



IN THE ROOM

Eshinee and Rob Represent LBT at Global Events.



Above: selfie on the shuttle bus to the airport.

Below: Greg, Rob, and Jennifer at FOBAI discussing issues in oral translation methods. You can't have a meeting without a wall covered in sticky notes.

After a full two years of conducting all of our meetings on Zoom, Eshinee and I have appreciated a series of in-person gatherings. We've had several since the last time you heard from us.

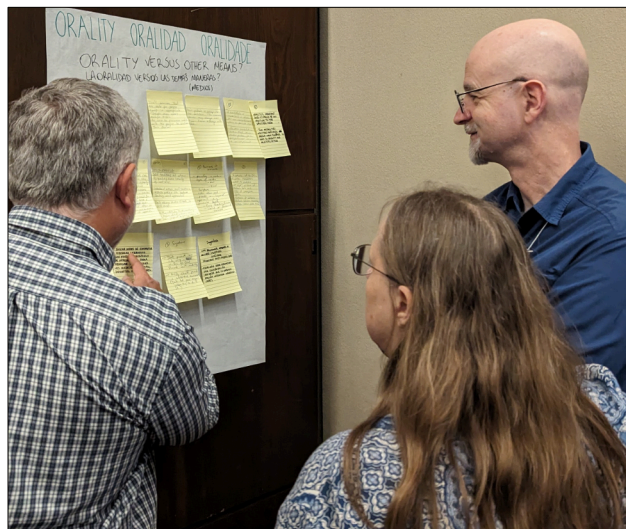
Rob attended the Global Consultation on Arts and Music in Mission in September, where hundreds of people from all over the world committed to developing new creative media for the glory of God gathered. This GCAMM was a big deal; we were celebrating 20 years together and meeting at the same Dallas, Texas

location where the original GCAMM (then called GCOMM) took place. I attended my first in 2006... the second time it was offered. This made me one of the "old timers."

We both attended the semi-annual Bible Translation Conference in October, along with a host of other LBT missionaries.

In November, Eshinee represented LBT at the annual gathering of Every Tribe Every Nation.

In February, Rob went to Kenya for a gathering of Scripture Engagement workers across the African continent. He was able to meet some of our regional partners for the first time.



Finally, in April, we represented LBT at the Forum of Bible Agencies International; Rob joined the Scripture Engagement Development Group, while Eshinee joined the Translation Development Group.

ETHIOPIA TEACHING

Eshinee spent January in Ethiopia teaching linguistics at the Mekane Yesus Seminary. Colleague Michael Ersland joined her. They used a new curriculum that they had developed together just before the class.

They designed the course to give students a framework for recognizing and describing features of a language other than their own. The basic structure of the course was adapted from the "Discover your grammar" workshop approach used in SIL, though with the tweak of having people discover someone's else's language rather than their own. Each student was paired with someone whose language was different from theirs, in many cases from a completely different language family. They would help each other take a "first exposure" look at a language and make observations about it.

Of the design of the course, Eshinee says, "Linguistics has typically been taught like, 'here are all the features you could ever possibly find in a language... got any of those?' This makes sense if you're teaching someone who is monolingual or who is intending to write academic papers. We were trying something new." Eshinee and Michael presented major language categories in very general terms, with little special terminology. Rather than telling the students everything they might find, the students were encouraged to engage and discover what features were actually there in their own language and in the languages of their classmates. This was no mean feat; there were 15 different languages spoken among these 20 students..

On the first day, they learned each other's letters and alphabet with word examples. Day two, they talked about how languages have words for people, places, and things (i.e., nouns), including both things which can be seen and things which cannot be seen. They then spent time collecting nouns from their partner and looking for patterns. Using plain English, they described what they were seeing in a "special features" area on their homework handout.

When the students discovered something in their partner's language, it would be shared in

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WHAT THE FUTURE HOLDS: A PRAYER REQUEST

By Rob

By the time you receive this newsletter, I'll be in Tanzania. LBT has been building a partnership with the Bible Society of Tanzania and the Evangelical Lutheran Church of Tanzania. Translation work has started at several levels with an emphasis on oral translation.

Oral translation involves gathering audio recordings. As I specialize in field recording, and have taught this subject twice before in Tanzania (though to different groups), I've been asked to lead a workshop in the Mwanza area. My colleague Stephanie Biggs, with whom I've taught in the past, will join as a co-teacher and Swahili interpreter.

After the field recording workshop, I'll travel to nearby Bunda. Bunda has a recording studio associated with Artists in Christian Testimony with plans to record songs with Christian messages. At the centerpiece of the studio is a piece of software called Logic Pro which I've been using nearly 30 years, but which is new to the studio engineers. We'll work through some recording projects together to help them master the software.

My work almost always manifests as a short term project; someone needs my help for one week to three months. We set the scope of the project, the nature of the goals, what my part will be, and when it will happen. Some of these projects land on the calendar solidly and don't move. Others seem to resist getting nailed down. I have two big ones in my potential queue this year. I'm really excited about both of them. Each will take me to a place I've never been before. Each involves partnering with an organization I've never partnered with before, but which I've known and admired for a long time. The goals are good. The skills they need are ones I can provide. It would be my joy to be involved. It's just a question of whether these things will happen this year. I am looking to the Lord's leading, that he will open the doors he would have open and close the doors he would have closed. Please join me in this prayer.



Dr. Ebisse Gudeta presents Eshinee with a silver cross in thanks for her service to Mekane Yesus Seminary

ETHIOPIA

Continued

class so other students can learn from the observation. When they had challenges, the class would work through them on the whiteboard together.

"It's an uncharted territory approach for all of us," Eshinee said at the time. "I keep telling them and myself that what we're trying to do is a difficult thing, that most people who are trying to see how someone else's language works would take far more than three weeks to do it."

For two weeks, the class was going pretty well. Eshinee's energy was flagging a bit by the middle of the second week, but she chalked it up to having left nouns behind and starting on trickier topics, like pronouns and demonstratives. This turned out not to be the case as she fell ill with a fever by the weekend. It turned out to be COVID. After a few days of fever and developing some new symptoms, an LBT colleague Ali took her to the hospital where they discovered that she also had amoebas. Her return flight was rescheduled for a week later when she was mobile enough to travel.

Thankfully, her co-teacher Michael had already been scheduled to take the lead by the time Eshinee fell ill. This meant that the training was able to continue and flourish without her. Nonetheless, the students and seminary staff texted her often during that last week with messages and prayers for her recovery. She was thankful to be well enough before she left to visit the faculty offices to say her goodbyes to the seminary leaders of the theology department and the translation track.

Through the grace of God, the care of LBT colleagues, skilled medical professionals in both Ethiopia and the US, and people who push wheelchairs in airports, Eshinee returned home and recovered well. Thanks be to God.

ABOUT US

Rob serves as LBT's Scripture Engagement Coordinator and a specialist in Ethnodoxology.

Eshinee is LBT's Innovation Manager, providing a central point of contact for employees seeking innovative strategies, resources, or support.

Veith ministry is funded through donations by individuals and groups.

CONTRIBUTIONS

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