



BIBLE A MONTH
REGULAR GIVING

YOUR MONTHLY MEMBER'S REPORT **JANUARY 2024**

MALAWI

In 1861, Bishop Charles Mackenzie of the Anglican Universities Mission to Central Africa (UMCA) led the first Christian missionary group into Malawi. It proved to be an ill-fated expedition. The group made a base near Lake Nyasa, now Lake Malawi. Unfortunately, Bishop Mackenzie died there from malaria along with three others. Early conversion efforts yielded few results, and supplies ran out or were destroyed during a period of famine forcing the remaining members to withdraw.

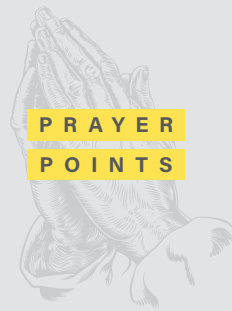
In 1889, the first Catholic mission, known as the White Fathers, established a mission station at the southern tip of Lake Malawi. In 1891, Malawi became a British protectorate. In 1964, after achieving independence the country was ruled by Dr. Hastings Banda for thirty years, who was a colourful but ruthless dictator. In 1994, the first multi-party elections were held. Today, Malawi is a peaceful and stable country in a region plagued by wars and civil strife.

It is also the fourth poorest country in the world, with 70 per cent of its largely rural population existing as subsistence farmers. But 77 per cent also identify as Christian and the gospel has penetrated to every section of society.

The Bible Society of Malawi is working to bring Family Scripture Engagement packs to impoverished, rural families. In consultation with church leaders and partnering with Scripture Union, they have created an interactive reading programme. Each family receives a Bible, a children's Bible, and a reading guide, and ongoing support from a provincial coordinator. Your gift to Bible a Month Regular Giving this month will help to support this project.



Photo Credit © Bible Society of Malawi



**PRAYER
POINTS**

Give thanks that more than three quarters of the population identify as Christian and that Christianity has penetrated nearly every corner of society.

Pray for improvements in the economy because the intense poverty hinders education and prevents theological training.

Pray that the Bible Society of Malawi's programmes will touch lives and leave a lasting impact that will lead many to the knowledge of the Lord Jesus Christ.

Pray for government leaders, many of whom are Christians, to act with wisdom and humility in their decision making as the country faces significant issues.



Scan to get a look at our latest Prayer Booklet!

FURTHER BIBLE MISSION PROJECTS



GUATEMALA

In the 16th century, Spanish colonists brought Christianity to Guatemala. In 1821, Guatemala became independent of Spain, but it was controlled by a few plantation owners through a series of dictatorships and military governments. The poor, especially indigenous Mayans, suffered years of indignity and deprivation, which exploded in 1960 into 36 years of guerrilla warfare.

Today, Guatemala is facing many issues, including high levels of violence, poverty, and teenage pregnancy rates. Teenagers who become mothers do not receive any state assistance. The Bible Society of Guatemala is reaching out to teenage mothers with spiritual, psychological, and emotional assistance. It is providing them with skills and training to help them create a new life for themselves and their babies.

Photo Credit © Bible Society of Guatemala.



UKRAINE

During the latter part of the 18th century, most of Ukraine was absorbed into the Russian Empire. Between 1917 – 1920, the country experienced a brief period of independence before being reconquered by Russia. Under a brutal Soviet rule and during WWII, millions of Ukrainians died. In 1991, the country achieved independence.

Since the Russian invasion of Ukraine began on 24th February 2022, the Bible Society of Ukraine has been working to provide people with Scriptures and with physical aid, such as water and food. It supports chaplains who provide Scriptures to soldiers and to people living in liberated villages. It provides Bibles to people within Ukraine and to the many refugees who have fled to neighbouring countries.

Photo Credit © Ukrainian Bible Society



ARMENIA

In the 1st century, Christianity was brought to Armenia by the Apostles Bartholomew and Thaddeus of Odessa. In the 4th century, Armenia adopted Christianity as its official religion. Between 1921 – 1930, the Armenian people endured systematic repression under Soviet Occupation, followed by the collectivisation of agriculture.

In 1991, Armenia achieved independence, but it was quickly drawn into a territorial conflict over the Nagorno-Karabakh region. This enclave was populated mostly by Christian Armenians but under Stalinist reorganisation in the 1920s it was placed within Azerbaijan's borders. Today, the Bible Society of Armenia is reaching out to people living in border villages. It teaches villagers Bible parables along with art therapy classes, including carpet square making for the women and puppet making for the girls.

Photo Credit ©Silke Gabrisch



URUGUAY

Christianity was brought to Uruguay by the Franciscans who sought to convert the indigenous population. In 1830, Uruguay's constitution established Catholicism as the state religion. In 1917, a new constitution separated the church and state.

Today, Uruguay is the most secular country in South America with high rates of depression, suicide, abortion, and divorce. Twenty- seven per cent of the population is living below the poverty line. During the COVID-19 pandemic, state assistance such as meals in schools for children ceased. Therefore, families began turning to community soup kitchens and churches for food. Through its 'Breakfast with Jesus' project, the Bible Society of Uruguay is distributing Scriptures and fortified chocolate milk powder to churches, so they can provide morning tea activities for impoverished children.

Photo Credit © Bible Society of Uruguay.



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