

Gift and Kathryn Asiku and family are based in Entebbe, Uganda. Gift is a Language Programmes Coordinator and Kathryn is the Literacy & Scripture Engagement Assistant.

December 2020



Dear Friends,

Greetings from Entebbe! We are continuing to stay well and safe, and we thank you for your prayers and support. In spite of the challenges of this Covid season, God has met all our needs and we have been blessed with more than enough to share with others. It has been a year of learning to be content with what we have and where we are, whilst making the most of the opportunities we have. We have much to be thankful for.

Reflecting: It has been a year of more and less; more family time at home, more football, more baking, more gardening, more building – both our house and Lego models; less time at the office, less travelling, less visitors and fewer physical meetings. It has also been a year of opportunities. We have had the chance to get to know our nephews better – we have had five of them staying with us at various times; we have had the privilege of coming alongside several couples preparing for marriage and others already married, putting into practice what we learned in the marriage counselling training we did at church in 2019; we have been exercising our teaching skills with the children and neighbours at home; and we have been learning how to make the best use of technology in more areas of life – work, church, education and keeping in touch with family and friends.

Adapting: We give thanks and glory to God that Bible translation has been continuing throughout this year, in spite of the challenges. Translators have had to adapt to working from home. Thankfully, resources were found for each one to have internet access at home for their work, but not all have electricity at home, so the translators may have to walk or cycle several kilometres to a place where they can charge their laptops. More translation consultant checking has been done remotely rather than in person with consultants in Uganda and in the USA meeting translation teams online, often requiring sacrifices because of the time differences. One particular challenge caused by the spread of Covid-19 has been how to carry out the community testing step of the translation process. However, with the use of masks, sanitiser and smaller groups, the translators have been able to do some testing of the translated Scriptures in their communities.

Appreciating: In Uganda, the churches were closed from the end of March until October, but many Christians started to hold their own services at home or be more committed to having family devotions. Translators have reported that people have appreciated having the Bible in their language even more than before, because it made it easier for them to read and share from God's Word themselves. They had been used to depending on a Church leader to interpret the Bible reading from English or Luganda or another language, because that was what used to happen before the translated Scriptures were published.

Celebrating: This year, we will spend Christmas in Entebbe, even though we had planned to celebrate it in the UK. We will miss our usual Christmas visit to Gift's family in Arua, but we are used to expecting the unexpected and have learned to be flexible. We hope you enjoy Christmas wherever you are and however you celebrate it, even if it is a bit different this year.

Looking ahead: Next year, we as a family are looking forward to schools reopening, whenever that happens, completing the first floor apartments in our house and to celebrating two significant birthdays in the family. With our colleagues, we are looking forward to implementing a new project aimed at engaging the churches in Uganda more actively in the work and support of Bible translation in this country. I, Kathryn, am praying that the literacy project proposal I have been working on will receive funding and that we will be able to go ahead with it for the benefit of many children who currently have few or no books to read. We are also praying that several more translated books of Scripture will be published next year, so that even more people can share in the hope we have in knowing Christ.

We appreciate your prayers and support, and we pray that God will bless you as you celebrate “Immanuel” – God with us – this Christmas.

With love from Gift, Kathryn, James and Simon Peter

Prayer points:

- We praise God for good health and His protection upon us and our families.
- We praise God for providing teachers and learning opportunities for our children during this time.
- We thank God that we have been able to continue our work throughout this Covid season.

Please pray with us...

- ...for an end to the Covid-19 pandemic.
- ...for a peaceful and enjoyable Christmas, and time to rest after a very busy year.
- ...for peace and security in Uganda during this election season and for free and fair elections in January.
- ...for God’s wisdom and resources for the implementation of new projects next year, and for energy and sufficient human resources to do the work successfully.
- ...for protection for translators and their families as Covid-19 is now spreading in rural communities.



One thing we have really enjoyed during this Covid season is the opportunity to access services online from our supporting churches in the UK. It helps us feel part of fellowships there. On Sunday 20th December, we followed the online Christingle Service from Kathryn’s parents’ church, Tonbridge Methodist. It was the first time our nephews and neighbours had heard of Christingle. You may notice from this photo that our oranges are green and we used mango pieces instead of raisins or sweets. Front row: our neighbours Emmanuel and Victor with Simon Peter. Middle row: James with our nephew Daniel. Back row: Our nephew Clifford, Kathryn and our neighbour Ronald.

How you can be involved: We appreciate your prayers and support for us in this work. To support us financially, please use the secure on-line giving option on the Wycliffe UK website: <https://www.wycliffe.org.uk/donate/> or send a cheque payable to Wycliffe Bible Translators with a note saying it is a gift towards Gift and Kathryn Asikus’ ministry. Thank you.

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