Dear Friends in Christ,

Greetings from Nigeria! We’re writing this during the two weeks between the American Thanksgiving Day and our Thanksgiving/ Harvest celebration in our congregation of the Lutheran Church of Nigeria in Jos, Plateau State. In rural areas many people grow crops (most of them using hand tools), and so a Harvest celebration is an opportunity to contribute some of the crops to the Church as a way of thanking God for blessing the year’s growing season. Jos is a city, the capital of Plateau State, and so most people contribute money instead of crops as a way of giving thanks for God’s sustenance throughout the year.

And we are also very grateful for faithful partners, whose prayers, concern, and support have kept us in Nigeria to help people to have access to God’s word. May God bless each of you!

THANKSGIVING FOR CHECKING UP

A major part of our ministry here is sitting down with various translation teams and checking drafts of various Biblical books for accuracy, clarity, and naturalness. We are thankful that Chuck has spent most of the past three months working with translation teams from the Ikwerre, Tarok, Gade, and Maya language areas. In the Ikwerre and Tarok languages we went through roughly the first half of Isaiah, including the beautiful passages from Isaiah 7 and 9, which are typically read in churches this time of year. Gade is a newer team working hard on a complex writing system, and we went through part of Daniel—which reminds us of our Lord’s second coming, another common Advent theme.

PRAYER REQUESTS

- Thanksgiving for the Christ child!
- Thanksgiving God’s blessings throughout the year.
- Thanksgiving for good checking sessions with the Ikwerre, Tarok, Gade, and Maya translation teams.
- Thanksgiving for God’s blessings on the regular Council meeting of the Lutheran Church of Nigeria, held in November 2015.
- Thanksgiving for God’s blessings on Rev. Ayugha’s presentation of a paper on the Utugwang writing system to the Linguistics Association of Nigeria.
- Thanksgiving for the work of Rev. Otronyi and others in completing the audio recording of the entire Yala New Testament.
- Thanksgiving for Karen Rose and John David, along with prayers for God’s blessings on their lives.
- Prayers for good health, peace, and security, both here and around the world.

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Please do not send any contributions to Nigeria
LETTER OF THANKSGIVING: PHILIPPIANS
During June and July Chuck went through Philippians with the Gworog translation team. We're also thankful for a report we recently received from that area. A visitor was recently in one of the churches in which part of the newly-translated Philippians was read in the Gworog language. As the passage was being read, the congregation was chuckling and laughing a bit. One's first guess would be that there were a few odd expressions which caused the laughter. But later members of the congregation sincerely said that the laughter was a sign of happiness that they were hearing God's word in their own language, which they hadn't been sure was possible.

WHAT DOES THAT MEAN?
While John David has been holding “conversations” for quite a while, it seems that he is becoming more thoughtful. Recently he has been saying in the middle of a conversation, “What does that mean?” After that, a little explanation normally does the trick.

Of course, “What does this mean?” is a good Lutheran question, appearing often in the Catechism and introducing explanations to various articles of the faith. This question is one which we often use in one form or another with translation teams, to see that God’s word is communicated accurately and clearly.

ON THE MOVE
We are still living in the same place in Jos, Nigeria. But you may have heard that the LBT international offices have moved from Aurora, IL, to the campus of St. Paul Lutheran High School, Concordia, MO. It is anticipated that sharing facilities will reduce LBT expenses in the US in order to expand ministry overseas. The new mailing address is PO Box 789, Concordia, MO 64020-0789. Phone numbers are the same: (630) 897-0660, or toll free (800) 532-4253.

May God bless your Christmas celebrations and the New Year,

Chuck + Karen Issario