaders and teams who translate Scripture and deepen Scripture engagement in their language communities. In our communication with you, we seek to bridge the distance and connect you with the global community of Christians - especially those needing God's Word in the language they understand best.

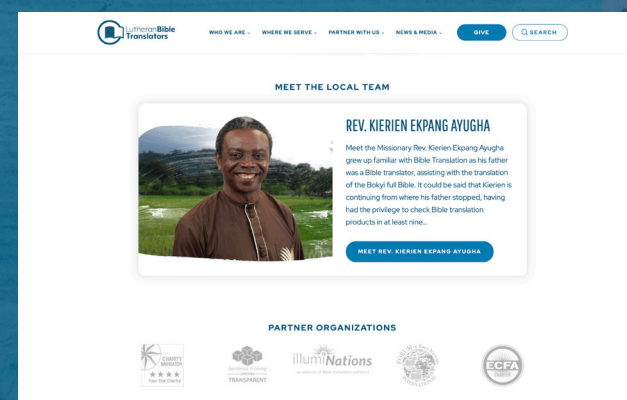
OUR RECENT WEBSITE REBUILD SEeks TO:



Modernize the site's design and infrastructure, ensuring it's visually appealing and built to the latest web standards for desktop and mobile access.



Incorporate additional dynamic elements, such as interactive maps and closer to real-time updates.



Enhance your experience of engaging with programs and meeting the local leaders you support.

A refresh isn't just about aesthetics; it's about ensuring the site serves you well and helps new supporters discover the ministry connections available.

LBT.ORG

Editors: Seth Hinz & Jessica Albers
Creative Direction & Layout: Sarah Rudowske
Executive Director & CEO: Rev. Dr. Rich Rudowske

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Lutheran Bible Translators

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SUPPORT BIBLE TRANSLATION THROUGH PRAYER



1 Sign Up

Support the mission of Bible translation with a single step—fill out the form at lbt.org/pray.



2 Receive the Prayer Calendar

Watch your inbox or mailbox for the monthly calendar and use it to stay connected with the mission and join a global community of prayer partners.



3 Pray

Embrace the power of collective prayer as we join together to uplift crucial aspects of our work, fostering spiritual growth and unity in our global community.