



Lutheran  
Bible  
Translators  
of Canada

# Messengers of Christ

Volume 38 Number 2

Summer 2010

## Steps Towards New Work in Cameroon

*This edition of Messengers of Christ is dedicated to some details of placing new translators in Cameroon. Come along for the ride...*



Signpost upon arriving in Tignère from Ngaoundéré.

### Notes from the Road Trip to Galim

*By David Maffett*

As coordinator of LBT in Cameroon, I manage all LBT staff working in translation and literacy projects. Earlier this year, I visited new LBT staff member Kory Fay, wife Cara and children in southern France where they are learning French, one of the **official languages of Cameroon**. Kory's language skills and love of language are remarkable. Kory will begin work in the Nizaa language project in 2011.

The next stage of placing the Fays in Cameroon was to determine where they would be located among the Nizaa people. The Lutheran Church in Cameroon, EELC, had recommended Galim as the place to start this work. So during May, I travelled to Cameroon to start setting this up, with Kory joining me from France.

Six of us made the trip to Galim from Ngaoundéré approximately 200 km or 5 hour drive. Martin and Joan Weber from Yimbéré will help the Fays integrate into the community and communicate between the church, local government and the Nizaa people. Rev Daniel Touka, the language project representative of EELC and Rev Dieudonné Ousmane were travelling companions too.

We stopped about two-thirds of the way to Galim in Tignère to visit with Jacqueline Sambou Patouma, a school teacher and **member of the Nizaa literacy centre**. For... *continued on Page 6*



First contact with the Nizaa people,  
L - R: Rev Dieudonné, Jacqueline, Kory,  
Rev Daniel and David.

## Reflections from LBTC

By David Maffett, Executive Director



I just read an article in a book on the History of Bible Translation discussing the import of the Septuagint. The following really struck me.

*This first translation into Greek is also of enormous significance because it established the principle (already in the third century B.C.E.!), for both Jews and the early Christians, that it is translation of the holy word into the common languages of people (who have no knowledge of the original biblical languages) that will best enable them to hear/read the biblical text with clear understanding. This pioneering Bible translation from Hebrew into Greek thus establishes a basic principle of indigenization that declares that the word of God in the Holy Scriptures can be (or ought to be) incarnated into the mother-tongue languages of people anywhere.\**

Last month in Cameroon, I twice heard a justification of that statement. In two different places among two different people groups, the Christians told us how they needed more than just their New Testament translations. They needed the rest of the Bible and **some liturgy. What they don't have translated they read in a common trade language, Fulfulde. A Samba pastor said that they have no liturgy for Baptism, Communion or funerals in Samba and so use Fulfulde, but the people don't understand!**

Trade languages take people a long way but the reality is that when you get beyond buying and selling things, understanding drops off quickly. (I was reminded of this fact when I and others for whom

French is a second language struggled to express certain things in that language!) So if **God's Word is to be more than part of a ritual** that we hardly understand, it has to be in the language we fully understand, our heart-language.

**This need for God's Word in their own language** has driven many who worked on earlier New Testament projects to do what they can even though there has been no outside help for some time. Two Dugun men, whom we hope will be able to work with Aubert Kpengapse (see page 5), have been working on their own since 2006 to translate more of the New Testament into their language. They have manuscript **drafts of Acts, most of Paul's epistles and Revelation** as well as earlier printed drafts of the Gospels. They are most eager for a trained exegete to come work with them so that these translations can be properly checked, finished and used among their people.

This issue of *Messengers of Christ*—and think about that title!—shares some of what we learned and experienced during three weeks in northern Cameroon. We are delighted that the Fay and Kpengapse families will soon be working in two projects. But there is so much more we could do. Pray the Lord of the harvest to send us more workers, from both Canada and Cameroon. And then join with us to train and equip them for this most fundamental and vital ministry of Bible translation.

I leave you with a thought from Paul: *Undoubtedly there are all sorts of languages in the world, yet none of them is without meaning. If then I do not grasp the meaning of what someone is saying, I am a foreigner to the speaker, and he is a foreigner to me. So it is with you. Since you are eager to have spiritual gifts, try to excel in gifts that build up the church.*

NIV 1 Corinthians 14:10-12.

**The Lord be with you! ... David**

\*Burke, David G., *The First Versions: The Septuagint, The Targums, and the Latin*, in *A History of Bible Translation*, Ed. Philip A. Noss. Rome: Edizioni di Storia e Letteratura, 2007, p. 60.

## Building From the Past With Present Translators

By Kory Fay

Cameroon with her husband Martin) related how she had been reading this portion of Scripture and drew the parallel between this story and the project among the Nizaa.

A little background: After the Jews returned from exile, King Cyrus commanded the rebuilding of their temple. After the foundation had been re-laid, some in Samaria began to oppose the rebuilding. They sent a letter to King Artaxerxes saying that it would be a mistake to let the Jews rebuild the temple since they had a history of being powerful and a threat to Babylon. The king

stopped the work. However, some Jews, moved by the prophecies of Haggai and Zechariah, continued rebuilding in spite of opposition. In searching Jewish archives, they located the original decree by Cyrus to rebuild. This clarified that there was no question that the work should continue.

### Suga (Nizaa) Language from the SIL Ethnologue

SUGA - [sgi] 10,000 (1985). Adamawa Province, Faro-and-Deo Division, Galim area south-west of Tignere; Mayo-Banyo Division, north Banyo Subdivision, Sambolabbo area.

Alternate names: Galim, "Jemjem", Nizaa, "Njemnjem", "Nyamnyam", Ssuga. Classification: Niger-Congo, Atlantic-Congo, Volta-Congo, Benue-Congo, Bantoid, Northern, Mambiloid, Suga-Vute, Suga.

literature center for the Nizaa to learn to read and write their language and to train others to teach it. Working with several Nizaa speakers she created health pamphlets and a book teaching those who already knew French how to read/write Nizaa. She began translating the Bible publishing the book of Mark and almost completing the other three Gospels. However, the work stopped around 2002. These missionaries built a very strong foundation for the Nizaa language as well as for the gospel to reach the Nizaa people.

As we look to begin working in Galim, we know that there will be challenges. However, like the Israelites, we have the support of many and a call from God to help the Nizaa build on the foundation already laid, and we hope to finish the work that was started.

It's not often that we get to quote from Ezra but the discoveries of my trip to Cameroon very much parallel the experience of the Jews after returning from exile and attempting to rebuild the house of the Lord. On our first night in Galim, the village where we are going to live, Joan Weber (long- time LBT missionary in



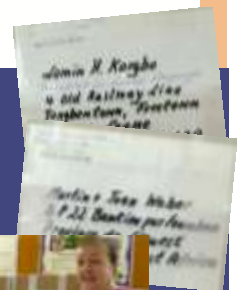
Kory with Martin Weber who, with wife Joan, will assist the Fays with settling into Galim.

I've held you all in suspense for long enough. What does this Scripture have to do with the Nizaa? In the 1980's, literacy work was begun by the Norwegian Missionary Society (NMS) among the Nizaa. The first missionary worked hard to learn the language establishing an orthography or the rules for the written Nizaa language. The next NMS missionary continued the work a few years later helping to open a Nizaa

Would you like to follow the Fay family as they continue their preparation? Link up to their prayer letters through the LBTC website: [www.lbtc.ca](http://www.lbtc.ca)

## First Shipment on Its Way to Sierra Leone and Cameroon - Thank You!

Medical missions organized by Ardith Pollex with the Ontario District LWMLC has sent a shipment to LBTC missionaries - the Webers in Cameroon and Lamin Karbo and his wife in Sierra Leone. This greatly assists with their work . Thanks so much, ladies!



## LBT / LBTC Translation Projects Underway In Cameroon

### ◆ Kwanja - Yimbéré

Completed New Testament and Old Testament readings. Primer series for literacy classes and regular teacher training and classes underway. Recording of New Testament completed. Mother Tongue translators in place.

### ◆ Vuté - Yoko

Completed New Testament and working on Old Testament readings. Using transitional primers from French to Vuté. Mother Tongue translators in place.

### ◆ Samba - Balkossa

Completed New Testament and working on Old Testament readings. Using transitional primers from French to Samba. Mother Tongue translators in place.

### ◆ Nizaa - Galim

Drafts of the Gospels. New missionary Kory Fay will learn language and review current orthography, then re-establish translation team.

### ◆ Doowaayo - Poli

EELC has identified this language as a high priority. The New Testament is complete. Aubert Kpengapse is being prepared to begin the Old Testament translation in 2011.



Legend of Trips During May 2010 Visit

— Ngaoundéré to Galim    — Ngaoundéré to Poli    — Poli to Balkossa



Valentin and David discuss Vuté work.

## Vuté Update with Valentin Yakoura

Since the Vute New Testament dedication in 2007, there has been an ongoing translation of Old Testament readings. Valentin is in charge of literacy, so that is what we discussed. Alfred Oumarou is in charge of Translation and Marcel Thaally is the bookkeeper for the project. Valentin said that he has been placing greater emphasis on the youth now, working with the schools where the youth can already read French.

Technically, the project is supervised by the EELC ... *continued page 8*

# Help to Do Electrical, Cement and Stucco Work?

By Martin & Joan Weber



Martin, Joan and Laurie.

Twenty seven years ago, LBTC supporter Mr Laurie Lonneberg responded to our plea for help to build a house to live and work in. In 1990, LWML Canada helped us with solar panels and batteries to power our computers and printers in our Kwanja Translation Center in Yimbéré.

Today, that house is still working great as our residence and one of our workplaces. But as these years have passed, our house needs some important repairs and upgrades. The solar system still works but needs some upgrades to make it safe and reliable. Other work is needed as well. The Kwanja Translation Center needs plaster repair and repainting. Does someone out there know how to mix up a *truly waterproof stucco*? I'm not sure I can find people in Cameroon who do know how to do this. A nice sharp stucco finish would hopefully discourage the goats which eat the plaster. Yes, they EAT THE PLASTER! - probably for the salt in it.

Then there is the Lutheran Elementary School in Yimbéré. A good solid three class-room building was built in 1974 and financed by an elementary school in Norway. While the building is still structurally sound, it needs some cement and painting repairs, and new shutters on all the windows. We feel this school is important to Yimbéré and to the Kwanja people. Several key Christian people today testify that without this school, they would have been Muslims (following their father's religion.) It was at Yimbéré Lutheran School that they first heard about Jesus and later devoted their lives to following him as Lord.

We are ready to welcome a couple of people who could come in early August, till about the end of August. You would live in camping-type facilities, not fancy but functional. We would eat together, laugh together, serve Jesus and the Kwanjas together, and hopefully have a lot of fun!

Interested? Can you help The Webers? Contact LBTC at 1-866-518-7071 today for details and then start packing!



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## Pictures Are Worth A Thousand Words

- 1 & 2 School needs to be replastered and painted.
- 3 & 4 Inside the house plumbing needs repairs.
- 5 & 6 Outside the house, plastering is needed, and solar panels require improvements.
- 7 The translation office needs to be replastered and painted.

*Galim, cont. from page 1*

about 5 years, the Norwegian Mission Society had a missionary in Galim working on translation, Dr. Bjorghild Kjelsvik. She established a Nizaa language committee, developed an orthography and translated the Gospel of Mark. The committee also produced some development material intended for a wider Nizaa audience.

Just before Galim, we stopped in Sabongari and met Mr. Yougoudá Bah, another member of the Nizaa language committee. He, as a Muslim, proves that more than just the Christian community was and remains interested in this project. He accompanied us to Galim with the keys to the mission house and literature office.

Arriving in Galim we stopped to see these two buildings located at the entrance to the village. The house **was occupied recently by a Nizaa pastor. It's large and seems solid.** It would need cleaning and some minor repairs to be usable. There is also an EELC health clinic on the property staffed by nurses but no doctor.

Next, we met the Lamido. I think this would be equivalent to the Paramount Chief in countries like Ghana. He is Nizaa and, like much of the population, Muslim. He warmly welcomed us, fed and housed us for the two days of our visit. He expressed great interest in the project and seems to have a genuine desire to preserve and develop his language.

This meeting with the Lamido continued the following day. We revisited the mission house and walked through part of the village. In our discussion with the Lamido, we asked him to help us find suitable housing



**In front:** Joan Weber, Rev Dieudonné Ousmane, Chief's secretary. **In back:** Rev Daniel Touka (squatting), Kory Fay, Chief of Sabongari, David Maffett and Yougoudá Bah, member of the Nizaa language committee.

in the Nizaa section of the village. While the mission house and property is great, the distance of its location from the Nizaa part of the village was almost 2 km away. That would be a hindrance to language **learning and could send a message that Kory's work** was only for Christians. Having the Muslim community very interested in this project was most desirable.

So rather than place the Fays in the mission house, we will continue to look for other accommodations in **the Nizaa quarter, especially for the Fays' first term.** After language study, the mission location could well be the best place to be.

Upon our return to Ngaoundéré, Dr and Mrs Salipou, invited the group for dinner. Dr Salipou is the director of the EELC hospital in Ngaoundéré and his wife is Nizaa.

With all this generous hospitality and interest in the language project, we all felt that the pieces were falling into place and were very comfortable with placing the Fays in Galim. Many Nizaa both in Galim and other towns expressed excitement at our visit and are eager **for the Fays' arrival.**

## Update from Aubert Kpengapse



The Kpengapse Family in Abidjan, Côte d'Ivoire while attending university.

**Abidjan, Côte d'Ivoire**      **31 May 2010**

*Aubert Kpengapse is a Cameroonian Lutheran pursuing a degree in Bible Translation with the help of an LBT scholarship. [David Maffett translated Aubert's original message from French to English.]*

**My name is Kpengapse Eugène Aubert and my wife's name is Nindori Germaine.** We have four children - a boy and three daughters whose names are Betrogo Souti Fabrice, Mizenneri Lafortune, Betkemdo Lacouronne, and Mgoori Ange. The three oldest go to school and are in grades 3, 1 and kindergarten respectively.

I am at the end of my third year of training at **FATEAC (Faculté de Théologie Evangélique de l'Alliance Chrétienne [Evangelical Theological Institute of the Christian and Missionary Alliance])**. I realize at this moment how much I have learned about translation and theology. When I first came, I had little experience in or knowledge of Bible translation. But from then to the present, courses in theology, exegesis, linguistics and others have given me a

good understanding of Bible translation. I am now able to see the theological and translation difficulties of a Biblical text.

Back when we were leaving Cameroon for Abidjan, Mrs. Fanta, the Director of the Department of Translation and Literacy (of the Evangelical Lutheran Church of Cameroon), hoped that I would be able to take courses in both theology and translation. This would enable me, at my return, not only to translate the Bible but to serve the Church as a theologian. I find that the current training program has made that possible. I am very happy with the quality of training that I receive at FATEAC. In addition,

**my wife is able to attend the Women's Academy** where she benefits from

courses in theology and practical courses like sewing, cooking, and everything that could help her teach **pastors' wives.**

I sincerely thank LBT for the blessing of enabling me to travel to Cameroon during the coming summer vacation. This will give me the opportunity to do some **survey work on the topic of my master's thesis, revisit our Doowaayo translation centre and pray together for the resumption of activity, for literacy classes and for the literacy teachers and coordinators in the various areas.** I hope also to visit other translation centres in the area, Dupa, Samba and Dugun, in order to share experiences, especially concerning ways to support the work of teachers.

We wish finally to express our sincere thanks to LBT for its devotion to our training at FATEAC. This training is equipping me to serve the Church as an exegete and theologian. We pray that God, by his grace, will **enable us to respond effectively to LBT's expectations.** **God bless you .... Aubert**



## Lutheran Bible Translators of Canada

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Your prayers and financial support of Bible translation and literacy to God's people through Lutheran Bible Translators of Canada is greatly appreciated as well as your comments or questions regarding this publication.

\_\_\_\_\_ I/we would like to support the work of Lutheran Bible Translators of Canada (3001)

\_\_\_\_\_ I/we would like to support Martin & Joan Weber's repair projects (3301)

\_\_\_\_\_ I/we would like to support Kory & Cara Fay (3958)

Spending of funds is confined to programs and projects approved by LBTC. Gifts for approved projects are used as designated. When the project is fully funded, surplus funds will be applied to other projects as needed. Gifts are receipted with an official receipt for income tax purposes.

### *Vuté Update continued from page 4*

Department of Translation and Literacy (DTL), and Valentin reports to it.

However, we spent some time discussing vision and goals for the future. What became clear was that they, like the other projects, could use some help in planning for the future.

We thought that it would be helpful if Rev Touka of the DTL and the Webers brought the three current LBT supported projects together and worked on this.

Rev Daniel Touka said that he and the EELC accountant plan to go to Yoko in June to offer their support and perform a yearly audit.

We ask for prayers for Valentin and his family who are personally in a difficult situation at the moment. Where they had been living, the rent

more than doubled, which he **couldn't pay. Now he lives about 3 km** from the language centre and as he has personal physical challenges, he has a hard time getting back and forth.



The Vute New Testament dedicated in 2007

## Memorials & Honour Gifts

*For  
Jan 30 to June 3  
2010*

### MEMORIAL

Bauer, Len & Ada  
Knipfel, Fred  
Klett, Karin  
Martin, Carol  
Merrifield, Frances  
Schaffer, Hilda  
Mabel  
Schmidt, Clayton &  
Clara  
Uhl, Joyce  
Vihinen, Anja

### HONOURS

Bechthold, Ruby  
(Christmas)  
Johnston, Doris  
(Birthday)  
Glaicar, Gordon  
(Birthday)  
Lonneberg, Laurie  
(85<sup>th</sup> Birthday)  
Graupe, Ragna  
(92<sup>nd</sup> Birthday)  
Weber, Vera  
(81<sup>st</sup> Birthday)  
Urbach, Evelyn  
(90<sup>th</sup> Birthday)  
McCombie, Rev. Alex  
(50 years Ordained)  
Weber, Peter  
(65<sup>th</sup> Birthday)  
Bigelow, Joan & Lem  
(50<sup>th</sup> Wed. Anniv.)  
Zoller, Elizabeth  
(Birthday)

*Free Memorial and In Honour Card sets are available from Lutheran Bible Translators of Canada. Please contact our office.*