

“Do not be anxious about anything, but in every situation, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, present your requests to God.” — Philippians 4:6 (NIV)

Dear Prayer Partner,

The global Covid-19 crisis requires a global response in prayer. We trust the Lord hears and responds to our united prayers within the Covid-19 environment. Whatever the challenges ahead prayer remains an integral part of the life of the Fellowship.

Prayer will always be essential to our mission of helping make the Bible accessible to everyone and encouraging interaction with it. This booklet remains part of a series of initiatives to support Bible mission through prayer. In this edition you will find prayer points and related Scriptures for projects that UBS supports across the world, many of which are supported by BSNZ during September – December.

Sign up to a prayer e-newsletter by emailing:
info@biblesociety.org.nz

Visit our website: www.biblesociety.org.nz/pray-with-us

Follow us on our Social Media platforms as we develop prayer content.

We also send out prayer points to both our *Bible a Month Regular Giving* donors and to our Appeal donors. What’s more, the staff of Bible Society and Manna Christian Stores come together each week in our chapel session to pray for the projects that we are currently supporting. Together, our prayers are working to bring the Word of God to people in many countries across the world.

Ngā manaakitanga,

Prayer Team

Note: You may notice the acronym ‘BAMRG’ appearing in brackets after certain countries. It stands for Bible a Month Regular Giving. These countries receive financial support for Bible mission projects, funded by our Bible a Month Regular Givers.

Bible Society New Zealand

Bible Society was established in New Zealand in 1846 and is a member of the United Bible Societies (UBS).

We are dedicated to helping make the Bible accessible to everyone and encouraging interaction with it.

We aim to serve the whole Christian community by working closely with Christian churches of all denominations.

We do not receive government funding and rely on the prayers and financial support of churches and individuals like you.

We thank you for your prayerful support.



Above: Young girl holds up a Bible at a book fair in Egypt. © Bible Society of Egypt

If you'd like to support Bible Society work financially, you can scan the QR code on the right, call us on 0800 424 253 or go to our website at www.biblesociety.org.nz



Contents

175th Anniversary	5
Belarus	6
Israel	7
Thailand	8
Brazil	9
Vietnam	10
Sierra Leone	11
Papua New Guinea	12
Sri Lanka	13
Ukraine	14
Pakistan	15
Cuba	16
Myanmar	17
India	18
Nepal	19
South Pacific	20
Philippines	21
Kenya	22
United Bible Societies	23

175th ANNIVERSARY POSTPONEMENT



Due to the recent announcement of a continued lockdown due to the spread of the Delta Variant of Covid-19, as well as the uncertainty around how long this may extend, we have decided to **postpone the upcoming 175 celebratory events in Palmerston North, Wellington and the three Auckland events.** At this time, we do not have new dates set in stone, so we will update you on this as soon as we can.

Our hope is that we can still schedule these events later in 2021. Our apologies for any inconvenience this may cause.

We look forward to seeing you join us for these future celebratory events, when it will be safe to meet together once again. We will inform you of the upcoming dates and event information as soon as we can.

Prayer Points:

- Praise the Lord that we have celebrated Bible ministry across New Zealand with 700 supporters who came to the 14 events we've had so far.
- Please pray that those who have and will be attending these events will be inspired by the story of how the Bible came to Aotearoa and get excited about the future of Bible mission.
- Pray for the rescheduling of the remaining events.
- Pray for guidance and wisdom for the 175th team as they plan around rescheduling the remaining events and that those invited will feel safe enough to freely attend.
- Pray that God's hand of protection and peace will be with us all during this ever-changing time.

Scripture:

"For from him and through him and for him are all things. To him be the glory forever!" Amen.

Romans 11:36 (NIV)

BELARUS (BAMRG)

Capital: Minsk

Population: 9 million

Languages: Belarusian, Russian

Religions: Eastern Orthodoxy (73.3%), Catholicism (9.7%), no religion (14.8%)



A study conducted by UNICEF in Belarus found that about 31% of parents physically and psychologically abuse their children. There are approximately 24,500 children in Belarus who are socially at risk, 40% of these children are pre-school age. About 10,000 children with autism live in Belarus and are not receiving proper care because their parents are ashamed to ask for help.

The Bible Society in the Republic of Belarus is running a project to help save vulnerable children, show them the love of God, guide them through the Word of God, and help them develop a spiritual bond to guide them through life.

Prayer Points:

- Give thanks for the 7,000 Bibles and biblical literature already distributed to children through churches and institutions.
- Please pray for more local ministers to be involved in visiting children's institutions to distribute Bibles and storybooks.
- Pray that parents who abandon their children will have a change of heart and reconnect with their children.

Scripture:

"Jesus said, 'Let the little children come to me, and do not hinder them, for the kingdom of heaven belongs to such as these.'" Matthew 19:14 (NIV)

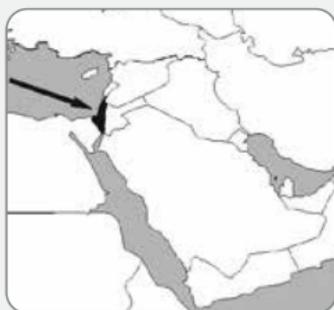
ISRAEL

Capital: Jerusalem

Population: 8.7 million

Languages: Hebrew, Arabic, English

Religions: Judaism 74.1%, Islam 17.9%, Christianity 1.9%, Druze 1.6%, other 4.5%



Our focus this week is on the Arab Israeli Bible Society, which operates in the northern part of Israel out of Nazareth. The Arab Israeli Bible Society is working to reach out to Arab-Israeli Christians and to Arab women, who are often downtrodden in the home, and their families, through workshops, conferences, and Scripture distribution.

Their materials cover topics such as communication, anxiety, loneliness, and loss, etc. "The sessions were very helpful and practical for daily life," one conference attendee said who had lost her husband six months earlier. It also distributes a women's magazine jam-packed full of useful articles to around 1,000 women, and it links some women with counseling services. Bible Society is also working in schools with teachers, students, and parents providing biblical resources on the issues of bullying and violence.

Prayer Points:

- Pray that God will touch the hearts of marginalised women who are exposed to the Word of God through the work of the Arab Israeli Bible Society.
- Pray that through its work of promoting and advocating for the Bible, the Arab Israeli Bible Society will become a true peacemaker in its region.
- Pray that the body of Christ will be strong and unwavering amid persecution and hardship in Israel.

Scripture:

"Finally, all of you, be like-minded, be sympathetic, love one another, be compassionate and humble."

1 Peter 3:8 (NIV)

THAILAND

Capital: Bangkok

Population: 70 million

Languages: Thai, other languages

Religions: Buddhism 95%, Islam 4.6%, Catholicism 0.7%, other 1%



The Urak Lawoi are a minority fishing community on Thailand's Andaman Sea coast. Significant church growth since the 2004 tsunami has led to the need for the Old Testament to supplement the existing New Testament used by churches. Language change and growing Thai literacy means that diglots are often the most effective way to provide this need.

Scriptures for Spiritual Needs for Urak Lawoi is a translation project of the Thailand Bible Society. It aims to complete the translation of the entire Urak Lawoi Bible and to publish it digitally where it will stand alongside the Thai Standard Version.

Prayer Points:

- Give thanks that the draft version of the translation is now complete and ready for review. Pray for wisdom for the translation consultant tasked to review the draft.
- Pray for translator Ethim Pramongkit who is paraplegic. Pray for health, strength and protection from Covid-19.
- Pray that communication between NZ and Thailand continues at a time when no travel is possible.

Scripture:

"Your word is a lamp for my feet, a light on my path."
Psalm 119:105 (NIV)

BRAZIL (BAMRG)**Capital:** Brasilia**Population:** 211 million**Languages:** Portuguese**Religions:** Roman Catholic

64.6%, other Catholic 0.4%,

Protestant 22.2%, other 12.8%



In Brazil, there are more than 6.5 million people with visual impairment. Since 1999, the Bible Society of Brazil (SBB), has been assisting people who are visually impaired to read and write in Braille using Bible-based materials giving them access to the Word of God. This will also help them to become more independent and gives them the ability to access information without having to rely on others.

Amidst the challenges brought about by the current Covid-19 pandemic, the Bible Society in Brazil continues to deliver these teaching sessions online. The project is on track to be completed end of this year and will impact around 5,000 visually impaired people.

Prayer Points:

- Give thanks for the 205 people who have already received help this year.
- Please pray that other public and private organisations will advocate for the use of the Braille Bible in teaching literacy.
- Pray for more visually impaired people to commit to the teaching sessions.
- Pray for additional funding so that the project can be completed.

Scripture:

"Blessed are those who have regard for the weak; the Lord delivers them in times of trouble."

Psalms 41:1 (NIV)

VIETNAM

Capital: Hanoi

Population: 102.8 million

Languages: Vietnamese, English, French, Chinese, Khmer, ethnic languages.

Religions: Buddhism, Christianity, Hoa Hao, Cao Dai, Islam



Christianity was first brought to Vietnam by Spanish and Portuguese missionaries in the 16th century, but with limited success. However, after the arrival of the Jesuits in the 17th century, Christianity began to make small inroads. Today, it can mainly be found among the ethnic minorities many of whom live in the Highlands of central and northern Vietnam.

Vietnam is a communist country, and Christians face persecution for their faith including social exclusion, discrimination, and attacks. Despite that the Vietnam partnership is working to bring the Bible to Vietnamese Christians in their heart language. For example, the Cham are an ethnic group of 115,000 people who live along Vietnam's southern coast, around 0.5 percent of whom are Christian. They have received the New Testament and work is now underway on translating the Old Testament.

Prayer Points:

- In 2005, the government introduced new regulations requiring religious groups to register.
- Pray for Bible translation projects, for the skills of the translators and for funding for the projects.
- Give thanks that despite persecution the number of Christians throughout the country is growing and pray that they will provide an effective witness to their neighbours.

Scripture:

"Therefore, among God's churches we boast about your perseverance and faith in all the persecutions and trials you are enduring." 2 Thessalonians 1:4 (NIV)

SIERRA LEONE

Capital: Freetown

Population: 6.6 million

Languages: English, Krio, Mende, Temne

Religions: Islam 78.6%, Christianity 20.8%, other 0.3%, unspecified 0.2%



The Sherbro people are a native people of Sierra Leone. They make up 3% of Sierra Leone's population or 178,000 people. They are primarily fishermen and traders.

Sherbro is the community language and is used in teaching at community clubs and organisations. The New Testament translation into the Sherbro language will help them read the Scriptures in their heart language as well as preserve their language.

Prayer Points:

- Give praise that the Bible Society in Sierra Leone has a Global Translation Adviser and Project Coordinator who are helping them progress this project.
- Please pray for more churches to help the Bible Society in Sierra Leone complete this translation.
- Please pray that other Bible Societies will help fund this project.

Scripture:

"Blessed is the one who reads aloud the words of this prophecy and blessed are those who hear it and take to heart what is written in it, because the time is near."
Revelation 1:3 (NIV)

PAPUA NEW GUINEA

Capital: Port Moresby

Population: 8.6 million

Languages: Tok Pisin, English, HiriMotu, 839 indigenous languages

Religions: Protestant 64.3%, Roman Catholic 26%, other Christian 5.3%, other 4.5%



Papua New Guinea (PNG) is a country in the southwestern Pacific, with a population of about 8.6 million people. There are over 880 languages spoken in PNG, making it the most linguistically diverse country in the world.

The Bible Society of PNG is currently in the process of reinstating their core services to ensure Scriptures are available to all. They aim to reach everyone in the country with the Word of God in a language and format that suits them best, at a price they can afford.

This is especially challenging in PNG with the number of languages spoken and limited access to remote communities across the country.

Prayer Points:

- Give thanks for the commitment of Bible Society to bring the Word of God to everyone in PNG.
- Please pray for God to open doors and hearts to help fund the rebuilding of the Bible Society.
- Please pray that many lives in PNG will be reached and transformed by the Word of God.

Scripture:

"By day you led them with a pillar of cloud, and by night with a pillar of fire to give them light on the way they were to take." Nehemiah 9:12 (NIV)

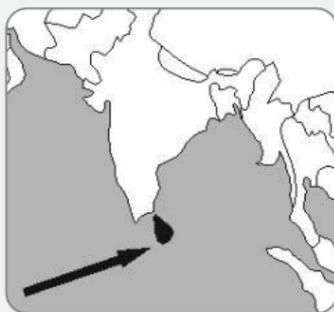
SRI LANKA

Capital: Colombo

Population: 22.9 million

Languages: Sinhala, Tamil, English

Religions: Buddhism 70.2%, Hinduism 12.6%, Islam 9.7%, Christianity 7.5%



The Healing the Wounds of Trauma programme of the Ceylon Bible Society (CBS) aims to help children and adults experiencing trauma due to physical, sexual or psychological abuse, domestic violence and those heavily affected by the COVID-19 global pandemic. The main objective of this program is to help and assist the Church to be a place of healing and restoration for the affected individuals and communities concerned.

In co-operation with the Trauma Healing Institute, the CBS will provide a Bible-based model for trauma healing. They will also help train church leaders, Christian organisations and those involved in counselling to become well equipped as trauma healing facilitators.

Prayer Points:

- Give thanks for the organisations and churches in Sri Lanka which are helping to implement this project.
- Please pray for God's guidance and protection for all those who are facilitating the programme at churches and online.
- Pray for healing and comfort for all the children and adults attending these healing sessions.

Scripture:

"Cast your cares on the Lord and he will sustain you; he will never let the righteous be shaken."

Psalm 55:22 (NIV)

UKRAINE (BAMRG)

Capital: Kiev

Population: 45 million

Languages: Ukrainian

Religions: Ukrainian Orthodox 46%, Catholic 8%, Protestant 2%, Islam 1%, None 43%



A country with a proud Christian heritage with the Apostle Andrew said to have first brought Christianity into the area. In the 10th century most of the population was converted to Christianity following the conversion of Prince Volodymyr of Kievan Rus, a medieval East Slavic state. During the 17th century the Church in Ukraine became subordinate to Moscow. Under communism Ukraine was known as the Bible belt of the Soviet Union. The Ukrainian Bible Society was established in 1991.

The suffering caused by the ongoing military conflict in Eastern Ukraine has caused people to cry out for the Word of God. Partnering with churches, Bible Society is providing special-edition Bibles and New Testaments to members of the Ukrainian military and army chaplains.

Prayer Points:

- Please pray for openness of soldiers' hearts to the Gospel message.
- Pray for continued cooperation and openness of the army officers in distribution and follow-up work.
- Pray for active cooperation with partner organisations.
- Pray for peace in Ukraine and God's guidance of the governments of all countries involved in the conflict.

Scripture:

"This is the Lord, we trusted in him; let us rejoice and be glad in his salvation." Isaiah 25:9 (NIV)

PAKISTAN

Capital: Islamabad

Population: 233.5 million

Languages: Punjabi, Urdu, English, other languages

Religions: Islam 96.4%, other (includes Christianity) 3.6%



Literacy rate in Pakistan is very low, especially among Christian women based in villages and slums. These Christian ladies have no opportunities to attend the Church on a regular basis because they spend most of their time earning money for their families. The project *Beacon in the Darkness of Illiteracy* will help empower women to be able to make informed decisions and to understand the value of education and pass this on to their children.

Teaching them to read and write using the Bible will also help women read the Bible for themselves. They will come to know the teachings of Christ and apply these in their daily Christian walk. This project aims to reach 4,500 Christian ladies in Pakistan.

Prayer Points:

- Give thanks for the 13 churches and parachurch organisations partnering with the Bible Society in Pakistan to implement this project.
- Give thanks for the 290 classes planned for 2021 and the 288 teachers involved.
- Pray that these students will continue to commit to these classes and complete the course. Pray that their employers and families will support them in their study.

Scripture:

"The fear of the LORD is the beginning of knowledge, but fools despise wisdom and instruction."

Proverbs 1:7 (NIV)

CUBA

Capital: Havana

Population: 11.1 million

Languages: Spanish

Religions: Christianity 59.2%,
folk 17.4%, other/none 23.4%



The Cuban Bible Commission (Bible Society in Cuba) is currently working to establish a local printing plant in Cuba so that it can meet the spiritual needs the country is currently experiencing. The Cuban church is growing and those who are preaching the Gospel in the churches, hospitals, prisons, communities, and wherever they work, study or live, need to be empowered not only by the Holy Spirit but also by the Holy Scripture.

With the local printing plant, the Cuban Bible Commission aims to supply Scriptural resources to around one million evangelical Christians from more than 60 different denominations, and to offer their services to the Catholic Church, and to the Cuban population in general.

Prayer Points:

- Give thanks for the growth of the Cuban Church and the increasing desire within the country for the Gospel message.
- Please pray for the successful construction of the Cuban printing plant in Cuba.
- Please pray that every printed material produces a transformational impact on the lives of those who receive them.

Scripture:

"He who was seated on the throne said, 'I am making everything new!' Then he said, 'Write this down, for these words are trustworthy and true.'"

Revelation 21:5 (NIV)

MYANMAR

Capital: Nay Pyi Taw

Population: 56.6 million

Languages: Burmese

Religions: Buddhism 87.9%,
Christianity 6.2%, Islam 4.3%,
Other/none 1.6%



It is estimated that there are at least 200 spoken languages in Myanmar. A big part of the Bible Society of Myanmar's mission is to help make the Word of God available in these languages. A Bible translation project they are currently facilitating, together with the Zomi Christian Literature Society, is for the Tedim Chin ethnic group in the Northern Chin State.

The Holy Bible in Tedim was first launched in 1977, but recently church leaders have requested a new Bible which is more literal, for the special purpose of exegetical preaching and Bible study. The Tedim Chin New Testament project started in January 2018 and expects to be completed by 2022.

Prayer Points:

- Please give thanks for this updated New Testament translation, which will provide the Tedim Chin people with spiritual guidance through God's Word.
- Please pray for this translation project, that it receives the funding and support it requires to be finished by its scheduled completion date in 2022.
- Please pray for the translators in the translation teams as they seek to express the meaning of the biblical text and key terms in the clearest way possible.

Scripture:

"The grass withers and the flowers fall, but the word of our God endures forever." Isaiah 40:8 (NIV)

INDIA (BAMRG)

Capital: New Delhi

Population: 1.4 billion

Languages: Hindi, Bengali, Marathi, Telugu, Tamil, Gujarati, Urdu, many other languages

Religions: Hinduism 79.8%, Islam 14.2%, Christianity 2.3%, Sikhism 1.7%, other and unspecified 2%



India's 1.3 billion plus people speak an estimated 3,372 languages/dialects, of which only 216 are spoken by 10,000 speakers or more. So far, the Bible Society in India (BSI) has provided full Bibles in 139 translations covering 80 languages spoken in India, and the New Testament in additional 88 versions covering 90 languages thus far.

There is a growing need for the Scriptures in several languages to meet the needs of the people for the worship, and the mission needs of the Church.

Although some of these languages are considered to be minor or tribal languages, Christian growth among some of these language groups is phenomenal.

Prayer Points:

- Give thanks for assistance received from other Bible Societies to help fund this project.
- Please pray that these translation projects will be completed on time despite challenges brought about by the worsening Covid-19 pandemic in India.
- Please pray for the translators in the translation teams as they seek to express the meaning of the biblical text and key terms in the clearest way possible.

Scripture:

"Then you will know the truth, and the truth will set you free." John 8:32 (NIV)

NEPAL

Capital: Kathmandu

Population: 30.4 million

Languages: Nepali, Maithali, Bhojpuri, many other ethnic languages

Religions: Hinduism 81.3%, Buddhism 9%, Islam 4.4%, Kirant 3.1%, Christianity 1.4%, other 0.7%



Nepal is one of the poorest countries in the world. In 1715, Christianity reached the country brought there by Capuchin Friars. However, they were expelled in 1768, when Christian groups were officially banned from the country. Up until the early 1950s, Nepal was a closed country to both foreigners and Christian missionaries. In 2008, Nepal became a republic. Prior to that it had been ruled by a monarchy.

In 1951, a church was planted in Kathmandu by Indian Christian technicians working in the area. However, church growth was slow due to a hostile cultural and political environment.

The Nepal Bible society was formed in 1976. Today, it is working to provide Scripture engagement projects to women and children. It is also working to bring audio Bibles to vulnerable people including illiterate and the visually disabled and disabled people.

Prayer Points:

- Give thanks that each of the 75 districts has a church plant and believers can be found in almost every people and cast group.
- Pray for Nepalese Christians that they will remain strong in their faith as they seek to bring the Word of God to others.

Scripture:

"Blessed is the one who perseveres under trial because, having stood the test, that person will receive the crown of life that the Lord has promised to those who love him." James 1:12 (NIV)

SOUTH PACIFIC

Countries: Fiji, Samoa, Tonga, Vanuatu, Solomon Islands, Kiribati, Tuvalu, New Caledonia, Cook Islands, Wallis, Futuna, Nauru, Niue, and Tahiti

Population: 900,000

Religions: Christianity 64%



There is an immediate need for a network and system upgrade to be implemented within the Bible Society of the South Pacific. Without this upgrade BSSP's core operational functions will be drastically affected and thus have major impact on achieving its regional wide mission goals. The current network has crashed on two occasions resulting in loss of important data.

The *Establishing Essential IT Infrastructure and Security to Accelerate Bible Work in the Pacific* project is important because the BSSP looks after 16 Island nations which makes it challenging to manage without the use of digital technology.

Prayer Points:

- Give thanks for the significant progress achieved in the IT Infrastructure upgrade, resulting in improved security and easier access to information between satellite offices and the main headquarters in Fiji.
- Please pray for the second phase of the project as the BSSP team work on upgrading and improving their online sales system.
- Pray that the IT equipment needed for the upgrade will arrive in Fiji and that there will be no further delays.

Scripture:

"And God has placed in the church first of all apostles, second prophets, third teachers, then miracles, then gifts of healing, of helping, of guidance, and of different kinds of tongues." 1 Corinthians 12:28 (NIV)

PHILIPPINES

Capital: Manila

Population: 109 million

Languages: Filipino (official) and English (official)

Religions: Roman Catholic 80.6%, Protestant 8.2%, other

Christian 3.4%, Islam 5.6%, tribal and religions 2.2%



Deaf people have their own true language - the Sign language. It is not just gestures or acting but a true language of the deaf people. It has its own unique structure and grammar. The hand is the mouth of the deaf. Many deaf people are not educated and those who are educated still find it difficult to understand some of the words.

The *Scriptures for the Deaf* project of the Philippine Bible Society aims to make God's Word available in the heart language of the deaf. For the year 2020, this project aims to translate the 10 passages of the 45 passages from the *Follow God How*, of the Chronological Bible Translation series. This project has the potential to impact 500,000 people.

Prayer Points:

- Give thanks for the first 15 passages already translated into the deaf language.
- Please pray that the deaf community in the Philippines will have full access to God's Word in the language that they understand.
- Pray that the Lord will empower the deaf pastors in sharing the Gospel through this translation.

Scripture:

"In that day the deaf will hear the words of the scroll, and out of gloom and darkness the eyes of the blind will see." Isaiah 29:18 (NIV)

KENYA

Capital: Nairobi

Population: 48.4 million

Languages: English, Kiswahili, many indigenous languages

Religions: Christianity 83%, Islam 11.2%, Traditionalists 1.7%, other 1.6%, none 2.6%



There is a growing need to raise a God-fearing generation of children and pre-teens who know and can explain confidently their faith in Jesus Christ. The main goal of the *Open the Book* (OtB) project in Kenya is to help school aged children and communities engage with the Bible through Bible storytelling. This is a unique approach of presenting Bible stories in a way that children will relate to and enjoy.

The BSK has partnered with schools, churches, children's homes, Government, and Non-Government organisations to implement the project. Part of this project is also to provide Scriptures to children from marginalised and poor backgrounds.

Prayer Points:

- Please pray that BSK will receive further support from other relevant stakeholders.
- Pray that the OtB materials will be approved by the Kenya Institute of Curriculum Development.
- Please pray that through OtB the younger generation in Kenya will develop a passion for Bible reading, increase their knowledge of Scriptures.

Scripture:

"Start children off on the way they should go, and even when they are old, they will not turn from it." Proverbs 22:6 (NIV)

SPECIAL PRAYER FOR THE UNITED BIBLE SOCIETIES FELLOWSHIP (UBS)

In May 1946, less than a year after the most destructive global conflict in human history, representatives from Bible Societies in 13 countries gathered at the Elfinward Conference Centre in Haywards Heath, England. Convinced more than ever of the “need of the world for the Word of God”, the delegates set in motion the formation of a truly global Bible fellowship—the United Bible Societies.

75 years later, people around the world’s need for the Bible continues to be served by the shared pursuit of a shared mission—a mission built on the legacy of faithfulness, sacrifice and collaboration. From the initial 13 countries gathered at Elfinward, now around 150 Bible Societies work in more than 240 countries and territories to make the life-giving words of the Bible available to everyone.

Prayer Points:

- Give thanks for the work of the UBS fellowship for the past 75 years and pray for increased cooperation among its members as they continue to strengthen Bible ministry around the world.

Scripture:

“Then make my joy complete by being like-minded, having the same love, being one in spirit and of one mind.” Philippians 2:2 (NIV)



**United Bible
Societies**

Sources:
United Bible Societies community website
Central Intelligence Agency
Website of each Bible Society featured