

word in action



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in Jordan

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turns 40

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pastor crisis

Welcome to
Summer 2017's
Word in Action!
Thank you so
much to over

5,000 of you who
completed our Supporter
questionnaire in the last
edition - an amazing response.
We will give you the headline
results in our Winter edition.

I hope you are intrigued by
our front cover and are
inspired and encouraged by
our stories from the Middle
East and around the world.
I have been moved to tears
while gathering prayers from
our colleagues in the Middle
East, please pray fervently
for them as they seek to
bring the Bible and God's
love and healing to the
broken hearted.

Every blessing
Larissa
Word in Action editor



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United Bible Societies

Chat with our Chief Exec



Photography by Layton Thompson

What would you like to ask our supporters?

Please pray for us. One of the things we sense God really putting on our hearts is to help the church in this country recover confidence in the Bible. Firstly, please ask God to help us see exactly how we can help contribute to what he's already doing and secondly ask for wisdom to design our programmes and resources. Finally, we would really appreciate your prayers for our leadership team and our staff as we're engaged in this process that's reflective, creative and hard work. We deeply value your prayers for us!

You recently visited the Bible Society of Jordan, do you have a memorable experience from your trip you could share with us?

We met an Iraqi refugee family who had a traumatic story fleeing from Mosul in Iraq. The family had been separated while fleeing and didn't know whether the other half of the family were alive. It took them two years to be reunited in Jordan. After we listened to their powerful story, I asked if there was a passage of Scripture that had been meaningful to them during this harrowing experience. The daughter started to read Psalm 13 in Arabic. As she read, the whole family (there were three generations there – the grandmother

of the girl, her parents and brother) all started crying. It was a very emotional moment and we were desperate to know what she was reading. When we found out, it was incredibly powerful to read Psalm 13 from their context; 'How much longer, Lord, will you forget about me? Will it be forever?'... ending with 'You have been good to me, Lord, and I will sing about you' (you can read the full Psalm on page 4).

For them it was the word in action in their lives sustaining them and their testimony of God's faithfulness to them.

What do you think we can learn from the Bible Society of Jordan?

I was struck by the effectiveness of the leadership of Munther (the General Secretary) and the Bible Society's vision and their relationships with the Church and other religious groups. Spiritually they understand the power of a unified Church.

That's an important lesson for us in this country. It's vital that we unify together, recognising that the core thing we share is an allegiance to Jesus Christ as Lord. With unity we can be more effective in the way we proclaim the gospel, the way we embody the gospel and the way we relate to others in our society.



Great result from Best Companies

Nine out of 10 of our employees responded to the Best Companies engagement survey 'Be Heard' and the results have been very encouraging. Bible Society has been ranked 31 in the top 100 not-for-profit organisations (up 45 places on last year) and awarded Two Stars status (up one from last year). We have an outstanding team who love what they do and understand the difference their work makes. We all know that without you we would not be able to do any of this. So a big thank you from all of us for making this possible.



Byw y Beibl

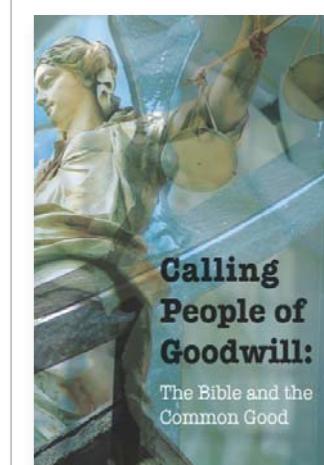
It is important that as well as reading the Bible we also learn to live out the implications of what we read. And that is the focus of our Welsh campaign Byw y Beibl (Live the Bible). We are sending out weekly articles entitled 'What does the Bible say about...' published in a newsletter which goes to 1,500 readers in Welsh chapels. The articles look at current affairs and explore challenging themes that are relevant to people's daily lives, discussing how the Bible helps us live day by day.

We have new Welsh social media pages, so come and join in the conversation if you speak Welsh:

Twitter: [@cymdeithasybeibl](https://twitter.com/cymdeithasybeibl)
Facebook: facebook.com/cymdeithasybeibl
facebook.com/beiblbyw
Website: cymdeithasybeibl.cymru

We are living in turbulent times – with religious, political and social divisions challenging our identity and common life. So what kinds of conversation and encounter will help us move forward? The common good is a means to seek the welfare of all people and this new booklet explores how Christians of all traditions can build the common good – both now, and for future generations. This is a booklet for our times.

£3.99
biblesociety.org.uk/commongood or
call 01793 418222



B Cymdeithas y Beibl @cymdeithasybeibl · Mar 8
Mae ymprydio'n arfer traddodiadol o'r Grawys, ond be' mae'r Beibl yn ei ddweud? #BlogBywYBeibl #yagym biblesociety.org.uk/what-we-do/bib...



B Cymdeithas y Beibl @cymdeithasybeibl · Mar 8
Agor y Gair gyda Mari - llyfr wedi'i sgwennu i ferched, gan ferched #DiwrnodRhyngwladolMenywod #IWD2017 ♀

Mae'r llyfryn newydd hwn gan Gymdeithas y Beibl...
Mae'r llyfryn newydd hwn gan Gymdeithas y Beibl wedi ei sgwennu i ferched gan ferched youtube.com

Journeys in Jordan

Millions of people have had to flee their homes in the Middle East, an estimated 1.4 million Syrians have ended up in neighbouring Jordan where they comprise 20% of the population.

I'm just back from visiting Bible Society's work in Jordan. Before I went, I was aware of the refugee situation. But it's when you meet families that you really come to understand the horror and complexity of their tragic journeys. We (including Paul Williams who recounts the meeting on page 2) met an Iraqi refugee family who fled from Syria, and had a dreadful journey. We asked them if there was a passage from the Bible that gave them hope. And the daughter read Psalm 13 (CEV):



How much longer, Lord, will you forget about me? Will it be forever? How long will you hide? How long must I be confused and miserable all day? How long will my enemies keep beating me down? Please listen, Lord God, and answer my prayers. Make my eyes sparkle again, or else I will fall into the sleep of death. My enemies will say, 'Now we've won! They will be greatly pleased when I am defeated. I trust your love, and I feel like celebrating because you rescued me. You have been good to me, Lord, and I will sing about you.

The whole family had tears pouring down their faces while she read this Psalm. It was an incredibly moving experience and personified how the Bible can speak to us in our deepest need.

This year, with your help, we're spending around £110,000 over five projects in Jordan. Bible Society provides everything from bedding to trauma healing for people who've fled their homes. But crucially, we do so through the local churches. We support the local churches and they support the refugees, which makes it sustainable.

The real needs go far beyond bedding and food. My experience is that the most pressing needs are emotional. One woman told me that her soul needed healing. All our projects seek to deliver that: they all have a biblical component. More than that, the people who are doing this are full of compassion. They really are playing a critical role in being the hands and feet of Christ.

We spent quite a bit of time in a town where the local church is providing trauma healing for families who have fled their homes. That applies whether they are from a Christian or Muslim background. I had a sense from the families that I talked to that they were discovering love and care from Christians and they questioned why – why should these people go out of their way to care for them? The answer was that Christ had shared his love with the local people and they were sharing that love with others, no matter where they came from or their background.



they are making a difference amidst the Middle East crisis helping people through their physical and spiritual journeys.

It is hard to measure what this will mean in the future. How can you quantify a changed life and the lives that person will affect? That is what's happening right now in Jordan through the gifts and prayers of supporters like you. Please continue to support this amazing work and use *Prayer in Action* to pray for the Middle East.

*name changed to protect her identity, please do not share her photo or story on any websites or social media as it will endanger her



Tim Foggin

Programme Advisor
for the Middle East



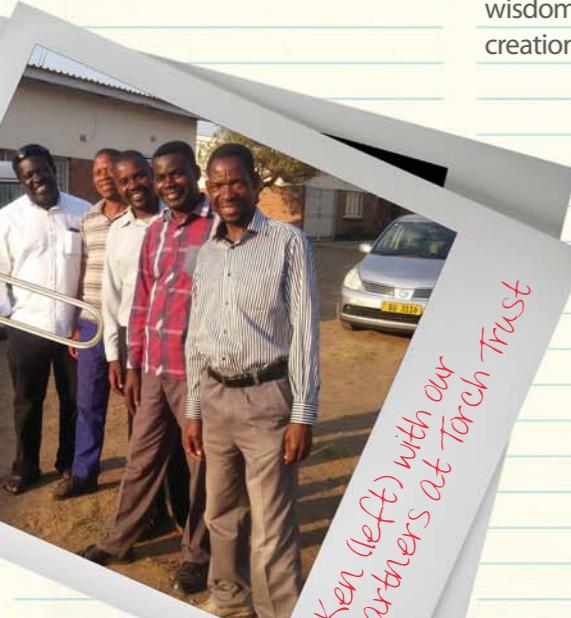
An African adventure

Christianity is growing fast in Africa, and there's an unprecedented demand for the Bible. But this is a continent with deep-rooted challenges. There's a tremendous opportunity to see God's word help shape fairer, more just nations.

This year, we're investing more than ever in the toughest, hardest areas of sub-Saharan Africa. We sent our new **Programme Adviser for Africa, Ken Dachi**, to find out more.

Day 1

Arrived in Blantyre, Malawi. Visited Torch Trust, our partner organisation which prints and distributes braille Bibles. Saw the full Bible in braille, a huge volume tied up in strips of cord. 1%¹ of sub-Saharan Africans are blind, so there's a pressing need for more braille Bibles here.



Day 2

Flew north to Lilongwe. Met some Sunday school teachers running our project to provide children's Bibles to children in Sunday schools in all city churches. More than half² of Malawi's population are children, so it's vital that we support this project to help shape Malawi's future.

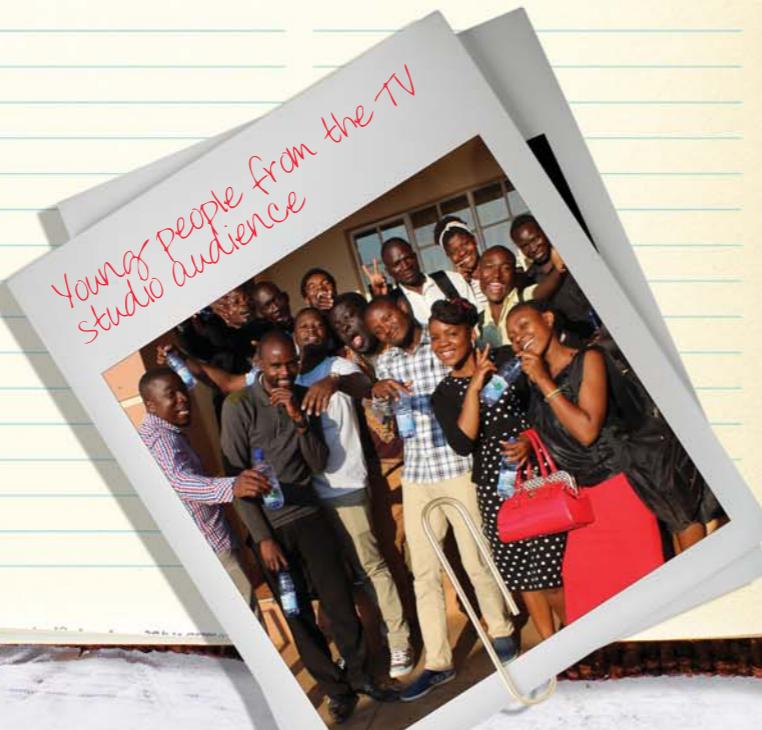


Day 3

Visited a TV studio! I was invited onto the panel for a pilot TV show – a laid-back question and answer format on 'Faith and Career' in front of a live audience of young people. Malawi's youth unemployment rate is 8.2% for females and 12.6% for males. I was supposed to be there for two hours, but stayed for twice as long because the young people kept asking questions.

Day 4 to 8

Arrived in Nairobi, Kenya, for the African Biblical Leadership Initiative (ABLI). Leaders gathered from around the continent to discuss the Bible's wisdom on governance and the creation of fair, just societies.



Day 9 to 12

Arrived in Maputo, Mozambique, an African city with warmth and energy, overlooking the Indian Ocean. But there are many challenges to Bible work:

- Certain parts of Mozambique have limited access, frustrating Bible mission.
- 43 languages are spoken here, with Portuguese the official language, so Bible translation is vital. Ten translations are currently underway.
- The country is huge. From Maputo, in the south, to Pemba, in the north, it's 1,500 miles. That's Land's End to John O'Groats and back again.



I spent three days with the team forming a strategic plan for Bible work. Our idea is to create regional hubs, to run Bible distribution, translation and literacy programmes, as well as Bible-based trauma healing for communities displaced by rebel fighting. We want to set up the first hub in 2017, and have at least two others by 2022.



Day 13

Travelled to Swaziland, one of the smallest nations in Africa with a population of just 1.25 million – about the same size as the city of Birmingham.

Day 14

Swaziland Bible sale! We sent word that we'd be in a town marketplace, loaded the Bibles into the Land Rover and set off in convoy. Villagers made their way on bikes and foot. They brought grain, figs, goats, pigs and other goods in exchange for Bibles.

It was all about bartering. We loaded the produce onto our vehicles, ate with the locals and travelled back to the city. We went straight to market, sold what we had and transferred the money to support more Bible mission. It's a perfect, local solution. It was also emotionally moving and spiritually exciting to see. If someone gives you grain, they are giving you their life. It brought tears to my eyes.



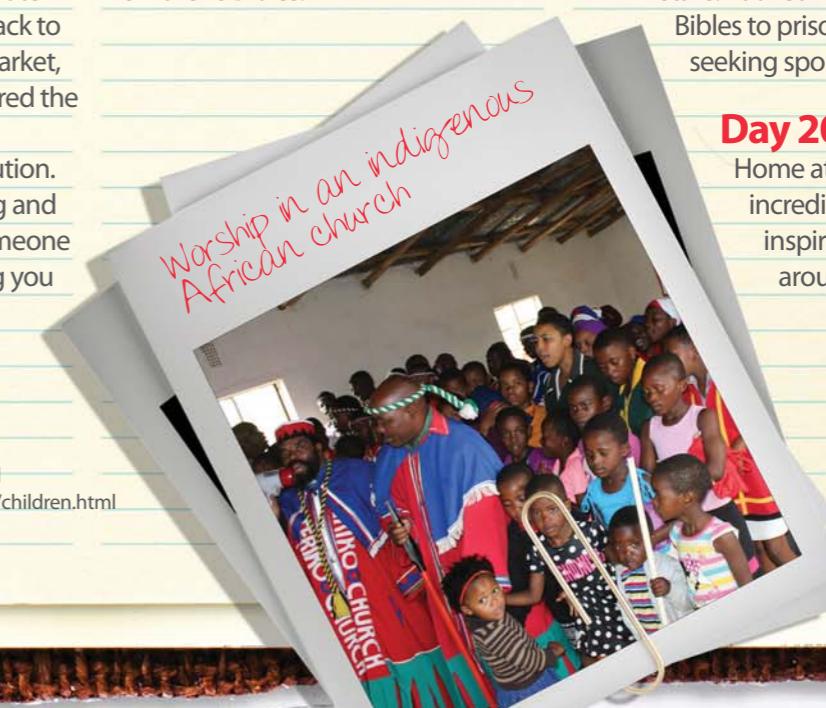
Day 15

Took the Gospels of Luke and Mark in the new siSwati Study Bible format to a pastors' gathering, to get feedback and whet their appetite for the upcoming full version.

Amazing to see them so excited for the study Bible. Also joined a service of an indigenous African church – five hours of loud, energised worship!

Day 16 and 17

Spent two days with deaf primary school children at a specialist school. Did an assembly on using the gifts God has given us. Totally moved by these children. Bible Society is ministering to this neglected community by providing sign language Bibles and illustrated children's Bibles.



Day 18

Attended a workshop for people with albinism and sight impairments. They aired their frustrations about church and access to God's word. One man living with albinism, a condition characterised by the absence of pigment in the skin, hair and eyes, told me it's all very well to give him a Bible – but he needs glasses to read it. I connected with another charity and we're hoping to do Bible distribution at the same time as them providing glasses.

Day 19

Explored other Bible distribution options. Already, the team use street sellers to hawk Bibles, setting up sales points alongside pay-and-go phone stalls. Looked into providing Bibles to prisoners and seeking sponsorship for this.

Day 20

Home at last after an incredibly moving and inspiring adventure around Africa!

¹ British Journal of Ophthalmology
<http://bjo.bmjjournals.org/content/85/8/897.full>

² UNICEF <https://www.unicef.org/malawi/children.html>

Bible a Month turns 40

Bible a Month, our scheme for supporters to give a Bible, month after month, is celebrating 40 years.

In that time, *Bible a Month* (BAM) members have raised more than £35 million – which is the equivalent of providing more than 7 million people around the world with a Bible.

The programme, originally called *Bible a Month Club*, was launched in June 1977. Back then, prospective members were told: 'It's the book club where you don't get a book – you give one every month,' and were invited to donate £1.50 a month. Within six months, the club had 1,500 members and by the end of 1978 it had doubled to 3,000 regular givers.

Today, there are 23,162 *Bible a Month* supporters, who give on average £8 a month each – enough to cover the £5 cost of translating, producing and distributing a Bible.

You've helped distribute 7 million Bibles



What YOU give

You give...
– the Bible, the most precious gift in the world, translated into the languages of peoples of every continent.
– specific prayers for urgent needs – for those translating and distributing Bibles, and for needy, grateful men, women and children, eager to read them.
– thanks to God for His daily goodness, expressed in sharing with others.
Your gift of £2 a month helps someone in another land to have a copy of the Bible. You make up the difference between the total cost of providing the Bible, and people's ability to pay. Sometimes this means free distribution.

Newsletter No 5
Dear Club Member
Praise God we're over two thousand! Yes, we have more than that number of members joining together each month in sharing the Good News of our Lord Jesus Christ by giving and by prayer. Thank you for your personal participation in our work.

But two thousand is not enough! Each year the calls for help are increasing. Take Ghana in West Africa, for instance. They need more Scripture. The Bible Society in Ghana has been carrying out some work to help them. They have reported "since our economy cannot allow the free flow of currency for some time to come, we need the prayers and which God's Word must pass to His people."

Put in other terms, Ghana is saying "we desperately need more Bibles". Our Club plans to help Ghana in 1979. You could make the value of this help greater – by introducing others to BAM. To help you, we've prepared a 'mini-exhibition'. This is a display panel, 27" x 20", which gives pictures, Club details – and holds brochures. It comes in a cardboard box through the mail (though not through your letter-box). Please put it on a table at your church entrance, at your fellowship group – wherever you return. If you would like to help the Club by borrowing the exhibition for a week or two, please write to me.

Thanks again for sharing

David Longley
BIBLE-A-MONTH CLUB SECRETARY

date 15.12

"The Holy Scripture is able to give you that leads to salvation through faith in Christ (2 Tim. 3 v.15) Please give each

Together, these supporters donate more than £2 million every year to Bible work.

John Ranford, *BAM* co-ordinator, said, 'We're so very grateful to all our *Bible a Month* members, today and in years gone by. This ministry has reached millions of people with God's word, and has changed so many lives, for good. Please keep supporting Bible work in this vital way.'

- To sign up to *Bible a Month*, fill out the card in *Word in Action* or call us on 01793 418222

Your Bible a Month memories

David Longley, the first co-ordinator of *BAM* in 1977 (and a supporter for the last 40 years), said, 'It's amazing to think of such long faithfulness by many to this very strategic ministry. Let's praise God for the countless thousands whose lives have been changed through the work of *Bible a Month*'.

Patricia Munthali

said, 'The Bible

has been a source of comfort and joy for me. I want everyone to have a Bible so that the Lord will minister to other people.'

Joanna Martin remembers joining *Bible a Month* in the late 1970s out of sympathy for the young spokeswoman who visited her church to talk about the scheme! She said, 'Bible Society does an immensely important and wonderful work, and I am very proud to be a supporter – whatever the reasons for originally joining up!'

Alec and Jan Forman became Christians during a 40,000-mile adventure through 29 countries in their trusty Land Rover, in 1977 – the same year that *BAM* was launched. They said, 'Having the Bible in modern-day English, that we could understand, had revealed Jesus to us, and we have been members of *BAM* since 1979.'



Bible Book Club

Bible Book Club, a new resource launched at the end of January, encourages people to read through the Bible one book at a time. Over the past six months over 3,000 people have been downloading our helpful guides and setting up their own Bible Book Clubs.

Amazingly, our guide to Leviticus, the least popular book according to a recent Bible Society survey hosted on our website, has had the most downloads, with Genesis and Matthew coming in second and third place.

Bible Book Club – Top 10

- Leviticus
 - Genesis
 - Matthew
 - Ruth
 - John
 - Romans
 - Mark
 - Esther
 - Luke
 - Jude
- (downloaded guides since January 2017)

One of the key aims of Bible Book Club is to encourage people to explore lesser known books as well as more familiar ones and it takes less time than you think. Obadiah, Haggai and Nahum can all be read in under 10 minutes according to our guides. New Testament books like Philippians, Colossians and 2 Peter can be read in under 15 minutes.

The Bible Book Club website hosts easy-to-use guides for all 66 books with lots of information including genre, background context and tricky issues. There are also questions for small groups intended to develop conversation as you gather to reflect on your personal reading experience with your book club.

According to Rob Hare, Bible Society Project Manager: 'One of the key benefits of Bible Book Club is the emphasis on reading one book at a time rather than reading a few verses or small sections of Scripture. The learning experience is amplified as you share your

reading experience with others in your book club.'

If you're not sure which book to start with, we provide a variety of tracks to help you get going – if you want to explore the poetry of the Bible you could try reading Psalms, Proverbs or Ecclesiastes. If you want to revisit Sunday School stories you could go to Genesis, Exodus or Judges. Or how about exploring some of Paul's writing in Romans, Corinthians or Ephesians? If you are feeling inspired and want to discover a richer experience of the Bible, then why not start your own Bible Book Club. It's free and all the information you need is available at biblesociety.org.uk/biblebookclub or call 01793 418222 for further details.

Share your Bible Book Club adventures on social media using the hashtag #biblebookclub





Revd Liu (left) with Duan Yonghua (right) and his grandson



Chen Jingchun with some of his Sunday school students



All photography by Clare Kendall

China's pastor crisis

It's 4 am and still dark in the small town of Luhe in central China. The town is asleep, but Revd Liu Xiaofan is awake. Every day for the last 35 years, he's risen at this time. He walks alongside the river, praying and singing, communing with God. He works a 19-hour day, seven days a week, and hasn't had a day off in those 35 years.

Why does he do this? Because – with three other pastors – he is responsible for some 45,000 Christians over more than 900 square miles, among 244 congregations. He lives on site at his home church in Luhe town so that he can be available constantly.

'I believe in being on call 24-hours a day,' he says. 'I never get a day off. It's the way here. My daughter got married in July and even then I didn't have the day off. For me, it's very natural.'

Across China this situation is repeated again and again. Church growth, combined with a lag in the number of pastors being trained, means that nationally there are some 6,700 Christians for every trained pastor.

With your help, we're trying to change that. Your support means that we've been able to provide the best theological library in China in Nanjing Theological Seminary. It helps the students learn. And we're able to bring in specialist teachers to add to the quality of their learning. It all helps them when they get out into their home churches.

Revd Liu is now concentrating on encouraging the next generation of pastors within his churches:

12 young people from his congregations are studying in Nanjing. This gives them a foundational grounding to become a pastor' he says.

So back at Luhe church, it's now early on Saturday morning and Revd Liu is taking the Saturday church service. The church is packed. Then, after a bite to eat, he jumps in the car and drives to Gaozhuang village, about half an hour away. This rural community is bringing in the rice harvest, drying the grains of rice across the roads. So he drives carefully around vast swathes of rice to get to the church. Revd Liu visits the church once a month. The rest of the time lay leaders conduct the services.

Yu Mei Ping, 69, is one of the church members. 'Because our church is not that rich we can't afford our own pastor,' she says. The idea of the church having its own pastor is beyond her. It would be 'unimaginable' she says, and 'inexpressible joy'.

Back at the town church in Luhe, it's 6.45 pm on Saturday night and a Bible study starts with singing. This is where Revd Liu starts to train lay leaders, some of whom may go on to become theologically-trained pastors like him. Everyone is up and clapping. There's a very cheerful atmosphere. Around 70 people are seated at rows of desks on a Saturday night to learn more about the Bible.

The next morning, Luhe church starts filling up at 5 am. By 7 am, more than 1,200 people have arrived. Late-comers for the 7.50 am service sit outside in the late winter sunshine. Among them is Duan

Yonghua, 56, who's here with his grandson. 'I come to church because of God's goodness,' he says. 'My sister was called to the Lord first and I have seen a change in her life and so I came too. Now the whole family comes to the church.'

This is the case across China where it's estimated that 40 million people are Christians. One million more join the Church every year. But at Nanjing Seminary, there are just 400 students. Two thousand have been trained since it opened in 1952. Revd Liu spends Sunday afternoon at Long Ci village where 700 people are attending the service. The church is so overwhelmed that they are digging the foundations of a new, larger building.

But they are also laying down foundations for its spiritual future, as Chen Jingchun, 28, the Sunday School teacher, plans to go to Nanjing to train to be a pastor. 'I couldn't do my job without the training,' he says. 'I could try my best to love the kids. They would feel my love, but to teach the Bible I really need to be trained.'

So, in the coming years, it may be that as new pastors like Jingchun join the churches, Revd Liu could have a day off. What would you do with it, I ask? He looks rather blank. 'I've never thought about relaxing,' he says. 'Each time when I think I will have a short break, something crops up.'



Hazel Southam
Chief reporter

GUARDIANS OF ANCORA

Bringing the Bible to life in the digital realm

When children aged between 5 and 15 spend a record 15 hours online each week, there's one obvious way to engage them with the Bible...

Time online has overtaken TV viewing as kids' top pastime for the first time, according to Ofcom, and 44% of 5 to 15-year-olds own a tablet.

So Scripture Union has developed a game, available free for smartphones and tablets, which has faith and Bible engagement at its heart. Users become characters ('guardians'), who enter a fictional city to explore and recover lost Bible stories. They run, climb and leap through quests, answering quizzes, watching videos and playing mini-games. The game, called Guardians of Ancora, has been developed with support from Bible Society in the States and was launched in 2015. Since then, it's

been downloaded more than 110,000 times and has been played nearly a million times.

The aim is that by 2020, 20 million children will be discovering the Bible's stories through the game.

Maggie Barfield, product developer for Guardians of Ancora, said, 'If we're going to meet children where they are, they are in the digital realm – gaming, researching, sharing, watching videos and communicating. The question is not whether digital technology can be useful to spirituality, so much as how best to harness the possibilities on offer.'

The game has been created by world-class game designers as well as highly experienced Christian writers, theologians and practitioners. Maggie added, 'Every element of Guardians of Ancora is designed to have a spiritual and

biblical purpose, embedded in such a way to be unobtrusive and natural to the player. This is what gives the game its vital immersive quality.'

Use the game with your church, school or family:

- Download and play the game, for free, on your tablet or smartphone by searching in the App Store
- Find out how to use it with your church or school by visiting guardiansofancora.com
- Become a 'champion' for the game and promote it among churches and schools in your area. Visit guardiansofancora.com and click on the 'support for you' link



Prom Praise for Schools

The lights came up at London's Royal Albert Hall, and around 5,500 children cheered wildly. They were there for a unique exploration of the Bible story, The Lost Son, retold through song, drama, music and even beatboxing.

This was Prom Praise for Schools, a project which we have supported since 2015. The children, all aged between 9 and 11, came from 56 primary schools across London and nearby counties. Just over 530 of them formed a choir which lined the iconic Royal Albert Hall stage, flanking the 80-strong All Souls Orchestra.

The theme for the evening was Jesus' famous parable of a wayward son returning home to his open-armed father. Each song was carefully chosen to help tell the story – from Coldplay's 'Viva la Vida' to traditional hymn 'Amazing Grace'.

For many children, it was an unforgettable experience. But equally important was the preparation which many schools had been doing in the run-up to the

event, using specially-produced RE resources to explore the story through art, music and drama.

In one school, Holy Trinity Church of England Primary School in Northwood, west London, children had been using 'thought tunnels' to investigate the emotions of the characters.

Seven-year-old Blake walked between two lines of his peers, each calling out conflicting thoughts: 'He'll be so angry,' 'You shouldn't have spent all that money,' 'I'm quite excited to be going home...' Afterwards, Blake was bursting to share his new idea: 'Before, I thought the son was happy when he came home to his father,' he said. 'But he wasn't. I think he felt sad and worried.'

Meanwhile, at All Souls Primary School, in Foley Street, London, musicians from All Souls Orchestra visited with their instruments, and talked to children about how song lyrics related to The Lost Son. As they consider the words to Amazing Grace, the children are asked, 'Who lost him? What does "found" mean?'

Kate Sharp, a schools' worker with All Souls Church, who leads the choir at All Souls Primary School, said, 'The children think the Bible is old and hard to read. So it's very clever to link it to music. The music brings the emotion alive. It brings the story to life.'

Claire Smith
Freelance writer



Rezi, aged 11, said, 'When I am singing, it reminds me of the story. The son is lost physically and emotionally. He's lost in money and greed. I think it's emotionally that he gets found.'



Nine-year-old Umindee said, 'This is the first time I have heard the story of The Lost Son. If someone left me, I would want them to come back and I would forgive them.'



YOUR LETTERS & COMMENTS

The special editions you produce, such as *The Servant Queen* and *The Super Cool Story of Jesus* are an excellent aid to give to people on special occasions. Thank you

ANN, WESTON-SUPER-MARE

The idea of reading a book of the Bible at a time with friends (Bible Book Club) is an excellent idea.

STELLA, CHIPPING NORTON

Thought *The Well Good News of Christmas* booklet was really great and spot on for communicating the message in a contemporary style. The decorated Bible verses calendar was also a good idea – gave ours away to a worker in a care home who saw it and really wanted it!

VICTORIA, HULL

A great read. I couldn't put it down! How wonderful that, at last, Yaofang and others have the Bible in their Black Yi language plus literacy classes. Brave Anthony in Pakistan, against all odds and dangers, distributing and sharing God's word needs our prayers. And praise God for Viviane in Congo, sharing the Good Samaritan programme with children.

ANNE, WARRINGTON

I thoroughly enjoyed this issue of *Word in Action* because I could clearly see the impact it has made in the life of fellow believers around the world. Getting the Bible translated for the Black Yi tribe shows how Bible Society has helped those people in China to progress in their walk with God.

DAWN, LONDON

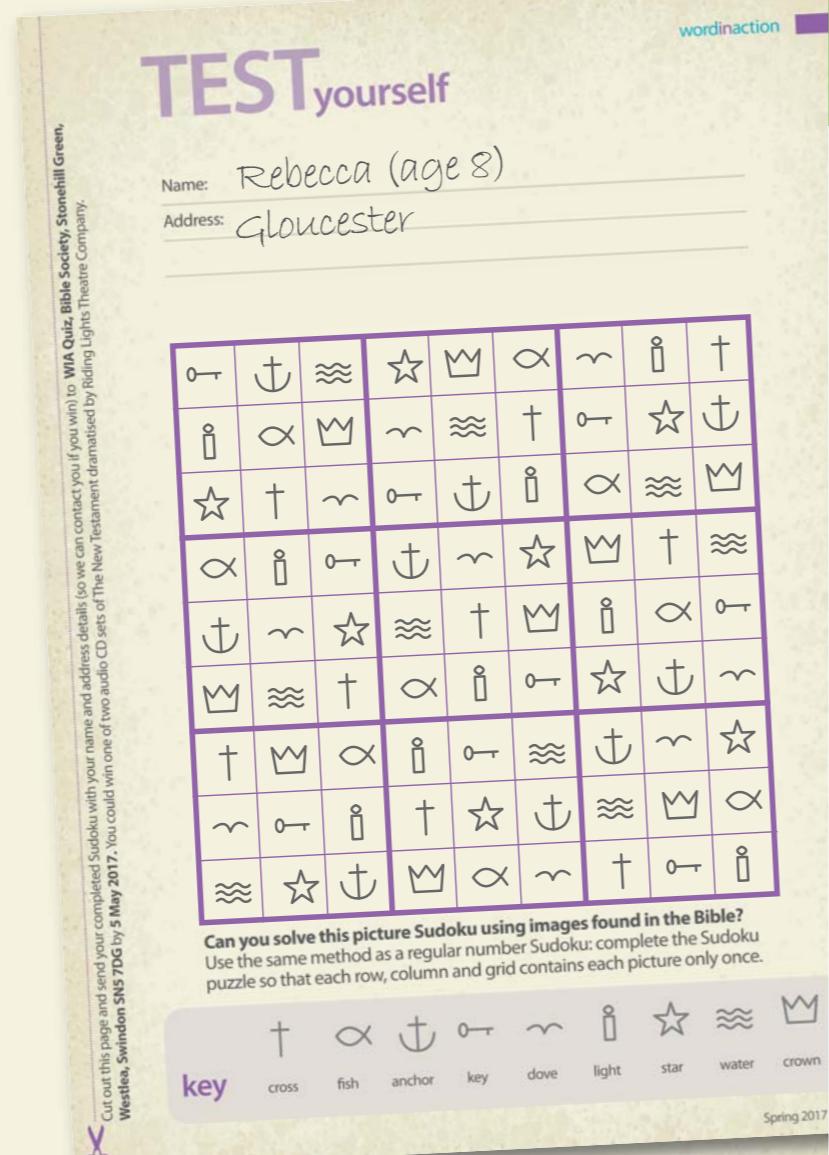
WE LOVE TO HEAR FROM YOU

Email us your thoughts and comments at wia@biblesociety.org.uk or use the comments form attached.

We reserve the right to edit letters for style and length.

The views expressed do not necessarily represent those of Bible Society.

Thank you for your completed entries for the picture Sudoku. Congratulations to our winners, Rebecca (age 8) from Gloucester and Matthew from Oxford – we hope you enjoy The New Testament audio CD set dramatised by Riding Lights Theatre Company.



One verse



'Heaven and earth will pass away, but my words will never pass away.' Matthew 24.35 (GNB)

When I was growing up as a young Christian, I was taught that there were two things that will last for eternity: the souls of men, women and children and the word of God. All that we see will not last for eternity, we can't take our houses and cars to the next life! But the souls of people and the word of God will last forever.

I'm involved in ministries of eternity. When we translate, publish, distribute,

teach and spread the word of God to people in China, we are dealing in the eternal word and giving it to men and women, so that it will affect their eternal destiny.

It will impact millions, maybe thousands of millions of people for eternity. So this verse has been a great encouragement to me.

Kua Wee Seng, Director of Bible Society's mission in China

mercy and compassion. So, hope for us is waiting for the restoration with trust and confession. There is hope for South Sudan!



Biblepeople:

Honourable Anne Lino Wuor Abyie is a member of the South Sudanese National Legislative Assembly. Her passion is bringing the Bible to the realm of governance.

How does the Bible shape your political outlook and career?

There are great biblical stories about political figures such as kings and rulers. These stories tell us that when politicians obey God and depend on him, they prosper in everything they do. Their nations also live in peace as the result of God's protection.

Therefore, their children prosper because of peace and tranquility in the nation. It is this biblical teaching about obedience to God and dependence on him that is central to my involvement in politics.

Hope is one of the fundamental messages of biblical teaching. What does it mean to hope in South Sudan?

In South Sudan, the political situation is very volatile. But our hope must be anchored in the word of God, in his forgiveness, grace,

Open the Book research proves fruitful

For the last two years, Open the Book (OtB) has conducted independent research in several primary schools to measure how their storytelling assemblies have made a difference to the children's biblical literacy, Christian values and relationships with the local church.

The consensus was that the knowledge and influence of Bible stories on the OtB groups was significantly positive and the OtB school children clearly retained

Bible stories and characters better than their non-OtB school counterparts. It was evident that:

- OtB storytelling is highly valued and enjoyed by children, teachers and volunteers alike
- It develops the children's own sense of spirituality and helps form their world view
- It increases biblical literacy and builds moral character

One RE co-ordinator reinforced the relationship-building aspect when she said, 'It's lovely having some of the local Christian community coming into school.'



Photography by Clare Kendall



What will your legacy be?

**Bring the Bible to life for the next generation.
Remember Bible Society with a gift in your will.**

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