

Word at Work

SHARING THE BIBLE SO ALL PEOPLE CAN KNOW JESUS



Bible Society
Northern Ireland

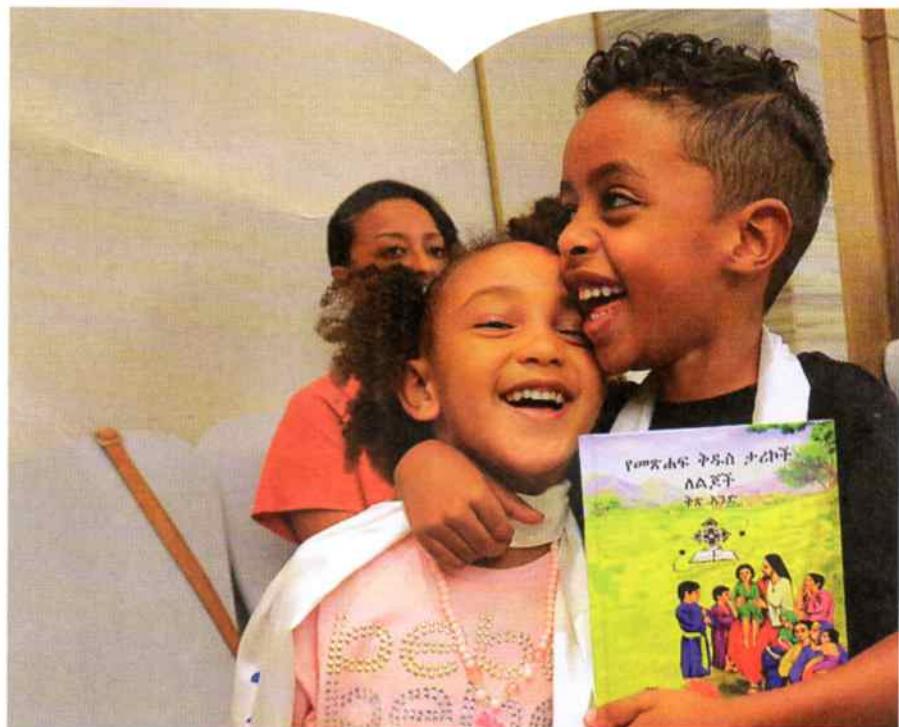
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Editor's Note

Happy New Year! Thank you for taking the time to read this first edition of *Word at Work* in 2026.

One of the things I love about writing these magazines is getting to read so many stories of impact and transformation from across the world, so much so that it can be difficult to choose which stories to share with you.

A personal highlight in this edition is Tetiana's story - what an inspiring story to hear as we start the new year not knowing what we will face, but knowing that God has it all in His hands.



Aaron Sweeney
Communications &
Projects Manager

As followers of Jesus, we stand on the unshakable conviction that God's Word brings hope, light, and transformation. In this edition of *Word at Work*, we reflect on Mark 16:15 - a simple, yet world-changing command that continues to shape the mission of Bible Society Northern Ireland: **Share the Bible.**

This call is as urgent today as it was when first spoken. Across our world, millions of people are still waiting for Scripture in a language they understand. Others long for a Bible of their own but cannot access or afford one. And here at home, many are searching for truth, comfort, and direction in a time marked by uncertainty and anxiety. Into all these places, God invites us to bring His Word - a gift that leads hearts to Christ and sustains faith

that might otherwise falter.

In these pages, you will read stories of how Scripture is changing lives across the world. You'll also find opportunities to partner with us - to help place God's Word into hands that are anxiously waiting.

Thank you for standing with us. Together, we can ensure that no one is left without access to the life-giving message of the Bible. May this magazine inspire you to pray, to give, and to share God's Word with confidence and joy.



Wilson Beare
Chief Executive Officer



At Home

We're hitting the road!



A NIGHT WITH BIBLE SOCIETY

This September Bible Society is hitting the road for a series of inspiring events across Northern Ireland. A Night with the Bible Society will bring together friends, supporters, and anyone curious about the work of Bible Societies both here and around the world. We're excited to be visiting Lisburn, Enniskillen, and Derry/Londonderry for 3 inspiring evenings of celebration, storytelling, and inspiration.

Each night will be a unique opportunity to see how God is

at work through Bible Societies - from distributing Scriptures in local communities to supporting translation projects in some of the world's most challenging places. These events are a chance to hear first-hand stories of hope, transformation, and faith, and to celebrate the incredible impact of your support.

So, whether you are a long-time friend of Bible Society Northern Ireland, or are new to our work, these evenings are designed to inform, inspire, and encourage.

Save the date!

All 7pm for 7:30pm start

Derry/Londonderry

Tuesday 22nd September
Kilfennan Presbyterian Church

Enniskillen

Thursday 24th September
Fermanagh Christian Fellowship

Lisburn

Friday 25th September
T3 Centre at Vic Ryn, Lisburn

Come, celebrate, and be inspired. Together, we can continue to make a difference through the work of Bible Societies both near and far.

We warmly invite you to join us and bring someone with you who would love to hear about this vital work. It's a perfect opportunity to introduce a friend, family member, or colleague to our shared mission.

UPDATE

Moving Forward Together

We're delighted to share that Bible Society Northern Ireland's incorporation process has been finalised on 1st January 2026. This important step strengthens our governance, ensures best practice, and positions us well for the future — so we can continue our mission of sharing the Bible so all people can know Jesus.

While this is a significant legal change, we want to reassure you: our ministry remains the same.

Our heart, vision, and commitment to God's Word will not change.

If you give by Direct Debit or Standing Order, you will have received correspondence explaining how this may affect your support and if there are any small steps you need to take to ensure continuity in this regard.

Please do take a moment to check and act as needed — your support helps us keep God's Word at the centre of lives here and around the world.

Tetiana's Story

Beauty in Brokenness

Meet Tetiana, a 50-year-old woman in Ukraine. Together with her husband, they raised three wonderful sons. Life, it seemed, was just good. But then the war came...

Originally from Russia, Tetiana had moved to Ukraine - to Zhytomyr - long before the full-scale invasion.

Her father remained in Russia, but all communication with him was cut off when the war began. Just before the invasion, Tetiana's mother passed away, which struck her deeply.

Then came the second blow: her husband Andriy, a police officer, voluntarily joined the Armed Forces to protect his family. He was deployed to help defend Kyiv from the advancing Russian forces. On March 7, 2022, he was killed in action. For



'My Christianity was nothing more than visiting the church once a year. I didn't believe in the Living God. But then the Word of God came into my life.'

two months he was considered missing.

After the Kyiv region was liberated, his body was found beneath the rubble of a bakery where he and his unit had been holding their position. All the men perished.

Tetiana recalled: "I didn't know how to keep living. I constantly dreamed of dying just to be with him again. If it weren't for my children, I might have done it."

Tetiana's eldest is now fighting on the front lines. Her middle son is about to graduate from a military academy, and her youngest is still in school.

For a long time, Tetiana couldn't leave her home - she couldn't bear to see people smiling or walking hand-in-hand. Every happy couple brought her deeper into depression. But in the autumn of 2022, she was invited to church. When she came and saw other women who had lost their husbands or children, she finally felt some relief. She realized she had found a place where people could truly understand her. Shared grief brought them together.

After a few months, she returned to work. But the emotional trauma and stress had taken a heavy toll on her health. She kept trying to carry the burden alone, but things only got worse. *"I was never really a religious person,"* she admitted. *"Yes, I believed in a distant God somewhere, but my Christianity was nothing more than visiting the church once a year. I didn't believe in the Living God. But then the Word of God came into my life."* During one of the support group meetings, Tetiana received a Bible from the Ukrainian Bible Society. She began to read it with deep hunger and interest. *"I began to realise that all my efforts weren't enough. I needed something greater. So, I surrendered to God. I invited Jesus Christ into my heart and let Him take control of my life. And immediately, I felt a massive burden lift off me. I started sleeping again. My health began to improve. And for the first time since my husband's death, I felt peace. I realised - God has never left me."*

In the summer of 2024, Tetiana was baptised as a believer and began actively serving in her local church. *"I kept asking myself, what is my mission in this life? And I found the answer. I can serve women who've gone through the same pain - widows who've lost their husbands. They look at me and say, 'You're so strong - you've handled your grief so well.' But I tell them: I'm not strong. The pain hasn't gone away. But God*



gives me strength. And He gives me hope that I'll see my husband again in eternity. I always tell them - life is so much easier with God. And without Him, it's almost impossible. I believe the church in Ukraine has a unique opportunity right now - to draw near to hurting people."

Tetiana began helping with administrative work at the church. Though her health was still fragile and worsening, she wanted to give everything she had while she still had the strength to do so. That's when she heard about a new ministry: visiting a military hospital not far from Zhytomyr. Several other women - wives of soldiers, widows, and mothers of fallen heroes - had begun visiting the wounded soldiers there. The soldiers were deeply moved by the presence of these women. They knew these women had every reason to grieve - and yet they chose to bring the light of Christ to those still fighting. These tough, battle-hardened men - who had seen death many times - were moved to tears. They began asking: *"Where do you find the strength to go on?"* And the women pointed them to the Lord. They prayed with the soldiers and gave them New Testaments, which the men gladly read. When Tetiana joined this ministry something incredible happened - her health began to improve. She felt noticeably better. She began leading one of the support groups for widows, helping

organize camps for them, and even started serving children at a social-psychological rehabilitation centre where children are placed by child protection services until a permanent home can be found.

Tetiana helped organize a special outreach visit there with the Bible Society in May which included a program for the children and gifts of Bibles. She also helped distribute 120 Bibles in a women's group consisting of wives of missing soldiers.

When asked if there was a Bible character or book that especially inspires her. She answered without hesitation: *"Yes - Job. He is an example for me. He went through unimaginable trials and yet remained faithful and courageous. There are people in Ukraine today who have lost even more than I have. But I still have my children, I still have a home. What do I have to complain about? I pray constantly to serve selflessly, just as Christ did. I try to reflect His love. I pray for wisdom and humility, that the Lord would soften my still-proud heart. And I constantly pray for all three of my sons - that they would come to know the Lord and belong to Him."*

Tetiana's story is just one of many who have found beauty in the brokenness of war. She wants to be close to those who are now experiencing loss and pain. She brings Jesus to them.

One Verse

"I have come that they may have life, and have it to the full."

John 10:10



John 10:10 has become, for me, a verse that speaks with a depth that grows each time I return to it. These words hold together two truths that shape my faith: a present reality and a future hope.

In the present, this verse confronts me with the generous heart of Jesus. He did not come merely to improve life or patch up the broken pieces; He came to give something abundant, spacious, and overflowing. When I look at my daily routines, my busyness, my worries, I often sense how small my view of life can become. Yet Jesus invites me to experience life in Him right now - life that is marked by peace beyond understanding, joy that does not depend on circumstances, and purpose that runs deeper than

achievement. This abundance is not loud or flashy; often it is quiet, steady, and deeply grounding. It is found in surrender, in trust, and in walking with the Shepherd who knows my name.

But John 10:10 does not stop at the present. It also points me forward, toward the hope that one day this abundant life will be experienced fully and without hinderance. There is a future fullness still to come - a life where all the shadows of loss, pain, and fear are burned away by the light of God's presence. This hope strengthens me when the world feels fragile or when I feel incomplete. It reminds me that Jesus' promise stretches beyond my lifetime into eternity.

So I hold this verse as both invitation and assurance. Jesus offers abundant life today, and He prepares an even greater abundance for tomorrow. In that tension - between the now and the not yet - I find my faith renewed.



Wilson Beare
Chief Executive Officer

Spring Bible Reflection

Read John 10:7-11 in whichever translation of the Bible you like.

1 Jesus contrasts the thief's purpose with His own mission. Have you ever noticed things in your life that seem to drain joy, peace, or hope? How does Jesus' promise of "life to the full" reshape the way you respond to those influences?

⁷ Therefore Jesus said again, 'Very truly I tell you, I am the gate for the sheep. ⁸ All who have come before me are thieves and robbers, but the sheep have not listened to them. ⁹ I am the gate; whoever enters through me will be saved. They will come in and go out, and find pasture. ¹⁰ The thief comes only to steal and kill and destroy; I have come that they may have life, and have it to the full. ¹¹ I am the good shepherd. The good shepherd lays down his life for the sheep.

2 Jesus calls Himself the gate for the sheep. What does it look like for you to enter through Him in your daily life, rather than seeking security or abundance elsewhere? How might this change the way you pursue fulfilment?

3 The good shepherd lays down his life for the sheep. How does Jesus' sacrificial love deepen your understanding of what 'abundant life' truly means? In what ways can you reflect that same love towards others this week?



Prayer at Work

FEBRUARY 1-7

Colombia Pray for the Colombian Bible Society and for their literacy work with children and adults across the country. Pray for their work with migrants and people facing displacement, that they will know God's peace, and for their work with communities in the Amazon rainforest. Pray also for ED Diana Leal and the staff here.

Peru Pray for the Peruvian Bible Society and for the ongoing first translations of the OT in Matsigenka and Shipibo and revisions of the NT. Praise God for the 'Bread of Life' project, providing spiritual and physical sustenance to vulnerable children across the country. Pray also for ED Pablo Gutierrez.

Ecuador Pray for the United Bible Societies in Ecuador as they continue to serve the visually impaired community through their 'Hands that read' Braille Bible reading project. Pray too for the 'Open the Book' project which helps school-aged children to engage with the Bible in creative ways. Pray for ED Rev Daniel Oliva and the staff here.

FEBRUARY 8-14

Albania Pray for the Interconfessional Bible Society of Albania and for their work helping people to engage with the Bible through their Biblical Learning Centre and sports ministry projects. Pray for the ongoing 'Open the Book' project working to make the Bible known to children. Pray too for GS Altin Hysi and the staff here.

Macedonia Pray for the Macedonian Bible Society and for their work distributing Bibles and portions of Scripture to young people who cannot afford to buy their own copy. Pray for their sign language project, sharing the life of Jesus with the deaf community. Pray also for GS Fr. Daniel Jovanovski and the staff here.

Bulgaria Pray for the Bulgarian Bible Society as they continue to revise and modernise the Bulgarian Protestant Bible. Pray too for their work with churches across the country as they seek to help individuals to engage with the Bible. Pray for GS Radoslav Apostolov and the staff team here.

FEBRUARY 15-21

Greece Pray for the Hellenic Bible Society and for their work on translating the New Testament into Greek Sign Language, helping the deaf community to engage with God's Word. Pray for their ongoing relationships with the Church across Greece. Pray too for GS Michail Chatzigiannis and the staff team.

Italy Pray for the Bible Society in Italy as they continue to work on the Ecumenical Literary Translation of the Bible, bringing together understanding of Scripture from across denominations. Pray for their relationships with churches across Italy as they share the Bible. Pray too for GS Luca Maria Negro and the staff here.

Malta Pray for the Malta Bible Foundation as they continue serving and partnering with the church in Malta. Pray for good collaboration between the team and similar organisations, so that they can share the Bible with more people. Pray for the staff team and board here as they work to deliver their mission.

FEBRUARY 22-28

Zambia Pray for the Bible Society of Zambia as they continue to develop young leaders through their 'Catalysing Leaders' programme, based on biblical leadership principles. Pray for the ongoing work on the Nyanja Bible translation. Pray too for GS Dr Abraham Chikasa and the staff here.

Angola Pray for the Bible Society in Angola and for their work promoting positive development with young people through the 'Young Samaritan' project. Pray too for their translation work into many local languages, some for the very first time. Pray for GS Beatriz Hupa and the staff team here.

Mozambique Pray for the Bible Society of Mozambique as they continue to translate the Bible into Mozambican Sign Language, enabling the deaf community to engage with God's Word. Pray for their ongoing translation projects into local languages for the first time. Pray also for ES Rev Valente Tomas Tseco and the staff here.

Please join us as we pray for every Bible Society and their work throughout this year.

Terms & Abbreviations

FCBH: Faith Comes by Hearing - A programme providing audio Scripture for listening groups, set up mainly through local churches.

Trauma Healing: Bible-based counselling for survivors of traumas such as epidemics, disasters or war.

OT/NT: Old/New Testament.

GS: General Secretary

ED/ES: Executive Director/Secretary

CEO: Chief Executive Officer

Prayer at Work

MARCH 1-7

Palestine Pray for the Palestinian Bible Society as they work in uncertain circumstances. Pray for peace and reconciliation in these lands. Pray for safety for the staff and board of the Bible Society.

Arab Israeli Pray for the Arab Israeli Bible Society as they work in uncertain circumstances. Pray for peace and reconciliation in these lands. Pray for safety for the staff and board of the Bible Society.

Israel Pray for the Bible Society in Israel as they work in uncertain circumstances. Pray for peace and reconciliation in these lands. Pray for safety for the staff and board of the Bible Society.

MARCH 8-14

Chile Pray for the Chilean Bible Society as they continue to work on the Chilean Sign Language Bible translation, enabling the deaf community to engage with God's Word. Pray for the first translation of the Mapudungún Bible, and for their Trauma Healing project. Pray for GS Francisco Viguera Errazu and the staff here.

Uruguay Pray for the Bible Society of Uruguay and for their 'Breakfast with Jesus' project which, in partnership with local churches, provides spiritual and physical sustenance to vulnerable children. Pray for their work supporting schools through the 'New Horizons' project. Pray too for GS Samuel Duarte and the staff here.

Argentina Pray for the Argentine Bible Society as they continue to work on the West Toba Bible translation. Praise God for over 200 years of Bible ministry here, and for each life changed by God's Word. Pray for the Argentine Sign Language translation too. Pray also for GS Ruben Del Ré and for the staff team here.

MARCH 15-21

Armenia Pray for the Bible Society of Armenia as they continue to work on the translation and production of both the Western and Eastern Armenian Bibles. Pray for their work in schools and border villages promoting Bible literacy and engagement. Pray for GS Fr. Husik Smbatyan and the staff here.

Georgia Pray for the Bible Society in Georgia and for their ongoing work on the revision of the OT in an easy-to-read format, enabling young people to further engage with God's Word. Pray for their relationships with local churches as they seek to share the Bible. Pray also for ED Avtandil Guruli and the staff here.

Azerbaijan Pray for the Azerbaijan Bible Society as they continue to build a strong Christian presence across the country. Pray for the distribution of Bibles in Azerbaijani, Russian, and Udi. Pray also for the development of 'LightPath', a digital, interactive Scripture engagement tool. Pray for GS Rasim Khalilov and the staff here.

MARCH 22-28

South Pacific Pray for the Bible Society in the South Pacific as they continue to work on Bible translations in Tongan and Samoan. Pray for their Bible distribution and engagement project throughout the South Pacific, to enable more people to access the Bible. Pray for GS Geoffry Miller and the staff here.

New Zealand Pray for Bible Society New Zealand as they work to share the Bible with more people. Pray for their relationships with different denominations and for their work with indigenous communities, helping them to engage with God's Word. Pray for CEO Neels Janse Van Rensburg and the staff team here.

Australia Pray for Bible Society Australia and for their distribution work across the country in partnership with Christian organisations and churches. Pray for those who minister to indigenous communities across Australia, and for the grants available to chaplains in places of vulnerability. Pray for Interim CEO Chris Melville and the staff here.

MARCH 29 – APRIL 4

Austria Pray for the Austrian Bible Society as they continue their work distributing Scriptures in various languages to refugees and asylum seekers, including those in detention centres and prisons. Pray for their relationships with like-minded organisations and churches. Pray for GS Dr Jutta Henner and the staff here.

Switzerland Pray for the Swiss Bible Society as they continue to share the Bible so that more people can know Jesus. Pray for strong relationships with their donors and churches across the country. Praise God for their faithful ministry over the years. Pray for CEO Benjamin Doberstein and the staff here.

Germany Pray for the German Bible Society as they work to make the Bible accessible to all people across Germany. Pray for their relationships with local churches, and ask God to bless them as they fundraise for Bible Mission across the globe. Pray for GS Dr Christoph Rösel and the staff team here.

APRIL 5-11

Pakistan Pray for the Pakistan Bible Society as they continue to serve women and children through the 'Beacon in the Darkness of Illiteracy' project. Pray for their translation work on the first Punjabi Interconfessional OT and the Saraiki Common Language Bible. Pray for GS Rev Azhar Mushtaq and the staff here.

India Pray for the Bible Society of India as they continue the Sign Language Bible translation, which will enable the deaf community in Nagaland to engage with God's Word. Pray for their work empowering women across India through connection with churches. Pray for GS Rev Dr Kavita G Zhimo and the staff here.

Nepal Pray for the Nepal Bible Society as they strive to share the Bible with many people across their country. Pray for strong relationships with local churches and other Christian organisations. Pray for their Bible engagement work across the country. Pray for ED Arjun Kapri and the staff team here.

APRIL 12-18

Ukraine Pray for the Ukrainian Bible Society as they continue to serve in the midst of war. Pray for protection for the staff team as they continue to distribute Bibles and help individuals to engage with them. Praise God for people like Tetiana who are partnering with the Bible Society to share God's Word far and wide.

Belarus Pray for the Bible Society in the Republic of Belarus and for their work with children facing difficult life situations. Pray for their ongoing Bible revision in Belarusian, and for the communities who will benefit from this work. Pray for strong relationships with local churches, organisations, and authorities.

Russia Pray for the Bible Society in Russia as they continue to serve the Christian population of Russia amidst increasingly difficult circumstances. Pray for the safety of the staff team and for the leadership of the Bible Society as they navigate this difficult situation.

APRIL 19-25

Netherlands & Flanders Pray for the Bible Society for the Netherlands and Flanders as they continue to serve an increasingly secularised society. Pray that they might be able to bring people closer to God. Praise God for their supporters who partner with them to make this work possible. Pray too for GS Dr Rieuward Buitewerf and the staff here.

Belgium Pray for the Belgian Bible Society (French) as they continue to share the Bible with more people. Pray for their partnerships with local churches who support their efforts to make the Bible accessible for everyone. Pray for GS Vincent Beckers and the staff team here.

APRIL 26 - MAY 2

Ghana Pray for the Bible Society of Ghana as they continue to train young leaders through their 'Catalysing Leaders' programme. Pray for their Trauma Healing and literacy projects and the communities they serve through these programmes. Pray for GS the Very Rev John Kwesi Addo Jnr and the staff team here.

Benin Pray for the Bible Society of Benin and for their work on the first NT translation in Xwla. Pray for the many Bible revisions being carried out also. Ask God to bless their literacy project and their 'Young Samaritan' project. Pray for GS Rev Fidèle-Fifamè Houssou Gandonou and the staff here.

Togo Pray for the Bible Society of Togo and for their ongoing work on the translations of the OT in Lama, Kabiye, and Nawdum. Pray too for their FCBH project, providing audio Bibles to churches and communities who cannot read. Pray for GS Estelle Akouegnon and the staff here.

Prayer at Work

MAY 3-9

Brazil Pray for the Bible Society of Brazil as they continue to share the Bible with families along the Amazon river through the 'Light in the Amazon' boat. Pray for the ongoing translation into the Pomerano language, helping more people to engage with the Bible. Pray for ED Rev Dr Erní Seibert and the staff team [here](#).

Paraguay Pray for the Paraguayan Bible Society and for their work on the Paraguayan Sign Language Bible translation, enabling the deaf community to engage with God's Word. Pray for the 'El Amanecer' ship addressing spiritual and practical needs of communities along the Paraguay River. Pray for ED Rev Carlos Samuel Fleitas and the staff [here](#).

Bolivia Pray for the Bolivian Bible Society and for their ongoing work helping to support clergy-in-training through the provision of scholarly editions of the Bible. Pray too for their literacy project working with Aymara children and for their Braille distribution project. Pray for GS Fanny Cossío and the staff [here](#).

MAY 10-16

Namibia Pray for the Bible Society of Namibia as they continue to translate the Bible into Namibian Sign Language and many other local languages, some for the first time. Pray for their literacy project working to provide women with essential literacy skills. Pray for CEO Dr Schalk Botha and the staff [here](#).

Zimbabwe Pray for the Bible Society of Zimbabwe as they continue to work on the Zimbabwe Sign Language translation as well as many other local languages, and for those who will use them once complete. Pray for the teams working on these translations, that they will be blessed by this work. Pray too for the leadership and staff team [here](#).

Botswana Pray for the Bible Society in Botswana and for the ongoing work on the first translation into Mbukushu. Pray too for the Botswana Sign Language translation, enabling the deaf community to engage with God's Word better. Pray for their relationships with local churches. Pray for the leadership and staff team [here](#).

MAY 17-23

Burkina Faso Pray for the Bible Society of Burkina Faso as they continue to run literacy projects to empower women with the essential skills they need for work. Pray for the ongoing Trauma Healing projects working with children and adults. Pray too for their Bible translation work. Pray for the leadership and staff [here](#).

Morocco Pray for the Bible Society in Morocco and for their ongoing support of underground and expatriate churches across the country. Pray for their work producing accessible Bibles to enhance Bible engagement across the country. Pray for the leadership and staff team [here](#).

Algeria Pray for the Bible Society in Algeria as they continue to distribute Bibles to those seeking to know more about God. Pray for more opportunities to share His Word. Pray for the difficult situations they must face, and for openness to hear God speak. Pray also for the leadership and staff [here](#).

MAY 24-30

Mali Pray for the Bible Society in Mali and for their ongoing Bible translation and revision work in many local languages. Pray for their Bible engagement work, helping people to actively read and understand God's Word. Pray too for their relationships with churches across the country. Pray for ES Jacques Dembélé and the team [here](#).

Uganda Pray for the Bible Society of Uganda as they continue to distribute Scriptures to those who need them most. Pray for their 'Catalysing Leaders' and 'Young Samaritan' development projects, giving young people skills for life. Pray for GS Peter Serumaga and the staff team [here](#).

Rwanda Pray for the Bible Society of Rwanda as they continue to run audio-based Trauma Healing courses for the blind community. Pray for their distribution and literacy work, helping more people to learn essential skills whilst engaging with the Bible. Pray for GS Rev Viateur Ruzibiza and the staff [here](#).

Partners in the Gospel



A new year brings new opportunities for all of us. What better way to begin 2026 than by sharing God's Word with those who have never held a Bible of their own?

Through the Bible-a-Month Partnership, you can do exactly that. With a simple monthly gift of £10, you place Scripture into the hands of people across the world - people who are hungry for hope, truth, and the Good News of Jesus.

Every Bible given through the Bible-a-Month Partnership is more than just paper and ink. It's light in the darkness, comfort in suffering, and

the living Word that transforms lives. Month by month, your partnership ensures that someone, somewhere, encounters Christ - possibly for the very first time.

This new year don't just make resolutions - make a difference! Plus, when you sign up, you will receive our Bible-a-Month Calendar!

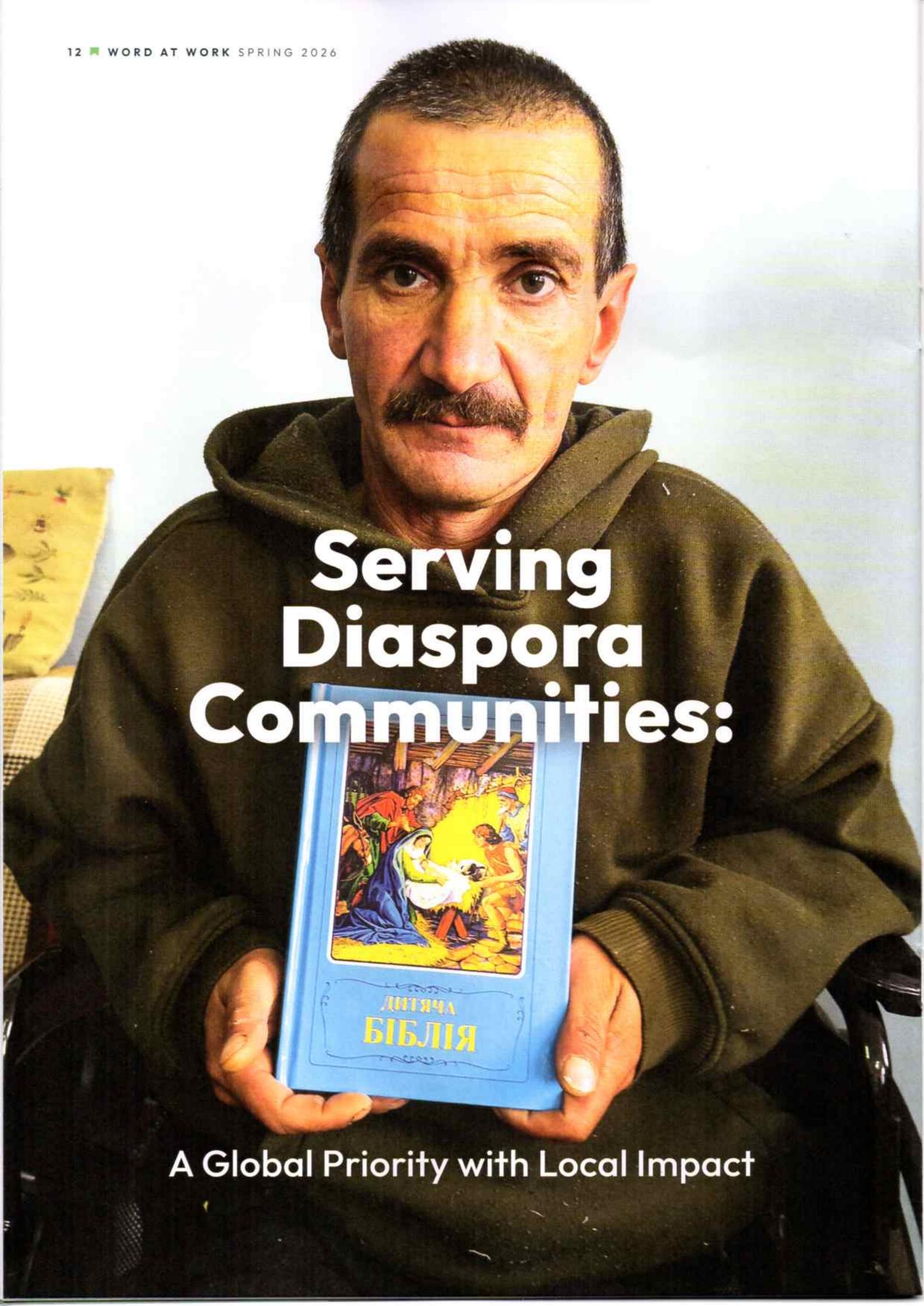
Will you start 2026 by partnering with us in the Gospel?



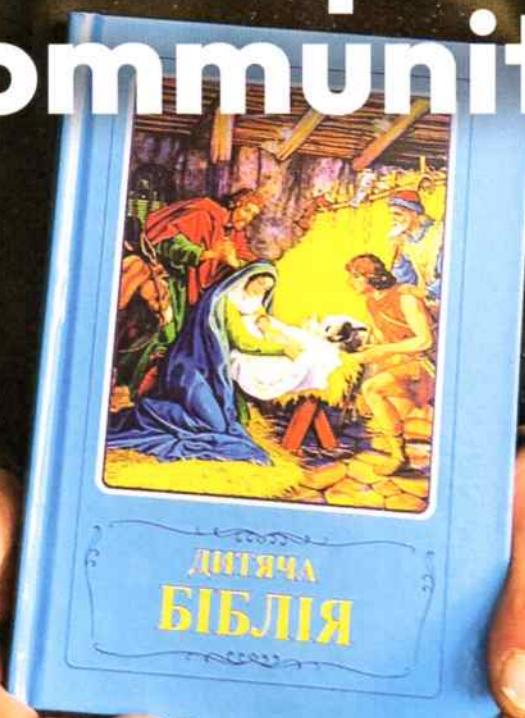
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Serving Diaspora Communities:



A Global Priority with Local Impact

At the United Bible Societies' (UBS) World Assembly back in 2023, hosted in Egmond aan Zee, Netherlands, Bible Societies from around the world agreed to 'The Egmond Affirmation', a collective commitment to seven important global issues: Bible Translation, Bible Distribution, Bible Engagement, Serving Diaspora Communities, Creation Care, Digital Transformation, and Mission Resilience. Whilst we're very familiar with some of these areas in Northern Ireland, the others are equally important.

One such area is Serving Diaspora Communities. Around the world, millions of people live outside their country of origin - be it through migration, displacement, or the search for new opportunities or a better life. For those people, the Bible can be both a lifeline and a bridge: a source of comfort in unfamiliar surroundings, and a way to connect across culture and languages.

But what does this mean for us who call Northern Ireland home?

More than a Global Story

The word 'diaspora' might sound distant, maybe you know what it means, or maybe this is the first time you are hearing it, but it is much closer to home than you might think. Northern Ireland has its own history of diaspora with generations of families having emigrated to Canada, Australia, America, and beyond, carrying their faith and traditions with them.

Today, that story is reversed. Our towns and cities are home to people from across the globe - Iran, India, Nigeria, Ukraine, and many other places. If you take a walk through any large town or city in our wee country, you'll see a diverse range of shops, hear a chorus of different languages, and meet neighbours whose journeys have brought them here.

A Place to Call Home

Northern Irish people know what it means to long for belonging. Our history is marked by questions of identity, community, and reconciliation. Serving diaspora communities isn't just about helping others - it's about recognising ourselves in their story. Just as many of our ancestors sought welcome in foreign lands before, today we are called to extend that same welcome here.

The Bible is a Shared Language

UBS' vision is simple, yet profound: to ensure that diaspora communities have access to Scripture in their heart languages. Arriving in a new country with a different culture and traditions than you are used to can be terrifying, but to find something as simple as a Bible in your own language can bring comfort and peace. It serves as a reminder that God's story includes you.

At Bible Society Northern Ireland, we have a small stock of non-English Scriptures available for purchase, some of them are full Bibles, others are small portions of Scripture. We

Serving diaspora communities is about making space at the table, ensuring that the Word of God is accessible, and living out the radical welcome of Christ.

can also do custom orders, stock dependant, if there is a particular language you are looking for. We would love to be able to partner with churches and groups to play our part in making the Bible accessible to everyone in Northern Ireland to help them feel seen, valued, and spiritually nourished.

Expansive, Inclusive, & Alive

Spring is a season of renewal. As we celebrate Easter, and the hope of Christ's resurrection, we are reminded that God's kingdom is expansive, inclusive, and alive in every country and culture. Serving diaspora communities is about making space at the table, ensuring that the Word of God is accessible, and living out the radical welcome of Christ.

So maybe the question for us in Northern Ireland to consider today is 'how can we make our churches places where diaspora communities feel truly at home?' Sometimes it may be as simple as offering a Bible in someone's language, sharing a meal, or listening to their story.

UBS' vision is "The Bible for everyone" and as we seek to share the Bible here in Northern Ireland, we pray that we will continue to be inspired to serve, to welcome, and to see the image of God in those who have journeyed from near and far to make our wee country their home.



Hope Across Borders:

God's Word for Diaspora Communities



When people pack their lives into bags, whether carefully calculated or rushing to flee danger, and step onto a plane, bus, or boat bound for a new land, they carry more than just belongings. They carry memories of home, the weight of loss, and the fragile hope of starting again. Across the globe, diaspora communities are reshaping the cultural scene of cities and towns. Their stories tell of strong resilience unknown to most of us. But they are also stories of longing: longing for belonging, for safety, and for a voice that speaks to their hearts.

A Global Movement of Displacement

The numbers are staggering. Millions of people across the world are on the move, driven by conflict, poverty, or opportunity. Refugees from war-torn regions, migrant workers in industrial hubs, international students in bustling university campuses - each group faces unique challenges. Yet they share a common thread: the need for community and the hope of faith.

Bible Societies across the world are stepping into this space, with

a mission that is simultaneously timeless and urgent: to ensure that every person, no matter where they are, can encounter God's Word in a language and format they understand.

This year, Bible Society Northern Ireland have the privilege of supporting a few of these projects across the world.

Austria

Austria has become home to thousands of refugees from Syria, Afghanistan, Iran, Iraq, Somalia,

Nigeria, and most recently Ukraine. Many arrive traumatised, uncertain of their future, and often unwelcome in their new surroundings.

The Austrian Bible Society has faithfully served these communities since 2016, providing free Scriptures in the heart languages of these refugees and asylum seekers. Bibles, New Testaments, audio proclaimers, and special Scripture selections are distributed in refugee camps, homes, detention centres, and prisons.

For many people, a Bible in their own language is a lifeline, bringing comfort and hope. One of the Ukrainian recipients in Vienna said, "A Bible in one's own language is, for many, like a piece of home."

Another recipient in a prison in lower Austria, said, "This book (the Bible) gives me a sense of friendliness and inner peace... I understand that God gives me peace and that the way to happiness is to follow Him."

Iran

For the past four decades, Christians in Iran have lived under immense pressure and persecution. Converting from Islam is treated as a crime, owning a Bible is illegal, and Bible distribution is absolutely forbidden.

Despite these conditions, the Church is growing at an astonishing rate. Many new believers describe life-changing encounters with Jesus - moments of revelation, visions, or dreams that draw them to faith, but it is impossible to know Jesus without a Bible.

It is in this context that the Iranian Bible Society (in Diaspora) are working with over 200 covert partners, distributing

thousands of Scriptures annually, training leaders, and equipping house church networks.

What might seem as simple as owning a Bible, can spark a whole revolution for Jesus in a community.

One Body

Scripture reminds us that in Christ, we are one body; one family. Serving diaspora communities is not just about serving 'others' but in fact recognising that the Church is a global family that crosses every border.

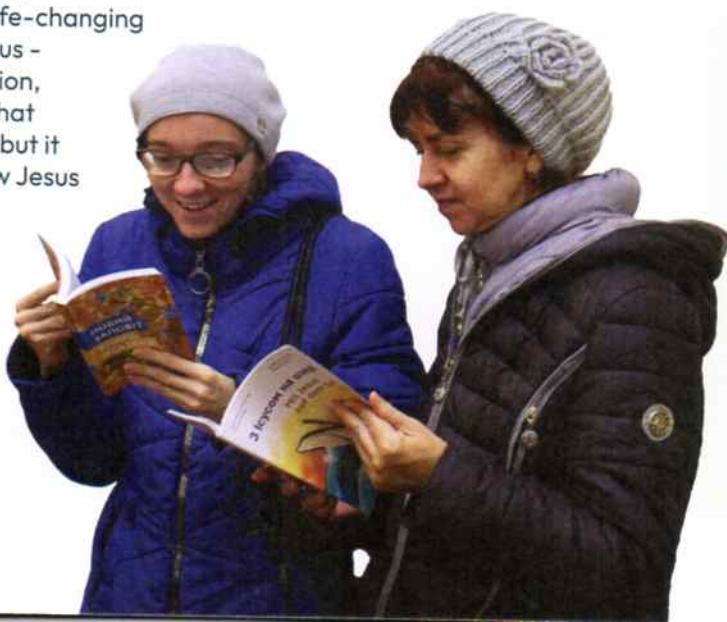
Bible Societies around the world cannot continue this vital ministry without your support. Every pound you give helps someone in a diaspora community to encounter Christ through His Word.

When God's Word crosses borders, hope follows.

This spring, as we watch the world around us reawaken from winter, and as we prepare to celebrate the hope of resurrection at Easter, let us remember those who are far from home, searching for their new home. By supporting these projects, we can place the Bible into the hands of those who need it most.

Together, we can serve diaspora communities, strengthen the global church, and live out the radical welcome of Christ.

Will you join us?



PRAY WITH US

- Pray for safety for those involved in Bible distribution in countries like Iran where it is illegal.
- Pray that diaspora communities would find a warm welcome in the places they seek refuge, security, and opportunity.
- Pray that God would continue to move across borders and in places where persecution is rife.

DONATE

- £16 could provide 2 full Bibles in the heart languages of 2 people building a new life for themselves.
- £40 could provide Bibles for a family of 5 living in diaspora, helping them to find comfort and steadiness in an unfamiliar place.
- £113 could cover the cost of transporting a box of 20 Bibles into Iran (this cost is high due to the ever-changing, dynamic style of transportation required.)

If you would like to donate to this project, simply fill out and return the form included with this magazine or visit our website: www.biblesocietyni.co.uk/give. Alternatively, you can scan the QR code with your smartphone.





“Go into all the world and preach the gospel to all creation.”

Mark 16:15

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