



Greetings from Sierra Leone!

I can't believe I've been in Sierra Leone for almost two months already (I arrived May 28th)! I wish I could tell you about everything I have learned and experienced in this short time, but publishing a book would take too much time ☺ This whole month and a half has been focused on my orientation to living and working in Sierra Leone. My colleagues Josh and Ruthie Wagner are the ones tackling the task of orienting me to this beautiful and challenging country. My orientation includes necessary processes like getting a Sierra Leonean phone number, residence permit, and driver's license. But it also includes learning to drive in Sierra Leone (manual), living in a village for a week, learning about health and safety, and experiencing a variety of things that will help me live life in Sierra Leone: taking motor bike taxis, going to the market and supermarket, and interacting with Sierra Leoneans and expatriates. I would greatly appreciate prayers as I continue to learn how to live in a new country and environment – it's not all difficult, but it's not easy either.

Although, I did not live in the village for long, the people in Gerihun village were gracious in helping me learn Mende and sharing their culture with me. For the week, I stayed in an apartment on a school campus (no water or electricity) that was connected to the apartments for other teachers and staff from the secondary school. A generator ran a little bit at night, and some of the smaller school children were kind enough to get me water from the well for my bucket showers. Throughout my time there, I determined that there are no introverts in the village - once I opened my doors people were in and out all day long teaching me Mende, talking (in English), or just keeping me company. Some days someone walked me to town for market, brought me to a more secluded village where they grew up (yes, I did receive a pineapple, coconut water, and a live chicken as gifts!), or I would go up to the school. I'm grateful for the time I had to live in a Mende village, and I look forward to going back to visit and test my Mende. Please pray for me as I continue to learn Mende!

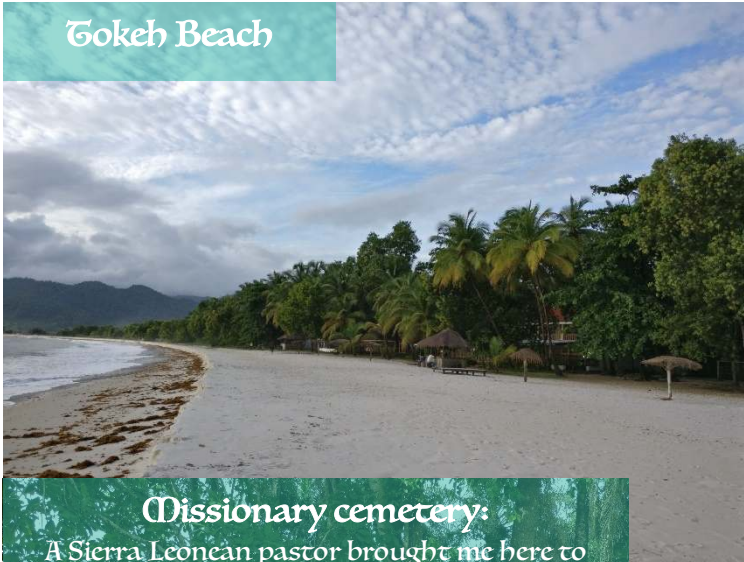
This past week my colleagues and I attended a translation software (Paratext) training with the translators from the four Bible translation projects in Sierra Leone. This training gave us the tools to create a better, more consistent, and print ready text. Paratext allows us to teach it Mende words and rules, so that it can run checks similar to spell check in a word processor. To take advantage of the software the translators have a lot of work ahead of them teaching Paratext what it needs to know – Mende spelling, punctuation, Biblical terms, word formation and more. This is definitely necessary, so prayers of perseverance and patience are greatly appreciated!

Mende Minute

Here are some Mende words I learned in the Gerihun village:

Mende Word	Pronunciation	English Translation
puje	poo-jay	pepper (a.k.a super spicy pepper)
nikii	nee-kee	groundnut (peanut butter)
saki	saw-kee	cassava leaf
jula	joo-lah	potato leaf
njei	njay	fish (general)

Tokeh Beach



Students/tour guides/cook from Gerihun

Missionary cemetery:

A Sierra Leonean pastor brought me here to welcome me to love Sierra Leone as much as my predecessors. Not all died in Sierra Leone.



Tokeh Beach

IF YOU WANT TO GO FAST, GO ALONE.
IF YOU WANT TO GO FAR, GO TOGETHER.
- AFRICAN PROVERB

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I look forward to hearing from you!