

Call to Prayer

May - June 2012

Jesus Christ... abandoned his whole being, agreeing to become a servant when he went to be born a man on the earth. Thus he humbled himself to the ground.

Phil 2:7-8b in Nomaande, Cameroon

light and peace in Nigeria



The Mwachavul New Testament launch

■ **Tue 1 May** 70% of the **Okphela** people call themselves Christian but without the Scriptures in their language, their faith has had no way to mature and many continue to live according to traditional animistic beliefs. Praise God that the **typesetting of the New Testament** has now been completed and it is now in the printing process; soon the hope of glory will be clearly proclaimed to the Okphela (*Col 1:28*).

■ **Wed 2** The **Lis Ma Ron** translators have themselves been deeply touched by the Scriptures while they wrestled with the complexities of language and doctrine. Pray that the final translation will reach out to people's hearts as it has to the translators'.

■ **Thu 3** An extremist Islamic sect called **Boko Haram** has grown in stature and boldness in attacks in Nigeria. While many things are unclear about this terrorist group, the amount

of violence, particularly in the northern parts of the country, is concerning. Please pray that Boko Haram would fail in their efforts to incite further violence in Nigeria.

■ **Fri 4** Praise God that he has kept the **Ichen** translation team safe in the midst of violence in the region. Their state calls itself the '**home of peace and tourism**': pray that God will, in his mercy, bring peace to them. Power cuts also continue to hamper the project.

■ **Sat 5** The Abakaliki cluster project* looks to see all three translations of the whole Bible completed soon. Pray that the final translations will be clear and faithful. They also struggle with inconsistent power supply. Ask God that he will **bring light to dark places**, through the translation and for the team (*2 Sam 22:29*).

**In a cluster project, translation teams from several language groups cooperate to produce translations in their respective languages.*

■ **Sun 6** Good progress is being made on checking the **Dadiya** New Testament, but the process is a long one. Thank God for the **encouragement** those working on the project have received from a Dadiya man called Donatus, who has been helping them with their computer needs, and checking spelling and key terms in the draft for consistency.

■ **Mon 7** The **Mwachavul** Old Testament project is having a wide-reaching impact: the work is progressing well, mother-tongue literacy classes are starting in local secondary schools, and one of the translators is leading workshops for

other translation teams. Their translations may even be **used as a foundation** for other nearby languages starting translation projects.

■ **Tue 8** Today and throughout this week, a team from Wycliffe will be at the **Christian Resources Exhibition**, talking about how individuals and churches can get involved with Bible translation, literacy and Scripture engagement all around the world. Pray that the vision will be shared.

■ **Wed 9** Two previous translation efforts had left the **Irigwe** people with a small amount of Scripture. Praise God that the whole New Testament has now been completed and is in preparation for printing. It will be hugely beneficial to the community, **especially for women and children** who do not have the education to read the Scriptures in the trade language. Literacy efforts are increasing, so that the people will be ready to read the New Testament when it's published.

■ **Thu 10** Three Nigerians who were working to distribute newly-translated Scriptures to a remote and highly persecuted language community were recently killed for their faith. Their fellow believers, though, are **undeterred** in their evangelism and discipleship efforts. Praise God for their steadfastness and commitment to the Bible and the truth that it conveys. Please pray for their safety, and that God would thwart further attacks. Ask God to use the Scriptures that have made it to this community for his glory. (*Acts 14:21-22*).

■ **Fri 11** Praise God for the completion of a major renovation project at a significant translation centre! Thank God that the work was done quickly, for a fair price, and in a way that will **accelerate Bible translation throughout Nigeria**. Pray that the increased activity in this centre, including translation workshops, media recordings, and the development of new church partners, will be a blessing to Nigerian language committees.

the latest news

Through the InFocus programme, churches in the UK partner directly with language projects in Africa and Asia (wycliffe.org.uk/infocus).



■ **Sat 12** Banyole, Uganda: A group from an InFocus supporting church are planning their first visit to the Banyole in November. A briefing meeting is being held at the Wycliffe UK headquarters today to help them prepare. Pray for **their practical and spiritual readiness**, and that their visit will be a blessing both to the Banyole people and to the UK church.

■ **Sun 13** Aghem, Cameroon: Training on **translation principles** was held in 2011 for those who interpret preaching from the trade languages into Aghem. It has had a positive impact for the churches, and further training will take place this year for those who missed the first session. Pray for a better

understanding of God's word in the Aghem churches.

■ **Mon 14** Weera*, Kenya: A young man joined the Weera team in January to **adapt an existing translation** into the related Weera language. He is doing translation training before going to the Weera area, where he'll work with the one local Weera translator. Pray for good working relationships.

**indicates pseudonym, here and elsewhere*

■ **Tue 15** Bagwere, Uganda: Several books of the New Testament have been published in the Lugwere language, and others have been drafted and are being checked by a consultant. Pray that the Lugwere speakers who review the draft translations will be **excited** to see God's

word in their language and will share their enthusiasm with their communities.

■ **Wed 16** Banen, Cameroon: The Banen people live in two main areas, separated by almost **impenetrable rainforest**, which makes communication between them slow and difficult. Pray that literacy classes will be established in the more remote area and that churches there will enthusiastically embrace the translation project.

■ **Thu 17** Burdu*, Chad: Most of the Burdu people follow another major religion. 15 Burdu young people have moved to a regional centre to attend school and are staying in

a boarding hostel run by the local church. Pray that the witness of Christians will bring **light** into their lives (2 Tim 1:10).

■ **Fri 18** Dawla*, Chad: 39 Bible stories, covering *Genesis* and the life of Jesus, have been translated into Dawla and recorded on cassette. Pray that these stories will be eagerly received in the communities and touch people's hearts.

■ **Sat 19** Flame*, West Africa: A **dictionary** in a previously unwritten language can help to preserve the language for future generations. The Flame team are very busy with Bible translation and training people to use the Scriptures but have

also found time to complete a dictionary. Pray that this will be valued by the community and will encourage people to learn to read their mother tongue.

■ **Sun 20** Nawila*, East Africa: The Nawila team have had to move from their office following a **terrorist attack** on the church compound where they were last November. They thank God that the team members and their equipment were spared, and have moved 100km away. Pray that this relocation will not have a negative impact on the work. It should enable the team to keep a closer eye on construction of a new literacy centre and school in a nearby village.

now what?

Robert and Margaret Hunt (Wycliffe New Zealand) started working among the Matigsalug people of the Philippines in 1989. Last year finally saw the launch of the Matigsalug New Testament.

■ **Mon 21** One of the greatest difficulties was showing the Matigsalug people the value of their language. They said, 'Everyone laughs at our dark skin, laughs at our curly hair, laughs at our language; they say we babble like monkeys.

We hate our language, we hate how we look, we hate how we talk.' It took more than 12 years of literacy programmes and producing Matigsalug videos and CDs before the people felt happy with their language – all very time-consuming, but vital for the translation work to be accepted. Pray that people from all languages will come to know that they are loved by God.

■ **Tue 22** Praise God for the New Testament launch. The people prayed and sang in Matigsalug as they celebrated: what a contrast! Now many reports are coming of people reading, studying and preaching from the New Testament in Matigsalug. In one church, some of the regulars have been **standing outside at the back** in order to let newcomers have the seats inside.

■ **Wed 23** 'The only discouraging thing that we've heard,' says Robert, 'is that many other



people want to buy the Matigsalug New Testaments but can't afford the minimal price. We put a charge on them so that people will consider them to be of **value**, but at the same time, we don't want lack of money to be what stops people from having a copy.' Pray for wisdom in this issue.

■ **Thu 24** The Hunts have moved back to New Zealand, but Robert continues to work with the project. As well as checking drafts the translators send, he manages the computer servers and provides training via email. Pray for clear communications and that this working process will continue to be effective.

■ **Fri 25** The Hunts call the new publication the "NT+", because it also includes *Genesis, Ruth, Esther and Jonah* – 8% of the Old Testament! Since the launch, work on the Old Testament has continued to prosper: *Daniel* has been prepared for consultant checking, and work is in progress on *Exodus* and *1 Samuel*. The Matigsalug

translators are translating so quickly, it's hard for Robert to keep up with the checking!

■ **Sat 26** The Old Testament project needs continued funding. Part comes from the Hunts' house, which they gave to the project when they left. Now it is being rented to teachers from a nearby school. More sponsorship is still needed. Thank God for some **generous gifts** last year and pray for wisdom about how to proceed in seeking funding.



a long way from home

■ **Sun 27** Cameroon: This year, many Cameroonian languages will begin **Faith Comes By Hearing** programmes (1-8 June). The coordinators, Felix, Daniel and Apolinaire, need to have stamina and strength for their work, especially as they travel long distances and away from their families. Starting these new programmes will also require more funds.

■ **Mon 28** James, Ruth and their young son have recently moved from the UK to a city in **west Asia**, having completed their initial training in linguistics and literacy in December last year. They join an existing team

and believe God has called them to the country for the long term. Pray for their son to adapt well, and for them to make some deep friendships and learn the language well and quickly.

■ **Tue 29** Nigeria: The Cishingini New Testament, the final New Testament of a cluster of three languages in northwest Nigeria, is going through its last translation checks before being sent to the printers. The final stretch involves **almost a year** of intensive checking based in the United States for two Cishingini translators as they relate to their US project advisors. They

are currently in the middle of this final year.

■ **Wed 30** (cont.) The final stages of producing New Testaments often encounter a lot of spiritual opposition, so pray for the translators as they experience a long separation from their families and struggle with living in a strange culture. Pray also for the relationships with the project advisors, that despite the stress created by intensive work, relationships will be blessed. Finally pray for the language committee and community back in Nigeria who eagerly await the completed translations, that

they will support the team working in the US with prayer and encouraging words.

■ **Thu 31** Philippines: Tano, one of the Matigsalug translators (21-26 May), is doing theological training

in Manila, the capital. He returned home at Christmas for **the birth of his first child**, but most of his time is spent at the seminary, a long distance away. Pray for his studies, and for his wife and baby daughter.



31 May

june

hearing the word of Christ

*For many people, hearing the Bible is easier than reading it, because of illiteracy, traditional oral practices or preference. 2012 marks the 40th year of **Faith Comes By Hearing (FCBH)**, one of Wycliffe's partners, which produces audio versions of mother-tongue Scriptures.*

■ **Fri 1 June** At the end of 2011, FCBH had been involved in audio Scripture in **more than 600 languages**. These are spoken by 5 billion people, 2/3 of the world's population! Pray that God will continue to prosper this fruitful ministry.

■ **Sat 2** 'Marakwet, spoken in Kenya by over 160,000 people, is another of our new recordings to be released. **God does speak Marakwet!**' FCBH shared. The Marakwet New Testament is one of more than 30 audio New Testaments to be released this year alone. Praise God that he does speak Marakwet... and Hmong Daw (Vietnam)... and Yuracare (Bolivia)...

■ **Sun 3** Wycliffe and FCBH began working together in the late 80s. They recognised that, while many may never read translated Scriptures, they could understand them in an audio format. The partnership has seen the

production of more than 200 completed projects, and **50 more are ongoing**.

■ **Mon 4** When an audio recording of a New Testament is produced, it is distributed on solar-powered digital audio players called **Proclaimers**. Frequently, listening groups are set up – a group will listen to the Scriptures from the Proclaimer and discuss them together. In the three months after the Bench New Testament was launched in Ethiopia, over 100 listening groups were started.

■ **Tue 5** (cont.) A man from another language in Ethiopia said this: 'It is miraculous for me to hear the word of God in our own language, which was undervalued very much. Today, while we have this Proclaimer reading Scripture in our heart language, it is for us like **waking up from sleeping**.' (Eph 5:14)

■ **Wed 6** This year, many Cameroonian languages will begin FCBH programmes. It will be hard work for the coordinators, Felix, Daniel and Apolinaire. One of the projects Apolinaire has been overseeing, in the Ngiemboon language, has gone from strength to strength; when he



5 June

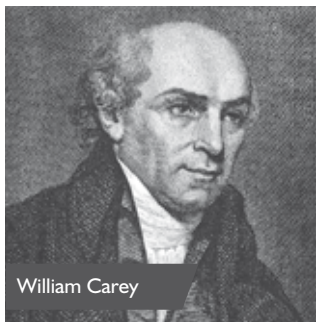
returned after a short absence, one listening group that had started with 4 Christians had grown to 60. He's seen an increased interest in literacy among the community too.

■ **Thu 7** Ghana: That 'faith comes by hearing' has been clear in Kasinji Kofi's life. 'I did not know anything about Jesus Christ, nor was I interested. When the FCBH program started in my village, I avoided the meetings,' he says. 'Some of the promoters kept inviting me to come. They promised not to preach to me, so I obliged them. **I enjoyed the first session**, and

no one preached to me. They only discussed the message. After some time, I finally accepted Christ as my personal Saviour.' May God strengthen Kasinji and others who have come to know Jesus through audio Scriptures.

■ **Fri 8** FCBH also run *Bible.is*. It's a free Bible application for reading and listening to Bible passages simultaneously, available on mobile phones and the internet, making it easier for people to read or listen to Scripture and share it with others. Pray for new ventures like this into **mobile and internet Scripture dispersion**. (www.bible.is)

attempting great things for God in India



William Carey

■ **Sat 9** When **William Carey** first arrived in Kolkata, aged 32, he began by managing an indigo factory. In this position he drafted the first translation of the New Testament into Bengali. During his lifetime, he was involved in 35 different Indian Bible translations; he died **on this day** in 1834. Thank God for the courage and insight he has given to pioneering mission workers in the past and today.

■ **Sun 10** Today we know much more about the need for Bible translation in India. Estimates suggest that translation needs to be started

in **35% of India's languages**, spoken by as many as 65 million people. Praise God for the work of Wycliffe India and partners, who are involved in more than 60 projects.

■ **Mon 11** In recent years Christians in the East Indian state of Orissa have seen persecution; **tens of thousands** have been injured and displaced. Since the height of the violence, there has been *trauma healing* training, a programme which aims to help people find comfort and forgiveness in the Scriptures. One pastor said of the trauma healing manual, 'We need this book badly,' and it has since been translated into the state language. May leaders know how to teach the peace and love of Jesus to people suffering under persecution (*Acts 10:36*).

■ **Tue 12** The Muria translation team are starting to see fruit. Thank God that the analysis of the language has been done well

and that translation is underway. During a visit to a village, team members noticed some translated portions of the Bible **attached to the wall in one home**. The residents wanted everyone who came into their home to read and understand the truth of these passages!

■ **Wed 13** The Muria are largely oral learners, and only 10% can read, so story-sharing groups have been well received by local Christians. One said, 'Tomorrow, if we can't carry our Bibles openly, **we can store God's word in our hearts** through the stories we learn.'

■ **Thu 14** IT specialists could be used **immediately**. One area of need is applications to put translated Scriptures on mobile phones in both audio and text formats. These would allow people to read and share Scriptures more easily and quickly. Ask God to provide people who have the requisite skills.

■ **Fri 15** Mbembe, Cameroon: The Mbembe team are giving thanks for solar power and an internet connection, which help them to feel less isolated. They hope to establish a **farm of palm trees** to provide an income for the project; a local church leader has donated a number of plants to start this. Pray for unbelievers who are attending churches in increasing numbers.

■ **Sat 16** Morwa*, Chad: A man who came to Christ through helping an expatriate translator learn the local language has faced opposition from his family, but has had the courage to attend the little church in his village and so declare his faith openly. He has been working on a translation of Mark which now needs checking. Pray for his **perseverance in his faith**, and that this first book of the Bible in the Morwa language will be published and have an impact.

■ **Sun 17** Oku, Cameroon: The New Testament has been completely translated and, it is hoped, will be typeset this year. Pray for wisdom in all the detailed work that needs to be done to prepare the translation for printing, and that the hearts of the Oku people will be ready to receive and respond to God's word (*James 1:21*).

■ **Mon 18** Maor*, East Africa: The New Testament is complete and has been consultant checked. However, the majority of the Maor people follow another major religion and **there**

are no Maor churches. Pray for wisdom for the team, who hope to publish the New Testament next year, as they consider how to launch it in an appropriate way.

■ **Tue 19** Saju*, Chad: Eight people in the Saju community who listened to Bible stories in their language have professed faith in Christ. One is the son of an important teacher of the majority religion. Pray for courage for these new believers to persevere in their faith, and for wisdom about how to live as Christians in a hostile environment (*Phil 2:16*).

■ **Wed 20** Songu*, Chad: The Songu translator has been able to use his skills with recording equipment to help other language groups in the area **record the Bible stories** they have translated. He is encouraged that two young Songu men have taken an introductory course on Bible translation. The only book of the New Testament that has been published so far is *John*. Pray for perseverance for the translators in spite of challenges.

■ **Thu 21** Weh, Cameroon: The project team are struggling with a widespread assumption that educated people should leave home to find a well-paid job rather than staying in their village to work on Bible translation. Pray that the right people, including some who are young and well-educated, will commit themselves to this work (*2 Tim 2:15*).

■ **Fri 22** Ikiaras*, W Asia: The Ikiaras are a large people group of **14 million**, where there is a small growing church amid the national religion. The translation team has been working hard for a number of years on a translation of Scripture which will feed the new believers and reveal God's truth to those of the majority faith. They work in an area where **security and living are difficult**. Pray that God will be their refuge and strength (*Ps 46*).

■ **Sat 23** Husa*, SE Asia: Just seven more books to go before the New Testament is completed! Give thanks for the encouraging comments from the national team who are reading *Romans* with their house groups and say, 'They are reading



well because they can understand it.' However, there has been sadness at the death of the team's national leader. Please pray for them as they complete the work without him.

■ **Sun 24** Yaru*, SE Asia: The Yaru team works in a group of islands where at least **17 languages** are spoken. They are currently working in five of

the languages but aim to see God's word in all. In three of these there are some simple story books and some portions of God's word. There are faithful national workers committed to this work, but they would like to recruit younger people to carry on the work and start on new languages. Pray for God's resourcing.

the UK hub

■ **Mon 25** Wycliffe are continually engaging Christians in the UK with a vision for seeing more people excited about **God's mission** around the world. Pray that, as they share about the need for Bible translation in more than 2,000 languages, audiences would be motivated to see God glorified in UK churches too.

■ **Tue 26** (cont.) Pray that as churches and church leaders serve others through their involvement in missions, Wycliffe would be able to serve them back, providing resources and support to help churches **strengthen and mature**.

■ **Wed 27** 'At the moment, it looks like we will have **sufficient staff** to cover most roles in the UK until

September. Praise God!' says staffing officer Steve Orchard. God has providentially brought interns into housekeeping, catering and maintenance roles, and new staff into finance so that the workload is covered.

■ **Thu 28** (cont.) But more recruitment is needed. While temporary help is invaluable, the **IT department** is still urgently seeking long-term, full-time specialists. More interns are also needed for the last quarter of the year. Pray in expectation that God will continue to provide for all our staffing needs (*Phil 4:16*).

■ **Fri 29** Wycliffe's UK base has been at the Wycliffe Centre in Buckinghamshire for **40 years**. It's a big centre to run and takes a lot

of maintaining. Pray for the Estate Services team, that they would have the right people, support and resources to do their work well. Manual work with tools (like power tools) can be dangerous; please pray for safety of staff working in Estates Services.

■ **Sat 30** The end of this month sees a team of leaders from Wycliffe's Youth Network (WYnet) heading out to see Samuel, the mother tongue translator of the Ntcham Bible in Togo (wynetuk.org). WYnet have supported this translation project for 15 years! Pray that, during their visit, the team will encourage both Samuel and local churches as the **Old Testament translation nears completion** (*Eph 6:22*).

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