

Literacy & Evangelism International  
**THE MESSENGER**  
 THE AMERICAS EDITION

*Celebrating 50 Years*



Spring 2017

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Issue #1

*“We will tell the next generation the praiseworthy deeds of the Lord, his power, and the wonders he has done.”*  
 Psalm 78:4b niv

**SID RICE: LEI PRESIDENT**



The Psalmist cries, “O Lord, hear my voice! Let your ears be attentive to the voice of my pleas for mercy!” (Psalm 130:2 - ESV) The good news is that, “The Lord will listen to you...” (Deuteronomy 33:7 - CEV). God is the consummate example of one who listens. A recurring theme, woven throughout the entire biblical narrative, highlights the fact that God is listening. When we pray, “Hear my prayer, O Lord; give ear to my pleas for mercy!” (Psalm 143:1 - ESV), we can be certain, God is listening.

As we begin the celebration of Literacy and Evangelism International’s (LEI) 50th anniversary year, we celebrate that God is our listening God. 50 years ago he heard the cries of billions of non-readers. His response was to burden Dr. Robert Rice, LEI’s founder, with their plight. Within this edition of *The Messenger* you will read stories of LEI missionaries who, like Dr. Rice and our listening God, have heard the cries of the poorest of the poor on the face of our planet, those who are not able to read.

I trust you will join me in celebrating the work of a host of faithful LEI missionaries who have been created in the image of our listening God to share the strategically critical gift of reading across the Americas for the past 50 years.

We thank you, our partners in ministry, for making this viable work possible.

Your brother in Christ,



**BOB BIEDERMAN: LEI MANAGING DIRECTOR NORTH AMERICA & EUROPE**



Fifty years ago Bob Rice visited a Navajo reservation desiring to teach people to read and write, so they could read God’s Word. This was a first step in developing literacy books in over 247 languages and dialects around the globe. Today, LEI missionaries continue to travel to places near and far to share the Gospel using Bible-content literacy and ESL materials.

Recently, through a contact of LEI-Canada, a ministry team was invited to travel to Cuba to teach ESL with Bible-content material. Bruce and Jaye Hansen, Don Edic and Jennifer Bryant worked with the Eastern Baptist Convention of Cuba in Guantanamo City. Four professors and 15 students from the university came to learn about Bible-based strategies for teaching conversational English.

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**T. L.: LEI MANAGING DIRECTOR LATIN AMERICA & SOUTHERN ASIA**



I first saw Dr. Rice when he came to my home church - Oreland Evangelical Presbyterian Church. I was seventeen and played guitar for our worship team. He was sitting in the first pew that was reserved for the band. I was thinking, “Who’s this elderly man sitting in the ‘reserved’ pew?” I sat down and introduced myself. He pulled a business card out of his suit jacket and invited me to come to his presentation in Fellowship Hall after the service. When he said Literacy and Evangelism, I was imagining the distribution of Christian books or something. I soon learned that it was much, much more than that.

In Fellowship Hall, his manner was calm and his voice quiet, yet it carried a powerful and palpable intensity. His passion for God’s word and the lost was evident, and his words pierced me:

“95% of the world has access to the Bible, but only half can read it... God calls us to serve the poorest of the poor, which are the illiterate.”

(continued on page 3)



# Celebrating 50 Years of Ministry

## 1967 - REV. BOB RICE'S LITERACY MINISTRY BEGAN ON A NAVAJO RESERVATION

“God has led me in preparation, and is leading me into a new ministry. Twenty years ago, my Th.M. Thesis at Princeton Seminary was: *Literacy As a Means of Evangelism in Missions*. Working in the Korean Presbyterian Mission, 1950-1965, I saw the need. This spring (1967) I taught with Dr. Frank Laubach, ‘the apostle of literacy,’ a graduate course at ORU: *Literacy Techniques in Missions*. I have discussed with different mission groups the problem of lack in training personnel, and the growing need of literacy on the field. This summer at the Summer Institute of Linguistics (Wycliffe Bible Translators), I led two seminars on Laubach literacy methods.

“With over 40% of the world illiterate - and illiteracy growing, I am entering today’s most open door in missions. The wonderful work of the American and other Bible Societies of 150 years, still leaves the Bible a closed book to the illiterate. There are churches around the world less than 10% literate! Teaching the illiterate to read gives the native Christian and missionary an unsurpassed opportunity for personal witnessing. People the world over are eager to learn to read. Teaching and then witnessing, we can also put God’s word in their hands.

“I am venturing forth in faith into this strategic field of literacy evangelism. This month, invitations have come to work with the Indians in the southwest...”

This was the way Rev. Bob Rice began his introductory support-raising newsletter in July of 1967. By October, as a first step in Literacy Ministry, Rev. Bob Rice committed to working among the Navajos of Arizona during November 1967. He worked with Rev. John Beck of the Navajo Presbyterian Mission in Kayenta; Mrs. Sybil Lawlis; and Miss Faith Hill, a veteran Wycliffe worker. With 90% of the Navajos illiterate and unable to read God’s Word – it was little wonder that John Beck’s first words to Rev. Rice included, “We deeply feel you are an answer to our prayers.”

Rev. Rice prayed that something would start that, “with the blessing of the Holy Spirit,” would “grow into a continuing and effective literacy evangelism outreach among the Navajos.” Sybil Lawlis wrote, “Truly, the Lord must have great things in this plan... At Oljato we were able to have several Navajos in a



Teaching a Navajo

### ILLITERACY... TODAY’S MOST OPEN DOOR IN MISSIONS

presentation class to show them the possibilities of the Literacy program. Their enthusiasm and response was a real test of their needs. They are begging for help...They are so eager to learn.”

Using Laubach materials, Rev. Rice did tremendous work in Navajo literacy evangelism in a very short time. Having classes each weekday

night, the people were so interested that they even came Saturday and Sunday nights to practice!

“There were both decisions for Christ and evident healings through prayer,” Rev. Rice reported. “Learning the Navajo alphabet and basic phrases, I was able to teach the Navajos how to begin reading the Bible and writing their own language.”

Faith Hill, who translated the Navajo New Testament, later wrote to Rev. Rice, We “are so thankful for your presence there. I wish you... could be available to visit each Mission doing what you are doing there.”

At the end of Rev. Rice’s visit, John Beck told Rev. Rice, “You don’t know how much your visit has meant to us.” Rev. Rice thought these words more than repaid the little effort of the four weeks’ work.

Two years later Rev. Rice heard from Faith Hill who wrote, “I’ve just spent two days at Kayenta helping Betty Gon with materials and methods for the reading classes she is holding. I know you’ll be glad she is carrying on.”

## BOB BIEDERMAN: LEI MANAGING DIRECTOR NORTH AMERICA & EUROPE

(continued from page 1)

The experience so motivated the host pastor, Eliobin, that he is planning to attend the 2017 International Literacy Training Institute in Tulsa this summer. God is opening doors in places (like Cuba) that were long closed but today are avenues of opportunity. In the footsteps of our founder, Literacy and Evangelism continues to push into new frontiers and areas to equip the church to share the message of Jesus Christ through the gift of literacy and ESL.

Another frontier for LEI is online training. As it becomes increasingly difficult for internationals to travel to the U.S. (due to visa and transportation costs), a door is opening to put our premier training online. God brought Dr. Melina Gallo to LEI to make online training a reality. We are currently testing the first piece of an online International Literacy Training Institute (ILTI). This will be accessible at no cost to Christians around the globe. In so doing we will make the training in Tulsa available to thousands who will not have to leave their family, ministry, or country to attend ILTI.

Here in Tulsa the Lord also led Dr. Rebecca Foote to direct our local outreach – the Tulsa Literacy Center. Her gifts in teaching, Spanish, and language acquisition will be utilized as she provides leadership over basic literacy and ESL in the metropolitan area.

The mission that Bob Rice began in 1967 continues to grow and expand. Little did he realize how his obedience in reaching out to the Navajo would begin a mission which today spans the globe, equipping the Church to share the message of Jesus through the gift of reading.

## T. L.: LEI MANAGING DIRECTOR LATIN AMERICA & SOUTHERN ASIA

(continued from page 1)

I had often thought about the idea of going into missions some day but probably for all the wrong reasons - exotic foods, traveling, adventure, etc. But this was different. God awakened something in my soul that day.

After enrolling at Arkansas Tech University, I soon began spending more time with the Rices. Tulsa wasn't too far away, and Rev. Rice and his wife often invited me to stay with them. Rev. Rice was always more interested in my spiritual life than anything else. Before college, I had endeavored to read the Bible, but I struggled with consistency. As I spent time with the Rices, though, my daily communion with God became more of an integral part of my life. One morning at their house, I woke up early (for me) and went to the living room to read the Bible. I was enjoying the solitude when I was suddenly startled by the crinkling sound of a page turning. I had gotten up early, but not earlier than Rev. Rice! He was kneeling behind his favorite chair in the living room with his Bible resting on a miniature Japanese stool, spending the first part of his day in prayer.

In 2002, I was just a freshman in college. I think Dr. Rice (rightly) surmised that I was too immature and inexperienced to join him on his overseas journey. But his wife, Alice, later told me that it was her idea to have me accompany him on his bi-annual trip "around the world." She told him, "If you don't invite Tedd now, you'll lose him." So before I knew what I had gotten myself into, I was on a plane with Rev. Rice headed to Korea. I had no idea that it would be Rev. Rice's last trip around the world and that the Lord would call him home a few months later. At the end of that year, I was grateful to God that I had the chance to be mentored by Rev. Rice.

*The LEI Messenger: The Americas Edition 2017*

## TULSA LITERACY CENTER: RECOLLECTIONS OF MARY (HEARD) MULLOY

Mary Mulloy served as the Coordinator for the Tulsa Literacy Center (TLC) from 1984 to 1987, succeeding Hazel Hunt who actually started the ministry. Ms. Hunt "must have done a wonderful job," said Mary. "I kept hearing stories of her skills and compassion for the needy people in the community who could not read."

"The TLC office was in the main LEI building at that time since there was no Tutor Place when I first started working at LEI! I thoroughly loved the job, helping to bring awareness in the Tulsa community of the need for adult literacy classes. I gave radio interviews, spoke in churches and Sunday school classes, and put articles and fliers in the local papers, libraries, gas stations, etc., trying to recruit tutors and to make LEI's services known to adults in the community."

As word got out, people who wanted to help teach others to read called the LEI office. After being trained by Chris Jenkins, Mary and Chris held Tutor Training Workshops. They needed to keep a balance between trained tutors and adults seeking help. This was, at times, a tricky balance to maintain. Workshops were held on Saturday mornings so that working people could get the training. Reading classes were held at the local library in private rooms, in churches, and at the LEI building.

Mary recalls, "I met some of the most wonderful people - tutors and students! The students were so courageous; many of them shared heart-wrenching stories of how they struggled to make it in today's world without being able to read." Some told potential employers they had left their glasses at home, asking if they could take a job application with them to complete. Others carried a folded newspaper under an arm when out in public or when applying for jobs, to give the impression that they were literate.

Since the beginning, many individuals have led the TLC. Bob Biederman, Wendell Rochester, Carol Sterner, Irma Walthall, Barbara Merrill, Larry Buell and a host of Oral Roberts University interns: Keri McNeeley, Marie Baye, Raphael Stone, Aisha Doris, and Joseph Santhappan have done a fantastic job of coordinating the TLC over the years.

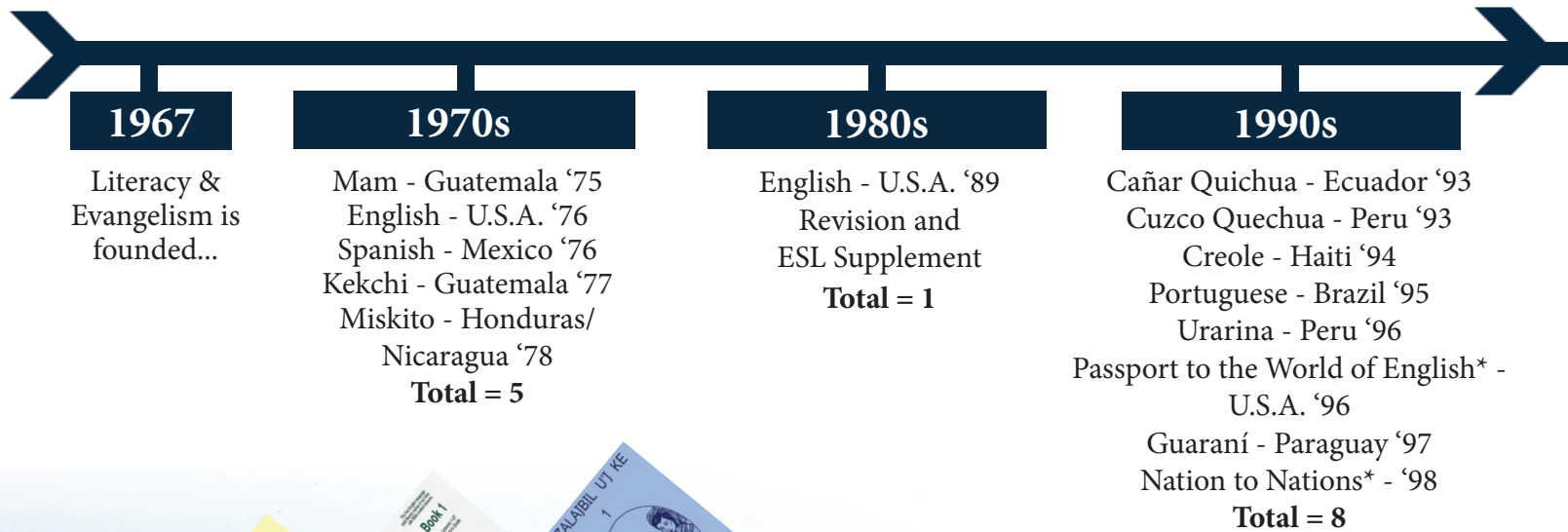
Now, Dr. Rebecca Foote has taken on the TLC's vital role of training and coordinating volunteers; conducting teacher training workshops, matching tutors and students, publicizing opportunities, and the myriad of details that the TLC Coordinator's job entails. There is still a great need in Tulsa to share the gift of reading while sharing the love of Christ.

WE INVITE YOU TO VIEW THIS VIDEO ABOUT THE  
TULSA LITERACY CENTER AT  
[HTTPS://VIMEO.COM/202401426](https://vimeo.com/202401426)



*Mary Mulloy and friends.*

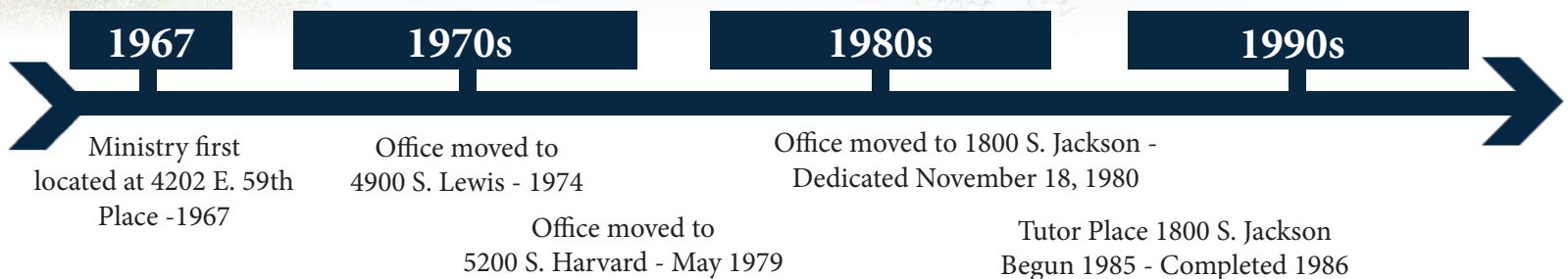
# LEI'S Literacy Primers Creation Timeline



\*TESOL = Teaching English to Speakers of Other Languages



## BUILDING THE MINISTRY:



# AMERICA Primers 1967-2017

2000s

Ayacucho - Peru '00  
 Aymara - Bolivia '04  
 Lambayeque - Peru '05  
 Aguaruna - Peru '08  
 Using Everyday English\* - U.S.A. '08  
**Total = 5**

2010s

Huambisa - Peru '12  
 Maxakali - Brazil '14  
**Total = 2**

Total

**21 Primers  
 for the  
 Americas**

2017

The future  
 holds endless  
 opportunities...



Nicaragua Documentary

To see a video about LEI's impact in Nicaragua please visit

<https://vimeo.com/50145228>



Created by Icon Fair from Noun Project

Check out LEI's new website written in Spanish:  
<http://alfabetizacioninternacional.org>

This can also be accessed from the toggle button on the LEI website.

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

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



# Celebrating 50 Years of Ministry

## ILTI: INTERNATIONAL LITERACY TRAINING INSTITUTE U.S.A.

Each summer, Christian leaders from around the world gather in LEI's training center in Tulsa, Oklahoma, USA, for the International Literacy Training Institute (ILTI). Initiated by Rev. Bob Rice, these training opportunities have shared a wealth of information regarding best practices in literacy evangelism. Starting as the Fall Literacy Institute (FLI), these training sessions were originally 11 weeks long, running from early September through mid-November. Bob Biederman recalls his 1990 FLI experience which included a *Firm Foundations* Tutor Training Workshop that was put into immediate action teaching local illiterate students; an English as a Second Language class; instruction in how to lead a Neighborhood Bible Study; a Primer Construction Workshop; and more. Students were up early at 7:45am each morning for the daily Bible study led by Rev. Rice on the book of John. Class time culminated in worship in the chapel each noon. A satisfying noon main meal was served at the Salvation Army in downtown Tulsa each day where FLI students ate with the Salvation Army staff. Afternoons were spent completing community living chores for about two hours each day: vacuuming, cleaning, doing laundry, and etc. Evenings were spent in preparing a light dinner, reading and doing homework. There were occasional outings: a picnic at George and Mary Bragg's home, an excursion to Shepherd of the Hills. All this culminated in a commissioning and certificate ceremony. For those becoming full-time LEI missionaries, two weeks of orientation followed.

About 2000, Fall Literacy Institutes were changed to Summer Literacy Institutes and the International Literacy Training Institute (ILTI) was established. Training was eventually compacted into an intense five or six-week institute. To this day participants are inspired by the worship, prayer, Bible study, instruction, and fellowship they experience in the loving multi-cultural setting of ILTI in which life-long friendships are forged. Even more importantly, after this time of intensive training these Christian leaders are prepared to go back out into their world to share what they have learned.

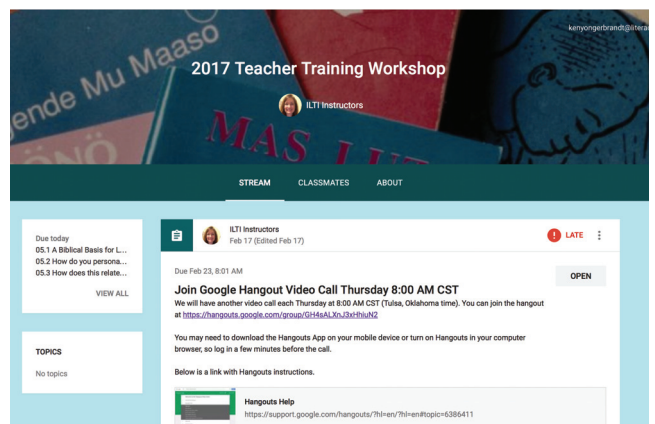
Most recently, with the expert leadership of Dr. Melina Gallo, LEI is currently testing its first online course, "Teacher Training Workshop." This test course will give LEI valuable feedback as we continue to develop and implement online training. The goal of this project is to develop a resource that is effective in training and strengthening literacy workers around the world fully equipping them to share the loving message of Jesus Christ through sharing the gift of reading.



1986



2014



2017 and into the future!

## FROM JERRY & KATHY MANUS - LEI MISSIONARIES IN PERU



*Emma Manus helps Nica advance through primer lessons while sharing God's Word.*

Nica was a little girl who did what she was supposed to do. She went to school, participated, and did her work. There was just one problem. Nica didn't learn to read.

First grade went by and other students were reading and writing. Nica could write the letters and words. She could copy from the board or out of a book. But when she was done writing, she couldn't read what she had written. When Nica began fourth grade, she still could not read.

Some of the other students were in the same situation at Nica's school. The teachers had done their job, but with so many students in each classroom they could not give much personal help to a child who was falling behind.

Nica's situation is very common now in Peru. Some continue in school for years, even into high school, sometimes learning in other areas such as arithmetic, but barely able to read a single word.

The future for someone like Nica who grows up a non-reader in Peru can be easily imagined. These are people who earn just enough to live day by day. The doors to better jobs, steady incomes, and higher learning are closed to them. We are told of non-readers who will not go to church because they don't want anyone to find out that they cannot read. Those who do go to church are very limited in their participation. They cannot join in scripture reading or follow the words of songs from a hymnal or projection. They cannot become teachers, cannot study the Bible for themselves, usually cannot join in the leadership of the church even if they are faithful members.

Peru does not have an adequate solution for the millions of non-readers in their land. But God has a solution, and the church called Manantial de Vida found that solution and put it to work.

In February of this year, the pastor and some of the members of Manantial de Vida requested that we train them as volunteer teachers using LEI's Bible-content primer series in Spanish, *Nuevos Caminos*.

Pastor Carlos had already been trained years before and had used the LEI method as a school teacher. Now he and his wife are part of the parents' association at the school where their own children attend. They saw the problem of students in that school not learning to read and decided their church would do something about it.

Once their team was trained I went with them to see the principal of the school. We drew up an agreement allowing Pastor Carlos and his team to go in twice a week after school to work with students who had not learned to read in their regular classes. The Principal and teachers were glad to have this help.

My daughter Emma and I have been going to the after-hours classes with the team from Manantial de Vida. Emma is the one who almost always teaches Nica. As I write this Nica is at Lesson 23 in the primer series. We thank God that He has made a way for Nica and others to have their lives changed for the better.

But learning to read and going on to have a better income is only part of what we hope and pray for in the lives of Nica and the others we teach. Every time we teach, we read a Bible passage with the students and talk with them about how they can respond in faith to God's message.

Ironically, a picture over the chalk board in the classroom declares Jesus as Savior, but a class project below the chalk board, regarding the origin of life, denies Him. The battle for the minds and hearts of Nica and other children is raging right in the classroom. We thank God for the opportunity to go to the classroom and read God's word with the students and make sure they receive the message of Jesus as Creator, Savior, and Lord.

*From Jerry Manus, LEI Missionary Peru*



# Celebrating 50 Years of Ministry

*For everyone who asks receives; the one who seeks finds; and to the one who knocks, the door will be opened.*

LUKE 11:10 NIV

## PLEASE PRAY

- MON** Please pray for literacy missionaries in the Americas as they share the story of love and salvation that Jesus Christ offers, while sharing the gift of literacy.
- TUES** Please pray blessings upon Bob & Mary Mulloy for their previous and current literacy work, and for Dr. Rebecca Foote as she now coordinates the Tulsa Literacy Center.
- WED** Please pray that LEI's partners in ministry throughout the Americas - LEI-Canada, LEI-Brazil, LEI-Guatemala, LEI-Nicaragua, LEI-Peru - will prosper.
- THURS** Please pray for LEI's Latin America Director T. L., Emily (Ts wife & LEI's graphic designer), and their four children.
- FRI** Please thank the Lord for LEI's 50-year heritage of literacy and evangelism ministry and ask for wisdom and blessing regarding future endeavors.
- SAT** Please pray for the International Literacy Training Institute 2017, for participants to complete paperwork, raise funds, and obtain visas.
- 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.

<https://www.literacyevangelism.org/get-involved/training>

#### 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)



Enhancing Trust



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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.*