

Pacific

Churches are present almost everywhere on the island nations of the Pacific, and there is no animosity toward Christians or the Bible. But without heart language Scripture, believers have difficulty growing in their faith and reaching others.

While the area has a long history of Bible translation work, local churches and ministries face many obstacles to addressing the area's remaining needs. These obstacles include:

1. A shortage of well-trained people to ensure accuracy and clarity of translated texts
2. A great number of languages (Papua New Guinea alone has over 800)
3. Logistical challenges. Some areas with remaining Bibleless people groups have poor or no roads, while others can only be reached by boat.

As you pray through this journal, ask for more laborers in God's harvest field of the Pacific with innovation and creativity to address this area's logistical challenges. We join in praying Matthew 6:10 over this region: "May your Kingdom come soon. May your will be done on earth, as it is in heaven."

[**VIDEO: What do we mean by "Pray for Zero"?**](#)

Regional Praise

Nukuoro People of Micronesia Celebrate Completing the Full Bible

[We prayed for the Nukuoro dedication celebration in December 2022](#), and God answered! The full Nukuoro Bible was dedicated on March 25, 2023. This joyful event was the culmination of over 60 years of hard work by Nukuoro translators.

At the celebration, long-time project leader [Betty Amon](#) put the Bible into the hands of the local church, saying, “My work is done. It’s your Bible now.” Translation consultant Paulus Kieviet mentioned that the Nukuoro are one of just 725 language groups to have the whole Bible (out of over 7,000). With fewer than 1,000 speakers, they are also one of the smallest people groups worldwide to have this privilege.

Early generations of Nukuoro believers were so passionate about the gospel that they carried the message to the neighboring island of Kapingamarangi—even without Scripture in their own language! Now that they have the full counsel of God’s Word, may this generation of Nukuoro believers carry that same passion in reaching others around them.

PRAISE

The translation is available in printed form and a Scripture app in the Google Play Store. The Nukuoro songbook (printed in 2005) has also been published on an Android app.

Monday

And then he told them, "Go into all the world and preach the Good News to everyone."

— Mark 16:15 (NLT)

PRAY FOR A BIBLELESS PEOPLE GROUP Diodio of Papua New Guinea

Diodio people (population 3,300), who live on Goodenough Island in the Milne Bay Province, are friendly and hold strong family values. Most are Christian, but animistic beliefs remain influential. Pirates are a hazard whenever they travel by sea to the mainland.

After SIL and Bible Translation Association held a Translation Awareness Workshop, Diodio people realized they needed their own translation in order to fully understand the teachings of Scripture. They appointed a translation committee, and they've partnered with SIL Papua New Guinea to translate the New Testament!

PRAY

That as Scripture is translated, people will apply it to the issues of their daily lives, including unemployment, drug abuse, and confusion between Christ's teachings and traditional rituals.

Praise God for a Complete Niuafou New Testament in Tonga

National language speakers in Tonga have historically tended to look down on minority language groups, especially the Niuafou group of roughly 900–1,000 people. Most Niuafou identify as Christian, but many still don't truly understand the gospel of grace. Niuafou Scripture will help people grow deep roots in Christ as well as confidence in their own identity.

Praise God the Niuafou New Testaments have arrived, and a dedication celebration is planned for July 7!

Pray Now

For a wonderful day of celebration and for social and spiritual transformation for people who have long felt that their language was inferior.

Tuesday

God will do this, for he is faithful to do what he says, and he has invited you into partnership with his Son, Jesus Christ our Lord.

— 1 Corinthians 1:9 (NLT)

PRAY FOR PARTNERS

Isles of the Sea

[Isles of the Sea](#), a partnership between members of SIL Pacific and Wycliffe, is sponsored by Seed Company. The goal of the Isles of the Sea project is to facilitate ongoing Bible translation programs in languages of Polynesia and Micronesia in which local people are committed to translating Scripture into their own languages. The Nukuoro and Niufo'ou languages are part of this project.

PRAY

That God will give wisdom to start new projects, even for the smallest people groups, so they can have his Word in the language they understand best.

PRAISE

They've produced a film called "Unfinished!" that features testimonies from Pacific Islanders to inspire other Pacific Islanders to get involved in Bible translation for their people. [Watch "Unfinished!"](#)

Praise God for Answering Prayer for the To'abaita People of the Solomon Islands

[In March, we asked God to help the To'abaita team complete Luke's Gospel](#) in time for the consultant check. Prayer answered! Luke is complete, and checking is scheduled for this month. Quality Scriptures in To'abaita will help people know the true God and stand firm against false teaching.

The team reports, "The translated Christmas and Palm Sunday stories were read in church while the people followed along with printed copies. It had probably been more than 30 years since some older people had heard the gospel in their own language. For most people at those services, it was their first time."

Pray Now

That the consultant check will go well so even more To'abaita people can hear the gospel in their own language for the first time.

Wednesday

In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth.

— Genesis 1:1

Ka ia tatanigaina, God neke va vuhai ia kolanga nia malau iahi peka nia ira vahina leghutau nga ka ira giliodi.

— Tatanigaina 1:1 (Zabana, a language in the Solomon Islands)

Pray for the Zabana Team in the Solomon Islands

Zabana people left behind traditional animistic practices and came to faith in Christ in the 20th century. But they have never had Scripture in their own language. That is changing!

Last September, on page 17 of the Pacific prayer journal, [we prayed for the Zabana New Testament publication process to go smoothly](#) and for wisdom as they worked with a consultant to improve Old Testament drafts. God answered! They report that they “really enjoyed and admired the hard work offered by consultant Pat Andrews.”

Pray Now

For the community as they prepare for the dedication of the Zabana New Testament on July 2nd, 2023. Ask for the Holy Spirit’s continued guidance as they work toward a full Bible.

PRAY FOR AN ACTIVE TRANSLATION PROJECT

Tikopia in Solomon Islands

[God answered our prayers in March for finalization of the Tikopia New Testament!](#) Consultant and project manager Nico Daams reports a good response to the launch of the Tikopia New Testament app, with almost 40 downloads in one day. To promote awareness of the app, he started a Facebook Bible translation group. He also discovered a Tikopian group with more than 1,000 members and was able to easily connect them with the app because of his relationship with the group's administrator. Praise God for this open door!

PRAISE

Reviewer John Teakolaoi said when he reads the Solomon Islands Pijin translation in church, he sees little response. But when he reads the Tikopian Gospels, people really pay attention!

PRAY

That people will offer constructive comments on the app to improve the translation's quality before printing later this year.

Thursday

Their responsibility is to equip God's people to do his work and build up the church, the body of Christ.

— Ephesians 4:12 (NLT)

EQUIPPING THE SAINTS

Pray for Intern Lorie Temi in Papua New Guinea

Lorie, a Seed Company intern, is a translator for the Fanamaket language and serves as a teaching assistant in a Greek course for translators in Papua New Guinea. By the end of the course, the participants can understand simple narrative passages in New Testament Greek. Praise God for enabling him to make such great progress in his internship since [we prayed for him last September \(page 12\)](#).

“I love opening up God’s word to anyone and to encourage others and doing just anything I can to serve the Lord in a church setting or to my peers or to anyone whenever I have the opportunity. I’m thankful that God can use me for his glory, more than I expected.”

[Learn more about Lorie with this 1-minute video from SIL Papua New Guinea.](#)

PRAY

For Lorie to discern what types of ministry roles the Lord wants him to take on in this season. Pray for wisdom to know what he should pause, hand over to other believers, and continue to pursue.

PRAISE

Lorie praises God that the Greek 2 course went well. He felt that he was learning alongside the students as he helped them through the 5-week course.

Praise God for Protecting Two Interns During Cyclones in Vanuatu

Interns Philip and Georgie were participating in a Scripture training when two cyclones hit the area. Thankfully, God protected both of them!

Philip Joses

Philip says, “Praise God for this wonderful opportunity to be part of God's mission as an intern with SIL Vanuatu and the privilege to get closer to him.” He requests prayer for his community as they recover from the cyclones and also requests prayer for God to bless his family, work, and personal relationship with God.

Georgie Reman

Intern Georgie Reman ([who we prayed for in December](#)) took [a video of the cyclones](#) that hit during their “Trenem Tingting Kos” training (which roughly translates to “Train Thinking Course”). Incredibly, the training continued in the middle of the storm. He writes, “I praise God for his protection during the cyclone, and all the good things that he's been doing in my life during this time.”

Friday

Rise up, O Lord, in all your power. With music and singing we celebrate your mighty acts
— Psalm 21:13 (NLT)

IMPACT STORY

Sudest People of Papua New Guinea See Themselves in the Book of Joshua

Joshua begins with 12 action-packed chapters of God giving the Israelites victory over their enemies as they begin to take the Promised Land. Some might find chapters 13–21 a bit less exciting, as Joshua “gets into the weeds” of dividing up the land. But not the Sudest people.

Sudest people live on a large island in which land is passed down through family lines rather than written titles. So when their translation team met with consultants for the final check of Joshua, the descriptions in these “boring” chapters made perfect sense to them. They could describe their own land with the same level of detail.

Checking these chapters showed the Sudest translators that just as God cared about Israel enough to lay their specific land boundaries so that everyone had what they needed, he has provided their own land with the same type of attention and care.

PRAY

That such passages will continue to show the Sudest people that Scripture is real and relevant to all areas of life.

Praise God for Answered Prayers for the New Ireland Cluster in Papua New Guinea

Though about 90% of New Ireland's population identifies as Christian, in times of trouble, people tend to appeal to both animistic spirits *and* the God they hear about in church. The New Ireland Cluster translation project, which includes six languages, is helping them find freedom and trust Christ alone to meet their needs.

In March, [we prayed for protection for the Feni project advisor as he traveled to Anir Island for their final New Testament readthrough](#). The readthrough was completed, and the team reports that “the rather sketchy travel to and from the Feni islands went smoothly.”

In addition, [God answered our prayers for the Label team](#) (page 11 of September's Pacific issue) and helped them work through a “pesky grammatical particle.” Their New Testament is almost ready for typesetting!

Pray Now

That God will bless and make the way smooth for each of these teams as they work to get the New Testament in the hands of their people.