

Compass Braille

Newscast Issue 2025-3

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Welcome

Welcome to the latest edition of the newsletter of Compass Braille. Please find the colour print version with photos attached together with Prayer Pointers.

Right now, it seems there's an incredible openness to the Gospel in sub-Saharan Africa, especially among blind and partially sighted people. Because of this, we continue to send braille Scriptures to the region, and in this issue, we're sharing more stories from there.

At the same time, as you may have noticed from the production statistics in this and previous issues, we're also sending large quantities of braille Scriptures to countries across Asia. It's important to remember, though, that in some of these places Christians face real persecution, which means we don't always hear about the impact they're having – or, when we do, we can't always share those stories openly. Even so, the continued demand assures us that the difference these braille Scriptures are making in people's lives is just as powerful as the stories you'll read about here.

The Light Within

Since the last issue of Newscast we have sent 280 volumes of braille Scriptures to Zimbabwe in the languages of Shona, Ndebele and English (Revised Standard Version). Recently we received the following report by Rutendo Mandipa of the Bible Society of Zimbabwe:

At just 19 years old, Nyasha is a shining example of courage, determination, and faith. A Form 4 student at Jairos Jiri Association School for the Blind, her journey has been anything but easy – but it is one marked by grace and resilience.

Nyasha was not born blind. She came into the world with perfect sight, the third of six children in a close-knit family. Her early childhood was filled with the same simple joys and everyday moments as any other child. But everything changed when she turned six. A bout of measles struck, and complications followed. Cataracts began to cloud her young eyes.

Her mother, heartbroken and desperate, did all she could. Doctor after doctor was consulted. Some tried to scrape the cataracts, hoping for a miracle. But nothing worked. Nyasha's sight slowly slipped away, and with it came waves of sorrow. "My mother cried," Nyasha recalls quietly. "Then she accepted that this was the new me."

Nyasha never lost her sense of purpose. She continued her education in mainstream schools, surrounded by sighted children. She never felt out of place. "I just wanted to learn like everyone else," she says. "I didn't want my blindness to stop me."

Her turning point came when her headmistress referred her to Jairos Jiri Association, a school that caters for children with visual impairments from primary through secondary level. At the age of 8, Nyasha began learning braille. "It was like learning a new language," she says with a smile. "But I was eager. I had dreams."

And those dreams are big. Nyasha hopes to become a journalist, a storyteller who can give a voice to others who feel invisible. Part of what fuels her passion is her love for stories, especially those found in the Bible.

Thanks to the Bible Society of Zimbabwe, Nyasha receives braille Bible portions that she treasures deeply. "Reading the Bible in braille is one of my favourite things," she shares with a glow on her face. "I enjoy the stories so much, especially about Job. He suffered so much, but God restored him. That gives me hope."

Her favorite verse is Romans 12:19:

"Do not take revenge... It is mine to avenge; I will repay," says the Lord.

It reminds her that justice and healing come in God's time.

To other young people living with blindness or disability, Nyasha offers heartfelt encouragement: "God has a reason for everything. Sometimes we go through things so that His glory can be seen through us."

Nyasha may no longer see the world with her eyes, but her vision, her purpose, her calling is clear. And with each step she takes at Jairos Jiri, with each braille page she reads, she draws closer to the future she was born for.

Ugandan Lives Forever Changed

The Bible Society of Uganda continues to do great work among blind and partially sighted people throughout their country. Below are two reports, from among the many they send us, showing the fruit that is being yielded from the braille Scriptures supplied to them by Compass Braille.

A Future and a Hope: Jovan's Story

Seventeen-year-old Jovan was born blind into a family that struggled to accept him. Half of his relatives rejected him, keeping him isolated from other children. He grew up surrounded by loneliness, pain, and the crushing feeling of being unwanted.

At one point, Jovan's parents, overwhelmed and unable to cope, abandoned him in the forest. Their hope, perhaps, was that nature would take its course. But God intervened. A passerby discovered Jovan and carried him to a nearby church. Though he eventually reunited with his parents, their neglect only deepened. In the next town, they abandoned him again, this time drawing the attention of the authorities. His parents were arrested and each sentenced to two years in prison for child neglect. Tragically, Jovan's father died while attempting to escape prison. His mother later remarried, far from Hoima, living in fear of how people might treat her after what she had done to her own son.

Amid this brokenness, the church became Jovan's refuge. The leader of the congregation sought Godparents for him, and through their love, Jovan was raised with dignity and given a place to belong.

Years later, during a visit to his school in Hoima District, Jovan received something that transformed his life; his very first braille Bible. For a boy who had known rejection, abandonment, and pain, this gift became a wellspring of hope.

"When I read the braille Bible, I know God loves me. I no longer feel that He is far from me."

Jovan's favourite Scripture is Jeremiah 29:11:

"For I know the plans I have for you, declares the Lord, plans to prosper you and not to harm you plans to give you a hope and a future."

He loves this verse because it reminds him that, despite everything he has gone through, God's plan for his life is good. It strengthens his belief that blindness is not the end of his story, but the beginning of a greater purpose.

Today, Jovan is in Senior Four. Against all odds, he dreams of becoming a lawyer, determined to advocate for the rights of other visually impaired people in Uganda. Yet more than his future profession, he treasures the braille Bible, because it connects him daily with his Creator.

Jovan's journey reminds us that a braille Bible is not just paper and dots. It is a lifeline of hope. It whispers to the forgotten: God sees you, God values you, and God loves you.

"I am no longer the girl people whispered about"

My name is Grace Namubiru. I come from a small village near Lake Kyoga in central Uganda. I began losing my sight at the age of 13 due to an untreated eye infection. By the time I was 15, I was completely blind.

Everything changed. My parents wept for me, but the community whispered behind my back. "She will never marry." "She will be a burden." Some even said I had been bewitched. I believed them. I stayed indoors, ashamed, angry, and hopeless.

I used to go to church with my mother, but after losing my sight, I stopped. What was the point? I couldn't read the Bible anymore. I couldn't see the faces of those worshipping. I felt forgotten even by God.

Then one Sunday, a visitor came to our church. He spoke about the Bible Society of Uganda and how they provide braille and audio Bibles to people who are blind. My heart stirred. A month later, I received my own braille Bible, my first since losing my sight.

The first Scripture I read with my fingers was Isaiah 43:1:

"Do not fear, for I have redeemed you; I have called you by name, you are mine."

I cried. After years of silence and shame, I felt seen, truly seen by a God who still knew my name.

That was the beginning of a new life for me. I rejoined church. I started praying again, this time from the heart, not just repeating words. Slowly, confidence returned. Joy followed.

Today, I teach braille to other girls who are blind. I sing in church again. And yes, I did get married, to a kind man who loves the Lord. I am no longer the girl people whispered about. I am a woman with purpose and faith.

Updates

Tony Kightley with the Lord

On 11 July 2025 former Compass Braille volunteer, Tony Kightley, went to be with the Lord. Tony regularly helped at the Compass Braille press in Devon from the 1990s until it relocated to Hertfordshire in 2008. As well as being proficient in all the manual tasks needed to bind the braille volumes, he was able to fix computers and printers and even invented and built electronic devices to make production more efficient. After Compass Braille's relocation, Tony continued to be a keen supporter right up to the end of his life.

"Tony was one of a kind – so gifted but very humble. He was a vital member of Compass Braille particularly at the start of the work and so loyal."

– Steve Brown, first Manager of Compass Braille.

Let us thank God for all the volunteers both past and present and pray for the latter as they labour for the eternal reward of seeing souls won for, and growing in their relationship with, the Lord Jesus Christ!

New Staff Member

We are pleased to announce that Johnny Leung has joined the Torch/Compass Braille Production Team. His addition will help us to stay on top of the large number of orders we have received and hope to complete by the end of the year. Johnny, originally from Hong Kong, writes:

"I am happy to join the Torch team and help with Compass Braille production. Thank God he guides me every step of the way and fulfills his plan."

Pray for Johnny and the rest of the Production Team as they carry out their valuable work for the Lord.

Transcription

Urdu Bible: Work continues with the Gospels of Mark, Luke and John currently being proofread.

Spanish Bible, "Dios Habla Hoy" version: We are transcribing the deuterocanonical books so that they may be distributed in Latin America alongside the Protestant Canon we transcribed a few years ago. We are currently awaiting proofreading feedback from Costa Rica.

New Languages: There is talk of new languages in the pipeline but as yet nothing is confirmed. Please pray for potential projects to move forward.

Production

In the 3 months from July to September we have dispatched 2351 braille volumes. The vast majority, 2014, were Bible volumes, with 102 volumes of the Lion Children's Bible, 200 booklets containing Bible extracts on themes ("Thematic Portions") and 35 containing deuterocanonical books.

The languages and destination countries of the volumes were as follows:

- 755 English to Kenya
- 300 Swahili to Tanzania
- 280 English, Ndebele and Shona to Zimbabwe
- 260 Kinyarwanda to Rwanda
- 302 English to Uganda
- 24 English to Liberia
- 430 Telugu to India

Other Formats

Newscast & Prayer Pointers are available on request in text, braille, giant print or by email.

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