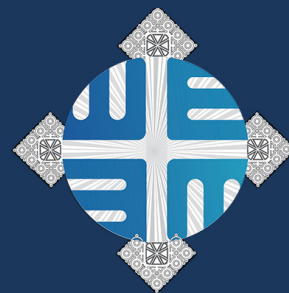


2024 #1

Reach Out

Wycliffe Ethiopia Magazine



10th
anniversary
edition

Why national
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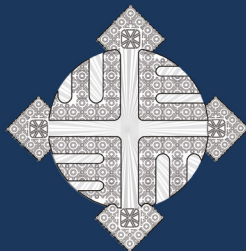
One Body
in Christ

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www.wycliffeethiopia.org



Dear Dr. Girum Molla and Tefera Endalew,
Hallelujah! this far God almighty has brought Wycliffe Ethiopia! Congratulations on your 10th Year Anniversary!

Hab.2.3 - For the vision is yet for an appointed time; But at the end it will speak, and it will not lie. Though it tarries, wait for it; Because it will surely come, It will not tarry".

The journey of Wycliffe Ethiopia has been one of passion and vision, laced with determination, resilience, victory over challenges and unwavering commitment for the Word of the Living God (Bible) to be actualized into the local languages of Ethiopia, across its borders and the diaspora. Wycliffe Ethiopia being the youngest of the Eighteen (18) Alliance Organizations in Africa has grown exponentially and significantly contributed to the Bible Translation Movement.

As Wycliffe Ethiopia moves into the next phase of its life, we pray that it will become a beacon of strength and hope across Africa and beyond. It has indeed been a pleasure to journey with Wycliffe Ethiopia.

In Christ,

MRS. PAULINE WAIRIMU IRUNGU
Wycliffe Global Alliance
Africa Area Director

Congratulations messages



“Your words endure forever in heaven.”

(Psalm 119:89)

Christian greetings!

John Wycliffe was the first person to translate the Bible into English. Forty years after his burial, according to a decision of a council of Constance, his remains were removed from the place of burial and burned, and the ashes scattered into a river.

As it is said, “The blood of the martyrs is the seed of the Church,” and the ashes of this translator have led to the translation of the Bible into many languages today. Our institution named after him is one of the fruits.

When we look at this new building, we realize that there are two things to do with the memory of his work.

One is that many ministers today are determined and dedicated to delivering God’s Word in every language through life, career, money, and various pressures to translate God’s Word into different languages. It is our recent story that Wycliffe Ethiopia ministry colleagues also sacrificed their lives in their deployment for the ministry.

On the other hand, John Wycliffe’s ashes have produced institutions such as Wycliffe Ethiopia. Wycliffe Ethiopia is an institution founded ten years ago with the vision of quickly and qualitatively providing the Bible to a mainly minor population, especially those who have not had the opportunity to access the Bible in their language.

Wycliffe Ethiopia’s expansion of translation projects, professionals, property, domestic, and international relations from within the country and even interna-

tionally and in neighboring countries compels us to say that this is truly God’s hand.

One of these fruits is completing four Bible translation works in ten years and the inauguration of this modern facility today.

When these four translations reach the public, seeing believers praising God with great joy will be a great satisfaction. Non-believers and government administrators can also be seen celebrating. They all celebrate because they have a Bible in their language for the first time.

From here, Wycliffe Ethiopia is still growing in Africa and worldwide, ready to serve in translation, language development, and other related activities. Therefore, I call on all of us to work together in different sectors of this institution.

I am also pleased to announce that we are ready to award the “Abba Rumi Prize” named after Abba Rumi, an Ethiopian Orthodox Church scholar who contributed greatly to the development of our country’s literature and translated the Bible into Amharic for the first time.

I would like to congratulate you again and wish that today’s inauguration building will be a quick answer to all those who are waiting to have the Word of God in their language that expands the scope of the institution’s ministry.

May the Lord Bless our Country!

PASTOR GIRUM MOLLA

Board Chairperson of Wycliffe Ethiopia



Congratulations messages



የዊክሊፍ ኢትዮጵያ - የመጽሐፍ ቅዱስ ሥራ ማህበር ፥ አስረኛ (10ኛ) ዓመትን በማስመልከት ከኢትዮጵያ ወንጌላውያን አብያተ ክርስቲያናት ኅብረት ፕሬዝዳንት ከፓስተር ፓስተር ጻድቁ አብዱ የተላለፈ መልዕክት

ሁላችንም እንደምናውቀው በዓለም ላይ ዊክሊፍ ግሎባል አሊያንስ የሚባል ድርጅት አለ። የዊክሊፍ ግሎባል አሊያንስ ወይም የዊክሊፍ ታሪክ፥ የመጽሐፍ ቅዱስ ታሪክ ነው። ቀድሞት አባቶቻችን መጽሐፍ ቅዱስን ሕዝቡ ወደ ሚጠቀምበት ቋንቋ፥ ሕዝቡ ወደ ሚገባው ቋንቋ፥ ለመተርጎም የከፈሉትን ዋጋ እናውቃለን። በዚህ ምክንያት ዊክሊፍ ግሎባል አሊያንስ አለ። በኢትዮጵያ ደግሞ ዊክሊፍ ኢትዮጵያ አለ። ዊክሊፍ ኢትዮጵያ፥ በኢትዮጵያ ውስጥ መጽሐፍ ቅዱስን በመተርጎምና የተተረጎመው መጽሐፍ ቅዱስ ሰዎች ሊያነቡት እንዲችሉ፥ በቋንቋቸውም ተርጉመው ማንበብ እንዲችሉና እንዲማሩ፥ ፊደልም እንዲቆጥሩ፥ ማንበብና መጻፍ ወደ ሚችሉበት ደረጃም እንዲደርሱ የሚያድርግ ነው። እንደገናም ደግሞ የተተረጎመው መጽሐፍ ቅዱስ በተለያዩ መንገዶች በማንበብም፥ በአዲሱም በተለያዩ መንገድ ለምሳሌ በእስክሪፕቸር ኢንጂነሪንግ በሚባል ስራ ላይም ተጠምዶ መትጋቱ በእጅጉ ያስመስግናል።

የዊክሊፍ ኢትዮጵያ ዋና ተልዕኮው፥ ዓላማውና ራእዩ ለብዙ ዓመታት መጽሐፍ ቅዱስን መተርጎም ቢሆንም የተተረጎመው መጽሐፍ ቅዱስ ግን ሕዝብ እንዲጠቀምበት ለማድረግ የሚያስችሉትን ሁለንተናዊ ሥራዎችን ሁሉ በትጋት እንደሚሠራ ይታወቃልና ዊክሊፍ ኢትዮጵያ በዚህ ታላቅ አገልግሎት ውስጥ

በመገኘቱ ለእግዚአብሔር ታላቅ ደስታ፥ ለእኛ ለሁላችንም ደግሞ ሰፊ ጥቅም ነውና የእግዚአብሔር ስም የተባረከ ይሁን ማለት እፈልጋለሁ። ከዚህ ጎን ለጎንም ተያያዥነት ባለው ሁኔታ፥ የልጆች አገልግሎትም ማለትም ልጆች በዕድሜያቸው ልክ የሚገባቸውን የመጽሐፍ ቅዱስ ታሪኮችንም እንዲያገኙ የሚያደርግ ሥራንም በትጋት መሥራቱን ዊክሊፍ ኢትዮጵያን ያስመስግናል። በመሆኑም ዊክሊፍ ኢትዮጵያ - የመጽሐፍ ቅዱስ ሥራ ማህበር፥ አሁን አስረኛውን ዓመት በዓሉን ማክበር በመቻሉ እግዚአብሔርን እጅግ አድርጌ ከፍ አደርገዋለሁ።

ለዚህ ለአስረኛው ዓመት ክብረ በዓል ከመላው ዓለም ለመጡ የዊክሊፍ ኢትዮጵያ እህት ድርጅቶች፥ ለዓለም አቀፍም የዊክሊፍ መሪዎች እንዲሁም ደግሞ ከዊክሊፍ ግሎባል አሊያንስ ጋራ የስራ ግንኙነት ላላቸው ሌሎች የመጽሐፍ ቅዱስ የትርጉም አገልጋዮች ሁሉ ይህንን የተባረከ አገልግሎታችሁን በትጋት እስከ መጨረሻው እንደ ምታስቀጥሉ እና እግዚአብሔርም እንደሚረዳችሁ አምናለሁ።

እግዚአብሔር ዊክሊፍ ኢትዮጵያን ይባርክ።
እግዚአብሔር ሁላችንንም ይባርክን። አሜን።
አመስግናለሁ።

ፓስተር ጻድቁ አብዱ
የኢትዮጵያ ወንጌላውያን አብያተ ክርስቲያናት ኅብረት
ፕሬዝዳንት



Wycliffe Ethiopia's phenomenal growth in the face of challenges

Woyita Woza (Ph.D.), the first Board Chairperson of Wycliffe Ethiopia, currently serving as Education, Training, and Integrated Child Development Director at the Ethiopian Kale Heywot Church Development Commission

Congratulations on your 10th-anniversary celebration! The speedy growth of Wycliffe Ethiopia in the past ten years surprised us all and put us in awe of God's blessing. The humble beginnings grew into a magnificent organization. This memorable event took me back to the establishment of Wycliffe Ethiopia. I was indeed privileged to be its first board chairperson. When my Ethiopian colleagues, the founding members of Wycliffe Ethiopia, invited me to stand beside them, their vision, zeal, passion, potential, relentless concerted effort, and strong determination were unique and motivated me to join them. They were keen and hardworking people who stood to fill the gap in Ethiopia's Bible translation and literacy work. God vindicated this effort, unity, devotion, and sacrificial ministry and birthed this great organization. Thanks to God's grace, many successful and inspiring stories were accounted for despite the ups and downs. Praise the Lord!

Now, as we reflect on the past achievements, it is a beautiful opportunity and moment to glean lessons from the past, place stones of remembrance

to praise and gratify God who helped us and is still in the making of Wycliffe Ethiopia, and dream big for the future because the awaiting work is immense and only possible with God's help. As John Wycliffe said, " ... believers should have Scriptures in a language familiar to the people..." to have faith in Christ and life transformation. Hence, this goal is still the goal of Wycliffe Ethiopia. To achieve it, there is a call for help from churches, friends, partners, and donors in Ethiopia and beyond.

At this historic moment, I urge everyone to read and use translated portions of the Bible in their respective languages. In these languages, current and future doxological praises are presented to God (Rev 5:9).

Once again, I congratulate Wycliffe Ethiopia staff, board members, Wycliffe families worldwide, all churches, friends, partners, and donors who unswervingly supported in the 10-year journey. I hope you all will continue to stand beside Wycliffe Ethiopia in the coming years till Christ's coming. May God make this anniversary moment a springboard to stretch to the future more miles and exert influence with multifaceted breadth and depth of ministries to impact many nations in the Horn of Africa and beyond.

In Christ's Service,

WOYITA W. OLLA

"... believers should have Scriptures in a language familiar to the people..."

John Wycliffe

Message from the Director

Congratulations to Ethiopia! Congratulations to Africa!

10th
anniversary
edition



Whether or not the Bible should be translated into other languages is not something for serious academic debate. The vital work of Bible translation should be as natural to the believer's mentality as taking in oxygen. Since the Great Commission was issued, Christianity has spread through Bible translation. We only need to look at ourselves and realize we would not have known the message of Jesus if it were not for a Bible in our mother tongue. I understand how "mother tongue" can be more theoretical than experiential, but think of the concept as the language you dream in at

night. Our dream language is the language that gets into our inner being and heart, i.e., their heart language. Some have come to know the saving message of Jesus in a different language, but most people need to read and hear the Bible in the language they dream in at night.

The story of Wycliffe Ethiopia may have started in 2014 with a group of local believers and church leaders. But if you look at the book of Acts, the task of the Word coming to Ethiopia and the communication in our dream

language started much earlier. The Ethiopian eunuch's story demonstrates that Ethiopia was one of the first countries outside Jerusalem where the message of God's Love took root.

As part of Wycliffe Ethiopia's vision, we aim to share the Word of God through Bible translation work in Ethiopia, which hosts over 87 languages, over 127 million people, and Africa in general. Our main goal is to make the Bible available in different languages and promote Scripture Engagement. We hope that as people appreciate and cherish the Bible, more translators will be inspired to translate the Word of God for other parts of the world. Additionally, we seek to partner with different organizations in Ethiopia and other parts of Africa and wherever there is a need for Bible translation work.

“Whether or not the Bible should be translated into other languages is not something for serious academic debate.”

Why would we deny others the very treasure we embrace as believers? We all need a reference book. Soldiers need a reference book as they make plans to protect us. Those who get married need a book to help them navigate their new journey. But sadly, there are still ethnic minority groups in Ethiopia and the world who still need a reference book to navigate the harsh realities we all experience. Let's get busy with Bible translation important tasks so all in Ethiopia and other countries will experience the life-giving, sustaining message of God's grace.

As you read the articles and stories in the following pages, we hope you come away with a fresh appreciation for the work of Bible translation and that you will partner with us in any way the Spirits leads. May we see the need and respond so that heaven will be filled with people from every language, tribe, and nation.

Now, we have come ten years into our journey by the grace of God. From the humble beginnings to our cur-

rent ministry, God has led us with might and power. We have now come to the climax of a chapter in the journey of Wycliffe Ethiopia, and we want to close this chapter and begin the next, as we always do, with thanksgiving and praise to God Almighty. God has given us grace and shined His favor upon us, and we are forever grateful for what He has accomplished through Christ Jesus. All Glory, Honor, and Praise be unto God!

On February 4, 2024, we celebrate Wycliffe Ethiopia's 10th anniversary. During this celebration, we will have a symbolic dedication of four New Testaments, the official inauguration of our new office facility, the 10th anniversary of Wycliffe Ethiopia, and an award ceremony for the Aba Rumi Award for African Heroes of Bible Translation and Leadership. All these achievements we have gained with God's help will help us keep pressing forward toward the goal: the glorious message of God's Love in the heart language of Ethiopia and neighboring countries in the Horn of Africa. Our beginnings may have been small, but our goal is big because we serve a mighty God.

I want to extend my sincere thanks and heartfelt appreciation to all of you who came to praise God with us here in Addis, with the Wycliffe Ethiopia staff and all the translators in the field, various church leaders, and many other guests. Many of you who came to celebrate and witness God's great deed have also been instrumental in our success, and we would not have made it without your partnership. Thank You! Your partnering with us means a lot; we will reap the benefits together.

Therefore, I encourage you to use the time God has allotted you as wise stewards in His Kingdom Ministry.



TEFERA ENDALEW YAYEH

Director

Wycliffe Ethiopia Bible Translation Association



Wycliffe Organisations in Africa

Why national organizations are important

As Wycliffe Ethiopia commemorates its tenth anniversary, I would take this opportunity to congratulate its leadership, board and staff for what has been accomplished in ten short years. Above all, we thank God for without him we can do nothing. Apart from God we cannot bear any fruit. This is a good time also to reflect on the journey national organisations have taken over the years and why it has been important to follow that path.

In 1971, a Kenyan pastor, Rev. John Gatũ, shocked the missionary enterprise when he called for a moratorium on missionary personnel and finances to African churches. A moratorium is a temporary cessation or a pause – in this case a pause on sending missionaries and finances to Africa. Up until this time, it was accepted without question that African churches and mission field were too fragile and immature to survive without outside funding and missionary personnel specifically from the Western Church. Rev Gatũ believed that only an intentional and deliberate break could help give a proper assessment of the situation and allow the African church and ministries venture out on their own. Rev Gatũ's desire was to see the growth and dignity of the African Church in order to make its rightful contribution to the global Christian witness.

Foreign donors and local African beneficiaries of foreign inflows of money and personnel vilified Rev. Gatũ for his proposal. These local beneficiaries were content to live in a state of perpetual dependency. Generally speaking, a large proportion of foreign funding benefits a few individuals and not the larger community in whose name the funds are raised. The vilification of Gatũ's call was as swift as it was vicious, but it bore remarkable results. To confirm his convictions, Rev. Gatũ launched *jitegemee* (self-reliance) campaign in his Presbyterian Church of East Africa (PCEA). He cut off dependency on foreign funding and embarked on the academic training of pastoral staff and leaders in the church. Within two decades, the PCEA was internally self-funding for its ministry and project needs. Though not the largest church in Kenya, the PCEA had the biggest number of

ministers with PhDs than any other church in the country. Rev Gatū proved that with a vision and an undying resolve, it is possible to achieve self-reliance in financial and personnel resources.

As we discuss the important subject of national organisations in Africa, I thought it prudent to remind ourselves of the journey the African church and Christian organisations have had. For over three decades, I have had the privilege to participate in conversations that birthed many Wycliffe organisations in Africa. However, many other organisations were created long before I came into the scene. One person that was instrumental in the creation and growth of Bible translation organisations in Africa is the late Dr. John Bendor-Samuel otherwise known as JBS. In 1962, JBS spearheaded the work of SIL and Wycliffe in Africa. He believed strongly in the creation and growth of national organisations to participate in Bible translation work alongside other international agencies. His vision and efforts resulted in the creation of the following national organisations GILLBT in Ghana, NBTT in Nigeria, CABTAL in Cameroon and BTL in Kenya. These organisations and others became known as National Bible Translation Organisations (NBTOs). In spite of his noble intentions, the NBTOs struggled to find acceptance in either the Wycliffe or SIL structures. JBS was also instrumental in the formation and development of Wycliffe Africa, Wycliffe Benin and Wycliffe Togo in the early 2000s.

“The journey of Wycliffe Organisations in Africa has had it joys and pain, often times not in equal measure.”

The journey of Wycliffe Organisations in Africa has had it joys and pain, often times not in equal measure. Wycliffe's primary mission was resource mobilization while SIL was the field agency. NBTOs were initially not perceived as Wycliffe organisations because they did not raise funds locally nor did they send personnel to other organisations. Though the NBTOs did similar linguistic and translation work as the SIL branches, and in some cases, SIL members worked under these NBTOs, they were still not accepted in the SIL structure either. (Nev-

ertheless, SIL always adopted NBTOs language reports as its own.) The NBTOs found their existence was therefore very confusing to them. They were then placed under Wycliffe Bible Translators International as Affiliate Organisations and later as Wycliffe Organisations with Language Programmes before eventually becoming Wycliffe Organisations.

One characteristic that was uniform in all the NBTOs was that both financial and human resources were largely imported from overseas. When I joined BTL in 1988, over 70% of the personnel in the organisation were expatriates. Less than five Kenyan staff had university degrees – not because there were no educated Kenyans, it just was not the practice to recruit educated Kenyans. It was generally assumed the organisation could not mobilize enough resources to pay highly educated Kenyans. Apart from land donated by language communities, about 99% of BTL's income and assets were sourced from overseas. BTL's experience was not unique. It was the experience of most nascent organisations related to Wycliffe and SIL in Africa. Little or no effort was made to recruit financial and personnel resources locally. It was seen as a radical move by BTL to recruit me and assign me the role of raising funds from Kenyan churches and individuals. Later on, BTL made a fundamental decision to intentionally recruit highly educated Kenyan personnel who could then be trained as mother-tongue translators, “other-tongue” translators, consultants and language administrators. Since the labour costs for these new cadre of staff was markedly higher than less academically trained personnel, it meant that BTL had to look for funding to meet this need.

The ability to recruit a sizeable percentage of local personnel and local funding enables an organisation to make long term goals and plans as it has better control of its resources. Without resources that an organisation can bank on, it is impossible to plan ahead. Local personnel, by this I mean national personnel as opposed to personnel from overseas, also has an effect on the organisational culture, which in effect makes the organisation more recognisable in its own national context. It is possible for an organisation to be registered in a country but because of its organisational culture become perceived as a foreign organisation. How an organisation is perceived by its publics (participants,

stakeholders and backers) such as the church, the government and language communities determines their level of ownership. When local publics of an organisation take greater ownership of the organisation, they are freer to speak into its priorities and goals, invest more in its programmes and outcomes and will make sacrifices to rescue the organisation in times of crisis.

“I understand the topic of dependency is a broad and sensitive topic and we do not have the space to address it in the context of national organisations.”

When an organisation lacks local ownership, it is foreign owned. In such situations, the contribution of nationals to the Bible translation task is overlooked, belittled, unrecognized or excluded. When the organisation is foreign owned, its annual reports about the ministry or products of its work such as completed published Bibles are assimilated and listed under other agencies. Such was the experience of NBTs. When they wrote reports of the progress in Bible translation work in their respective areas, these reports were sent to overseas donors and sponsors of the translation work. These reports were never availed to local language communities and national church leaders. National church leaders therefore did not have access to the status of Bible translation in their own countries. I recall being part of a Kenyan delegation that travelled to South Africa to attend a global conference on unreached people groups. The delegation consisted of bishops and pastors and other church leaders. The organisers of the conference presented the Kenyan delegation (as they did with other delegates) a list of unreached people groups in Kenya and asked the church leaders to lay strategies on how these people groups will be reached with the gospel. The names of the communities in the list were unrecognisable to the Kenyan church leaders and their immediate reaction was to reject the list. Two of us were familiar with the names of these people groups and with much fear and trembling pleaded with the church leaders, explaining that the list was authentic and accurate. The

church leaders very reluctantly accepted the list but not without finding it a big embarrassment on their part.

When we do not involve national church leaders in our reporting of the status of Bible translation it does create a feeling in the African church leadership that Bible translation work is not the responsibility of the African church but of the western church. National organisations have a responsibility to build mutually beneficial relationships with national church leaders to brief them on the status of Bible translation and to involve them in Bible translation activities.

An unintended outcome of provision of large supplies of foreign resources (funds and personnel) is the creation of a dependency syndrome. When organisations rely on foreign inputs for their programmes and on a prolonged period to time, they begin to feel entitled to be supported. They lose creativity and confidence they need to run their own programmes. This sometimes has been the case with national organisations managing Bible translation programmes. For example, one organisation got funding and purchased a generator to provide electricity in their head office. They later wrote another proposal to get funds for fuel and maintenance of the generator. When the generator broke down, the organisation appealed for more funding to replace it arguing that their operations were at a standstill because the generator was broken. This is the face of dependency. Unhealthy dependency undermines the sense of dignity on the part of the receiver.

I understand the topic of dependency is a broad and sensitive topic and we do not have the space to address it in the context of national organisations. I am aware that my reference to it has potential to be misunderstood and misinterpreted or even weaponised. As Glenn Schwartz summarises it, the dependency syndrome is very pervasive. In his book, *When Charity Destroys Dignity*, he makes this assertion regarding dependency syndrome: “It touches many areas of church and mission life in Africa. It not only affects churches and the support of pastors, it affects the building of church buildings, development projects, medical projects and church planting. It especially affects the production and distribution of Bibles.”

WHY IT IS IMPORTANT TO HAVE NATIONAL ORGANISATIONS

Organisations are a product of a vision. An organisation is created to carry out a vision that was formed in the mind of a founder or founders. It is then determined that for the vision to be accomplished, an organisation is established as a vehicle to achieve the vision. A vision may not be born in a country i.e. participation in global movement for Bible translation, but it is absolutely important that national leadership not only owns such a vision but seeks to indigenise it. I see "vision" as a process, very much like how it is put in Proverbs 4:18 "The way of the righteous is like the first gleam of dawn, which shines ever brighter until the full light of day." (NLT). With time and involvement of others, a vision gets sharpened and clarified. That's where board governance comes in to sharpen and indigenise a vision to the organisation's context. When the vision is indigenised, there is broader ownership of the organisation and its goals. It is important that boards that run African organisations invest in first understanding the vision for Bible translation then seek to indigenise that vision into the organisation's context. This brings diversity to the shared global vision adding to its richness. Merely carrying out a global vision without indigenising it is a disservice to God's mission and to the church universal. This diversity is what national organisations are bringing to the Bible translation movement. Without them, the Bible translation movement is poorer.

Another outcome of having national Bible translation organisations is the increased involvement of the African church in Bible translation. When church leaders are invited and involved in vision building for Bible translation, it creates room for the African church to take ownership of Bible translation. The African church when it is sufficiently involved will see Bible translation as its responsibility and allocate time and resources to it. The African church is more confident to render its voice in how it would like to see Bible translation done in Africa if it is addressing a national organisation than if it is speaking to a foreign organisation.

When Bible translation organisations are incorporated in their respective countries, they are accountable to their own governments and churches and have a responsibility to grow. Their growth means a growth in participation in the global development of Bible translation movement. The pool of participants inadvertently grows as multiple organisations tap resources in their respective spheres of influence. Growth is therefore exponential as opposed to serial growth when we have monolithic international organisations. The growth of Wycliffe Ethiopia has resulted in new resources and new participants in the Bible translation movement than was previously the case.

One outcome of the growth in national organisations is the increased involvement of qualified nationals in the





work of Bible translation. In order for national organisations to be relevant in their own countries, they have to recruit credible and qualified personnel. There are many qualified and highly educated people in Africa who are reluctant to work with international mission agencies but are interested in working with national organisations. (give a reason)

In the course of their own growth, national translation organisations begin to develop their own (often new) networks. They begin to tap into new national human, prayer and financial resources that were previously unavailable or untapped for Bible translation. They recruit new streams of funding that could otherwise not be available. This is a welcome addition to the national and global Bible translation movement. A case in point is BTL of Kenya. In 2007, BTL ventured into a fundraising activity it called Run for the Bibleless. In this new venture, BTL began to go into schools and colleges as well as in churches to recruit participants for the Run. Part of this recruitment involves building vision for Bible translation and creating awareness of communities without

Scripture. Participants raise funds and buy merchandise from BTL. On an appointed date, they assemble together and run for 10 kilometres through the streets in specific towns and cities. The annual event is now held in multiple cities. As initially intended, the event helps to build vision for Bible translation among children and university students before they become career people. Tens of thousands of people are mobilised to give funds for Bible translation. It was not envisaged in the original vision, but the Run for the Bibleless has become a family outing where whole families (parents, children and grandparents) step out together to raise funds for Bible translation. I am told that other African organisations now hold similar events in their respective countries.

The growth of national organisations in Bible translation has resulted in the development of a national leadership that is both energetic and visionary. This has perhaps been my most joyful privilege and exciting experience to see new crop of African leaders populating the BT movement with fresh perspectives. This growth among young leaders has an outcome of added responsibility and new vision. It is also investing in the development of middle level leadership hence ensuring that these organisations have a well-oiled leadership succession plan.

“The growth of national organisations in Bible translation has resulted in the development of a national leadership that is both energetic and visionary.”

African organisations in Bible translation are helping to create and deepen new ways of translating the Bible for African communities. Because they have good understanding of the language and cultural terrain, national organizations in Africa are seeking new methods of working. They don't feel bound to traditional methods. They are exploring new ways of doing translation and questioning old standards. How much anthropology does a local translator need to study in order to translate into his own language? I remember an incident in 1994 at the PACLA 2 conference organised by the Associa-

tion of Evangelicals in Africa in Nairobi. I was manning the BTL exhibition booth and was explaining the task of Bible translation to delegates of top church leaders in Africa. Many were awed by the process of Bible translation and the various disciplines involved in the process. As the delegation moved on to visit other booths, one gentleman however remained behind. He very gently commented that as Africans, we do not need that amount anthropology to apply into Bible translations in Africa as would a missionary from the West for we have a deeper understanding of our communities. The gentleman did not introduce himself but it was obvious to me that he was highly intelligent and knew what he was saying. My research on his identity turned out to be the venerable late Rev. Prof Kwame Bediako. His comment set a light bulb in my brain. Many years later in BTL, I changed the requirements for anthropology for a mother-tongue translator as he/she has a deep understanding of the belief systems in his/her own language community.

I encourage national Bible translation organisations in African to invest time and energy to build a national base of prayer and financial supporters in their own countries. Such a base provides the organisation with needed validation and acceptance. It can speak into the direction and practices of the organisation. In return, it gives the national organisations a sense of belonging and dignity because it has a local base that supports and approves its work. The organisation can then negotiate with international partners with dignity and confidence.

I am an advocate for strong well-run and professionally managed national organisations.

Gone are the days when African managed organisations were synonymous with mediocrity and shoddy leadership – a laughing stock in the Bible translation movement. We must set a high bar for management of African national organisations. Be ready to grow and make use of management of resources that include a clear vision for the organisation – employ communication strategies to clarify vision to both staff and the church. Leaders get the work done by means of clear communication with the various stakeholders.

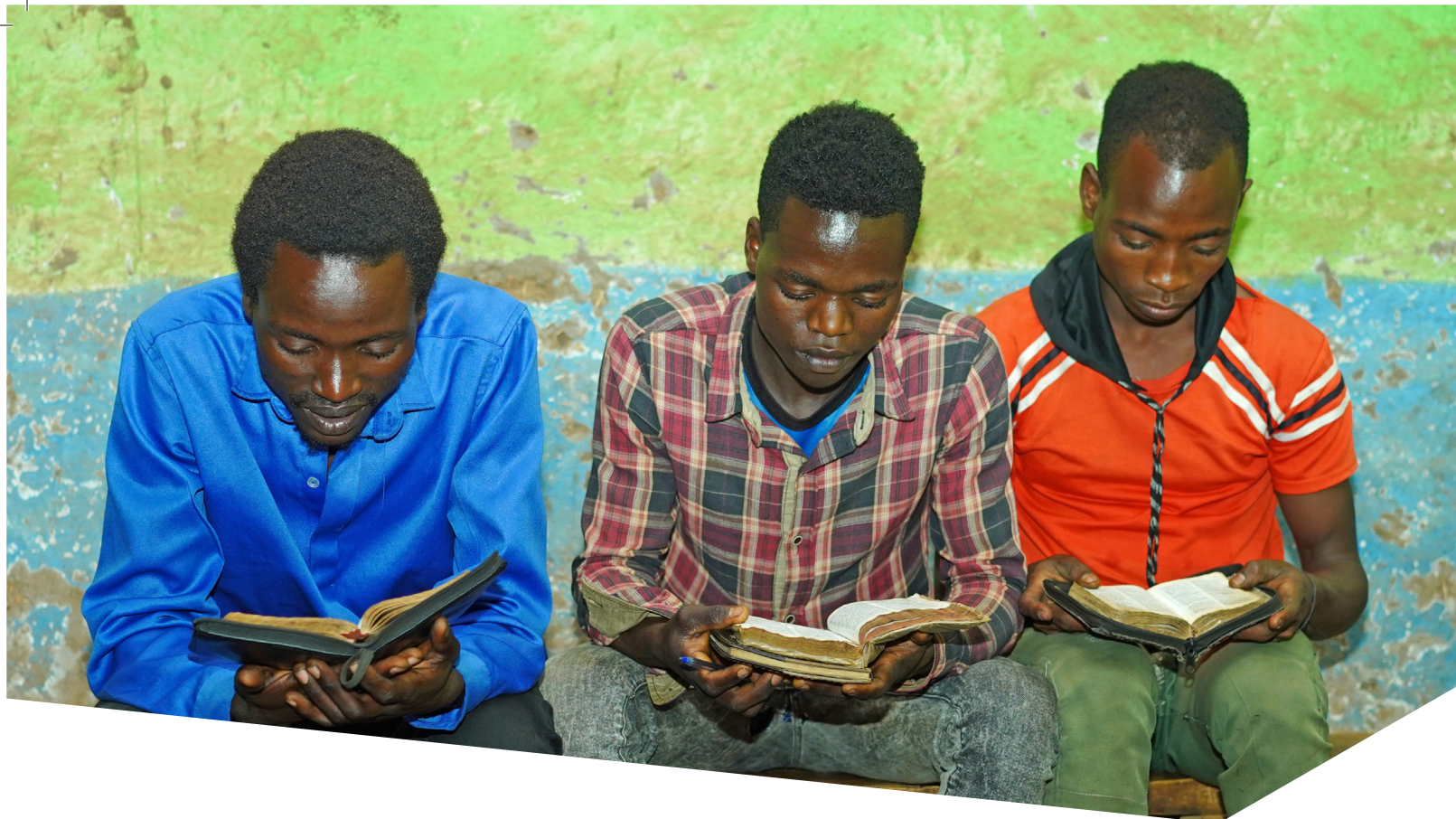
Another area of interest I have for African organisations is in good governance. It is important that organisations

invest in board governance training and equipping of board members so that they can do their work effectively. As Area director, I participated in numerous board governance training across Africa. It occurred to me that many well-meaning leaders have not been well trained to provide direction and oversight of the organisations they lead. It is imperative that the board and the executive have a clear understanding of their mandates so that they complement each other.

Lastly, I appeal to African organisations to work collaboratively with each other. Cooperation rather than competition between national organisations is key to growth and stability of the ministry. Peer learning should be part of our organisational culture. For instance, if one organisation has demonstrated significant success in church engagement or in local fundraising, it should offer its expertise to other organisations. It can host an internship programme where other organisations can send their staff for coaching through internships. This is the kind of generosity that needs to be encouraged and shared between African organisations. I urge directors of African organisations to submit themselves to each other for peer counselling and accountability. Leadership at the top is a lonely space to be in. Being able to form deep friendships with other leaders so that you are accountable to them and they can speak into your life is absolutely necessary. The accountability should not merely be at a professional level. It should also be at a spiritual level. At the end of the day, Bible translation is a spiritual undertaking and leaders ought to be spiritually fit to lead the work.



MŪNDARA MŪTURI
Kiambu, Kenya



Why is Bible Translation important in Ethiopia?

Even though people may be able to understand and speak several languages well, their own language will speak to them in a much deeper way than any other. People will invariably pray in their own language, even if they use other languages for other things. It follows, then, that they will also gain far more from studying Scripture in their own language than from studying in any other, even a language they know well. If there are no Scriptures available in their language, they will miss out.

The church has existed in Ethiopia for many hundreds of years, and as early as the 4th century the Bible was translated into Ge'ez, the language spoken in the north of the country at the time. It was one of the world's earliest Bible translations, existing long before any in Europe apart from the ancient Greek and Latin texts. By the 19th century, the language situation had changed and Amharic had become the language that was spoken in the parts of the country where the church was strong, so an Amharic translation was produced. At that time, the gospel message was beginning to be taken to the Oromo people in the west of the country and, in the process, a translation was pro-

duced in their language. In more recent days, revisions in both of these languages have been made to cater to the current population. With so many people now able to read these translations and many also able to read English versions, why is it important for a Bible translation ministry to continue in Ethiopia? Since Ethiopia is a large and varied country populated by over 80 different groups, each of which has its language and culture, I believe there are many reasons. Here are three of them.

FIRST REASON WHY IT'S IMPORTANT

Firstly, language is an integral part of one's identity, an essential element of who we are both as individuals and

as members of a community. Giving place and honour to a person's language shows honour and respect for the person. Conversely, speaking negatively of a person's language is felt to be an insult to one's self. A person's native language is also the language of his heart. Even though people may be able to understand and speak several languages well, their own language will speak to them in a much deeper way than any other. People will invariably pray in their own language, even if they use other languages for other things. It follows, then, that they will also gain far more from studying Scripture in their own language than from studying in any other, even a language they know well. If there are no Scriptures available in their language, they will miss out.

SECOND REASON WHY IT'S IMPORTANT

Secondly, there are still many people in Ethiopia, especially in remote locations, who only speak their native tongue and who would not be able to understand the Gospel without it being put into their language. In areas where there are no translated Scriptures and even in some areas where they do exist, preachers depend on interpretation. As Scripture is read in Amharic or Oromo, it is interpreted into the local language phrase by phrase. This breaks up the flow of the reading in both languages, and if you know both languages even a little, it will not be long before you realise how easily mistakes and distortions creep in. In one church in a rural area of Ethiopia, 1 Timothy 5:16 was being read in Amharic and interpreted phrase by phrase into the local language as usual. When the reader reached the word

እርዳኸው (iridu'āchewi) he made one small pronunciation error and read እረዳኸው (iredu'āchewi). Unfortunately, the interpreter translated what he heard, rather than correcting the mistake. So the meaning became, "If any woman who is a believer has widows in her family, she should slaughter them. Then the church will not be burdened by them"!!! It was this incident that led one man to commit his life to encouraging people to use the translated New Testament and to begin translating the Old Testament for his people.

THIRD REASON WHY IT'S IMPORTANT

Thirdly, the actual process of translation enables the local church to develop a relevant way for people to express their faith, using terms that are immediately meaningful. Ways of translating Biblical terms such as prophet, grace, Holy Spirit etc. accurately yet understandably can be discussed and agreed upon and subsequently used consistently in worship and preaching. Where no translation has been undertaken, Amharic terms are often used without any thought of how people will understand them.

WILL IT CONTINUE TO BE IMPORTANT

We may also ask the question, for how long will Bible translation continue to be important in Ethiopia? It is remarkable that almost all of the country's 80 plus languages now either have a New Testament or have a translation team working to produce one, either in written or audio form. For that we praise God. However,



Mary Breeze

Now retired and living in UK, Mary lived and worked in Ethiopia for many years, firstly as a teacher and then involved in the Bible Translation ministry. She was advisor for the Bench New Testament translation team and then took on various administrative, consultant and training roles. For some years she was SIL's Africa Area Translation Coordinator.

The importance of Bible translation

Ethiopia, characterized by linguistic and cultural diversity, boasts over 87 spoken languages. Despite this rich tapestry of languages, only a handful of Ethiopian languages have a complete translation of the Bible, with some languages having only the New Testament or portions thereof. Many of the population remain unable to read the Bible in their mother tongue, creating a pressing need for extensive Bible translation efforts.

Recognizing this need, Bible translation agencies and missionaries worldwide dedicate their lives to translating the Bible into diverse languages. The primary objective of Bible translation has always been to make the Scriptures accessible to people in their native languages, ensuring that individuals can engage with the Word of God meaningfully and personally.

The church of Christ is experiencing remarkable expansion in Africa, with Ethiopia being a notable focal point of growth, as substantiated by missionary researchers. This burgeoning growth underscores the necessity for maturity within the church, prompting a crucial need for Bible translation in the mother tongue. Below, I will briefly outline three compelling reasons highlighting the significance of translating the Bible into various languages in Ethiopia.

“Recognizing this need, Bible translation agencies and missionaries worldwide dedicate their lives to translating the Bible into diverse languages.”

First and foremost, Bible translation is a pivotal element of the church’s mission, constituting an indispensable component of the Great Commission articulated in Matthew 28:18–20. The mandate of this commission is not merely to initiate churches in diverse nations and ethnic groups in the conventional sense; rather, it encom-

passes a multi-dimensional approach that includes the imperative task of Bible translation.

The evolving understanding of mission work has expanded beyond the traditional notion of establishing churches in foreign territories. In this contemporary perspective, the mission involves comprehensive engagement with diverse aspects, prominently featuring the indispensable role of Bible translation. This expanded view recognizes that the mission is not confined solely to the establishment of congregations but encompasses the vital endeavor of making the Word of God accessible to all.

Bible translation, therefore, emerges as a critical means of fulfilling the broader mission mandate, ensuring that the message of the Gospel resonates with people from diverse linguistic and cultural backgrounds. As the church seeks to carry out its mission dynamically and inclusively, the imperative of translating the Scriptures into various languages becomes increasingly apparent. This approach aligns with the comprehensive nature of the Great Commission, acknowledging the diversity of God’s creation and the need to reach every individual with the transformative power of the Word.

Jesus incarnated himself to become accessible to human beings, emphasizing the universal nature of God’s message. Consequently, the church is entrusted with translating the Bible into every living language, ensuring that the profound teachings of the Scriptures are within reach for all individuals. Unlike some religious texts, such as the Qur’an, which maintains a sense of authenticity in its original Arabic form, the Christian



Bible places significance on its spiritual authority irrespective of the written language.

The accessibility of the Bible in various languages is crucial because not all Christians can engage with the original Hebrew and Greek texts. God does not expect believers to master these ancient languages but rather desires that the transformative message of the Bible be accessible to people from diverse linguistic backgrounds. This inclusivity aligns with the essence of Jesus' incarnation, reaching out to all humanity.

While the Qur'an's translations are considered supplementary to the original Arabic, the Christian Bible transcends the limitations of language. Its authority and transformative power remain intact regardless of the written language, emphasizing the universality of its message. Translating the Bible into multiple languages

serves as a means to extend the reach of God's Word to diverse language communities, providing them access to the rich spiritual teachings encapsulated in the Scriptures. Reading the translated Bible becomes a gateway for many to encounter God's life-changing and saving word.

Secondly, Bible translation plays a pivotal role in fostering Christian growth. Translating the Bible primarily aims to provide a Bible that the church can utilize within a specific language group. This endeavor is driven by the aspiration that the lives of the intended recipients will undergo positive transformation upon gaining access to scripture in their native language. Bible translation emerges as an indispensable catalyst for the vitality and expansion of the church, theological pursuits, and the contextualization of the gospel message within a particular cultural milieu.

The Word of God is the nucleus for every mission activity and aspect of the church's life. Numerous studies have indicated that using the vocabulary for preaching effectively spreads the message of God to a broader audience. A well-known saying attributed to Nelson Mandela encapsulates this: "If you talk to a man in a language he understands, that goes to his head. If you talk to him in his language, that goes to his heart." The impact of Bible translations extends beyond comprehension; it resonates with the depths of individuals' hearts.

"Bible translation profoundly impacts language, an integral component of culture."

Furthermore, translated Bibles empower believers to apply biblical teachings directly. These translations become invaluable tools for preaching, studying, and composing hymns and songs within the local cultural context. The translated Bible serves as a foundation for establishing and growing Christian communities worldwide, fostering a deeper understanding and internalization of the Scriptures within diverse linguistic and cultural settings.

Thirdly, Bible translation assumes a vital role in language development and the preservation of culture. In many instances, translating the Bible necessitates in-depth studies in linguistics and anthropology coupled with comprehensive language development initiatives. This may involve creating a writing system, generating literacy materials, and assisting native populations in acquiring the ability to read and write. Language development, a natural outcome of Bible translation efforts, not only contributes to preserving linguistic diversity but also brings about additional social and economic benefits, enhancing second language acquisition.

Bible translation profoundly impacts language, an integral component of culture. In various parts of the world, missionaries have played pioneering roles in studying, describing, and establishing writing systems (orthographies) for diverse languages, laying the groundwork for translating the Bible. Across many African countries, Bible translation initiatives have elevated literacy levels

and contributed to integrating cultural elements and practices into Christian services. This integration imparts an indigenous character to the church, allowing it to resonate more authentically within the local context.

Historically, the survival of Christianity has often been intertwined with the presence of translated Scriptures. In regions where translation efforts have thrived, Christianity has endured and thrived, becoming deeply rooted in local cultures. Conversely, in areas devoid of translation initiatives, Christianity has faced challenges and, in some cases, has been eradicated. Northern African countries provide a poignant example of the latter scenario.

As briefly outlined earlier, Bible translation holds paramount importance within the Ethiopian context, serving as an integral aspect of the Great Commission, contributing to church growth and Christian maturity, and playing a pivotal role in language development. Firmly grounded in this understanding, Wycliffe Ethiopia is actively involved in Bible translation projects to serve diverse language communities within Ethiopia and extend its impact beyond the nation's borders.



NEBEYOU ALEMU (PH.D.)
Translation Consultant at Wycliffe Ethiopia

10th
anniversary
edition

Congratulations messages



It is with excitement and a grateful heart to God that I am writing to congratulate Wycliffe Ethiopia's leaders. Within a period of ten years, God has used you for a great accomplishment! It is a wonder!

I have witnessed the birth of Wycliffe Ethiopia. I remember those years when there were debates about having or not having a Wycliffe organization in Ethiopia! I praise the Lord for the way he has led you, so today, Wycliffe Ethiopia has become a reference organization in Bible translation.

Your "Entrepreneurial" spirit in leadership with your big dreams for Bible Translation has led to what we see today: your big center that will be inaugurated! Praise the Lord! Congratulations to the leadership and the whole team!

Please, Keep moving forward! You still have a lot to do as you are now taking into consideration the work beyond Ethiopia! May the Lord, the owner of Mission, be with you along your way in His vineyard for greater victories (Psalm 60.12)!

DANIEL DEDJI
Wycliffe Benin Director

**GP Partnership Facilitator
for Francophone Africa**

**Western and Central Africa Director
for Faith Comes By Hearing**

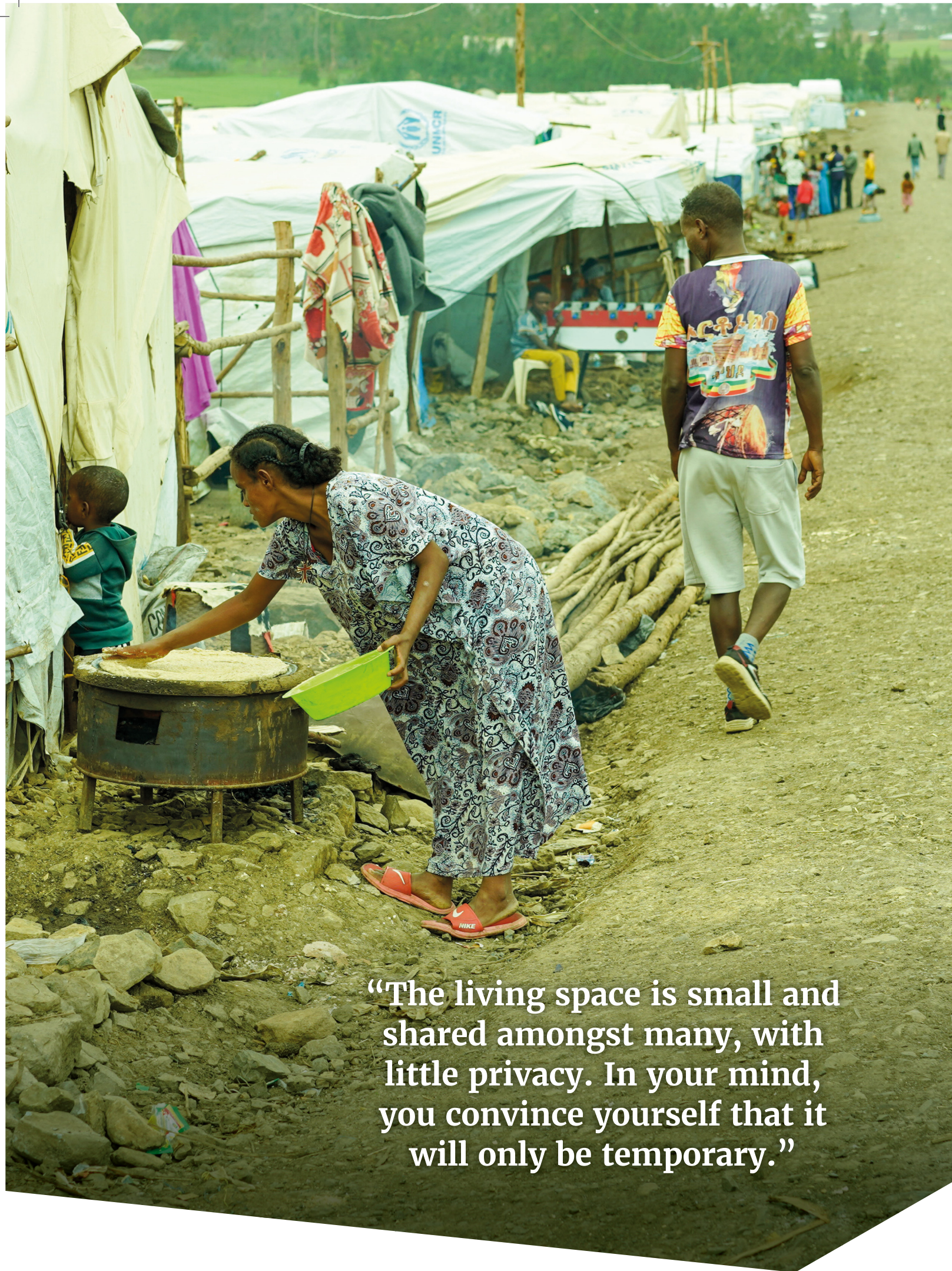


Wycliffe Netherlands congratulates Wycliffe Ethiopia with its 10-year anniversary. We thank God for his Grace and Mercy and how He has used Wycliffe Ethiopia in these 10 years. We are thankful to Him if we see what has been done in Ethiopia in the different language communities. And more recently the progress in supporting Bible translation in the countries around Ethiopia. We are grateful that we can partner together and we look forwards to walk this road together for His glory. May He bless you in many ways to stay faithful to His purpose.

BRAM VAN GROOTHEEST
Wycliffe Netherlands Director

**"May the Lord, the owner of
Mission, be with you along
your way in His vineyard for
greater victories ."**

Psalm 60.12



“The living space is small and shared amongst many, with little privacy. In your mind, you convince yourself that it will only be temporary.”



The Search for Hope

Imagine a war starts in your neighborhood. Or maybe a conflict between two rival ethnic groups or a dispute between two bordering countries. Now, imagine that you are caught in the middle of this conflict. Soldiers start pouring in, some on foot and some in tanks. You spot heavy artillery, which you have never seen before. Soon, you begin to hear continuous gunshots, and the house down the street gets hit by artillery. You realize your quiet neighborhood has become a warzone, and you cannot stay there. Against impossible odds, you leave everything behind, minus what you can carry on your back, searching for something better.

After crossing desolate wastelands, forging torrential streams, and hiking through dangerous mountain passes, you might arrive at a refugee camp if. Here, you can catch your breath and consider your next survival steps. You and your family get a place to stay and food to eat. For the time being, you breathe a sigh of relief, knowing you are safe from the fighting back home.

However, the living space is small and shared amongst many, with little privacy. In your mind, you convince yourself that it will only be temporary. You will soon be assigned and moved to a permanent place of refuge in a peaceful country where you can start to rebuild your life and provide opportunities for your children. But the week becomes a month; the month turns into a year. You get depressed with the endless days of inactivity. You can't work, you can't visit family, you can't go down to your local convenience store to pick up groceries. All you can do is wait; all you have is hope for something to im-

prove. However, even that hope starts to dwindle as you meet more people who have been there for years. They no longer have any prospects or plans, and you wonder if the same fate is in store for you and your family.

These are the thoughts and feelings expressed by refugees across refugee camps in northern Ethiopia, a country considered one of the stops on the Middle East-East Africa 'Refugee Highway.' Ethiopia hosts over 800,000 refugees from 19 countries, including South Sudan, Somalia, Sudan, Eritrea, Yemen, and Syria. Four of its 26 refugee camps are in the country's north, in Tigray. Due to the area's proximity to the Eritrean border, a lot of Eritrean refugees are found there, and Shimelba, in particular, is a camp primarily designated for Eritrea's Kunama tribe. The Kunama are a group of people who used to live on the border between Ethiopia and Eritrea. When Eritrea gained its independence from Ethiopia, the Kunama community was split. The ensuing border

wars between the two countries were fought in the Kunama towns and cities. This caused the community to flee the area, and many of them ended up in refugee camps in the Tigray region of Ethiopia. Some of these refugees have been there for more than ten years, and a lot of them have started to feel the clutches of hopelessness.

Despite all this, God always has a plan, a way, and a light in some of our darkest moments. Who would have thought that amid uncertainty and despair, these people would have the chance to do great work for God's Kingdom? They would be the hands to reach the unreached and the bridge to bring in the neglected.

THE ROLE OF REFUGEES IN BIBLE TRANSLATION

Rising from the ashes of war to make something beautiful summarizes Gebre's¹ life. Gebre was born to a conservative Muslim family in Tole, Eritrea. He grew up herding goats and sheep full-time, never having the chance to go to school and get an education. When he was 14, the two-year-long border war between Ethiopia and Eritrea broke out throughout the region he lived in. In the confusion and chaos, Gebre left his native home of Eritrea with two strangers and arrived in Ethiopia. He planned to assess the situation across the border and, if it was safe enough, return and bring his family to a more peaceful area. To his dismay, he was captured by Eritrean soldiers as soon as he crossed the border and forced to join their camp and fight in the very war he was trying to flee from. In the blink of an eye, with no farewells to his family and no attempts at his anticipated future, Gebre was sentenced to lifelong military service at 14.

However, God had his timing and plans for him, and 11 years later, He provided him with a chance to escape and flee to the Shimelba refugee camp in Tigray, north Ethiopia. God's hand in drawing Gebre close to Him was evident when his new neighbors gave him a Bible and started ministering to him. The Spirit of God worked in his life to bring him to a saving knowledge of His love and grace and forgiveness of sins through the atoning work of Christ Jesus on the Cross. Gebre surrendered his life to his Savior in 2018. God gave him a new family in the form of the Christian community in the camp. However, there were periods when Gebre came across soldiers who mistreated him and even took away his

laptop. But God intervened, and now he's part of the Nara Translation team in the relative safety of Addis Ababa.

Then there was the story of Million Daniel and Kaleb Lugi, two of Wycliffe's Kunama translators who fled the crisis in Tigray. The conflict led them to a refugee camp, but all that changed when war broke out and arrived in the camp, resulting in 8,500 people being forced to evacuate. Some were taken back to Eritrea, while others found their way to Shiraro, where Million and Kaleb waited for the fighting to settle down enough to get to Addis Ababa. Once in the capital, they found believers who helped them settle into their new place of ministry.

“Despite all this, God always has a plan, a way, and a light in some of our darkest moments.”

The help for refugees doesn't only come from those here in Ethiopia. There is also a Kunama community overseas with a passion for those suffering here. In this current crisis, believers overseas are banding together to raise awareness and offer their support for those affected by the war. Currently, the overseas community is helping refugees to get much-needed trauma healing. It is hoped that communication will continue through video conference calls to do more projects such as Bible translation work, literacy awareness, and church planting.

Sometimes, the life of a Bible Translator is spent in the ease of a house or office surrounded by like-minded believers. But the life of a Bible translator could also be as a refugee using their transition time to produce something beautiful for the Kingdom of God. May we all remember and support those who have lost everything to make an eternal impact on future generations.

¹His name has been changed to protect his identity.





One Body in Christ

From Tigrignya to Amharic to Mursi, Usman's story required three languages and two translators as it made its way to his audience.

Usman was born and raised in a strict Muslim community in southwestern Eritrea. As per the country's law, as soon as he turned 18, he was conscripted into the national navy. It was during his time there that he came to know Christ. However, he was soon thrown into military prison for refusing to renounce his faith. But that did not stop him from worshiping and praising God; he was able to lead many to Christ during this period of suffering. Fast forward almost a decade, and he escaped the navy to Ethiopia, where he started doing translation work for Wycliffe Ethiopia. He is one of only two known Christians from his community.

“Usman was thrown into military prison for refusing to renounce his faith.”

The Mursi are a nomadic community that resides in southwest Ethiopia. A group visited Debre Zeit for a Wycliffe Ethiopia-led workshop, where they met Usman. They had heard of him before through the WE network. However, seeing and interacting with him in person was a fantastic event for them. They felt strengthened and encouraged by him. They told him that after hearing about all the trials he had gone through, their problems seemed like less of a mountain to them. Usman also felt the support of a Christian community praying for him from across the country.

The coming together of two tribes from two very different places to carry out God's work was truly unique. Both groups wore the signs of their culture, from face markings to lip rings, and they talked about their different lifestyles and local governments. Despite all this, they could put away all their differences in times ravaged by ethnic tensions and become a part of God's family. They could call each other brothers and sisters and were willing to share in each other joys and burdens.

Congratulations messages



It's amazing for me to see what Wycliffe Ethiopia has become over the last ten years. It's clear that God has favoured your efforts and has now placed you strategically in the horn of Africa to serve the region as an international Bible translation and language development hub. And the ministry you provide is crucial not only for people's spiritual development but also for their quality of education, wellbeing, and identity.

It's a privilege for the Canada Institute of Linguistics to be partnered with you in the development of new translation consultants. We believe that in growing this capacity, you will have a far reaching impact beyond anything we could have ever imagined.

God bless you all for your hard work, resourcefulness, and deep faith that enables you step out into the needs around you. I pray that God will extend your reach even further over the next ten years.

DANNY FOSTER
Ph.D | President
Canada Institute of Linguistics



The Cameroon Association for Bible Translation and Literacy (CABTAL) has a vision to transform individuals and communities through the Word of God in their languages. CABTAL has established a modern printing press in Yaounde, Cameroon, to print Scriptures and other literature. In 36 years, CABTAL has completed 38 New Testaments and two complete Bibles, serving about 120 of over 280 language communities in Cameroon.

CABTAL partners with churches and communities to guarantee local ownership and sustainability of translation programs. There has been significant expansion, albeit with challenges of insecurity, with some communities being inaccessible. However, the CABTAL General Director, Dr. Keyeh Emmanuel, and his team are upbeat. Congratulations on the strides you have covered over the years and every blessing as you embark on the task ahead of you.

DR. KEYEH EMMANUEL LUFANG
General Director of CABTAL

"It's clear that God has favoured your efforts and has now placed you strategically in the horn of Africa to serve the region as an international Bible translation and language development hub."

Wycliffe Ethiopia Exegetical Advisors' Training Program

Getachew Yohannes, Wycliffe Ethiopia Translation Director

Translation Advisor's (exegetical advisors) training in Ethiopia was envisioned by Wycliffe Ethiopia and designed to train experienced Bible Translators, who lack formal training in Bible Translation, at intermediate or advanced level.

The program aims to equip exegetical advisors in the region through a rigorous three-year short-term training. It is designed to be on-the-job training, allowing the trainees to receive training while working with their translation teams.

Ethiopia is a country of more than 87 languages. Of these languages, we have less than 20 complete Bibles and about 23 NT available. In the year 2024, this number may increase as translation organizations in Ethiopia work on some new projects or Bible revisions. Wycliffe Ethiopia alone works on numerous Bible translation projects in different parts of the country and other parts of the Horn of Africa. We are now reaching other countries in the Horn of Africa. As Wycliffe Ethiopia and other translation organizations widen their territory and become involved in several language communities, the demand for exegetical advisors and translation consultants skyrockets.

The demand for consultants and exegetical advisors has been a bottleneck in Africa. The Translation projects stall because of a need for exegetical advisors and consultants. Shortage of technical people in each project, the quality and the speed of the work has been impacted.

Moreover, most of the language groups we are currently working with are remote villages with little access to education and technological infrastructure. The translators we recruit need much active help while translating and doing group checking. Therefore, this situation necessitates that Wycliffe Ethiopia assign one executive advisor for each team who will work closely with the team. However, one exegetical advisor for each team is only possible if we recruit and train the best translators to be exegetical advisors.





Getachew Yohannes

Moreover, the region has an acute shortage of Bible Translation Consultants. This program is aimed at resolving this challenge by fast-tracking consultant training. Capable translators going through this training program will eventually be recruited as Consultant-in-Training (CIT) and ultimately become Translation Consultants.

The training consists of courses in Bible Translation, Linguistics (Morphology, Syntax, Semantics, Discourse Analysis, and so on), Biblical Background, Hermeneutics and Exegesis, and Biblical languages (Hebrew and Greek).

In the first round of the 3-year cycle, we produced more exegetes in the shortest time possible, which paved the way for more consultants. We have recruited four capable people from this program, and they are presently doing their MA in Bible Translation with the Canada Institute of Linguistics (CanIL).

The need for training exegetical advisors and consultants is growing due to the number of translation projects in Africa. Even though our advisors' training serves us well in the Horn of Africa, the need is much broader than our program can handle. Moreover, our trainees need formal accreditation for the courses they are taking so that it can help them with their journey to becoming translation consultants. However, this program does not offer any certification.

So, Wycliffe Ethiopia is establishing an academy to offer college-level training in Addis Ababa in the soon-to-be inaugurated Aba Rumi Campus that can serve

Africa and beyond. The academy's primary purpose is to train Executive advisors and translation, SE, and literacy consultants for Africa to alleviate the shortage of consultants. The groundwork for the academy is well underway. We are working on accreditation with a Bible College in the USA and other African accrediting bodies. We trust the Lord that it will be a reality very soon.

A few seminaries and Bible colleges in Ethiopia offer Biblical courses at BA and MA levels. So why another college?

Wycliffe Academy of Biblical Interpretation and Translation (WABIT) is a unique academy in its area of focus. WABIT specializes in Translation Studies, Biblical Languages, Linguistics, Literacy, and Scripture Engagement rather than theological training, which other seminaries offer. Students from any of these Seminaries and colleges can take courses from WABIT for credit.

In this journey, we are not alone. Different partners are working with us locally and internationally. We thank God for all of them and the results of this training. Wycliffe Ethiopia will continue the advisors' training even after WABITS is established to train local translators who need that training.

In summary, Wycliffe Ethiopia has been trying its best to help solve the shortage of consultants in the Horn of Africa and beyond, and this effort has now continued to reach other parts of the world through its formal Academic training. We thank God for all those who took the journey with us.



Matewos and Ruth in '87

The Crossroads of War and Sacrifice Reap a Kingdom of Harvest

Famous legends are not created in the nurture of an easy life. Stories that pass down through generations are those where there is a triumph after enduring times of sacrifice and hardship. These are remembered because, despite their humanness, their bravery, sacrificial living, and exemplary lives help us to press on when we face our trials. The lives of Matewos Gebremariam and Ruth Cremer are such a story. Only God could orchestrate events where two people from different cultures could unite to make an eternal impact.

Matewos was born and raised in the Kafa region in southwest Ethiopia. He accepted Christ after high school and started to work at a local government-operated health clinic. Coming from a family of non-believers and living in an area where born-again Christians are looked down on was challenging for him, but Matewos had every intention to live out his faith in

his community. But he wasn't satisfied with only getting a paycheck; he also wanted to grow in his faith and serve the Christian community around him. He started volunteering at his local church in every way he could. He met Ruth Cremer for the first time when she came down to his church to lead a workshop.

“Famous legends are not created in the nurture of an easy life”

After a short while, Matewos' hopes of living peacefully in Bongo, Kafa, came to a screeching halt. The then-communist government conscripted Matewos into military service and told him he would be going to the front line of the war. The government was strictly atheist and looked for ways to extinguish any other religions, espe-

cially Christianity. The depth of anguish that Matewos experienced during this time is beyond comprehension. However, throughout Matewos' ordeal, God remained in control of his life, ultimately facilitating his escape from captors during transport. Seeking refuge, Matewos fled to Addis Ababa, drawn by the knowledge that believers from Kafa were engaged in translation work. Here, he

“Coming from a family of non-believers and living in an area where born-again Christians are looked down on was challenging for him.”

encountered Ruth Cremer for the second time, overseeing the project. The reunion between teacher and student must have been a profoundly moving moment. But their relationship didn't end there. Four years later, when Ruth needed a full-time Kafa translator, she went

to look for Matewos. He agreed to drop everything else and dedicate his life to resuming this valuable work.

So far, the story is remarkable, but it doesn't stop with Matewos' amazing escape and his divine meeting with Ruth Cremer. Ruth also has a sensational story of sacrifice and devotion. She was a missionary from New Zealand who devoted her entire life to sharing her love and the saving Gospel of Jesus Christ with the Kafa people. Ruth would travel to the most remote villages in the Kafa region by a wide assortment of transportation, including helicopter, car, and on top of a mule, with the sole intent of instructing others in spiritual matters. She would not let anything distract her, deciding to forego TV, radio, and even email to spend time serving those she loved.

Ruth's everyday life consisted solely of prayer and translation work. When her health started to decline, she didn't wallow away in self-pity but took the time to make her remaining years count for eternity. Her devotion of over 54 illustrious years will have a lasting impact on untold generations, as evidenced by the lives she touched and the finished work of the Kafa translation.

Ruth Cremer using a mule to get to the more remote parts of the village





Congratulations messages



Congratulations on your achievement!

It is my honour and privilege to extend the felicitations of the Board, Management and Staff of Ghana Institute of Linguistics, Literacy and Bible Translation (GILLBT) to you on the occasion of your 10th anniversary.

As you celebrate this incredible milestone – and deservedly so – we rejoice with you over this remarkable achievement and wish you continued growth, prosperity and success in your quest to transform the lives of many more Ethiopian communities through access to God’s Word in their heart languages.

May this special occasion also be a time of sober reflection of the amazing journey you have had over these 10 years and an inspiration that will propel you to greater heights in the future.

Blessings,

SYLVESTER NKURMAH
Director GILLBT



Congratulations to Wycliffe Ethiopia On your 10th anniversary!

On behalf of BTL, I would like to offer our warmest congratulations to Wycliffe Ethiopia on reaching this remarkable milestone – a decade of unwavering dedication, transformative impact, and meaningful service! Over the past ten years, Wycliffe Ethiopia has exemplified a commitment to excellence, fostering positive change, and making a lasting difference in the lives of many. Your tireless efforts in advancing Bible translation, promoting literacy, and preserving linguistic diversity have not only enriched communities but have also sown the seeds for a brighter and more inclusive future.

It is truly inspiring to witness the collective passion and resilience of the Wycliffe Ethiopia team. Your dedication to breaking barriers, overcoming challenges, and empowering individuals through language development, Bible translation and Literacy has left an indelible mark on the fabric of Ethiopian society.

As you reflect on the achievements of the past decade, may you take pride in the lives you’ve touched, the communities you’ve uplifted, and the profound impact you’ve had on the cultural and linguistic landscape of Ethiopia. This anniversary is a testament to your vision, hard work, and the enduring spirit of collaboration that defines Wycliffe Ethiopia. Congratulations!

REV. PETER MUNGUTI
National Director
Bible Translation and Literacy (E.A)



Ever since Philip sat alongside Queen Candace's official, Ethiopia has been a gateway to the Gospel reaching the continent of Africa. Wycliffe Ethiopia has been divinely ordained and placed to bring God's words of hope to the millions of least reached peoples of the continent.

I am especially excited about Eritreans, and specifically the Kunama people, twice displaced, hearing the gospel through trauma healing, the printed, audio and video Word. OneBook is privileged to be part of this mission and hear the stories of transformation that are only made possible through the power of the Holy Spirit.

Wycliffe Ethiopia's influence has reached Canadian shores as diaspora congregations recognize the current harvest in their "home" country is only possible with the translation of Scripture.

TED SERES
OneBook Director



On behalf of Wycliffe Bible Translators USA, we want to congratulate you on 10 years of faithful service to the Bible translation movement in Ethiopia.

As Paul described in Philippians 1:3-5, "Every time I think of you, I give thanks to my God. Whenever I pray, I make my requests for all of you with joy, for you have been my partners in spreading the Good News about Christ from the time you first heard it until now" (NLT).

May God continue to bless Wycliffe Ethiopia richly as you faithfully serve Him so that more people can encounter Jesus personally through Scripture in a language and format they clearly understand. To God be the glory!

JOHN CHESTNUT
Wycliffe USA director

"Every time I think of you, I give thanks to my God. Whenever I pray, I make my requests for all of you with joy, for you have been my partners in spreading the Good News about Christ from the time you first heard it until now."

Philippians 1:3-5



በሰው ህልውና የቃል ወሳኝነት

ቃል ይተክላል፤ ያፈርሳልም። ቃል ያስኮንናል፤ ያስጸድቃልም። ቃል ወደጦርነትም ወደ ሰላምም ያደርሳል። የማኖር፤ የማጥፋትም ሃይል አለው። የእግዚአብሔር ቃልማ! ይህ እውነት የገባው በ14ኛ መቶ ክፍለዘመን በእንግሊዝ አገር በዝናው በታወቀ አክሲዮኒድ ዩኒቨርሲቲ የፍልስፍናና የሥነመለኮት መምህርና የካቶሊክ ቤተክርስቲያን ካህን የነበረው ጆን ዊክሊፍ የእግዚአብሔር የሥልጣን ቃል የሆነው መጽሐፍ ቅዱስ ለሁሉም ሰው በአፍ መፍቻ ቋንቋው መተርጎም እንዳለበት በማመኑ የመጀመሪያው የእንግሊዝኛ መጽሐፍ ቅዱስ ተርጓሚ በመሆን በዘመኑም ለነበረችዋና ዛሬም ላለችዋ የክርስቶስ ቤተክርስቲያን ዓይን ከፋች ሆነ። ይህን የሠራው ስለተፈቀደለት ሳይሆን በሕይወቱ ተወራርዶ ስለነበር፤ ጉዳዩ በገሃድ የታወቀው ከሞተ በኋላ ቢሆንም፤ ከቅጣት አላመለጠም። ለራስም ሆነ ለአገር ትውልድ ተሻጋሪ ተግባር መፈጸም ትልቅ ዋጋ ቢያስከፍልም፤ እስከዛሬ ድረስ ትልቅ ውጤት አስገኝቷል።

ሐዋርያው ያዕቆብ ቃልን በምላስ በማስመሰል ትንሿ አካል የሰውነትን ሁሉ ሥራ ልታቃጥል እንደምትችል ያሳየናል። የሰንፍና ቃል ለብዙዎችን ጥፋት፤ ለአገር መፍረስ ሲያደርስ፤ የጥበብ ቃል ወደ መዳን ያመጣል። አንደበትን መግታት እጇን ትልቅ ትጋትን ይጠይቃል። ለዚህም ነው ዘማሪው ዳዊት ለአፌ ጠባቂ አኑርልኝ፤ አቤቱ የልቤ ሃሳብና የአፌ ቃል በፊትህ ያማረ ይሁን ብሎ የሚጸልየው። ሐዋርያው ጳውሎስም ለማነጽ የሚጠቅም የጸጋ ቃል እንጂ ክፉ ቃል ከአፋችን እንዳይወጣ ይመክራል።

የቃል መገኛ ጽንሰሃሳብ ስለሆነ መገለጫ መንገዶች ብዙ ናቸው። ከነሱም ህልም፤ ስሜት፤ ምልክት፤ ንግግር፤ ሥነ ጽሑፍ፤ ድራማ ወዘተ። በሰዋሰውኛ ቃል የቋንቋ ትንሹ አካል ሲሆን በመሰበጣጠር ቋንቋ ይሆንና ውስብስብና ወሳኝ የሆኑ መልክቶችን ሁሉ ያስተላልፋል። ቃል መግባቢያ ብቻ ሳይሆን የሰው የማንነቱ መገለጫም ይሆናል።

ቃልና ቋንቋ በተለዋዋጭነት ሊያገለግሉ ይችላሉ። ሰዎች ከሌሎች እንስሳት ከምንለይባቸው መንገዶች አንዱ መንገድ የቃል ወይም የቋንቋ ባለቤት ሰው ብቻ መሆኑ ነው። እንስሳትም ለምግብና ራስን ከጥቃት ለመከላከል የሚጠቀሙበት መግባቢያ ቢኖራቸውም እንደሰው ውስብስብ ሃሳቦችን አሰናስነው የሚገልጡበት ቋንቋ የላቸውም። ከሰውና ከቋንቋ የሚቀድመውን ማወቅ ቀላል ባይሆንም ሰውና ቋንቋ የማይለያዩ የአንድ ሳንቲም ሁለት ገጽታዎች እንደሆኑ አይጠፋንም። ቋንቋ ይወለዳል፤ ያድጋል ይሞታል ቢባልም ሰው ያለቋንቋ የሚሆነው ሳይወለድ በፊትና ከሞት በኋላ ብቻ ነው። በሥነ ቋንቋ ቃል ግንዛቤን፤ አጽንኦትን ወይም ስሜትን ሊያመለክት ይችላል። አንድ ቃል ብዙ ትርጉሞች ቢኖሩትም፤ ከሌሎች ጋር በተለያየ አሰላለፍና አውድ ሲሰለፍ የማይወሰን ትርጉም ይዞ የመገኘት ተፈጥሮ አለው። ማንኛውም ቋንቋ የተወሰኑ ቃላት ቢኖሩትም እያንዳንዱ ቋንቋ በነዚያ ውስን ቃላት አእላፍ ሃሳቦችን የመወከል

አቅም አለው። እውቁ የሥነ ልቦና ፈላስፋ ኖኦም ቾምስኪ ስለቃል ሲናገር፤ ከቀላል መግባቢያነት አልፎ ውስብስብ የሆኑ ማህበራዊና ፖለቲካዊ ጽንሰሃሳቦችን የመቅረጽ፤ የመወከልና የማስተላለፊያ አቅም እንዳለው ያስቀምጣል። ለዚህም የሚድያ ብዙሃንንና የተለያዩ ትምህርታዊ አቀራረቦችን በመጠቀም፤ የፖለቲካ ዲስኩርን፤ ርእዮተአለማትን፤ እሴቶችን፤ ባህልንና ፍልስፍናዎችን

በህዝብ ህሊና ማስረጽ የሚችል ብቸኛ መሳሪያ ነው። ቃል በተቃርኖ ያሉትን ማስታረቅ ብቻ ሳይሆን፤ አለመስማማታቸውን እያሳየ መረጃን በማስበጣጠርና በመቆጣጠር ወደ እርቅ የሚመራ ድልድይም ይሆናል።

የቃል መገለጫ ብዙ ቢሆንም፤ በዋናነት ቃል በንግግርና በጽሑፍ ይገለጻል። ከንግግር ይልቅ የጽሁፍ ግን ለአሁንም ለሚመጣውም ትውልዶች ጽንሰሃሳቦችን፤ ፍልስፍናን፤ ባህልን፤ እምነትን ወዘተ ማስተላለፍ በመቻሉ ይመረጣል። የንግግር ቃል በፍጥነት ቢሰራጭም፤ ለመታረም ዕድል ካለመስጠቱም ሌላ ለተሳሳተ ትርጉምም ስለሚጋለጥ ሕጋዊ ስምምነትን መሸከም አይችልም። የቤተ ክርስቲያንም አስተምህሮ ለብዙ መቶ አመታት በዋናነት በቃል ሲሰራጭ በመቆየቱ፤ የሚሰሙት ቃል በጽሑፍ ባለመቀመጡ፤ ሕዝቡ ለስህተት ትምህርትም የተጋለጠ ከመሆኑም ባሻገር፤ በስደት ጊዜና አስተማሪ በማይገኝበት ከእምነት ፈጥነው ፈቀቅ እንደሚሉ እኛም ታሪክም ምስክሮች ነን። እስልምና በሰሜን አፍሪቃ መሰራጨት ሲጀመር መጽሐፍ ቅዱስ በሕዝቡ ቋንቋ ባለመተርጎሙ፤ በስደት የክርስትናን እምነት ጠብቆ ማቆየት አለመቻል ብቻ ሳይሆን በዘመኑ የነበሩ አማኞች በፍጥነት እስልምናን ለመከተል አልተቸገሩም። በቃል ያለ ይረሳል፤ በጽሑፍ ያለ ይወረሳል የሚባለውም ለዚህ ነው። ማንኛውም ቋንቋ በትውልድና በታሪክ ጠንካራ ተጽእኖ የሚኖረው በሥነጽሁፍ ሲዳብር ብቻ ሲሆን፤ በተለያዩ ምክንያቶች ግን በጽሁፍ ያልተቀመጠ ቋንቋ ተናጋሪዎች እንዲጠፉ ከተደረገ ቋንቋውም አብሮአቸው ይጠፋል።

ቃል ሃሳብንና ስሜትን በግለሰቦች፤ በሕዝቦች፤ በዘመናት፤ በትውልድና በዓለማት መካከል መግባባትን የመፍጠር ብቻ ሳይሆን በሁሉም መካከል ያለውን ወዳጅነት የማሳደግ ወይም የማጥፋት ሚና ይጫወታል። ተራ እሳቤዎችን ብቻ ሳይሆን፤ ውስብስብ ጽንሰሃሳቦችን፤ ፍልስፍናዎችን፤ ድርጊትንና ስሜቱን በማቀነባበርና፤ በማሳደግ በአንባቢዎችና በሰሚዎች ማንነትና ግብር ላይ ተጽእኖን ይፈጥራል። ቃል የግለሰቦችንም ሆነ የህብረተሰብ ማህበራዊና ፖለቲካዊ አካሄድ፤ ባህልና የኑሮ ዘይቤ ይቀርጻል። ቃል የሰውን የህይወት አቅጣጫ ይለውጣል፤ ይመራልም። ቃል ድምጽና ፊደል ብቻ ሳይሆን እውነታም ነው። የምናስበው፤ የምናልመውም ሆነ የምንኖረው በቃል ነውና። መደሰት፤ ማልቀስ፤ ማማትና ማለምም የሚቻለው በቃል ነዋ። በተገቢው ጊዜና ቦታ የሚነገር ቃል የአንድን ሰው የሕይወት አቅጣጫ እስከመጨረሻው ሊቀይር ይችላል። በሚድያ ብዙሃን እንደምናየው የዓለምን የፖሊቲካ፤ የኢኮኖሚና የሃይማኖት አቅጣጫ ለክፉም ሆነ ለልማት የሚቀርጽው ቃል ነው። እያንዳንዳችን ባማካይ በየቀኑ 16 ሺህ ቃላት ማለትም በጽሑፍ ወደ 60 ገጾች የሚይዝ መጽሐፍ የሚያክል ቃላት እንናገራለን። በንግግር ቃል ብዙ ስህተት ስለሚፈጠር ብዙዎች አስተማሪ ባይሆኑ

ይመረጣል። የተሰጠን 2 ጆሮችና አንድ ምላስ ስለሆነ ለመስማት ፈጥነን፤ ለመናገር መዘግየት ጥበብ ነው። በቃላት አጠቃቀሞችን እጅግ መጠንቀቅ ያለብን ለዛ ነው።

ቃል የሃሳብ መገለጫ ብቻ ሳይሆን አድራጊም ነው። በመጽሐፍ ቅዱስ ቃል ሥጋ ሆነ (ዮሐ 1፡14) የሚለው በቃል አዲስ እውነታ እንደሚፈጠር ነው። ፍጥረታትን ካለመኖር ወደ መኖር፤ ጨለማ ተገፎ ብርሃን የመጣው ቃል በጨለማ ላይ ሲነገር ነው። ቃል የነበረው ክርስቶስ ሰው በመሆን፤ በቃልና በሥራ የዓለምን ጨለማ አሸነፈ። ቃል በመናገር ፍጥረታትን ፈጠረ፤ ህምምተኞችን ፈወሰ፤ ሙታንን አስነሳ፤ ሰዎችን ከሙታን መንደር ወደ ዘላለም ሕይወት አፈለሰ፤ አሁንም ወደፊትም ማፍለሱን ይቀጥላል። እኛም የተሰጠን፤ አገልጋይ የሆንንለት ይህ የሕይወት ቃል ነው። ይህ አገልግሎት በተገቢው መልክና ፍጥነት መከወን ካለበት፤ ጊዜና ጉልበት ሲተርፈንና ሲፈቅድ ሳይሆን፤ እንደ ጆን ዊክሊፍ የሞትና የሕይወት ጉዳይ ስለሆነ የሕይወትን ቃል አለመናገር አማራጭ ባለመሆኑ፤ አለመናገር ዕረፍት ነስቶን ሊሆን ይገባል (10፡14)። መጽሐፍ ቅዱስን በአፍ መፍቻ ቋንቋ ከሰማነውና ካነበብነው በጥልቀት ስለምንረዳ በውስጣችን ያድራል። የዊክሊፍ ራዕይ ከመጽሐፍ ትርጉም ቅዱስ አስፈላጊነት አልፎ፤ የዘመናዊውን ትምህርትም እውቀት ለማስተላለፍ ቃል አልፋና አሜጋ ነው። ለሰው በማይገባ ቋንቋ አሥር ሺህ ቃላትን ከመደርደር፤ ሁሉም በሚረዳው አምስት ቃላት መናገር ይመረጣል። እርስ በርሳችንም የተሻለ መግባባት እንዲኖረን፤ ሥራችን ፍሬም እንዲሆን የልብ ቃል መጠቀም የልብን ያደርሳል።



ቄስ ዮሐንስ መኮንን

በኖርዌ ቤተክርስቲያን የኦስሎ ሰበካ አገልጋይ ቄስ ሲሆኑ የዊክሊፍ ኢትዮጵያ ደግሞ ተባባሪ አባል ናቸው።

Carrying on the Legacy

Bethlehem Girma

The past three years and four months have been like nothing I could have envisioned. On January 27, 2020, I got a call that turned my life upside down. At the time, I was living in the US, fresh out of college, waiting for my OPT (a sort of work permit) to get approved. At the same time, I was applying for jobs in hospitals, clinics, and research centers. I had graduated as a Biology and Chemistry major, and although I wasn't entirely sure what I wanted to do with my life, I knew I wanted to work in the science field, and I was hoping I could figure it out in the next two years as I worked.

Then, on that cold January morning, I received the news that my father had passed away, and I would need to travel back to Ethiopia immediately for the funeral. Thinking back on it now, I realize it was only through the Grace of God and the people he put in my life that I made that 30-hour journey to Addis Ababa. The months following were very difficult for my mother and me. Nevertheless, this was also when we experienced true strength and peace from the Lord in a tangible way.

During this time, the COVID-19 pandemic gained traction, and travel restrictions were put in place, meaning I could not return to the US anytime soon. Ethiopia was also going through civil unrest (that would eventually lead to the 2-year civil war in the north), leading to fur-

ther restrictions in the country. I felt like my world had come to a complete halt, and I was at a loss for my future.

At that time, I was invited to work as a volunteer, and I started working at Wycliffe Ethiopia in September 2020. I began volunteering in the communications de-

“Over the past three years, I have seen Wycliffe Ethiopia take on exponential growth and expand its reach beyond the borders of Ethiopia.”





Bethlehem Girma with her parents Girma and Senait at her graduation (2020)

partment, and gradually, I was trained to take over the Project Funding as the organization needed someone in that department. What first started as a way to pass my time in waiting quickly became something I became very invested in. Over the past three years, I have seen Wycliffe Ethiopia take on exponential growth and expand its reach beyond the borders of Ethiopia. Thanks to this organization, I have been able to travel to the most remote parts of this country, meet people groups I only knew by name, and be involved in the work of expanding the Kingdom of God. I have seen first-hand the looks on people's faces as they hear the Word of God in their native language for the first time and seen people ravaged by war and human atrocities find solace and healing through the Scripture.

My father, Girma Getahun, grew up in a large Ethiopian Orthodox family in Gimbi, a city located in West Ethiopia. He eventually moved to Addis Ababa and started teaching chemistry in a high school. He came to Christ through a friend who witnessed him, and from that moment on, he wholly devoted his entire life to serving God. He started taking evening classes at the local theological college while continuing to work as a teacher during the day. He then joined the Summer Institute of

Linguistics as a translator and, over the years, became a certified consultant. He has consulted on many Bibles, two of which were published in 2023. My father was also a very gentle and humble man who put God above

“ I have seen first-hand the looks on people’s faces as they hear the Word of God in their native language for the first time.”

everything and had such deep faith and devotion in the Lord that it has shaped who I am today. From the moment he gave his life to Christ, his one desire had been that all could hear and understand the Word of God. He and my mother, Senait Shiferaw (who is still working as the property manager), were commissioned by the church leadership to be among the founding members of Wycliffe Ethiopia with many other brothers and sisters in Christ. It is such a privilege for me to work in a place where he gave so much of his time and energy and with people who knew and loved him.



A Reconciled and Reconciling Community of Christ **Embracing Missional Identity** **and Heavenly Worship**

In the diverse cultural tapestry of Ethiopia, the Church's mission as a reconciled and reconciling community holds profound significance. Ethiopia grapples with pressing questions of unity, justice, peace, and reconciliation. The transformative power of the Gospel amid these challenges is immense. Our journey involves a brief yet insightful exploration of the Church as the alternative eschatological community of Christ, examining its relevance and impact within the Ethiopian context. This exploration is particularly crucial in a nation yearning for peace and reconciliation, where the Church's mission becomes a beacon of hope and healing.

BIBLICAL FOUNDATION OF RECONCILIATION

The Church's foundation as a reconciled community is deeply rooted in the life and works of Christ. Scripture emphasizes reconciliation as a central theme, urging believers to serve as ambassadors of peace (2 Corinthians 5:18-20). In the Ethiopian context, marked by historical and ethnic tensions that intermittently strain

communal bonds, the Church is called to present itself as a genuine and alternative source of hope, echoing Christ's call to reconciliation. This biblical foundation not only shapes the ecclesiastical identity but also positions the Church as a missional force, actively engaging in the transformative work of reconciliation within the complex societal fabric.



CHRISTIAN UNITY IN AN ETHNO-LINGUISTICALLY DIVERSE NATION

Ethno-linguistic diversity in Ethiopia is evident, with approximately 86 ethnic groups and languages forming a rich, interwoven mosaic central to the country's cultural and historical identity. Instituted in the early 1990s, the federal system aims to acknowledge and accommodate this diversity through regional autonomy. While intended to address historical grievances and promote inclusivity, the federal structure has sparked debates and challenges, including tensions over resource allocation, identity, and power-sharing.

Navigating the delicate balance between preserving the cultural identity of individual regions and fostering national unity remains an ongoing challenge. This task involves addressing historical complexities through open dialogue to create a shared vision for the future. The ultimate goal is to ensure that Ethiopia's diversity becomes a source of strength, contributing to national unity and stability—a significant contemporary missiological challenge since the collapse of the Marxist regime.

In a country yearning for unity, the Church's unity, grounded in the Scriptures, is vital, especially with an estimated 25% of the Evangelical population. Division within the body of Christ and a lack of a collective voice have significantly hindered its message of reconciliation and unity.

“The need to transition from the constraints of historical entanglements to assuming the role of keyholders of hope.”

ADDRESSING HISTORICAL WOUNDS

Ethiopia's historical narrative is marked by nuanced moments of cohesion and discord. Operating as a reconciling community of Christ, the church is called upon to assume a pivotal role in addressing the wounds embedded in the nation's past and nurturing the healing process. Through actively promoting forgiveness, the

Church is challenged to emerge as a catalyst for restoring fractured relationships, fostering a profound sense of unity and shared purpose among the populace. In light of this, a critical imperative arises: the need to transition from the constraints of historical entanglements to assuming the role of keyholders of hope.

Drawing parallels with the redemptive narrative epitomized by Christ on the Cross, the Church transcends its ecclesiastical role to function as a transformative vehicle for forgiveness, reconciliation, and healing. In this sustained journey, the Church is pivotal in facilitating the intricate process of collective healing, enabling communities to transcend the scars of history and navigate towards a future characterized by hope and unity, for Christ's redemptive works encompass the healing of history.

MISSIONAL IDENTITY AND RECONCILIATION

The Church's missional identity involves a dual calling – living for and against the world. Positioned as an agent of the Kingdom, it confronts sin in varied manifestations, addressing both individual and collective realms. The foundation of this mission rests on anchoring hope in the transformative power of the crucified and risen Christ.

Rejecting a rigid separation of vertical and horizontal dimensions, the Church acknowledges the interconnectedness inherent in Christ's redemptive work on the cross. This recognition leads to a holistic biblical perspective, dismissing the notion of segregating these dimensions. Navigating these dynamics requires avoiding false dichotomies, as prioritizing one dimension over the other undermines the depth of Christ's redemptive work.

David Bosch's insight becomes crucial, underscoring that the Church is not intended to be a detached, transcendental entity. Such an approach risks relegating the Church to irrelevance or reducing it to a mere sociological or political organization, diminishing its prophetic role. As an eschatological and sociological community, the Church must navigate this delicate balance, avoiding overemphasizing one side that risks irrelevance or redundancy. It is a unique and transformative com-

munity of Christ, dynamically engaging with the world while maintaining its distinctiveness.

HEAVENLY WORSHIP AND THE TRUE LIFE OF THE ALTERNATIVE COMMUNITY OF CHRIST

The Church is summoned to partake in heavenly worship, as depicted in Revelation, where individuals from every tribe, language and nation unite in praising the eternal Creator (Rev. 4:11). They acknowledge the worthiness of the Lamb of God, Jesus Christ, to receive

embodying the all-encompassing redemptive work of Christ and serving as a bridgehead in a deeply divided nation. It functions as both an eschatological and sociological community, avoiding the pitfalls of irrelevance or redundancy. Remaining faithful to its mission, the Church becomes an agent of positive change, fostering a sense of belonging and shared purpose across Ethiopia's diverse landscape. This fundamentally involves living as a sign of God's Kingdom – a united body of Christ pointing to the hope found in Christ by actively engaging in and mirroring heavenly worship.

“Individuals from every tribe, language and nation unite in praising the eternal Creator.”

power, wealth, wisdom, strength, honor, glory, and praise (Rev. 5:9-14). Suppose the Church remains faithful to its call, identity, and mission. In that case, it actively engages in this celestial worship, reflecting the beauty of the heavenly gathering before God, who is seated on the throne.

The Ethiopian Church can impact the nation by embodying this heavenly worship as a diverse yet united community—reconciled to God and each other through Christ. This entails members choosing not to perceive each other through worldly values but through Christ, who has demolished human-made barriers—ethnic, socio-political, or economic—on the cross. In essence, it is summoned to epitomize the authentic life of the Alternative Community of Christ: “There is neither Jew nor Gentile, neither slave nor free, nor is there male and female, for you are all one in Christ Jesus.” (Galatians 3:28). Through genuine unity, members discover their true identity in Christ, transcending worldly values. This transformative journey removes all barriers, fostering profound self-recognition as the united eschatological community of Christ, mediating God's boundless love in a profoundly divided nation.

CONCLUSION:

The Church's role as a reconciled and reconciling community in Ethiopia is intricately tied to its missional identity. It is called to stand as a transformative force,



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Printing with a mission

Pretore, our Dutch printing partner

Pretore, a unique company because of the technology of printing Bibles on lightweight paper with inkjet. The automation process is controlled by an innovative workflow that enables automated production from a digital file to a book.

In a groundbreaking development for publishers and missionary organizations alike, the dream of printing Bibles in low volumes (up to 7.000 copies) has become a reality, ushering in a new era of flexibility and efficiency. This dream has come true because of the hard work of Pretore and innovative partners. The innovation allows customers to be able to order Bibles in much lower volumes, thereby reducing excess stock and other associated costs. This is particularly advantageous for missionary work, where the need for numerous cop-

ies may not always align with practical considerations. Now, (missionary) organizations can focus on delivering high-quality, personalized Bibles without the burden of managing surplus inventory. This printing solution not only meets the specific needs of each order but also contributes to a more sustainable and streamlined approach to disseminating God's Word, making it a game-changer in the world of publishing and missionary endeavors.

የመጽሐፍ ቅዱስ ትርጉም ሥራ በቁጥር ሲታይ

ሕያው የእግዚአብሔር ቃል በየዕለቱ የሰዎችን ሕይወት እየቀየረ ይገኛል። ሆኖም ግን ወደ 1.5 ቢሊዮን የሚጠጉ ሰዎች ሙሉውን የእግዚአብሔር ቃል የሆነው መጽሐፍ ቅዱስ እስከ አሁን ድረስ አላገኙም። ዊክሊፍ የመጽሐፍ ቅዱስ ተርጓሚዎች ሰዎች ሁሉ መልካም የምሥራች የሆነውን የክርስቶስ ኢየሱስ አዳኝነትን እንዲሠሙ እድል እንዲያገኙ ከእናንተ ጋራ አብሮ በመሥራት ይህንን መለወጥ ይፈልጋል።

በዓለም ዙሪያ 7,397 ቋንቋዎች አሉ።
(386 የምልክት ቋንቋዎችን ጨምሮ)



741

ሙሉ መጽሐፍ ቅዱስ
ያሏቸው ቋንቋዎች



1,679

አዲስ ኪዳን
ያሏቸው ቋንቋዎች



1,215

የተመረጡ የመጽሐፍ ቅዱስ ክፍሎች
ያሏቸው ቋንቋዎች



1,274

ውሳኔ ያልተደረሰባቸው
ቋንቋዎች



2,526

ምንም ዓይነት የመጽሐፍ ቅዱስ ትርጉም
ሥራ እየተከናወነ ያልሆነባቸው ቋንቋዎች

1.5 ቢሊዮን ሕዝቦች



3,597

የመጽሐፍ ቅዱስ ትርጉም ሥራ
እየተከናወነ ያለባቸው ቋንቋዎች

እጅግ ብዙ ቁጥር ያሏቸው ሕዝቦች መጽሐፍ ቅዱስ በቋንቋቸው
የላቸውም። እነዚህን ሕዝቦች እንድንደረስላቸው ይረዱናል? የዊክሊፍ
ኢትዮጵያ ድኅረ ገጽ በመጎብኘት አብረውን ያገልግሉ!



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