Kirk Bleavin’s story began in church as a young boy. “I was given a Bible in the third grade as part of our church,” Kirk says. “The pastor wrote a separate verse for each child in their Bible. Mine was 1 Chronicles 16:11, which says, ‘Seek the Lord and his strength...’ This verse fits me. I have always felt weak and a need for God. With God’s grace, I am able to serve with strength.”

As Kirk got older, his need and desire for the Bible only grew. “That Bible accumulated many written notes and markings. When my wife and I became engaged, I presented her with this Bible, encouraging her to read my notes to learn more of who I am.”

Kirk serves in technology that supports Bible translation, and his wife, Beth, serves missionary kids. They shared how the Bible came to be the foundation of their family. “While we were dating, Kirk and I would have long talks. One night, he turned and courageously said to me, ‘You smile, but you are not happy. I can see there is a deep sadness in your eyes behind your smile. Why is that?’ Those very words alone pierced my soul and my heart. I began immediately to cry, to sob uncontrollably, and I shared the horrible truth of my life — that I had made a mess of it. Right then and there, Kirk prayed with me and for me and told me of how God wanted his truth to set me free.”

“And you will know the truth, and the truth will set you free” (John 8:32, NLT). This was the verse Kirk shared with Beth, and it became not only her first life verse but also the verse their family now lives by. “By faith in Christ alone, I was saved that very night,” Beth says. “I now hunger and thirst for his Word.”

Their desire for the Word was modeled for their daughter, Alyssa. She shares her parents’ enthusiasm for the Bible and even has her own life verse in 1 Corinthians 13:13 (NLT): “Three things will last forever — faith, hope, and love — and the greatest of these is love.”

“This verse is a big part of my life and I hope it always will be,” Alyssa says. “About six years ago we adopted a teenage girl from Latvia. And she spent the next five years living with us. She was diagnosed with Reactive Attachment Disorder ... she has trouble being part of a family and creating long-lasting relationships.

“It was also hard for her to understand love, because it was never given to her. When she turned 18, she left our family. That was a very hard time for us, but it taught us some really important lessons, one of which is you can love someone even if they don’t love you back. Jesus is the best model for unconditional love. This is a small reason why the Bible is important to me.”

For more stories and resources about why the Bible matters, visit wycliffe.org/whybible
Fall Scripture Celebration!

Come join us October 18 at 2 p.m. ET at the Wycliffe Discovery Center for our Fall Scripture Celebration! It will be a wonderful time to rejoice with 30 communities who now have God’s Word in their own languages. For more information, visit wycliffe.org/celebrate.

A Glimpse into the Cook Islands

Pukapuka is a small coral atoll in the northern group of the Cook Islands. Although about 500 people still live on the atoll, the majority of people in this language community have settled in New Zealand and Australia.

Work continues on a revision of the draft New Testament for the Pukapuka. Two translators are checking, reviewing and revising the epistles (Galatians through 2 Peter). The translation team recently printed copies of Matthew to Acts for key leaders and supporters to proofread and give feedback. The team also posts Scripture readings in Pukapuka on Facebook and continues to get good comments from the community — even though the Pukapuka are scattered in numerous places.

This past summer over 200 adults and teenagers came by ship from Pukapuka to attend the triennia constitution celebrations in the Cook Islands’ capital of Rarotonga. And not long ago, the chiefs of Pukapuka held a conference on the Pukapuka language and Bible translation.

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Ways to Pray for the World

› Pray for the translation team as they work hard to check, review and revise the epistles.

› Now that the conference is over, pray for a continued sense of unity and direction among the Pukapuka.

› Pray God would continue to use the Pukapuka to reach the surrounding Pacific islands.

**Cook Islands Fast Facts**

Population: 17,791

Pukapuka Speakers: 5,700

Living Languages: 11

Languages in Need of Scripture: 4

*These statistics are pulled from wycliffe.net and joshuaproject.net