

The Wartburg Project



October Report
2017

The Wartburg Project is a group of WELS and ELS pastors, professors, teachers, and laypeople who are working together to produce a new translation of the Bible called the *Evangelical Heritage Version*® or *EHV*®.

Grass withers, flowers fade, but the Word of our God endures forever.

Translators come, translations go, but the Word of our God endures forever.

This month we take a break from our regular progress reports to observe two milestones. The great milestone is, of course, October 31, 1517, the beginning of the Lutheran Reformation, which restored the three great truths, by grace alone, by faith alone, and by Scripture alone to their central place in the teaching of the church. This year on the 500th anniversary of this event, on the weekends before and after October 31 and on the day itself Christians will be joining in special services and commemorations of this milestone. You very likely have the opportunity to participate in such special events and to benefit from the many 500th anniversary materials that have appeared.

The Lutheran Reformation touched all areas of life: Most important, of course, was the restoration of the biblical doctrines that make us confident of salvation by grace alone through faith alone. But the Lutheran Reformation also had an impact on the political and religious alignment of Europe, on worship in the vernacular, on Christian education, on a flourishing of hymnody, on Christian freedom, and on many other areas of spiritual and civic life.

Last but not least, Luther had a tremendous impact on Bible translation. It is not an exaggeration to call him the father of modern Bible translation. He played a decisive role in getting the Bible into the hands of the people, in establishing sound principles of Bible translation, and in defining the

role of textual criticism. Our debt to him in all these areas is acknowledged by the name of our translation society, the Wartburg Project, which is intended to be a tribute to his pioneering work. Here too the old saying applies: We can see so far, because we stand on the shoulders of giants.

As a further expression of our thankfulness and in recognition of Luther's great role as a translator, we chose October 31, 2017 as the day to hand in the last book of the Evangelical Heritage Version to the publisher. With the submission of the book of Malachi, the first phase of the Wartburg Project is completed, and we are entering on phase 2 (more on phase 2 follows below).

As further expressions of our thankfulness we are offering our readers two articles on the work of Luther as a Bible translator and our indebtedness to him.

The first is an article not previously published here:

[“Luther’s Bible & the EHV on the 500th Anniversary of the Lutheran Reformation” \(15 p\)](#)

The second article was published with this letter last June but is repeated here for those who missed it the first time around and as a fitting review on this special occasion:

[“Luther and the EHV” \(15 p\)](#)

Find the articles attached to the email or on our website.

The EHV Past, Present, and Future

PAST

The Wartburg Project's translation work began in the fall of 2013, so the initial translation took four years to complete. It would not have been possible to do a project with so many participants in this amount of time in the pre-computer era and without the diligent and harmonious participation of so many people, so we thank the Lord:

for the great treasure of his Word which he has entrusted to his church;

for the faithful witnesses who transmitted his Word across the centuries and across the continents in spite of persecution, opposition, and the indifference of those around them;

for the generations of translators, scholars, and confessors who provided for a foundation for our work;

for all the participants in the project: translators, reviewers at every level from technical review and to proofreading and set up, and for the families and congregations that supported them;

for all who have supported the work with their gifts, their prayers, and their encouraging words,

and for the spirit of harmony, cooperation, and love for the Word that the Lord has graciously given among the participants.

PRESENT AND FUTURE

There is still a lot of phase 1 work to do in setting up and formatting the files of the Old Testament books, in doing more layers of proof-reading, and in bringing the complete Bible to market, but phase 2 work is already underway.

Every book of the EHV has already been reviewed by ten or more reviewers at all levels from technical review to ease-of-reading review. Review copies have been sent to outside reviewers. But the really important and most valuable review is that which will be done in the next few years by those who read the published texts and listen to the lessons as they are read in church. A thorough, meaningful review of a translation requires some years of congregational and devotional use and testing. The review done in the hearts and minds of thoughtful readers who love the Word is the important review, the review that brings the greatest blessing. We continue to catalog all the suggestions made by readers and after a suitable

time has passed, we will have a committee study all these suggestions and suggest improvements to make the text easier for all readers to understand at the same time as it remains faithful to the original Hebrew or Greek.

Since the text has already been extensively reviewed, we expect that there will be relatively few changes to the text. We especially want to have a very stable text in passages that are commonly memorized.

The lectionary readings for the 2017-2018 church year are being posted.

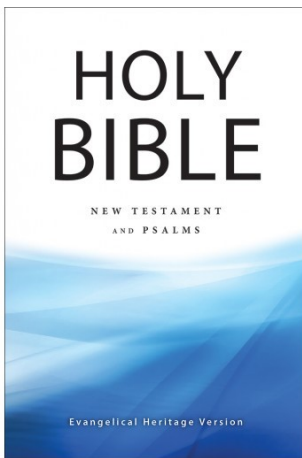
Work is under way on the study Bible. Drafts have been made of nine books, and testing is being done on producing various electronic formats. Future news reports will include charts of this progress similar to those that were provided during the translation phase. Work is beginning on maps and charts.

PRESENT AND FUTURE (CONTINUED)

We are continuing to offer licenses for derived works and are working get the EHV into popular formats such as BibleGateway, LOGOS, and Bible Works.

We are reorganizing and expanding our online library and FAQs, so that they will provide much more information on translation issues than they already do.

All of these topics and more will be the subjects of our future news reports, but for this month let's just relax and celebrate two milestones.



The Holy Bible: Evangelical Heritage Version New Testament and Psalms

Available for purchase

nph.net



Website

See our website (wartburgproject.org) for more information relating to the EHV. See FAQ #15 on the name EHV. A paper explaining our name is posted in the “Library” section.

Sign up on the “Contact” page to receive free e-reports. Like us on Facebook to receive the latest updates posted there. (The purpose of our Facebook posting is not debate, but we’ve been able to share information with many people very quickly that way (sometimes close to 14,000)).

We continue to be a “purely positive” effort, avoiding debates and controversy. We are just quietly trying our best to translate the Bible “to spread its light from age to age.” So far, so good! God has richly blessed us. To God be the glory and praise for all of his blessings!

The address of our financial office is:

The Wartburg Project
907 Mattes Drive
Midland, Michigan 48642-3708.

