



# Literacy & Evangelism International THE MESSENGER ASIA EDITION

*Celebrating 50 Years*

*Sharing the Message of Jesus Christ through the Gift of Reading*

Fall 2016

A Publication of Literacy & Evangelism International

Issue # 3

*“I cannot read the book because I don’t know how to read.”*

ISAIAH 29:12B ERV

### FROM THE PRESIDENT: SID RICE



It is recorded in the book of Acts that the apostle Paul wrote, “...from the first day I came into the province of Asia. I served the Lord with great humility ...” Acts 20:18-19 (NIV).

This year we begin celebrating LEI’s 50th year of ministry by highlighting missionaries in Asia who have carried on the tradition of the apostle Paul, serving the LORD with “great humility.”

In this edition of the *Messenger: Asia Edition*, I know you will be encouraged by reports from faithful LEI missionaries and partners who have served and who are serving, humbly, for the sake of kingdom purposes in Asia. A number of LEI missionaries cannot be spotlighted due to the sensitivity of the work they are doing to engage the illiterate in undisclosed regions of the world.

I was honored to be in Thailand this past spring with LEI’s Managing Director of Asia, Dr. Nam-Hyeon Kim. After many years of planning, Dr. Kim’s vision to have an LEI Southeast Asia Center was fulfilled. It was my privilege to be with him in Chiang Mai to dedicate this center, which is an outreach of Global Literacy Mission of South Korea. The center is located in Chiang Mai at the Yedam Korean Church.

As we reflect on LEI’s 50 years of ministry, we recognize the significant impact South Korea has played in LEI’s development. We are blessed to have a strong Korean heritage, as well as strong teams serving in India and other strategic locations throughout Asia. We thank God for all who have been part of the LEI story as we begin to celebrate 50 years of strategic literacy evangelism ministry.

Your brother in Christ,

### IN THE BEGINNING

This fall, Literacy & Evangelism International begins celebrating 50 years of literacy and evangelism ministry. As we reflect upon 1967 - our year of inception - and the following five decades, we appreciate how things have changed. Who remembers life without cell phones, personal computers, and the World Wide Web? Fifty years ago Lyndon Johnson was president, the Vietnam War raged on, the Cold War heated up, and the Space Race reached new heights. The Green Bay Packers defeated the Kansas City Chiefs in the first “Super Bowl,” the Beatles released their *Magical Mystery Tour* album, and we watched in awe as Dr. Christiaan Barnard performed the world’s first heart transplant in South Africa. We used rotary hard line telephones to communicate; human secretaries used typewriters for correspondence; and paper books were stored in buildings called libraries.

In 1967, four Experimental World Literacy Programme Projects were launched by UNESCO, and September 8th marked the first International Literacy Day celebration. A UNESCO report, *Literacy 1967-1969: Progress achieved in literacy throughout the world*, states that by 1960 adult illiteracy “had reached an estimated total of 740 million” - 39.3% of the entire world population. It was into this environment that Literacy & Evangelism International was born, committed to the foundational principal that “every Christian must be able to read God’s Word.”

**1960 - “adult illiteracy had reached an estimated total of 740 million.”**

*The Rice family circa 1963*





# Celebrating 50 Years of Ministry

## DR. ROBERT F. RICE, FOUNDER OF LITERACY & EVANGELISM INTERNATIONAL

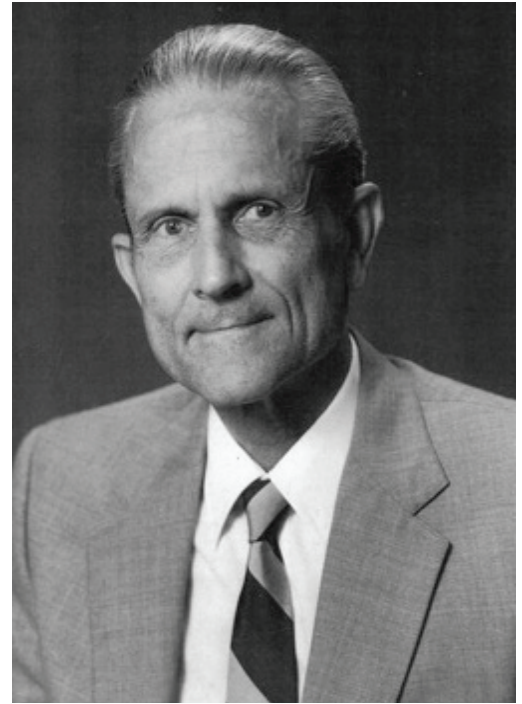
At a summer Christian Conference in New Hampshire, 1945, I first met Dr. Frank C. Laubach. At that time he was becoming the world “apostle of literacy.” Hearing “Dr. Frank” speak and pray, the Lord opened my eyes to the tremendous evangelistic potential in adult literacy worldwide. I saw that the “silent billion,” the illiterate half of our world, could be reached for Christ in the best possible way by using literacy as a bridge for the Gospel -- both a spoken word of witness after each lesson, and then the written Word of God as the learner begins to read.

At this time World War II was on, and I was a Cadet Chaplain in the U.S. Navy at Princeton Theological Seminary. The war ended before I finished studies at Princeton, and at that time I decided for the foreign mission field. In the spring of 1950, I went to Korea as a Presbyterian missionary with Alice and our two baby boys. Six weeks following our arrival, the Korean War broke out. We evacuated with other missionaries to Japan where the family remained for almost four years, but I spent over half of that time in Korea. I found in the Korean churches that literacy was a prerequisite for membership. Only one reason: every Christian must be able to read God’s Word. So to some degree I was able to use literacy in Korea, having written my Th.M. Thesis on “Literacy as a Means of Evangelism on the Foreign Mission Field.” Today, according to statistics, Korea is as literate a nation as is the United States.

Returning to the States from Korea for our second furlough as Presbyterian missionaries, I did graduate study and then accepted a two-year position as a professor of church history and missions at Oral Roberts University in Tulsa, Oklahoma. It so happened that during my last semester of teaching in this position, Dr. Frank Laubach, then 81 years of age and going strong, agreed to teach with me a course: *Literacy Techniques in Missions*. This rekindled a long-abiding vision of both the need for adult literacy worldwide and the tremendous opportunity of using literacy as a bridge for evangelism. This same year, 1967, following my teaching with Dr. Laubach and with his moral support and acceptance to be our first Member Trustee, I founded Literacy & Evangelism, Inc. as a religious and educational non-profit corporation with tax-exempt status. At the same time, Dr. Donald McGavran, our best known professor of missions stateside, if not worldwide, accepted my offer to be a Member Trustee, advising me at the same time that our priority should be to teach first the Christian how to read and secondarily the non-Christian. This advice we follow, and I have been surprised to find Presbyterian denominations around the world with memberships only 10% literate -- and sometimes less.

Today there is a great need for adult literacy work among millions of illiterate Christians to whom the Bible is a closed book. There is also the painfully evident need to bring literacy -- ability to read God’s Word -- to the multiplied millions of non-Christians. And as we teach these, we also have the opportunity to witness to them...of God’s love in Jesus Christ.

*Memoirs of Rev. Dr. Robert F. Rice*



*Dr. Robert F. Rice, founder of Literacy & Evangelism International  
1921-2002*

**EVERY  
CHRISTIAN  
MUST BE ABLE  
TO READ GOD’S  
WORD.**



*The Rice family circa 1957*

## DR. FRANK LAUBACH APOSTLE OF LITERACY

Dr. Frank Laubach served in the Philippines among the Maranao people early in the last century. Laubach's efforts to reach them with the Gospel message ended in failure until he taught literacy. After reducing their language to writing, he developed a simple method for teaching adults how to read their own language. His principles were both easy and effective. As Laubach trained 20 teachers to spread literacy throughout the tribe, barriers came crashing down. Those opposed to his message soon became open and receptive. A strong literacy program spread among the Moros. A total of 70,000 illiterate Moros eventually learned to read and write their mother tongue. Laubach's simple method for teaching illiterates proved a great success. Other countries invited Dr. Laubach to develop primers and begin literacy ministries elsewhere. Primers were developed in over 300 languages in 100 countries around the world. This remarkable achievement marked Dr. Laubach as "The Apostle of Literacy."

In his book, *40 Years with the Silent Billion*, Laubach wrote:

"In the spring of 1967 I taught literacy-evangelism in Oral Roberts University in Tulsa, Oklahoma. Each Thursday we had a two-hour class. Rev. Robert Rice assisted me in this class in Oral Roberts University. He became aflame with the vision of literacy evangelism. Now he is traveling all over the world helping prepare lessons and train Christians. He reports having done the same kind of work I did for many years, in Korea, Indonesia, Malaysia and South Africa. Missions are inviting Bob Rice in greater numbers than he can accept. I am very happy about this, for my most ardent hope is that all churches will adopt literacy as a powerful means of evangelizing. I exult in the thrill Bob Rice is getting while he does this work across the world."

*Bob Biederman is LEI's Managing Director of North America.*



*LEI is greatly influenced by the work of Dr. Frank Laubach.*

**"It's not hard," the aged literacy pioneer said, "to take advantage of people if one group can read and write and the others cannot."**

*~ Dr. Frank Laubach (Beth Macklin, Tulsa World, 1967.)*



*Bob Biederman teaching literacy leaders*

## DR. NAM-HYEON KIM REMEMBERS

Each time Dr. Bob Rice made an around-the-world tour to help missionaries set up literacy programs, he always stopped in South Korea. In 1999, the second time I met Bob Rice in S. Korea, I experienced a spiritual awakening to God's call to literacy evangelism work. Whenever I had time off from my teaching job at Keymyung University, I would fly to meet Bob Rice wherever primers were being constructed. In this way I learned about primer construction and how to lead Teacher Training Workshops (TTWs). When I retired in 2005, I joined Literacy & Evangelism International and started constructing primers: Lahu in Thailand; Vietnamese in Vietnam; Lao in Laos; and Inner Mongolian in China, leading TTWs to teach others how to use the LEI Bible-based materials.

In 2000, I joined Bob Rice in China to create the Mandarin primer. I read Mandarin and also provided funds to support the primer construction project. After much prayer, governmental permission was given to print the Chinese primers and to hold a TTW in China. Yet, just before the first TTW began, the primers were confiscated. (These primers are available on our website.)

Two other Korean missionaries and I were part of a Mongolian primer construction team in 2002, which became Dr. Rice's last. In 2003, John Taylor and I trained 22 teachers, government officials in charge of teaching illiterates. At that training, twelve of the twenty-two teachers became Christians. As the Managing Director of Central and Southeast Asia I travel to many Asian countries teaching and developing Bible-based literacy materials. The legacy that started over 50 years ago continues through the next generations.

*Dr. Nam-Hyeon Kim is LEI's Managing Director of Central and Southeast Asia.*



*Sid Rice gives Dr. Kim LEI's Distinguished Missionary Award*

# LEI'S Literacy Primers Creation Timeline:

**1967**

Literacy & Evangelism is founded...

**1970s**

Sundanese - Indonesia '72  
Kalangoya - Philippines '74  
Toraja - Indonesia '76  
Santali - Bangladesh '79

**Total = 4**



**1980s**

Blaan - Philippines '80  
Cebuano - Philippines '80  
Subanen - Philippines '80  
Tiruray - Philippines '80  
Javanese - Indonesia '81  
Matig-Salug - Philippines '81  
Kannada - India '82  
Malayalam - India '83  
Punjabi - Pakistan '83  
Sinama (Central) - Philippines '83  
Botolan Sambali - Philippines '85  
Ilocano - Philippines '87  
Korean - Korea '87  
Korean (Deaf) - Korea '87  
Marathi - India '87  
Tamil - India '87  
Urdu - India '87  
Bawm - Bangladesh '88  
Chakma - Bangladesh '88  
Sarangani Manobo - Philippines '88  
Bangla (Christian) - Bangladesh '89

**Total = 21**



**1990s**

Ilonggo - Philippines '91  
Assamese - India '92  
Mizo - India '93  
Indonesian - Indonesia '93  
Urdu - Pakistan '93  
Santali - India '94  
Tedim Chin - Myanmar '94  
Bangla (M) - Bangladesh '95  
Gujarati - India '95  
Khmer - Cambodia '95  
Nepali - Nepal '95  
Punjabi - India '95  
Sindhi - Pakistan '95  
Zomi - India '95  
Lisu - Myanmar '96  
Paite - India '96  
Pampango - Philippines '96  
Turkish - Turkey '96  
Wa - Myanmar '96  
Badjao - Philippines '97  
Boro (Roman Script) - India '97  
Konkani - India '97  
Garo - India '98  
Marwari - Pakistan '98  
Saraiki - Pakistan '98  
Sinhalese - Sri Lanka '99

**Total = 26**



Dr. Bob Rice (right)

# ASIA Primers 1967-2017

## 2000s

Mandarin - China '00  
 Mongolian - Mongolia '02  
 Magindanawn - Philippines '03  
 Meitei - India '03  
 Sama Bangingih - Philippines '03  
 Kazakh - Mongolia '04  
 Meranaw - Philippines '04  
 Kalagan - Philippines '05  
 Boro (Boro Script) - India '06  
 Burmese - Myanmar '06  
 Lahu - Thailand '06  
 Maithili - India '06  
 Vietnamese - Vietnam '06  
 Falam Chin - Myanmar '07  
 Gujjari - India '07  
 Hindi - India '07  
 Iranun - Philippines '07  
 Lao - Laos '07  
 Molbog - Philippines '07  
 Pilipino - Philippines '07  
 Hmong - Thailand '08  
 Mongolian Peripheral - Inner Mongolia '08  
 Tausug - Philippines '08  
 Apatani - India '09  
 Oriya - India '09  
 Sadri - India '09

**Total = 26**

## 2010s

Dimasa - India '11  
 Kui - India '11  
 Bhojpuri - India '12  
 Russian - Mongolia '12  
 Thai - Thailand '13  
 Bengali - India '14

**Total = 6**



## UNDATED

Malay - Malaysia  
 Mentawai - Indonesia  
 Nias - Indonesia  
 Sengoi - Malaysia  
 Timorese - Indonesia

**Total = 5**



## 2017

The future holds endless opportunities...

**GRAND TOTAL FOR ASIA PRIMERS: 88**

84 Asian Primers are available for free download from our website. For more information about all our free online literacy primers, please visit:

[LiteracyEvangelism.org/Primers](http://LiteracyEvangelism.org/Primers)

To see a video about the primer construction process please visit

<https://vimeo.com/59014926>.

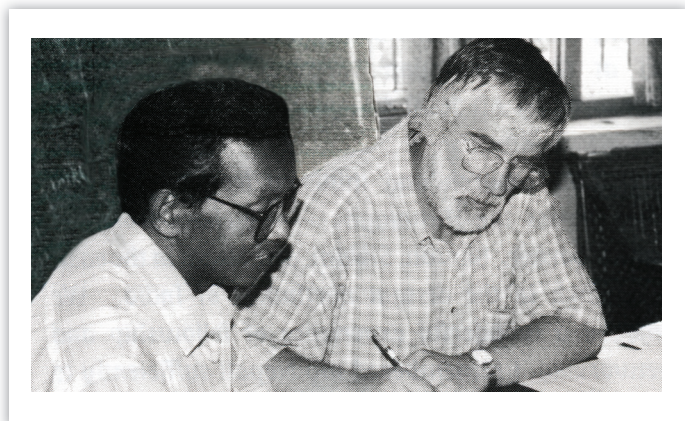




# Celebrating 50 Years of Ministry

## INDIA 1995

**JOHN TAYLOR:**  
**LEI MISSIONARY (1984-2015)**  
**LEI PRESIDENT (1994-2005)**



*John Taylor working with a partner on the Garo language primer*

In 1995, “I took a trip to Asia, visiting Nepal and India... my first overseas trip in my new role as Director of Literacy & Evangelism International... It was exciting to be in India again. I participated in some of our work going on there and established some promising new contacts for future work. One experience that was particularly rewarding was joining Dr. Rice in a workshop near Hyderabad. We trained 21 slum workers of Operation Mobilization’s Good Shepherd Ministries teams, working in four major languages for which we have produced primers. After that we went further south to Hosur, where we joined Carey Jo Johnston (Managing Director of LEI Canada) and Bob Biederman (LEI Managing Director of North America). Together with two primer construction teams of India nationals, we succeeded in producing new Bible-content primers in the Punjabi and Gujarati languages...It was great to see what the Lord is doing in India through literacy work. Thousands are reading the Bible as they learn to read. Many are encountering the Living Word in the process. As a result, hundreds of new churches are springing up across this second-most-populous nation. *Excerpt from Missionary Journey: 1995 Newsletter. John Taylor, August 11, 1995.*

## NEW READER TESTIMONY - S ASIA 2016

“My name is R. B.; I’m from S. Village. I am married and have three children. I have never been to school, but I had a great desire to learn to read the Bible. For 20 years or so I was attending church services without carrying a Bible. I had a great feeling of shame and embarrassment deep inside my heart. Three years ago LEI started a literacy class in my village. I was extremely excited about this news and quickly registered my name. Within a three-month period my eyes were opened. I started reading the lessons well for the first time in my life! After the ten-month course was over, I bought a beautiful Old Testament Bengali Bible. I wrote down all the scripture verses which Pastor shared on Sundays. I came back home and read the verses in my Bible. I learned more through this reading process. I am still attending a Bible-reading class started by LEI. Now I can read any portion of the Bible with ease! Reading the Bible on a daily basis has given me an experience of a closer relationship with God thanks to the LEI consultant who brought the gift of reading in my village!”  
*Testimony sent by G. M., LEI Missionary, S. Asia.*



## FROM C. - LEI MISSIONARY IN S. ASIA 2016

Greetings from India!

At present there are 18 classes running well in K., and two classes in progress in the vicinity of D. Almost immediately upon my return to S. Asia, I went to visit one of these D. classes. It comprises an underclass community living in a "basti" on the edge of another community. A basti is something similar to a slum, dwellings attached to each other, another tent or room added as money slowly comes in or as the family extends. The class is taught by A. who happens to be one of my former students of D. Bible College. He was one of my weakest students, but as so very often happens, the Lord uses what is weak or feeble for His service in a wonderful way. The target group he teaches literacy to are robbers and thieves, beggars and snake charmers - that is the way A and his father described this group to me. The students actually were mostly young women, girls and also a young man.



*This is Akash and his literacy class. He was trained about three months ago and has been teaching faithfully for the past two months. His students are already on lesson 39 of the Hindi primer and reading incredibly well!*

After the class they each testified of how they had heard so much about Jesus through A. (who also leads a Bible study), and so they want to learn to read in order to read the Bible. Most seem to have made some sort of commitment to follow Christ. Please pray that they will bear the consequences of this commitment in the face of strong opposition in the basti; especially for a change in their lifestyle.

## FROM T. L. - LEI MANAGING DIRECTOR SOUTHERN ASIA 2016



Today, the official literacy rate is 74%. As a point of fact, this number (according to their own statistics) accounts for more than two-thirds of the world's illiteracy (a number between 700 and 800 million). That's 326 million people that can't read! And since many are counted as literate if they can simply sign their name, the actual literacy rate is lower. There is a direct correlation between illiteracy and poverty, hygiene, infant mortality, and debilitating superstitions. Literacy & Evangelism International has a great opportunity to reach these 324 million people with a practical tool that will enrich their lives and offer a better education.

At the same time, literacy provides the perfect vehicle to share the hope of salvation and new life in Christ and gives believers a way to connect with God daily through the reading of Scripture. We thank God for the great transformation He has brought to thousands of lives through the faithful efforts of our missionaries and national partners. In a country where only 3% are Christians, I can think of no greater strategy for simultaneously addressing both the physical and spiritual needs of the people.



# Celebrating 50 Years of Ministry

*I cannot read the book because I don't know how to read.*

ISAIAH 29:12B ERV

## PLEASE PRAY

- MON** Please pray for literacy missionaries in Asia as they share about the love and salvation that Jesus Christ offers while sharing the gift of literacy.
- TUES** Please pray for Dr. Kim and literacy missionaries in S. Korea, Vietnam, Laos, and Thailand. Pray for the new literacy center in Thailand as workers answer requests from many countries.
- WED** Please pray for protection and the productive work of literacy missionaries serving in Indonesia and the Philippines, especially those serving in dangerous places.
- THURS** Please pray for literacy missionaries C., ., and M.K. in Southern Asia, protection in travel, faithfulness in teachers and supervisors, and students to be open to the Holy Spirit.
- FRI** Please pray for literacy missionaries in Mongolia, for completion of the literacy center and their home. Pray for home schooling of the children and literacy work in prisons and with soldiers.
- SAT** Please thank the Lord for the ability to read, the freedoms we enjoy in the U.S., and our citizenship in Heaven.
- SUN** Please ask the Lord if He is calling you to love the illiterate by sharing the gift of literacy to help alleviate the suffering of those in the U.S. and around the globe. You can make an impact by praying, giving, and/or going.

### INTERNATIONAL LITERACY TRAINING INSTITUTE 2017

Tulsa, OK, USA - LEI Tutor Place

June 10 - July 15, 2017 (5 weeks)

For more detailed information about Literacy Trainings and Digital Resources, please see our website.

[www.literacyevangelism.org/ilti](http://www.literacyevangelism.org/ilti)



Enhancing Trust

#### THE MESSENGER

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Would your church like someone to make a mission presentation?

Please contact our President: [SidRice@LiteracyInternational.net](mailto:SidRice@LiteracyInternational.net)



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*Literacy & Evangelism International (LEI) equips the Church to share the message of Jesus Christ through the gift of reading.  
We develop Bible-content materials to teach basic reading in local languages and conversational English.  
We train church leaders and missionaries to use LEI materials for evangelism, discipleship, and church planting.*