



By Richard and Renee Cook

Sharing the Hope!

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Bishop David Tswaedi
Members of the Church Council
Lutheran Church in Southern Africa
P O Box 117, Meadowlands / Soweto
1851, Republic of South Africa

SAYING FAREWELL

Dear Bishop and Members of the Church Council,

After 11 years of service with Lutheran Bible Translators as Language Program Coordinator in Botswana through the invitation of the Lutheran Church in Southern Africa, through much prayer and discussion, my family and I believe that this year should be our final year in Botswana.

The Lord brought me here to accomplish the task of assisting the minority language groups in initiating language projects and Bible translation efforts. That task is now well underway. We have seen the development of language projects and the beginning of translation efforts among the Wayeyi, Khwe, !Xoo, Bakgalagari, Basubiya, Babirwa and Batswapong. This year I will also initiate work among the Tsoa by linking them with RETENG. Each of these projects now needs the assistance of a full time translation consultant and / or literacy consultant.

As I completed my task here, my family, living in the States, began requesting our return to be closer to them. My eldest son, Reuben, now with children of his own, has made numerous requests for us to be closer so that we can have a regular part in his family. Our daughter, Sarah, recently married, strongly desires her mother to be closer as she hopes soon to begin her family as well.

In summary, this appears to be a good time to say farewell to Botswana and to all of our friends and colleagues. It is also a good time to return to family in the States. Our plans are to leave in August, 2007.

I thank the Lutheran Church in Southern Africa for giving me the opportunity to serve the Lord at your sides in bringing God's Word to the people of Botswana. May our gracious God and Father continue to bless you and your efforts of bringing this life empowering Word to all the peoples of southern Africa.

In the Lord's Care and Service,

Rev. Richard P. Cook

The above letter sent to the Lutheran Church in Southern Africa, the church that invited us to work in Botswana, clearly states our reason for leaving Botswana and returning to the States. We depart with their blessing.

Please remember
In your prayers

✿ Praise ✿

For RETENG and OSISA to continue the initial work among the minority languages of Botswana.

For 11 years of ministry alongside the Lutheran Church in Southern Africa.

For the joy of like-minded friends & colleagues who made these years productive.

✿ Prayer ✿

For new LBT workers to serve in Botswana bringing God's Word to the people in their heart languages.

For peace, joy and courage as we begin the process of closure to ministry in Botswana.

For clear direction for new ministry as we return to the States.

Prayer
Requests



The Rest of the Story

For the past several years, we have talked about RETENG, the multicultural coalition of Botswana, with whom Richard has been working. RETENG is composed of members of the 13 language and cultural organizations established around the country in the past 11 years. One of their main objectives is to promote, nurture and preserve the linguistic and cultural diversity of Botswana's heritage and to promote the development of Botswana's languages in all social domains.

Besides RETENG, a new group has come forward this past year. OSISA, the Open Society Initiative for Southern Africa, is a Johannesburg-based foundation established in 1997 by investor philanthropist, George Soros. OSISA works in nine Southern Africa countries: Angola, Malawi, Botswana, Lesotho, Swaziland, Mozambique, Namibia, Zambia and Zimbabwe.

While involved in many aspects of development, language rights and indigenous language development is a part of the work of OSISA.

At the Shegalagari Orthography workshop in September, Richard had the opportunity to work with OSISA's language rights fellow, Dr. Lazarus Miti. Dr. Miti, a citizen of Zambia, holds a Ph.D. in Linguistics from the University in London. He is eager and qualified to work with the minority languages of Botswana.

As we bring our work to a close and plan to depart the country, Richard feels confident that the initial language development efforts will continue with RETENG and OSISA working alongside each other.

However, LBT still plays a critical role in the development of the minority languages of Botswana in providing trained staffing for Bible translation and literacy. These roles are unique to groups such as LBT and Wycliffe Bible Translators.

Continue to pray for Bible translation and literacy among the minority languages of Botswana. The task is begun but can only be brought to completion through the efforts of translation advisors, exegetes and literacy specialists committed to make every effort for this task. ✿

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