

Dear family and friends,

It was a hot, sunny day. Our excitement had been growing throughout the week like a wave approaching shore. We thought people would come, and they did. They came.

We were blessed to arrive a week earlier with some family members to greet people in Gbintiri and Nanangbanl. We were able to go to market, walk to our neighbors, worship, eat at a friend's house, and enjoy delicious local cooking that was sent over to us most evenings. It was wonderful. An important aspect of our work and lives is building relationships with people. People matter, and to have the opportunity to dig into that truth leading up to the Bible dedication was a gift.

So, the day came. A day we all have been waiting for. I have been waiting a short time—it's been around nine years since I first arrived in Ghana. Many have been waiting decades or their whole lives.

We went over to our Ghanaian supervisor's house in the morning to observe the excitement. It was a flurry of commotion as he was within walking distance of the event and he was the head organizer. Gradually, chiefs arrived and then changed into their regalia. Youth came in and out, and we eventually relocated to the place of the dedication.

Music was playing as we walked around greeting people from across North East Ghana whom we have known and loved. Other missionaries in Ghana arrived, and visitors from across the country and around the world came. By eleven, the event was beginning. People kept coming, more benches were sent for from around town, every inch of shade had someone sitting under it, and many were standing in the hot sun. There were dozens of chiefs, church leaders, politicians, and dignitaries.

Chiefs arrived in pomp and circumstance. It is a sight to behold the processions, the drum beats, the dancing. The Gbintiri chief came with all of this plus his truck and him riding on his horse!

There were many speeches. Some highlighted the collaboration of organizations in the translation work, others mentioned the advancement of the Komba language, and others pointed to the power of God's Word and how it transforms our lives. There were choirs. There was dancing. As we reached the peak of the event and the heat of the day, some of the Bibles were processed in by dozens of church leaders. The Komba Bibles were prayed over, blessed, and dedicated.

In addition to all of this, the complete Komba audio Bible was also dedicated on the same day! This is almost unheard of! People can access audio and written forms of the Bible now.



*Dozens of church leaders processed in front of Komba Bibles as they were brought to be dedicated. The Bibles were followed by dozens of other people singing responsively.*

*There were various forms of dancing, singing, and musical instrumentation as ways to express joy over the day's events.*





The Komba Bibles and audio recordings of the Bible were dedicated by a pastoral representative of the Evangelical Lutheran Church of Ghana (an organization that initiated this translation work more than 20 years ago).  
“The Lord Almighty—the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit—bless this Bible.”

The Gbintiri chief bought the first Bible with an unbelievable donation as a sign to everyone there: this book is valuable, it is important, and it is supported by every aspect of society. It is to be celebrated. Many people flocked to get their Bibles. It was special to see them being used in church the following day.

While the day came and left, the most important thing never changes: God’s Word will endure forever. Our Komba brothers and sisters have hope in Jesus as their savior. His sacrificial blood covers over everyone’s sins and gives unity with God. We have this same hope.

We were able to visit Ghana for a little over two weeks. We are back in the States visiting churches. We have begun sorting and packing items to take with us to Tanzania, to leave behind in storage, or to give away. January and the first couple of weeks of February will be filled with travel. Michael will present a paper at a conference in Dallas, and then we hope to see some of you in the Tampa, Las Vegas, Milwaukee, and Chicago areas. We also have final medical appointments, and we will return the vehicle which a very generous couple has lent to us this past year. March will come before we know it and then the time for our family to move to Tanzania and begin Swahili language learning. There is much more to share, hopefully in our next newsletter. For now, thank you for your prayers. Thank you for walking alongside us—some for over a few weeks and others for over a decade. You all are a blessing and you all are a part of God’s mission of proclaiming His saving love displayed through Jesus.

Confident in Christ,  
Naomi and Michael Ersland

### Prayer Requests

- Praise God for the dedication of the Komba Bible!
- Pray that many will come to faith in Jesus who gives life and that many will grow in faith as they interact with God’s Word.
- Praise for our vehicle and house special projects reaching 40% funding.
- Pray for safe travels, health, and good connections as we start the year.
- How may we pray for you? Please let us know so that we may be praying for you!

Contributions:  
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Checks written to Lutheran Bible Translators with *Ersland Ministry* on the memo line. You can also give online at [LBT.org](http://LBT.org)

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