

Dear family and friends,

God continues to direct our paths. We don't know what will happen next—whether that is later today, this week, this month, or this year. I feel like it is easier to experience and understand this when living overseas and in times of transition. As I write this update, our family is in the US weeks away from our hopeful departure for Tanzania. This year we have been waiting to hear news on our work permit. We hoped that we could depart the beginning of March and be present for a workshop later in the month, but God has different plans.

Now, we are packed up and waiting for word on our permits so we can leave. We'll miss the workshop, but there will be another opportunity to observe a similar event in August (hopefully). This season of waiting is a little challenging because we are feeling ready to begin this next season of life. Amidst this waiting, we are also finding that our stress levels are decreasing. Instead of cramming packing for our next term into one unforgivably stressful week in February, we were able to do it over the course of one and a half weeks.

Because our packing is mostly done, we have the opportunity to focus on tasks that got pushed off or that we would otherwise miss because of our move. We also feel well positioned to move without feeling sleep deprived (which tends to be common for us). God knows what is best, and Naomi does well to remind our family of this truth.

By the time you receive this newsletter, we may be in Tanzania. It is amazing how print communication can warp time! It can take a month from the time we write and submit our letters for printing to when you receive them.

So, what will we be doing in Tanzania? We are planning to attend Swahili language school for about our first three months in country. There are around 120 languages spoken in Tanzania, and Swahili is considered the language of wider communication (what people gravitate towards in multi-lingual environments).



We were privileged to meet the Kerewe translation team last July. They have been translating Scripture for many years. Michael looks forward to walking alongside them to learn from them and to help provide resources and training as they request.

Tanzania is in East Africa.



Scan this QR code to see LBT's video about work being done in Tanzania.



**Transforming Lives in Tanzania:
How Bible Translation Brings Hope**





The languages that we are anticipating to work with are the Sumbwa, Datoga Taturu, Kara, and Kerewe. These final two people groups live on islands in Lake Victoria. Michael will provide mentoring and training for translators of these projects as requested by them. This is different from what he did in Ghana. He will not learn these languages. Pictured above is the Tanzanian flag on a ferry as we are leaving Ukerewe Island this past July.

It is the language that Naomi will use when going to the market or store to purchase food. It is the language that our children will likely use when playing with neighborhood children. It is the language Michael is planning to use for training translators and for communicating with different language projects. It is NOT the language that Lutheran Bible Translators is helping to translate anew. There are already translations of the Bible into Swahili. However, there are many languages in Tanzania without the Bible, and local churches are asking for help to get the Bible into these languages. Lutheran Bible Translators is assisting with four different local language translation projects. One project has been going for several years while the other three are in beginning stages of the process.

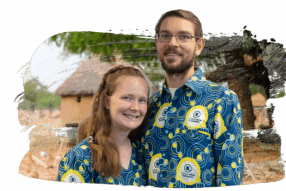
After we finish language school, we plan to move to the city where we will be living. We will need to learn where to purchase daily items such as food and cooking gas and how to get money. We will begin visiting churches, local church leaders, and members. We will continue daily language and culture learning, hopefully with someone who will come to our house. Thank you for walking alongside us throughout this journey.

Confident in Christ,
Naomi and Michael Ersland

(A note: we recently saw our newsletter list and noticed incorrect addresses, missing titles, deceased recipients, and misspelled names. **Please** email us if we need to make adjustments regarding your reception of this letter so we can notify the printers.)

Prayer Requests

- Pray for our family as we transition to life in Tanzania.
- Pray for our family as we learn Swahili. May God open our ears and minds and loosen our tongues so that we may pick up the language well.
- Thank God for our Tanzanian and US colleagues working hard to help us throughout this transition.
- How may we pray for you? Please let us know so that we may be praying for you!



About Us

Michael provides training and mentoring for multiple Bible translation teams. Naomi's management of the family and daily life extend beyond the house as she builds relationships and walks alongside neighbors.

Contributions:
Lutheran Bible Translators
PO Box 789
Concordia, MO 64020

Checks written to Lutheran Bible Translators with *Ersland Ministry* on the memo line. You can also give online at LBT.org

Michael-Naomi.Ersland@lbt.org

