



Messenger

Limba New Testament Reprinted

The Limba people have dedicated their New Testament — again! A revised edition was launched on December 16, 2011, during ceremonies at the British Council Events Center in Freetown, Sierra Leone.

The Limba New Testament, originally dedicated in 1983, was one of the first translation projects completed with primarily LBT involvement. Former missionaries John and Joanne Iler were the main translators. From 1983 to 1988 former missionaries Bob and Jean Schmitt served as literacy advisors. Since then, the main personnel on the project have been Sierra Leoneans Larmin Kargbo and Patrick Kamara. Under their leadership, the Limba people have embraced the Gospel in their heart language with great enthusiasm.

But there have been stumbling blocks along the way. The Limba are primarily an oral society. At the time the printed New Testament was introduced, there was a lack of reading skills among the Limba people. Those who did possess such skills were more literate in English, the national language of Sierra Leone.



The number of literacy class graduates is growing.

To read in Limba was a new concept back in the 1980s, and those who could read their own language were usually the community leaders. Over the years, enrollment in literacy classes has continued to



Limba radio programming features readings from the Limba New Testament.

grow. In 2010, over 450 adults and children learned to read Limba under the guidance of 56 teachers. Limba literacy and Scripture Engagement work continues to be carried out through The Institute for Sierra Leonean Languages (TISLL).

The need for a reprint of the New Testament became apparent several years ago. The Bible Society in Sierra Leone, with permission from LBT, updated the 1983 edition, making minor changes to the orthography (writing system). There were also changes to words that were found to be ambiguous and potentially expressed the wrong meaning.

In addition to the printed version, the Limba audio New Testament was also launched at the ceremonies in December. The New Testament was recorded by Faith Comes by Hearing and the Bible Society. It is available on Proclaimers, which are rechargeable digital players. The Proclaimer battery will play for 15 hours and can be recharged to play the entire New Testament more than 1,000 times.

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The mission of Lutheran Bible Translators [LBT] is to help bring people to faith in Jesus Christ by making the Word of God available to those who do not yet have it in the language of their hearts.

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Mercies Without End

by Dr. Marshall Gillam

Another year completed — a new year has begun!

While there were certainly challenges in 2011, God’s mercies were also evident, and we will depend on His grace and provision again in 2012.

As we read the Messenger, missionary prayer letters, and other communications, we see just a brief glimpse into the many mercies God granted to us and the people we serve in 2011. For example,

- The very fact that a reprint of the Limba New Testament was needed is an indicator that the Limba people have taken God’s Word to heart.
- The very fact that two young couples will be serving as new missionaries with LBT, helping to bring people to faith in Jesus Christ through translation and Scripture Engagement, is exciting.
- The very fact that a Komba choir wanted to record Scripture songs indicates their interest in making God’s Word available to those who cannot read. I don’t want to spoil the story, so let me just say that what happened after that (hint: cell phones) was pretty remarkable.

We could easily make an enormous list of the big things that demonstrate God’s mercies. There would be great blessings in such a list. But I find it more of a blessing to look for the little things, things that are often overlooked, because God is interested in the small things, too. And I believe that if God cares about the small stuff, He most certainly cares about me.

God wants His Word spread throughout the world, reaching every nation, tribe, people, and language. As we work together to make Scripture available to those who do not yet have it in their heart languages, God will continue to bless our endeavors in ways both large and small. We look forward with eager anticipation of the demonstration of God’s mercies to come in 2012. 📖

Sincerely yours in Christ,

Dr. Marshall R. Gillam, CFRE
Executive Director



One of those days...

by Ali Federwitz

Living on the mission field can be challenging — some days more so than others. Paul and Ali Federwitz live in Tamale, Ghana, where Paul serves as an Information Technology Consultant and Trainer. Ali provides advice and encouragement to missionary families who are home schooling their children. Ali posted the following on the Federwitz blog after an especially demanding day last November.

Today was “one of those days” that happen every so often. After supper, I commented to Paul that I should write about all of the things that happened because it is nearly unbelievable. Please note: This is not a list of complaints, just a list of events!

This morning while the diapers were in the washing machine, we ran out of water. We have a reserve water tank and a pump so that we can pump water from the reserve to the tanks on the top of our house. The pump ran for about 20 minutes and then shut off. Apparently it overheated. I filled some buckets with water directly from the reserve tank and filled the washing machine by hand to finish the diapers.

In the mid-afternoon we lost electricity (not unusual). I was making baked sweet potatoes as part of our supper. I got them in the oven and after they cooked for about 15 minutes I heard a strange sound. That sound was the gas going out in the oven. It’s difficult to bake sweet potatoes with no cooking gas! I then tried to call Paul at work to see if he could come and change the gas tanks and my call would not go through. In fact, I was unable to make or receive any calls at all. With no electricity, little water, no cooking gas, no phone access, I decided to gather the kids and go for a walk. We walked to GILLBT (Ghana Institute of Linguistics, Literacy, and Bible Translation) to share our list of events with Paul. By this time, it was 5 pm anyway and he was soon packing up.

When we came home, Paul switched the gas tanks. I continued to cook the potatoes but was working on dinner Plan B since potatoes take awhile to cook. As he was pulling out the generator to start it up, the electricity came back on. He started up the water pump again and then my phone started to work as well. I know about the phone working because I received a text message that Paul had sent to me just before 4 pm.

Although the potatoes didn’t finish in time for supper, everything else fell right back in line. We had salad and sandwiches for supper and I ate a sweet potato after the kids went to bed as a reward for not having a melt down. I can tell that I have adjusted to life here because it just didn’t surprise me that all of these things happened at once.

Although I wasn’t surprised at all of these events, you better believe I was praising God as each item began to function again!

A Taste of Cinnamon

by Dan and Kay Finley

You are probably wondering what cinnamon could possibly have to do with our latest media project.

In mid-September, our travels took us to Brazil for a three-month stay with the Canela Indians in the northeastern state of Maranhão. In Portuguese and Spanish, the word for cinnamon is canela. In other words, the audio New Testament recording was for the Cinnamon Indians of Brazil!

The Canela people live in large circular villages located in the remote savanna countryside, which is drier and less humid than the Amazon River area further west. Men construct houses and prepare the fields. Women harvest the crops except for rice, which everyone gathers. Women also fetch water and firewood, cook, raise children, and clean houses. While they appear to have a definite division of labor, either gender will do any work when necessary.

The Canela New Testament was completed in 1990. The audio New Testament is a “panoramic” translation, which was a new approach for us. Individual Gospel stories were recorded only once, beginning with Luke and John and supplemented chronologically with those from Matthew and Mark. Selected Old Testament portions that help to explain the New Testament text were also included.



Zaquinha and his family were our gracious hosts in Porquinhos.

The recording took place in two Canela villages: Porquinhos and Ponto. Zaquinha, Roseamelia, and their family welcomed us into their Porquinhos home, even constructing a special shelter in which we could record and a new house of traditional materials large enough to incorporate us into their family. Shortly after our arrival, we were welcomed at a formal gathering in the village patio by the village chief, who emphasized the importance of the project and encouraged everyone to participate. We were only in Porquinhos for 10 days, but the power of his mandate was apparent in the level of commitment exhibited by the entire community. Though only a few actual readers were found, several non-reading speakers also participated, repeating lines spoken by another Canela reader. Still others helped by chasing away the noisy chickens and entertaining small children during recording sessions. Before we left it seemed that we had even trained one of the roosters to be a speaker. Every time Dan said, “Pronto,” the cue to record, the rooster would crow!

Most of the recording was done in Ponto. A larger pool of Canela readers was balanced off by the challenges of a larger community — more roosters, dogs, small children, and cowbells. While the tinkle of the cowbells was a pleasant sound at first, it soon became clear that more soundproofing was necessary to block out the bells and the barking dogs that chased the cows out of the area. Daily temperatures of more than 100°F quickly turned the sound booth into a hot box, and a short break midway through a session was necessary for the speaker to cool off.

While this particular project progressed more slowly than we had hoped, we were blessed beyond measure during our time in Brazil. We praise God for this new resource that will help bring the Good News to the Canela people. 📖

Dan and Kay Finley serve with LBT as vernacular media specialists. They have assisted with New Testament recordings in several countries and locations.

What Does This Mean?

Rev. Larry Johnson is a translation consultant who works with several language groups in Liberia. He finds it very interesting to hear the idioms the various languages use to express thoughts. See if you can match the meaning to the Liberian idiom.

1. a bad stomach person
 2. swallow your heart
 3. hold your heart
 4. make a heart fall back
 5. heart is down
-
- a. you are being very patient
 - b. the person is being humble
 - c. to discourage someone and make him feel badly
 - d. a person who does things in a dishonest way, a person who doesn't like other people
 - e. to control yourself

Answers: 1. d; 2. a; 3. e; 4. c; 5. b



Serve Boldly!

by Mike Butterfield



Mike Butterfield

What famous words from the sainted Dr. Martin Luther come to your mind as you reflect upon his voluminous writings? Surely many would quickly recall the power of his three-word testimony before Roman Emperor Charles V: “Here I stand.” Lovers of Lutheran hymnology recall Luther saying, “Music is the art of the prophets and the gift of God.” Well, are you aware that Martin

Luther also urged Christians to, “Sin boldly!”

Indeed, all of these quotations are accurately attributed to Martin Luther. The foundational motivation for each declarative statement is the same. Luther was guided by the Spirit in coming to the recognition of the joy of the spiritual liberation which comes about only through God’s abundant grace. He was led to know by faith with absolute certainty that God’s grace is so powerful that it finally defeats sin altogether.

In response to such amazing grace, Luther directed Christians to recognize the scriptural admonitions to perform spiritual service as a joyful duty. Christ Himself reminds us in John’s Gospel (12:26) that to be a servant means that we must follow Him. The Apostle Paul in his letter to the Philippians (2:1-7) presents to us the example of Christ’s humility as being “the very form of a servant.” We are instructed to consider others more significant than ourselves and to serve the interests of others. To be a servant is to **serve boldly!**

We at LBT believe that following the call to service from our Lord and Savior in carrying out the call of the Great

Commission means that we must **serve boldly!** It begins with a Spirit-formed attitude for humility and obedience to the call of carrying out “mother-tongue” language translation and Scripture engagement to people groups throughout the world.

Just consider how the missionaries of LBT **serve boldly** as they dedicate their lives in faithful service to translating God’s very Word into the languages of peoples’ hearts. And to think that these people of God serving today have done so for two, three, even four decades! In boldness they serve, knowing that God works through them as His servants. They are carrying out His call because they are transformed into instruments of His good pleasure in order to accomplish His purposes.

As baptized Children of the heavenly Father, you and I also possess the call to **serve boldly!** It is known as our “Christian vocation.” We are directed to serve God in faith and our neighbor in love. Within the context of LBT, your bold service is the call to pray for the safety and health of our missionaries and their families. Your call is to pray for the success of all of the various forms of missionary service conducted by LBT. A portion of your call is to speak enthusiastically to others about the importance of the mission of Lutheran Bible Translators. And finally, your call to such bold service includes offering a portion of your tithes and offerings in financial support for the advancement of the Gospel.

As we submit ourselves to Him, together we seek the Spirit’s blessings upon our bold service. It is our Father’s will. **Serve boldly!**

Need More Information?

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Mike Butterfield
Lutheran Bible Translators, 303 N Lake Street, PO Box 2050,
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How Do You Spell That?

by Rev. Rich Rudowske

I knew that printing and selling Shekgalagari materials would be a learning experience. I did not anticipate that the learning would extend to the realm of how to spell words in Shekgalagari.

The two books we published used an orthography (writing system) proposed by Dr. Kemmony Monaka, a speaker of the language with a PhD in phonetics. It appeared to be a good orthography from my outsider perspective, so we

used it. We found, however, that almost universally there were complaints about the same few letters by any Shekgalagari speaker who looked at our materials.

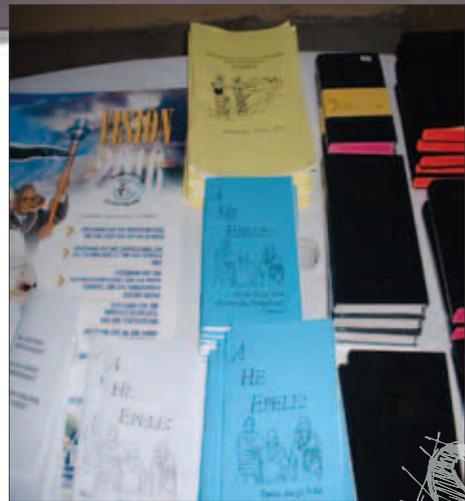
Upon investigation, I noted that the spellings in question were all for sounds that do not occur in English or Setswana (the national languages of Botswana). I had not considered the impact that literacy in those two languages would have on the assumptions that readers would bring to the table when trying to read their own language.

For example, if you say the [s] sound (go ahead and do it, play along) and then you say the [z] sound, you'll notice that the placement of your tongue in your mouth is exactly the same for both, the only difference is that your vocal cords make noise for [z]. With me? Now do the [s] sound again and then switch to the sound that we spell /sh/. You'll notice that your tongue moves back just a little in your mouth. Now do that same sound again but add noise from your vocal chords.

This may sound a little like your vacuum cleaner running. That sound is all over the place in Shekgalagari. So, we decided if /sh/ is just /s/ moved back, then if we move back /z/, we should spell it /zh/. Logical right? Not in the mind of the native speakers. They only know /z/ from English and they seem to have difficulty reading it with the /h/, because in Setswana the /h/ means 'add more air to the sound' so it's just a louder [z]. You may need to take a few seconds to process that.

So what do we do? Interestingly enough, the consensus seems to be to use the letter /j/. But /j/ is already used in Shekgalagari for the same sound as we use it for in English. To distinguish between the two we decided to use /jh/. For some reason, this works in the mind of the native speaker. The lesson is that we are blessed to some extent with a literate population, albeit in other languages, but we need to learn and consider the assumptions they bring to the table in reading their own language. In the end, the writing system has to make sense to them, otherwise it becomes an obstacle to accessing the word of God and reading what He has to say to Shekgalagari speakers in their own language. 

Rev. Rich and Maya Rudowske and family will begin furlough in the U.S. in May following their first term of service with the Shekgalagari translation project in Botswana.



Materials produced by the Shekgalagari Translation Project.

LBT Welcomes New Missionaries

Rob and Mical Hilbert were appointed as missionaries by the LBT Board of Directors in January 2012.

Rob was born in Glen Ellyn, Illinois. He attended Valparaiso University and Keller Graduate School of Management, earning an MBA in project management. After service with the Peace Corps, he worked at DeVry University as a finance analyst. Mical, daughter of LCMS missionaries, was born in Guatemala. The family returned to the States in the 1990s, living in Ft. Wayne. Mical attended Concordia Lutheran High School and graduated from Indiana University. She was working as a business analyst when she met Rob. They were married in 2008, and have a son, Carston, born January 31, 2011.

Ruthie Wagner, née Lee, was reinstated as a missionary on January 1. She served with LBT from 2007 until 2009, when she met and married Josh Wagner. Josh is currently an LBT missionary candidate.

Josh grew up as the oldest of six children in the Minneapolis area, where he and his family have been heavily involved with inner-city ministry. He received a B.A. in Business Management from Bethel University, St. Paul. Ruthie was raised as a second-generation missionary kid in Bangladesh. She moved to Minneapolis for Bible school and college. She received a B.A. in Linguistics, Ancient Language and Historical Texts from Northwestern College, St. Paul.

Both the Hilberts and the Wagners will continue training at the Graduate Institute of Applied Linguistics in Dallas, Texas. To support these couples visit www.LBT.org.



Church Choir Goes Mobile

by Rev. Chris LaBoube

One Friday morning in early October 2011, fellow LBT missionary David Federwitz and I left our homes in Gbintiri, Ghana, hopped on a motorcycle and headed to a nearby church to record worship songs. After a 15-minute ride, we arrived at Damanko Lutheran Church and were introduced to the choir, who would be the star performers. After visiting with the choir and Oscar, the choir director, we began working.

Oscar got the choir set up in one of the church's classrooms. David and I set up our recording equipment. After initial practice runs, preparing the recording equipment and the surrounding environment, the beautiful singing began.

The choir sang ten songs — a lot of singing all at one time. Oscar did a great job encouraging the choir members to continue singing their best. The choir sang in Komba, which is their mother tongue. LBT missionary Rev. Nathan Esala is working with local Christians on a translation of the New Testament into the Komba language. These ten worship songs were taken directly from the newly-translated Komba Scriptures. Now, the Damanko Lutheran Church and other Komba-speaking congregations will be able to worship Jesus as Messiah in their mother tongue using these Komba worship songs.



The Damanko Lutheran Church Choir.



David and Chris traveled by motorcycle to the recording session.

When we were finished with the recording, the choir director and a couple of elders in the church wanted to give us a thank you gift. It was not a surprise when one of the elders pulled two guinea fowl out of a large wicker basket. I was quickly and a little nervously figuring out what was going to happen. David was driving the motorcycle, since I had never driven one. That meant that I would be carrying the two guinea fowl on our trip back home, something else I had never done.

Once back at David's house, our work continued. David and I analyzed the quality of the songs. Working through each took some time, editing and cleaning up the overall material. The final product will be a cassette tape with all ten worship songs.

The next day, Saturday, was a weekly market day for the area. After the editing had been completed, David downloaded the songs onto his cell phone so we could share them with Oscar, who would also be at the market.

While David transferred the songs from his mobile phone to Oscar's mobile phone using Bluetooth technology, a small crowd gathered around us. A few young men heard the Komba worship songs being played, got out their own phones, and asked if the songs could be transferred to them.

This is the area of ministry I have been called to in Ghana. My work will include a variety of similar tasks with the goal of providing Scripture in mother tongue languages through various kinds of media. I am very excited to see how such technology is helping to spread the Word of God. With these songs recorded on cassette and available on mobile phones, God's Word is now available to many speakers of Komba in northeastern Ghana who are not able to read.

By the way, the return trip to David's house that day went fine. The guinea fowl survived and made a delicious meal for David and his family. ☺

Rev. Chris LaBoube began his first term as a Scripture Media Advisor in Ghana in 2011.

LBT to Host Annual Dinner

Plans are underway for LBT's 2012 Annual Dinner to be held on Friday, May 4, at the Lisle Hilton Hotel in Lisle, Illinois.

Past dinners have included displays, presentations, prayer, question and answer time with a missionary panel, and a visit with LBT missionaries via Skype.

If you're going to be in the area on May 4, please plan to join us for an informative and enjoyable evening of fellowship — and a delicious meal!

For more information, or to make a reservation, please call Judi at 1-800-532-4253 ext. 21.

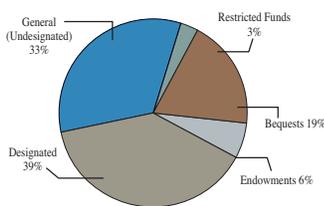
LBT Partnership Support

October 1 — December 31, 2011

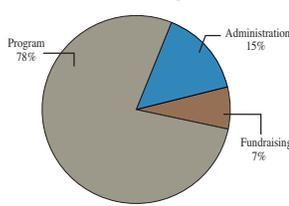
INCOME

	Unaudited 4th Quarter	Unaudited Year-to-date
Designated	\$614,284	\$1,711,206
General (Undesignated)	529,624	1,417,394
Restricted Funds	43,319	186,273
Bequests	300,905	602,428
Endowments	<u>103,727</u>	<u>67,683</u>
Total Income	\$1,591,858	\$3,984,984

4th Quarter Income



4th Quarter Expenses



EXPENSES

Program	\$670,734	\$2,892,070
General & Administration	127,349	579,201
Fundraising	<u>65,559</u>	<u>281,593</u>
Total Expenses	<u>\$863,642</u>	<u>\$3,752,864</u>
Net Total	728,216	232,120

NOTE: During the last quarter of 2011, there were no additional equipment purchases.

CUT HERE

CUT HERE

Birthdays

MARCH

- 1 **Lisa Beckendorf**
Botswana
- 2 **Levi Federwitz**
(2008)
Ghana
- 8 **Maila Davies**
Papua New Guinea
- 9 **Peter Slayton**
Service Center Staff
- 11 **Sheri Larsen**
Guatemala
- 22 **Hannah Federwitz**
(2006)
Ghana
- 24 **Danny DeLoach**
United States
- 26 **Kory Fay**
United States
- 26 **Kay Finley**
United States
- 28 **Mae Johnson**
United States
- 30 **Janine Pluger**
Zambia
- 31 **Lucy Fay** (2009)
United States

APRIL

- 13 **Jonathan Burmeister**
United States
- 13 **Tim Beckendorf**
Botswana
- 17 **Annaka Esala**
(2004)
Ghana
- 20 **Dennis Malone**
Asia
- 22 **Carol Bunge**
United States
- 25 **Tom Holman**
Ghana
- 26 **Nancy Burmeister**
United States
- 29 **Sean Pluger** (2002)
Zambia

MAY

- 1 **Peter Larsen** (2001)
Guatemala
- 2 **Samuel Fay**
(2007)
United States
- 2 **John Strasen**
Botswana
- 13 **Nathan Federwitz**
(1998)
Papua New Guinea
- 13 **Julia Federwitz**
(1998)
Papua New Guinea
- 15 **Janet Borchard**
Papua New Guinea
- 15 **Chris LaBoube**
Ghana
- 15 **Michelle Miller**
Thailand
- 17 **Ali Federwitz**
Ghana
- 19 **Wesley DeLoach**
(2011)
United States
- 21 **Kendra Larsen**
(1996)
Guatemala
- 28 **Ken Bunge**
United States
- 28 **Ellyn Miller** (1993)
Thailand

FOLD

Limba New Testament Reprinted

Continued from page 1

LBT has been instrumental in making God's Word available to the Limba through other means as well. Worship songs and videos based on Scripture have been created and recorded, and pastors are asking for more. Over 3,500 listeners are able to hear Scripture in their own language through regular radio programming that features discussion based on readings from the Limba New Testament.

Interest and excitement about God's Word is growing in the Limba community. Even as New Testament usage increases, TISLL is discussing with Limba church leaders the prospect of translation work on the Old Testament. We give praise that the Limba people have taken God's Word to their hearts — hearing, reading, and sharing the Good News about Jesus Christ. 📖

Gift Designations

Your gifts in support of an LBT missionary are applied to the budget of the designated missionary. If the budget for that missionary is overfunded, surplus funds are used to assist other missionaries whose budgets are in deficit. If all missionary budgets are completely funded, surplus funds are applied to the General Fund.

LBT MISSIONARY Currents

Prayer partnership is the backbone of this ministry. Here are several prayer concerns for which we ask your support. May God bless you abundantly!

BOTSWANA

- Pray for **John Strasen** as he leaves the U.S. in early April to begin service with the Shekgalagari Language Project.

GHANA

- Praise God that at a recent **Evangelical Lutheran Church of Ghana Women's** convention, Komba women were able to hear Scripture in their own language and fully understand what was being said.

CAMEROON

- Pray for **Martin and Joan Weber** as they begin furlough in the U.S. and Canada.

- Pray for Volunteer Missionary **Christina Riddle**. She will complete her current term of service in May, and is considering future ministry with LBT.



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Executive Director:
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Lutheran Bible Translators is an independent mission group, founded in 1964, which is dedicated to helping bring people to faith in Jesus Christ by making the Word of God available to those who do not yet have it in the language of their hearts. It is the only Lutheran organization totally devoted to this specialized ministry. LBT actively recruits Lutherans to serve as Bible translators, literacy or vernacular media specialists and support missionaries. The LBT ministry is supported by the prayers and contributions of fellow Christians. It is not subsidized by any church body or sponsoring agency.

Did you know we're on Facebook?



- Pray for safe travels for the **David Federwitz family** as they visit congregations during their partnership development furlough.

LIBERIA

- Pray for **Alvina Federwitz** as she spends a short time of furlough in the U.S.

NAMIBIA

- Pray that the **Dhimba New Testament** will be ready for publication by the end of this year.

NIGERIA

- Praise God for the first published translation of **Scripture in the Mushere language** of Nigeria, Luke 1 and 2. This project was completed in time for reading in Mushere churches during Christmas 2011.

- Pray for International Scholarship student **Rev. Linus Otronyi**. Unrest at his university caused it to be closed for several weeks last fall and winter. Pray that this will not hinder his path toward his B.A. in Linguistics.



SIERRA LEONE

Praise God that International Scholarship student **Lamin Kargbo** completed his Bachelor's in Adult Education degree last fall.

UNITED STATES

- Pray for **Dan and Kay Finley** as they spend much of February and March in Papua New Guinea, working on the recording of the Ipili New Testament in partnership with Faith Comes by Hearing.
- Pray for new missionaries **Rob and Mical Hilbert** as they continue studies at the Graduate Institute of Applied Linguistics in Dallas, Texas.

- Praise God that **Ruthie (Lee) Wagner** has been reinstated as an LBT missionary. Her husband Josh will be presented to the Board of Directors for missionary status in May.
- Praise God that intern **Gail Ludvigson** was able to travel to Liberia to assist staff of the Liberia Translation and Literacy Organization (LIBTRALO) in learning to write grant proposals.
- Pray for increased funding for **LBT** in 2012 to enable planned expansion of ministry.

