



Lutheran Bible
Translators

Formella 411

Sierra Leone West Africa - Mende & Themne

September
2025

In my last newsletter, I promised to introduce you to an incredible person, the retired General Secretary of the Bible Society of Sierra Leone, **Mrs. Christiana Jones**. Below you can find a link and QR code for the full interview. In missions and Bible translation, we work with a lot of people from all over world, everyone with their own story, path to Bible Translation, and impact on the work.



Mrs. Christiana Jones, of the Krio tribe, was born in the village of Hastings in Sierra Leone. She was the oldest child, grandchild, and great-grandchild of her generation in her family. As the eldest in her family, there was a lot of pressure on her to do well in school and succeed. And while school did not come easy for her, she worked very hard and became a very good student. Even though there was a lot of pressure on her as the eldest, she loved to run around, play soccer, and climb trees, while also loving to cook. She was very passionate about the things of God and even began reading the King James Version by the age of seven. While she was still a university student she began her teaching career locally and earned her diploma (similar to an associates degree), bachelors, and a Masters degree. She studied hospitality, education, and educational administration. Early in her tertiary schooling, she married an Anglican priest. While she wanted to focus on school and wait to marry, he promised he would support her education goals, and he kept that promise. Together they had two sons, Bernard and Leslie (Noel), who have both completed their bachelors degrees as well.

As the General Secretary of the Bible Society of Sierra Leone, Mrs. Jones helped facilitate making sure all translation teams had a designated office for the work, acquired training for translators, and made sure translators had the equipment to do their work well. Additionally, she ushered in the Sierra Leone Sign Language translation project with support from Seed Company, which will allow the deaf community of Sierra Leone to access Bible stories in their language. And with the support of the local membership of the Bible Society, 90 % of the third floor of the head office was remodeled to accommodate 300 people with an additional resource center.

She has been a great leader and mentor for many of us and a wonderful example of a woman in leadership who has great strength, humility, desire to always be learning, and concern for those around her. For me personally, she has been an inspiration and has always been protective of me like a daughter, while encouraging me in my education and finding my voice. We are all grateful to Mrs. Jones for her sacrificial work at Bible Society; her efforts have made a big impact on the organization and the work.



Now that she is retired, she will continue and increase her involvement in church activities and a community organization she has established. Her organization will help teach young girls practical skills they can use to support themselves in addition to whatever career or family life they aspire to. While she may be retired, but she is not done working for her community or the kingdom of God.

Mende Bible Translation Project (with Deuterocanonical Books) Progress

Portion	Drafting	Team Checking	External Review	Consultant Checked
Old Testament	39/39	39/39	39/39	24/39
Deuterocanonical Books	12/12	12/12	12/12	0/12
New Testament	27/27	6/27	5/27	1/27

Themne Bible Translation Project Progress

Portion	Drafting	Team Checking	External Review	Consultant Checked
Old Testament	39/39	39/39	39/39	4/39
New Testament	20/27	1/27	1/27	0/27

Note: The Deuterocanon (which means ‘second canon’) includes the books accepted into the Roman Catholic Church inspired canon. While Lutherans and other protestants do not hold them as inspired, they are considered beneficial like reading other theological or religious publications, and they give us a view into the context between the Old and New Testament. The wisdom books are quite beautiful, and the stories are very interesting. Have you read any? What is your favorite?

Prayer Requests

- Praise God that the Mende and Themne translations are moving forward.
- Pray that I can use all that I’m learning as a translation advisor.
- Praise God that I was able to connect with other missionaries and hear inspirational presentations at the Concordia Mission Institute in Missouri this past July.
- Praise God for your continued faithful prayers and support!

Zoom Presentation Form:

forms.gle/sSPhvC2ahCsW6ugk6

Video Interview with Mrs. Jones:

amyformella.wixsite.com/amyonthefield/videos



As you listen to her interview, what did you learn, what questions do you have, and how did her story inspire you?



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