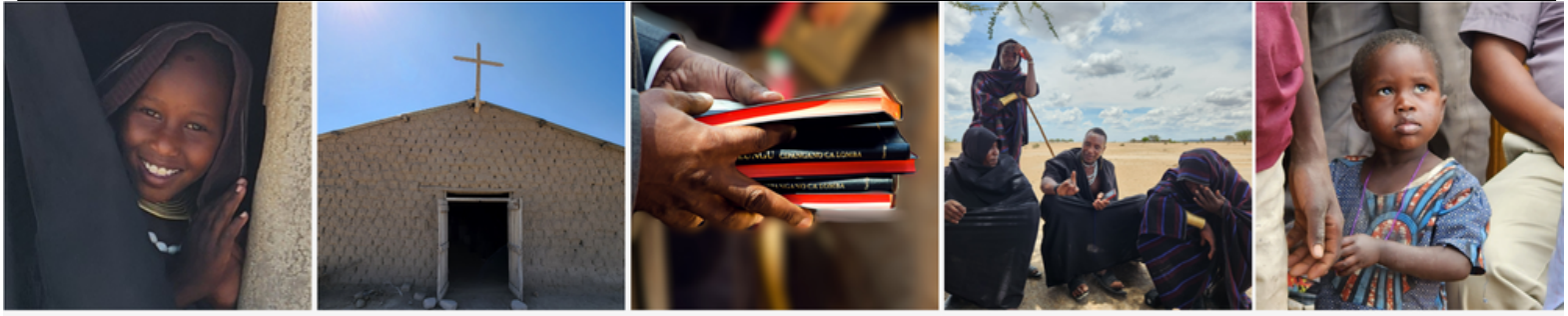


"My heart's desire and prayer to God for them is that they may be saved..." | ROMANS 10



Wapendwa wa Kristo,
(Beloved in Christ,)

In January, work started back up following the long Christmas break. I rang in the New Year by going to an anniversary celebration near Kilimanjaro for Assistant Bishop Mono's parents, who were celebrating 60 years together! Unfortunately, back in Shinyanga a few days later, we attended the funeral for Bishop Nzelu's younger brother. There have been many deaths in the last year, which means there have been a lot of funerals. The cultural value of people supporting one another and doing things as a community is something I've learned to appreciate during this time. The picture below is of a group of women at the bishop's house after he lost his younger brother. The women sat with the bishop's wife to support her. When there was no more room on the couches, they sat on the floor. It reminds me of the book of Job, when his friends came to sit with him after he lost everything. Granted, his friends proceeded to make Job feel even worse in his suffering, but we learn a bit about the culture Job lived in. When someone is mourning, you sit with them. Not necessarily for seven days and nights, as Job's friends did, but at least for a day or two, or even just a few hours.

Another example of community-supporting-community I've witnessed is during wedding preparation. In March I was invited by a friend to attend the meeting for her wedding preparation, which will be in June. Basically, the meeting was full of about one hundred people who pledged to give money to the family of the bride to help pay for her wedding expenses. That was just the meeting for the bride; there is a separate meeting for the groom's guests - very different from the US weddings I've been a part of! The expectation from these hundreds of people, of course, is that they will show up at the wedding and have a good time with plenty of food and drinks, but likewise the families of the engaged couple expect that all of those who pledged their support will be there throughout the preparations to help with anything they may need. Weddings are a joyous and special occasion in Tanzania, but if you want a grand celebration it takes everyone pitching in to make it happen.

In February, things really picked up when my Regional Director, Sarah, visited for meetings and one-on-one time with me. We made a lot of progress in our planning for 2024 (*below*), and I felt for the first time in months that we were finally back on the horse in regard to our work here. (*Continues page 2*)



STAY IN TOUCH

EMAIL: TIFFANY.SMITH@LBT.ORG
WHATSAPP: +1 515-493-6566

If you would like to give to my ministry, please mail all checks to Lutheran Bible Translators' headquarters at the address below, or give online.

2024 Funding Goal:  30%





Vehicle Update

I'm less than \$10,000 away from reaching my vehicle goal! Thank you for continuing to give and pray about this special project.

It will give me more flexibility traveling to the villages since I won't have to borrow another car, and it will enable us to travel to the harder-to-reach areas where many Taturu speakers live. Your support in this particular area is helping the project in too many ways to count!

This is a \$38,000 project. You can designate gifts to "Smith Vehicle Project" by check or online at the addresses on the bottom of this page. Thank you for your support!

Current Vehicle Funding:



Prayers and Praise

Philippians 4:6-7

Pray: For my spiritual health and that I continue to grow in my faith.

Praise: For my safe travels and presence at the SE Conference in Nairobi. It was a great time of fellowship and learning.

Pray: For my health, that God would keep me safe and strong this year.

Praise: For the generous support I continue to receive, it gives me such peace of mind knowing that you have my back!

Pray: For the linguistic research and other work we have to do with the Taturu language. It is a lot, but little by little and with God's guidance we can get it done!

A few weeks later, I saw many of my other colleagues from the US and Africa at the Scripture Engagement Conference in Nairobi, Kenya. This time was both encouraging and convicting for me. I realized a few days into the conference how much I had been struggling spiritually. Not having any English services here in Mwadui/Shinyanga was taking its toll. However, by God's good grace and providence, only a few days ago I was casually talking to Bishop Nzelu, and he mentioned that as more missionaries begin to work in this area, he wants to consider making an English service in Shinyanga available for us all. This would certainly be an answer to my prayers!



(L) Quarterly reporting with Assistant Bishop Lema (R) Dr. Megahan talking to Pastor Joseph, a Taturu speaker, about the Barabaig Bible and the differences in their languages.

In early March I traveled to Bukundi with some pastors and our American colleague, Dr. Michael Megahan. We wanted to start asking questions from the "Translation Brief", a document which communities walk through together to decide how they want the translation project to be carried out. It asks many questions regarding all aspects of the translation program, including preference for Scripture-based products (produced once the translation is ongoing/finished) and the language issues that exist (to be discussed before translation even begins). We in the Taturu program are still exploring the latter topic, and so we are beginning with Oral Bible Storytelling as a platform before translating the Bible into Taturu.

When we asked people how many dialects there are in Taturu, they told us 6, which means we need to further investigate how these dialects differ and which one should be used for the official translation, once it has begun. This is a very complex issue to navigate, so we want to take our time. We have even considered whether or not the Taturu Bible can simply be adapted from a neighboring language called Barabaig, which already has a Bible (one of the biggest reasons why the Taturu have not been given their own translation yet). The language Barabaig belongs to the same tribe, called Datoga, but it is not the Taturu's language. This is hard to explain to outsiders who are under the impression that the Datoga already have a Bible, which is what you see when you look online. However, a Taturu man in Bukundi showed me the Barabaig Bible he bought years ago. He attempted to read the entire Bible several times, highlighting words and phrases he could not understand as he went along. Just about every sentence had an underlining, a star, or a mark noting where he couldn't understand it. Most were very important terms like the name for God. For example, the word for God in Barabaig exists in Taturu, because they are similar languages, but it has a different meaning. The meaning for that word in Taturu means "Witchdoctor". Very different meanings! There were other significant differences that lead us to conclude that the Taturu certainly need their own translation.

Thank you for continuing to support this ministry so that we can support the Taturu as they translate the Bible into their unique and beautiful language. Mungu akubariki sana!