



Messenger

Dhimba Receive New Testament

The Dhimba people of Namibia celebrated the arrival of the New Testament in their language on January 25, 2014. LBT missionary John Strasen, who worked with the translation team to bring the manuscript to completion, and former missionary Judy Olson, who served as literacy advisor, attended. They were joined by Rev. Rich Rudowkse, LBT’s regional director for southern Africa and David and Ruth Snyder, LBT Interim Executive Director.

Several LBT missionaries have served in Namibia over the years. Survey work, literacy, Scripture Engagement and translation efforts were all aided by the efforts of LBT. But the desire and determination to have God’s Word in the Dhimba language originated with the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Namibia (ELCIN) and Rev. Johannes Tolu, head translator for Dhimba Bible Translation and Literacy Project since 1998.

New LBT Director Appointed

The LBT Board of Directors has unanimously named **Dr. Michael Rodewald** the new Executive Director of Lutheran Bible Translators. Mike and his wife, Cindy, served with LBT in Liberia and Botswana, and are currently LBT associate missionaries. They live in South Africa, where Mike is Regional Director-Africa with LCMS Office of International Missions, Pretoria.



“The vision of LBT to make God’s Word accessible to those who otherwise would never have a chance to hear is one in which I remain honored to participate,” remarked Mike. “I look forward to serving with the board, missionaries, staff, donors, and friends in the years ahead that others may hear God’s message and in the doing, come to know the saving power of the Gospel through the working of the Holy Spirit.”

David Snyder, LBT Director of Program Ministries, will act as Interim Executive Director until June 1, 2014, when Dr. Rodewald is scheduled to begin his service.

ELCIN has its roots in the Finnish Evangelical Lutheran Mission, a group of Finnish missionaries who came to northern Namibia in 1870 to plant the seeds of Christianity. Today, the church has almost 700,000 members. Its mission is to proclaim the Gospel of Christ to every person.

Rev. Tolu was ordained as an ELCIN pastor in 1982. He was first called to serve as a missionary in a congregation in Ruacana. In 1986 he began similar outreach work in Opuwo, serving as parish pastor and also missionary-at-large to surrounding, un-evangelized areas. While in Ruacana he worked on the Dhimba translation of St. John’s Gospel.

Namibia’s struggle for independence from the apartheid government of South Africa put the Dhimba translation on hold until 1994, when ELCIN encouraged continuance of the work. With the help of Finnish missionary friends and LBT, Rev. Tolu returned to part-time translation work in 1995.

In 1998 Rev. Tolu attended a one-year course at the Bible Institute of South Africa in Cape Town. The course equipped mother-tongue translators in biblical languages, translation practice and linguistics. Rev. Tolu was able to attend due to a generous scholarship through LBT from the International Lutheran Women’s Missionary League. He then began work full time as head translator and driving force for the project.

Continued on page 5

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.

Inside this issue...

In Relation to Translation	2	Simply Extraordinary!.....	4
New Missionaries Begin Assignments ..	2	Missio Dei.....	5
Reaching Out to the World 2004-2014.....	3	Technology in Bible Translation	6



In Relation to Translation

by Rev. Michael Megahan

Sometimes, what appears to be a simple matter of translation is not as easy as it seems. Consider the words *brother* and *sister*. We can safely assume that in most cultures there is a word for *brother* and another for *sister*. But one will find that how different cultures conceptualize these relationships and speak about them is not always the same as in English (or Biblical Greek or Biblical Hebrew). In Kalanga, the language group we work with in Botswana, there are two words, both of which can mean either *sister* or *brother*, depending on the gender of the person who is talking.

If I am referring to my *brother*, I call him *nning'una*. I refer to my *sister* as *hazwadzi*. But my *sisters* will call each other *nning'una* and will call me *hazwadzi*. These words can also be used to refer to cousins (on the mother's side only). So, instead of *brother* and *sister*, we have *sibling of same gender* and *sibling of opposite gender*, or *cousin of same gender* and *cousin of opposite gender*. There is also a special term for an older sibling.

In translating, then, we need to know the gender of the speaker, the gender of the person being referred to and if they are sibling or cousin (on mother's side) and age relation to the speaker in order to select the correct word. It gets even more complicated when referring to aunts and uncles — I won't even try to explain! Just keep us in prayer as we try to faithfully translate — even the seemingly simple things. 📖

Rev. Michael and Jo Ann Megahan serve with the Kalanga Old Testament Translation project in Botswana. The New Testament was dedicated in 2009.

New Missionaries Begin Assignments

Josh, Ruthie, and Elijah Wagner arrived in Sierra Leone to begin their first assignment in November 2013. They will be serving with the Themne translation project.



THE WAGNER FAMILY



Rob, Mical, Carsten, and Annabelle Hilbert began their first assignment, also in Sierra Leone, in December 2013. They will serve with the Mende translation project.

Many of the Bible resources used by Ethiopian translators are written in English. **Claire Schuerman** began her English as a Second Language (ESL) assignment in Ethiopia in January 2014, working with several language groups to help them improve their proficiency in English.



CLAIRE SCHUERMAN

Lutheran Bible Translators

Reaching Out to the World 2004-2014

The century was still new, but old problems plagued the world as **natural disasters caused massive damage** and killed hundreds of thousands. Rising prices and falling economies triggered a **financial crisis** that affected countries around the globe. We learned to communicate with each other through ever **changing technology**, while still trying to **solve our differences** through war.

But God's Word has never been limited by geography, boundaries, or politics. As mankind explored the heavens, our heavenly Father blessed the efforts of LBT through the **dedication of twelve New Testaments**, one Old Testament, and one complete Bible. People in Cameroon, Papua New Guinea, Ghana, the Philippines, Australia, Sierra Leone, Togo, and Ecuador were able to read and hear Scripture in their own languages, many for the very first time.

In this jubilee year, we **remain dedicated** to making God's Word accessible to those who do not have it in the language of their hearts. We invite you to celebrate with us all that God has done and all that is yet to come. Please visit www.LBT.org/jubilee for celebration ideas, recipes, activities for kids, and more. We'll be adding additional materials throughout the year! 📖



Martin Weber presents a Kwanja New Testament to a new Kwanja chief in 2007.

2004

- † The National World War II Memorial opens to the public in Washington D.C.
- † Facebook is launched
- † Over 200,000 are killed after a massive earthquake and tsunami hit southeast Asia

2005

- † Hurricane Katrina strikes southern U.S.
- † Pope John Paul II dies
- † YouTube goes online

2006

- † The Kwanja New Testament is dedicated in Cameroon
- † The Kobon New Testament is dedicated in Papua New Guinea
- † Pluto is downgraded from a planet to a dwarf planet
- † Twitter is launched

2007

- † The Anufo New Testament is dedicated in Ghana
- † The Ayta Mag-Anchi New Testament is dedicated in the Philippines
- † The Vuté New Testament is dedicated in Cameroon
- † The Kriol New Testament is dedicated in Australia

2008

- † The Kono New Testament is dedicated in Sierra Leone
- † The Ipili New Testament is dedicated in Papua New Guinea
- † The Moba New Testament is dedicated in Togo

2009

- † The Minimib New Testament is dedicated in Papua New Guinea
- † Audio recording of the Ipili New Testament in Papua New Guinea
- † The longest total solar eclipse of the 21st century occurs over parts of Asia

2010

- † The Haruai New Testament is dedicated in Papua New Guinea
- † Average price of gas is \$2.73/gallon
- † Gulf of Mexico oil spill

2011

- † The Cañar Quichua Old Testament is dedicated in Ecuador
- † Thirty-eight clergy from different language groups in Nigeria come together for the Ogoja Scripture Engagement Seminar
- † Earthquake and tsunami damage cause nuclear disaster in Japan
- † U.S. troops leave Iraq

2012

- † The Jesus Film is dubbed into six languages in the Ogoja region of Nigeria
- † LBT begins partnership with Mekane Yesus in Ethiopia
- † Former Liberian President Charles Taylor found guilty of war crimes
- † Curiosity lands on Mars
- † Prince William marries Kate Middleton

2013

- † The Krio Bible is dedicated in Sierra Leone
- † Dr. Mike Rodewald named new LBT Executive Director
- † After almost 20 years, LBT missionaries return to live and serve in Sierra Leone

2014

- † LBT's 50th Anniversary
- † Dhimba New Testament is dedicated in Namibia



Simply Extraordinary!

by Mike Butterfield

Take a moment and consider the events in your life that caused such a response you find it difficult to describe your reaction. Perhaps you recall with me those (much) earlier days when you were wondering what “real love” is. How did you attempt to explain it to your son or daughter when they sought your wisdom? Or recall the moment when you held your first child. That’s a reflection for many of us that can never be repeated nor described. Similar wonderment and awe overcome me when I seek to grasp God’s creative powers as I observe snow-capped mountains, river gorges, radiant leaf colors in the fall, birds flying south, animals instinctively caring for their young and all that exists from His hand. Beyond description. Simply extraordinary!



Mike Butterfield

I am humbled to share with you another simply extraordinary experience I have repeated multiple times during my four years of service with LBT. Based upon my personal conversations with hundreds of LBT supporters, I am certain that this is an experience we share. I’m referring to the inability to grasp and be able to describe adequately the extraordinary commitment to service carried out by those men and women who serve as missionaries of our Lord through LBT.

For me this experience began only one month into my tenure with LBT. I vividly recall the sense of true privilege I had when I was introduced to Alvina Federwitz, the first missionary I met. I recall it as if it were yesterday. I had become aware that Alvina had served in Liberia for 34 years, 26 of them with her sainted husband, Rev. Dale Federwitz. I was amazed that they continued to serve through two Liberian civil wars. I was even more amazed to learn that all of their four children were similarly serving their Lord as missionaries

somewhere in the world today. I recall confessing to Alvina that I could never imagine myself serving our Lord in the environmental conditions in which she serves. She smiled and nodded understandingly as she offered this wise reply, “Mike, it’s all about being called. It’s where the Lord has placed me.”

Now I fast-forward to December of 2013. Early in that month, four people-of-God — two new missionary couples — set up their households in Sierra Leone, West Africa. Josh and Ruthie Wagner, with Elijah (1) and Rob and Mical Hilbert with Carsten (3) and Annabelle (1), undertook their new missionary ministry callings. Both couples had been preparing for this lifetime of service most intensely for the past two years, receiving training and traveling extensively in order to gain prayer and financial support from ministry partners — many of you. While their commitment to service is truly extraordinary, it is similarly extraordinary that thousands of Christians such as you are led to pray and contribute financially each and every year in support of Gospel-driven, heart-language ministry.

I believe we are able to understand such commitment ONLY by concluding that **God has prepared ordinary people to serve such an EXTRAORDINARY GOD.** He has revealed this profound and personal calling to Christian service to Alvina Federwitz, to the Hilberts and Wagners and to you and me through Paul’s words to the Corinthians in Chapter 12 when he writes:

“Now there are varieties of gifts, but the same Spirit; and there are varieties of service, but the same Lord; and there are varieties of activities, but it is the same God who empowers them all in everyone. To each is given the manifestation of the Spirit for the common good. All these are empowered by one and the same Spirit who apportions to each one individually as He wills.” 

Need More Information?

Return this coupon to:

Mike Butterfield
Lutheran Bible Translators, 303 N Lake Street, PO Box 2050,
Aurora, IL 60507-2050
Phone: 1-800-532-4253 or 630-897-0660 Fax: 630-897-3567
E-mail: mbutterfield@lbt.org

Your Name _____

Address _____

City/State/Zip _____

Phone with Area Code _____

Please send me a free subscription to your quarterly estate planning newsletter, **INSIGHTS**.

I would like information on making a gift of stock by electronic transfer.

Please contact me.

Making a Gift?

Your tax-deductible gift can be made by check or credit card. Please use the enclosed self-addressed envelope.

Credit Card:

Visa MasterCard Discover American Express

Credit Card Number: _____

Expiration Date: _____

Name on Card: _____

Amount of Gift: _____

Signature: _____

I would like to make a regular monthly donation by major credit card.

I would like to make a one-time gift.

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

Missio Dei

THE MISSION OF GOD

by David Snyder

I recently saw a glimpse of activity that deeply encouraged me. We were privileged to have two African leaders visit us at the LBT Service Center. They expressed their appreciation for our partnership. They specifically mentioned that they appreciate the fact that we take the time to listen carefully to understand what they are saying. They said not all western mission organizations do this. We claim this is one of our core values — and it was encouraging to hear someone from another organization validate that.

I needed that encouragement because sometimes I find myself discouraged that so few people seem to care — especially about the almost 2,000 language groups that the Church has never even attempted to offer God’s Holy Word. It is hard for me to forget the words of a little old lady who said, “It is as if the Holy Spirit has peeked over a wall and seen us” when she heard the story of Abraham sacrificing Isaac — the first bit of Scripture ever translated into her language. She felt found by God, and I wonder why it took hundreds and hundreds and hundreds of years for the Church to bring this message to her.

One of our visitors was Dr. Paul Opoku-Mensah, a Ghanaian and a leader in the Bible translation movement. He recently initiated a conference on the state of Bible translation in Africa. His desire was to stir up African leaders to really see the need of their own people to have God’s Word. He wants African



Dr. Paul Opoku-Mensah

leaders to do something about this directly. True, Paul wants the assistance of the international community. But it is clear that the Holy Spirit has awakened Paul’s heart with a deep desire to not only participate, but lead forward. This refreshes and encourages me.

Also visiting was Dr. Gilbert Ansre. For years Professor Ansre has been teaching African students at the university level and encouraging them to read Scripture and apply it to the issues facing Africa life. Africans may be struggling with coming-of-age rituals (there’s a local idiom for that), or ethnocide (local history plays into this), or the use of magic and occult powers to harm people (certainly there are local words to describe these rituals). Knowing that language is a key to culture and a key to deep understanding, Professor Ansre demands that his students know the Word of God, think about God through their own language, and be able to express Biblical concepts in their own metaphors. Only in this way can they speak to relevant issues on the tongues of local audiences. Again, wow!



Dr. Gilbert Ansre

You are involved in God’s mission. *Missio Dei* is a phrase you may have heard in some circles — the Mission of God, and we partner in it. We are an important part, but nonetheless just a part. As you read in our publications and

Continued on page 7

Dhimba Receive New Testament

Continued from page 1

The new Dhimba New Testament is the very first complete book of Scripture for the Dhimba nation, which numbers over 30,000. The majority (about 65%) of Dhimba live in southern Angola. Basing the work in Namibia was done for practical reasons; however the Dhimba speakers in Angola have eagerly been asking Rev. Tolu for years: “Where are the Dhimba Bibles? You say they will soon be done, but we do not see them. Are you sure you have done this work? We need to have the Bible in our language.”

With thanks to God, Pastor Tolu can now say, YES, the New Testament is now available. By God’s grace, and LBT’s faithful supporters, LBT will be joining the Scripture promotion and Christian education efforts of the national Lutheran Churches in both Namibia and Angola. 



Rev. Tolu (in the red shirt) and members of the Dhimba translation team.



Technology in Bible Translation

by Sarah Esala

No electricity. No cell phone reception. No computers in the homes and schools. Families sending kids to boarding school for their secondary school education. This has long been the situation for families in the Ghanaian town we lived in for ten years, as well as many other rural West African villages. Computer education in our local Nasuan school consisted of the teacher drawing a computer on the board and the kids labeling the parts — kind of like an anatomy lesson for the computer rather than the human body and not a good way to learn.

It's no longer a paradox to have a mud-walled hut and cell tower in the same picture.

This is changing. The technology that has been knocking at the door of West Africa (and could be accessed in the larger urban areas for a while now) is being welcomed into the village home. How? Why? And the good Lutheran question “What does this mean” for Bible translation?

Meet my friend's daughter, Grace. She attended boarding school for five years. While there, she took a computer class and received a cell phone. She was also exposed to the potential of technology, BUT this was left behind when she returned to Nasuan on school breaks. Then in her last year of school, when she came home for Christmas, a shiny new cell tower heralded to our town, “Go ye to the market and get thee a phone. You've got coverage.” That's exactly what happened. In a shockingly short amount of time, nearly every household had a phone, and these students who had been exposed to technology's possibilities were eagerly sharing their knowledge. They were a bridge.

When I visited my friend after the installation of the cell tower, I found Grace sitting under her family's grass covered shade hut with phone in hand. Facebook, Wikipedia, and college registration information were being accessed. She took photos and listened to downloaded music. With one small affordable phone that could be easily recharged, she had the capacity of a radio, internet, bank (if she wanted to send money), and camera. She held a whole new world in the palm of her hand...and so did the rest of the village.

You're probably aware that recorded Scripture portions and Bible songs can be accessed on phones for easy listening, but that just scratches the surface of what technology can do when applied to Scripture Engagement.

Nathan attended several Bible translation conferences in the fall of 2013, and the role of technology in our work was a hot topic. Every medium (print, oral, electronic) needs to be handled appropriately for that specific medium. For instance, publishing a Bible on the web needs to be done in a different way than the traditional printed text with occasional illustrations; just posting a PDF isn't adequate. It is now even possible to use a virtual studio to record the New Testament during and as part of the translation process. The audio and print can be released at the same time! Better yet, they help improve each other prior to publication. We pray for continuing creativity and wisdom as technologies are tapped and developed to engage people in God's Word in their heart language. 

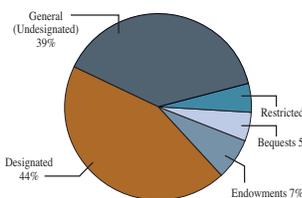
Rev. Nathan and Sarah Esala served with the Komba New Testament translation team in northern Ghana. They currently reside in Dublin, Ohio, while Nathan pursues a PhD, preparing him for Bible translation consultant ministry.

LBT Partnership Support

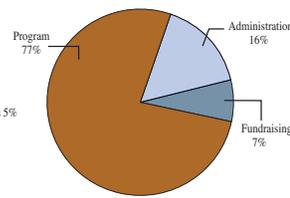
October 1, 2013—December 31, 2013

	Unaudited 4th Quarter	Unaudited Year-to-date
INCOME		
Designated	\$ 577,547	\$ 1,747,805
General (Undesignated)	515,810	1,266,125
Restricted Funds	62,962	229,207
Bequests	61,564	459,927
Endowments	87,867	311,114
Total Income	\$ 1,305,750	\$ 4,014,178

4th Quarter Income



4th Quarter Expenses



EXPENSES

	4th Quarter	Year-to-date
Program	\$ 776,366	\$ 3,093,201
Administration	158,382	610,480
Fundraising	70,030	309,140
Total Expenses	1,004,778	4,012,821
Net Total	\$ 300,972	\$ 1,357

NOTE: During the last quarter of 2013, LBT was able to purchase a missionary vehicle at a total cost of \$43,384.55. This cost is not reflected above.

Missio Dei

Continued from page 5

Facebook posts about the celebration for the Dhimba New Testament, you will again see how we are a part in what God has been doing through His Spirit and His people.

We Lutherans who have gathered together under the name “Lutheran Bible Translators” each joyfully share the resources that God has entrusted to us. We each use the skills He has given to us to grow those resources so we have more to share. We do this differently — whether that be primarily through skilled labor as in my case, or prayer as is the case of my friend Hank, encouraging notes as in the case of my friend Ramona, or dollars as in the case of my friend Bill. The compliments bestowed on us by our African partners fall to each of us. It is hard, but rewarding, to be part of God’s global body and God’s mission. 📖

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.

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**
United States
- 22 **Hannah Federwitz**
(2006)
Ghana
- 24 **Danny DeLoach**
Papua New Guinea
- 26 **Kory Fay**
Service Center Staff
- 28 **Mae Johnson**
United States
- 30 **Janine Pluger**
Zambia

APRIL

- 13 **Jonathan Burmeister**
United States
- 13 **Tim Beckendorf**
Botswana
- 17 **Annaka Esala**
(2004)
United States
- 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)
United States
- 2 **John Strasen**
Botswana
- 11 **Mike Rodewald**
South Africa

- 12 **Tobias Kuhn**
(2010)
Cameroon
- 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)
Papua New Guinea
- 21 **Kendra Larsen**
(1996)
United States
- 25 **Mike Kuhn**
Cameroon
- 28 **Ken Bunge**
United States
- 28 **Ellyn Miller** (1993)
Thailand

FOLD

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**
- Give praise that the **Kalanga Bible** is nearing completion and may be ready for typesetting as early as 2015.
- Pray for clarity as **Rich Rudowski** and the **Shekgalagari team** check translation portions with people in the local villages. Pray that the book of Luke will be completed and published this year.

- Pray for **Eshinee and Rob Veith** as they resume their ministry in Botswana after spending several months in the U.S. on furlough.

ETHIOPIA

- Pray for **Claire Schuerman** as she settles into life in Ethiopia and begins language learning.



Lutheran Bible Translators • PO Box 2050 • Aurora, IL 60507-2050

Non-Profit
Organization
U.S. Postage
PAID
Permit No. 80
Aurora, IL 60507

Messenger

Volume 41, Number 1
Winter 2014
David Snyder, Editor
Editorial management by Linda Gari
Printed at Kelmscott Communications, Aurora, IL

The Messenger is the official quarterly periodical of Lutheran Bible Translators, Inc. (LBT), 303 N. Lake St., PO Box 2050, Aurora, Illinois 60507-2050.
(630) 897-0660 FAX (630) 897-3567
1-800-53-BIBLE 1-800-532-4253.
Web Site: www.LBT.org E-mail: info@LBT.org
Standard A Non-Profit postage paid at Aurora, Illinois. Printed in the U.S.A.

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

Interim Executive Director:
David Snyder



©2014 Lutheran Bible Translators, Inc.
Permission is granted to excerpt from this publication.
Please send a copy of your use of material to the editor. Thank you!
This mailing was assembled by volunteers!

A Canadian edition of this newspaper is published by Lutheran Bible Translators of Canada, 137 Queen St. S., Kitchener, ON N2B 1W2.

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?



GHANA

- Give praise that the **Komba New Testament** translation is completed. Pray for receptive hearts and minds as the Komba people wait to receive the printed manuscript.

NAMIBIA

- Praise God that the **Dhimba New Testament** is in the hands of the Dhimba people.



UNITED STATES

- Give praise for **Marshall Gillam's** 17 years of service with LBT. Ask God to bless him as he adjusts to retirement.
- Give thanks that **Mike Rodewald** has accepted the position of LBT Executive Director. Pray for the Rodewald family as they prepare to transition from life in Africa to life in the U.S.

ZAMBIA

- Give praise that work has begun on the **Nsenga Jesus Film**, and that plans are in place to record the dialogue this August.

LIBERIA

- Give praise for **Alvina Federwitz** and her 40 years of missionary service in Liberia.

SIERRA LEONE

- Give praise for the safe arrival of the **Wagner and Hilbert families** in Sierra Leone. Pray for them as they continue to adjust to a new culture.
- Pray for a safe and healthy pregnancy for **Ruthie Wagner**.

