



LUTHERAN BIBLE TRANSLATORS

Messenger

Luke—On Screen!

by Rev. Chuck Tessaro

Not long after we began our Nigeria ministry in 1985, my wife, Karen, was taking a group of women to visit people who had not been well enough to attend church services. In case after case, the person being visited would ask how the service went. Various elderly women would respond, narrating highlights of the day, including the chapter and verse reference of the sermon text along with a 10 to 15 minute summary of the message. Needless to say, I was more than a little impressed. None of these women had been to school (there wasn't much opportunity for that when they were young), yet all of them had oral skills that enabled them both to listen attentively to a one-hour sermon and to give an extended summary of it some time later.

Prior to our arrival in Nigeria, there was a major Bible translation effort in the Ogoja area of Cross River State. A number of New Testaments and one complete Bible were dedicated. Former LBT missionaries Ed and Wilma Rupprecht, who were involved in these projects, returned to mission service in Nigeria in 2005 after a 24 year absence. They knew that the people of Ogoja, like the elderly women we would come to know, live in historically oral societies.

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Church services in Nigeria are often several hours long.



Do You Recognize These Photos?

They're from the Krio New Testament dedication in Sierra Leone in 1984, just one of many significant events in LBT's almost 50 years of ministry.

You can help us prepare for our 50th anniversary. **Do you have photos, memories, or stories about LBT? Send them to Jubilee@LBT.org.** We'll be compiling them into a web page to be shared with all of our partners, staff, and missionaries. Then visit www.LBT.org/jubilee where we'll be posting the latest anniversary celebration information as it becomes available.

We look forward to hearing from you. You are an important part of our history — and our future!

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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a heart
for missions

How Does It Sound to You?

This issue of *The Messenger* presents some fascinating accounts of the mission and ministry that God has given us — all of us.

Greeting someone as they arrive or bidding them farewell when they leave is usually not a very complicated proposition. As Rev. Chris LaBoube describes the process among the Dagbani of Ghana, some information is required before the appropriate greeting can be selected. This may be labor-intensive, since it requires and shows interest in the other person. Perhaps the Dagbani have a good idea!

Then there is *bread* — the staff of life we sometimes say. Who would imagine that choosing the proper word for bread could be so complicated? As Rev. Rich Rudowske explains the dilemma faced by the Shekgalagari translation team, it becomes apparent that the time spent in selecting the appropriate word for *bread* was worth every minute that was invested.

Sometimes we are asked, “Why not just teach everyone English rather than going through the arduous process of Bible translation?” At the conclusion of a workshop that led to a translation of the story of the Good Samaritan in six Nigerian languages with no previously translated Scripture, Pastor Linus Otronyi received affirmation that translation into heart languages is the best way to share God’s Word. “I never knew our language and people were so important to Jesus,” said one participant. Said another, “It sounds sweet to my ear past [i.e., more than] English.”

Chris Pluger and the Nsenga translation team in Zambia heard the same affirmation when the Gospel of Mark was read in the Nsenga language. “That’s good! It sounds like real Nsenga!”

When a translation speaks clearly in the language of the audience, people listen and understand. And when the content is Scripture, nothing is more beautiful! As you reflect on these stories, don’t be distracted by the complexity of the translation process. Rather, rejoice in the assertion that “Jesus is speaking in our language, so He will hear us when we pray to Him in our language.”

Thank you for your prayers and gifts that make this all possible. Your partnership is a blessing to us. ☺

Sincerely yours in Christ,

Dr. Marshall R. Gillam, CFRE
Executive Director



Speakers of six languages joined together to record the Gospel of Luke into their respective mother tongues.

Luke—On Screen!

Continued from page 2

That strong oral element is still evident today. People enjoy meeting and talking together and it isn’t unusual for church services to be three to five hours long, with a sermon that lasts an hour.

The Rupprechts began to search for ways to reach people with God’s Word in addition to the printed text. Among other things, they set the stage for the recording of the Gospel of Luke in the Bekwarra, Bette, Bokyi, Ekajuk, Kukele, and Yala languages, with the intent of dubbing the recordings as voice over into an existing film about the life of Christ.

As a translation consultant with Lutheran Bible Translators, I have had the privilege to work with many translation teams in Nigeria, as well as Pastor Linus Otronyi of the Lutheran Church of Nigeria. Pastor Otronyi, a Yala speaker, assumed responsibility for the Luke recording project when the Rupprechts retired in 2011. Even though he was a student at the University of Calabar, he often traveled on the weekends to the various language areas to hold discussions, help raise funds, and resolve any issues that came up. This could involve six to eight hours on public transportation or the back of a motorcycle at the mercy of weather, road conditions, and checkpoints.

Despite the difficulties, Pastor Otronyi organized follow-up meetings with church leaders and representatives of the six language groups. In the process, leaders from the

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Rev. Otronyi with members of the Yala translation team.

Fire Up The Printer!

by Chris Pluger

The first review drafts of the Nsenga Gospel of Mark were printed in early September 2012. The translators had their first chance to work with printed copies of their manuscript, instead of working off of the computer screen.

During the next several weeks extra reviewers came to the office for a period of intensive editing. A local pastor or two, a Roman Catholic lay preacher, and an Nsenga author and folklorist offered their verse-by-verse assistance in the editing process.

Copies of Mark will also be given to other Nsenga speakers, who will take them back to their homes and villages and make their suggestions in writing.

Finally, we will take drafts out into more rural, isolated, mono-lingual Nsenga villages for “field testing.” All of these checks are important steps in the process to make sure we have the ABCs of a good Bible translation — a version that is Accurate, Beautiful, and Clear in the language of the people.

There is more good news! A public meeting was held on Saturday, September 8, to inform the Petauke community of our progress so far and solicit their support of our ongoing efforts to translate the Bible into Nsenga. Over 60 people were in attendance, including representatives from many local congregations.

The guest of honor was the Petauke District Council Chairman, who gave a speech highlighting the Bible translation project. His Royal Highness Chief Nyamphande was also in attendance, as were representatives of HRH Chieftainess Nyanje.



Over 60 people attended a meeting to hear about progress in the translation project.

In spite of the presence of VIPs, the highlight of the meeting was the reading of selections from our draft of Mark, including the Parable of the Sower and the Seed and the account of the Resurrection. The readings were received with a spontaneous round of hearty applause, and the first comment heard was, “That’s good! It sounds like real Nsenga!!”

After that, a half-hour discussion broke out as people commented on certain words that had been chosen and other language details. I took it as a good sign — people care and are invested enough in the success of this project that they are willing to “argue” about word choice!

We give thanks for the prayers and support for the Nsenga Bible Translation Project. Our work is bearing fruit! 📖

Chris, Janine, and Sean Pluger live in Petauke, Zambia, where Chris serves with the Nsenga Bible Translation Project.



The first printed drafts of the Gospel of Mark in the Nsenga language.

Copies of Mark will also be given to other Nsenga speakers, who will take them back to their homes and villages and make their suggestions in writing.



Model of Contentment

by Mike Butterfield



Mike Butterfield

I've never met this dear lady, but I have had a phone conversation with her. She sounds much younger than her close-to-90 age. Perhaps I'm just measuring her youthful voice by the fun and quick wit she displayed. I called her to thank her for offering yet another generous gift in support of one of our missionaries. This \$3,000 gift brought her total of 90 gifts to LBT close to \$60,000.

Wouldn't it be natural to think that she must be a lady of some financial means, "comfortable" some would say? Well, in my efforts at getting to know her better, I learned that she has no TV, no cell phone, no credit cards, no air conditioning, and does her own hair. Her car is a 44-year-old Chevy Nova — "with two bullet holes in it," she added. She begged me to stop by for a piece of homemade pie. It appears she is far more than "comfortable." I concluded that she is "content."

John Strasen, an LBT missionary since 2004, is another servant of our Lord. He recently began serving in a New Testament translation project for the Shekgalagari-speaking people in central Botswana. I don't believe we can fully imagine the personal needs a missionary must have in order to be secure, housed, fed and equipped — all of which could make him "content." In a recent prayer letter from John, he asked for prayers for three items: 1) thanksgiving that he made the very long trip safely; 2) that he would be able to learn the new language rapidly so he could communicate

effectively; and 3) that the Holy Spirit would move the people to more fervently desire God's Word in their own heart language. There were no prayers requested for personal needs.

As Christians we must surely confess to experiencing times during which we lack contentment and humbly seek God's forgiveness in Christ. Our missionaries would surely share such a confession. However, even in the midst of that confession, the men, women and children who comprise the missionary families of LBT present for all of us a true model of unusual contentment. They live, they give, they serve our loving God unselfishly and present to all of us a Christian model of contentment which can only be credited to the power of the Holy Spirit. They live out the truths of Scripture verses such as Philippians 4:11-12, I Timothy 6:8 and Hebrews 13:5 in which we are instructed to be content in all situations because God has said, "Never will I leave you; never will I forsake you."

The message of a loving, forgiving God who promises that His children will be with Him in eternity is the message of our dedicated missionaries. They strive together year after year to put His precious truths in writing, writing that is recorded in the "heart language" of the people. This mission of Lutheran Bible Translators is unique among Lutherans. It merits your prayerful financial support as you consider the many worthy philanthropic and Christian causes that touch you. And when you are led to serve Him and to give Him your first fruits as a manager of all He has given you, you, too, will realize true contentment. 📖

Need More Information?

Return this coupon to:

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Additional on-line giving opportunities and information about LBT are available on our web site: www.LBT.org

Much Ado about Bread

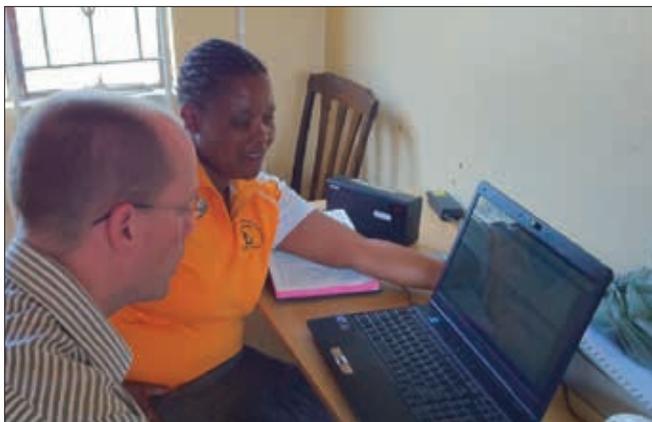
by Rev. Rich Rudowske

I ran into an interesting problem when Pontsho, Esther, and I were translating Luke 24 earlier this year. In the story of Jesus with the disciples on the road to Emmaus, there comes a point where Jesus is recognized as He blesses bread and breaks it so they may eat. The Setswana text uses the word *senkgwe* for bread. In discussing with the team, they initially stated that we should use the Shekgalagari word *borotyo* because even in Setswana nobody really knew what *senkgwe* was.

Senkgwe is the word that was chosen by Robert Moffatt and Alfred Wookey in their 19th century Bible translations. At that time the Tswana people did not have bread as part of their diet. Their staple was (and still is) a porridge called *phaletshe* made from either maize or sorghum. It resembles a thick version of the grits we have in the southern USA. When people were going to travel, they cooked this porridge until it was very dry, set it out in the sun to dry further, and then packed hunks of it in their pouches to take along. This dried version of *phaletshe* was called *senkgwe* and was the closest thing they had to bread, so that was the word used in the Moffatt and Wookey translations.

Fast forward a few decades and you start to have more contact between the Afrikaans-speaking people of South Africa (descendants of Dutch who settled there in the 1600s) and the Tswana and Kgalagari people. These Afrikaaners brought with them their version of bread (which is like ours) known as *brot*. The Setswana began using this type of bread, calling it *borotho*. In Shekgalagari it was called *borotyo*. The use of the word *senkgwe* all but vanished.

Today, the only place the word *senkgwe* is known is for the bread that Jesus uses in the Bible for the Lord's Supper. However, the vast majority of the people do not know the history of the word in their culture. The term has lost its original ability to create a picture of the concept of "bread" in the mind of the hearer. Most assume it is a special kind of bread that has some kind of spiritual power.



Rev. Rudowske reviewing the translation of Luke 24 with Deaconess Pontsho Mosweu.



After initial reviews of our translation of Luke 24, the team came back together for discussion. Many folks felt that the word *borotyo* in the text should be changed to *shenkgwe*. I asked what *shenkgwe* meant and was told that it was basically a Shekgalagari sounding version of the Setswana word *senkgwe*, which is what people are used to hearing Jesus break and share. "If we use *borotyo*," one person said, "then it sounds like Jesus is just using regular bread." Exactly! That's the point.

Jesus is just using regular bread. He is not using some spiritual special bread inaccessible to common people. This is a microcosm of who God is and what He is trying

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Luke—On Screen!

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six language areas formed the Ogoja Language Commission in order to facilitate cooperative effort. Arrangements were made for two three-week script writing workshops to make minor adjustments to the texts of the Gospel of Luke in those languages so that the dubbing process could go smoothly. The adjustments were checked under the supervision of Bible translation consultants, and the adjusted texts were presented to local language committees, verified, and approved. Voice actors and actresses were sought, practice sessions held, and the recording was done in June 2012. We anticipate that the completed videos will be available by the end of this year. (Read more from Pastor Otronyi on page 6).

These videos will go beyond the printed Word, helping provide a clearer understanding of Scripture for these six language groups. A feeling of community solidarity combined with the tradition of oral communication will provide an effective setting in which groups of people see and hear the narrative of our Lord Jesus Christ in their own languages, and have the opportunity to discuss its significance. 📺

Rev. Chuck and Karen Tessaro are missionaries with Lutheran Bible Translators in Nigeria. Chuck serves as a translation consultant with numerous language projects. Karen loves to work with children, teaching Sunday school and other classes.



God is Faithful to His Workmen

by Rev. Linus Otronyi

“For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand, that we should walk in them.” Eph. 2:10

God is so faithful to His workmen. Late summer was a very busy time for me, with studies and the Luke Partnership Workshops in Ogoja. At first it looked so overwhelming with all the work and travel involved, but all went so well to the end. I believe that this is what I was created to do, and the One who prepared the work for me is faithful and can be trusted. He works in us, through us, for us, with us, and among us.

At the beginning of the last workshop, there were lots of ups and downs, including the death and burial of one prominent priest, and an attack along the road on expatriates by robbers. But in all of this, God revealed Himself as the owner of the work. If we do the part He has called us to do, He will take care of the rest.

As we started the workshop, these six languages, that never had a Scripture portion in their heart language, were eager to get to work. They were determined to conquer all challenges to produce translations for their people. At the end of the second week, each group had the translated story of the Good Samaritan and was eager to go to their villages that weekend to test the Scripture with other speakers of their language.

When they returned, like the seventy, they were all so happy and eager to share. We were elated to hear the different reports they brought back. “We cannot believe that Jesus is speaking in our language, so He will hear us when we pray to Him in our own language,” was one comment made by those who heard the translated Scripture. “I never knew that our language and people are so important to Jesus,” said others. Some asked, “When will the whole Bible be ready in our language?” Many agreed that, “It sounds sweeter to my ear past [i.e., more than] English. Now I understand the story of the Good Samaritan better.”

I count myself privileged to be among the workmen He is using to build His kingdom in bringing His word closer to His people in the language of their heart. May I never lose focus of His purpose for my life! 📖

Rev. Linus Otronyi is an LBT International Scholarship recipient. Because of his experience and excellent work, he has recently been recognized as an International Associate of LBT. An International Associate is a Lutheran in good standing in a country other than the U.S. who has at least three years of higher education or work experience in Bible translation.

Rev. Otronyi serves as coordinator for five mission organizations, including LBT, that work in various Scripture Engagement programs in Cross River State, Nigeria.

How is the Well?

by Rev. Chris LaBoube

Dagbani (pronounced daag-BAH-knee) is the language spoken here in Tamale, and in small pockets around northern Ghana. Although my language ability is still quite minimal, I can greet people. But there is no one simple phrase like, “Hi, how are you?”

Greetings here are based on what you were doing or where you have been. For example, if you are walking along, and you pass a woman who is carrying water on her head — a tremendous thing that women learn to do here at an early age — you would greet her and basically ask, “How was the well?” This question is not asking about the construction or stability of the well, but rather, “How are you doing now that you have gone to the well?”

The response for many greetings in Dagbani is simply one word: “Naa” (pronounced nah, with a lengthened ‘a’). I still haven’t been able to determine an English equivalent of this word, but the understanding is something like this: “It is / I am / The well is fine.” From what I’ve gathered, the word “naa” is more of an affirmation to the person who has greeted you. When Ghanaians greet, depending how much time they have to stop, they run through a handful of questions, asking about the person’s health, the health of one’s wife, the family, and so on. Greeting is an important part of Ghanaian culture, just one of the many things I have learned since my arrival here. 📖

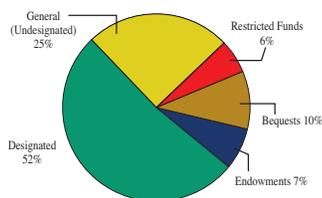
Rev. Chris LaBoube serves in Ghana as a Media Specialist.

LBT Partnership Support

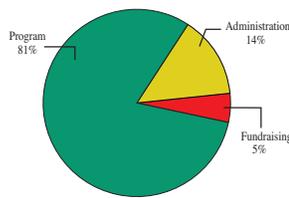
July 1 — September 30, 2012

	Unaudited 3rd Quarter	Unaudited Year-to-date
INCOME		
Designated	\$386,445	\$1,168,777
General (Undesignated)	182,887	661,122
Restricted Funds	42,179	172,863
Bequests	71,865	329,681
Endowments	52,425	166,066
Total Income	\$ 735,801	\$ 2,498,508

3rd Quarter Income



3rd Quarter Expenses



EXPENSES

Program	\$725,117	\$2,247,130
Administration	125,937	424,504
Fundraising	44,339	155,336
Total Expenses	895,393	2,826,970
Net Total	\$(159,592)	\$(328,462)

NOTE: During the third quarter of 2012, LBT did not purchase any equipment not reflected above.

CUT HERE

Birthdays

DECEMBER	JANUARY	FEBRUARY
2 Allen Larsen United States	4 Matthew Rudowske (2002) Botswana	3 Susan Kaiser United States
5 Isaac Esala (2008) Ghana	6 Karen Tessaro Nigeria	8 JoyAnna Federwitz (2008) Ghana
9 Larry Johnson United States	12 Rachael Nielsen Prefield/Sierra Leone	11 Anna DeLoach (2004) Papua New Guinea
14 Paul Federwitz Ghana	12 Joe Dunsey Service Center Staff	12 Gideon Kuhn (2012) LBTC/Prefield/ Cameroon
18 Joan Weber Cameroon	13 Karen Benesh Service Center Staff	16 Cindy Rodewald South Africa
19 Katherine Rudowske (1998) Botswana	14 Mike Buhrke Service Center Staff	17 Michael Megahan Botswana
22 Thomas Larsen (1997) United States	15 Alvina Federwitz Ghana/Liberia	23 Donald Jensen United States
24 Josh Wagner Prefield/Sierra Leone	22 David Federwitz Ghana	
25 John Davies Papua New Guinea	24 Karen Campbell Service Center Staff	
29 Terry Borchard Papua New Guinea	27 Aaron Beckendorf (2005) Botswana	
31 Mical Hilbert Prefield/Sierra Leone	29 Micah Federwitz (2006) Ghana	
	31 Carsten Hilbert (2011) Prefield/Sierra Leone	

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Much Ado about Bread

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to show. He is accessible through plain bread and wine connected with His word and used by His command. He is not far off and distant, only reachable through ancestors and by special ways of singing or speaking. He is imminently accessible through Christ.

Yes, Jesus is just using regular bread, and that's what we need to communicate. We are hoping that by keeping the word *borotyo* we can begin a conversation that breaks down the myths about who God is and makes Him more imminent and tangible to people in the common everyday things of life, not in some distant spiritual realm that has nothing to do with everyday life. 📖

Rev. Rich and Maya Rudowske and family serve with the Shekgalagari Translation Project in Botswana. They are currently on furlough in the U.S.

Gift Designations Your gifts in support of Mission Projects and Programs are applied to the designated project or program. When a designated project is fully funded, surplus funds are applied to comparable projects. When a designated program is fully funded, surplus funds are applied to the general fund.

CUT HERE

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 the **Rudowske family** as they return to Botswana to begin their second term serving in translation ministry among the Bakgalagari people.

GHANA

- Pray that the final preparations for the printing of the **Komba New Testament** will continue to move forward.
- Pray for continued culture and Dagbani language learning for **Rev. Chris LaBoube**.

CAMEROON

- Pray for **Martin and Joan Weber** as they return to Cameroon to begin new roles aiding the Department of Translation and Literacy in the Evangelical Lutheran Church of Cameroon.



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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.

Executive Director: Dr. Marshall R. Gillam



Did you know we're on Facebook?



- Pray for Rob and Mical Hilbert, Josh and Ruthie Wagner, and Rachael Nielsen as they participate in LBT's first Africa Training Course being held in Ghana, West Africa in early 2013. This three month experience provides practical and professional training for missionaries.
- Pray for Mary and Tom Holman as they help the Anufo team in Ghana polish their translation of Genesis and Exodus. Pray that the Anufo Old Testament Translation Project will be fully funded so that the three translators can work full time.

LIBERIA

- Pray that LIBTRALO (Liberian Translation and Literacy Organization) and the 16 language groups working in Liberia will be successful in their efforts to acquire support from language communities for literacy programs in local languages.



continues preparations for sending three new teams to Sierra Leone for work in various language projects.

- Pray for Rev. Nathan and Sarah Esala and family who have recently moved from Ghana to the U.S. so Nathan can prepare for future translation consulting. Pray for the family as they transition to U.S. culture.

SOUTH AFRICA

- Pray for safe travels for Mike and Cindy Rodewald in December. Mike has a trip to Ethiopia. Sons Caleb and Jacob will be traveling from the States to join their parents and younger brother Seth for Christmas.

ZAMBIA

- Pray that the Gospel of Mark in Nsenga will be published and used by the community by the end of the year.
- Pray for the three Nsenga translators, Fasten Tembo, Stansilas Lungu, and Fanely Phiri, as they continue work on the New Testament.

NIGERIA

- Praise God for Rev. Kierien Ayugha and Rev. Linus Otronyi, LBT's first International Associates.

UNITED STATES

- Pray for wisdom and financial provision for Don and Sharon Jensen as they anticipate retirement in early 2013.

SIERRA LEONE

- Pray for Jim Laesch, Associate Director of Language Programs, as he

