

# Messenger

## God's Peace Medal...the Sweet News of Jesus

In 1804 Meriwether Lewis and William Clark started exploring the Northwest Territory, seeking a waterway to the Pacific. They took with them an interpreter and a supply of Peace Medals. The medals were to be given to the various people groups they would meet to signify that there would be peace between them and the United States.

On October 18, 2008, in the village of Nano in northern Togo, West Africa, the Moba speaking people received a different sort of Peace Medal from God – the New Testament in their own language. With singing, dancing, worship and feasting, the nearly 1,500 people celebrated and thanked the Lord for this precious gift. They celebrated because they no longer need an interpreter. They have the “sweet news” of Jesus in their own language.

Almost 22 years ago, Rev. Kombat Bigbi, Rev. Joiniim Lanbon and Mr. Saka Kombien, with Rev. Walt DeMoss as their advisor, started this translation...finding the best Moba ways to express God's Word...touching the people's hearts and bringing glory to God.

At the beginning of this translation process, a group of young Moba men gathered to study for the ministry using materials written in French. At that time, only portions of Scripture were available in Moba. The ministry students would refer to the Moba Scriptures to understand what the French translation was saying; proof that their mother tongue spoke to



The Moba people can now read and hear the Good News in their own language.

**“God used us all from the start. Many have already passed on to heaven, having received the Gospel orally,” Rev. DeMoss said. “Now, through the printed Word, many more are being reached in a new way, in their heart language and are being led to salvation in Christ Jesus. We thank God and give Him the glory.”**

their hearts and heads...better than the French Bible!



Rev. DeMoss accepts one of the first copies of the Moba New Testament.

The translation work continued over the years. Translation consultants from the United Bible Societies checked the work and suggested revisions when necessary. Introductions to each book of the New Testament were written and a glossary prepared. After the manuscript was typeset in Nairobi, the translators did a meticulous read through to check for any errors. They wanted to be able to say with confidence to the Moba people that “This is the Word of God!” Once the checking work was complete, the manuscript was sent to South Korea for printing, with much praise and thanksgiving.

There was more thanksgiving when the Bible Society of Togo learned that the printed New Testaments were being shipped to Togo. Excitement began to build as a tentative dedication date of October 18 was set. Planning began in earnest: a list of invitees was developed; a Nano schoolyard was chosen as the site for the dedication; the celebratory meal following the dedication was arranged; emails and cell phone calls increased dramatically. A sigh of relief arose from many corners when word came from Lomé, the capital of Togo, that the New Testaments had been cleared from port. October 18 was shaping up to be a big day.

*Continued on page 6*

*The mission of Lutheran Bible Translators [LBT] is to help bring people to faith in Jesus Christ by making the Word of God available to those who do not yet have it in the language of their hearts.*

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a heart  
for missions

## One God, One Word, One Desire, One Mission

“A Heart for Missions” has been the caption of this column for over 12 years. It’s where I share experiences and perspectives about the mission of Lutheran Bible Translators. It has, I suppose, been an insight into *my* heart for missions.

I’ve been thinking about some of my experiences during 2008 and realized there is another heart for mission that should also be expressed.

I was privileged to attend three New Testament dedications last year, two in Africa (Togo and Sierra Leone) and one in Papua New Guinea. The languages were different, the cultures were different, and the weather was definitely different!

In each of the three dedication settings I had the privilege of speaking with members of the translation team and local church leadership (hampered, of course, by my lack of fluency in their language!).

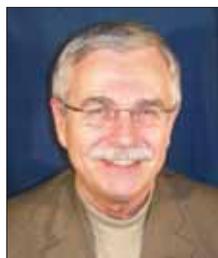
These are a few of the things I heard:

- Genuine excitement that God’s Word was finally available in their language.
- Recognition, expressed in many ways, that something of historical significance in the life of the people happened on the day of the New Testament dedication.
- An eagerness for men and women to hear God speak to them in their heart language.
- The desire for more and better literacy programs so that more people can have access to God’s Word.
- In many cases, an expression of desire for the Old Testament, too.

Underlying it all, I heard a heart for mission expressed in other voices, languages, and cultures. Our hearts for mission complement one another as we seek to make *the Word of God available for those who do not yet have it in the language of their hearts.* 📖

Sincerely yours in Christ,

Dr. Marshall R. Gillam, CFRE  
Executive Director



## Unicode Helps Spread God’s Word

by Ali Federwitz

Computers think in numbers. These numbers are the codes for a corresponding letter, something we humans can then read and understand. Since the inception of computers there have been many standards for how letters should be coded. The problem is that each was designed for a specific major language. Each of these **legacy standards** could only handle a maximum of 256 characters.

People who work in minority languages, as the Ghana Institute of Linguistics, Literacy and Bible Translation (GILLBT) does, had to develop their own standards and in so doing created uniquely modified fonts. This worked fine within a language group, but data was not able to be shared outside of that group without also passing along the necessary fonts and keyboards. Sometimes even two organizations that were working in the same language were not able to share their files. To combat these problems a new system called Unicode has been developed to create a distinct code for every character in every language in the world.

Unicode has a place for more than 16 million different characters. Unicode is an international standard and has helped level the playing field. It allows data to be shared among various organizations in Ghana and throughout the world.

Learning how Unicode works was a major task for Paul in 2008. He had to find the characters in Unicode that corresponded to the characters currently being used by GILLBT. He then had to redevelop the software keyboards that change what a person types on a standard keyboard, putting it into the local language. All this needed to happen behind the scenes so that work was not disrupted.

The most difficult task was finding all of the files on each computer that use the legacy standard and converting them to Unicode. Then each language program had to be upgraded to one that is compatible with Unicode. This needed to be done on every computer in GILLBT’s thirty-three language projects.

If you would like to learn more about Unicode, check out these websites: The Unicode Consortium (<http://www.unicode.org/standard/principles.html>); Non-Roman Script Initiative (<http://scripts.sil.org/unicode>); Keyboard Manager (<http://www.tavultesoft.com>). 📖

*Paul and Ali Federwitz serve in Ghana, where Paul is an Information Technology Consultant and Trainer and Ali a Childrens’ Education Advisor.*

# Lights, Camera, and the Prodigal Son

by Kedra Larsen

**In November 2008, LBT missionaries Dan and Kay Finley and I traveled to Freetown, Sierra Leone. It was the first time in Africa for the Finleys, and I enjoyed showing them around. Our primary goal was to work on a video project with the Bible Society.**

You know what they say about the best laid plans...

During my previous visit in May, plans were made for the projects to be completed in November. Due to illness and other commitments, the individuals I worked with at that time were not able to have the proposed scripts and children's dramas ready to record. As a result, the video project we ended up doing turned out to be quite different from what was originally planned.

After the Finleys and I arrived, the Bible Society worked with two churches to develop two dramas. The first was the story of Ananias and Sapphira (from Acts 5). This was done as a staged drama with primary school children. They did a great job, but unfortunately, the only time they had for recording was during one evening and the lighting was poor. However, it was a learning experience for all, and they now have a better idea of filming requirements and what it takes to do a drama such as this.

Then, by the end of our second week in Sierra Leone, we had filmed a movie!



Filming was done from a balcony in Freetown.



It took awhile for dinner to be ready.

This second drama is a short movie based on the Prodigal Son parable from Luke 15. I say "movie" because we worked with

young adult actors and shot scenes for the video at three different locations. In Krio the story is called "The Wayward Boy". Below is a synopsis of the storyline as portrayed within a modern Freetown, Sierra Leone context. Each scene is introduced by a narrator reading directly from Luke 15. At the end a Krio song based on John 3:16 is played and the words are scrolled on the screen.

*The father owns a general merchandise shop. The son works for his father but is unhappy. He wants his inheritance in order to go off with his friends and enjoy life.*



This was the first visit to Africa for Dan and Kay.

We filmed this scene from a crowded second floor balcony in downtown Freetown. Dan held the camera standing right against the balcony rail and Kay used the fabric light reflector we brought to reflect the sunlight and brighten up the

actors' faces. It was a very noisy street, but I was able to place the audio recorder close enough to the actors to eliminate the background noise.

*After receiving his inheritance, the son enjoys the high life and lavishly spends the money with his friends.*

We filmed this scene at a restaurant. Yes, it was a real chicken dinner. We had to wait for the chicken to cook before we could begin filming. The scene is 8 minutes long – much too long for western audiences, but in West Africa they like to see the whole scene play out as it would in real life.

*Eventually, the son completely runs out of money and begs for a job scrubbing pots and pans for a restaurant. He realizes the error of his ways and heads home where his father warmly receives him.*

We were anxious to film this last scene before it got dark. We used a street that we thought would not be too busy to show the son come hobbling up the road while the father runs down to meet him. We had to work around several vehicles, motorbikes, and pedestrians who got in the way. It made for an interesting time during editing.

The Bible Society plans to use the video as an evangelism tool. They will have the completed project early next year, and we will continue to dialogue with them as they distribute and use it. They will also likely market it and sell it in their office store. We may help them produce more Bible story videos and similar materials in the future.

Thank you for supporting LBT to make projects such as this possible for the people of Sierra Leone. It is a blessing to help people interact with the Scriptures in their heart language and to create a tool they can use to share the message of God's love with a wide Krio speaking audience. 📖

*Kedra Larsen serves as LBT's ethnomusicologist.*

*Dan and Kay Finley are East Coast Regional Representatives for LBT. They also assist LBT missionaries and national co-workers with vernacular media projects.*



## reflections

# Adventures in Literacy

by Valerie Federwitz

In mid September the first Komba literacy classes were launched using the primers that the KOLIBITRAP (Komba Literacy and Bible Translation Project) volunteers created under the guidance of David Federwitz and Rev. Nathan Esala. Since then, David and Elijah, the local literacy coordinator for the project, have spent many nights out in villages visiting and encouraging the teachers and students. We have also been encouraged by seeing the competency of the teachers and the eagerness the students have to learn. David has commented on the various ways the classes provide themselves with light at night. At one class he saw that someone had taken apart a flashlight with five LEDs and strung them up on a stick in the front to shine light on the chalkboard!



Those of you who have been receiving our e-mail updates have seen our prayer requests for these night journeys that David and Elijah have been on. David rides as a passenger on Elijah's motorcycle to villages that are often very far off the main roads through the "bush." One night they ran up a sapling tree that was hiding in the tall grass. David sustained only a few scratches on his leg. Another night the motorcycle's brakes went out. He also learned, after the fact, that a river they had crossed is home to several crocodiles! Please continue to pray for safety for David and Elijah as they continue this important work. 📖

*David and Valerie Federwitz serve as literacy specialists with the Komba translation project in Ghana. Rev. Nathan and Sarah Esala serve as translation advisors to the project.*

# Written on the Heart



Rick Allmon

by Rick Allmon

The Rosetta Stone was discovered in 1799 during Napoleon's campaign in Egypt. It measured 45 inches high, 29 inches wide, and 28 inches deep. Though not very formidable in appearance, it was a huge find. The carved inscriptions on the stone provided the key to the interpretation of Egyptian hieroglyphics, revealing and unraveling thousands of

years of ancient history. It was a stupendous discovery that will forever occupy prominent space in history books and the minds of scientists and historians worldwide.

Translations of a different sort played a major role in the achievements of LBT missionaries in 2008. These translations did not depict the accomplishments of mankind, but rather, the marvels of God. No talk about aqueducts, pyramids, and the lineage of pharaohs, but words that express

God's love for all people. By God's grace, the selfless work of missionaries and their translation teams, and with your prayer and financial support, three New Testaments were dedicated in 2008. The Kono of Sierra Leone, the Ipili of Papua New Guinea, and the Moba people of Togo are now able to hear and read for themselves God's plan for all people and nations.

The world celebrates great discoveries like the Rosetta Stone, a substantial monolith that helped us understand the past. How much greater our joy should be when a book that often measures less than 6" x 8" x 2" provides us with all we need to understand the past, live in the present, and anticipate a glorious future. How wonderful that God's Word, written on our hearts, holds the key to salvation and eternal life.

Thank you for your support during 2008. We look forward to further progress in translation and Scripture engagement programs during 2009 as we work together to bring Scripture to people around the world. 📖



# A Legacy for Eternity

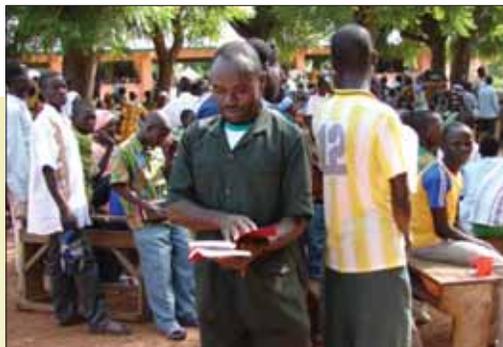
by Gary McCall

On October 18th, 2008, while standing under a make shift canvas shade stretched among thin tree tops, in sweltering African temperatures, I had an extraordinary opportunity to witness the *Moba New Testament Dedication* in the small African village of Nano, Togo. The Moba language is spoken by approximately 50,000 people. They now have a New Testament written in the language of their hearts, the language they speak and *fully* understand.

A litany of 13 impressive speakers addressed the crowd of about 1,500. However, when former missionary to the Moba people, Rev. Walt DeMoss (recently retired Director of LBT's Program Ministries) rose to speak, I noticed something I had not seen before. All eyes turned to him...he had their full attention. I could not help but sense the outpouring of love and warmth directed towards their dear friend, former Pastor, and long time coordinator of this Moba New Testament translation. This warm reception was not superficial, it was genuine. No one else commanded



Rev. DeMoss had the crowd's full attention.



Many immediately began to read their New Testaments.

it that day. It was apparent the DeMoss legacy is one of love and the knowledge of Jesus Christ, a

true spiritual heritage, one which will have an impact on people's lives for generations to come.

After nearly six hours of festive celebration, the dedication ceremonies came to an end. I watched in amazement as my brothers and sisters in Christ lined up to obtain their "very own" Moba New Testament. Many, after taking only a few steps, stopped, immediately opened their New Testaments and began to read. As I walked among them, they seemed oblivious to my presence. Their focus was solely upon their "new Bible". Whenever our eyes did meet, the smiles on their faces and joy in their eyes transcended all language barriers. With confidence, I can say we are making a difference in people's lives for Christ.

In the days ahead my ongoing prayer will be; *O Father, who gave us the legacy of your son, Jesus, may my legacy also be a "spiritual one." Please give me, my children and my grandchildren, understanding as to why a father's/grandfather's legacy should not be one solely of "bricks and mortar." They are things of this world and will never last. But let our legacy be one that brings people to Faith in Jesus Christ...a legacy for eternity.* 📖

Gary McCall is a member of LBT's Board of Directors.

## Need More Information?

### Return this coupon to:

Rick Allmon, CFRE  
Associate Director for Development  
Lutheran Bible Translators, 303 N Lake Street, PO Box 2050,  
Aurora, IL 60507-2050  
Phone: 1-800-532-4253 or 630-897-0660 Fax: 630-897-3567  
E-mail: Rick@LBT.org

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- I would like to make a one-time gift.

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



## New LBT Website and Updated Logo Introduced

# Building Awareness and Stronger Support for LBT

In case you've not already noticed, we've reworked and upgraded our website while freshening and updating our logo.

We invite you to visit our website, [www.LBT.org](http://www.LBT.org), and explore the new site.

Both logo and website changes are intended to help mission minded people who are familiar with LBT's work, as well as those who may be coming across us for the first time, to better grasp what we do, why we do it, how we're doing, what the future holds, and how they can get involved.

"Many of us are fond of the old LBT logo and accustomed to the very traditional look and feel of our website," Dr. Marshall Gillam, LBT executive director said. "The new logo updates the elements and symbols that those familiar with LBT recognize and cherish as central to our mission. Our missionaries work around the world, helping to bring Holy Scripture to those who do not yet have it available in their heart language."

"We used web savvy staff members and internal communications pros with an appreciation for our traditions, heritage and mission. They worked with a hand picked designer who understands our mission and is experienced in developing both logos and web pages on very tight budgets,"

Gillam said. "We feel we've been able to preserve our heritage and express the spirit and mission of LBT while modernizing our look, broadening our appeal, improving the functions, viewability and timeliness of information on our website."

The new website is designed to be updated and maintained by a cadre of staff members. It is visually brighter, graphically livelier, and intended to be easier and more intuitive to navigate than our previous site. Built-in design elements make it easier to update and maintain, and less prone to breakdowns and malfunctions, making it more valuable to you and to us.

The new website is intended to more impactfully tell LBT's story. It will feature LBT missionaries and spotlight their work to individuals with state of the art computers, while protecting the interactivity and access of those with older, less powerful equipment and software.

The new logo will be incorporated into and onto all appropriate print and electronic communications. As existing print inventory runs out, the new logo will be added to replacement pieces.

If you have questions or comments about either the logo or the new website, please feel free to drop us a line. Contact Don Ruhter, Director of Advancement at [DRuhter@LBT.org](mailto:DRuhter@LBT.org).

## God's Peace Medal...the Sweet News of Jesus

*Continued from page 1*

Last minute dedication details were dealt with on October 17 at a meeting between Rev. Amegah Wolanyo, Director of the Bible Society, his colleagues, and the Moba translation team. Culture required that there had to be time for all invited dignitaries to speak, even if they could not attend. The final program was printed while changes were still being made!

October 18...dedication day...dawned. The appointed starting time was 8:00 a.m., but as is typical in African culture, the service did not begin until after 10:00 a.m., when the crowd had greatly increased.



About 1,500 gathered together to thank God for the "sweet news" of Jesus.

Once the service began, it did not stop. The animation and enthusiasm kept building until finally

Rev. Amegah unveiled a stack of Moba New Testaments. Now there was no doubt, the sweet news of Jesus Christ, *Yiesu Labamann Mual Ni*, had arrived. The people could see and touch God's Peace Medal.

In his sermon, Rev. Kombat Bigbi, the president of the Lutheran Church of Togo and the head translator, read from Acts 2 where the events of Pentecost Day are related. Two thousand years ago the people gathered at Jerusalem heard the believers declaring the wonders of God in their own language. So also the Moba speaking people heard these same wonders in the language of their hearts. "We no longer needed an interpreter," Rev. Kombat said. "We can now read and hear the Good News of free salvation through faith in Jesus Christ directly in our own language."

From the beginning of the project 22 years ago until the dedication in 2008, there was one hope, "To God be the glory!"

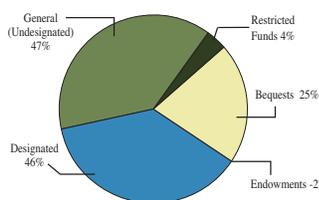
**"Helena and I are blessed to have spent ten years living and working with the Moba people in Togo," Rev. Walter DeMoss said. "God used us as instruments – not only helping meet the physical needs of the people – but ministering to them spiritually as well."**

## LBT Partnership Support

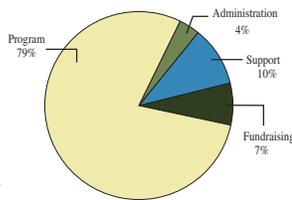
October 1, 2008 — December 31, 2008

	Unaudited 4th Quarter	Unaudited Year-to-date
<b>INCOME</b>		
Designated	\$519,418	\$1,800,631
General (Undesignated)	531,239	1,297,945
Restricted Funds	50,158	149,565
Bequests	286,834	373,119
<u>Endowments</u>	<u>(256,991)</u>	<u>(516,340)</u>
<b>Total Income</b>	<b>\$1,130,659</b>	<b>\$3,104,919</b>

4th Quarter Income



4th Quarter Expenses



## EXPENSES

Program	\$727,494	\$3,132,717
General & Administration	33,670	131,671
Support	94,058	396,305
<u>Fundraising</u>	<u>66,411</u>	<u>235,249</u>
<b>Total Expenses</b>	<b>\$921,633</b>	<b>\$3,895,942</b>

NOTE: During the last quarter of 2008, LBT was able to purchase 1 computer, 1 major computer repair, a 4 channel recorder/soundmaster and 1 new overseas vehicle. These totaled \$32,259 and are not reflected in the amounts shown above.

CUT HERE

# Interested in Becoming a Missionary?

If you, or people you know, are interested in the possibility of becoming missionaries, consider attending I.D.I.O.M. (In Depth Investigation of Missions).

I.D.I.O.M. encourages and advises those individuals and couples who are considering missionary service. A wide range of topics and issues are covered, including training, living standards and expectations on the field, cross cultural engagement, and the role of nationals in the translation process. There is no cost for the workshop. LBT provides transportation, housing, and meals once you arrive in Chicago.

I.D.I.O.M. dates for 2009 are May 20-23 and August 12-15. For more information contact Peter Slayton at [PSlayton@lbt.org](mailto:PSlayton@lbt.org) or 800-532-4253 extension 23. 📧

## Gift Designations

Your gifts in support of an LBT missionary are applied to the budget of the designated missionary. If the budget for that missionary is overfunded, surplus funds are used to assist other missionaries whose budgets are in deficit. If all missionary budgets are completely funded, surplus funds are applied to the General Fund.

CUT HERE

## Birthdays

### MARCH

- 1 **Lisa Beckendorf**  
Botswana
- 1 **Don Ruhter**  
Service Center Staff
- 2 **Levi Federwitz**  
(2008)  
Ghana
- 8 **Maila Davies**  
Papua New Guinea
- 9 **Peter Slayton**  
Service Center Staff
- 11 **Sheri Larsen**  
Guatemala
- 19 **Melody Knight**  
Botswana
- 22 **Hannah Federwitz**  
(2006)  
Ghana
- 24 **Danny DeLoach**  
Papua New Guinea
- 24 **Allen Jensen**  
United States
- 26 **Kay Finley**  
United States
- 26 **Kory Fay**  
United States
- 28 **Mae Johnson**  
United States

### APRIL

- 1 **James Maxey**  
Service Center Staff
- 4 **Rick Allmon**  
Service Center Staff
- 13 **Jonathan Burmeister**  
Côte d'Ivoire
- 13 **Tim Beckendorf**  
Botswana
- 17 **Annaka Esala**  
(2004)  
Ghana
- 20 **Dennis Malone**  
Asia
- 25 **Tom Holman**  
Ghana
- 26 **Nancy Burmeister**  
Côte d'Ivoire
- 28 **Helen Marten**  
United States

### MAY

- 1 **Peter Larsen** (2001)  
Guatemala
- 2 **John Strasen**  
Namibia
- 2 **Samuel Fay** (2007)  
United States
- 13 **Nathan Federwitz**  
(1998)  
Papua New Guinea
- 13 **Julia Federwitz**  
(1998)  
Papua New Guinea
- 15 **Janet Borchard**  
Papua New Guinea
- 15 **Michelle Miller**  
Thailand
- 17 **Ali Federwitz**  
Ghana
- 21 **Kendra Larsen**  
(1996)  
Guatemala
- 22 **Joshua Schroeder**  
(2005)  
Nigeria (LOA)\*
- 28 **Shawn Boylan**  
Namibia
- 28 **Ellyn Miller**  
(1993)  
Thailand

\* Leave of Absence

FOLD

## LBT 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!

### GHANA

- Praise God for the December 5, 2008 birth of **Isaac Emmanuel Esala**, son of **Nathan and Sarah**, and brother of **Karissa, Annaka, and Aili**.
- Pray for Ghanaian coworker **Stephen Ayuuni**, who is attending technical school to improve his computer skills. He plans to serve at the Ghana Institute of Linguistics, Literacy and Bible Translation.

### LIBERIA

- Pray for International Scholarship recipient **Samuel Cooper** as he works to complete his BA in linguistics at the University of Ghana this spring.

### NAMIBIA

- Praise God that the **Khoekhoegowab translation team** has completed the New Testament and begun working on the Old Testament.



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*Messenger*

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Executive Director:  
Dr. Marshall R. Gillam



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Lutheran Bible Translators is an independent mission group, founded in 1964, which is dedicated to helping bring people to faith in Jesus Christ by making the Word of God available 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.

Want more information about translation, Scripture Engagement, or LBT's ministry in a specific country? Sign up to receive one or more prayer letters from LBT missionaries.

Call Karen Campbell at 1-800-532-4253 for more details.



Pray that the **Dhimba New Testament** will be ready for publication by the end of the year.

**NIGERIA**

Pray for real and lasting peace in **Nigeria**. Praise God for keeping LBT and other mission personnel safe during unrest last December.

**PAPUA NEW GUINEA**

Praise God that **Jonathan and Carrie Federwitz** have begun their third term in aviation ministry.

Pray for **Danny and Becca DeLoach** as they resume their Scripture Use ministry among the Wantoat people.

**UNITED STATES**

Pray for peace and comfort for **Dan Finley and his family** at the passing of Dan's father in late November.

Pray for guidance for **Margie McMillen** as she ties up loose ends with her ministry to the Uspanteco people of Guatemala in preparation for her retirement this summer.



Pray for God's guidance and blessings as **Mary Gruell and Paul and Wendi Schroeder** continue on leave of absence from their respective LBT ministries.

Pray for **Cara Fay and Soco Speck**, who are expecting babies this Spring.

Pray for missionaries on Partnership Development: **Jim and Susan Kaiser, Kory and Cara Fay, Rev. Rich and Maya Rudowske, and Greg Meier**, missionary candidate. Greg will be serving as an intern in Ghana this year.

