

LUTHERAN BIBLE TRANSLATORS OF CANADA

Summer 2020

Bible House dedicated! To God be the Glory!

Sunday, March 1, 2020, marked the realization of many hopes, dreams, and prayers and the culmination of much hard work. The completed Bible House in Ngaoundere, Cameroon, was dedicated to Christ's service for the translation and proclamation of God's Word.

People came from all over to celebrate this event. Rev. Ron Mohr joined Martin and Joan Weber to represent LBT of Canada. People from all three of our LBTC projects were in Ngaoundere at the dedication, allowing Pastor Mohr to meet them in person and discuss the current state of their projects and their future hopes and plans, a rare God-given opportunity. LBT US was represented by Regional Director Rev. David Federwitz and his wife Valerie, Caleb Rodewald (photographer/videographer), missionaries Elliot and Serena Derricks and their children, and Ariana Schulte (intern).

Prior to the dedication generous friends of LBTC provided donations to help with costs, such as food. A few days before the dedication, Pastor Touka called Martin, asking him to bring his truck to haul the bull he had purchased from a nearby village market to Ngaoundere. Not one to miss out on an adventure, Pastor Mohr joined them and took pictures and videos to show the donors how their gifts were spent.

The dedication celebration began with a service at the cathedral. Pastor



Bible House, Ngaoundere, Cameroon



Procession from the Cathedral to the Bible House

Mohr preached for that service while Martin Weber translated. The Scriptures were read in French and at least five choirs filled the sanctuary with joyful praises in several different languages.

Over 500 people then took part in the 500-metre-long procession from the cathedral to the Bible House. The celebration continued with many speeches, much

music and dancing, and several presentations and expressions of appreciation. Martin Weber gave a stirring account of how God was at work in many ways and through many people in the whole process of bringing this project to fruition.

The dedication rite began with the national bishop of the Lutheran *continued next page*

Pentecost & Lutheran Bible Translators of Canada – Great together!

Our ascended Lord sent His Holy Spirit as He promised. What the Holy Spirit worked in those first believers on that first Christian Pentecost is very much akin to the work done by the Holy Spirit through Lutheran Bible Translators of Canada missionaries, translators, and ministry partners. The proclamation of the gospel in the heart languages of the people gathered in Jerusalem that day resulted in 3000 people coming to faith in Jesus. The proclamation of the gospel in the Kwanja, Nizaa, and Dwayo languages in Cameroon is resulting in the salvation of many in those language groups and the strengthening and deepening of the relationship with Christ for those who already believe. Thank you for your prayers and financial support that help enable this growth of Christ's kingdom to continue.



Dedication, continued

Church of Cameroon (EELC) praying for God's blessing upon the whole building, cutting the ribbon and unveiling the sign. He then entered the building and proceeded to pray over and bless each room of the Bible House with a prayer specific to that room's purpose.

It is a custom in Cameroon to choose a fabric design for special events. Many people have dresses, pants, jackets, ties, head-coverings, or whole outfits made with that fabric to wear. Pastor Touka, the director of EELC's Department for Translation and Literacy, presented

Pastor Mohr with a pastoral stole made of the fabric design chosen especially for this celebration. What a wonderful way to say thank you and an awesome memento of the joyful celebration.

Over and over, the people of the EELC expressed their heartfelt thanks to the people of LBT Canada for their generous

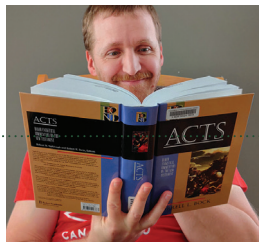


Pastor Touka with Pastor Mohr who is wearing his gift of a stole made from the fabric chosen for the Bible House celebration.

donations large and small that made this building a reality. Pastor Touka and all the translation teams, promoters, and literacy workers are grateful to have a place where they can work together in making God's Word available in more languages for the people of Cameroon. Praise God from whom all blessings flow!

"But the word of God increased and multiplied" (Acts 12:24)

It is a wonderful thing when God orchestrates opportunities so His mission is accomplished! The Acts of the Apostles is a book replete with examples of God taking action to put His servants



Rev. Michael Kuhn

in situations so He can work through them. In fact, since St. John of Chrysostom, some theologians have argued that the book was mis-named since it is the Holy Spirit who is the primary actor in the pages of St. Luke's second volume. Chrysostom wrote: "the Gospels are a history of what Christ did and said; but the Acts, of what that 'other Paraclete' said and did." (Hom. 1.5)

In Acts, we see the Holy Spirit consistently moving; sometimes in subtle ways and at other times in forthright ways. Pentecost is, of course, the most obvious occasion that comes to mind, but consider also His activity in the episodes of Phillip and the Ethiopian eunuch (Ch 8) and when Peter preaches to Cornelius in Caesarea (Ch 10) where God unmistakably acts to cause His Gospel to go out. Even the persecution God allows to fall on his

young church serves to scatter the Gospel throughout Judea and Samaria (8:1) and to other regions beyond traditional Jewish lands (11:19-21). Persecution served to propel Paul

from place to place on his missionary journeys as well; eventually moving him in Rome! God is always working, sometimes in unexpected ways, to cause His Word to go out.

Why all this talk about God working in Acts? Well, Acts was a major focus of mine on this furlough! I have always loved the book for its missionary focus, but our ever-active God presented me with an opportunity on this furlough to dive deeper into the book than I ever had before and to share it with a group I hadn't expected to connect with!

It began in early 2019 when Concordia Lutheran Seminary in Edmonton approached me about teaching a course during our furlough. I was immediately excited by the opportunity, so we moved on to considering possible topics for a class. After weighing a few options, we settled on an Exegetical

Study of Acts; a course that would benefit the students and leverage my experiences. We slated the course for the short-term in May of 2020.

We spent as much time looking at the threads and themes of the book as we did studying the Greek text, and the whole experience was very enriching for me. Perhaps you have heard it said that the best way to learn something is to teach it to someone else? That was certainly my experience! And based on the response from the students, it was rewarding for them as well!

Since the course wrapped up, most of the students in the class have been called to their first parishes and our family has been getting ready to return to Cameroon. Even though we are all embarking on separate paths, I know that our gracious God goes with each of us just as He accompanied His servants in Acts! How will the still-active Spirit work in and through the lives of the men in the course so that His Word continues to grow? What opportunities will He orchestrate for our family in our next term in Cameroon? I look forward to finding out!

Rev. Mike Kuhn

Kwanja-Ndung lectionary dedicated

Nearly 40 years ago, Martin and Joan Weber began their LBTC translation ministry among the Kwanja communities of central Cameroon. This spring marked the climax of their time in Cameroon and the fulfillment of a long-standing commitment to the Kwanja people. They celebrated the dedication of a second three-year lectionary, this time in the Kwanja-Ndung language.

The March 7 dedication was not only a high point for the Webers, but also for many Kwanja people. Several had already been saving up and had begun paying for their books even before they were printed!

The dedication celebration began on Friday afternoon with bringing the lectionary books to Nyamboya, where the ceremony was to be held the next day. To Martin's surprise, a procession met them outside of town. More than 100 Kwanjas were rejoicing and dancing ahead of them as they drove very slowly the last couple of kilometers to the Kwanja chief's compound. There they were honoured with a program including songs composed for the reception of the books and a special meal.

Saturday morning the dedication ceremony began at 10 am and continued about three and a half hours! Several choirs and local composers sang songs for the occasion. Three to five hundred people gathered to celebrate receiving God's Word in their heart language.

Priests and pastors processed forward to begin the ceremony. Following their cultural traditions, first the men did dance movements with leafy stalks, moving forward and then back three times with hunting motions. Then the women, with movements including sweeping motions to prepare the way, moved forward and back four times. This was to acclaim and receive the Word



of God as a Hero, a great Leader, a new Chief for their lives. This lectionary is the Bible they will read in all their services.

The women then presented the lectionary in a basket, for the dedication rite to begin. This was all done with much prayer and preaching and great praise and glory given to our Lord.

After the dedication rite and as part of the ceremony, several people bought their lectionary books of Scripture readings at special higher prices to show how much they value God's Word in their language and to contribute to fund more books. Many others bought theirs after the ceremony.

One poor elderly lady bought the lectionary book, even though she cannot read. She said, "It is a precious book. I want the book so my children and my grandchildren will borrow it and read it!"

From an article by Martin & Joan Weber



Bringing in the lectionary has several unique cultural aspects. It can't be seen until it is presented at the chancel. It is hidden (protected) in the middle of the tightly huddled group of women and behind the cloth held by the two women at the front of the huddled group. The procession was led by two women wielding machetes. At several points the procession would stop and they would perform a sword-fight dance. Behind the machete-bearers came two men with incense burners. The procession took 10-15 minutes as it wove all through the large open area in front of the chancel. The whole process was choreographed with all the dance movements (by groups of men and of women) having meaning and purpose. This was all accompanied by drums and singing.

2020 Lifetime Achievement Awards



Jerome Yuare (left) and Emmanuel Nganko.

This year's LBTC Lifetime Achievement Awards were presented to Jerome Yuare (left) and Emmanuel Nganko. Both of these faithful Christian men are native Kwanja speakers and served on the Kwanja translation team with the Webers. The Webers began this translation work in 1982 and Emmanuel served with them nearly from the beginning. Jerome joined the team only a short time later and was mentored by the Webers and Emmanuel in the translation process. The language skills of both of these men were invaluable in the production of the Kwanja New Testament and the two three-year lectionaries, one in Kwanja-Sundani and one in Kwanja-Ndung. Pastor Mohr had the opportunity to present the awards to these men in person during the dedications of the Bible House and the Kwanja-Ndung lectionary in March.

COVID-19's impact on LBTC

COVID-19 has had a tremendous impact on the whole world and LBTC has not been immune to its affects. Thanks be to God that all of LBTC's missionaries and office staff have remained healthy throughout this time. Still, many adjustments have had to be made.

Pastor Mohr and Tara Bradley (LBTC's financial/office manager) have both been working from home since the middle of March. Because of the many restrictions, volunteers have not been able to gather to work on mailings and Harry Drews (LBTC's office volunteer) has not been able to do the record keeping that has been most valuable over the last several years.

But the pandemic has had the biggest impact on the Webers and Kuhns. The borders of Cameroon were closed in mid-March. The US embassy offered an evacuation flight in early April and, after much prayer and consultation with LBTC/US and with their family, the Webers decided to evacuate to the US.

The Kuhn family had planned to make many more visits to supporting congregations and



individual prayer partners and donors across Canada during the second half of their furlough. These had to be cancelled. Pastor Kuhn prepared a video by which he shared his work with the Nizaa translation team online. He also taught a course for the students at LCC's Edmonton seminary, adjusting the material so he could teach it online.

They had planned to return to Cameroon in June. But Cameroon's government was not issuing any travel documents at the time. Recently their visa services have been restored, so the Kuhn's now plan on returning in mid-September.

Both Webers and Kuhns are asking for your prayers as they wait for the uncertainty of these times to lessen. Please pray for God to continue to protect them from illness and to grant them a safe return to Cameroon in the coming months.

Pastor Mohr has been making use of phone calls and social media to keep connected with LBTC supporters and to bring the good news of what God is doing through LBTC mission work to a broader audience. Tara and her family have

worked hard to keep LBTC mailings going out. The LBTC Board of Directors have continued to meet as needed through online meetings and conference calls. Webers, Kuhns and Pastor Mohr have continued to work with, pray with, and support the many people in Cameroon who partner with LBTC in bringing God's Word to the people of Cameroon in the languages of their hearts.

Additional photos

Kwanja-Ndung lectionary



Use of incense during the dedication.



Close-up of machete protectors.



Here is my gift of \$ _____

☐ I prefer to receive one annual receipt each year (only for individuals).

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Spending of funds is confined to programs/projects approved by LBTC. Contributions designated for such will be used as designated with the understanding that when the program/project has been funded or cannot be completed for a reason determined by LBTC, the remainder will be used where needed most. Gifts are acknowledged and receipted with an official receipt for income tax.

How To Respond With Your Gift of Support

- **By cheque** You can also send LBTC post-dated cheques to continue support for several months.
- **Online** - Visit www.lbtc.ca, select "Supporting LBTC" and click on a blue CanadaHelps button. CanadaHelps will issue a receipt by email. It is possible to set up monthly donations through CanadaHelps.

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