

13. Bible media, Bible translation and Bible distribution

13.1 REPORT: DEPUTIES BIBLE (Artt 24, 25, 179)

- A. Br HL Dekker delivers the Report.
- B. The report is concluded during the Synod.
- C. **Decision:** Financial matters are referred to Commission Finances.
- D. Br HL Dekker addresses Synod on behalf of the Bible Society of South Africa.
- E. Rev AP Kruger thanks br HL Dekker for his actions and his work in the Bible Society.
- F. Rev J van Schaik reports on behalf of the Financial Commission.
- G. The chairperson thanks rev JGL van der Walt and sr I Senekal for their involvement in the translation of the Bible for deaf persons.

H. REPORT

1. Assignment

1.1 *Issues of notification by the Synod*

- 1.1.1 The assignment of the Deputies Bible relates to Bible distribution, Bible media and Bible translation.

Decision: Noted.

2. BIBLE DISTRIBUTION

2.1 *Assignment (Acta 2006:123, 7.1.2.1 and 7.1.2.2)*

- 2.1.1 Have a fund-raiser for Bible distribution and maintain liaison with the Bible Society in South Africa.

2.2 *Issues of notification by the Synod*

2.2.1 Fund-raising

- 2.2.1.1 The functions of the liaison deputy, Mr Hennie Dekker, includes amongst others the appearance at congregations on Sundays after services aided by a Power Point presentation regarding the functions of the Bible Society. During these appearances special attention was given to special projects of the BSA regarding Bible distribution, Bible translation, etc.
- 2.2.1.2 Monthly visits to congregations form the basis of contact with ministers, Church Councils, Women's Societies, Bible study groups, Senior members and Youth Groups. Church Councils were encouraged to follow the approved guideline of contribution of R23 per confessing member per annum for Bible distribution.
- 2.2.1.3 Report was given to Classes regarding the contributions of congregations. The time span reported is always the previous year (January to December). At the beginning of each year each congregation receives a summary of payments done during the previous year. In this way each congregation can control their payments for Bible distribution.
- 2.2.1.4 Contributions of congregations and individuals grew with between 10 and 13 percent over the last 3 years. A blessing from the Hand of the Lord:

Year ending 31 October	Amount	Average per Confessing member
2003	855 198	11.60
2004	1 013 535	14.08
2005	1 022 614	14.66
2006	1 168 485	16.85
2007	1 332 117	19.64

- 2.2.1.5 During the past year the Comrades marathon, which were used by numerous Christians to raise funds for Bible distribution, moved to a Sunday. This caused

wide reaction and numerous questions were asked of the BSA. There were reports in the press about the issue and various members indicated their dissatisfaction regarding this to the BSA. The Head Secretary, rev Gerrit Kritzinger provided the viewpoint of the BSA regarding this in a letter. As a consequence the BSA broadened the *Run for Bibles* project to all marathons that are presented during the year.

2.2.2 Liaison with the Bible Society of South Africa

2.2.2.1 Mr Dekker is the Liaison person with the BSA at all levels. During 2007 he was also appointed as the Regional Head for North-West Province. In this capacity as Regional Head he also has access to higher level meetings within the BSA and has voting right on the National Council meeting. The North-West region is one of 5 new regions that were set out with the purpose to “move closer to the people” and to “distribute Bibles all over the rural areas”. Therefore Regional Councils for the new regions were started in the Northern Cape, Limpopo, Mpumalanga, Gauteng and North-West provinces. The Regional synods in these regions were also requested that church representatives should be selected for the Regional Councils on which they would serve to make contributions on behalf of the churches in those regions. Regional synods reacted favourable and Deputies were assigned to serve on the Regional councils.

2.2.2.2 In all the Regional Councils Reformers play an important role. In the Western Cape and the North-West provinces e.g. rev Rodney van Wyk and Prof Rantsoa Letsoša were appointed as Chairpersons. It meant that the brothers serve on the National Council with the Chairpersons of other Regional Councils. This Council is the body of highest authority of the BSA. During the National Council meeting of November 2007 rev Van Wyk and Prof Letsosa was appointed members of the Managing Committee in which decisions are made at the highest level regarding the operational and financial issues of the BSA.

2.3 *Issues that has to be decided by the Synod*

2.3.1 The Synod sets out the guideline for Bible distribution on R25 per confessing member for 2009. The Liaison deputy will provide the churches with the guideline. The guideline will be increased yearly according to the decision of the Synod (Acta 2006, 119, 3.2.2)

2.3.2 The Synod congratulates rev Rodney van Wyk and Prof Rantsoa Letsoša with their selection on the **Executive Committee** of the BSA.

Decision: Points 2.1 to 2.3.2 noted.

3. BIBLE MEDIA

3.1 *Assignment (Acta 2006:123, 7.1.1.1 and 7.1.1.2)*

3.1.1 Have connection with Bible media and select knowledgeable persons on ad hoc basis, if Bible media uses advisory panels in the selection of manuscripts.

3.2 *Issues of notification by the Synod*

3.2.1 Rev BR Kingma (Bellville East) was appointed to liaise with Bible media.

3.2.2 No significant connection with Bible media happened during the last term.

Decision: Points 3.1 to 3.2.2 noted.

3.3 *Issues that has to be decided by the Synod*

3.3.1 That the Synod should not appoint another Liaison Deputy to Bible media.

3.3.2 That Bible media contact the Deputies Bible when knowledgeable persons are needed on advisory panels for the selection of manuscripts.

Decision: Approved.

4. BIBLE TRANSLATION

4.1 *Assignment (Acta 2006:123-124)*

- 4.1.1 Name persons on the Church Advisory Committee for Bible translation by the Bible Society.
- 4.1.2 Provide co-operation in all issues related to the “Further Afrikaans translation of the Bible”.
- 4.1.3 The assignment by Synod 2000 with regards to the God’s names is continued (see 6.3.2.5) JHWH and Adonai in the Old Testament needs continued attention.

Decision: Points 4.1.1 to 4.1.3 noted.

4.2 *Issues of notification by the Synod*

4.2.1 Afrikaans Bible translation for the Deaf

- 4.2.1.1 The Deputies named rev JGL van der Walt (Worcester) and sr I Senekal to serve on the Selection Committee.
- 4.2.1.2 Rev Van der Walt gladly reports that the whole process of translation, printing and distribution of the Bible for the Deaf is completed and the Bible was released in February 2008 countrywide. The deaf community receives the Bible well. What is unique about the Bible is that it is only the second translation for the Deaf in the world. Hearing persons can also use the Bible. Especially children would value the simple use of language and the 17 000 footnotes that explains concepts very well.

4.2.2 Advisory Committee for Bible translation at the Bible Society

- 4.2.2.1 The following persons are named on the Inter-church Advisory Committee for Bible translation from the Bible Society of SA from the GKSA: Profs GJC Jordaan (convener), HF van Rooy, JJ Janse van Rensburg, PP Kruger, HJM van Deventer (liaison deputy), dr AJ Kruger (secundus – OT) and Prof FP Viljoen (secundus – NT). The involved persons and the Bible Society were notified about the selections.
- 4.2.2.2 The selected persons (or secundi) met with the Church Advisory Committee since the Synod 2006 at the following opportunities: 23 October 2006 (yearly meeting), 22 October 2007 (yearly meeting). Apart from this the named persons attended training opportunities to this regard in 2006 and 2007, with the other named co-workers on the next Afrikaans translation of the Bible.
- 4.2.2.3 During the meeting on 23 October 2006 special attention was given to issues related to the next Afrikaans Bible translation project. A Conducting Committee under the Chair of Prof HJB Combrink guides the project. Report was given regarding training seminaries that were presented during 2006, and the workbook according to which the various book teams will perform the translation. Report was given during Synod 2006 regarding the specific translation assignment that has been decided upon and that has been set out in detail in the named workbook (see Acta 2006:122).
- 4.2.2.4 During the meeting of 22 October 2007 feedback on a meeting between the Conducting Committee and Dr Jaap van Dorp of the Dutch Bible Society was given and adaptations have since been made to the process. There was a decision to appoint Exegetic Coordinators to help with the management of the process. Report was also given regarding further training seminaries presented during 2007 and that churches were informed about the further translation during 2007. The importance of church consultants for the process was repeated.
- 4.2.2.5 The Deputies Bible of the GKSA received a letter related to the naming of church consultants from the conducting committee (March 2008) in which it was asked that a restricted amount of consultants from the GKSA must be appointed. The Deputies decided to include an urban congregation, rural congregation, and other people with interest in this.
- 4.2.2.6 The issue regarding the translation of God’s names in the Afrikaans translation of the Bible is not yet completed. Various possibilities are considered at this stage. Access that the Deputies had in the completed translation that will be laid before the church consultants indicates that orthographic distinguishes (e.g. LORD for the

Covenant Name, as found in the 1933 translation) is definitely one of the possibilities.

Decision: Points 4.2.1 to 4.2.6 noted.

4.3 *Issues that has to be decided by the Synod*

4.3.1 Afrikaans Bible translation for the Deaf

4.3.1.1 The Synod endorses the naming of rev JGL van der Walt and sr I Senekal on the Selecting Committee of the Afrikaans Bible for the Deaf.

4.3.1.2 The Synod values the work that has been done by rev Van der Walt and sr Senekal in this regard.

4.3.1.3 The Synod congratulates the Bible Society and all co-workers on the project with the completion of this work and trusts that it will be a great blessing in the kingdom.

4.3.2 Advisory Committee for Bible translation at the Bible Society

4.3.2.1 The Synod endorses the naming of Profs GJC Jordaan (convener), HF van Rooy, JJ Janse van Rensburg, PP Kruger, HJM van Deventer, FP Viljoen (secundus – NT), Dr AJ Kruger (secundus – OT) on the Church Advisory Committee for Bible translation.

4.3.2.2 The Synod thankfully notes the progress with the project in the compilation of a source language oriented Further Afrikaans Translation of the Bible. We pray for the blessing of the Lord on the completion of the project for the Bible Society and all involved.

4.3.2.3 The Synod thankfully notes the participation and inputs of the congregations and persons from the GKSA that are involved with the Further Afrikaans Translation van die Bible in various ways.

4.3.2.4 The Synod endorses the appointment of church consultants from the GKSA with regards to the Further Afrikaans Translation of the Bible.

4.3.2.5 The Synod continues the assignment with regards to the translation of the God's names *JHWH* and *Adonai* in the Old Testament (Acta, 2006:124, 6.3.2.5 and 7.1.3.3).

Decision: Points 4.3.1 to 4.3.2.5 approved.

5. Recommendations

5.1 Rename Deputies with the following assignments:

5.1.1 *Bible media*

5.1.1.1 Name knowledgeable persons on an ad hoc basis, when Bible media uses advisory panels in the selection of manuscripts.

5.1.2 *Bible distribution*

5.1.2.1 Have a fund-raiser for Bible distribution and maintain liaison with the Bible Society in South Africa.

5.1.2.2 Provide the churches of a yearly guideline regarding contributions for Bible distribution

5.1.3 *Bible translation*

5.1.3.1 Name persons on the Advisory Committee for Bible translation by the Bible Society.

5.1.3.2 Give co-operation in all issues related to the Further Afrikaans Translation of the Bible.

5.1.3.3 The assignment of the Synod 2000 regarding the God's names is continued (see 6.3.2.5) *JHWH* and *Adonai* in the Old Testament must receive continued attention (Acta, 2003:114, 5.3.5 and 6.1.3.4).

Decision: Points 5.1 to 5.1.3.3 approved.

I. SUPPLEMENTARY REPORT

1. BIBLE DISTRIBUTION

1.1 Matters that the Synod should take note of

- 1.1.1 Fund raising for Bible distribution (financial year ending 31 October 2008). The following amount has been received from the church denomination: **R1 528 306.73**.
- 1.1.2 A part of this amount is made up of *Businesses - Besighede* – R9 300.00 and *individuals* who donated amounts on their own initiative: R204 856.
- 1.1.3 The contribution list with regard to Churches should therefore be calculated per number of members in relation to the amount that the congregations raised themselves through, members, sisters and confirmands namely R1 081 904. This gives an average of R15.41 per communicant. If the total amount by different elements in the Church denomination is taken, the average becomes: R21.76.
- 1.1.4 The Deputies also suggest that there should be an opportunity for the Public Relations Deputy – Bible, mr Hennie Dekker (at the Bible Society of South Africa full-time) to inform the Synod in short on important developments at the Society, especially with regard to the new accessibility to the Word that the Church (Bible distribution) can use as resources.

Decision: Points 1.1.1 to 1.1.4 noted.

1.2 BIBLE TRANSLATION

1.2.1 Matters that the Synod should take note of

1.2.1.1 Afrikaanse Bible translation for the Deaf

- 1.2.1.1.1 Although this project has been completed, the great interest in this translation lead to this translation in simplified Afrikaans from the original languages being made available by the Bible Society as *Die Bybel vir Almal*. It is specifically aimed at younger readers.

1.2.1.2 Advice committee for Bible translation at the Bible Society

- 1.2.1.2.1 The Afrikaans Bible Translation Project is now fully operational and first test translations of shorter parts have been sent to church readers for input. During the meeting held on 3 November churches were asked to especially involve young readers with the reading of the test translations with the aim of getting their input. Much input has been received from older readers. The Bible Society is currently working on a web page on which information on the project will appear.
- 1.2.1.2.2 During the meeting there was also feedback on the current state of the project. The target stating that the first chapters of all Bible books should be through the first two of the four phases of the translation process before the end of September 2008, could not be reached.
- 1.2.1.2.3 The following person from the ranks of the GKSA has been elected as the Additional Member on the executive management of the Interdenominational Advice Committee for Bible Translation of the Bible Society of SA: Prof H J M van Deventer.

1.2.1.3 Budget for the Translation Project

- 1.2.1.3.1 The source language oriented translation was undertaken on the request of the GKSA and professors affiliated to the TSP and NWU are working on it actively.
- 1.2.1.3.2 The professors who are involved in the translation project as translators, are often busy with translation work on a full-time basis. This means that temporary staff have to take over their duties at the TSP and NWU. These staff members have to be remunerated for their work.

Decision: Points 1.2.1.1 to 1.1.3.2 noted.

1.2.2 Matters for decision

- 1.2.2.1 That the budget makes provision for temporary staff members in the place of professors who are involved with the new source language oriented Bible translation. *Motivation:* see 1.1.1.3.

Decision: Approved and refer to Financial Commission.

Decision: Approved. The amount for the following three years are: 2009: R63 560; 2010: R49 450 (plus inflation); 2011: R23 000 (plus inflation).