

Wow!

Word at Work

THE MAGAZINE OF THE BIBLE SOCIETY IN NORTHERN IRELAND
SUMMER 2018



PEOPLE ARE ACCESSING THE BIBLE IN MANY DIFFERENT FORMATS. SEE PAGE 11 FOR MORE.

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Cover photo demonstrates how more people are listening to the Bible through devices while they are on the move.



Welcome

Catherine Little
General Secretary, Bible Society NI

Recently I became an auntie for the first time; my sister and her husband had a little girl called Charlotte at the end of March. Naturally, everyone is trying to work out who she looks like – does she look like her Mum or her Dad? I know that I look like my Dad. I've been told this a lot growing up. I'm also very like my Dad in other ways, I have his ability to talk apparently!

Recently I've had a couple of opportunities to speak to groups near to where I grew up in Fermanagh, even one at the Mothers' Union in my home church! Speaking to people who have known me my whole life is very different to speaking to groups who don't know me at all. When I'm speaking in Fermanagh people often know who I am, they know my Mum or Dad, they know where I have come from and this makes a difference to how I feel and perhaps to how they feel. I know I feel hugely encouraged.

As well as looking like my earthly father, I also hope that I carry the characteristics of my heavenly father. As Christians, we all carry God with us as we interact with others, as we speak and act. Bible Society staff all

over the world carry God with them as they work to encourage people with God's Word.

This edition of Word at Work is, as ever, filled with encouraging stories. I loved having Hrayr from the Gulf with us in February and very much look forward to welcoming Dina from the Arab Israeli Bible Society in August. Bible Society NI is part of a huge global family with people from almost every country in the world. As I communicate with and get to know my colleagues, I do so on your behalf. As a supporter of Bible Society NI you are part of our family here, you have a truly global impact.

There are changes to how charities and other companies can communicate to their supporters with the General Data Protection Regulations – see the back page of this magazine. As part of our family here in Northern Ireland we want to stay in touch with you; please see the enclosed 'Staying Connected' form. **Please don't forget** to complete and return this so that we can stay in touch.

Thank you for your encouragement and support.

Catherine



Many more Bibles are needed for people of all ages in China. Turn to page 14 to find out how you can be part of changing their story.

'I'll never complain about being too hot again'

Towards the end of February, we welcomed a very special visitor to Northern Ireland. Dr Hrayr Jebejian, the General Secretary of the Bible Society in the Gulf, came to Belfast following a visit with family in London.

We have supported work in the Gulf region for a number of years and currently support a Bible engagement project in Kuwait amongst migrant workers. This project encourages Bible storytelling amongst groups of migrant workers who are often illiterate, lonely and far from their families. The Bible Society in the Gulf works with local churches to engage groups of migrants with the Good News.

The Gulf region is made up of seven countries: Saudi Arabia, Yemen, Oman, Qatar, Bahrain, Kuwait and the United Arab Emirates. There is Bible Society activity in all of these apart from Saudi Arabia and Yemen. Approximately half of the population of the Gulf region is made up of foreign nationals from all over the world; some will be very wealthy in high paid jobs but around 60% are migrant workers on very low wages, often from Asia. These migrant workers are usually involved in construction or domestic work. The ministry of the Bible Society to these migrant workers is vital in bringing the hope of the Good News of Jesus.

Whilst there are no official statistics, there are thought to be around 5 million Christians in the Gulf region, around 10% of the population. Some will not be able to share their faith openly; Hrayr referred to a verse from Colossians referring to those whose lives are 'hidden in Christ' (Colossians 3:3).

Hrayr speaks with passion and enthusiasm about work that he has been involved in for many

Half of the population of the Gulf region is made up of foreign nationals

years. He made some good connections when he visited us, not least with our staff team and the Board. He also spent time with Tim Dunwoody and Laura Kerr from Irish Methodist World Mission Partnership (WMP) who have agreed to support the work of the Bible Society in the Gulf for the next three years. WMP are also supporting work in Austria and Togo between 2018 and 2020. We are so grateful for the support of WMP for this project and thrilled that Hrayr was able to meet Tim and Laura in person.

Hrayr was here on some of the coldest days of winter and after a walk through the Titanic Quarter he commented that he would never complain about being too hot again! However, Hrayr appreciated the warm welcome and enjoyed seeing our scenery from the warmth of the car!

Like many of our colleagues, Hrayr works in an environment very different to ours. Please remember him and his team in your prayers as he brings messages of hope through Jesus across the Gulf region.



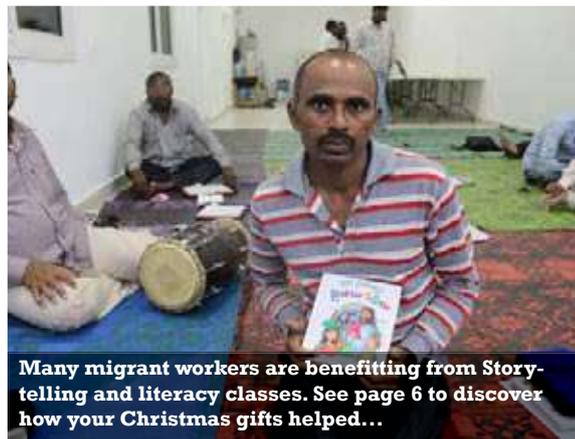
Dr Hrayr Jebejian from the Bible Society in the Gulf enjoyed a visit to the Titanic Quarter.



It was great for Hrayr and Catherine to spend time with Tim and Laura from the Irish Methodist World Mission Partnership.



Some of the team in the Gulf at the Bahrain International Bookfair, openly selling the Word of God.



Many migrant workers are benefitting from Story-telling and literacy classes. See page 6 to discover how your Christmas gifts helped...

News Snippets at Home

I will run 13.1 miles!

Last summer I visited the Bible Society in Cambodia. I visited projects that we are supporting there and got a glimpse and flavour of some of the projects we have been partnering with.

You may have recently received a letter from us about a lady that I met in rural Cambodia – Keo Seng. Keo is learning to read at a literacy class run by the Bible Society in Cambodia. She is 55 and is attending this class with her grandchildren. Her story touched my heart and because of this I've signed up to run Edinburgh Half Marathon at the end of May.

I'd love for you to encourage me by sponsoring my run – you can do this online at www.charitychoice.co.uk/fundraiser/catherinelittle-1 or get in touch with the office to make a donation.

Running doesn't come naturally to me. Most of the time I feel like I'm plodding rather than running but I love the feeling of coming home from a run. I will admit to feeling just a little smug and very proud of myself as I put my key in my door.

I'm guaranteed a personal best at this half marathon! Everyone tells me it is a fast route but I've never ran that far so I'm going for my own best time. Do consider supporting my longest ever run!

Thank you, Catherine.



Catherine visiting a Literacy group in Cambodia in Summer 2017.



Don't miss Dina Katanacho from the Arab Israeli Bible Society at Bangor Worldwide this summer.

Don't Miss Hearing Dina

Ms Dina Katanacho from the Arab Israeli Bible Society is speaking at Bangor Worldwide Missionary Convention in Hamilton Road Presbyterian on the evening of Friday 31st August 2018. Come and hear her share her story at this event.

Dina has a powerful story of how she serves in a place where every part of her identity is under pressure and how she feels called to be a peacemaker through her work in the Arab Israeli Bible Society.

We are supporting the work of the Arab Israeli Bible Society this year and would really commend this opportunity to hear from Dina about her work in the Bible Society in this part of the Holy Lands.



Bibles in many different languages were used in the Bible tree. Could your church do something like this?

‘I Love to Hear the Story’ Festival of Christmas Trees

The first week in December 2017 saw a Festival of Christmas Trees in St. Patrick’s Church of Ireland, Loughgilly in County Armagh. The theme ‘I love to Hear the Story’ was interpreted in many different styles, helping visitors reflect on the true story behind Christmas – from creation, through to the promised Messiah, foretold by the Old Testament prophets.

The parishioners of Loughgilly built a tree using Bibles from Bible House. We were thrilled to partner with them in this wonderful community event. A great amount of imagination went into creating the tree and highlighting some of the languages spoken here. Bibles in many different languages were used in the Bible tree, including Indian, Chinese, Kiswahili, Russian, French, Romanian, Slovak and German.

The Select Vestries of the Grouped Parishes of Acton, Drumbanagher and Loughgilly are twinning their 110 pew Bibles with China and Cuba. Catherine will be visiting on Pentecost Sunday when she will be presented with a donation of £550.

Rev Graham Spence is the Rector of these Grouped Parishes. He has written an insightful article reflecting on the ‘Story’ behind the Festival of Christmas Trees. You can read it on our Bible blog on our website – www.biblesocietyyni.co.uk

Looking Good...

We are really excited here in Bible Society NI as we look forward to the launch of our new-look website.

After a few too many years of service, we will be retiring our old website and welcoming in our crisp new one. We hope that this will make it easier for friends like you to find the information you need. We also hope that people who are new to Bible Society ministry will be able to see at a glance exactly who we are and what we do.

We invite you to have a look and let us know what you think! Lots of the same elements are there – projects, prayers, resources etc – just with a new flavour and hopefully all a little easier to navigate.

We have also recently upgraded our email system so you may have noticed that our email addresses have all changed a little. So if you need to get in touch by email you will be wanting to use info@biblesocietyyni.co.uk

**Check the website out here:
www.biblesocietyyni.co.uk**



To the Praise of His Glory

This is the theme of New Horizon 2018 which will happen at the University of Ulster Coleraine Campus between 4th and 10th August. Bible Society NI will be there with other mission agencies and we would love to say hello to you if you are there as well. It is a week filled with worship and teaching with some well-known names involved including Philip Yancey. See you there.

Greatest Gift is Still Giving!

Christmas may be in the dim-and-distant past by now, but the impact of our 'Greatest Gift' alternative gift catalogue lives on. A massive thanks goes to everyone who responded and gave through the Greatest Gift 2017. Your generosity raised just over £34,800!

Your kindness continues to reach people from many places in different ways. Whether through Storytelling or Braille, printed books or through listening groups – the Bible is being shared and lives continue to be changed!

So if you gave, or received, a Greatest Gift voucher or made a donation towards one of the projects, we know you will be so encouraged to read of the reach of the gifts.

Papua New Guinea – Bible Translation

The Bible Society in Papua New Guinea is involved in 22 different translation projects, supporting small isolated groups of local translators. With over 800 languages in Papua New Guinea, much prayer and support is needed for this task. Greatest Gift donations have covered the cost of translating **967 Bible verses!**

Uganda – Braille Bibles

People who are blind in Uganda are often shunned and hidden from society. The Bible Society is advocating for them and placing braille Scripture in places where they can access it – schools, churches, libraries and private homes. **580 sets of the Gospels in braille** are being placed in Uganda thanks to donations through Greatest Gift 2017.

Togo – Bible Listening Groups

For those who cannot read or cannot see, it is important that they can hear the Bible. The Bible Society in Togo sets up Bible listening groups in prisons, schools and churches. Thanks to Greatest Gift, **322 wind-up audio Bibles** called 'Proclaimers' have been placed in Togo!

Kuwait – Bible Storytelling

Huge numbers of migrants arrive in the Gulf States with the false promise of good working conditions and a fair wage. As many cannot read, Bible Storytelling is leading many to Christ who in turn share what they are learning with others. **2,230 migrants will learn of Jesus** through Storytelling thanks to the Greatest Gift.

A massive thanks goes to everyone who gave through Greatest Gift 2017

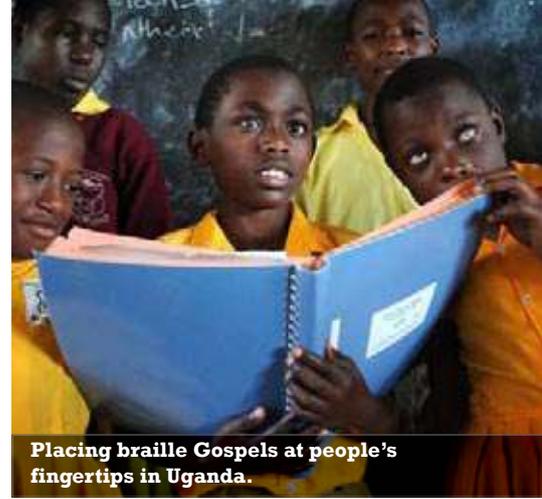
Peru – Bread of Life

There are so many children living in poverty in Peru, whether in struggling rural communities or in urban shanty towns. For over 15 years, the Bible Society in Peru has been running the Bread of Life programme, partnering with local churches to bring hundreds of children a daily meal and the Word of God. Greatest Gift donations will feed and teach **193 children for 3 months!**

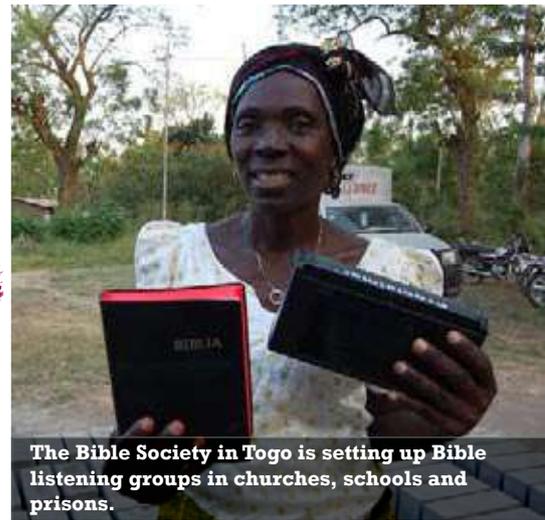
Cambodia – People on the Edge

People are isolated for many reasons, whether in isolated rural communities or battling poverty. Isolation means accessing the Bible becomes even more difficult. Greatest Gift donations are bringing **1,015 Bibles to isolated people.**

It is wonderful how much can be brought about by replacing Christmas presents with the gift of God's Word. Our thanks goes to each person who gave or received a Greatest Gift Voucher. We trust you are encouraged to know that people are hearing about Jesus because of your generosity.



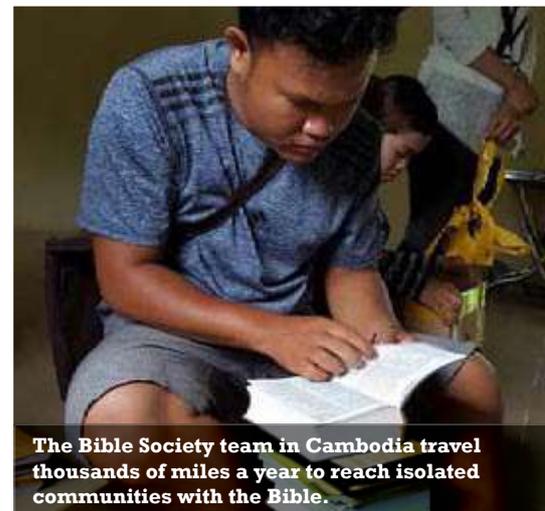
Placing braille Gospels at people's fingertips in Uganda.



The Bible Society in Togo is setting up Bible listening groups in churches, schools and prisons.



Greatest Gift donations are feeding and teaching 193 children in Peru for 3 full months.



The Bible Society team in Cambodia travel thousands of miles a year to reach isolated communities with the Bible.

P@W!

Prayer at Work

PULL OUT AND KEEP PRAYER GUIDE

SUMMER 2018

“Ask and it will be given to you; seek and you will find; knock and the door will be opened to you.”

Matthew 7:7

It is tempting to read this verse and interpret it as saying that God will bow to our every whim, giving us exactly what we ask for, when we ask! Yet there may be another, more reassuring way to read it. We are rightly assured that when we ask, seek and knock, we do indeed receive, find and a door will open. However, it is God who decides what is best for us to receive, who reveals Himself when we seek and chooses which doors to open. Let's trust Him fully as we lean in to pray for Bible ministry around the world.

FCBH: Faith Comes By Hearing - A programme providing audio Scripture for listening groups, set up through local churches.

Good Samaritan Project: A Bible-based HIV/AIDS education programme. Workshop based, multi-media training.

Trauma Healing: Bible-Based counselling for survivors of traumas such as disaster, epidemics or war.

GS: General Secretary.

OT/NT: Old/New Testament.

CEO: Chief Executive Officer

MAY 13-19

Burundi Pray for GS Marjorie Niyungeko and team. Pray for the provision of Bibles for Alpha courses in prisons and rural areas as well as Trauma Healing, FCBH and Good Samaritan programmes. Ask for new ways to help young people understand the Bible and for ongoing work on a Kirundi Study Bible.

Rwanda Pray that fundraising efforts would see new supporters with a heart to make the Bible known and available. Pray for GS Therese Mukamakuza and team as they run Trauma Healing, FCBH, Literacy and Good Samaritan programmes as well as work to get the Bible into High Schools.

Uganda Pray for provision for a new Bible House, and for the board as they lead the next five-year strategic plan. Pray for translation, Trauma Healing, Good Samaritan projects, ministry to refugees and the project to place 'A Bible in Every Home, Hand, Heart, Hospital and Hotel'. GS Simon Peter Mukhama leads the team.

MAY 20-26

Cambodia Give thanks for 50 years of ministry and ask for new partnerships with churches. Executive Director Pisit Heng leads the team as they distribute the Bible, run a literacy programme, revise the Khmer Bible and work on the Khmer Study Bible. Pray for peace during the Prime Minister's election in July.

Vietnam Thank God for the publication of the NT in some minority languages despite limited freedom. Pray for safety for Chief Executive Arun Sok Nhep, staff and translators as they continue translation, widespread distribution and literacy. Pray too for their work to engage children and young people and for strengthened church relations.

Laos There is limited religious freedom in this communist country. There is no Bible Society office but ministry continues in partnership with local churches. Pray for the work including literacy, Scripture translation, distribution and publication. Remember Executive Director Joy Sahassawas, her small team and local partners.

MAY 27-JUN 2

Gabon Thank God for the team and ministries led by GS Thierry Mabilia. Pray for the two translation projects as well as the FCBH listening groups and the Good Samaritan programme. Pray for strong partnerships with churches and a lasting impact from their children's ministry training and resources.

Cameroon Pray for the Esther Project which supports teen mums and girls who have been sexually exploited. Pray for Bible translation and revision projects, FCBH and Good Samaritan programmes. Pray for fundraising efforts and for each person who is part of this work led by GS Luc Gnowa.

Central African Republic Thank God for ministry despite more than 30 years of civil war. Pray for peace in the rebel-controlled areas. Pray for the plans to build a suitable headquarters and shop. Executive Secretary Sylvain Ndjendolé and team seek to increase fundraising, strengthen church relationships, promote literacy and distribute Scripture.

Bible-a-month Project May: Paraguay

Communities along the Paraguay River live in poverty, with little healthcare and education. The Paraguayan Bible Society has been travelling up and down this river for five years, bringing food, medicines, teaching and, most importantly, the message of Christ. Churches have been raised and lives have been changed by the Word of God. Now the challenge is to train leaders and supply the small churches with resources to teach and spread the Good News.

- Pray for Captain Patrocinio Velaquez and his crew as they sail into some of the most dangerous areas of Paraguay. Pray for safety and courage for all the staff and volunteers.
- Thank God for his provision and pray that people will continue to make donations towards this work.
- Pray that God's Word will be accepted in the riverside communities. Pray that the Lord will give wisdom and grace to the new leaders in the area.



Donate by text: send **BAMC18E5** to 70070

W@W! 7

Canada Give thanks for all that the team achieve under the leadership of National Director Rev Dr Rupen Das. Work continues on a number of indigenous language Bible translations. Give thanks for the new translations published in recent years. Pray for the efforts to promote Bible engagement as well as raising up new supporters for the Bible Society work around the world.

America Please pray for God to ignite a desire for Scripture engagement across America. Pray for the Bible-based Trauma Healing programme and for the developing plans for the Philadelphia-based 'Faith and Liberty Discovery Centre' to flourish, bringing the transformative message of hope and healing through God's Word. Pray for this large team led by CEO Dr Roy Peterson.

Mexico Pray for the varied ministry of the team led by GS Julio Splinker Martinez. Pray for the ongoing indigenous language translations as well as the translation into Mexican Sign Language. Pray also for the FCBH programme and the other audio resources for native languages. Ask for blessing on the work to reach children with God's Word, including children who are seriously ill.

West Indies Bible Society of the West Indies operates in the following countries: Jamaica, Bahamas, Belize, Turks & Caicos Islands and the Cayman Islands. Pray for GS Courtney Stewart and the whole team who work across various island locations and communities. Their work is carried out from Bible House in Jamaica so pray for good relationships with Christian communities in the various locations enabling openings for Scripture distribution.

Cuba Pray for GS Dr Alain Montano and the small team in Cuba as they work to reach every home with a Bible. Pray too for their dream of creating a Bible printing press in Cuba to meet all the local Scripture needs. All Scripture is imported and there are no Bible bookshops, so local access is difficult. Pray for the work to translate the Bible into Cuban Sign Language and for the help they offer following hurricane season.

El Salvador Give thanks for the work of this team led by General Secretary Mr Pablo Gonzalez. Pray for their Trauma Healing programmes and their work to tackle domestic violence. Give thanks for the growing connection with the police force and for the resources they are producing to help children and young people engage with God's Word.

South Pacific Based in Fiji, this Bible Society works across 16 island countries. Executive Secretary, Mr Apenisa Lewatoro and team are thankful for partnerships with churches and other Christian organisations; pray that partnerships will continue to grow. Pray for ongoing Bible translation, printing and distribution. Please pray for efforts to reach children and young people with relevant resources and for the response to natural disasters when needed.

Micronesia Work in Micronesia is run from the Philippines, led by Partnership Manager Mrs Perry Cartera. Pray for the logistics of making the Bible available across 600 islands. Pray for the importing and distributing of Scripture. Their isolation adds to transport costs, meaning that Bibles come with a price! While demand is high, churches and individuals cannot afford the cost, so please pray for ways to subsidise the cost, and partners who can make that possible.

New Zealand Pray for the goal of helping 100,000 children and youth engage with the Bible. Pray also for the 'Good for Life' initiative, seeking to equip people of all ages to read the Bible. Give thanks for the ongoing translation work of the Bible in contemporary Māori and the publication of the Tokelauan Bible. The team here is led by CEO Francis Burdett.

East Caribbean The Bible Society is based in Barbados and serves 12 nations. Pray for GS Owen Williams and the challenges faced by the team. They work to make the Bible affordable and available in multiple languages across the islands where people struggle financially. Pray for the work to engage young people with the Bible in an effort to bring them hope for their future.

Netherlands Antilles & Aruba GS Mr Armin Elisa leads a team who work across the Netherlands Antilles islands of Aruba, Bonaire and Curaçao. Life on these islands is often one of low income, unemployment and poor neighbourhoods with high street crime. Pray for the work to support kids at risk and efforts to make the Bible available and affordable. Pray for the work to finalise the Papiamentu Study Bible.

Honduras Honduras struggles with the effects of violence, corruption and disenchantment with the country's leadership. The population has a high percentage of young people, and the Bible Society are working to impact them. Pray for public safety in what is one of the most violent countries in the world. Give thanks for the Scripture programmes in prisons, with the police and military. Pray for wisdom for GS Mr Jorge Gómez and team.

Bible-a-month Project June: Cameroon

In Cameroon one in five girls between the ages of 15 and 19 have been raped or sexually abused. These girls need to heal. They need to know they are loved and cherished by God. The Esther Project is a unique Bible-based trauma healing programme. It's a holistic ministry where women receive and study the Bible; learn vital life skills, like how to make things and run a small business; and allow God to heal their emotional and psychological wounds.

- Pray for all the girls who will take part in this programme. Pray for healing and hope as they discover, through God's Word, his love and value on their lives.
- Every day girls in Cameroon are abused. Pray that God would be their helper in their distress, leading them to safety.
- The mainly-Muslim far north of Cameroon has been drawn into the regional Islamist insurgency of Boko Haram – pray for the staff of the Bible Society who are running the Esther Project, along with other programmes, in difficult circumstances.



This month £5 will give a New Testament to a girl or woman searching for healing.

JULY 1-7

Israel Pray for the bookshop in Tel Aviv which is visited by people from different backgrounds and for the safety of the team led by Mr Victor Kalisher. Pray for outreach to migrants and refugees. Pray for the work to produce children's literature, the Bible in Modern Hebrew Sign Language and a revision of the Modern Hebrew NT.

Palestine Pray for GS Mr Nashat Filmon and the team who are engaged in ministry to Christians and humanitarian assistance to people from other faiths. Praise God for the impact of the different programmes for children and young people and pray for the political, economic and spiritual situation of the country. May hope prevail.

Arab Israeli 20% of Israel's population are Arab Israeli. Pray for Director Dina Katanacho as she leads the work of making God's Word available and known to these people. Pray for the Scripture Community Centre in Galilee and the programmes to empower women and children and to support families. Dina is visiting Northern Ireland in the summer to speak at Bangor Worldwide.

JULY 8-14

Egypt The NT and two OT books of the Van Dyck Study Bible in Arabic have now been printed; pray this will be complete by the end of 2018. Pray for GS Ramez Atallah, staff and volunteers. Praise God for opportunities to impact people through bookshops and projects to reach

poor families, rural teens and children.

Jordan Give thanks for a good level of freedom and pray for opportunities to reach people from different backgrounds. Pray for Trauma Healing, the programmes to engage youth and young families and for refugees receiving practical and spiritual support. Pray that GS Munther Al-Namat and team may see their dream of a Bible Hub and Resource Centre realised.

Lebanon Thank God for Bible distribution and effective programmes reaching all parts of society. Pray for Trauma Healing for all ages and for the projects bringing hope to refugees and disadvantaged communities. Pray also for supporters and volunteers that spread the Word and empower Churches in the Middle East. Pray for GS Dr Mike Bassous who leads the work here.

JULY 15-21

Estonia Ask God to use this ministry, led by GS Mr Jaan Bärenson, to impact this increasingly secular country. Pray for the Bible exhibitions in libraries and universities and for a good impact through book fairs. Pray for strengthened relationships with churches, Christian organisations and the local media. Pray too for the development of their online presence and resources.

Latvia Mr Valdis Teraudkalns leads a small team. Pray for the Bible revision into modern Latvian which began last year. There is strong focus on reaching children. Pray for the

Bibles for school pupils and for the work to publish a Children's Bible in Latvian to support Sunday Schools and children's ministries. Ask God to raise up more Latvian supporters and partners.

Lithuania Pray that the new Ecumenical Bible translation is accurate, fluent to read and clear to understand. Pray that the Bible in Sign Language will soon make God's Word accessible to the deaf community in their heart language. Pray also for the Living Pictures photo contest for school children. Pray for Ms Vilhelmina Kalinauskiene who leads the ministry here.

JULY 22-28

France Please pray for GS Jonathan Boulet and team as they promote the Word of God in this largely secular country. Pray for an impact on families, young people and migrants. Pray for strong connections with churches, organisations and individuals who have a heart for the ministry. Pray for the revision work on the popular version, 'Bible en Français Courant'.

Spain Pray for the Board as they seek God for the future of the ministry there. May they have great wisdom as they seek opportunities to make the Bible available and known. Pray that the truth of God's Word would take hold among the mainly nominally Catholic population, drawing people to faith in Jesus.

Malta Pray for GS Paul Agius and the Board who are working to carve out a fresh ministry. Thank God for their 60th

anniversary and pray for the years ahead. While over 90% of the population are Catholic in name, many are now entirely secular with little or no faith. Pray for wisdom in how to minister in an environment that is increasingly dependent on tourism.

JULY 29- AUG 4

Cyprus Praise God for the NTs distributed in schools by the Ministry of Education. Ask that this will continue, helping students learn about God. Pray for the small team led by GS Michail Chatzigiannis and pray for an increase in the number of local churches and supporters who have a heart for Bible Society ministry around the world.

Turkey Executive Secretary Ms Tamar Karasu leads this team. Praise God for the witness of their bookshop in a busy shopping area of Istanbul, in a place where so few are Christians. Give thanks for their presence at secular book fairs and pray that the Gospel would reach more people. Pray for ministry with refugees and local believers.

Syria Pray for the enormous challenges in Syria. Ask God to guide the team as they distribute Scripture, support churches, take part in book fairs and offer Trauma Healing training to more and more people. Pray for safety for Director George Andrea, the team and their families who continue to live and work in such an unsafe place.

Bible-a-month Project July: The Gulf

There is a huge migrant population in the Gulf. Many have come to the area for work but now find themselves underpaid and overworked. There is a desire to find comfort and direction in God's word, yet for many illiteracy is preventing this. The Bible Society in the Gulf is bringing the Bible alive for migrant workers. Storytelling workshops are run to let people hear Bible stories and learn how to tell the stories themselves.

- Pray for the construction workers and maids who find themselves trapped by their employers. Pray that the Storytelling sessions and distribution of Scripture would give them hope and encouragement.
- Pray that the migrant workers learning to tell Bible stories will have the courage to share them with those around them.
- Babu Ganta is the Senior Communication Officer at the Bible Society in the Gulf. Thank God for the passion he has for sharing the Word of God in a creative and meaningful way.



This month £5 will give a Bible story book to a migrant worker in the Gulf.

AUGUST 5-11

Serbia Pray for the team led by Ms Vera Mitic. Thank God for ministry to the Roma community and pray for the ongoing Roma NT translation. Pray that children and young people would engage with God's Word and praise God for the partnership with other Bible Societies in the Balkans.

Romania Ask God to bless GS Mrs Emilia Iorgandopol and team. Pray for the special ministry offering comfort to those with cancer and for the Trauma Healing programme. Pray for projects bringing the Bible alive to children and young people and for the ministry with children with Down Syndrome.

Moldova Thank God for blessing the work led by GS Anton Placinta. Praise God that Bibles are being made available in public libraries and prisons, and the elderly are being reached with large print versions. Pray for political and economic stability and pray that it will remain possible to offer subsidised Scripture for those who need it.

Croatia Pray for the ministry led by GS Damir Lipovsek, that through it the Bible would be more widely read and trusted. Pray for the ongoing work to create a modern Croatian Bible translation. Pray too for the sporting events that are being hosted to reach young people with the message of the Gospel.

AUG 12-18

Côte d'Ivoire Pray for GS Mr Dominique N'Gbesso and the whole team. They are having difficulty in obtaining the quantity of Bibles they need to meet demand. Pray that they will be able to source 500 to 800 thousand Bibles a year. Pray also for their literacy classes, translation projects and Bible revision.

Liberia Work is mainly focused on three Bible translations into Gola, Mann and Dan languages. Ask God to protect the translation teams, to provide much needed funding and to guard their equipment which is vulnerable to theft. Pray for the developing ministry to young people and training for pastors in rural areas. Pray for GS Paul Stevens and team.

Sierra Leone Pray for the first Bible translations for Sherbro and Kono speakers and for the revision of the Mende Bible to improve understanding. Pray that the local churches will support these teams. Pray also for the FCBH and Good Samaritan programmes. The team is led by Christiana Agima Jones.

Guinea-Conakry Pray for Executive Secretary Pastor Robert Iffono and the efforts of the team to build strong relationships with the churches. Pray that partnerships will increase the spread of God's Word. Pray for the FCBH programme in Kissi, Kpèlèè and Conakry languages. Please pray that God will make a way for peace and stability in the country.

AUG 19-25

China Praise God that approximately 4 million Bibles are printed and distributed annually in China. Pray for the development of suitable Bible Portions and for improvements in their Bible App. Praise God for the strong link with seminaries and pray for the students receiving Bible resources. Mr Kua Wee Seng co-ordinates this vast ministry.

Hong Kong Pray for the centennial thanksgiving service of the Chinese Union Bible in 2019; may it strengthen unity within the Chinese-speaking Christians. Pray for the team led by Acting GS, Mr Tseun Yuen, Ignatius Lee. May their relationships with churches and other Christian organisations bring new opportunities to make God's Word known.

Taiwan Pray for the activities around their anniversary, that these would catch people's attention and impact many. GS Rev Daniel Cheng leads the ministry here and the team would love to see a strengthened partnership with churches and a greater unity. Pray for their plans to increase Bible advocacy and literacy groups.

Japan Only 2% of the population are Christian so pray blessing on the team led by GS Makoto Watabe as they work to encourage different generations to read the Bible. Pray especially for the resources for young people and children. Pray for the work to make the Bible available in Japanese Sign Language.

AUG 26-SEP 1

Eritrea Ask for God's blessing on ongoing Bible translation and the publication that will follow. Pray that the sourcing, transporting and distribution of Scripture would be smooth and affordable for all who seek it. Pray for a fresh outpouring of God's Spirit on GS Minasse Haileab and for provision for the ministry.

Ethiopia Pray for Bible translation into local languages and for work on both a Children's Bible and a Study Bible in Amharic. Pray for FCBH and literacy programmes and for the plans to reach young people in relevant ways. Pray that GS Mr Yilma Getahun and the team will know God's guidance.

Kenya Praise God for the team led by GS Elizabeth Muriuki. Pray for translation and literacy programmes in a number of languages. Pray for FCBH, Good Samaritan and Trauma Healing programmes. Pray that the Scripture distribution to marginalised children and young people will have a powerful impact on their communities.

Tanzania Ask God to bless the Bible Work led by GS Alfred Kimonge. Pray for those receiving God's Word through Trauma Healing, or the Jesus Film. Pray that many will respond to the Good News. Ask God to provide for the translators working on several Bibles and for blessing on the FCBH and groups.

Bible-a-month Project August: Chile

In Chile many elderly people are isolated from society, unable to leave their homes without assistance, and forgotten by members of their families. The Bible Society in Chile, through local churches, are inviting elderly people to gather together in small 'Light at Sunset' Bible study groups. They gather in churches, homes or residential homes. Each group member receives a large or giant print Bible. The dream is to see people coming to know Jesus, growing in faith and sharing with those around them.

- Please pray for the 'Light at Sunset' Bible study groups. Pray that they would be a warm place of fellowship where people can know friendship and joy.
- Pray that those who do not know God personally would feel encouraged to take part and engage with God's Word.
- Thank God for the work of the Bible Society in Chile who are playing a vital role in helping the churches reach out to the older members of their communities.



This month £5 will help someone who is lonely to have fellowship around the Word of God.

Who in the World is Waiting?

Global Scripture Access facts and figures.

Sometimes it is good for us to remind ourselves that Bible Society NI is part of the United Bible Societies Fellowship that is influencing communities all over the world with the Bible! That is somewhat overwhelming and awe-inspiring!

Thank you for being a faithful and vital part of all that we do.

We wanted to share some news with you from the latest update from the United Bible Societies. This is taken from the 2017 Global Scripture Access Report. This is a report that collates the Bible distribution, translation and access that has happened throughout the year, giving us an idea of how far the Bible has reached and how far the work still has to go!

Translation

In 2017, Bible Societies assisted in the completion of Scripture translations in 49 languages spoken by more than 580 million people. 7 communities received their first full Bible and 4 their first ever New Testament. As English speakers, this is hard for us to comprehend as we have so many translations people can be confused as to which one they should read!

We can see from our own Bibles however, that languages change and develop over time so Bible Societies are also committed to revising existing translations when needed. This gives younger generations the chance to meaningfully engage with Scripture. In 2017, this resulted in 26 new translations and revisions, plus 9 study editions, with the potential to reach more than 566 million people.

Bibles with a Difference

Millions of people can't read printed text, or really struggle to make sense of it. For example, 70 million Deaf people use sign languages as their 'first' or heart language. There are also millions of people who read braille because they have severe

visual impairments.

The truth is, there is still a long way to go in making the Bible accessible to these audiences worldwide. Only 44 languages have a full Bible in Braille and there isn't even a single language with a complete Bible in sign language! Bible Societies are working with partners all over the world to change this, so that all can have access to the Bible in their heart language.

There are of course, other mediums for sharing the Bible including audio, visual and digital platforms. Bible Storytelling is not new but has definitely made a resurgence in recent years. It is true that there has been great progress and Bible access has never been so good, yet there are still 209 million people who cannot access the Bible in their own language, in any format, as it simply does not exist yet!

God's Word is living and active and we are in an age where it is spreading more rapidly than ever before. Keep praying that nothing will stop the spread of God's Word and the expansion of His Kingdom!

Be encouraged as you read the whole report here: www.unitedbiblesocieties.org/2017-global-scripture-access-report



Listening to the Bible in Finland. More people are enjoying listening to the Bible while they are on the move.



A boy reads a portion of the Bible in Armenian Braille.



Mobile devices have brought the Bible to many in a way that was never possible before. This lady is reading in the shade in Uganda.



10,000 people attended the launch of the first Bible in the Mabaan language in South Sudan.

A Few Days in Beirut

Elma Leeburn is this year's President of Presbyterian Women (PW). She recently travelled to Lebanon to encourage women of the National Evangelical Synod of Syria and Lebanon (NESSL). NESSL is the partner church of the Presbyterian Church in Ireland (PCI) in the Middle East. Travelling with Elma and her husband Ian was PCI's Global Mission Secretary Rev Uel Marrs, and Women's Ministry and PW Development Officer Pauline Kennedy. Elma shared her reflections with us:

We spent a day at the beautiful modern premises of the Bible Society in Lebanon in Beirut and saw some of the very impressive work they are doing. After CEO Dr Mike Bassous' warm welcome, we joined in their morning worship in both Arabic and English.

We gained an insight into the extensive work of the Bible Society in Lebanon. Although the distribution of the Scriptures in Lebanon, Syria and Iraq is still their main single largest activity they have expanded into various other streams such as the 'Bible World' studio where the gospel is presented to children in a creative and attractive format.

We visited a school attended by refugees where we saw one of the Bible Society's vital projects. This project presents the gospel to children using fun and interactive ways through the performance of a clown who combines tricks with the telling of Bible stories. They listened and interacted with full attention, excitement, lots of noise and fun and at the end of the session there was quietness as he prayed with them. As well as helping the cause of peace in the Middle East this project offers hope to the children.

Maya Saleh, Executive Assistant and Special Projects Coordinator told us about the Trauma Healing programmes, orientated towards women, which started in 2015 out of the Syrian crisis. The purpose of this project is to train and equip committed Christians in Trauma Healing who will be willing to implement this programme with refugees.

We met Dr Issa Diab, the translation consultant for United Bible Societies - Europe and the Middle East, who provides expert translation of the Bible taking into consideration the cultural understanding of the language. We visited the large warehouse in the basement, the bookshop and also the downtown bookshop in the heart of the city which supplies Scriptures to so many in Lebanon, Syria and Iraq.

There is a thirst for the Bible in Syria and the Middle East, and as I reflect on our visit I saw an organisation committed to distributing God's Word, whether through digital means, the internet or the written word but also an organisation living out God's Word as they meet the holistic needs of refugees in Lebanon.



Elma Leeburn, Pauline Kennedy and Rev Uel Marrs from PCI spent time with Mike Bassous (second from right) in the Bible Society in Lebanon offices in Beirut.



Pauline and Elma enjoyed hearing from Mayah Saleh (left) about the women's Trauma Healing programmes.



Visiting a School attended by refugee children, to see the Bible teaching in action.



A very visible sign for the Bible Society in Lebanon in a busy area in Beirut.

International News

The Bible Society NI is connected to so many incredible people and projects around the world – thanks to all that YOU do through praying, giving, fundraising, hosting events, speakers and sharing information.

It is important to us that we pass on encouragements to you, particularly when we hear about projects that you have been part of through Word at Work. Praise God for all that He continues to do in Chile and Cuba...



Marta from Chile (left) is 79 years old. She says she likes attending the small group because she finds peace and feels the Lord speaking to her.

Light at Sunset in Chile

In a previous edition of this magazine we told you about a great project that the Chilean Bible Society is running called 'Light at Sunset'. In a society where the elderly are often ignored and forgotten, the Bible Society is helping churches to set up small groups where older members of their communities can gather together around God's Word. Bible Society NI, with your help, are so pleased to be able to continue supporting this important work.

Rodolfo Araya Ossandón, Projects and Human Resources Manager at the Chilean Bible Society, says:

"We thank the Lord for this second year in which the Word of God has reached many grandparents in Chile, but we especially thank God that this project has motivated many churches to develop a ministry with older adults and show them love and attention. **We thank Bible Society NI for the support of this project and the trust they have given us.** This second year of the project has been more challenging as we set out to motivate churches that are outside the capital city, Santiago. This demands more time and other resources to get to where they are to accompany and support them in their work. New churches joined the project in the second semester... We are pleased with the commitment we see in pastors and leaders who have started this beautiful journey of showing God's love for people who are further in life to receive the gospel and be saved."

This year Chile is our Bible-a-month country for August. Find some points for prayer on page 10.

One Million Bibles in Cuba

You will remember the project in Cuba to place 'One Million Bibles'. We have raised support for this over the last number of years; thank you for being a part of it.

Cuba was closed to Christianity for many years due to the political situation – it was a place Christians prayed for, that doors would open and God would break in. Now we are thanking God that He has allowed that to happen and in these recent years of opportunity, the Church is growing as people turn to Jesus.

Some are re-establishing the faith of their parents and grandparents. Others are discovering Jesus for the first time.

It is wonderful to be able to report that 'One Million Bibles' have now been distributed since the beginning of this project in 2013. The bonus here is that it is thought that most of the Bibles distributed are being used by 2 people, or more in some cases, extending the reach further than ever thought possible.

It is also wonderful to share that 65 different denominations have been part of this project, distributing Bibles to church members and receiving study Bibles and reference books for leaders as well as material for those in

seminaries and Scripture for children and outreach.

So many lives have been impacted through this incredible dream given to one small team in Cuba. This is living proof that with God, all things are possible.

Work continues beyond this distribution of 'One Million Bibles'. The population of Cuba is almost 11.5 million, so there are still many who do not own Bibles of their own. However, thanks to the hard work of the Bible Commission (the name for the Bible Society team in Cuba), millions more people now have access to God's Word.

We plan to continue working with our friends in Cuba and thank you for your ongoing prayers for Church growth and Bible access.



Cuba was featured in last summer's W@W magazine too. Work continues to bring the Bible to people who long to own God's Word.

Summer Appeal

Bibles for China

Who gave you your first Bible?

Many will remember their parents, grandparents or Sunday School teachers giving them their first Bible. For some this Bible is still a treasured possession, evidence of a legacy passed on from a generation before them. We can look back and see how that gift has impacted our lives.

People all over the world remember their first Bible. Madam Zhou from China remembers that her first Bible was the one her mother shared with her during a very difficult time...

Madam Zhou's Story

Madam Zhou is 70 years old and loves to read the Bible. She lived through the Cultural Revolution in China, a time when all churches were closed and Christian activities were not allowed. **She owes so much to her mother who shared her Bible and prayed for her...**

"In those days, Bibles were confiscated and burned. But I was determined to keep my mother's Bible and so I hid it in the rooftop of our home. We lived in thatched houses and to prevent my mother's Bible from getting wet, I put it into a plastic bag before hiding it in the rooftop. The Red Guards came to my house but did not find it... We began to have secret meetings among some Christians in my house and only then did I dare to bring down my mother's Bible from the rooftop. And my mother would read it every day till she passed away at the age of 96.

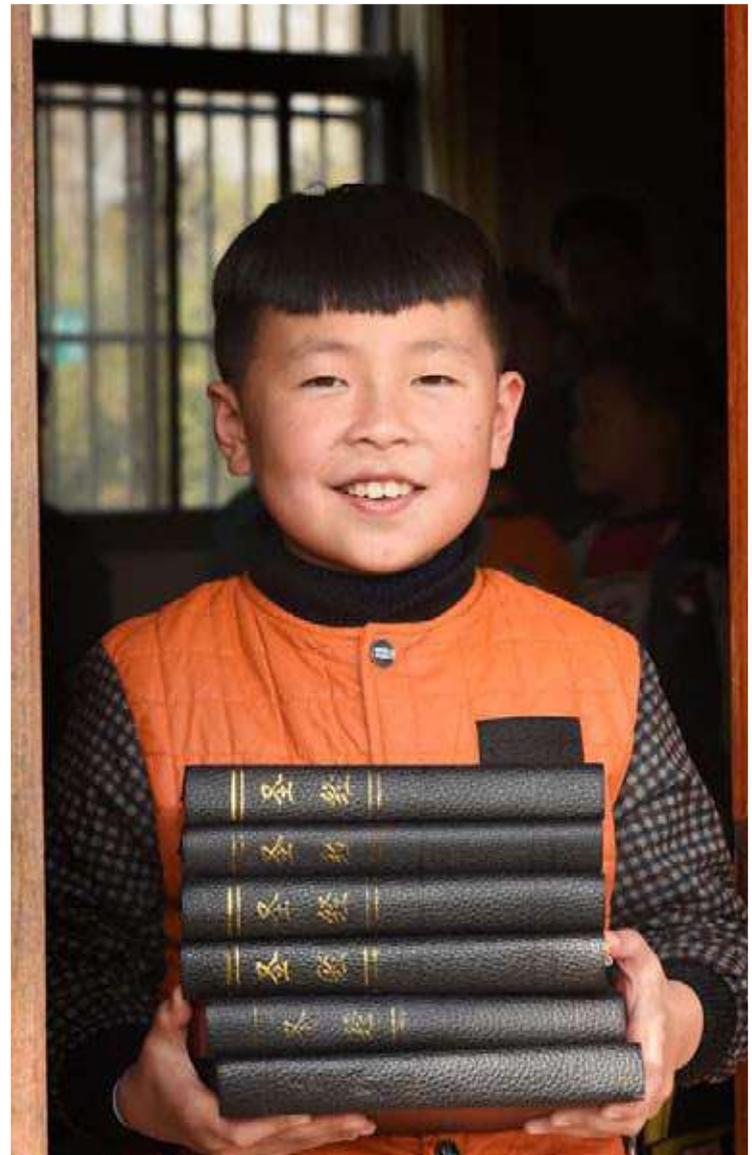
"I was influenced by my mother's prayer life. Because we were very poor, she would pray every day for all our needs. From her life, I knew that the God of the Bible is the true God. She taught us never to abandon the Lord; we are to walk the path of heaven. So the Bible is very precious to me, it is filled with truths to help me live."

China today

Praise God that the situation for Christians in China is very different today. **While there are still some restrictions Churches have been reopened and people no longer have to hide their Bibles away.** Madam Zhou still has her mother's Bible, and it is still as precious to her today as it was when she had to meet with other Christians in secret.

She benefitted so much from the legacy passed on from her mother that Madam Zhou was sure to share the Bible with her own daughter.

Today there are many Christians in China who are determined to keep passing God's Word on to the next generation, but this task is difficult when they don't have a Bible that they can give them.



Ang Weigi and other kids in his Sunday School class received Bibles from the Amity Printing Company

YOU CAN HELP GIVE THEM A BIBLE

Many in China are living in poverty and they simply can't afford to buy a Bible. **One simple step we can take to make the Bible more affordable is by paying for the paper that is used to print Bibles.**

There is a huge printing press in Nanjing, China called the Amity Printing Company. For 30 years it has been printing Bibles. In fact they've printed over 168 million Bibles in that time – half have stayed within the country and half have been exported overseas. Bible Societies around the world are working in partnership with the Amity Printing Company by paying for the printing paper.

By paying for a bale of paper over 600 Bibles can be printed. These Bibles can then be sold at a much reduced price or given out for free to those who need it.

Bible Society NI needs to raise £500 to pay for just one of these bales of paper. Supporters here have been generous for so many years, but we need to ask you to keep giving! More and more bales of paper need to be paid for so that more and more Bibles can be printed. **93% of China's population still haven't been reached with the Bible so it is vital that we keep raising money to pay for paper.**

By paying for paper we are helping parents like Madam Zhou who love the Lord and want to share His story with their children. You could play a part in passing God's Word on to the next generation. Whether adults or children, they can receive life to the full when they experience God's truth in his Word.

If you would like to make a donation by text, send WATW18£10 to 70070



Madam Zhou (right) with her husband and daughter.



You can help give Bibles to people in China by paying for these huge bales of printing paper.

If you would like to help us pay for bales of paper in China, then you can give a donation by

- filling in and posting the sheet that came with your magazine,
- contacting Bible Society NI on 028 9032 6577 to make a donation over the phone,
- or texting WATW18£10 to 70070 (there is no charge for this service, so your full donation of £10 by text will go to this project.)

Please pray for this important ministry and consider making a donation to help share the Word of God with the next generation in China.



Staying Connected

You have probably heard by now that the laws are changing around how your information is held and used by any organisation, including charities.

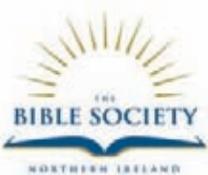
This means it is important that we keep in touch in the way you want us to. The new laws will allow us to hold and use personal information for a number of reasons and it is really important that we do this well. We want you to feel in control of the information we hold about you and how we use it.

If this magazine came in the post, you will have received a 'Staying Connected' form along with it. Please have a look at this form. Please complete and return it, **or we may no longer be able to stay connected with you.**

Don't Forget that you can get in touch with us at any time to stop, change or chat about what you receive from Bible Society NI. You should also let us know if we have your details wrong or incomplete, or if anything changes.

It is important to us that we keep in touch with you well, so please don't hesitate to contact us.

The new General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) laws will be enforced from 25th May 2018. If you would like to know more, we would suggest having a look at the Information Commissioner's Website: www.ico.org.uk



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Word at Work

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