



Support EFSL News

March 2023

<https://supportefsl.org>

Dear praying friends,

As we approach Easter, let us make greater efforts to celebrate the success of God's plan of salvation and remember how Jesus willingly went to his death on the cross for us, and then rose victoriously from the dead. The debt of our sin is paid, we are forgiven and eternal life belongs to everyone who calls upon the name of the Lord Jesus Christ who conquered the grave! The preacher John Stott once said, "Christianity is in its very essence a resurrection religion. The concept of resurrection lies at its heart. If you remove it, Christianity is destroyed." I pray that we can all strive to live out the following words of Paul: **'I want to know Christ and the power of his resurrection and the fellowship of sharing in his sufferings, becoming like him in his death, and so somehow, to attain to the resurrection from the dead.'** **Philippians 3:10,11**

Support for Muslim Background Believers

As you know, Support EFSL helps the Evangelical Fellowship of Sierra Leone in supporting a number of Christians who have converted from Islam. These Muslim Background Believers (MBBs) are often persecuted and no longer supported by their families. So, with your help we are able to provide funding to EFSL for their education and other needs. With EFSL we regularly review this support. We currently support eight MBBs and have just started sponsoring two more. Here are their stories:



My name is **Abubakarr**. I was born into a Muslim family of the Mandingo tribe. I studied the Quran and interpret it at age twelve. I attained the rank of an assistant imam, and served in that position for 5 years in our local mosque. In September 2022 I gave my life to Christ through the effort of Bro Hassan Kargbo. I use a Mandingo oral Bible in my small group Bible study (DBS). But ever since I gave my life to Christ last year, my family has done everything to make me suffer and return to Islamic religion, but to no avail. I have been driven from our family compound. They have denied me of every right and privilege that I had before now. Even our family land has been taken from me.

My name is **Festus King** of New Harvest House of Gathering, in a village in Bo District. Our fellowship has a congregation of 36 baptised believers. I double as the church leader, but am also involved in domestic farming, with a rice mill and pig farm.

It was about September 2022 when a witch doctor was invited to our community by the paramount chief and other community leaders to investigate the backwardness of the community in terms of development. According to their beliefs, some evil forces are responsible for the under-developed state of the town. They believe the witch doctor has the power to deliver the community from being under-developed.

In the process, the witch doctor set an altar for every inhabitant to swear. The population of about 4,000 in the village were forced to confess their innocence. But I refused to swear by anything, and I was bold enough to let them know it clearly, quoting from Mathew 4:10, "Worship the Lord your God and serve him alone."

For this I became the enemy of the community. I was seriously beaten by the community thugs, authorised by the native doctor. My rice mill was closed down, and I had to flee for my life. We reported the matter to the police and they made some arrests of the perpetrators. However, the persecution continued, and even extended to whoever sympathizes with me. That has affected the town chief who has been suspended from his position.



As I speak, our church members in the village are under constant threats not to attend our church again. Everyone has been mandated not to have any business with me. Later, we had a report from the paramount chief that some members of his own family had beaten him, and he reported the matter to the police. Now, being a paramount chief, his own matter has overshadowed all other matters, though he and the committee that brought the witch doctor are the perpetrators of our own matters. Recently some people have started defecating in the church as a way of discouraging us. As a ministry, we are even finding it very difficult to even acquire a permanent land for the church and the agricultural project.

Please support us in prayers and any other means to help us stand the test of time, as with Jesus victory is always sure.

Study Bibles and Bicycles for Pastors, and Sewing Machines



Pastors throughout Sierra Leone, but particularly in rural areas, have little or no access to extra-biblical study aids. This affects their ability to prepare sound biblical messages. But an aid as simple as a Study Bible can both help them to understand Scripture better and present them with sound truth and inspirational ideas to help them in their study and sermon preparation.

The last time Study Bibles were handed out was at a TBS in Kabala, Port Loko, and Kambia in November of 2019.

EFSL has also confirmed that it still constantly receiving requests for bicycles from rural pastors and evangelists. Having a cost-effective and independent means of transport is an immense help for them, as they can travel to two or three villages in a day to preach the Word of God.

A pastor in Kambia rejoices in 2019 to have received a Study Bible from the hand of Rev Michael Abdulai.

EFSL also seeks to help impoverished women and girls in member churches learn trades that can help lift them out of their dire circumstances. Some of these women and girls, identified by their pastors, have been sent to learn sewing. But, after training, their best opportunity for gainful work is if they have a sewing machine of their own.

Support EFSL is directing some funding towards providing Study Bibles and sewing machines, but more support is needed. The cost of a Study Bible is £25, a sewing machine is £115, and a bicycle is £80. So, if you are able to help with any of these needs, please feel free to send me a designated donation for EFSL.

Bill and Jan Roberts – an update

It has been some time since I provided news about Bill and Jan Roberts, the founders of Support EFSL. Last summer Bill and Jan sold their house on the Isle of Mull in Scotland and moved back to England to live with their son Jamie and his wife in Weston-super-Mare. They are well and have said that they would love to receive letters and cards from friends and hear their news. Please feel free to write to them at 16 Stafford Place, Weston-super-Mare, BS23 2QZ, UK.

Matters for Praise and Prayer

- For God's protection for all MBBs, and in particular for Abubakkar and Festus.
- For Bill and Jan Roberts' continued health and well-being, and for Jamie and Hannah as they continue to support and care for them.
- For EFSL to have sufficient funds to provide at least one Bible per pastor or congregation in the next series of Travelling Bible School seminars later in 2023, and to meet the ongoing need for bicycles and sewing machines.

'But thanks be to God! He gives us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ.' 1 Corinthians 15:57

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