

## **Moravian Women' Association – Home and Overseas – November 2012**

### **The Bible Society**

This year, the MWA is giving £500 to support the work of the Bible Society.

The Bible Society was established in 1804 by a group of people including William Wilberforce, to encourage the 'wider circulation and use' of the Scriptures.

This is still the mission of the Bible Society today.

The Bible is an extraordinary collection of books, worth reading and part of the answer to the big issues confronting the world. But the Bible Society believes it's more than a book.

The Bible Society makes Scriptures available where there are none. They work to help the Church engage with the Bible more effectively. And the Society tries – through the arts, education, media and politics, to promote the Bible in different cultures.

The Bible Society is working to circulate the Scriptures across the world, in the Church and through culture just like air conditioning circulates air through a building.

The Society concentrates on Bible *availability, accessibility and credibility*. This is what it does:

- [Translation](#): making the Bible available in new languages so that everyone can experience it in their 'heart language'.
- [Production](#): printing physical copies of the Bible and rendering digital formats in order to meet the demands of the millions around the world who want a Bible of their own
- [Distribution](#): taking the Bible to places it might otherwise be hard to come by, in formats that people can use
- [Literacy](#): helping people to read and to read well, using the Bible as a resource
- [Engagement](#): giving the culture a reason and opportunity to rediscover the joys of the Bible
- [Advocacy](#): helping people grapple with the Bible, read and respond to it wisely

### **The Olympic Games was just one recent example of the Bible Society's work**

As Olympic fever dies down, the flags are packed away and a nation reflects on a golden summer, hundreds of Games athletes have headed home with Scripture in their suitcases.

Thanks to Bible Society supporters, the Bible was available at London 2012 in 12 different languages.

A thousand copies of the Bible Society's new Sports Bible and 1,500 Gospels of Luke were provided in the Athletes' Village's Christian room at the Multi-Faith Centre. Eleven other countries, including China and Russia, made Bibles available in their languages.

On our TV screens, we saw athletes praying before races, dedicating victories to God and even US long jump bronze medallist Will Claye carrying a Bible round the track on his lap

of honour. But behind the scenes, the Bibles and Scripture portions were available through the team of official Olympic Christian chaplains, who were there to meet the spiritual needs of the athletes.

Revd John Boyers was Chaplaincy Manager in this year's Athletes' Village in Stratford, London. He said, 'One of the important resources at our disposal were the Bibles given by the Bible Society. The Sports Bible and the Gospel of Luke were well used. In my preparations, I realised we had 24 evening Bible study meetings to plan, and copies of Luke's Gospel with its 24 chapters, available. So we studied from consecutive chapters of Luke for the 24 gatherings. In other meetings, we used the Sports Bible for communal reading and preaching in services.'

"The Games protocol meant we were responsive in all we did – i.e. we could not distribute Bibles freely in the Athletes' Village. However, we were able to respond to requests and to questions. When people came to our centre asking for copies of Bibles – and many did – we were able to respond positively."

"In the setting of the Multi-Faith Centre, God's Word was shared, and, we believe, will continue to reach many hearts to bring truth, love, grace, hope and peace.'

"For many, the buzz word of this Olympics has been 'legacy' – passing on a love of sport to the next generation, inspiring the Olympians of the future. But, for those athletes who have benefited from Bible Society support, the legacy will hinge on their encounter with the life-changing message of the Gospel."

Naomi Hancock