

David and Lynn Frank Wycliffe Bible Translators Spring 2013

Dear Friends,

For the first time in history, the number of languages in the world with a confirmed need to have a translation of the Bible has now fallen under 2000. It may be confusing, because I can remember slogans from decades ago like “two thousand tongues to go” and “every tribe by ’85.” The problem is that as we continued researching the number of distinctive languages and cultures in the world, the number kept growing. Through their (our) research and publications, SIL International is a recognized authority on the languages of the world. A publication called the *Ethnologue* catalogues details about all of the languages of the world including relations to each other, where they are spoken, how many people are estimated to speak these languages, and how much Bible translation or other development work such as literacy or linguistic documentation has been done for these languages. Part of the difficulty in doing this research is testing to see whether two distinguishable language forms are far enough apart to be considered different languages, or close enough together to be considered different dialects of the same language. This is part of the work we do. The information in the published *Ethnologue* can also be found online at [www.ethnologue.com](http://www.ethnologue.com). The research has shown there to be over 6,800 languages spoken in the world, but the goal is in sight now to have a Bible translation at least started in every language that needs one in our lifetime.



According to the statistics on the [Wycliffe USA web site](http://WycliffeUSA.com), there are 518 different languages in the world with a translation of the whole Bible, and 1275 with at least a New Testament. In our first twenty-three years of service with Wycliffe, we have personally been part of two of these New Testament completions. In recent years, we have put our experience to use serving as consultants to other translation projects in progress. From 2009 through last year, we have been involved in consulting in Guinea-Bissau, West Africa. Currently the translation projects we were working on are on hold, due to a combination of limited funds and administrative reorganization, but we are looking forward to resuming our translation consulting either back in Guinea-Bissau or elsewhere.

Meanwhile, we have work to do back at our office at the JAARS Center in North Carolina, as editors. I have recently finished putting together a new issue of the *Journal of Translation*, which can be found online at [www.journaloftranslation.org](http://www.journaloftranslation.org). The work continues, assembling a new issue for later this year. Lynn has been involved in a number of editing projects. Recently she was editor of a literacy research project from Papua New Guinea, which will soon be published on the SIL web site, and she is currently editing a long paper on creative problem solving by one of our veteran linguistics consultants.

We are thankful to be part of this work, using our God-given skills for His service. We also thank you who pray for us and support us in various ways. We could not do this work without your support.

In Christ,

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for contributions sent to Wycliffe, please enclose a note saying,  
“for the ministry of David and Lynn Frank”