

GOD'S WORD WHERE NEEDED MOST

Record

SPRING 2015

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FOR THE
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AMERICAN
BIBLE
SOCIETY

Gift Catalog Inside

A New Season, Continued Blessings: Following God's Leading to Philadelphia



Dear Friends,

Lent has always been an important season of reflection for the church. As we spend more than 40 days preparing for the celebration of Jesus's resurrection, I am taking time to intentionally listen to God's direction for the coming year.

How is he preparing me? Where is he leading me?

This year, that time of reflection will bear a special significance, because we are entering a new and exciting season at American Bible Society. In January, we announced that we sold our building in New York City and will relocate our headquarters in the heart of historic Philadelphia at 401 Market Street and Fifth Street.

Our new home will be across the square from the Liberty Bell and Independence Hall, and I count it as an honor and a blessing to be able to stand in the midst of this great history, bearing witness to the legacy that God's Word has—and will continue to have—in our nation. We know that this move is no coincidence. God has led us—through prayer and discernment—to this place for such a time as this.

While American culture continues to turn from the Bible, there are glimmers of hope in the next generation. And it is our goal, our passion, our duty to stand in the midst of culture and declare that there is hope, healing and new life found in the Word of God. What better place to do that than from the city that started a revolution for freedom and independence?

And despite our change in address, the call and mission of American Bible Society has not changed. We continue our dedication to sharing God's Word with the world—helping

100 million people in the U.S. actively engage with the Bible and opening 100% of the languages needed to reach all people with God's Word.

In this magazine you will see a glimpse of the work that God is doing through his Word. From rural China to a rapidly changing Cuba, God is doing great things around the world. We are excited about what God has in store in the future, including the new ways that we can share the Bible in times of crisis—both in the U.S. and around the world—through our new Scripture 911 initiative. As you browse the Easter catalog, you might ask God if he is putting a particular burden on your heart.

Friends, thank you for your continued faithfulness in partnering with us to share God's Word with the world. We thank God for you each day. And this Easter we rejoice with you, because Christ is risen. And he is faithful in yet another new season. Hallelujah!

Serving Together,

Roy Peterson
President & CEO, American Bible Society

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Record

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The mission of American Bible Society is to make the Bible available to every person in a language and format each can understand and afford, so all people may experience its life-changing message. American Bible Society is a member of the United Bible Societies, a partnership of the Bible Societies throughout the world cooperating to make Scriptures available to people everywhere in their own language.

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Bible-based trauma healing launches in the Middle East



Harriet Hill gives a demonstration to students at the Bible-based trauma healing session in Amman, Jordan. Hill is the director of the Trauma Healing Institute and was an instructor for the training in Amman.

In a small room just outside of the city of Amman, Jordan, nearly 50 people gathered in December to attend the first Bible-based trauma healing session in the Middle East.

Trauma healing is especially urgent for the church in Jordan because of the large number of Syrian and Iraqi refugees who are flooding into the country after experiencing violence and war.

“The town we live in . . . is now a refuge for many people who are being evicted from their countries, like Iraqis and Syrians. So we find ourselves in a church, and the church is helping a lot of these families,” one participant explained.

The Bible-based trauma healing program has been tested throughout the world—from the Great Lakes region of Africa to rural West Virginia. It brings the hope of God's Word in conjunction with best practices in mental health to people experiencing trauma after experiencing war, violence, abuse or natural disaster.

“Requests for Bible-based trauma healing had come from leaders in the Middle East for a year,” said Harriet Hill, director of American Bible Society's Trauma Healing Institute. “Finally we were able to respond to the need that is so great in this region.”

The 4-day session was sponsored by the Bible Society of Jordan with support from American Bible Society. It trained Christian leaders to help people from a variety of backgrounds. One attendee works with street children in Lebanon; another couple came to the training with a dream to make a television series that incorporates Bible-based trauma healing teaching for children.

“I believe as Christians . . . it's very important to know that it was important to God to be able to touch the hurt people and the traumatized people and that Jesus, he took care of this,” a participant said.

You can share God's Word with those who need it most!
Visit ABSRecord.com/GiveABible

Cover photo credit: Andrew Hood.

Photo credit: Benjamin Leaman.

National Update

World Meeting of Families to Share Scripture in Philadelphia



The eighth World Meeting of Families is expected to draw millions of people to Philadelphia in September. American Bible Society will provide Scripture and lead workshops for the gathering, which advocates for the importance of faith in the family. Pope Francis will attend the event from September 25–27, and will say Mass at the base of the Philadelphia Museum of Art. The Mass is expected to draw between 1.5 and 2 million people.

God's Word will play a key role in the World Meeting of Families, which has the theme "Love is our mission: The family fully alive." American Bible Society will publish Scripture Portions in five languages for festival participants, offer a Bible engagement app for youth and lead a workshop about Lectio Divina and the family, which will focus on the prayerful reading of Scripture. In partnership with the Museum of the Bible, American Bible Society will sponsor a major Bible exhibit featuring one of the world's largest collections of rare biblical texts.

God's Word for Latino Communities

With a population of more than 50 million, Latinos are affecting many areas of American society, including expressions of the Christian faith. However, only 8 percent of Latinos read the Bible regularly, according to the recent study "Hispanic America: Faith, Values and Priorities," published by Barna: Hispanics, American Bible Society, the National Hispanic Christian Leadership Conference and OneHope. That's why American Bible Society is working with leaders in the Latino church to teach active Bible engagement. This year American Bible Society hosted its third annual seminar in Houston, Tex., to help Latino leaders understand issues such as financial and ministerial stewardship from a biblical perspective. The seminar was made possible through an invitation from the Church of God's South Central Hispanic Region. A similar seminar took place in New York City in November. By training leaders to become champions for the Bible, millions of people can experience transformation through engaging with God's Word.



Photo credits: ThinkStockPhotos.com and Benjamin Leaman.



Bringing God's Word to New York City

More than 1,500 ministry leaders were challenged to foster active Scripture engagement in their churches, cities and communities at Movement Day, an event American Bible Society hosted in partnership with the New York City Leadership Conference. At the event, President and CEO Roy Peterson and NYC Senior Ministry Mobilizer Enid Almanzar encouraged leaders to partner with American Bible Society to help 100 million people actively engage with God's Word in the next 10 years. At Movement Day, the team also launched the *Now is the Time: Luke* series, part of a suite of materials that helps churches and families read, reflect and respond to Scripture together.

To access the *Now is the Time: Luke* series, visit NowLuke.com.

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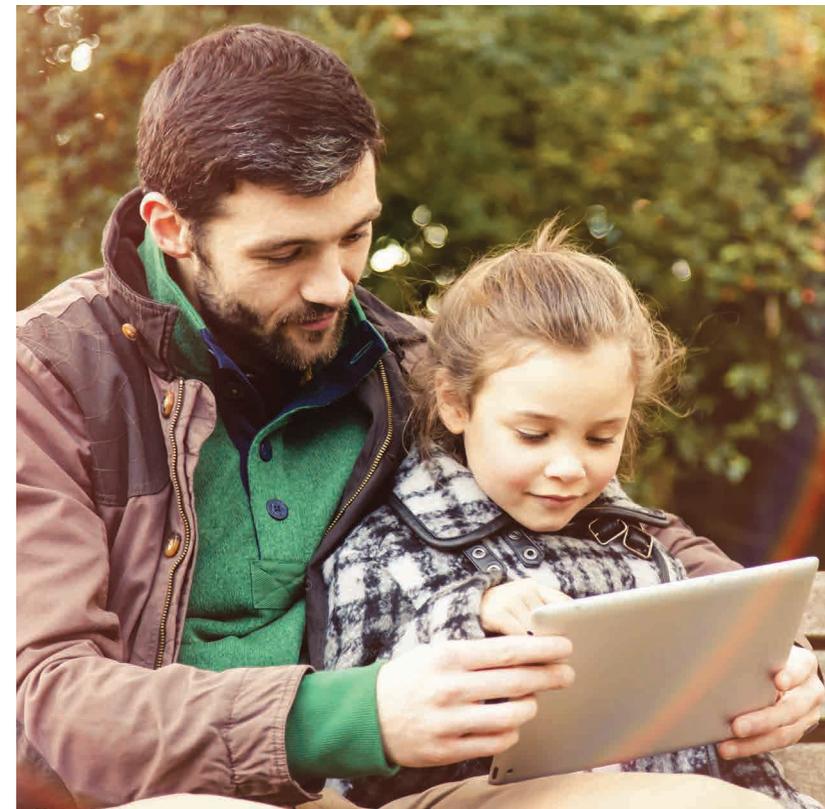


Photo credits: ThinkStockPhotos.com and photo contributed.

Thousands Download Scripture through YouVersion

In 2014, more people than ever were able to experience God's Word online for free. More than 350,000 downloads of the Good News Translation (GNT) and Contemporary English Version (CEV) of the Bible took place through the YouVersion Bible app. The full GNT was originally released by American Bible Society in 1976 and the CEV was released in 1995. (And these are only two of the nearly 1,000 translations available.) Once the Bible is downloaded to a phone or tablet, it can be accessed at any time—even when internet is not available. YouVersion is just one more way that this work, made possible by faithful financial partners, has continued to bear fruit over time.

Download the **YouVersion app** to access the Bible on your phone or tablet.

International Update



JORDAN

Syrian and Iraqi Refugees Experience the Love of Christ

Jordan, a nation of 7.9 million people, has become home to hundreds of thousands of refugees in the last three years due to conflicts in neighboring Iraq and Syria. Many of these refugees arrive without money, food, shelter or hope. That's why the Bible Society of Jordan, with support from American Bible Society, has reached out to these refugees with the message of love contained in God's Word, in addition to food, mattresses and small heaters.

"Some groups came to our city and killed 35 people. When people heard this, they started to run away from this

area. We left everything in our house. We left with [only] our clothes on us," says one refugee and mother of three, who received assistance from a program supported by the Bible Society.

The Bible Society of Jordan is continuing to provide assistance and access to Christ's message of love as refugees continue to pour into the country.

To learn more about how God is working through American Bible Society, visit News.AmericanBible.org.



INDIA: Local Bible Translators Equipped to Share God's Word

The Nida Institute, an outreach of American Bible Society that provides research, educational programs and resources for Bible translation, provided practical training in Bible translation for twelve Bible translators in northeastern India in a collaborative project with the Bible Society of India and the United Bible Societies. The attendees are translating the Bible into languages spoken in northeastern India, including Nyishi, Galo, Apatani, Nagamese, Bishnupriya Manipuri, Miji, Tiwa, Monsang, Nokte, Thangal and Maram. The training took place with support from the Every Tribe Every Nation alliance, which focuses on accelerating Bible translation so that all people can read and understand God's Word.

Photo credits: Benjamin Leaman and the United Bible Societies.



UGANDA: Refugee Children Share Message of Hope

Hundreds of children in the Nakivale refugee camp in Uganda heard a message of joy and hope this Christmas season. On December 28, the Bible Society of Uganda, which receives support from American Bible Society, worked with local churches to invite 500 children and 100 church leaders to a celebration that included Bible stories and messages from the Bible-based trauma healing curriculum for children. Many of the children at the refugee settlement are from the Democratic Republic of the Congo and have lived through war, displacement and violence. Yet they heard a message of hope from 13-year-old Serge Luanda, a young refugee who arrived at Nakivale in 2014. Luanda spoke about the Good News that Christ came to earth. The Bible Society also distributed 600 New Reader Portions of Scripture in Runyankole-Rukiga, the local language.

TOGO: New Mina Translation Launches with Great Celebration

The Mina Bible translation officially launched at a celebration on December 7 in Aneho, Togo. "It's a great joy and pleasure to know that we are launching the Bible in Mina, said Mina speaker and Bible Society employee Koffi Soké Kpomgbe. "It's only the second Bible translation to be published and completely translated in Togo, this small country in West Africa. We are so thankful for the donors, for those who made it possible for the Mina people to have a Bible available to them." Financial partners from American Bible Society contributed to this project, which will allow thousands of people to read God's Word in their heart language for the first time.

To read more updates about how God is working around the world, visit our Facebook page at [Facebook.com/AmericanBible](https://www.facebook.com/AmericanBible).

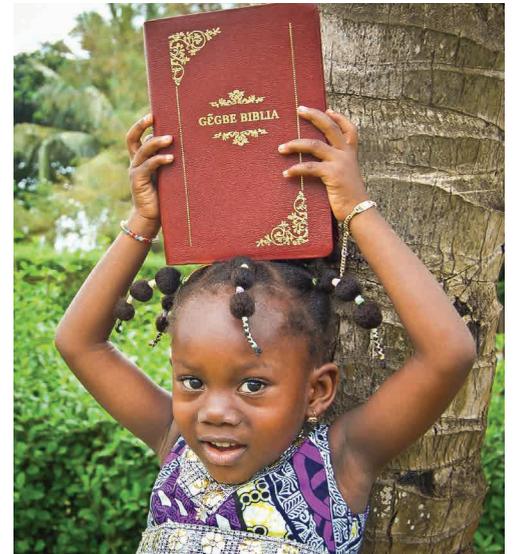


Photo credits: United Bible Societies, courtesy of the Bible Society of Guatemala and Macaire Gbokpi with the Bible Society of Togo.



GUATEMALA: Turning from Gangs to the Bible

According to the United Nations, Guatemala has one of the highest average rates of homicides per 100,000 inhabitants. Much of this violence is from gangs, organized crime and drug traffic. That's why American Bible Society's financial partners have supported the Bible Society of Guatemala's My Second Chance project, which brings the Word of God to adolescent gang members in detention. Since 2011, this project has worked with more than 1,000 adolescents. From 2015 to 2017, this project aims to reach more than 6,000 youth. Through Scripture, these adolescents are shown an alternative to a lifestyle of hate and violence.



Arnold Tackett is a former miner who now helps share God's Word at the Appalachian Dream Center in Logan County, West Virginia.

HOPE IN TIMES OF TROUBLE

God's Word restores life and hope in disaster zones in the U.S. and around the globe. » BY PETER EDMAN

Every day, Bishop Michael Hartwell gets up in the morning to serve the residents of Logan County, West Virginia, a community that depends on the coal mining industry. Life isn't easy in Logan County, especially these days, when jobs are scarce and budgets are tight. "[This is] one of the most depressed, oppressed, discouraged generations of Appalachians that I ever saw," says Hartwell.

That's why Hartwell helped to found the Appalachian Dream Center

in the tiny town of Holden. In addition to providing a safe meeting place for the community, the center, with the support of American Bible Society and Operation Compassion, provides free Bibles and hot meals to those who need it most.

Supporting dedicated church leaders like Hartwell with Bibles and Scripture-based tools is a key reason American Bible Society is launching a new ministry team designed to provide the hope of God's Word to those in the midst of crisis. Called "Scripture 911," the program builds on decades of sharing Scripture in post-disaster situa-

tions. It also builds upon the years of work American Bible Society has spent developing Bible-based trauma healing programs in war zones and refugee camps.

In Logan County, Pastor Hartwell knows that the need for the hope of God's Word alongside practical assistance is great. "When the coal mines are idle, everything around here becomes idle," Hartwell explains. With no other sources of income, many of the people he serves live without electricity or heat—and often without hope. Suicide is becoming more prevalent.

"The spiritual need right now

is to be delivered from oppression, depression, hurt, pain, generational hurts," he says. The Appalachian Dream Center, with its foundation in Scripture, is a beacon of hope in the midst of this hard reality.

Through Scripture 911, God's Word will be able to bring this same hope to more people in the U.S. and around the world.

"We have seen God restore lives and heal even the deepest wounds through His Word," says American Bible Society President and CEO Roy Peterson. "We've seen God do it again and again in situations from Hurricane Katrina, to the earthquake in Haiti, to the streets of New York after 9/11. As we look forward to our third century of ministry, we must expand this work—doing whatever we can to get the hope of Christ into the hands and hearts of people who are suffering around the world."

Scripture 911's focus is twofold: rapid response with Scripture resources when disaster strikes and ongoing Scripture support to help people throughout the recovery process, which can take months and even years.

"Pain and suffering are significant barriers to Scripture engagement," Peterson explains. "But when people encounter Jesus in the pages of Scripture, they find freedom and restoration. Through the Bible Society global network, we have the opportunity to share this message in the U.S. and around the world."

After a crisis, people often need the Body of Christ to help with food, shelter and medicine. When people are able to hear a message of hope in the Bible, while receiving aid for their material needs, the message's impact is enhanced.

However, the support does not stop there. What is often overlooked are the

trauma wounds of the heart. "There are spiritual and emotional wounds as well as physical pain," says Peterson. As time goes on, pain can continue to emerge through broken marriages, cycles of violence, depression or disinterest in daily life. At these times, Scripture can continue to speak into people's lives, providing comfort, guidance and strength.

That's why Bible-based trauma healing programs are effective in

following up in the months and years after an initial conflict or disaster. In the Great Lakes region of Africa, people have been wracked by decades of war and unrest. People carry years of perpetual, deeply buried pain. It's difficult to know how to cope—and how God fits into that pain.

But through trauma healing, they can begin to understand God's love and forgiveness through the words of Scripture. Even years after the trauma

Hundreds of thousands of refugees flooded into Jordan in the last three years. Many have witnessed violence and death. Bible-based trauma healing can help restore hope in the midst of great pain.



Photo credits: Benjamin Leaman.

has occurred, receiving God's Word can give new life.

Through the Scripture 911 ministry initiative, both Bible-based trauma healing and disaster response programs will be able to deploy more quickly and reach more people. As a result, more people can find hope and healing in the Bible.

Bible-based trauma healing originally launched four years ago in the Democratic Republic of the Congo

and the team recently held an initial session for church-based caregivers in the Middle East. In the U.S., three pilot sites are starting programs, and church leaders found that trauma healing opened new opportunities for ministry as participants learned from Scripture to release their pain to Jesus.

After testing at sites including Philadelphia and New York City, American Bible Society released an updated and revised edition of *Healing*

the Wounds of Trauma, the core program manual, for ministry use within the United States.

One of the communities that will benefit from this book is Logan County. Hartwell heard about the program through his partnership with American Bible Society, and invited the trauma healing team to host a pilot session in his community. The result was amazing.

"More ministry has taken place in the last two days than in all the years I've been here," said Hartwell, who has served in the community for 27 years. "People have opened up. I knew there was more going on in their lives, but I didn't know what it was."

Now, through the work of God's Word, the healing process can begin.

Peter Edman is an editor at *American Bible Society*.

You can help share God's Word today!
Visit ABSRecord.com/GiveABible.

In the Great Lakes region of Africa, where decades of war and violence have devastated millions of lives, Bible-based trauma healing is helping people find hope and healing.

Photo courtesy of Seed Company.



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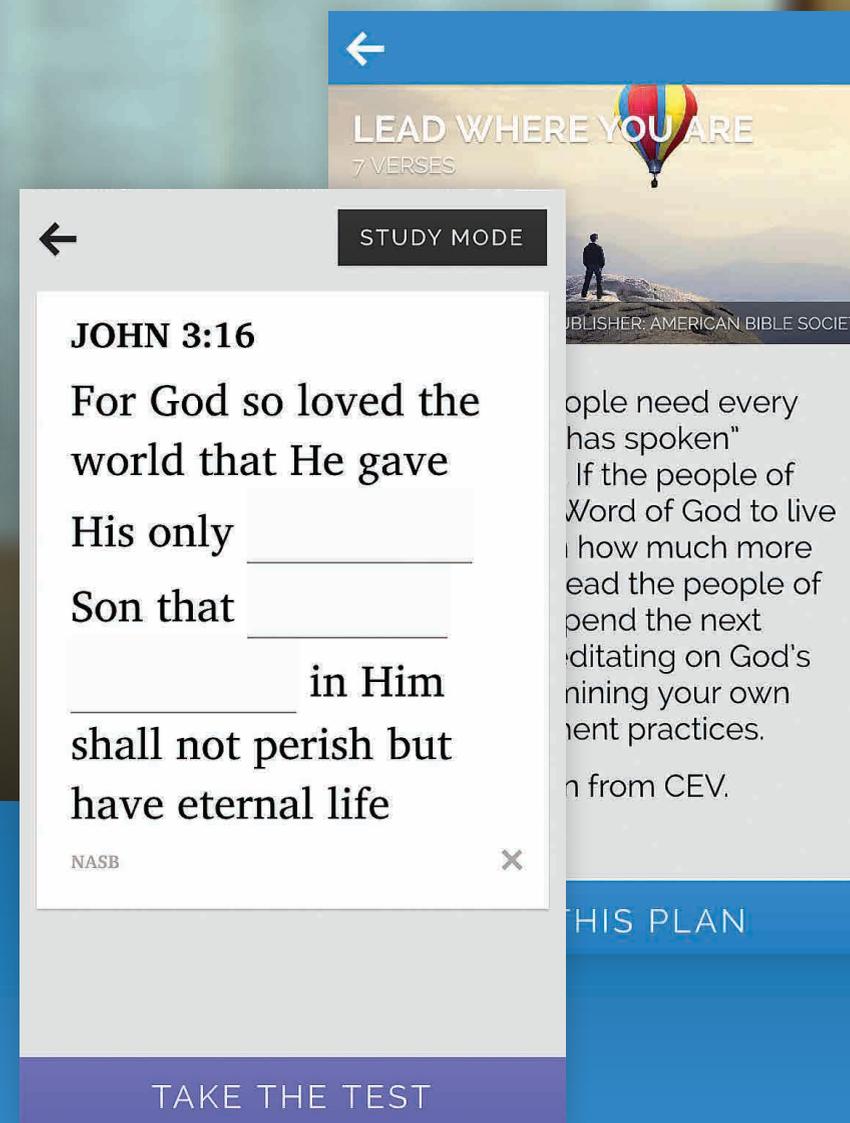
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PRAY AROUND THE WORLD

Bible Societies around the world are helping to spread God's message of hope and love with those who need it most. Here are prayer requests from a select group of Bible Societies that ask you to lift them up in prayer.



BIBLE SOCIETY IN CAMBODIA

Ask that the Holy Scriptures will be made available in different media so that they can reach the entire population, especially the youth. Please pray that their new projects would open Cambodian hearts to the love of God.



BIBLE SOCIETY OF COSTA RICA

Pray that the Word of God will reach immigrants who seek better opportunities in Costa Rica. Please pray that God will continue to give strength to the organization to spread the biblical message to every home in Costa Rica.



BIBLE SOCIETY OF HONDURAS

According to the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime, Honduras had the highest rate of intentional homicide worldwide over the last two years. San Pedro Sula, the country's second largest city, is now called "the murder capital of the world." Please pray for opportunities for the Bible Society of Honduras to change the country through the Word of God.



BIBLE SOCIETY OF KAZAKHSTAN

Please pray for political stability in the country and for the projects developed by the Bible Society of Kazakhstan that help local churches. Pray for new opportunities to share the Gospel with locals.



BIBLE SOCIETY OF NAMIBIA

Please pray for the Bible translation work in Namibia. Pray also that the construction at Bible House will go as planned.



BIBLE SOCIETIES OF WEST AFRICA

Pray for the Bible Societies of Guinea, Sierra Leone and Liberia as they continue to share God's Word in the midst of the Ebola outbreak. Although Bible sales in these countries have decreased since the Ebola epidemic, the requests for free Bibles have increased sharply. "People are seeking the comfort of God during this challenging time," states Robert Iffono from the Bible Society of Guinea. "We have more people requesting free Bibles." Pray that God's Word would provide comfort to the many people affected by the Ebola outbreak.

QUIET TIME

Yes, grass withers and flowers fade,
but the word of our God endures forever.

Isaiah 40.8 (GNT)

May 2015

God's Renewing Word

- 1 1 Corinthians 12.1-31
- 2 1 Corinthians 14.1-40
- 3 1 Corinthians 15.1-11
- 4 1 Corinthians 15.12-34
- 5 1 Corinthians 15.35-58
- 6 Romans 8.1-17

NATIONAL DAY OF PRAYER

- 7 Romans 8.18-39
- 8 Romans 12.1-21
- 9 2 Corinthians 1.1-11
- 10 2 Corinthians 2.12—3.18
- 11 2 Corinthians 4.1-15
- 12 2 Corinthians 4.16—5.10
- 13 2 Corinthians 5.11-21

ASCENSION DAY (WESTERN CHURCHES)

- 14 Acts 1.1-26
- 15 John 15.18—16.4a
- 16 John 16.4b-33

- 17 Ezekiel 1.1-28
- 18 Ezekiel 2.1-10
- 19 Ezekiel 3.1-27
- 20 Ezekiel 34.1-31
- 21 Ezekiel 36.1-38
- 22 Ezekiel 37.1-28
- 23 Joel 2.28—3.21

PENTECOST (WESTERN CHURCHES)

- 24 Acts 2.1-13
- 25 Acts 2.14-47
- 26 Galatians 1.1-24
- 27 Galatians 2.1-21
- 28 Galatians 3.1-29
- 29 Galatians 4.1-31
- 30 Galatians 5.1-26
- 31 Galatians 6.1-18

June 2015

God's Comforting Word

- 1 Hosea 1.1—2.1
- 2 Hosea 2.2-23
- 3 Hosea 11.1-11
- 4 Hosea 14.1-9
- 5 Joel 2.1-27
- 6 Amos 9.1-15

- 7 Zephaniah 3.1-20

- 8 Haggai 1.1-15
- 9 Haggai 2.1-23
- 10 Zechariah 1.1-21
- 11 Zechariah 2.1-13
- 12 Zechariah 3.1-10
- 13 Zechariah 4.1-10

- 14 Zechariah 8.1-23
- 15 Zechariah 9.1-17
- 16 Zechariah 10.1-12
- 17 Isaiah 51.1-23
- 18 Isaiah 52.1-12
- 19 Isaiah 54.1-17
- 20 Isaiah 55.1-13

- 21 Isaiah 56.1-12
- 22 Isaiah 57.1-21
- 23 Isaiah 58.1-14
- 24 Isaiah 59.1-21
- 25 Isaiah 60.1-22
- 26 Isaiah 61.1-11
- 27 Isaiah 62.1-12

- 28 Isaiah 65.17-25
- 29 Jeremiah 30.1-24
- 30 Lamentations 3.1-58

July 2015

God's Faithful Word

- 1 Genesis 6.1-22
- 2 Genesis 7.1-24
- 3 Genesis 8.1-22
- 4 Genesis 9.1-29

- 5 Genesis 10.1-32
- 6 Genesis 11.1-32
- 7 Genesis 12.1-20
- 8 Genesis 13.1-18
- 9 Genesis 14.1-24
- 10 Genesis 15.1-21
- 11 Genesis 16.1-16

- 12 Genesis 17.1-27
- 13 Genesis 18.1-33
- 14 Genesis 21.1-21
- 15 Genesis 22.1-19
- 16 Genesis 37.1-36
- 17 Genesis 39.1-23
- 18 Genesis 40.1-23

- 19 Genesis 41.1-57
- 20 Genesis 42.1-38
- 21 Genesis 43.1-34
- 22 Genesis 44.1-34
- 23 Genesis 45.1-28
- 24 Genesis 46.1-34
- 25 Genesis 47.1-31

- 26 Genesis 48.1-22
- 27 Genesis 49.29—50.26
- 28 Ruth 1.1-22
- 29 Ruth 2.1-23
- 30 Ruth 3.1-18
- 31 Ruth 4.1-22

August 2015

God's Encouraging Word

- 1 Exodus 1.1-22
- 2 Exodus 2.1-25
- 3 Exodus 3.1-22
- 4 Exodus 4.1-31
- 5 Exodus 5.1—6.1
- 6 Exodus 6.2-27
- 7 Exodus 6.28—7.13
- 8 Exodus 11.1-10

- 9 Exodus 12.1-28
- 10 Exodus 12.29-51
- 11 Exodus 13.1-22
- 12 Exodus 14.1-31
- 13 Exodus 15.1-27
- 14 Exodus 16.1-36
- 15 Exodus 19.1-25

- 16 Exodus 20.1-21
- 17 Exodus 33.1-23
- 18 Exodus 34.1-35
- 19 Leviticus 19.1-18
- 20 Numbers 9.1-23
- 21 Deuteronomy 31.1-29
- 22 Deuteronomy 34.1-12

- 23 Joshua 1.1-18
- 24 Joshua 2.1-24
- 25 Joshua 3.1-17
- 26 Joshua 4.1-24
- 27 Judges 4.1-24
- 28 Judges 5.1-31
- 29 Deuteronomy 7.1-26

- 30 Deuteronomy 8.1-20
- 31 Deuteronomy 11.1-32

Photo credit: ThinkStockPhotos.com.

Orthodox Christians will observe Ascension Day on May 21 and Pentecost on May 31.

CHINA

GOD'S WORD FOR THE RURAL CHURCH

As the number of Christians in China continues to grow, the demand for God's Word in rural areas also increases.

» BY JENNICA STEVENS

China is a land marked by economic progress. Clusters of skyscrapers reach to the heavens in sprawling cities throughout the country. Young people flock to urban areas where they get access to Starbucks, iPhones and McDonalds. Large cities, including Beijing and Shanghai, have become centers of culture, commerce and industry.

Yet despite this rapid urbanization, roughly 50% of China's population still lives in the rural areas. With a population of 1.4 billion people, that equates to 700 million people—more than twice the total population of the U.S.

And although city dwellers benefit from advances in technology, transportation and communication, rural residents face a different reality. In the countryside, farmers live in humble houses, often with dirt floors and mud walls. Villagers count on the strength of their backs and the sweat of their brows to eke out enough of a harvest to feed their families. They travel by foot or motorcycles on rutted dirt roads that prevent any cars or trucks from passing.

But there—in the midst of wheat fields and date trees, among winding roads and herds of goats—the church is growing.

And thanks to the support of generous financial partners, American Bible Society supports local Chinese churches with some of their greatest needs. Together they provide Bibles for growing congregations, give local church leaders Bible study tools that they can use to lead their congregations and equip pastors and teachers with sound, Scripture-based training at local Bible schools.

In the next pages, you will see a snapshot of the life of the Church in rural China. And you will see how that life is marked by hope, joy and faithfulness grounded in the message of God's Word.



Rooted in Scripture

Life isn't easy in rural China. Many churches are made up mostly of women, who work in the fields while their brothers, sons and husbands try to find work in the cities. Money is tight, which can make it hard for Christians to buy Bibles.

When people receive Bibles for free, they celebrate with music and special services. Bibles here last an average of three to five years due to the damage from the rainy seasons and unheated homes.



1 Wu Xiu Ying, 58, carries the Bibles she and her friends have just received during a distribution at their little rural church. Simei Tong helps Zhou Maoying, who is blind, to navigate the stream that they must cross to attend church each week. Simei Tong walks for three hours to get to Luo Shui Church, stopping an hour along her way to collect Zhou Maoying.

Farmer Wang Juxiang, 68, carries the new Bible she's just received in a basket on her back. She is a member of Luo Shui Church, attended by poor rural farmers, some of whom walk for hours to attend services each week. Bible Societies have provided Bibles for congregation members, most of whom are very poor.



2



3

Pastor Tong Xin Jun, 40, at the altar of Luo Shui Church, set deep in rural Hunan Province, among paddy fields. Thirty Christians meet regularly in the small farmhouse that serves as the church building, some of them walking for hours through the mountains each week to get here. Members can only reach the church by using stepping stones to cross a stream. Bibles are treasured by the congregants, who are mostly rural farmers.

Faithful Through the Ages

Much of the growth in Christianity is due to God working through local, faithful believers over decades. Now, their faith-

fulness is bearing fruit throughout China, and the demand for Bibles has increased as a result of their testimony.



4

Rev. Zhao Seng An, 77, of Hunan Province, comes from a long line of Christians. His grandfather became a pastor in the early 1900s, and his father graduated from Hunan Bible School in the 1920s. He owns a tiny New Testament and Bible encyclopaedias, which survived the civil war, the war with Japan and the Cultural Revolution.

Meng Xiu Ying, 71, became a Christian 20 years ago after encountering the kindness of Christians in another valley who prayed for her when she was ill. She was the only Christian in her valley in Hunan Province, but she began preaching and sharing her faith, inviting people to the small farmhouse where she and her husband Li Yong Fu, 72, lived. They say that sometimes as many as 200 people would cram into their home. There are now 1,000 Christians and several churches in the valley.



5

Photo credits: Dag Smermo and Andrea Rhodes.

Leading the Church of Tomorrow

There are currently an estimated 100 million Christians in China, but just 23 Bible schools and seminaries. The need for biblical training for pastors and church leaders is overwhelming. Local churches are training lay leaders to help fill this gap. Financial partners have enabled American Bible Society to support the church in China by supplying Bible

resources to both lay leaders and Bible school students.

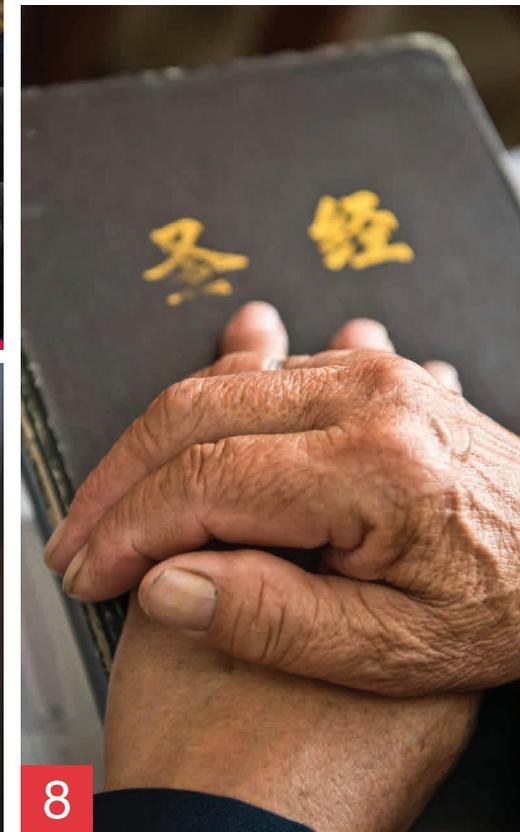
Jennica Stevens is content manager of American Bible Society and managing editor of Record magazine.

You can help share God's Word in China today! Visit ABSRecord.com/China.



A woman smiles as she holds the study Bibles she's received at a lay preachers' training event in Zhangjiajie, China. The training helps lay preachers and teachers from churches in the area to help deepen their biblical knowledge. With a shortage of pastors, churches rely heavily on these lay teachers. American Bible Society works with the local church to provide study Bibles, and other resources to support their work.

Zhang Yenping, 46, is studying to become a pastor at Hunan Bible School in Changsha. "When I became a Christian, I used to get up at dawn to read and see if what the pastor had preached was biblically sound," he said. There are more than 6,200 Christians for every ordained pastor in China. American Bible Society is working with the local church to help students at Bible schools and seminaries across the country by providing Bible study resources.



Hands on a Bible at a lay preachers' training event in Hunan Province, which is held for 10 days each year. When local leaders receive training and Bible resources, they are better able to provide sound, biblical teaching to the people in their congregations and communities.

Photo credits: Dag Smeemo and Andrea Rhodes.

Photo credit: ThinkStockPhotos.com.

IN MEMORIAM

"I depend on God alone; I put my hope in him. He alone protects and saves me; he is my defender, and I shall never be defeated." Psalm 62.5, 6 (GNT)

Our parents,
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Earl and Mildred Chew
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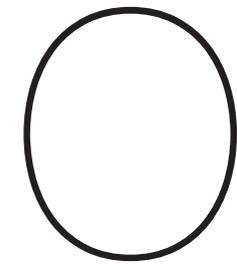
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For further details about the memorial process, please write to Donor Relations, American Bible Society, 1865 Broadway, New York, NY 10023.

A NEW DAY FOR THE GOSPEL IN CUBA

The rapid growth of the church in Cuba has created an urgent need for Bibles. » BY PETER EDMAN



On the surface, life in Cuba has not changed much in the last 50 years. People work. School-children play in the streets. The trade winds blow.

But much is changing behind the scenes, not least with the Church. Both Catholic and Protestant churches in Cuba are known for their emphasis on evangelism, and for more than ten years, God has been blessing Cuba's churches with unprecedented growth. The Catholic Church now has more than a million active members, and the number of Protestant Christians has increased threefold over the past decade to at least 900,000. Total, that's around 20% of the 11 million people in Cuba—and rising.

With all this growth in a country with near-100% literacy, the demand for Bibles is high, even among non-Christians. But there are few available. Even digital Bibles have been out of reach of the population due to Cuba's notoriously poor, expensive and highly regulated Internet connections. Most people cannot afford a Bible even if they can find one.

Often new believers—and even pastors—have no Bibles for discipleship. Our partners estimate that 40% of Christians have no Bible, and another 35% have Bibles that are simply worn out. Church leaders are also eager for their congregations to take advantage of recent Bible scholarship and encounter the Bible in more accessible translations.

In December the United States announced that it would begin to normalize relations with Cuba for the first time in more than 50 years. The consequences of this decision are still

to play out, but it has the potential to open Cuba to fresh influences, including a significant opportunity for the growing church in Cuba.

Not only is the church here ready to seize this opportunity, it is ahead of the news. In response to urgent requests of Cuba's Christians, American Bible Society has already launched Cuba:

“The impact with these materials has been big, especially when the need of them is so big.”

—Rev. Alain Montano Hernandez, general secretary of the Biblical Commission of Cuba, a key Bible Society partner.

Million Bible Mission. The program began last year with a goal to bring one million Bibles to this island nation over three years.

In 2014, the Cuban government permitted ministry partners to import 60,000 Bibles printed in Korea. These Bibles have already reached churches, students, pastors and prisoners across the island. “The impact with these materials has been big, especially when the need of them is so big,” says Rev. Alain Montano Hernandez, general secretary of the Biblical Commission of Cuba, which has for many years been a key Bible Society partner.

In preparing for the Million Bible Mission, the Biblical Commission coordinated with churches in Cuba to create distribution centers across the island. Because of their hard work, today it is possible to print and deliver a Bible anywhere in Cuba—whether to a teacher in Havana, a new believer in prison, or a pastor in a remote village—

at a cost of only \$5.40.

The Rev. Orlando Fernandez has distributed a sizeable portion of this first Bible shipment. He leads biblical training programs for pastors in the Catholic Archdiocese of Havana. “The arrival of the Bible in Actual Language Translation (TLA) with the Lectio Divina method has helped us,” he said.

“We are training all the Catholic people to read the Bible with this spirit of prayer. We've been sensitizing the clergy from many dioceses . . . and it's well-fitting for our evangelism [mandate]. These texts have been of positive impact to the Catholic Church due to the simple language and easy comprehension.”

Father Orlando explains that he and his pastors are deeply grateful to the Biblical Commission for making these new Scripture resources available and collaborating to serve the church. “We pray that God bless abundantly all those who support the evangelization of our people with this valuable media.”

Peter Edman is an editor at American Bible Society.

You can help share God's Word in Cuba today! Visit ABSRecord.com/Cuba.

GO TELL IT ON THE MOUNTAIN

From the Ozarks to Cambodia, one dedicated financial partner shares his love of God's Word with everyone he meets. » BY JENNICA STEVENS

Jack Turner became a Christian early in life. But he never read an entire book of the Bible until he was 35 years old. Then, once he started reading, he couldn't stop.

When someone gave him a New Testament as a gift, he tucked the Bible—a paperback Bible from American Bible Society—into his shirt pocket to replace his pack of cigarettes. He read it so much that he completely wore it out—he had to have a friend who repairs shoes put a new cover on his Bible, which is still on his desk today.

dance. During that period of time, we encourage them to read through the Bible," Turner explains. "We encourage the Gospel of John and Proverbs. They have a greater fervor and desire studying the Scriptures in jail than I've ever experienced in any church."

His passion also led Turner and his wife, Sammie, to support the work of American Bible Society—to bring God's Word to those who need it most in the United States and around the world.



Jack Turner has a lifelong passion for the Bible. "I try to read through the Bible every year 100 percent," he says.

“The greatest vehicle that we have available to us worldwide is the Bible Societies, and American Bible Society is how I got introduced to this massive worldwide ministry of making the Bible available. I am so grateful to American Bible Society.” —Jack Turner

“I made a commitment to the Lord, and I got immensely interested in studying the Scriptures,” Turner says with a smile.

“I had an intense desire to tell people that your faith is worthless unless it's based in the knowledge of the Scriptures.”

Soon, sharing that message became a lifelong pursuit. He has been visiting inmates in local jails for more than 45 years to bring Bibles and messages of encouragement and hope.

“In local jails the people might average two to four months in atten-

In 2013, Turner visited projects supported by American Bible Society in Cambodia and Vietnam. “We even went into offices where people were in the process of translating into the Hanoi languages. I am so inspired to know that people are being reached even in these remote countries,” Turner said.

In addition to his regular prayers and financial gifts throughout the years, Turner and his wife support American Bible Society's work through charitable gift annuities. These allow them to benefit from a dependable income

during their lifetime and support Bible ministry in the future.

At the end of the day, supporting American Bible Society is one more way that Turner can share his love of God's Word with as many people as possible.

“The greatest vehicle that we have available to us worldwide is the Bible Societies, and American Bible Society is how I got introduced to this massive worldwide ministry of making the Bible available. I am so grateful to American Bible Society.”

Jennica Stevens is content manager of American Bible Society and managing editor of Record magazine.

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