

God's Word at Work

2009 Mission Update from Lutheran Bible Translators of Canada

Recruitment of Workers for Harvest Remains Priority

Jesus said to his disciples, "The harvest is plentiful, but the labourers are few; therefore ask the Lord of the harvest to send out labourers into his harvest." (Mt 9:37-38 NRSV)

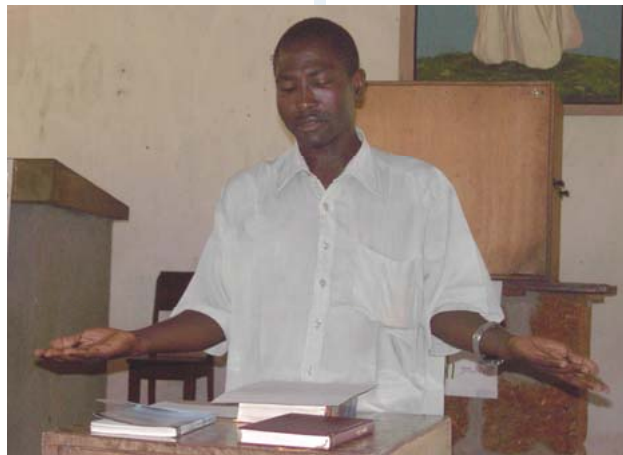
I suppose that every mission organization that has ever existed has referred to this statement. When Jesus said this, the disciples had not yet formally begun the work of being "fishers of men." And I doubt they could even have imagined that Jesus would later tell them to that they would be his witnesses "to the ends of the earth" and that they should "make disciples of all nations." That must have seemed almost impossible.

As we begin the year 2009, we can see that we have made disciples of many nations. From the perspective of Bible translation, there are 438 languages or nations that have a complete Bible in their language. Another 1,168 nations have a New Testament; 848 have some portion of Scripture; and a translation project has begun in an additional 1,953. Among those nations, the harvest—while perhaps far from complete—is at least under way.

Yet, there are some 2,250 nations that have none of God's Word in their language. In those nations the harvest has not really begun. Someone may have spoken to them in a different language, but that's not a very effective way to bring a person to faith in Christ. It's hard to trust in something or someone you regard as foreign.

It's certainly not the way Jesus began this task when he took on human flesh and spoke to people in their own language. When he raised Jairus' daughter, for example, he said to her, "Talitha koum," which Mark had to translate for us.

So if we are to bring people to faith in Jesus and



LBTC long-time Kwanja Bible translator, Yuaere Jerome, is a local servant of God to his people as a direct result of LBTC's work through Missionaries Martin & Joan Weber.

teach them to observe what he instructed, they need to hear His words in their own language. That means we have about 2,250 translations to go! That's going to take a lot of people.

You will notice that the focus of this LBTC Mission Update is recruitment. We are serious about helping to make disciples in those remaining 2,250 nations by putting God's Word in

their languages. So Jesus' words are near and dear to us: "The harvest is plentiful, but the labourers are few; therefore ask the Lord of the harvest to send out labourers into His harvest."

We are asking! We are asking God to provide labourers and we are asking His people, the body of Christ on earth, both to pray with us and to help us identify men and women whom we can send into this harvest. Maybe you can go to one of these nations. If so, talk to us!

Or maybe you know someone whom you could encourage in this direction. If so, talk to them. Ask them to read this Update!

Thank you for labouring with us in the Lord's harvest!

Long Journey from Newfoundland to the Okavango Delta



Eshinee Veith works with Sarah Sase on the Shiyeyi translation.

God chooses amazing people to do His work! Sometimes he also chooses an unexpected and longer-than-anticipated route to get them where they need to be. This is the case with one of LBT's newest translators, Canadian-born Eshinee Veith.

Hailing from Newfoundland and great-niece to Joey Smallwood, first Premier of Newfoundland, Eshinee felt a call to Bible translation and linguistics after serving with Youth With a Mission in 1997. In 2001 she earned a BA in Linguistics at Trinity Western University, a Christian university in Langley, BC. The same year Eshinee married Seattle-based graphic designer Rob Veith. Rob agreed to follow Eshinee wherever her calling took her, and, as he put it, "find something useful to do" while there. When local operations of Rob's company shut down, the couple decided it was time to act on the call to Bible translation.

Early in 2003, they met Lutheran Bible Translators recruiter Peter Slayton at a nearby college. Peter identified Rob's lifelong interest in media production and the folk music of the world as a clue to his future vocation as a Vernacular Media Specialist. He encouraged them to pursue their calling with LBT.

Moving to Dallas they began classes at the

Graduate Institute of Applied Linguistics. Rob was fast-tracked in linguistics through a 5-month program to help him learn foreign languages and culture. Eshinee continued her MA studies in linguistics.

From Dallas, they moved to JAARS (Jungle Aviation and Radio Service) in Waxhaw, NC where Rob was certified as a Vernacular Media Specialist. From there, they attended schools in different states for a few months, Rob receiving ethnomusicology training in Texas, while Eshinee studied New Testament Greek at a seminary in South Carolina. After a period of partnership development across the USA, they arrived in Botswana in

September 2007 as they awaited their visas to Namibia, their presumed destination.

Expecting time in Botswana to be short, Eshinee helped other translators with their efforts and Rob worked with short-term media projects. But as months passed, it became less clear that the Veiths would be going to Namibia.

Late in Fall 2008, LBT decided they should remain in Botswana. Their sponsoring organization, the Evangelical Lutheran Church of Botswana wanted to continue Rob's work. Eshinee, who had already been working to translate in the Shiyeyi language with the help of local coworker Sarah Sase, would be assigned to this language project permanently.

The Shiyeyi or Yeyi language is considered an endangered language, one of several Bantu language groups having 45,000 speakers who live along the Okavango River spanning Namibia and Botswana. The Shiyeyi language is complicated because it uses clicks to supplement its sounds, both single ones and consonant clusters. Challenges arise because users of the language disagree as to how many different clicks are in use.

Botswana has adopted a policy to use a different language, Setswana ... *continued on next page*

IDIOM... What Is It?

Lutheran Bible Translators of Canada works closely with LBT-USA during the recruitment process. Peter Slayton, LBT Missionary

Recruiter, travels to campuses in the United States, talking about the great need for workers (much the way David Maffett does in Canada). He invites interested individuals to attend IDIOM, an LBT event.

In Depth Investigation of Missions (IDIOM) offers a unique opportunity to answer every question a potential candidate might have about joining LBT as a missionary or volunteer. Some topics covered during the 3-day event include:

- LBT mission and vision statements
- Theory and trends in Bible translation
- Meeting office staff responsible for various functions at LBT
- Cross-cultural training
- Linguistics, phonetics, language patterns
- Job descriptions of positions available
- Education/training/skills required
- Time and costs to become a missionary
- Bible knowledge, health and other tests
- Training institutions

The next IDIOM event will be held in Aurora Illinois August 5-8, 2009. If you are interested in attending to learn more, contact LBTC in Kitchener.



IDIOM-ites enjoy fellowship with each other during sessions and after hours. Sessions include interaction with staff and field missionaries.

Continued from Long Journey...

as the national language, in part because it uses the Latin Alphabet. However a coalition of thirteen other language associations are concerned about this apartheid-type of assimilation not only of language but also of cultural and legal rights.

One fascinating person at the hub of this civil rights movement and with whom Eshinee works is Dr. Lydia Nyati-Ramahobo. Nominated in 2005 for the Nobel Peace prize, Lydia has made it her life goal to preserve Yeyi tribal rights, especially the language. Instrumental in developing orthography of the Yeyi language, she now works with specialists - like Eshinee - to continue translation. As the most influential person in the Yeyi community, her public support of LBT's work and welcoming of Eshinee into the life of the Wayeyi people is integral to the success of their mutual translation efforts.

By mid-January 2009, Rob and Eshinee plan to move to Maun, a predominantly Wayeyi community. This will connect Eshinee with local Shiyeyi speakers so she can begin language materials. It took eleven years to reach this assignment but Eshinee and Rob are ready to accept this new life in service to the Lord. Please pray that their assignment might continue in a God-blessed manner.

Job Descriptions of LBTC Missionaries - Where Do You Fit?

Recruiting new missionaries for Lutheran Bible Translators of Canada is one of the main goal for our organization. Until workers are positioned in every language group to which LBT has committed, many jobs are available.

If you are interested in overseas missions, consider from the job descriptions below where you might fit.

Language Survey Specialist

Completing a language survey is the first step in the translation process. Language Survey Specialists help determine the needs of language groups where Scripture is not available. They ask questions like: "How many speakers are there?" "Are the children being taught the language?" The answers to these questions and others help determine a group's translation needs.

Literacy/Scripture Use Specialist

Literacy specialists train and equip national co-workers to teach others to read and write their own language. Closely tied to literacy is Scripture Use. Scripture Use specialists help develop and advocate activities that encourage the use of translated Scriptures in churches and homes.

Ethnomusicologist

Many churches and congregations in other cultures use Western hymns, liturgies and worship styles in their services. They may believe their own music is inappropriate for worship. The Bible says we should "make a joyful noise unto the Lord". The ethnomusicologist helps national people set Scripture in their own language, to their traditional music styles, developing worship songs that speak to the hearts of the people. Worship is more meaningful when people express themselves in their own way. They sing and worship God with more elation.

Translation Advisor

In translating, the biblical texts are carefully studied and then written into the heart language of the people. The translation advisor forms relationships with a team of national people who commit themselves to translating God's Word accurately, beautifully and clearly into their own language. He or she then leads them through the many steps needed to bring the translation to publication.

Vernacular Media Specialist

These specialists assist indigenous people in the production of audio/visual and other tools to spread God's Word. They employ a variety of tools to make Scripture available to those who may not be reached through written text. The focus is on non-print media such as audio recordings of Scripture, dubbing existing video, writing scripts in the vernacular to accompany film strips, videos and more.

Missionary Kid Tutor

For many missionary families, teaching their children is a full-time effort. Having a tutor provides these families with the opportunity to be more fully involved in their primary mission such as translation, literacy or Scripture Use. Tutors do all the things any teacher would do, but without the structure of a traditional school setting. In international settings, creative, hands-on teaching is the way to go!

For more information about these missionary positions or about Lutheran Bible Translators of Canada please contact us in Kitchener.



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