



COMPASS
BRAILLE

NEWS

Braille Bibles

Good News at the Fingertips

Summer 2026

Seeds of Hope sown in Zimbabwe



“The Bible guides us and corrects us, but it has done something else truly beautiful: it has removed our shame”

Over the past year we have sent over 900 volumes of braille to the Bible Society of Zimbabwe.

These included the Bible in indigenous languages Shona and Ndebele as well as in English (Revised Standard

Version). Also among them were what we call “thematic portions” – collections of stories or encouraging verses from the Bible with titles such as “Stories of Women in the Bible” and “The Lord Hears Your Cries”. Last, but not least, we sent braille

sheets which contained the Lord’s Prayer and the Apostles’ Creed. These were to enable visually impaired people to participate fully in church services.

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Welcome to Compass Braille’s ‘new look’. We have a new logo, a new name for our newsletter and a newly designed website about to be launched – details on back page.

What hasn’t changed is the mission of Compass Braille – to bring God’s Word in braille to visually impaired people worldwide! In this issue we bring you stories from Zimbabwe and Nepal as well as our regular transcription and production reports.

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In response to our dispatches we have received news from the Bible Society of Zimbabwe outlining how these resources have been used.

Ndebele Launch

A highlight of the year was the Bible Society of Zimbabwe's official launch of the Ndebele Braille Bible on 30th January 2026. It took place at The United Methodist Church in Bulawayo and was supported by the Nkomwa Foundation Trust and the Theological College of Zimbabwe, who described it as a "groundbreaking milestone bringing God's Word to the visually impaired in our own language!"

The event included readings from the braille Bible, speeches from church leaders, prayers of thanksgiving to God and heartfelt worship led by visually impaired singers.

School Distributions

On 10th March 2026, the programs department of the Bible Society of Zimbabwe travelled east from Harare to visit 2 schools to distribute braille Scriptures among the students.

The first destination was Murewa High School. There was an atmosphere of excitement as the braille Bible portions were delivered. Gwinyai Ndembera from the Bible Society of Zimbabwe noted that such deliveries, "always bring hope and joy to students." One of the recipients, a young man called Tasimbaradzwa, had this to say:

"My journey here at Murewa High School began in 2012, the same year I started the life-changing process of learning to read and write in braille. To be honest, I want to thank God for braille; without it, I would be nowhere. After I was involved in a car

accident that affected my sight, my life was supposed to be a mess. But braille stepped in and nurtured me; it is the only thing that brought me to the stage where I am today."



The next stop was Nyamuzuwe High School where the team was left with "showers of blessings" as they had time to read the Word, recite it and share insights from various texts as a way of increasing Bible knowledge. They distributed braille Bible volumes, thematic portions and had one-to-one chats with the students. One of whom, Tendai, said:

"I want to extend a deep thank you to the Bible Society of Zimbabwe. For the past five years, you have been making the Word of God available to us in braille. Having access to Scripture in a format I can read myself has been a blessing. When I finish my studies here, I hope to go to university to become either an advocate or a social worker."

Another, Diana, who is 15, shared:

"When I first started my journey with braille, I was filled with sadness. I used to wonder, 'Will I ever truly be able to learn this?' It felt like such a mountain to climb. But God has been so faithful; He has enabled us to grasp the concepts so well that now we can sometimes read even better than those who have sight"

Diana added:

"I also want to say a very special thank you to the Bible Society of Zimbabwe. Your support through the Word of God has changed my life. The Bible guides us and corrects us, but it has done something else truly beautiful: it has removed our shame. Before, when others took their Bibles to church, we had nothing to hold. We felt left out. But now, because of these braille Bibles, we can read along with everyone else. We are no longer just listeners; we are participants. May God bless the Bible Society and increase their reach so they can help many more people just like me."

Partners

We rejoice that we are able to be partners in the Gospel with the Bible Society of Zimbabwe. We are delighted to stand alongside them and cheer them on in the wonderful work they are doing. The apostle Paul said to the Corinthians:

"I planted the seed, Apollos watered it, but God has been making it grow. So neither the one who plants nor the one who waters is anything, but only God, who makes things grow. The one who plants and the one who waters have one purpose, and they will each be rewarded according to their own labour. For we are co-workers in God's service; you are God's field, God's building."

1 Corinthians 3:6-9

In a similar way, with the help of our donors, we are able to supply "seed" to our partners – people like the Bible Society of Zimbabwe and Nepal Fellowship for the Handicapped (see later) – who can then plant it into the lives of the visually impaired people they minister to and we watch as God makes beautiful things grow!

A Special Delivery for Nepal

On 3rd May, Nepal Fellowship for the Handicapped (NFH) received a special delivery from England.

In the last issue of this magazine we shared news from NFH both about the impact of the braille Bible we had been able to send to them and also about a historic gathering that took place when, for the first time in 30 years, the members of NFH met for a three day retreat.

When NFH founder, Bonnie Thapa, originally contacted us in 2024 requesting braille Scriptures for her organisation to replace those



destroyed in a flood, she indicated that they would like five complete braille Bibles. When we mentioned this to supporters, gifts were received enabling us to send one Bible.

Recognising that there was still a large unmet need for braille Scriptures among NFH members, earlier this

year we decided to use some funds that Compass Braille had available in our “Special Bible Fund” (see article below) to produce the remaining four complete Bibles originally requested.

This time all went very smoothly with the 24 boxes arriving at NFH offices in good condition approximately three weeks after they were dispatched from us. Upon receipt Bonnie messaged us to say:

“I don’t have words to express how grateful I am to you and the Compass Braille team. Thank you so much for blessing us this way.”

The Special Bible Fund

The majority of the orders we receive come from our partnership with United Bible Societies (UBS). Bible Societies around the world submit braille requirements to UBS for any projects they undertake to minister to visually impaired people in their own countries. UBS, in turn, ask us to produce the braille for these projects. UBS fund these orders for poorer countries, via donations received through other Bible Societies, currently paying us £12.95 per Bible volume produced. This covers a large portion of our production costs, especially if we receive enough orders in a year. However, there are two scenarios where this way of working causes difficulties. The first is if we are made aware of a braille need where the Bible Society of that country either does not have the means to initiate a project or cannot find a donor to support it. The second is if we don’t receive enough orders from UBS in a year in order to cover our running costs.

Earlier this year, we found ourselves facing these exact two scenarios: we were waiting for orders from UBS whilst knowing of needs for braille Scriptures which the local Bible Society could not bring before UBS.

A solution which aimed to tackle both challenges simultaneously was set up many years ago by the then CEO, Colin Dowling, and Trustees of Compass Braille. It was called the “Special Bible Fund” and it was designed so that supporters could donate specifically to this fund and know that they would be supporting projects which were unfunded by UBS. This was the fund we were able to draw upon to help supply Nepal Fellowship for the Handicapped with the braille Scriptures that they recently requested (see article above).

At present we are again facing a shortfall of orders from UBS whilst knowing of overseas groups who would dearly appreciate braille

Scriptures that we have the ability to supply. Therefore we wanted to remind readers of the existence of the Special Bible Fund in case any felt led to donate to it.

All donations are gratefully received and will be made good use of, whether they are specified for the “Special Bible Fund” or for general use. Donations can be made as follows:

- Cheque payable to “Compass Braille” (address on back page)
- Bank transfer to Compass Braille, Sort Code 30-96-23, Account No. 00546743 (please let us know if you do this)
- Stewardship (go to website www.stewardship.org.uk - and search for “Compass Braille”).

If you are a UK tax payer, contact us for a Gift Aid form. This enables us to claim tax back on your gift, increasing it by 25%.

Website News

The Compass Braille website has recently undergone a long overdue redesign.

We are hoping it will be launched by the time you receive this magazine. Try going to the usual address:

www.compassbraille.org

The new version will have the new logo and include a menu item called “Our Stories” containing photos and testimonies of recipients of Compass Braille Bibles.



A screenshot from the new website

Do get in touch and let us know what you think. We hope it conveys the mission of Compass Braille well and will help keep existing supporters up to date as well as inform those wanting to find out more about us.

We would like to express sincere thanks to Esther Searle who has helped us over many years with our website. Also to Johnny Leung, Sally Ainslee and Jake Kyle for helping design the new logo and website.

Updates

Transcription

Ewe

This Ghanaian language (pronounced “eh-weh”) uses several letters not found in the English alphabet and so braille code information was needed from braille experts in Ghana in order to get started with this project. We received this and have since produced proof copies which are being checked in Ghana.

Malayalam

This Bible was one of the original 11 Indian languages transcribed by Compass Braille in the 1990s. We are now transcribing it again, firstly because it came to our attention that there were some minor errors in the original and secondly because this year there have been some updates to the Indian language braille codes. Proofs have been sent to India for checking.

Luganda – Catholic Bible

Luganda is the most widely spoken indigenous language of Uganda and the main ‘lingua franca’ in central Uganda, including Kampala. In 2018 we transcribed the standard Protestant Bible version in this language and this year we have been asked to transcribe the version used in Catholic churches. The most recent census suggests 36% of the Ugandan population is Catholic so there is a big demand for this Bible in braille. Proofs are on their way to Uganda now.

Production

As alluded to in the “Special Bible Fund” article above, the first half of this year has been difficult because of lack of orders from United Bible Societies. We understand that this is partly due to increased regulation introduced in India making it much harder for Christian charities there to receive donations from overseas. We are praying the extra red tape introduced will soon be overcome by our partners in India enabling us to resume production for this and other countries where we know the need is big.

In the period since the last figures were published, that is the 5 months from February to June 2026, we dispatched 2272 braille volumes. The languages and destinations were as follows:

- 605 Kinyarwanda to Rwanda
- 441 English to Zimbabwe
- 86 Ndebele to Zimbabwe
- 90 Shona to Zimbabwe
- 173 Nepali to Nepal
- 20 English to Ghana
- 292 English to Uganda
- 90 Acholi to Uganda
- 100 Runyankore/Rukiga to Uganda
- 90 Lango to Uganda
- 144 Lusoga to Uganda
- 135 Luganda to Uganda
- 2 Malayalam to India (proofs)
- 4 Ewe to Ghana (proofs)

Compass Braille News & Prayer Pointers are available in text, braille, large print or by email.

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