

*THE WORD OF GOD - IN THEIR HANDS...
AND UPON THEIR HEARTS*

**Is learning to read God's Word out of reach for some?
Is it too late to learn to read?**

Dear partners in prayer for the Kwanjas,

Grandmothers (mostly in their 50's) are meeting together in a classroom after school hours to learn to read and write for the first time in their lives! Before beginning classes, they didn't know how to hold a pencil. With much concentration and effort they are learning to form the letters of the alphabet, pronounce them phonetically, listen to and recognize the tone differences in their words, and begin to read simple words in their own language.

It has been several years since we began offering courses for Kwanjas to learn to read and write in their language. But until now, these have been transition courses for those who already learned the basics of reading in French (the language of government and education in this part of Cameroon). Most who learn to read well in Kwanja have at least a 6th grade education in school. But where motivation is high, there are exceptions to this. In one village, although few had much schooling in French, several young men were determined to learn to read their own language, and they repeated the courses 3 times until they could successfully read and write!

Recently I have been investing a lot of my time and energy into this first class of "pre-literate adults". Only these aren't just "illiterate adults" in this class - they are my Kwanja friends! They seem old to be learning such new things, but they are my peers! Years ago, when I was busy teaching my own children, I had hopes of also teaching my Kwanja friends to read in their language. But as the years went by and the primer series was not completed, I began to lose sight of this. Finally, we have a couple of primer booklets ready to be tested, and these friends are the people most wanting to learn!

I have found myself excited, hopeful, frustrated, and wondering at times, "Is it worth it to try to teach these women to learn to read?" What is remarkable to me is their motivation. They decided to continue coming 4 afternoons a week, so they can make progress in learning to read, even during their busy field work time. *They pray at the beginning and end of each class, often asking God that their teachers (Abraham and I) won't give up on them, but will keep on teaching them!*



long way off for them, but join us in prayer that God will do the miracle He did for Elizabeth. She was past the age to have a baby, but God gave her a child, because "nothing is impossible with God". These women are "past the age" to learn school, but **pray that God will sharpen their thinking abilities to learn new skills. Pray that God will enable them to continue and to learn to read His Word!**

Our hopes aren't just for these six women to learn to read, but that this course will be my opportunity to im-

What am I learning from the experience?

Finally, this is my first opportunity to test and improve the primers that Kwanja co-workers, Nathalie of the Prom-Alpha short-term team, and I worked on in 2006. I am getting a "reality check" in seeing how much review, repetition and re-enforcement needs to be included with each lesson! I am learning how to train teachers for teaching this level as I work with Abraham, a school teacher who teaches this class after school (when he is not too busy with other things). This is his first time to teach pre-literate adults and he is learning as well.



prove the primer materials. We would like to then train other teachers to use them, and hope that some would be sent out to the Kwanja bush villages where most of the people are still illiterate. Our hopes are to get the materials into the schools, and have



What are these women learning?

First of all, we begin each class with some verses that I read from the Kwanja New Testament. I heard one of my friends sharing with another woman today the blessings that she gets from hearing God's Word.

Secondly, they are slowly developing visual skills to recognize and distinguish letters. We take so much for granted! When I see the effort that it takes them to learn what seems simple to me, I am thankful for the education I was given when I was young. They have hopes to learn to read God's Word. It's a

the young children learn to read first in their own language before reading in French, which they don't understand. But the time left for us to work among the Kwanjas is short. **PRAY that God will undertake His purposes for this work, that we will accomplish what is most important in our time here.**

Pray that more Kwanjas will learn to read and understand God's Word!

At the same time that we are encouraging Kwanjas to learn to read God's Word in their language, we realize that many will never learn to read. They don't know the value of reading God's Word, or they find it too difficult to learn. God is providing for them in another way. Dan and Kay Finley are planning to come in September to help us record the whole Kwanja New Testament. The Finleys are members of LBT who are working with a Scripture recording ministry called "Faith Comes by Hearing". Through LBT and Faith Comes by Hearing, these recordings will be duplicated and made available to listening groups in all of the Kwanja villages.

PRAY that God will prepare Kwanja readers for this big project of recording the Kwanja New Testament, and that God will watch over all the details of preparing for it.

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N

Nàná má nìni?



nàná

nàná
nà ná
nà
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na	ni	nì	nu

2.

na	ba
ni	bi
nì	bì
nu	bu




3.

nì	ni
nìni	

Ní	nà
Nínà	

na	bì
nabì	



		
4	3	1
nì	ni	ní
nà	na	ná
mà	ma	má

Bí má ku.
Sátù má ku.
Wàwà má ku.
Wàwà ba: bí má ku.

Taḡǹt̀:

Sátù ba: Nínà má ni?
Wàwà ba: Nínà má ku.
Nab̀t̀ má ni?
Sátù ba: Nab̀t̀ má ku.



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nàná
N

What does a Kwanja primer look like?

Each primer lesson introduces a new consonant or a vowel, or reviews the previously taught letters. This is from lesson 7, which teaches the consonant “n”, using a phrase with a key word to help learners remember the new letter. The key word for n, “nana” means “baby”. In box 1, the consonant “n” is pronounced in syllables with previously taught vowels. Then in box 2 these syllables are read and compared with the syllables taught in the previous lesson. In part 3, simple words are built from using syllables they have been learning. The double bells signals the tone lesson, which is included in each lesson. They read syllables or words and compare the tone (pitch) with the key word for each tone. (The pitch of the word changes the meaning in Kwanja.) A grammar lesson is in the curved box, teaching a word in various sentences. And a short story is taught, using only syllables and words already learned. Finally they write the new letters and key word. For the present class of grandmothers, each lesson is taking several sessions for them to learn and remember!

What are Martin and his translation team doing?

Martin with his translation team, Jerome and Emmanuel, are continuing translation of the Psalms and Old Testament readings for the Sunday morning readings in the churches. They will be attending a 3-week long workshop in Meiganga, another city, in March to expose them to some of the elements of Hebrew and some of the challenges of Old Testament translation. This will help them as they translate the Old Testament selections.

Our LBT Directors Drop in on us!

Two important visitors just recently were in Cameroon with us, Dr. James Maxey, our work program director of LBT US, and Rev. David Maffett, our LBT Canada director.

Martin was with them as they attended important meetings with Lutheran church officials in Ngaoundéré, with SIL (Wycliffe Bible Translators) directors in Yaoundé, and with UBS leaders in Yaoundé (United Bible Society).



Martin, EELC Bishop Nyiwe Thomas, Vice Pres. Foubani, Rev. Touka Daniel of DTA, Dr. James Maxey and Rev. David Maffett discussed LBT's continuing role in working with the Lutheran Church in Cameroon.

David also visited our village for the first time, meeting our co-workers and seeing our work first hand. He saw literacy courses and was present at a meeting of Kwanja church leaders. He encouraged them to continue working towards the goal of God's Word in the hands and upon the hearts of the Kwanja people.



PRAY for wisdom

We are in the "hot" season here, with humidity high, but not enough rain yet to cool us off. Please continue praying for us, that we may continue working in God's strength, to bring Him glory in all that we do here. **PRAY for wisdom for us, that we may use our time for what will be most important from God's perspective!**

THANK YOU so much for your prayers and your financial support. We thank God for you and for your ministry with us, enabling us to continue here among the Kwanjas.

May God continue to supply all of your needs, as you continue to trust Him through all the challenges and uncertainties of the future.

Love in Jesus,

Martin & Joan

Martin & Joan Weber



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