



# Wow!

## Word at Work

THE MAGAZINE OF THE BIBLE SOCIETY IN NORTHERN IRELAND  
SPRING 2021

SCRIPTURE DISTRIBUTION  
IN SYRIA, PAGE 14-15



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*We are currently observing government guidelines with regards to public access to the office. Please ring ahead if you plan to visit the office.*

Cover photo shows George Andrea, General Secretary of the Bible Society in Syria.



## Welcome

**Catherine Little**  
General Secretary, Bible Society NI

When I welcomed you all to our Spring 2020 Word at Work magazine, I wrote about completing things in 2019 and the plans I had for 2020. For all of us 2020 turned out to be a year that we will not forget, or one that we would have never planned. Like all of you as I reflect back on 2020 it maybe wasn't as full as I had expected, but there was still plenty to celebrate.

As a global Bible Society Fellowship, we celebrated the completion of full Bible translations in 700 languages. We celebrated the creativity of our colleagues who found opportunities in difficult circumstances and continued to reach out with God's Word.

There were lots of things that didn't happen the way we had planned. We missed opportunities to gather in person, to celebrate face to face. Instead, many of our meetings and events became virtual, moving to online platforms like Zoom. Our supporters' event 'The Gathering' happened on Zoom in November and it was great to have many of you there. A virtual event allowed more of our colleagues from around the

Fellowship to join in; it was great to have friends from China, Peru, the Gulf, Egypt and England share with us.

As we all look forward to 2021, we do that differently. 2020 has taught us to value what we have, to be grateful, to give thanks and realise how much we have compared to how little we need. This reminds me of verses from 1st Thessalonians 5:16-18 where Paul tells us to rejoice always, to pray continually and to give thanks in all circumstances.

We are so grateful for the ways in which God has continued to be good to us throughout 2020 and for the generosity He has prompted through you our supporters. We have been able to respond to the needs of our colleagues around the world through the Solidarity Fund, as well as continue to support Bible Mission to the levels we planned.

Thank you for how you help us 'Reach out with God's Word'.

*Catherine Little*



Children receive Scripture from the Bible Society of Syria at Christmas.

## Local News

### The Gathering 2020



Daniel Loh shared with us about the work going on in China.



Andrew Ollerton shared with us about the Bible Course and his new book.

On Friday 6<sup>th</sup> November 2020 Bible Society NI went online as we hosted our second annual supporters meeting, The Gathering, via Zoom.

Although a different feel to 2019's live-in-person event, we were thrilled to be joined by over 40 supporters from across Northern Ireland and the wider United Bible Societies Global Fellowship.

The evening was a real mix of quizzes, prayer breakout rooms and resource launches. There were plenty of shared stories on how God has continued to inspire and empower Bible ministry and mission across Northern Ireland and the wider world, despite the Covid-19 pandemic.

We had a wide variety of guests present on the evening from around

the world. It was an honour to be joined by Daniel from China Partnership, who updated us on Bible distribution and engagement across China. Pablo in Peru shared about the difference people's support has made to the Bread of Life programme, and Hrayr excitedly informed us of the new opportunities the Bible Society is experiencing in the Gulf States.

Our interview with Andrew Ollerton (BFBS), creator of The Bible Course and author of The Bible: A Story That Makes Sense of Life, was a real highlight as he encouraged us to get to know and share the BIG story of the Bible.

**Thank you to everyone who came along and supported us during the evening. We appreciated seeing you, and your continued faithful support of our work.**

### CD Update

## 'Reach Out and Touch the Lord'

In our Autumn edition, we told you about a CD created by Eleanor Crymble – 'Reach Out and Touch the Lord'. This is a collection of hymns played and recorded by Eleanor with proceeds from sales coming to Bible Society NI. The CD has familiar tunes helping us to recall words and promises from Scripture.

We are so grateful to Eleanor for all of her hard work in producing and promoting the CD to so many. Eleanor has many musical talents and has organised events in the Marketplace Theatre in Armagh in the past to support our work.

So far, more than £3000 has been raised with copies of the CD reaching many. We know of at least one copy that got all the way to Australia!

Copies are still available of this lovely collection of hymns and other Christian music. They proved to be popular gifts for Christmas with many who haven't been able to get back to church enjoying listening along. Listening to these hymns and songs brings the memories of singing them and their words back to us, bringing comfort and encouragement.

**Get a copy!**

**To get a copy or for more information, contact us:**  
**T: 02890326577**  
**E: [info@biblesocietyni.co.uk](mailto:info@biblesocietyni.co.uk)**





# A HUGE THANK YOU!

As the COVID-19 virus grew into a global pandemic throughout the course of early 2020, it soon became evident that it was going to have a devastating impact on the work of Bible Societies around the world. Many Bible Societies' main income is from their book shops, the shutting of these shops due to restrictions and other challenges meant that 88 Bible Societies were at risk of closure if help was not received. Bible translation, production, distribution and engagement projects were at risk around the world. The United Bible Societies knew that something had to be done to support those worst hit. In June, plans were put in place for a special Solidarity Fund, the likes of which has never been done before in UBS history. Those Bible Societies who were most at risk could be supported through this fund to help them pay staff, building rents and, most importantly, keep Bible projects running.

In Northern Ireland, we began to work remotely from home in March 2020, having a staff team Zoom call every morning. Seeing the crisis that our brothers and sisters were facing around the world, we were deeply burdened. That's why, in August 2020, we put out an additional appeal letter for the Solidarity Fund. As a staff team we did not take this decision lightly, but the need was too great for us not to ask for your support. We spent many mornings in our team call asking God to provide support



“The Solidarity Fund is simply God’s response to our desperation and distress, and to give us strength and hope.” says the General Secretary of one Bible Society

for the Bible Societies struggling the most.

We wanted to take some space in our Spring magazine to say a massive “thank you” to all of you who supported the Solidarity Fund appeal and our other appeals for Bible work throughout the whole of 2020. We have tried to write this article over the last few weeks,

but it has been very hard to put our gratitude into words. We have been overwhelmed by the support which we have received. God has truly answered our prayers through your support and we, as the Bible Society in Northern Ireland and as UBS, have truly been blessed through you. We have been so greatly supported by you all. **Thank you.**

We reached out to some of the Bible Societies who have benefited from the Solidarity Fund over the last few months. They express how much this fund has blessed them and helped them keep Bible work running.



**GENERAL SECRETARY VALENTE TSECO** of the Bible Society in Mozambique:

“I was in despair and sleepless nights. But I kept praying and the answer came in God’s time. This Solidarity Fund means that God won’t allow Covid-19 to stop the plan for his people to get his Word through the ministry of the Bible Society of Mozambique.”



**GENERAL SECRETARY RUBEN DEL RÉ** from the Argentine Bible Society:

Ruben describes how he and his staff have continued some of their projects online amidst the pandemic. “I was just crying in front of my screen, with the deep conviction that the Lord was opening a new - and wide - door for the Bible ministry.” With regards to receiving the Solidarity Fund support he says, “Our heart is full of thankfulness.”



**GENERAL SECRETARY RADOSLAV APOSTOLOV** from the Bulgarian Bible Society:

“This support means a lot to us. It means we are not alone, and not abandoned, not forgotten. It means we are a real part of a significant “body” and that body cares for us. Like the Bible verse about the body and its parts: “If one part of the body suffers, all the other parts suffer with it; if one part is praised, all the other parts share its happiness.” (1 Cor. 12:26). We experience this care from the other parts and thus we see in practice how this works in the UBS Fellowship. Thanks to God for that!”



**GENERAL SECRETARY NGCEBO MBULI** from the Bible Society in Eswatini:

“We feel very hopeful for the future. Bible ministry will continue especially as we endeavour to reach children, the youth and adults. Receipt of the Solidarity fund is timely because we plan to print and launch our SiSwati Study Bible (New Testament) before the end of 2020. This is a long-awaited Bible which will be released in a time of so much hunger for the Word of God.”



Bible Societies have adapted projects to operate within their country's restrictions



# INTRODUCING OUR Intern

In October we were pleased to take on Lucy as our intern to help her complete her placement module for her degree. We asked her to tell us a little bit about herself.

Hello, I'm Lucy! I come from Sunderland in the North East of England and I'm currently in my final year of studying English and Politics at Queen's University Belfast.

I have been greatly blessed by growing up in a Christian home, with the best family God could give me. Through attending church and learning more about the Lord and His word, I came to know Christ and committed my life to Him. I was baptised at the age of 13, to publicly demonstrate the most important commitment I have made and ever will make.

When I was given the chance to complete a placement module through my degree, I contacted the Bible Society NI, who were exceptionally welcoming and keen to have me as an intern.

The work of the Bible Society is the most important work that can be done in the world; ensuring that all people have access to God's Word, in a language that they can understand for themselves. I am overjoyed to be a part of it!

Since starting my placement with the Bible Society, I have been amazed at the range of work I have been given. Whilst COVID-19 has impacted how much I have been able to spend time in person at the office, the use of technology has allowed for me to meet for Bible studies and prayer times with both staff and supporters. At the Gathering event, I even got the chance to lead a quiz with Keren! Through proofreading and helping with the preparation of resources, I am gaining confidence and learning new skills.

I have not fully decided what I would like to do in terms of a career, but I am keen to gain a greater understanding of Christian charity work. During my time at the Bible Society NI, could I please ask you to pray that I am able to be a real help to the team, honouring and glorifying God through the many opportunities I am provided with.



Lucy

“A passage I would love to share is Psalm 19, which emphasises the significance of the Lord's law, offering the prayer “Let the words of my mouth and the meditation of my heart be acceptable in Your sight, O Lord, my strength and my redeemer.” As Christians, this should be our ultimate desire and serves as a daily reminder and challenge to constantly seek to be more like Jesus.”

Lucy has written a piece for us on the completion of the American Sign Language translation on page 13.



There are many Bible Societies around the world today who are struggling. Projects are being adapted, cut back or stopped altogether as a result of the COVID-19 outbreak. Please pray for our brothers and sisters around the world as they continue to share God's Word in these challenging times.

#### Terms & Abbreviations

**FCBH:** Faith Comes by Hearing - A programme providing audio Scripture for listening groups, set up mainly through local churches. **Trauma Healing:** Bible-based counselling for survivors of traumas such as epidemics, disasters or war. **Good Samaritan Project:** A Bible-based HIV/AIDS education programme. Workshop based, multi-media training. **OT/NT:** Old/New Testament. **GS:** General Secretary. **CEO:** Chief Executive Officer.

#### 31 JAN – 6 FEB

**Albania** Pray for the Bible Society of Albania as they publish and launch the Albanian Bible. Due to restrictions they cannot have large numbers, but they hope to celebrate this occasion with twenty smaller meetings. Pray for the Friends for Life sports centre as they reach out with the gospel to their local community through sports. Pray for the team here led by GS Altin Hysi.

**Macedonia** Pray for the Bible Society of Macedonia's project to reach out to young people who cannot afford a Bible. Pray for Bible translations going on to help more people engage with what the Bible says. Pray for the Christian presence as a whole in Macedonia, as they seek to reach out with the Word of God. The work here is led by GS Gjoko Gjorgjevski.

**Bulgaria** Please pray for the work of distributing Scriptures to children in orphanages, that they might know the love of God. Pray for the work here amongst people with visual disabilities and amongst those who are in prison. Pray for their online presence as they seek to reach a new audience. The work here is led by GS Radoslav Apostolov and his team of staff and volunteers.

#### 7 – 13 FEB

**Greece** Pray for the Hellenic Bible Society as they reach out to their community with the Gospel. Pray for the revision of Bible translations to help people read and understand God's Word better. Pray for their work amongst refugees. Ask God that he would use this time to speak into many people's lives and bring them to Himself. The work here is led by GS Michail Chatzigiannis.

**Italy** Please ask God to bless the Bible work in Italy and that His Word can reach the hearts of the entire population. Pray that the work carried out by the Bible Society in Italy reaches every individual, thus making the Bible available in formats and translations that meet their needs. The Bible Society in Italy is led by GS Mario Cignoni.

**Malta** Pray for Bible work in Malta, that God will use the Bible Society here to reach people with His Word. Pray for good relationships with local churches and other Christian organisations, so that they may work together on evangelistic projects. Pray for Bible advocacy in Malta. Please pray for the Board, staff and volunteers here led by GS Paul Agius.

# P@W!

## Prayer at Work

### PULL OUT AND KEEP PRAYER GUIDE

SPRING 2021

#### 14 – 20 FEB

**Zambia** Pray for the New Testament translation and publishing of the Bible into the Nyanja language. Pray that people would come to faith in Christ through reading the Bible in their heart language. Pray for evangelistic work among children and young people in schools. The work in Zambia is led by GS Abraham Chikasa; pray for him as he leads the team this year.

**Angola** Pray for the Bible Society in Angola as they face the many challenges that face them with regards to Bible translation, distribution and outreach. Pray for the continued construction of the Bible Society headquarters. Ask God that He would guide GS Beatriz Hupa and her team throughout the next year as they adapt projects to COVID-19 restrictions in Angola.

**Mozambique** Pray for the Bible translation projects into the Xirhonga, Emakhuwa, Xichangana, Makhuwa-Marrevone, Cibalke, and Manyawa languages. Pray for the work to reach people with these translations in their heart language. Pray for projects equipping the church to reach out to those worst affected by COVID-19. Pray that God would bless the team here as they seek to distribute God's Word.

#### 21 – 27 FEB

**Arab Israeli** Pray that the Arab Israeli Bible Society would continue to build on good relationships with churches and other Christian organisations. Pray for safety as they carry out projects within COVID-19 restrictions. Pray for work among immigrants and those from other faiths. The work of the Arab Israeli Bible Society is led by GS Dina Katanacho.

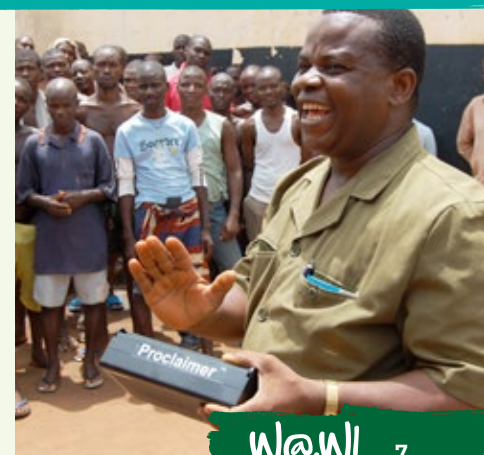
**Israel** Pray for the project translating the Bible into Modern Hebrew. Pray for the work of the Bible Society here in Bible distribution and engagement. Pray for projects that are being adapted to meet COVID-19 regulations. The projects here are carried out by Executive Director Victor Kalisher and his team. Pray that they would be strengthened and encouraged in their work.

**Palestine** Pray for the Child of Bethlehem project which reaches out to the youth of Palestine with a Bible-based programme. Pray for adaptations to this project to keep children and staff safe during the pandemic. Pray for good relationships and partnerships with the local church. The work of the Palestinian Bible Society is led by GS Nashat Filmon.

#### BIBLE-A-MONTH PROJECT FEBRUARY: TOGO

For many in Togo, the written version of the Bible is inaccessible; they may be unable to read it due to illiteracy or a visual impairment. It is for this reason that the Bible Society of Togo supplies "Proclaimers", audio recordings of the Bible. Every week over 1,000 listening groups are hosted all over Togo, bringing together believers who would otherwise not be able to interact with the Bible for themselves. Many churches host Bible listening sessions, where they come together and listen to the Word of God being proclaimed. These listening groups are also hosted in prisons, where illiteracy can be very high. Groups from all over the country meet in prisons to hear the life-changing message of the Bible.

- + Pray that many more people would follow Christ after the listening sessions.
- + Praise God for the many opportunities to spread His Word through this project.
- + Pray for the safety of the listening groups as they follow COVID-19 regulations





## 28 FEB – 6 MARCH

**Chile** Pray for the Light at Sunset project which supports older people and provides them with large print Bibles. Pray for the work of the Bible Society amongst children, young people and those with disabilities. Pray for the adaptations of projects to comply with COVID-19 regulations. Remember GS Francisco Errazu as he leads the team, and for his Board.

**Uruguay** Pray for the work among young people in Uruguay as the Bible Society prepares online outreach and engagement projects for them. Pray for the Draw My Own Bible project which works with at risk children. Pray for the core presence of the Bible Society in Uruguay and for GS Samuel Duarte as he leads the work.

**Argentina** Pray for the work in Argentina amongst those with disabilities. Pray for translation projects in progress and the development of new initiatives that will allow more people to interact with the Bible. The Bible Society here is led by GS Ruben Del Ré; pray that they will be able to continue spreading God's Word despite COVID-19 restrictions.

## 7 – 13 MARCH

**Armenia** Pray for the conflict in Armenia and those who it has affected. Pray that God would use this situation to reach people and to glorify Himself. Pray that the Bible Society would be able to engage more children with God's Word through providing teachers with their own Bibles. Remember the staff, volunteers and Board led by GS Yeznik Petrosyan.

**Georgia** Pray for the Bible engagement projects as they develop study materials for adults and young people. Pray that their publishing and distribution projects may influence many people throughout the country. Pray for the COVID-19 situation in Georgia and those it has impacted. The Bible Society in Georgia is led by Avtandil Guruli and his team.

**Azerbaijan** Pray for the core presence of the Azerbaijan Bible Society. Pray for the bookshop in the capital city, Baku, that it would be a blessing to those who are seeking Scripture. Pray also for stability in Azerbaijan and for the ongoing conflict in this area. The work here is led by GS Rasim Khalilov and his team of staff and volunteers.

## 14 – 20 MARCH

**New Zealand** Pray for continued good relationships between the Asia Pacific Bible Societies and local churches. Pray for projects impacted by COVID-19 and that they would be able to adapt to restrictions. Pray for their creative Bible engagement programmes in collaboration with the local church. Pray for CEO Neels Janse Van Rensburg as he leads the Board and staff team here.

**Australia** Pray for the translation work being carried out amongst indigenous peoples groups, particularly the Pitjantjatjara and Nyoongar languages. Please also pray for the work engaging young people with the Bible. Pray that through these projects people would be challenged and they would come to faith in Christ. The work in Australia is led by CEO Grant Thomson.

**South Pacific** Pray for the projects across the various West Pacific countries in Bible engagement and distribution. Pray for the translation projects in the many languages spoken in this part of the world. Thank God for the MagiMagi programme which helps to show the importance of the Bible alongside the local culture. GS Geoffry Miller leads the work in the South Pacific Bible Societies.

## 21 – 27 MARCH

**Austria** Pray for the staff and volunteers as they distribute Bibles to prison inmates and refugees in their mother tongues. Pray for projects which have been negatively impacted by COVID-19 restrictions and that they could find creative ways to still reach people with the Bible. The work here is led by GS Jutta Henner and her team.

**Switzerland** Pray for the work amongst refugees, prison inmates, the elderly and those experiencing injustice. Pray for ongoing translation projects and for those waiting for Scripture in their heart language. Pray also for the Bible Society staff, members and supporters for their dedicated work and support throughout tough times. The work here is led by CEO Benjamin Doberstein.

**Germany** Praise God for the launch of the Basic German Old Testament translation in January. Ask that German churches and donors will continue to fund global Bible projects and mission work. Pray for good relationships with the local churches and that they could work together to share God's Word. The German Bible Society is led by GS Christoph Rösel and his team.

## 28 MAR – 3 APR

**Pakistan** Pray for new Bible translation and publishing projects in Pakistan. Pray for the Beacon in the Darkness of Illiteracy project to continue to positively impact women as they learn to read and write through the Bible. Pray for safety of staff and volunteers as they carry out this work. Pray for their General Secretary, Rev. Azhar Mustaq.

**India** Pray for the many Bible translation works going on in India into different languages and dialects. Pray for the outreach and engagement programmes amongst children and young people. Ask God to protect the Bible Society staff as they carry out their projects as safely as they can during the COVID-19 outbreak. Pray also for GS Mani Chacko as he leads the team.

**Nepal** Please pray for the translation, production and distribution of the Nepali Bible and related materials for Nepali speakers. Ask for the Scripture engagement programmes, especially those developed through holistic ministries. Pray for enough funding so that the Nepal Bible Society may be able to carry out their projects. The work in Nepal is led by CEO Tej Bahadur Jirel.

# “ Pray for the new Bible for teenagers, that the powerful message may touch young people's hearts. ”

Netherlands

## 4 - 10 APRIL

### Ukraine

Pray for the work in Ukraine to reach people who are in crisis due to the impact of COVID-19. To aid these people the Ukrainian Bible Society runs various holistic outreach projects. Pray for their work amongst disadvantaged children and families and that they would be positively impacted by the Gospel. The Ukrainian Bible Society is led by GS Oleksandr Babychuk.

### Belarus

Please pray for their many projects to help reach at risk children with the Gospel including the “Sowing Together”, “Light of the Bible” and “Draw Your Own Bible” programmes. Pray for the projects which have had to be adapted due to COVID-19 restrictions. CEO Georgij Melnikov is in charge of the Bible Society in the Republic of Belarus.

### Russia

Pray for the translation of the Bible into Russian Sign Language and those this translation will impact. Pray for the many translation projects into different dialects that they would be able to finish, publish and distribute them. Please pray they can continue to provide Scripture to those who need it. Pray for Anatoly Rudenko as he leads the team in Russia.

## 11 – 17 APRIL

### Belgium (French)

Pray for the projects the Belgian Bible Society (French) has had to adapt due to restrictions. Please ask that the projects implemented last year may continue to interest people in the Bible and that many will come to a saving faith in Christ. The work here is led by GS Vincent Beckers and his team. Pray that they would be kept healthy during this time.

### Belgium (Flemish)

Pray for the staff, volunteers and Board working to promote the message of the Bible in Flemish speaking Belgium. Pray that many people will be interested in learning more about the Bible. Thank God for the strong connection with other Bible Societies and ask that God would continue to bless these partnerships.

### Netherlands

Pray for the new Bible for teenagers, that the powerful message may touch young people's hearts. Thank God that they are able to support digital Bible projects in the Netherlands and the Flemish-speaking region of Belgium. Thank God for every supporter who makes this possible through praying and donating. The team in the Netherlands is led by GS Rieuwerd Buitenwerf.

## 18 – 24 APRIL

### Ghana

Pray for the Bible translation projects in progress including the Ghanaian Sign Language translation. Pray for the preparations for the World Assembly that will be hosted by Bible Society of Ghana in 2023; pray that this will be able to go ahead. Ask that the distribution of Scripture to school children would be blessed. The team here is led by GS Erasmus Odonkor.

### Togo

Please pray for the many translation projects going on in this country, including the Lama, Kabiye and Akposso translations. Pray also for their work among youth, distributing Bibles, Trauma Healing programmes and for the Faith Comes by Hearing literacy project. Pray for GS Estelle Akouegnon and her team of staff and volunteers.

### Benin

Pray for the translations of the Bible into many native languages, including Gun, and for the literacy programmes running alongside this. Pray that Bible mission would be able to continue in Benin in light of the restrictions and impact of COVID-19. Pray for the staff team in Benin, including GS Kancou Ogou and the Board members.

## 25 APR – 1 MAY

### Bolivia

Pray for the Bolivian authorities that God would guide them in their decisions for the country. Pray also for the programmes working to share the Gospel with children, teenagers and women who are victims of violence. Please ask the Lord to give the staff and volunteers, led by GS Fanny Cossio, wisdom to bring God's Word to the most distant parts of Bolivia.

### Paraguay

Pray for the revision of the Guarani Bible, as well as the projects to reach people with disabilities with the Gospel. Pray for the work aboard the El Amanecer boat as it travels down the Paraguay River bringing supplies, Scriptures and teaching for church leaders. Executive Director Pedro Escobar leads the work of the Paraguayan Bible Society.

### Brazil

Pray that the Brazilian Sign Language Bible project would be a blessing and that those with hearing impairments will be blessed through it. Pray that they will have the human and financial resources needed to maintain and expand the Bible work in Brazil. Pray for the COVID-19 situation in Brazil. The work here is led by Executive Director Erni Seibert.

## BIBLE-A-MONTH PROJECT MARCH: LEBANON

**Many refugees in Lebanon have fled war torn countries hoping to find safety and better lives.** However, many now live in refugee camps with very little access to everyday necessities. The COVID-19 pandemic has only worsened these conditions and many are without hope.

The Bible Society in Lebanon is working to reach these people by providing care packages to them. These care packages include food, medical supplies, and most importantly, Scriptures. They partner with over 15 churches, helping to deliver these packages and build personal relationships with those who receive them. These care packages will bring hope and joy to those families who receive them.

- + Pray that each copy of Scriptures being distributed will bring joy and encouragement to the refugee families.
- + Pray that they will take the Bible back to their homes and share the message with others.
- + Pray for the safety of families living in refugee camps during the pandemic.

## BIBLE-A-MONTH PROJECT APRIL: PERU

**There are many children across Peru who live below the poverty line.** For over 17 years, the Bread of Life project has been addressing this need by providing children with physical and spiritual nourishment. Everyday across Peru, thousands of children receive a healthy breakfast and Bible lesson through the Bread of Life programme. For many this could be the only food that they eat all day. Due to restrictions in Peru, this programme has become more vital than ever in supplying whole families with food. Throughout the lockdown the Bread of Life programme provided care packages to families. Most importantly, these care packages have brought hope through Scriptures, bringing light into a dark situation.

- + Pray that the children involved in this project would come to faith in Christ.
- + Pray for the families of the children, that they would see the love of God through this programme.
- + Pray for the pastors and volunteers who carry out the projects, that God would bless them and keep them safe.





2 - 8 MAY

9 - 15 MAY

16 - 22 MAY

23 - 29 MAY

#### Botswana

Pray for the translation projects that are ongoing, including the Sign Language and Shekgalagari translations, as well as literacy projects alongside these. Ask God that He will move in Botswana and that many people will be drawn to the gospel message through these translations. Pray for good relationships with local churches. GS Ofentse Maruping leads the team in Botswana.

#### Zimbabwe

Pray for the promotion of the Chikunda Bible translation and that it would be a blessing to those who read it. Pray for the translation of the Bible into Zimbabwean Sign Language. Praise God for the project reaching Mothers of Differently Able Children, ran in partnership with the World Day of Prayer. The work in Zimbabwe is led by acting GS Sheila Chamburuka.

#### Namibia

Pray for the impact of COVID-19 on the people of Namibia. Pray for the translation of the Bible into many Namibian languages, including Oshikwanyama and Oshindonga. Pray also for the Bible Storytelling project and the Oral Bible Translation for the Ovahimba. Pray for the team of staff and volunteers here led by CEO Barnie Van Der Walt.

#### Algeria

Pray for the church and Christian community in Algeria, as it is a hard country to be a Christian in. Pray for the local churches and Christians, as they seek to reach their community in the midst of the COVID-19 outbreak. Please pray for the situation in Algeria and for safety for the team, led by Executive Secretary Ali Khidri.

#### Morocco

Pray for outreach projects to those in their community from other faiths. Pray for projects in printing and publishing, especially in the area of digital publishing. Pray for the work among immigrants and those who have been marginalised. Pray for Executive Director Latif and his team of staff and volunteers. Pray that God would keep them safe during this time.

#### Burkina Faso

Pray for all their translation projects into Bissa, Lyélé, and Birifor and the publication of the Bible in Dagara and San. Pray for the security situation with regards to terrorist attacks, and pray for the situation surrounding the pandemic in Burkina Faso. Pray especially for the protection of the Bible Society staff, led by GS Dramane Yankiné.

#### Mali

Pray for the Bible translations going on in Mali, and for the FCBH projects. Pray for the Bible engagement projects to get people from all age groups to interact with the Bible. Pray for those projects which have had to be adapted or suspended due to COVID-19. Pray for Executive Secretary Jacques Dembélé as he leads the work in Mali.

#### Rwanda

Pray for the Trauma Healing programme and the work among young people. Pray for the Bible translations they are working to complete, including the Rwandan Sign Language Bible. Pray also for the literacy programmes and that people would be touched by the Gospel through reading it for themselves. The work here is led by acting GS David Nkurunziza.

#### Uganda

Please pray for the Bible House renovation project that is currently underway. Pray for the FCBH projects to reach those who are illiterate with the Bible. Pray also for the successful and timely completion of their translation projects. Pray for the promotion of the Braille Bible. The Bible Society of Uganda is led by GS Simon Peter Mukhama.

#### Burundi

Pray that the FCBH project and the Trauma Healing projects in Burundi would be successful and that people would come to Christ through them. Pray for those worst hit by the COVID-19 pandemic and that Bible projects would be able to be safely adapted to regulations. GS Marjorie Niyungeko is in charge of the Bible Society of Burundi.

#### Micronesia

Please ask God to bless the Bible work in these islands and that His Word can reach the hearts of many people. Pray that the work carried out by the local Bible Society reaches every individual, thus making the Bible available in formats and translations that meet their needs. The work in Micronesia is carried out from the Philippines and is led by Perry Cartera.

#### Papua New Guinea

Pray for the revision of the Bible translation in Tok Pisin that God would guide the translators in their work. Pray for Bible engagement in Papua New Guinea that people would be challenged by what they read and that many people would come to faith. Pray for the staff, volunteers and Board that carry out the work of the Bible Society in this county.

## A Snapshot of a Supporter

# Betty McCay

We reached out to Betty McCay, who was secretary of the Bible Society NI Auxiliary in Londonderry until 2017. We asked her to share a little about how she got involved in Bible Society NI.

My name is Betty McCay and I live in the Waterside area of Londonderry. My husband died 15 years ago, hence I live on my own. I have two daughters, one son, seven grandchildren and one great-grandson. Before retiring 25 years ago I worked in the Civil Service for 18 years and previously in the APCK Bookshop.

As a member of Waterside Presbyterian Church I was a Sunday School teacher, Leader in the Boys' Brigade Junior Section (Lifeboys) and a Brownie pack Leader, retiring after 36 years of youth work.

I became interested in the work of the Bible Society during the 1980s when the Clerk of Session asked me to become the Bible Society NI's Secretary within the church. The Londonderry Auxiliary had been formed in 1942 and I joined the group when the Chairman was Mr T S Mooney. When he retired, Mr. I Warnock became chairman followed by Rev. N McCune BA and Rev. A Rosborough MA BD. Mrs May McNee was secretary for many years. When May retired I took over the role of secretary.

Since volunteering with the Bible Society my interest grew. Donations from our churches were gathered in by our Treasurer, Mr David Canning, which were then handed over to the General Secretary at our Annual Meeting.

In 2000, I became a member of the Londonderry Baptist Church and kept a keen interest in the work of the Bible Society.

I feel the team in Belfast are well aware of the needs of our world and can make wise decisions as to where the money is allocated. I enjoy reading about other countries in the many publications that are produced by the team in Belfast.



The Londonderry Auxiliary with former GS John Doherty. Betty sits on the right in the pink jumper.

My Bible is my stay- in it I find everything I need. God is gracious to me and enlightens me when He speaks through His Word. I have many favourite verses, I'll mention two. Psalm 23 and Matthew 28 v 18-20.

Life is changing but as Christians we need to stay close to our God. This year has been hard on us all and we need to be much in prayer asking God to heal our country and draw us closer to Him. The countdown is getting lower every day.

“My Bible is my stay- in it I find everything I need.”

Sadly, in 2017, due to a change in charity regulations, the Londonderry Auxiliary had to cease active work, but the support still provided by those in the North West is still such a blessing to Bible Society NI.

“Please ask God to bless the Bible work in these islands and that His Word can reach the hearts of many people.”

Micronesia

### BIBLE-A-MONTH PROJECT MAY: GUATEMALA

**Everyday 33 people become a victim of human trafficking in Guatemala.** It is estimated that 60% of these people are children. This has a devastating effect on the lives of the young women and children.

The “Free to Live” project brings God’s Word to those who have been victims of trafficking. This project helps girls and young women, giving them hope through the message of the Bible. “Free to Live” groups meet once a week, where they study Scripture and participate in Trauma Healing programmes. They are aided in their recovery from the traumatic events that they have experienced and are shown that God loves them and cares for them.

- + Pray for girls who have been victims of sexual abuse and trafficking that they can find relief in the Scriptures.
- + Pray for girls who have become mothers at a young age. Ask God that he would protect them and their children.
- + Pray for the safety of staff and volunteers involved with this project.





# Bible Translations Reach 700!

Despite all that has gone on in 2020, we have some exciting news- the number of languages the whole Bible has been translated into reached **700** in the second half of the year! **Just over 5.7 billion people (around 80% of the world's population) now have the whole Bible in their mother tongue.**

This significant milestone was reported by progress.Bible, which compiles data from Bible translation agencies across the world, including United Bible Societies (UBS). Nearly three-quarters of the world's full Bible translations have been provided by United Bible Societies.

"It is so encouraging to see 700 languages with the full Bible," says UBS Director General Michael Perreau. "This is the fruit of generations of sacrifice and generosity. Each Bible translation takes years of hard work and

**A pastor in Myanmar, gives thanks to God for the Bible in his language.**



The launch of the Mina Bible in Togo in 2014

**“ My mother tongue is the language of my heart. When I read the Bible, I get emotional - sometimes tears come to my eyes. They are tears of joy, as I can read in my own language. ”**  
says Helena.

*Helena is from Finnish Lapland and speaks the language of North Sámi, which recently had its translated completed*



dedication. We give thanks to God for the men and women who have spent so much of their lives bringing God's Word to their communities and for those who have supported and prayed for that work."

Over the past five years alone, United Bible Societies has completed first translations of the full Bible in 50 languages, which means that 57 million more people can access the whole of God's Word in their mother tongue.

"2020 has turned out to be a year of great uncertainty, with many seeking hope and reassurance," comments Mr Perreau. "It is even

more important that people are able to access Scripture in the language that speaks most deeply to their heart. My prayer is that, amidst the many challenges facing the world, this will be the year that millions more will discover the riches of the Bible for themselves."

According to progress.bible's data, the number of languages with the full Bible has nearly doubled over the past 30 years (from 351 in 1990, to 700 in 2020). And it was just 7 years ago, in 2013, that the last milestone of 600 languages was passed, demonstrating the incredible progress taking place in Bible translation today.

# The First Complete Sign Language Translation!

In October 2020, after 38 years of work, translation of the entire Bible into American Sign Language was completed! The news ensures that over 408,000 deaf people are now able to access God's Word, a real cause for celebration. **Out of the world's 400 sign languages, American Sign Language (ASL) is the only one with the full Bible.** Renca Dunn explained that "now, translators have the framework to keep translating the Bible into other Sign Languages", illustrating how this initial translation will act as a catalyst for further Sign Language Bible translations.

The translation, led by Deaf Missions and supported by a collection

of Christian Bible organisations including the American Bible Society, is true to God's Word. A team of over 50 people, most of whom use ASL as their first language, worked alongside esteemed theologians from various Christian confessions, to produce the ASL Bible. Deaf Missions CEO Chad Entinger remarked "We celebrate the faithful, diligent work of those who have worked with Deaf Missions through the years to get all 66 books translated into ASL – the native, preferred and heart language of Deaf people," portraying the significance of the translation in

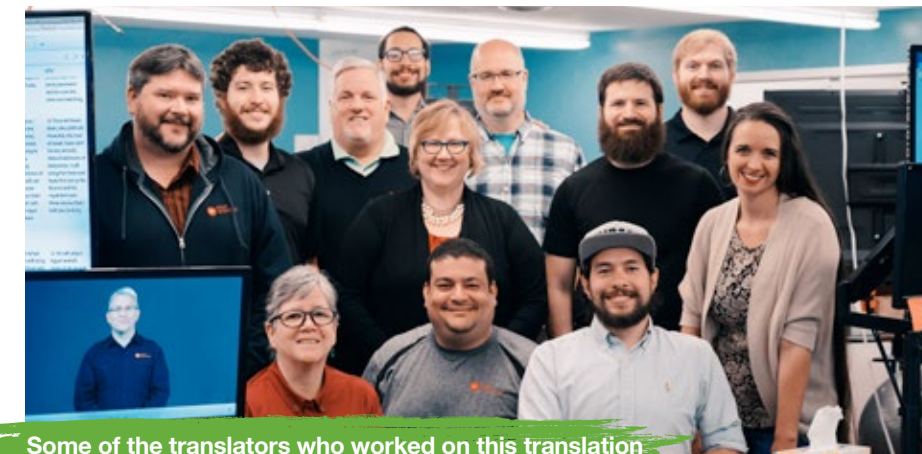


ensuring people have access to the Bible.

Deaf Missions reported that so far, the American Sign Language Scriptures have been downloaded more than one million

times! The impact that the new translation is having on people's lives is demonstrated through one man who, after having accessed the ASL Bible, stated "I become so engrossed in it that I watch some parts over and over again so I can study and meditate on it. Sign language is very beautiful and exciting and it draws me into God's Word." To see God at work in his life in such a way shows how much of a cause for celebration the news of the ASLV translation truly is.

Throughout the translation project, technological advances continuously created new ways for the Bible to be transformed into sign language. The process has consequently helped other projects in different parts of the world in their goal of producing a sign language Bible, using the ASL Bible as a guide.



Some of the translators who worked on this translation



# Syria Appeal

## The Scriptures are Testifying of Me

### SYRIA

For many of us when we think of Syria, we think of a war-torn country in dire straits. However, although this is often the case, there is also a vibrant and active Christian community which is reaching out to the people in their community with the Gospel.

The Bible Society in Syria has several projects to engage people with God's Word. Distribution has been, and still continues to be, the main activity carried out by the Bible Society in Syria. In recent years people's hunger for the Bible has only increased and over the last year they have had a real surge in people asking for bibles to be provided to them.

Syria is a very large country making it a real challenge to reach the most remote areas of the country. Many people live in rural villages and far away towns. In order to facilitate the increasing demand for the distribution of the Bible, the main Bible warehouse has been moved

from Aleppo to Tartous, a city on the coast. This has allowed them to increase their reach and to help meet the demand for Bibles.

Over the last year, this project has been increasingly difficult to carry out due to the COVID-19 pandemic. In a country like Syria, there is always a danger when following Christ and the COVID-19 virus has added an additional layer of danger to the staff and volunteers who run this project. Despite the dangers in such a situation the Bible Society has seen many people searching for the Bible, and they have been working to meet the need. One of the saddest moments in 2020 for the Bible Society of Syria was when the book shop in Aleppo had to close due to restrictions. This was truly heart breaking, as throughout the

“ You study the Scriptures diligently because you think that in them you have eternal life. These are the very Scriptures that testify about me. ”

John 5:39

entirety of the war, despite conflicts and bombings, the book shop had never closed. Thankfully, they have been able to reopen and are now continuing to provide Scripture through their shop.

The Bible warehouse in Tartous has been able to be open and is more active than usual. Our colleague wrote to us and told us that it is “like a beehive”. The international highway is open, and they are able to deliver Bibles and Scripture to remote places in Syria. They have been able to reach many areas which they could not go to before.

Christianity is growing in Syria and many people are turning to Christ. Praise God that even in such difficult circumstances his word stands true and is a source of comfort. With the help of local churches, they have been able to provide Bibles, Scripture and resources to over 18,000 people in 2020. It is often difficult work, but it is evident that God is working in this situation. Please join us as we continue to support our brothers and sisters in Syria.



## Pray for Syria:

- + Please pray for guidance on how to enable people to interact with the Word of God more easily. Pray that God would provide ways to reach those in remote places.
- + With the growing tension in Syria, please pray that the Bible Society here can deliver all the Scriptures that are needed. Pray that highways remain open and there is freedom of movement.
- + Pray for the safety of the Bible Society team and volunteers in Syria, as well as the wider Christian community. Ask God to watch over his people in this part of the world.

## Donate

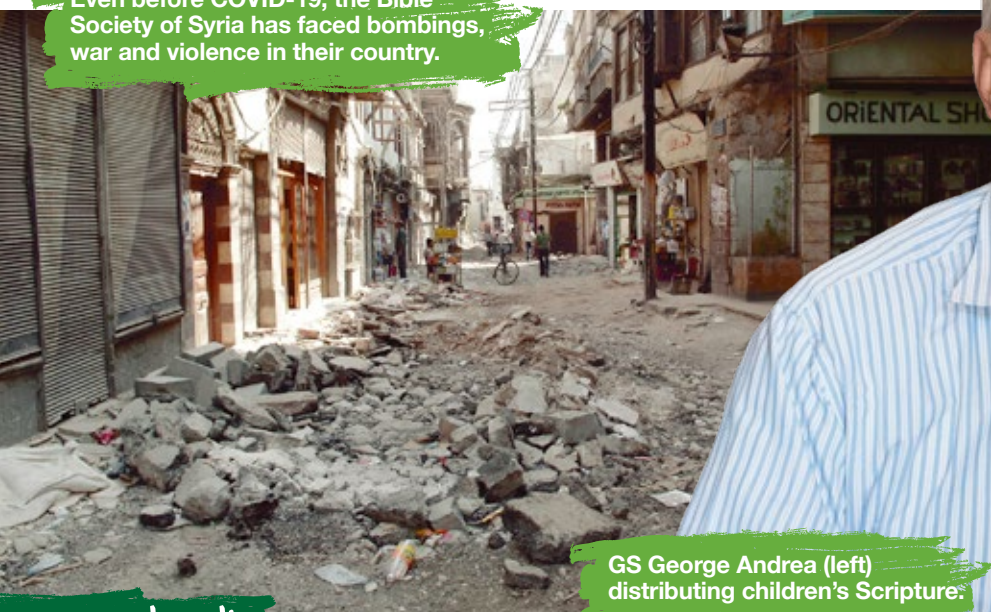
**All Bible Society work depends on the generous giving of supporters. You could help to provide God's Word to someone in Syria.**

- + **£10** could give 5 Believers a New Testament.
- + **£45** could provide Scripture booklets to 150 children in a church or hospital.
- + **£100** could provide 20 families with a Bible.

If you would like to donate to this project simply fill out the form that was included with this magazine. You can also donate online on our website at [www.biblesocietyni.co.uk/project/syria-delivering-scripture/](http://www.biblesocietyni.co.uk/project/syria-delivering-scripture/) or scan this QR code with your smartphone.



Even before COVID-19, the Bible Society of Syria has faced bombings, war and violence in their country.



GS George Andrea (left) distributing children's Scripture.



# Resources for You

The Apostle Paul boldly declared that “God’s Word is not chained” (2 Tim. 2:9). Despite all he endured for the Gospel, Paul remained confident that God’s Word would continue to reach the world and change lives. At Bible Society NI we are passionate about reaching everyone with God’s Word and enabling Bible engagement and understanding. To help you do that in 2021, we have some exciting resources available to you.

## 52

Our **BRAND-NEW, FREE Bible reading resource for 2021 and beyond!** Guiding you through 28 Old Testament and 24 New Testament readings – the 52 – with study questions, activities and prayers; this resource is perfect for people of all ages and stages to inspire Bible engagement, without getting you bogged down. 52 is available digitally from our website now, with new releases at the beginning of each month.



## Woven

Follow Jesus through the teachings, trials, tears and triumph of the final week of his life! You can download your free eBook copy of our Holy Week devotional from our website (<https://biblesocietyni.co.uk/resources/woven/>) or contact our office for a hard copy (£1 each). Here are some of your testimonies about Woven from 2020:

“This little book was such an amazing encouragement to me.” **Joan**

“We used Woven with our church family over Holy Week – it was great!” **Andy**



## 2021 Daily Bible Reading Guide

Our **FREE 2021 guide is available now!** This simple guide packs a powerful punch; providing a passage of Scripture for every day and encouraging the habit of daily Bible reading. Why not contact us for copies for your family, friends and church?



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# W@W!

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