

# Priors' Periodical...

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...Produced periodically.

**April 2009**

I haven't been paying much attention. It was only a couple of weeks ago that I realised I have been with Wycliffe Bible Translators for more than a year. The anniversary of my joining the organisation was back on the 1<sup>st</sup> February.

Working here has been a wonderful experience. I get to do what I enjoy, marketing and communications, while also contributing to something I believe in. Looking back to when I first visited Wycliffe, I remember being so surprised by the incredible number of people who don't have access to the Bible in their own language. *The most recent figures suggest that there are over 300 million people still waiting for a translation project to begin in their language, that doesn't include the places where work is in progress.* Now I get to play a part in making sure that situation changes by reminding people in the UK that there's still work to do.

Of course, being based in the UK, I don't have personal experience of what it's like for communities that don't have the Bible. *Quite embarrassingly, last night I counted the Bible's in our flat and found about 16.* But, I do have access to some great stories, like this one from Dawn Kruger,

## **A pastor's simple request**

*A knock at the gate drew me outside. I expected to find my co-worker waiting there but to my surprise I saw, instead, a man I didn't recognize. He seemed almost familiar, yet not quite. Who's this? I thought to myself as I went to greet him. The man at the gate turned out to be a thoughtful old pastor from a border city 100 miles north of my place. He had travelled all day on the back of a motorcycle over dusty, pothole-infested roads just to ask me one question: can you translate the Bible into our language?*

*"When did you become a Christian?" I asked.*

*"I was born a Christian," he replied.*

*I thought about that. If he was more than 75 years old, as he claimed to be, his parents would have been alive at the tail end of the ministry of the first missionary to go to his area. The Bible had been translated into the national language, and was at that time being translated into the wider regional language. But when the local people requested a translation in their own language, the missionary said, "Your group is too small," implying, it's not worth the effort.*

*This pastor desperately wanted God's Word in his own language. As he was talking about his dream to a colleague from another village, the colleague said, "I know some people who do Bible translation work. Let's go ask them if they'll help." So the colleague carried the elderly pastor on the back of his bike all the way to my place to ask for help.*

*"Do you speak the area minority language?" I asked. He said that he did, but the hesitation in his voice led me to think otherwise. For the next four hours, I administered some language evaluation exercises to determine whether or not his language was similar to other languages in the area. I discovered that it was entirely different and would need its own discrete translation.*

*After finishing the assessment tests, the pastor innocently asked, "When will the translation be ready?"*

*I had to tell him the sad news that, in situations like his – a language that is not accessible to linguists, a people group without higher education to assist in the process, and other factors that impact translation work – the average time for completing a translation is 15 to 20 years.*

*He then looked at me, steady and calm, and asked, "So when can we start?"*

From <<http://www.thewordislife.net/Stories/tabid/67/Default.aspx?id=1044&pg=1&continent=AS1>>



Phil & Tany Prior  
Pike A, The Wycliffe Centre, Horsleys Green, Bucks, HP14 3AF  
Tel: 07813 886009 / Twitter: Phil77 / Skype: philprior77  
E: phil.prior@yahoo.co.uk / W: www.philprior.co.uk/mylife  
**Working with Wycliffe Bible Translators UK, [www.wycliffe.org](http://www.wycliffe.org)**

When I began working with Wycliffe we agreed that I would commit to being here for two years. Well, one of those years has gone, and following my annual review and conversations with colleagues, we are now trying to find ways of making it practical for me to stay on for longer. I have to admit, if I left now I would feel like I was leaving a job half done.

## What's past and what's to come

I've just finished my first attempt as editor of our magazine – *Words for Life*. We made a special attempt on this occasion, to put something together as a bit of an introduction to Wycliffe, so if you still unsure about Bible translation and what this organisation does it's a good time to sign up for a copy.

You can register at [signing up online](http://tinyurl.com/ykr1hbq) (<http://tinyurl.com/ykr1hbq>). The magazines are free, but if you're not sure you will read it or you live outside of the UK, you can always ask for an electronic copy with a clear conscience, as it doesn't cost us a penny to send to you.

The next few months are packed with events squeezed in between work.

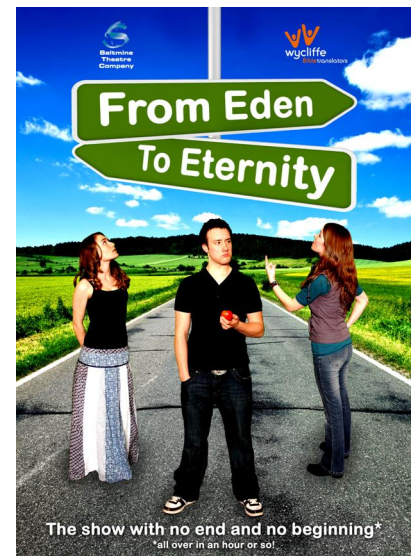
- From the 11<sup>th</sup>-14<sup>th</sup> May Wycliffe will be at the Christian Resources Exhibition at Sandown Racecourse. I have a few free tickets to this, so if you'd like to come along and say hello just drop me a line at the e-mail address that's at the end of this newsletter.
- The tour, *From Eden to Eternity*, is on the road as well, more of that below.
- I'll be leading a seminar, at WEC's Open Weekend in May, talking about using media in mission. I've got a fair bit of work to do in preparation for this, but I'm really excited to be speaking on the topic.

## From Eden to Eternity

This May, Wycliffe Bible Translators are back on the road with *From Eden to Eternity*, the story of the Bible performed in about one hour by Saltmine Theatre Company.

This was something that took place last year with great success. In fact, it was so successful that we couldn't pass up the opportunity of doing it again. This time the show will visit 27 venues across England and Wales and once again Wycliffe will give audiences the opportunity to support translations in the Koro cluster, a group of languages in Nigeria.

Tickets are on sale now at £7 and can be purchased online at [eden2eternity.org](http://eden2eternity.org) or by calling 01384 454808. For most of you the nearest performance is going to be in Portsmouth (or Salisbury). Let me know if you're intending to go along and I'll try to make it down to one or other of them.



Phil & Tany Prior  
Pike A, The Wycliffe Centre, Horsleys Green, Bucks, HP14 3AF  
Tel: 07813 886009 / Twitter: Phil77 / Skype: philprior77  
E: [phil.prior@yahoo.co.uk](mailto:phil.prior@yahoo.co.uk) / W: [www.philprior.co.uk/mylife](http://www.philprior.co.uk/mylife)  
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## News from home

There really is very little to report on the home front. Tany's still working as a physio in Harrow. The 90 minutes she spends commuting isn't great, but she's enjoying the work and the team she's working with.

We've made a conscious decision to try to settle in around here and treat it as home, but it has meant that over the past few weeks we haven't seen as many people as we would have liked. Getting away, even for a Friday night, is pretty tough. We are looking forward to hosting a bit of a 1<sup>st</sup> Wedding Anniversary and Tany's 30<sup>th</sup> birthday party here during the first May bank holiday weekend. It'll be good to see some people then.

## Prayer Points

Thanks to everyone who does pray for us and support us. We couldn't do this without you.

There's really nothing special to mention this month. Both Tany and I could do with a bit more energy to get through everything that's going on, but other than that we are doing really well. So maybe it's a good point to praise God for the past year (even if it's a little past the anniversary).

Thanks



Phil & Tany Prior  
Pike A, The Wycliffe Centre, Horsleys Green, Bucks, HP14 3AF  
Tel: 07813 886009 / Twitter: Phil77 / Skype: philprior77  
E: phil.prior@yahoo.co.uk / W: www.philprior.co.uk/mylife  
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