



LUTHERAN BIBLE TRANSLATORS

Messenger



Rev. Francis Kollie and Hawah Goll-Kotchi helped break ground for the new headquarters building.

LIBTRALO Breaks Ground for New Building

The long awaited day dawned bright and clear in Monrovia, Liberia, as the Liberian Translation and Literacy Organization (LIBTRALO) broke ground for its new headquarters. The new building will be the first permanent home for LIBTRALO, after using temporary rented facilities for almost

twenty years. In Liberian society, an important indicator of being a viable and successful organization is to have your own permanent headquarters. LBT is partnering with LIBTRALO to construct the office and training facility which will be the focal point for serving the nation and Liberian language communities for many generations.

“God has given me a divine gift. That gift is my own language,” said Rev. Francis Kollie, the Co-Chair of the LIBTRALO Board of Directors. “This is a groundbreaking for the place that will host my language. And the Bible will be translated into this language.”

Rev. Kollie was joined by other board members, LIBTRALO staff, government officials, and members of the public. Liberia’s president, Ellen Johnson-Sirleaf, was unable to attend but sent her greetings and congratulations through a letter read by Hawah Goll-Kotchi, Deputy Minister of Instruction (Department of Education).

“This is a unique occasion to appreciate God



Alvina Federwitz and LIBTRALO staff in 2003.

and to appreciate our partners who are making this building a reality,” Rev. Kollie continued. “The Word of God rightly tells us, our light is to shine and let the whole world see it. And the Word of God needs to shine in every corner of our nation, through translation, interpretation, and through leadership.”

Rev. Kollie expressed appreciation for the first LBT missionaries who came to Liberia in the 1970s, forming The Institute for Liberian Languages (TILL). TILL was closed in 1996 due to war. LIBTRALO was formed in 1995 and continued the projects begun by TILL, expanding to include nine additional languages.

LBT missionary Alvina Federwitz, who began serving in Liberia in 1974, also attended the ceremony. She works closely with LIBTRALO, developing Scripture Engagement materials and promoting Mother Tongue Education. She and her late husband, Rev. Dale Federwitz, served as mentors and advisors to LIBTRALO since the organization’s inception.



LIBTRALO produces literacy and worship materials in multiple languages.

It is LIBTRALO’s goal that every Liberian language has a workable writing system and to create quality materials so that the speakers of those languages

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The mission of Lutheran Bible Translators [LBT] is to make the Word of God accessible to those who do not yet have it in the language of their hearts.

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a heart
for missions

An Abundance of Gold

In May of last year, Rev. Rich Rudowske was the missionary speaker for our LBT Annual Dinner. During his presentation, he expressed how providing God's Word to the Shekgalagari people presented a golden opportunity to set an example for other language communities in Botswana.

As he repeated the phrase I thought, "What a great idea!" LBT's upcoming Golden Anniversary will be a golden opportunity to talk about, well, all those golden moments our God has so graciously provided.

Among other things, there have been 35 New Testaments and 2 Old Testaments completed since 1964, giving millions of people the opportunity to learn about Jesus Christ in their own mother tongues. Over the next few years there will be several more Old and New Testaments completed, while new projects begin.

Over these 50 years there have been many skilled missionaries, dedicated staff and board members, generous financial supporters and faithful prayer partners – each one exploring their golden opportunity for mission and ministry with LBT. These past 14 years as Executive Director have been a privilege and golden opportunity for me to work with a number of these wonderful people, all of whom love our Lord, love His Word, and are committed to making His Word accessible to those who do not yet have it.

King Solomon wrote, "For everything there is a season, and a time for every matter under heaven." All seasons have one thing in common — an end. And the end of my season here at LBT is drawing near. I will be retiring at the end of this year! But golden opportunities for ministry will continue to present themselves now and in the future. Your prayers, encouragement and financial support remain crucial as LBT rises to the challenges and possibilities of the next 50 years.

It has been a pleasure and honor to serve with you, bringing God's Word — pure gold! — to people around the world in their heart languages. Thank you, and may God's blessings be with you. 📖

Sincerely yours in Christ,

Dr. Marshall R. Gillam, CFRE
Executive Director



How Does This Sound?

by Chris Pluger

As we complete drafts of the books of the New Testament we invite guest reviewers to the office to help us refine the translation. We mainly read the books out loud, one paragraph at a time, and **listen**.

How does this paragraph of Nsenga Scripture sound?

- Is the meaning clear to the ear, not just the eye?
- Would reversing two clauses help the listener understand the flow of thought?
- Would repeating a key word a few more times help carry the main idea? Conversely, would using a synonym instead of repeating the same word make the verse more interesting and help keep the listener focused?
- Would tweaking the punctuation (a comma, a semi-colon, a dash, or a full stop and a new sentence) help the person reading out loud to better phrase the verse to make things easier in a public-reading situation?
- Is there another rhetorical device or a special conjunction we can use to make things sound more clear, natural and beautiful to the ear?

It has been estimated that church members **hear** the Scriptures more than they **see/read** them from a printed page, even in the U.S. This is all the more true in rural Africa, where literacy levels are lower and fewer people have the resources to purchase their own printed Bibles. Therefore, how the verse **sounds** is of primary importance.

After all, as Paul reminds us, "faith comes by hearing."

Chris and Janine Pluger and son Sean live in Petauke, Zambia, serving in translation ministry with the Nsenga people.

Lutheran Bible Translators

Making a Difference 1994-2004

It was a time of sorrow, as **war and violence raged worldwide**. The earth itself reflected our turmoil as **excessive heat** settled over the U.S., **locusts plagued** Africa, and **storms and earthquakes ravaged** communities around the world. Yet even as we suffered some of the greatest tragedies of modern times, **we celebrated peace**. A former President was recognized for his humanitarian efforts. Nations gathered together to compete not in war, but on the athletic field. And experts worldwide pooled their knowledge to prevent a potential computer crisis as the new century began.

Through it all, with the help of LBT missionaries, faithful supporters, coworkers and partners, God's Word quietly but insistently reached people in Côte d'Ivoire, Ecuador, Botswana, Liberia, Guatemala, Nigeria, Cameroon, Papua New Guinea, and Sierra Leone. **Ten New Testaments were dedicated** in languages such as Vai — with its unique script — Uspanteco, Samba, and Bukawa. LBT's mission was being fulfilled by bringing the Word of God to people in the language of their hearts.

But the work was far from over. Literacy and Scripture Engagement programs equipped and encouraged people to use their New Testaments. The Liberian Translation and Literacy Organization was founded to help facilitate programs in multiple Liberian languages. The Dhimba translation in Namibia was about to begin. Other translations were in progress, several nearing completion. By our 40th anniversary, 22 New Testaments had been dedicated!

Do you have memories about LBT or photos you'd like to share? Please visit www.LBT.org/jubilee to learn how you can help us celebrate 50 years in ministry. 📖



Mada New Testament dedication, Nigeria, 2000.

1994:

- † LBT founder Dr. Morris Watkins passes away
- † Yassar Arafat returns to Palestine after 27 years in exile
- † Amazon.com founded

1995:

- † Launching of LIBTRALO (Liberian Translation and Literacy Organization) in Liberia
- † LBT missionaries evacuated from Sierra Leone for second time
- † LBT hosts an audio Scripture seminar attended by six mission organizations

1996:

- † The Dhimba Translation Committee is formed in Namibia
- † Summer Olympics held in Atlanta, Georgia
- † Fighting breaks out in Monrovia, Liberia

1997:

- † The Anyi New Testament is dedicated in Côte d'Ivoire
- † The Cañar Quichua New Testament is dedicated in Ecuador

1998:

- † Average cost of gas is \$1.15/gallon
- † Tsunami destroys 10 villages in Papua New Guinea
- † Israel celebrates 50th Anniversary

1999:

- † LBT hosts a trip to the Holy Land to commemorate its 35th anniversary
- † The Kalanga New Testament is completed in Botswana
- † The world prepares for Y2K

2000:

- † The Western Krahn New Testament is dedicated in Liberia
- † The Uspanteco New Testament is dedicated in Guatemala
- † The Mada New Testament is dedicated in Nigeria

2001:

- † The Samba New Testament is dedicated in Cameroon
- † The Bukawa New Testament is dedicated in Papua New Guinea
- † 9/11

2002:

- † Civil War in Sierra Leone comes to an end
- † U.S. invades Afghanistan
- † Former President Jimmy Carter receives Nobel Peace Prize

2003:

- † End of second Liberian civil war
- † The Mende New Testament is dedicated in Sierra Leone
- † The Vai New Testament is dedicated in Liberia

2004:

- † LBT celebrates its 40th Anniversary
- † 60th anniversary of D-Day
- † Locust plagues hit west Africa



Just a Seed

by Mike Butterfield



Mike Butterfield

What do you think of when you consider the fact that Fall is well upon us? Children in school? Beautiful colors? Snow just ahead? How about harvest season? We all admire the hard-working farm community dedicating both daylight and nighttime hours harvesting the ripened crops. A Lutheran pastor recently was thinking about this as well when he observed, "Have you looked at harvested wheat, corn or beans and considered the fact that they each look identical to the seed that was originally planted?"

Seeds. Students of the Word would be likely to make a ready reference to the parable about seed growth or the mustard seed reference in Matthew's gospel. Yes, when properly cultivated and nurtured, even this tiniest of seeds becomes a tall tree in which birds nest. And, of course, the seed of faith implanted in us through water and the Word at our baptism, often described as being the size of the mustard seed, produces a faith that can move mountains.

Precious friend of Lutheran Bible Translators, I urge you to read the following account related to me by one of LBT's missionaries. It is a real life story of the eternal value of planting a seed. If you ever wonder about the real value of your financial contributions and prayers for the work of our mission and ministry, remember this.

An LBT missionary was serving in Bible translation ministry in Africa. There was a terrible drought one year in which both livestock and people died in large numbers. Among the people he discovered in his missionary travels was a young woman with a baby. Two weeks prior to the birth of that child the father had died. This new mom was eating one meal about every other day. She was malnourished and dehydrated but was attempting to nurse her infant.

The missionary and his wife invited the mother and child and her older children into their home. In exchange for working in their home, they paid for the older children to go to school and fed the family. It was also agreed that this young mother would teach her heart language to the missionaries. The missionary family would set up large Bible pictures and share both Old and New Testament truths while learning the mother tongue language. They also shared the Bible stories and pictures in smaller versions so the young woman could keep them.

After a few months, the mother and her children returned to their home. Shortly after, she invited the missionary to her village and into her hut. Her home was made from dried branches and cow manure and measured 10' x 15' with a ceiling barely 5' high. The only light inside was provided by the cook fire. But there the missionary found 50-60 children piled two to three high, sitting on laps and reciting the stories that accompanied the pictures the woman had received and treasured from the home of the missionary family. The seed of God's Word had been nurtured and took root in her heart by the power of the Holy Spirit. She heard, she believed and began to witness those truths to the children in her village Sunday school class.

The mission of Lutheran Bible Translators is to make God's Word accessible to those who do not yet have it in the language of their hearts. What powerful evidence this account offers that the Lord continues to make this mission and ministry effective after 49 years of existence. You continue to be our highly valued earthly partners in ministry support. Together our work is blessed by His grace alone in advancing the saving Gospel of Jesus Christ. May you be blessed in this partnership just as we are blessed to serve.

Need More Information?

Return this coupon to:

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Phone: 1-800-532-4253 or 630-897-0660 Fax: 630-897-3567
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Additional on-line giving opportunities and information about LBT are available on our web site: www.LBT.org

I Must Go to Your House Today

by Rev. Rich Rudowske

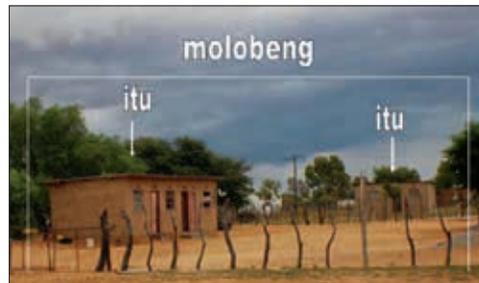
The Shekgalagari Bible Translation Project continues translation work in the Gospel of Luke. Recently I went out with the team for oral field testing.

One of the texts we read was the story of Zaccheus found in Luke 19:1-10. In verse 5, Jesus tells Zaccheus to come down from the tree, “for I must stay in your house today.” Our translation says “I must come to your yard (molobeng) today” and not “I must come to your house (moitung) today.” This is because you normally have your guests come into your ‘yard’ — still outdoors but inside the fence — which is all considered living space. For many the ‘house’ is a small room that is private, like a bedroom, so it is not normal to invite a guest in there.

Part of oral field testing is that the people listening to the text retell the story after it has been read. This helps to assess its understandability and how it is working orally/aurally. We noticed that when some of the people retold it they said that Jesus went to the ‘moitung’ of Zaccheus. When I asked them why he would go in there, they replied that we had said Zaccheus was a very wealthy tax collector. If he was wealthy, he probably lived in a larger home with a ‘kamoreya go rula’ (a sitting room) and he would have hosted Jesus in there.

So, while I thought we had made the right choice for the culture (lest Jesus invite himself into the man’s bedroom), we also have to take into account that Zaccheus was rich and it might be rude to make Jesus stay outside in that case. These are the sorts of cultural bridges we continue to build as we work together to tell the story of Jesus to the Bakgalagari in a way that speaks their hearts. 📖

The Rudowske family serves with the Shekgalagari translation in Ghanzi, Botswana.



Yard (molobeng) and houses (itu) on a typical Bakgalagari plot.



A Bakgalagari house (itu) owned by a wealthy person. The ‘kamoreya go rula’ is to the left of the front door, bedrooms to the right.

Tale of a Themne Translator

by Josh Wagner

I sat on a bench in a small village church near Makeni, Sierra Leone. I was there with my family for the Africa Training Course, learning about life on the mission field in anticipation of our first assignment with LBT.

Vibrant Themne singing surrounded me while I enthusiastically joined the clapping. One day I will understand, then speak, and eventually even sing in Themne. When it came to the liturgy reading from Isaiah I couldn’t understand that either. I did notice that the speaker’s words sounded slow and hesitant. I wondered if he had only recently learned to read his language. Being

so overwhelmed by the moment I forgot that there isn’t a Themne Old Testament. When I zoomed in with my video camera I saw “NIV” on the cover of the Bible. I later realized that he was actually reading English and translating on the fly into Themne so the congregation could understand. What an encouragement to see that the Themne will use the Bible in their heart language when it is finally available!

Josh and Ruthie Wagner, with son Elijah, serve in translation ministry with the Themne people of Sierra Leone.

The speaker was reading English and translating into Themne on the fly.



Africa Training Course

by Kory Fay

In November 2011, during a team meeting in Ghana, our field missionaries presented an idea to LBT leadership — create an event which would take training one step beyond our missionaries’ linguistic and cultural training at the Graduate Institute of Applied Linguistics in Dallas, Texas. This event would allow new missionaries to put their training into practice as well as learn essential skills needed to thrive on the field, even before they begin their long term assignments. Through several discussions over the course of 2011 and 2012 and much organization on the part of Paul and Ali Federwitz, the Ghana field staff, and the LBT Service Center staff, the first Africa Training Course (ATC) came into being.

ATC was a three month long course held in Tamale, Ghana, from February to April 2013. Participants for this first event were Rob, Mical, Carsten and Annabelle Hilbert and Josh, Ruthie and Elijah Wagner, the new missionary teams assigned to Sierra Leone. The training began with a four week course led by an expatriate Catholic priest and his Ghanaian colleague at the Tamale Institute for Cross-Cultural Studies (TICCS). TICCS focused on African worldview, African Christianity, learning languages through relationship building, and much more. Throughout these four weeks, field trips were provided to get participants out of the classroom and learning more about their surroundings.

Following TICCS, the LBT Ghana field staff facilitated morning long discussions (called LBT Seminars) on various topics that impact missionary service overseas. Such topics included cooking with local ingredients, shopping in local markets, driving on rough terrain and through busy cities with 4x4 vehicles, dealing with finances on the field, managing water and electrical systems, maintaining physical, emotional, and spiritual health on the field, relating to national partners, and making contingency plans in the face of crises. For all of the participants, the LBT Seminars were among the highlights of the training course. They



A visit with a chieftenship in Ghana.

provided an opportunity for everyone to benefit from the collective knowledge of missionaries who have a variety of roles, experience, and family structures and to put the knowledge into practice immediately.

The Hilbert family and Josh Wagner also traveled to Sierra Leone with Jim Laesch, LBT Associate Director for Language Programs. During a two week stay, they saw their project sites for the first time, met the translation teams they will be working with, and searched for available housing and resources in their future home areas.

Other elements of the training course included observing the translation checking process for two different language groups, a workshop on relationships in an African context facilitated by a missionary care organization based in Accra, a village stay among the Komba people with participation in a Scripture Engagement workshop and a few literacy classes, and debriefing the whole experience before returning to the U.S.



The Hilberts change a tire with assistance from LBT missionaries David and Paul Federwitz.

The Hilberts and Wagners agreed that the training course was well worth it. The team building aspects were especially appreciated. They also commented, “It was helpful and practical to see other singles/couples/families function day to day. It helped us better understand the things we need to consider as a family and how to be sensitive with other team members. We feel much more equipped for both moving to and living in Sierra Leone.”

As the Hilberts and Wagners begin their assignments, our hope is that the contents of this course would greatly benefit them, forestalling struggles that could have come about had they not participated in ATC. Please pray for them and their coworkers in Sierra Leone as they begin this new chapter of life and ministry. 



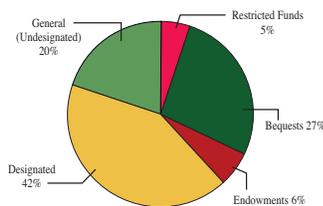
Dr. Dapila of the Bible Society of Sierra Leone met with the families.

LBT Partnership Support

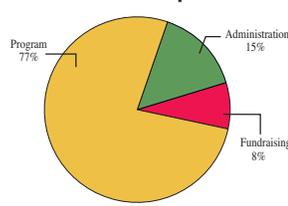
July 1, 2013—September 30, 2013

	Unaudited 3rd Quarter	Unaudited Year-to-date
INCOME		
Designated	\$ 373,504	\$ 1,170,258
General (Undesignated)	179,242	750,315
Restricted Funds	47,643	166,246
Bequests	241,396	398,363
Endowments	50,017	160,634
Total Income	\$ 891,803	\$ 2,645,815

3rd Quarter Income



3rd Quarter Expenses



EXPENSES

	3rd Quarter	Year-to-date
Program	\$ 702,639	\$ 2,301,618
Administration	136,307	442,920
Fundraising	70,797	238,992
Total Expenses	909,743	2,983,530
Net Total	\$ (17,940)	(337,715)

NOTE: During the third quarter of 2013, LBT purchased three computers for \$3,121, not reflected above.

CUT HERE

CUT HERE

Birthdays

DECEMBER

- 2 **Allen Larsen**
United States
- 5 **Isaac Esala (2008)**
United States
- 9 **Larry Johnson**
United States
- 14 **Paul Federwitz**
Ghana
- 18 **Joan Weber**
Cameroon
- 19 **Katherine Rudowske**
(1998)
Botswana
- 22 **Thomas Larsen**
(1997)
United States
- 24 **Josh Wagner**
Sierra Leone
- 25 **John Davies**
Papua New Guinea
- 29 **Terry Borchard**
Papua New Guinea
- 31 **Mical Hilbert**
Sierra Leone

JANUARY

- 4 **Matthew Rudowske**
(2002)
Botswana
- 6 **Karen Tessaro**
Nigeria
- 12 **Joe Dunsey**
Service Center Staff
- 14 **Mike Buhrke**
Service Center Staff
- 15 **Alvina Federwitz**
Ghana/Liberia
- 22 **David Federwitz**
Ghana
- 24 **Karen Campbell**
Service Center Staff
- 27 **Aaron Beckendorf**
(2005)
Botswana
- 29 **Micah Federwitz**
(2006)
Ghana
- 31 **Carsten Hilbert**
(2011)
Sierra Leone

FEBRUARY

- 3 **Susan Kaiser**
United States
- 8 **JoyAnna Federwitz**
(2008)
Ghana
- 11 **Anna DeLoach**
(2004)
Papua New Guinea
- 12 **Gideon Kuhn**
(2012)
Cameroon
- 16 **Cindy Rodewald**
South Africa
- 17 **Michael Megahan**
Botswana
- 17 **Christina Riddle**
Ghana

FOLD

LIBTRALO Breaks Ground for New Building

Continued from page 1

will become literate in their mother tongues. LIBTRALO wants all Liberians equipped to worship God with their own music and to have access to God's message of love (the Holy Scriptures) in their own languages. Lutheran Bible Translators exists for the purpose of making God's Word accessible to those people who do not yet have it in the language of their hearts. It is this shared value of making God's Word accessible that is the foundation of the partnership between LBT and LIBTRALO.

Rev. Kollie summed it up well: "We pray that the time will come when the Bible is in every church and in every corner of this nation and the Gospel will be preached in our national languages, which will make the Word of God go deep into the heart of people."

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.

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 **Rev. Tim Beckendorf** and the **Khwe Bible translation team** as they continue to check portions of Scripture that have been translated and begin releasing various books of the New Testament early in 2014.
- Pray for **Rob and Eshinee Veith** as they finish their partnership development furlough and return to service in Botswana early next year.

CAMEROON

- Pray for **Martin and Joan Weber** as they work alongside the Lutheran Church in Cameroon's Department of Translation and Literacy to help facilitate Bible translation and Scripture Engagement work in various languages.



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Comments and inquiries are invited. Correspondence may be directed to the Messenger Editor.

Executive Director:
Dr. Marshall R. Gillam



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This mailing was assembled by volunteers!

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Lutheran Bible Translators is an independent mission group, founded in 1964, dedicated to making the Word of God accessible 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?



ETHIOPIA

- Pray for **Claire S.** as she arrives in Ethiopia early in 2014 and begins Amharic language learning. Pray that she will adapt well and learn the language effectively.
- Pray for discernment for **Jim and Susan Kaiser** as they investigate the possibility of relocating to Ethiopia for ministry in the future.

LIBERIA

- Pray that the **Kisi and Kpelle Bible** typesetting and printing process would go quickly and smoothly, so that the Bible could be launched in 2014 in those languages.

NAMIBIA

- Praise God for the desire of Dhimba church leaders in Angola and Namibia for the **Dhimba New Testament**. Pray that it would be made widely available and used by these church leaders and the community at large as it is launched in the coming months.

NIGERIA

- Pray that the audio recordings of the **New Testament** in six Ogoja languages will be completed, distributed, and widely used in each language community.



- Pray for **Rev. Linus Otronyi** as he helps to coordinate the 6th Luke Partnership workshop in February 2014 for five different languages in Nigeria.

SIERRA LEONE

- Pray for **Rob and Mical Hilbert** and **Josh and Ruthie Wagner** as they experience language and culture learning during their initial months of ministry in Sierra Leone.

UNITED STATES

- Praise God for His faithfulness throughout the first 50 years of LBT's ministry. Pray for His blessings and guidance in the future.
- Pray for the preparations for **Crossroads 2014 – Botswana** happening May 27-June 14, 2014. *Crossroads* is a three week trip for those interested in mission service to observe and experience ministry in a field context.
- Pray for **Paul Federwitz** and the **Service Center staff** as they work together to implement Sharepoint, an online data collection and collaborative working site.

