

# LBT the messenger

lutheran bible translators  
**GOD'S WORD**  
for every language

## Celebrating with All the Saints in Ghana

[Emily Wilson, LBT Staff]

**HOW** did you celebrate All Saints' Day last year? All Saints' Day is a time of reflection. However, we are also called to consider the Church Universal—after all, we are celebrating all of the saints around the world who have been called to serve in God's mission.

This past All Saints' Day was certainly a celebration for the Church Universal as the Komba New Testament was dedicated in Gbintiri, Ghana. Hundreds—Christians and non-Christians alike—expressed their great joy at having the New Testament in their own language.

For some of the non-Christians, the event was a source of pride; their joy was rooted in the fact that an important book was written in their own language. It was a celebration of their cultural identity. Even Muslim leaders encourage the reading of the New Testament, since they view Jesus as a prophet.

Pastor Phil Cook, from Lamb of God Lutheran Church in Flower Mound, Texas, and a longtime mission partner of LBT's work among the Komba people, attended the dedication event. He reflected that as Christians, we know that "through this translation, God will now be speaking into the lives of Muslim Kombas, and the Holy Spirit will be working in those words to bring them to faith."

On the day following the launching of the Komba New Testament, the translated Scripture was read in worship. Pastor Ken Krause, a mission partner of the Komba project from Mt. Olive Lutheran Church in



Reading the New Testament in Komba for the first time.



Our brothers and sisters in Christ receiving the Komba New Testament.

Rockford, Illinois, was also able to attend the event. He commented on the joyous reactions of people who had finally received God's Word in their heart language. "To be present when the people were able to read from the newly dedicated New Testament for the first time in worship was especially moving. I loved the way they clapped after each reading." God's Word of life and salvation brings joy and hope and is always worth celebrating.

Both Pastor Cook and Pastor Krause rejoiced in witnessing the dedication on All Saints' Day and reflected on what it meant for the Church—Christ's body. The weekend following the dedication, Pastor Cook celebrated "All Saints' Day, Part II" with his congregation,

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## Words to the Wise

LBT missionary Chris Pluger is currently on furlough and has completed his master's thesis at the Graduate Institute for Applied Linguistics in Dallas, Texas. While serving with the Nsenga Translation Team in Zambia, he collected 270 Nsenga proverbs. The translators used them as models for translating Biblical proverbs in a style that would be recognized by the people as "proverbial." Here is a brief sample of traditional wisdom from the Nsenga people.

"Where the elephant has died, there are tusks."

***Where there is smoke, there is fire.***

"The one who was warning people about the slippery patch fell."

***Take your own advice.***

"What has horns can't be covered with a basket."

***Something evil can't be hidden.***

"The rat died by eating a very big bite."

***Don't bite off more than you can chew.***

"What you have is what you use to kill the snake."

***A bird in the hand is worth two in the bush.***

"The one who mentions a lion, climb!"

***Speak of the devil...***

"A big head cannot avoid a blow."

***The person in charge has to deal with all of the problems.***

"A shy mouse starved in his hole."

***It's better to ask than to suffer in silence.***

"To sleep on the best spot, you need to be the first to go to bed."

***The early bird catches the worm.***

"Cross while the river is still only knee high."

***An ounce of prevention is worth a pound of cure.***

"If you want rain, you should also be ready for mud."

***Be prepared for the consequences.***

"The one with a mouth is not lost."

***If you don't know what to do, ask!***

## The County of Los Angeles Honors LBT

**LBT** was awarded a certificate of congratulations by the County of Los Angeles—where LBT was founded—for 50 years of service. "A lot has changed since 1964," says LBT's executive director Dr. Mike Rodewald, "but southern California will always be the place where the vision of Lutheran Bible Translators took root and prospered. We are grateful to all whom God raised up then and continues to raise to be part of this mission through their service, gifts, and prayers."

In the early sixties, Rev. Morris Watkins and his family experienced tragedy and loss on the mission field, which forced them to return stateside. Yet within a few years, Rev. Watkins was instrumental in founding LBT in southern California. Over 2,000 people in the greater LA area now participate in the mission of LBT, and tens of thousands more across the United States. What began as a tragedy God has worked for His good.

Now, five decades later, LBT missionaries, staff, and overseas partners have deeply touched the lives of some of the most marginalized peoples of the world—and they have deeply touched ours. Forty New Testament translations have been published and two entire Bibles—all in languages that never had God's Word. And many of us here have grown to understand ourselves and God better because we have been exposed to their languages, customs, and lives.

We can only marvel at what God has done through those who have gone before, those of us now, and those who we encourage to continue work with the remaining task. To learn more about LBT missionaries and language programs, visit [www.lbt.org](http://www.lbt.org) or [www.facebook.com/LutheranBibleTranslators](https://www.facebook.com/LutheranBibleTranslators). **LBT**



Dr. Mike and Cindy Rodewald and Michael Antonovich, chairman of the Los Angeles County board of supervisors, with the County of Los Angeles certificate of congratulations. Mr. Antonovich is a member of Our Savior Lutheran Church in Arcadia, California.

# Partnership Works to Bring Scripture to the Marginalized

[by Rob Veith]

**OVER** the past year, I have become involved with a partner organization called the San Bible Partnership. I joined their meetings in two capacities: both as LBT's Scripture Engagement Coordinator, and as southern Africa's Vernacular Media Specialist. I find the goals of this organization both intriguing and daunting.

San refers to those people known collectively as Khoisan in textbooks, Basarwa in Botswana, and Bushmen elsewhere. They are noted for their unusual speech which includes several click sounds. A common misconception holds that there is a single Bushman language. In fact, the San community contains dozens of mutually unintelligible languages and diverse cultures in remote parts of Namibia, Botswana, and South Africa. They are among the people groups least reached with the Gospel in Africa. LBT has been working on a Bible translation in Khwedam, a Khoisan language spoken in the northwestern part of Botswana. Wycliffe missionaries are translating the Bible into Naro. Translation into other Khoisan languages has been limited.

The San Bible Partnership contains representatives from the Bible Societies of Botswana, Namibia, and South Africa, as well as Wycliffe, Seed Company, and Lutheran Bible Translators. The organization hopes to inspire and assist grass-roots efforts to translate the Bible into oral media using Bible storying workshops. In these workshops, a facilitator tells a Bible story,

which is then translated into the local language through discussion with the workshop participants. The facilitator makes sure that all of the key details of the story remain present. The orally presented story is checked by a translation consultant and committed to some kind of recording medium as a reference (if a story teller has forgotten parts of the story, he can listen to an mp3 file of the recording on his phone to refresh his memory).

An amazing concept in principle! Imagine what it would be like to have large chunks of the Bible in your head and be able to tell them to your church.

We still have challenges to overcome. These include:

- ▶ People may learn a story without understanding how it fits into the overarching narrative of Scripture as a whole. For example, someone might know the story of Creation, The Flood, and Abraham Sacrifices Isaac, but not what order they occur in the Bible, nor how they relate to each other, nor how they point towards Jesus and the path to Salvation. The challenge: how to get the meta-narrative of the Bible into the heads of the story tellers in a meaningful way so that the individual stories make sense.
- ▶ While indigenous story forms and storytelling styles exist in San cultures, we can't assume that we know enough about these forms and styles to teach people to tell Bible stories within it. Unless the story development process can be fully indigenized, story tellers may rely on outsiders to drive the story development process.

In November I made two trips into San villages. I traveled with the translation consultant and rendezvoused in the field with some of the workshop facilitators. My role was to document stories with digital reference recordings for the story tellers once the consultant has approved them as acceptable oral Scripture. These recordings will be available as mp3 files on SIM cards to be used primarily by story tellers to refresh their memory of the stories.

Please keep the San Bible Partnership in your prayers. Visit [www.us.lbt.org/project/eshinee-rob-veith/](http://www.us.lbt.org/project/eshinee-rob-veith/) to follow our ministry. 



The **Kisi Bible** was dedicated in Monrovia, Liberia, on November 30, 2014. Read more about this remarkable project—that took 40 years to complete—and the faithfulness and dedication of the Kisi people in the Spring edition of *The Messenger*.

*Rob and Eshinee Veith serve in Botswana, Rob as Scripture Engagement Coordinator and Eshinee as translation advisor to the Shiyeyi New Testament Translation project.*

# Participating in God's Mission

[by Emily Wilson, LBT Staff]

**LAST** year, at a “capacity building workshop” in Cameroon, Dr. Reuben Ngozo, the bishop of the EELC (Evangelical Lutheran Church in Cameroon), exhorted and encouraged the participants to stay deeply involved in Bible translation.


*“We have been entrusted with a great task, translating and making God’s Word available in our languages. So, work! Follow my example. I work with all my energy, enthusiastically. You also*

*carry a huge responsibility, don’t neglect it. Don’t neglect sending your reports, which show your responsibility in your work. Work with zeal, love, and in harmony together! You need to know Jesus, to have a spiritual awakening in your lives. You need to be filled with the Holy Spirit. You need balance in your relationships and with your work. Sometimes I hear people say that they are poor, they can’t do much. The Church is not poor. You are rich in Jesus! Look to God for provision! We say ‘no’ to corruption, to poverty, and ‘yes’ to abundant life in Jesus!”*

How does Bishop Ngozo’s exhortation apply to our own lives? If we have never gone out into the field as Bible translation missionaries, how are we participants in this huge responsibility of making God’s Word available in the heart language of others? How can we work with zeal, love, and harmony for Bible translation when we may not have any direct involvement in the projects?

According to His purpose, God has provided everyone with time, talents, and treasures to serve Him with energy and enthusiasm. God’s mission is the mission of the Church. The great responsibility of participating in His mission may seem daunting, or maybe we feel ill-equipped, or perhaps we feel spiritually poor. Yet when we look to God as our strength and salvation, we see that “[We] are rich in Jesus!”

As the initiator of missions, God—Father, Son, and Holy Spirit—has chosen us to participate in His mission to spread the Gospel. Whether we are missionaries out on the field or in our own backyards, He works in us. As mission partners of LBT, you are participating in God’s mission in your prayers, sharing the mission of the organization with your churches, friends, and family members, and offering up the treasures with which God has blessed you. God has called you into His mission with a purpose, and as Paul reminds us in 1 Corinthians 15:58, our “labor in the Lord is not in vain.”

Together, we are working in God’s mission to proclaim the message of salvation through Jesus in every tongue, tribe, and nation. As His people, we serve in thankfulness, using the gifts that He has graciously given us—always working for His glory and not our own. 

## Need More Information?

### Return this coupon to:

Mike Ferguson  
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Aurora, IL 60507-2050  
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E-mail: [mferguson@lbt.org](mailto:mferguson@lbt.org)

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Additional on-line giving opportunities and information about LBT are available on our web site: [www.LBT.org](http://www.LBT.org)

**We've changed our look!**

What do you think? Offer your feedback at  
<http://us.lbt.org/contact/messenger/survey>.

# The Messenger—Delivered!

[by Chris Johnson, LBT Staff]

**VOLUNTEERS** at LBT's Service Center make the delivery of *The Messenger* to your mailbox possible by their diligence and commitment. They joyfully give of themselves, because they know that through their efforts and participation they are helping in LBT's mission to make God's Word accessible to people in the language of their hearts.

Caroline, our head volunteer here at the Service Center, has just entered her 20th year of service. When there are tasks that require the assistance of the other volunteers, she knows she can rely upon the dedicated group because our volunteers truly believe in LBT's mission, vision, and values. The usual crew is comprised of ten who work on a weekly basis to help with gift record receipts, mailing of missionary prayer letters, and other mailings as necessary.

A larger team of volunteers, however, comes faithfully every three months to assist with the detailed mailing process of this newsletter. This procedure involves as many as 32 volunteers, and takes a total of three consecutive seven-hour days to collate the 26,300 printed copies.

On the first day, the volunteers concentrate on individual subscriber mailings. The next day is designated to process the bulk mail. These bulk mailings may be directed to congregations, Bible study groups, or small groups. In the bulk mailing process, the volunteers are very conscientious about cost-effectiveness; by weighing the parcels, they are able to determine the lowest rates for shipping each packet. On

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the last day, volunteers finish the mailing process. Through their teamwork, the sizable production is able to flow smoothly.

God has blessed this ministry through the cheerful labors of these individuals.

For that we are truly thankful. As Paul wrote in his letter to the Philippians:

"I thank God every time I remember you. In all my prayers for all of you, I always pray with joy because of your partnership in the gospel from the first day until now" (1:3-5).

If you are interested in joining our team of volunteers, you can find out more by emailing us at [info@lbt.org](mailto:info@lbt.org) or calling **1-800-532-4253**. We would love to see you here at the Service Center! **LBT**

## Celebrating...

*Continued from page 1*

making a connection with Christians across the globe. He focused on Revelation 7, which offers this description of the throne room of God, "there before me was a great multitude that no one could count, from every nation, tribe, people and language, standing before the throne and before the Lamb. . . They fell down on their faces before the throne and worshiped God." Pastor Krause noted: "Though we live so very far apart, and though we have different customs, we're one. We are brothers and sisters in Christ. We are part of that one body of Christ, united in our worship."

The power of the Gospel and the Holy Spirit working in and through each of these participants is beyond our comprehension. We urge you to pray with us that God's Word will be read and truly understood among the Komba community – that according to His will, the Holy Spirit will give them the gift of the one true faith. God's Word unites us, and God calls us into His mission to share the Gospel with every language. Even after generations pass and no one can remember the translators or consultants of the Komba New Testament, God's Word will continue to be read for it will never pass away. We are participants in His mission, and we look forward to the joy of celebrating and worshiping Him with all the saints—every nation, tribe, people, and language—on the last day. **LBT**



As many as 32 volunteers work together to process *The Messenger* mailing.

# Wanted: Laborers for God

Do you or does someone you know:

- ...enjoy learning languages?
- ...enjoy learning about other cultures?
- ...adapt and apply knowledge quickly?
- ...enjoy problem solving, especially in challenging new situations and interacting with new people, and are considered to be a good listener?
- ...have a willingness to serve in mission in a cross-cultural context?

**IF** you have answered **“YES!”** to any of these questions—or know of someone who would, we encourage you to consider serving God’s people with Lutheran Bible Translators!

Our overseas partners seek our technical support in a number of different domains, including exegetical help in the translation process, project management, literacy development, and non-print media. Although there are a number of different opportunities for service in these areas, there is always a shortage of people to do the work. What Jesus says in the Gospel of Luke is still true today: “The harvest is plentiful, but the laborers are few.”

Lutheran Bible Translators is seeking laborers for the harvest! We are an independent Lutheran organization that accepts missionary applicants who are Lutherans in good standing in their congregations. Our missionaries come from various backgrounds and ages: men and women; singles, couples, and families; ordained and lay people.

Bible translation is a long and intricately detailed process. This requires a great deal of learning and relationship building so we seek applicants who are willing to deeply invest in longer term assignments.

Applicants must have U.S. citizenship status and a bachelor’s degree (in any field) before completing the necessary training in applied linguistics (typically at the Graduate Institute of Applied Linguistics in Dallas, Texas). After the acceptance is finalized, we are able to determine advanced training needs based on the previous background and experience of the individual, as well as his or her position and placement.

Currently, we have a need for missionaries in many parts of Africa. So if you—or a person you know—has the ability to be culturally aware and learn new things quickly, laugh at mistakes, flexibility in challenging

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# The Ebola Fight Continues

**WE** are suffering greatly in this part of the world. “We have become Ebola prisoners.”

—Pastor John Bundor,  
Sierra Leone




Although local and international responses have greatly reduced the spread of Ebola in West Africa, new cases are still emerging, especially in Sierra Leone. LBT missionaries who were working in Liberia and Sierra Leone still have not been able to return to their overseas assignments. They continue to work from remote locations in Ghana or the U.S.

In Sierra Leone, travel is restricted in many areas. This makes basic food and medicines scarce and expensive for the local population.

In the midst of these hardships, Pastor Bundor stated, “The only thing that is left with us is our hope in Christ. That is what Satan (Ebola) is unable to take away from us. Even though we are in quarantine, the Gospel of Christ is being preached in every corner of our district!”

The Gospel is being preached, reaching every corner, because the Bible became available in Pastor John’s own Kisi language last November.

Please pray for the safety of workers like Pastor John who have continued ministry throughout this crisis. Pray that Ebola will be eradicated. You can support our Bible translation partners by donating to LBT’s Ebola Crisis Assistance fund, that helps provide life-saving food, medicines and disinfectants in areas where travel restrictions are enforced. If you would like to contribute please visit [www.lbt.org/ebola](http://www.lbt.org/ebola).

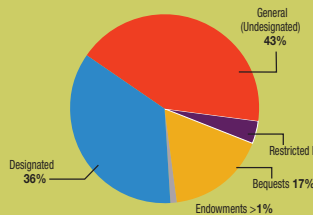
Through hardship and suffering, God’s Word still goes forth in Sierra Leone, bringing life to all who believe in the truth of His saving grace. 

## LBT PARTNERSHIP SUPPORT

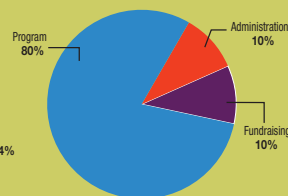
October 1—December 31, 2014

	Unaudited 4th Quarter	Unaudited Year-to-date
<b>INCOME</b>		
Designated	\$ 520,795	\$ 1,956,320
General (Undesignated)	615,512	1,620,432
Restricted Funds	56,812	175,165
Bequests	255,029	1,115,706
Endowments	(13,591)	159,949
<b>Total Income</b>	<b>\$ 1,434,557</b>	<b>\$ 5,027,572</b>

4th Quarter Income



4th Quarter Expenses



### EXPENSES

	4th Quarter	Year-to-date
Program	\$ 784,408	\$ 3,203,504
Administration	99,428	455,203
Fundraising	94,912	378,533
<b>Total Expenses</b>	<b>978,748</b>	<b>4,037,240</b>
<b>Net Total</b>	<b>\$ 455,809</b>	<b>\$ 990,332</b>

NOTE: During the last quarter of 2014, LBT purchased three computers at a total cost of \$3,271. These costs are not reflected above.

## Wanted: Laborers for God

Continued from page 6

situations, and work well with people of different backgrounds, culture, and languages, we have need of you!

For more information about joining Lutheran Bible Translators as a missionary, we encourage you to contact our recruitment coordinator, Kory Fay, at [recruiter@LBT.org](mailto:recruiter@LBT.org) or at 630-897-0660, extension 29.

If you are interested in sponsoring a presentation from an LBT missionary or a representative at your local congregation, school, or missions' event, please contact Sharon Vega at [svega@LBT.org](mailto:svega@LBT.org) or at 630-897-0660, extension 22.

## Gift Designations

Your gifts in support of an LBT missionary or project are applied to the budget of that project or missionary. If the budget is overfunded, surplus funds are used to assist other missionaries or similar projects whose budgets are in deficit. Surplus funds are applied where needed most.

CUT HERE

CUT HERE

## Birthdays

### March

- 1 Lisa Beckendorf, Botswana
- 2 Levi Federwitz (2008), Ghana
- 8 Maila Davies, Papua New Guinea
- 11 Sheri Larsen, United States
- 22 Hannah Federwitz (2006), Ghana
- 24 Danny DeLoach, United States
- 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, Nigeria/United States
- 26 Nancy Burmeister, United States
- 29 Sean Pluger (2002), Zambia

### May

- 1 Peter Larsen (2001), United States
- 11 Mike Rodewald, Service Center Staff
- 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, Southeast Asia
- 15 Emily Wilson, Service Center Staff
- 17 Ali Federwitz, Ghana
- 19 Wesley DeLoach (2011), United States
- 21 Kendra Larsen (1996), United States
- 23 Taylor Pindras, Service Center Staff
- 25 Mike Kuhn, Cameroon
- 28 Ken Bunge, United States

FOLD

## 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 and Lisa Beckendorf** as they complete partnership development and prepare to return to Botswana for another term of service.
- Praise God for **John Strasen's** many years of translation ministry among the Dhimba of Namibia and more recently among the Bakgalagari of Botswana. He retires from LBT in March.

### CAMEROON

- Praise God for the beginning of audio Scripture listening programs among the **Samba** and the **Dowayo**. Pray that God's Word would have an impact in these language communities.
- Pray for **Mike Kuhn** as he continues his master's work in applied linguistics. Pray that these studies would effectively prepare him for continuing translation ministry among the **Nizaa** later this year.




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

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U.S. Postage  
**PAID**  
Permit No. 80  
Aurora, IL 60507

**the messenger**  
Volume 42, Number 1  
**WINTER 2015**  
Dr. Mike Rodewald, 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 1-800-532-4253.  
**Website: [www.us.lbt.org](http://www.us.lbt.org) E-mail: [info@LBT.org](mailto: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.

Executive Director:  
Dr. Mike Rodewald



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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 God's Word 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?**



**Like Lutheran Bible Translators** for daily prayer requests, breaking news, links to blog updates, and to join the discussion!

**ETHIOPIA**

- Pray for the successful processing of work permits for **Jim and Susan Kaiser** so they can begin long-term translation consultant work with five translation teams.

**GHANA**

- Pray for **Rev. Chris and Christina LaBoube** as they begin ministry as a married couple in Ghana at the end of February. They were married in January.

**NIGERIA**

- Pray for **Rev. Chuck and Karen Tessaro** to receive the support they need to return to their ministry in Nigeria at the end of February.

- Pray for **Rev. Kierien Ayugha and Rev. Linus Otronyi's** involvement with the continuing Luke Partnership workshops in Cross-Rivers state with six different language teams.

- Pray that recording of the audio **New Testament in Yala and Bette** would be completed and available soon.

**LIBERIA AND SIERRA LEONE**

- Pray that Ebola will continue to come under control and the epidemic will end. Pray that missionaries will be able to soon return to ministry alongside national partners.



**SE ASIA**

- Pray for the successful completion of the **Central Thai Bible** stories set for training of storytellers in April.

**UNITED STATES**

- Pray for **Dr. Mike Rodewald and Rev. Rich Rudowski** as they explore future opportunities for translation ministry in Tanzania.
- Praise God for LBT's newest missionary, **Michael Ersland**. Pray for him as he continues linguistic studies at the Graduate Institute of Applied Linguistics.
- Pray for **Rob and Mical Hilbert** as they await the arrival of their third child this summer.
- Pray for **Paul and Ali Federwitz** and **Chris and Janine Pluger** as they travel across the U.S. for partnership development.
- Pray for wisdom for LBT leaders and Scripture engagement missionaries as they meet together to discuss program strategies.

