



the messenger

Lutheran bible translators
GOD'S WORD
for every language

A Perfect Day

LBT INTERNATIONAL OFFICES DEDICATED

[Staff Writers]

THE campus of Saint Paul Lutheran High School in Concordia, Missouri, buzzed with excitement as the new international offices of Lutheran Bible Translators were dedicated on Reformation Sunday. "God gave us a perfect day for the celebration," said LBT Executive Director Dr. Mike Rodewald. "The weather was beautiful."

"What better day to dedicate our new premises than on the anniversary of the Reformation. The translation of God's Word into the mother tongues of ordinary people transformed the world. We continue in that tradition, reaching people with God's Word through their own language—their heart language."

In a Reformation service at St. Paul's Lutheran Church in Concordia, guest preacher Rev. Kenety Gee, originally from Liberia, currently pastor of Chatham Fields Lutheran



The procession to the new offices was led by students from Saint Paul Lutheran High School.



It was a beautiful day as a crowd gathered for the dedication ceremony.

Church in Chicago, asked, "Who could imagine that one of those who at one time read a translation done by LBT would be here today preaching to you?"

Rev. Gee grew up in Liberia, until he was

displaced by civil conflict. As a refugee in Côte d'Ivoire he owned three Bibles— in English, French and Krahn, his mother tongue. The Krahn translation, done by LBT missionaries, spoke the most deeply to him. He personally experienced the power of God's Word in one's heart language. "I truly understood what it means to abide in Christ when I read John 15 in Krahn in the refugee camp."

Following the service, guests processed from the church to the new LBT offices at the Saint Paul high school campus. The school is home to over 200 students, many from other countries. The procession was led by students of diverse nationalities carrying the flags of 20 nations in which LBT works.

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A Reformation service was held prior to the dedication.

Photos courtesy of Robert Breshears

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Pressing On

[Christina LaBoube]

JANET Borchard is on her way back to the mission field in Papua New Guinea (PNG). She has two goals: to continue her own work in Scripture engagement, and help equip the Ipili translators to continue their work without the assistance of her late husband, Rev. Terry Borchard.

“Ipili Pastor Mandita Kunuma has a lot of experience in translation work—drafting, editing, and making the finished work ‘sound good,’” Janet says. “Whenever Terry would say something odd in Ipili, Pastor Mandita would teach him a better way to say it.”

After the Ipili New Testament dedication in 2008, Pastor Mandita started working on Genesis. “Now we’re just polishing up the last 20 chapters,” Janet says. They also have a first draft of Exodus, and, thanks to some good translation resources written in PNG’s pidgin trade language, Jonah and Ruth are almost finished.

Pastor Mandita and others on the translation team began to take on some of Terry’s roles following his death in 2014. But they’d like to receive more training before they get much further into the Old Testament. The Translators Training Course, presented by SIL and the Papua New Guinea Bible Translation Association, is held for five weeks every year. There translators learn more about translation and become familiar with Bible background, Biblical languages, and tools like Bible dictionaries, indexes, and maps.

Janet also has other ideas for making the team stronger.

“One thing Terry knew very well was the discourse grammar of Ipili—how sentences go together in paragraphs and how paragraphs go together to form the larger text. He studied how that structure works in Greek in Paul’s letters, and then he studied how it works in Ipili.”

In Paul’s letters, the main point is stated first, then is followed up with Paul’s reasoning. In the Ipili language, the reasoning comes first and the main point comes at the end. “The translators made a lot of changes in the order of how things were presented in the text. Terry took the first draft of each letter, switched things around, and then everyone was able to agree that it was now written in good Ipili. Terry didn’t have the opportunity to teach the Ipili to do that, but I would like to,” said Janet.

Janet plans to teach this skill by helping the translators compare the final draft of Jonah with their



Pastor Mandita is an experienced translator.

first draft so they can see the changes they made from a word-for-word, sentence-by-sentence translation to a translation that makes sense to Ipili ears.

In the meantime, Janet is doing a little studying of her own. She has the Ipili New Testament on her Bible translation software, and she’s learning how the language works. “As I know more about

Ipili—about sentence structure and how prefixes and suffixes interact with words—then I’ll be better able to help check what we’ve translated, and I’ll be better able to work with the team.” 

A Matter of Life and Death

[Christina LaBoube]

WHAT begins with five days of prayer and ends with exhausted participants? A Wayeyi (*people of Yeyi*) funeral in northern Botswana!

Funerals are major community events for the Wayeyi people. The five days of prayer at the home of the bereaved are followed by an all-night vigil with singing, dancing, and eating. Then everyone walks in the pre-dawn to the burial site. This is followed by another communal meal. As LBT missionary Eshinee Veith, project coordinator for the Shiyeyi (*language of the Yeyi*) New Testament translation project, explains, “Everyone is feeling different things when the funeral starts. Some have just lost their father or brother, some have lost a friend, and some have lost a member of the community that they barely knew. But by the end of the funeral, everyone is feeling exhausted.”

During the burial service, pastors are called upon to read a selection of Bible verses and to give a message. The more pastors there are present, the more verses and messages are given. This task is complicated, because Scripture is not available in the Shiyeyi language. Scripture can only be found in Setswana, the national language of Botswana. Shiyeyi-speaking pastors must translate and interpret on-the-spot, which can easily lead to the correct meaning of those verses being muddled or lost in translation.

Bridging the Gap

[Christina LaBoube]

LBT missionary Rob Veith works in southern Africa to bridge the gap between translated Scripture and its actual use in the community. Serving in ethnomusicology and vernacular media, he focuses on using non-print media to help people engage with Scripture in meaningful ways.

The Naro translation project based in Botswana was in the process of translating the book of Psalms. "As the Psalms are the song book of the Old Testament, I suggested that we set the Psalms to music. They liked the idea." Rob doesn't actually compose the songs himself. He doesn't even speak Naro. But he shares his expertise in indigenous song composition with Naro composers to help them fine tune their creations and share them with each other. Now, even before the Psalms see print, they have been sung in Naro-speaking churches.

Based on the success of the Psalms project, the Naro people asked Rob to return in 2016 to help them develop Christmas songs. At this time, there are no Christmas songs in the Naro language, translated or otherwise. "We'll hold the same kind of workshop we did with the Psalms," Rob says, "but this time adapting Scripture that talks about Christ's birth to Naro song forms."

A Perfect Day

Continued from page 1

LCMS Missouri District President Rev. Dr. Lee Hagan led the dedication service, which was followed by tours of the LBT offices and the Saint Paul campus as well as a "Celebrate the Ministry" dinner event hosted by the St. Paul congregation.

Members of the school's "Singing Saints" choir, led by choirmaster Dr. Jerrode Baker Marsh, performed "Ein Feste Burg ist unser Gott" in German as well as songs in Swahili (Tanzania and Kenya), Chewa (Zambia) and English.

"We are thankful for the partnership with the community," said Dr. Rodewald. "We are bound with our common vision of reaching others with God's Word. The support and warm welcome we have received here has been phenomenal." **LBT**

Rob usually centers song workshops around a theme determined by dialog with leaders in the language community. For example, funerals play an important role in many communities. "In 2015, both the Wayeyi and the Shekgalagari translation teams translated passages that might be read at funerals, so this year we're planning to develop hymns around these passages."

Since people from oral cultures don't always learn how to read, helping them access Scripture in an oral form is important. "When we merge Scripture into song, it enables people to engage with Scripture. It becomes a vital part of their day to day life. People sing to worship God. They internalize God's Word by memorizing the songs. They teach each other from the Word."

LBT's partner organization, the San Bible Partnership, has been working in the region to help some of the smaller languages develop oral Bible stories from key portions of the Biblical text. Some of the oral translators have said that in their culture these stories might be well expressed in song. Rob has been asked to conduct song development workshops in the !Xoon and Khwedam San languages in 2016. "My intuition is that songs seem to express wisdom more than stories do for them," Rob says. "Some of their songs feel almost like sermons."

Rob does more than song development. He also records audio Scripture which can be used in radio broadcast or listened to on dedicated audio players by non-reading people. In 2015, he spent six weeks in nearby Namibia recording a reading of the Bible in the Dhimba language. They completed about three quarters of the New Testament. "One more trip ought to finish it," Rob says. "The whole New Testament will be available as audio in the Dhimba language." He also spent several weeks recording Scripture portions in Khwedam in northern Botswana. "The Khwedam team has developed a lot of capacity to develop their own recordings, though, which is great. At this point, I mostly just help them with the mastering."

"If all we do is 'get the Book done,' then we haven't necessarily impacted the community with the Good News of Jesus Christ," Rob says.

To learn more about the Veith ministry visit <http://us.lbt.org/project/eshinee-rob-veith/> **LBT**

Taking Care

[Christina LaBoube]

“I didn’t realize it at the time, but I was taking a lot of little steps that led to my present journey,” says LBT missionary Ali Federwitz.

Ali has been living in Ghana for nine years, where her husband, LBT missionary Paul Federwitz, works as a technology consultant, collaborating globally with mission organizations to assist with effective use of technology. During that time, Ali has been serving her family as a wife and mother and serving her colleagues as a home school consultant on the field.

In October, 2015, Ali added an internship to her plate. She’s being trained by Mobile Member Care Team (MMCT) to work with missionaries on the field and help equip them to navigate the crises and challenges that come with missionary service.

“Missionary life comes with all kinds of joys and challenges that people from our home culture can understand on a surface level,” Ali explains, “and of course each church provides care for its members and missionaries. But there are many facets of missionary life underneath the surface that are difficult for someone who doesn’t have mission experience to understand. It is harder to provide care because of the complexities involved when multiple cultures combine.”

Social situations can become stressful when the missionary’s unspoken cultural expectations conflict with assumptions of the host culture. Should you accept a proffered gift, or should you politely decline it? What do you do when a guest in your home decides to explore rooms that people in your culture consider private?

And what if a missionary becomes a victim of crime? Dealing with the legal system in one’s own country can be complicated. Dealing with an unfamiliar system adds stress to an already stress-filled time.

Just going to the mission field is stressful. Missionaries learn how their new community works, how to find basic groceries, and how to hook up water and electricity, if they’re even available. They learn a new language and become adjusted to a new climate. In addition to short-term counseling and debriefing resources, MMCT provides training workshops to help missionaries adjust

FIVE NEW MISSIONARIES have been appointed to begin service with LBT. Learn more in the *Spring Messenger* and be sure to visit www.LBT.org.

and learn to deal with the stress that results from these issues and more.

“It’s critical for missionaries to have care available right here, right now,” Ali says. “Receiving as much care as possible on the field increases our ability to be fruitful in our ministry abroad.”

Prior to beginning the internship, Ali was trained as a Peer Responder through MMCT. “I realized things were falling together. From the care I

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A Matter of Life and Death

Continued from page 2

So the Wayeyi translation team decided to make it a priority to produce a booklet of Scripture verses in Shiyeyi that could be read at a funeral and understood by the Wayeyi people—verses such as John 3:16-21, and 1 Thessalonians 14:13-18. “Everyone goes to funerals, Christian or not,” Eshinee says. “It’s a great opportunity to get the Word out.”

The Shiyeyi booklet of funeral passages was completed late last year. Eshinee’s husband, Rob Veith, also has his eye on maximizing Scripture-impact at funerals: he’ll hold a Scripture song writing workshop in the future where Wayeyi songwriters will meditate on the Scripture verses in their new funeral booklet and compose songs to be sung during funerals.

“They sing all night long at funerals,” Eshinee says. “Wouldn’t it be nice to have some Scripture songs in there?” 



Eshinee and the Wayeyi advisory committee discuss ways of meeting the needs of the Wayeyi community with new Shiyeyi Scripture resources.

Hungry for God's Word

[Based on an article by Martin and Joan Weber]

A people without their language is a people without a soul." So said a leader of the Pahli people during the dedication of the Pahli Language Development Center in June 2015.

Pahli (*Pahli is a pseudonym, used in this article because of potential danger in their area*) is one of 280 languages spoken in Cameroon. The Pahli New Testament was translated by missionaries serving with Wycliffe Bible Translators and has been available since 1975. But domination by another people group influenced both the Pahli language and religion and there was little interest in Christian Scripture.

Then, in 2012, personnel from Faith Comes by Hearing recorded the Pahli New Testament. More than two thousand people began listening regularly to the New Testament. Many wanted to purchase their own printed copy. Despite termite damage, the remaining copies of the 1975 edition quickly sold out. Hearts stirred from hearing God's Word in their own language, the Pahli began looking for a way to revise the New Testament and translate the Old Testament. With encouragement and support from both Lutheran and Catholic church bodies, the Pahli Bible Translation Committee was formed.

LBT missionaries Martin and Joan Weber are witnessing the Pahli's hunger for God's Word first hand. After completing work on the Kwanja New Testament in 2006, they began assisting Rev. Daniel Touka, the head of the Department of Translation and Literacy (DTA) of the Cameroon Evangelical Lutheran Church (EELC), with



The Pahli Language Development Center was dedicated in June, 2015.

various projects. The Pahli Bible Translation Committee officially requested assistance from both the DTA and LBT in 2013.

Pastor Daniel met with the translation committee and an assembly of over 250 Pahli people in April 2015. "Translation is not easy. It demands training and study. You need to find reliable, capable young people to send for training. It will take years of sacrifice," he explained. "Houses break down, things wear out. God's written Word will last! *Do you really want the Bible in Pahli?*" The resounding answer was "Yes!"

Enthusiasm for the translation project is high. Though the Pahli, mostly farmers, have limited income, contributions continue to increase. An elderly Pahli man donated his home to become the Pahli Language Development Center. Church leaders, government and community leaders, the Pahli Translation Committee, and many others joined to celebrate the dedication of the center in June 2015. Luc Gnowa, the director of Cameroon Bible Society, challenged the translation committee, asking if they were ready to undertake the many responsibilities that face them. The answer? Another resounding "We are ready!"

The Pahli have renewed pride in their language, so integral to the heart and soul of their culture. The translation committee intends to continue the Scripture listening program as well as restart the Pahli literacy program. Potential candidates for the position of translator are being vetted and trained.

"Working together in God's power, we can do this!" said Pastor Daniel. "You are committing yourselves to a work that takes much time, but it is a work that will endure. For many years to come, the Pahli people will benefit from your present decisions and your work to make it happen." 

LBT-U

is an event that brings together new missionaries, those on furlough or living in the U.S., and office staff. **People interested in missionary service with LBT are also invited to attend from June 28-July 1.**

Topics include missiology, trends in the mission community, missionary care, and policies and procedures specific to LBT. Daily devotions and relationship-building will round out the time.

If you or someone you know is interested in missionary service with LBT and would like to attend, please contact us by email at recruiter@lbt.org.

University Students Consider a Future with God's Word for Every Language

[Cindy Rodewald]

ME? Serving in the mission field?" "Well, yes, maybe!"

LBT Executive Director Dr. Mike Rodewald spoke to Concordia University Irvine students gathered at a special events dinner hosted by LBT. Almost 40 hand-picked students were in attendance. University personnel had previously identified these students as having hearts for missions.

They all reacted positively when they heard about Lutheran Bible Translators' vision of "God's Word for Every Language" and how they might be vital participants in accomplishing this vision.

"We have exciting opportunities to begin translation projects in new locations in Tanzania and Ethiopia. You can see the many other mission service opportunities we have," Dr. Rodewald said, pointing to a large banner listing LBT's different positions available for service. "Maybe you will see yourself in one of these areas. We

need quality people to help accomplish this vision of God's Word for every language."

The featured dinner speaker, Rev. Gabriel Tsuaneng, general secretary of the Bible Society of Botswana, traveled to the U.S. specifically for this event. He told the students about the impact of having, and hoping to have, God's Word in the mother tongue of the 28 languages in his country. He also spoke of the need for more missionaries in Botswana.

The dinner event, complete with African cuisine served by CUI's catering service, was held November 8, 2015, at Grimm Hall Conference Center. Throughout the evening, Rev. Rich Rudowske, LBT's director of international programs, led the students, university personnel and other guests through cultural games and linguistic challenges to get a sense of the skills used by LBT missionaries.

"We hope to continue holding events like this in other college and university settings so we can connect with the next generation of those desiring to be a part of God's mission," said Rev. Rudowske. 

Sharpening Our Skills

[Rev. Nathan Esala]

WHAT happens when 450 Bible translation practitioners from all over the world meet together? A lot of sharing, discussion and learning—all in the name of improving and advancing approaches to Bible translation and Scripture engagement practices.

The 8th biennial Bible Translation Conference, held in October 2015 in Dallas, Texas, was hosted jointly by SIL International, the Graduate Institute of Applied Linguistics (GIAL) and the Nida Institute of the American Bible Society. Ten LBT missionaries attended.

Close to 80 academic papers were presented, covering a wide range of topics. I presented a paper connecting an approach to translation that I helped implement with the Komba New Testament Translation.

The heart of the paper describes a transformative Bible study centered around Job 2 and 3 with people living with disabilities in Ghana. It was a bit risky presenting a standard translation approach in dialogue with a Bible study approach. But I received positive feedback from people at the conference, including some

very kind remarks by Dr. Christiane Nord, long time professor at the University of Heidelberg, who is a leading translation theorist.

For those LBT translators able to attend, getting together in one place was quite a treat. We grew to know each other better during dinners and after hours. (Because of remote service areas, it is not uncommon for LBT missionaries to only know each other via their prayer letters!) We met as a group to discuss pertinent translation issues face to face from the in-house LBT perspective.

LBT personnel gained a lot through the learning presented at the conference, helping us to remain open to approaches and ideas that increase participation in Bible translation and engaging Scripture. We also contribute a great deal. Other translation organizations have expressed an interest in learning from LBT missionaries who work with and under local African partners and communities. The hope is for LBT to have an even greater presence and opportunity for sharing at the 2017 Bible Translation Conference. 

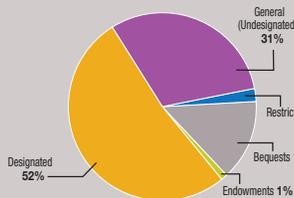
Nathan is enrolled as a Ph.D. student at the University of KwaZulu-Natal in South Africa. To learn more about the Job Bible study with the Komba people visit <http://us.lbt.org/lbt-core-values-gods-word-2/>.

LBT PARTNERSHIP SUPPORT

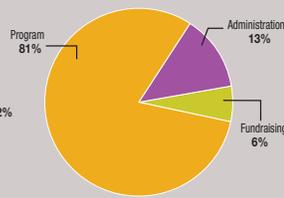
October 1—December 31, 2015

| | Unaudited 4th Quarter | Unaudited Year-to-date |
|------------------------|--------------------------|---------------------------|
| INCOME | | |
| Designated | \$ 691,213 | \$ 1,807,028 |
| General (Undesignated) | 415,775 | 1,549,495 |
| Restricted Funds | 23,431 | 74,412 |
| Bequests | 191,772 | 446,546 |
| Endowments | 75 | 11,560 |
| Total Income | \$ 1,322,266 | \$ 3,889,040 |

4th Quarter Income



4th Quarter Expenses



EXPENSES

| | | |
|-----------------------|-------------------|--------------------|
| Program | \$ 709,147 | \$ 3,186,251 |
| Administration | 111,205 | 531,740 |
| Fundraising | 55,625 | 219,892 |
| Total Expenses | 875,977 | 3,937,883 |
| Net Total | \$ 446,289 | \$ (48,843) |

NOTE: During the last quarter of 2015, LBT was able to purchase a missionary computer and make building improvements at a total cost of \$9,702. These costs are not reflected above.

Taking Care

Continued from page 4

received from my LBT colleagues when my family first came to Ghana, I saw the importance of member care and the healing that it facilitates. Then I went through the MMCT training to become a Peer Responder, and the light went on. It made me wonder if caring for missionaries is what I'm supposed to be working toward." 

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Maya.Rudowske@lbt.org for more information.

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*, Ghana
- 9 Maila Davies, Papua New Guinea
- 22 Hannah Federwitz*, Ghana
- 24 Danny DeLoach, Papua New Guinea
- 28 Mae Johnson, United States
- 30 Janine Pluger, Zambia

April

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

May

- 11 Mike Rodewald, International Offices
- 12 Tobias Kuhn*, Cameroon
- 13 Nathan Federwitz*, Papua New Guinea
- 13 Julia Federwitz*, Papua New Guinea
- 15 Janet Borchard, Papua New Guinea
- 15 Chris LaBoube, Ghana
- 15 Michelle Miller, Thailand
- 15 Emily Wilson, International Offices
- 17 Ali Federwitz, Ghana
- 19 Wesley DeLoach*, Papua New Guinea
- 25 Mike Kuhn, Cameroon
- 28 Ken Bunge, United States

*missionary kid

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 **Rob and Mical Hilbert** as they settle into their new home in Kang, working with the Shekgalagari Bible Translation Project.

ETHIOPIA

- Pray for **Dr. Jim and Susan Kaiser** as they relocate to their new home in Gidole in May.

LIBERIA

- Pray for the success of local fundraising needed to complete the **Liberian Translation and Literacy Organization's (LIBTRALO)** new headquarters.

CAMEROON

- Praise God for the dedication of the **Kwanja lectionary** this March.



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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 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.

Executive Director:
Dr. Mike Rodewald



save THE date!

LBT Annual Dinner
April 29, 2016
Concordia, MO

NIGERIA

- Praise God for the faithful work of LBT's international associates, **Rev. Linus Otronyi** and **Rev. Kierien Ekpang Ayugha**.

PAPUA NEW GUINEA

- Pray for blessings for **Janet Borchard's** time in Papua New Guinea as she works with national partners in the **Ipili Bible translation** project.

SIERRA LEONE

- Pray that the **Wagner family** will be blessed with safety and smooth travels as they return to Sierra Leone this spring.

UNITED STATES

- Pray for LBT's newest missionaries — **Amy Formella, Rev. Carl and Kelsey Grulke**, and **Elliot and Serena Derricks**.

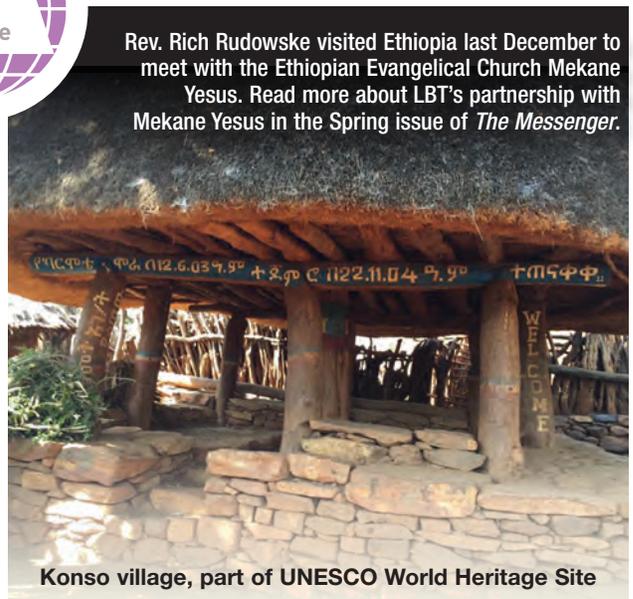
- Pray for the international office staff as they prepare for **LBT-U**, an annual training event, scheduled for June 26th-July 1st.

ZAMBIA

- Pray for **Chris Pluger** as he begins doctoral work at University of Free State, South Africa.



Rev. Rich Rudowske visited Ethiopia last December to meet with the Ethiopian Evangelical Church Mekane Yesus. Read more about LBT's partnership with Mekane Yesus in the Spring issue of *The Messenger*.



Konso village, part of UNESCO World Heritage Site