

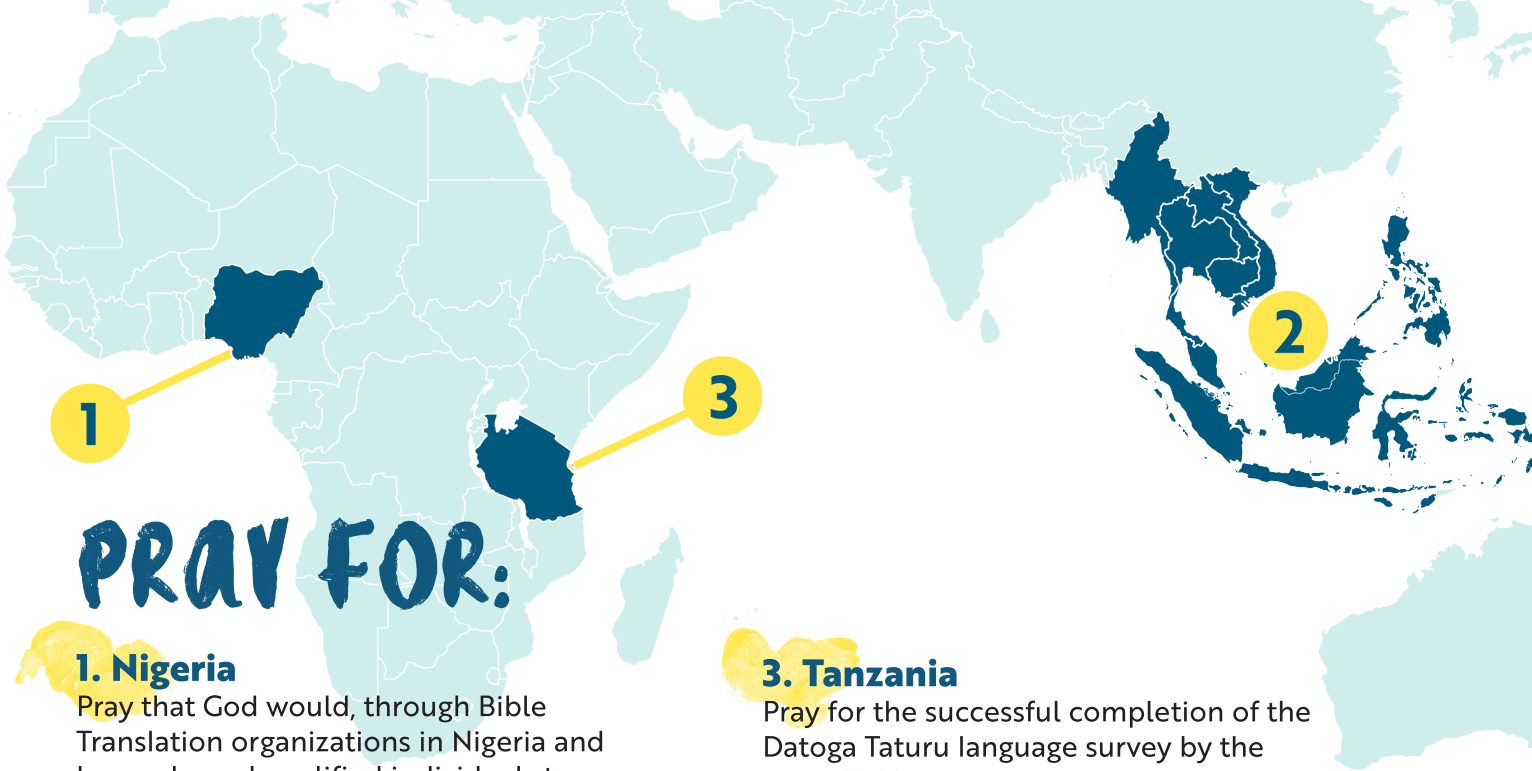


the messenger

Winter 2024

The goal of Bible translation is not a printed product.
The goal of Bible translation is to see people
engaging with the **WORD OF GOD.**





PRAY FOR:

1. Nigeria

Pray that God would, through Bible Translation organizations in Nigeria and beyond, send qualified individuals to take full time positions as teaching staff in the Linguistics and Bible Translation Department at the Theological College of Northern Nigeria.

2. SE Asia

Praise God that the set of Bible stories from Exodus has been completed! Please pray that the Holy Spirit will use this powerful set of stories describing God's rescue, covenant, provision, and forgiveness to deepen faith in the Almighty God in the hearts of many *Shi people (*NOLA).

3. Tanzania

Pray for the successful completion of the Datoga Taturu language survey by the end of 2024, so that the Bible translation process can move forward effectively.

4. Worldwide

Pray for protection against spiritual attacks as translation work nears completion and for continued strength and faith among the translators and communities involved.



Members of the Datoga Taturu language community in prayer

MORE THAN WORDS

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FROM THE CORNER OFFICE

Dear Friends:

As we close this remarkable year and draw the “More Than Words” campaign to a close, I am profoundly grateful to reflect on all that God has accomplished through us together. **Over the past 60 years, we have witnessed His faithfulness in ways we could never have foreseen when our journey began.**



REV DR RICH RUDOWSKE
Executive Director + CEO

Over the past 5 years of the “More Than Words” campaign, your support and prayers have not only helped us bring the Word of God to communities around the world, but also have allowed us to plan for a strong, sustainable future of partnerships with local communities who are **eager to experience hope, life, and transformation through God’s Word.** We know that as we step into this next season, God will continue to guide us.

Thank you for partnering with us and for every gift, every prayer, and every moment of encouragement. May we enter this next chapter in the story of Lutheran Bible Translators with the same confidence we have seen throughout our ministry’s history: **that our God is faithful, yesterday, today, and forever.**

With gratitude,

REV. DR. RICH RUDOWSKE

Executive Director + CEO

On the cover: A man leads a Komba literacy night class in a remote village in northeastern Ghana.

GOD PROVIDES:

SOLAR KITS IN PAPUA NEW GUINEA

Bible translators in the remote Waria River region of Papua New Guinea recently witnessed a profound answer to prayer. Translators from the Suena, Zia, and Yekora language groups face enormous challenges in their work. Until now, they relied on **LIMITED SUPPLIES OF FUEL TO POWER GENERATORS, WHICH ENABLED THEM TO USE ESSENTIAL TOOLS LIKE PARATEXT TRANSLATION SOFTWARE.** Fueling the generator involved a costly and complex journey, with fuel transported by boat across the ocean and then upriver to reach their villages. This dependence on fuel restricted their progress, but hope has arrived.

*A PROFOUND
ANSWER TO
PRAYER
THROUGH FAITHFUL
SUPPORTERS*

THE SOLAR KITS ARRIVING VIA BOAT





THE TRANSLATION TEAM RECEIVES THEIR SOLAR KITS

THANKS TO DEDICATED SUPPORTERS AND MONTHS OF PRAYER, NEW SOLAR KITS AND LAPTOPS WERE DELIVERED TO THESE TRANSLATORS.

The “Villager III” solar kits, designed for remote village settings, are light, portable, and capable of powering a laptop, phone, and light. Translators are now able to work with consistent, reliable power, regardless of their

location. Suená translator Helen Ausua expressed her excitement, saying, “We have good sun, and these solar panels are transportable so they can be taken to different locations. We will do the work much faster now!”

Upon delivery, the community gathered with tears and singing as local church leaders dedicated the new equipment to God’s work. We thank God for His provision and the faith of those who support Bible translation, making it possible for these communities to experience the hope, life, and transformation of God’s Word.

THE TEAM PRAYS, THANKING GOD FOR THE KITS



**CONSISTENT,
RELIABLE
POWER**

MORE THAN WORDS MILESTONES (2019-2024) WORDS

2019

More Than Words comprehensive campaign launched

2020

Scripture Dedication: Gola New Testament (Liberia)

2022

Opening of the Helge Center for Scripture Engagement at Mekane Yesus Seminary (Ethiopia)

2022

Scripture Dedication: Full Hadiyya Bible (Ethiopia)

2022

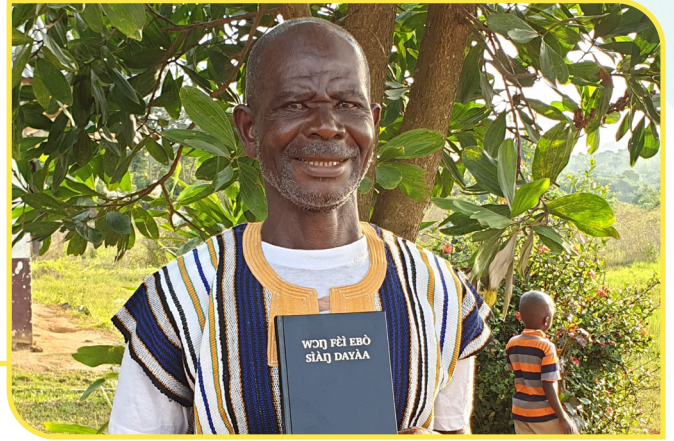
First Bible Translation cohort graduates at Mekane Yesus Seminary

2022

Dr. Mike Rodewald retires as Executive Director after 8 years and 41 total years of faithful service with Lutheran Bible Translators

2023

Rev. Dr. Rich Rudowske installed as Executive Director + CEO





The Living Water Project (New Testament set to music) is added to YouVersion Bible app

2023



Invited by The Evangelical Lutheran Church of Papua New Guinea to facilitate discussions about becoming a translating church

2023



Rev. Kierien Ekpang Ayugha adds C’Lela New Testament to Museum of the Bible’s illumiNations exhibit

2023

First use of Kerewe guesthouse, an income-generating project for local Bible translation and ministry (Tanzania)

2024

Scripture Dedication: Full Konso Bible (Ethiopia)

2024

Scripture Dedication: Shekgalagari New Testament (Botswana)

2024

Lutheran Bible Translators celebrates 60 years of ministry

2024



Hope, Life, & Transformation

Why Bible Translation Matters

In Zambia, Pastor Cyrus Miti, a dedicated minister, regularly travels to remote villages, often stopping by the Nsenga Bible Translation office to pick up new drafts of Scripture for the people he serves.

One day, Pastor Miti brought a fresh translation of the Gospel of John to a grieving village. He read chapter 11, the story of Lazarus, to comfort the mourners. As the story unfolded in Nsenga, the local language, the villagers grew quiet, and then—to Pastor Miti’s surprise—someone laughed, and others smiled. Unsure if he’d made a mistake, he paused, but the villagers reassured him. They explained that, **hearing it in Nsenga, they finally understood the story. Jesus’ words, “I am the resurrection and the life,” felt ALIVE and real, TRANSFORMING the moment with new meaning.**

Dr. Chris Pluger, Translation Consultant, shares, “The biggest take away for me (and Pastor Miti, when he told us the story) was that they “knew” the story but had missed the point

all along -- it’s not a story about sad sisters and shared grief. **It’s a story about a Savior who overcomes death and defeats it** -- truly good news in the midst of mourning. Imagine not ever understanding that Gospel story, and thus missing the “point” of a Christian funeral!”

Pastor Miti left that day with a full heart, grateful to see firsthand the difference it made when people could hear God’s promises in the language of their hearts.

This story is a reminder of why Bible translation matters. When people encounter God’s Word in the language best known to them, it doesn’t just reach their minds—it transforms their lives. For those communities, it’s not just about hearing a story. It’s about feeling that God is speaking directly to them, in words they fully understand and can hold onto with hope.

Jesus’ words,
“I am the resurrection
and the life,” felt **ALIVE**
and real, **TRANSFORMING** the
moment with new meaning.

-Pastor Cyrus Miti
Zambia



Field Notes



1 LITERACY WORKSHOPS

Gokana, Kpelle, and Kono

Literacy workshops are essential to the Bible translation and Scripture engagement process, playing a pivotal role in ensuring that people not only have access to translated Bibles but also engage with them deeply and meaningfully. Over the past few months, the Gokana, Kpelle, and Kono language communities have hosted successful literacy workshops across Africa.

2 SOUTH PACIFIC BIBLE FORUM

Fiji 2024

In October, Michelle Gillard and Steve Ttopoqogo traveled to Fiji for the South Pacific Bible Forum. After the conference, they spent several days together planning for 2025. Gillard remarked, "We were blessed to collaborate with others, share ideas, and plan for the future work of Bible translation in Papua New Guinea."



3 LUTHERAN CHURCH OF THAILAND 20TH ANNIVERSARY

Rich and Maya Rudowske join the celebration

Executive Director Dr. Rich Rudowske and his wife, Maya, were honored guests at the 20th anniversary convention of the Thailand Concordia Lutheran Church. As part of the celebration, the TCLC gathered leaders from more than twenty churches and ministries in Southeast Asia to discuss ways to enhance Bible ministry in the region.



4 SOUTH AFRICAN RESOURCE MOBILIZATION WORKSHOP

Sustainable Funding and Planning for the Future

Lutheran Bible Translators and United Bible Societies partnered to facilitate a workshop in early November. The workshop aimed to help Bible organizations develop their capacity to create sustainable funding models, with a focus on shifting from international grant dependency to local funding sources.



MORE THAN WORDS

CAMPAIGN IMPACT

Your support has significantly expanded the ministry's reach. This chart illustrates our funding projections in key impact areas before the MTW campaign alongside the contributions that have allowed us to expand our efforts.

CAPACITY BUILDING

BEFORE MTW	\$19.2 MIL
AMOUNT RAISED	\$25.2 MIL
MORE THAN WORDS GOAL	\$26.3 MIL

SCRIPTURE ENGAGEMENT

BEFORE MTW	\$2.8 MIL
AMOUNT RAISED	\$4.0 MIL
MORE THAN WORDS GOAL	\$4.2 MIL

BIBLE TRANSLATION

BEFORE MTW	\$5.4 MIL
AMOUNT RAISED	\$12.9 MIL
MORE THAN WORDS GOAL	\$13.4 MIL



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:

- Details on how to request nomination and voting information for the 2025 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.

YOUR SUPPORT HAS BROUGHT GOD'S WORD TO LIFE FOR MILLIONS

Thanks to you, 48 Scripture publications are now available, reaching over 15 million people around the world. **Lives are being changed, and communities are being transformed by the truth found in God's Word.**

There is still so much to be done. Over 3,700 language communities remain without access to the full Bible. Every day, they continue to wait for the hope and truth that Scripture brings.

As we look toward 2025, we invite you to make a lasting impact by joining Lutheran Bible Translators as a monthly donor. Together, we can bring God's Word to those who have yet to hear it.

For just \$35, one verse is translated. Would you commit to funding one verse a month in 2025?

Imagine the change 12 verses could bring.

Every letter. Every word.
Every verse.

Every person deserves to experience the hope, life, and transformation found in God's Word. Will you help make that possible?

**LBT.org/give
660-225-0810**



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Lutheran Bible Translators, an independent mission group founded in 1964, is the only Lutheran organization dedicated to making God's Word accessible to those who do not yet have it in the language of their hearts. Lutheran Bible Translators partners with local leaders around the world to launch Bible translation movements. The ministry is supported by the prayers and contributions of fellow Christians. It is not subsidized by any church body or sponsoring agency.

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FORUM of Banks and Accountants INTERNATIONAL



Exciting News:

THE MESSENGER IS NOW MONTHLY!



We're thrilled to announce that *The Messenger* is moving to a monthly publication, bringing you more real-time updates, prayer requests, Field Notes, and insights into Topics in Translation – with a fresh, new look!

Each month, you'll have the chance to engage more deeply with stories from the field and stand alongside those bringing hope through God's Word. **This change reflects our commitment to keeping you, our faithful supporters, more connected with the inspiring work of Bible translation happening worldwide.** Thank you for being part of this incredible community!