

**Mid-Year 2024
Newsletter**



Cheerful Givers

His Love Endures

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First Half of 2024 in the Books

As we flip into the second half of Cheerful Givers' first year in service, we want to take this opportunity to thank you for your prayers, support, encouragement, cheerleading and incredibly generous, cheerful giving (2 Cor. 9:6–14) in these first six months. We initially formed CG to be a vehicle through which we could integrate our passion for endurance racing with our calling to evangelize. But it only took God seven days after the receipt of our 501(c)(3) non-profit exemption from the IRS to remind us that it's His will we're living for; not our own. Endurance racing will always be a fun and integral facet of the Cheerful Givers mission (as we should never write-off God's ability to shine through us in unexpected places, such as, on the racecourse in uniform or in the presence of other athletes before and after the race itself (see Matt. 5:13–16).



But the “non-racing” work we’re being commanded to do with our skillsets and resources through our God-ordained and God-appointed partners, both locally and internationally, is ultimately where God needs us for the ongoing fulfillment of His plan for the Kingdom of His Son, Yeshua.





First Half of 2024 in the Books (cont'd)

If there's anything Lauren and I have learned in the last six months between our CG work, raising a one-year old, taking on a sooner-than-expected second pregnancy, both working full-time, seminary school, and endurance training, it's that God is the 'ultimate' at stretching us just beyond our comfort zones (see Josh. 1:1–9) so that we can (i) grow in Him and (ii) grow in our humility such that we remember little is attainable on our own, but everything is attainable through Him and the hope that comes from our faith in the work of his Son, Jesus Christ. A perfect example of this is Brooks' impending trip to east Africa for two weeks (the preface for which you can read about on page 6). Unbeknownst when we were initially feeling called on this trip and began planning for it, it is now coming at a very challenging time for us personally when



Lauren is reeling with the worst of the worst of pregnancy illnesses and when Ashton, our one-year old daughter, is really giving us a run for our money.

But against that backdrop, we've had to strongly pray over the seriousness with which we need to take God's calling to hand-deliver nearly 1,000 Bibles to our brothers and sisters in Burundi and Rwanda suffering in a corrupt and broken world (see Js. 5:7–11). And in that same vein, we know there is an equally important message imbedded in this trip for us to bring home for ourselves and for each of you [collectively, globally upper-class, materialistic, Americans...no offense!].

So as stretched as we feel going into this trip, we are staying the course and putting into action all of that endurance training we have learned, so that we can continue to pursue the race God has called us to (see 1 Cor. 9:24–27, 2 Tim. 4:7–8).

To the extent you are feeling stretched or challenged in your own ministries, we hope that you not only find comfort in knowing we are enduring alongside you, but that you also find the ultimate comfort in our Father, God, and in His strength and steadfast love which He has promised each of us.





Project Africa & our Divinely-appointed Partner

It was literally our first week being ‘open for business’, 501(c)(3) status in-hand, when we received an email from the Nairobi-based organization, Life in Abundance. For 25 years, LIA has been tackling poverty in 14 African and Caribbean countries (see John 10:10b) by empowering more than 175 local churches and their respective leaders (see Matt. 28:18–20, Matt. 25:31–45). In the email, the LIA team said that they heard we are in the business of providing Bibles and that they have a demand for 5,000 Bibles to be printed in 19 different languages for churches in all 14 countries they serve...[insert your emoji of choice evoking panic].

As we’ve already said...we know God is good at stretching us beyond our comfort zones, so we were not totally shocked to get this email (even though we were totally shocked by the magnitude of the ask and the speed at which it hit our inbox!). So, knowing this was no accidental email we received, and thus knowing this was a divinely-appointed partnership we needed to take seriously, we leaned into God in the face of our fears and took the ask head on, caveated by three specific prayers to God:

- 1. We are going to give as much of our own money as we can in order to fuel this effort, but we will ultimately need His provisions to complete the mission;*
- 2. We know this specific hitlist of Bibles may take all of 2024 to fulfill, if not longer, so we need His strength and Wisdom to endure; and*
- 3. We are willing, able and open to a longer-horizon, broader partnership with LIA, but we need Him to reveal His will to us and we will obey.*

Now at the halfway point of 2024, and to no surprise, God has been faithful. To-date, we’ve had the amazing honor to make more than 1,600 Bibles available in 13 languages for church congregations in Burundi, Djibouti, Eritrea, Kenya, Rwanda, Somalia / Somaliland, Sudan / South Sudan and Uganda. That leaves us with 3,150 Bibles still needed in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Egypt, Ethiopia, Sudan / South Sudan, Haiti and Jamaica (a \$44,600 “go-get”). So, we will ‘keep on trucking’ through the back-half of 2024 and as always, we invite you to join in this mission alongside us. You all have been so generous and giving to-date and we want to thank you so much for that <3

**See a Map of our completion to-date and of our remaining work on page 5*

[Click here to join us in the Mission](#)

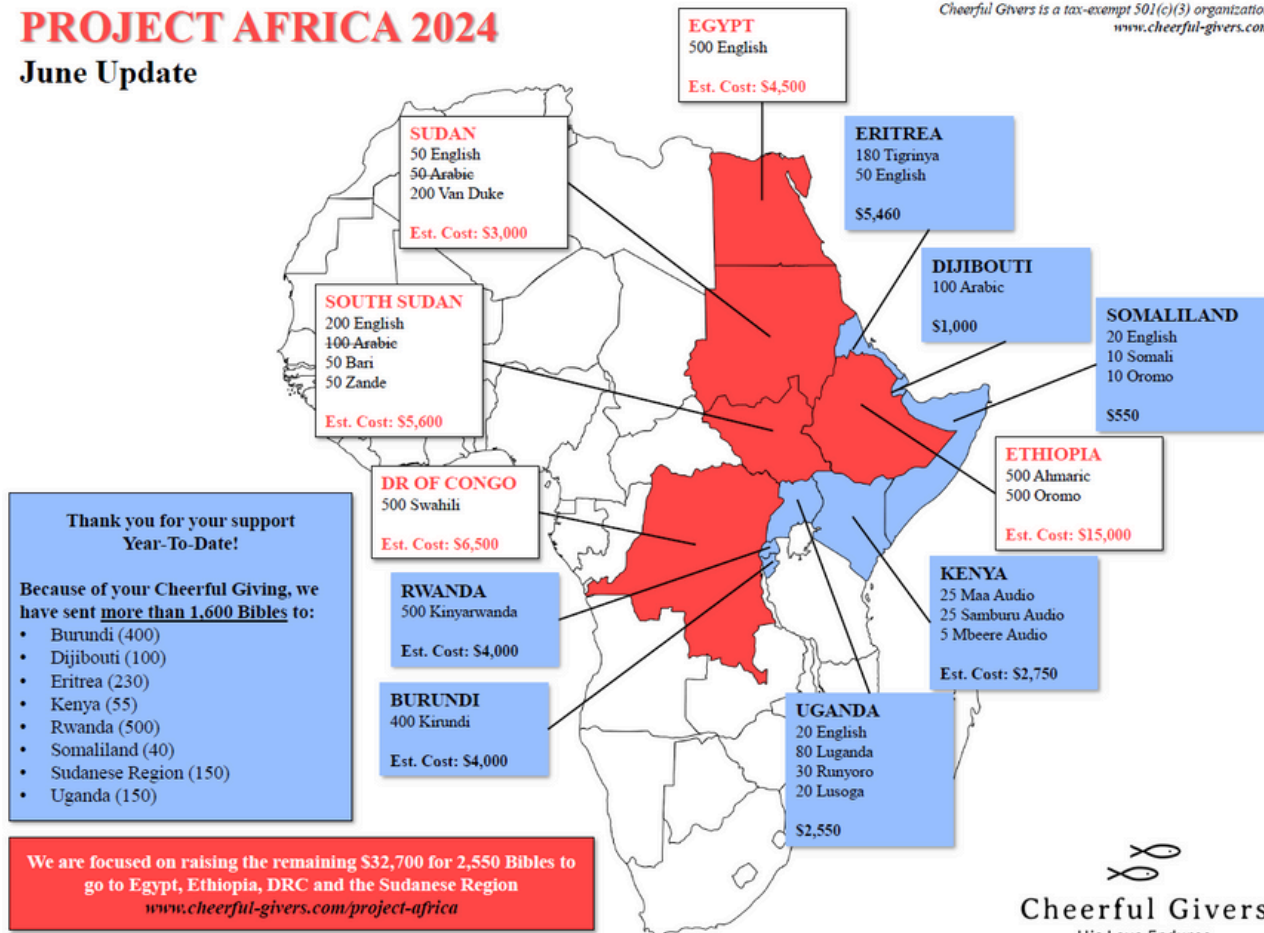


Project Africa & our Prayer Requests

PROJECT AFRICA 2024

June Update

Cheerful Givers is a tax-exempt 501(c)(3) organization
www.cheerful-givers.com



Prayer Requests

- That God provisions for the remaining need of 2,550 for east Africa and 600 Bibles for Haiti and Jamaica and does so on His timeline
- That God protects Bibles from the time of print to the time of receipt in the respective congregations (as Bibles are often targeted and looted during distribution and shipment throughout Africa)
- That God reveals to and identifies for us other communities throughout the world which are in need of Bibles and which Cheerful Givers could serve

We are Africa-bound

Regarding prayer #3 of our Project Africa recap, it should be of no surprise that God didn't stop at calling us to just provide Bibles. This initial work with LIA is most certainly the beginning of a divinely-appointed, longer-term partnership to be pursued, and our exploration of the next steps in that partnership will kick off on July 23 when Brooks heads to Burundi and Rwanda for two weeks.

The primary premise of the trip is for Brooks to travel to the local congregations with LIA's pastors and distribute the 900 Bibles Cheerful Givers has made available for these two countries. In conjunction with distributing Bibles, Brooks will also have the honor of praying and worshipping with the congregations, sharing meals with families of the communities, spending time with the pastors and learning about their respective ministries and kicking off asset-based community development and microfinance programming with some of the business owners.

With all of that said, the most important ministry of the trip may very well be reverse in nature, i.e., the witnessing of joy in the abundance of Jesus Christ and the hope we have through our faith in him and in our salvation (vs. what we see here in America vis-a-vis seeking synthetic joy in the abundance of money, social status and other temporary things of this world). What Brooks brings home for himself, his family and for all of you will probably be more important than what Cheerful Givers is ever able to bring the congregants of east Africa. But let's just stay tuned and see what God has in store for all of us to learn!

Following the trip to Burundi and Rwanda, Brooks and Lauren will head back to Africa in late September to attend LIA's Annual Global Conference in Nairobi, Kenya, which will be attended by all of LIA's leadership, country pastors and directors, staff, various partners and a host of budding African students beginning their respective ministries. This year's theme is "Transformed for Wholistic Impact" (see Rom. 12:1-2). We can't wait to see what God has in store for our endeavors with LIA and all those God reveals Himself to through the amazing outreach of LIA.

If you want to follow along Brooks' trip, make sure to follow our Instagram Page (@teamcheerfulgivers) or email him and Brooke (brooks@cheerful-givers.com, brooke@cheerful-givers.com) with a request to join the Project Africa WhatsApp thread.

Lastly, you can see on the next page a more detailed itinerary of Brooks' trip (including a day volunteering at Ironman 70.3 Rwanda, a day visiting our sponsor students at Hope Haven Rwanda and a day meeting with Jews for Jesus in Johannesburg, South Africa to learn about their outreach to the local Haredim community) and an extremely important prayer request list that we need your help with <3



Itinerary: Africa Visit

BURUNDI



Wednesday, July 24

- Arrive in Bujumbura
- Dinner & meeting with Pastor Team

Thursday, July 25

- Travel to Makamba
- Bible distribution
- Community engagement, dinner with families

Friday, July 26

- Travel to Gitega
- Bible distribution
- Community engagement, dinner with families

Saturday, July 27

- Bible distribution (round 2)
- Community engagement, lunch with families
- Travel to Bujumbura

Sunday, July 28

- Church service
- Sabbath Lunch
- City tour & dinner

Monday, July 29

- Depart for Rwanda

RWANDA



Monday, July 29

- Arrive in Kigali
- Dinner & meeting with Pastor Team

Tuesday, July 30

- Travel to Byumba
- Bible distribution
- Business & finance training

Wednesday, July 31

- Travel to Kayonza
- Bible distribution
- Lunch with families

Thursday, August 1

- Travel to Rubengera
- Lunch with families
- Bible distribution

Friday, August 2

- Bible distribution (round 2)
- Lunch with families

Saturday, August 3

- Travel to Lake Kivu

Sunday, August 4

- Volunteer at Ironman 70.3 Rwanda race
- Travel to Hope Haven (HH)

Monday, August 5

- Spend day with HH students
- Travel to Johannesburg

SOUTH AFRICA



Tuesday, August 6

- Arrive in Johannesburg
- Meet with Jews for Jesus South Africa director, learn about their outreach to the local Haredim community and where Cheerful Givers may be able to help
- **Travel home!**

Prayer Requests: Africa Visit

- Lauren's first trimester nausea has been multiples worse than it was with Ashton; please pray for God to heal her before Brooks' departure so that she has the energy to care for herself and for Ashton while Brooks is away
- Surround Lauren with the help, care and love of our family, friends and nanny
- Be present with Brooks throughout the journey and keep him safe from ongoing warfare at the borders of Rwanda and Burundi and of Rwanda and the DRC
- Also keep Brooks safe from the enemy - spiritually, physically and emotionally
- Use Brooks as an instrument for the Kingdom, so that the Cheerful Givers team can help carry out God's will and be a lamp on a hill through which Jesus Christ can shine to the people of Burundi, Rwanda and South Africa (as well as all the people he encounters on the journey to and from)
- Reveal to us where in these communities Cheerful Givers is to remain engaged on an ongoing base, including with the communities' local businesses and business owners
- Speak clearly to Brooks what it is he is supposed to hear, learn and bring home to our brothers and sisters in the U.S.
- Keep the athletes of the Ironman Rwanda 70.3 race safe on race day and during their travels into Lake Kivu for the race
- Use the Cheerful Givers team to share the gospel of Yeshua with the Haredim in Johannesburg, as well as other parts of the world, including New York City - give us incremental clarity, instruction and Wisdom on that mission field as we head into 2025

As Adonai reveals scripture to you in your prayer, we ask you to please share it with us in the WhatsApp group, on Instagram or in reply to this email <3



Mexico City & Romans 13:1-7 in Action

The second partner that came into our lives shortly after we launched CG was Convivir International. Its founders, Dustin and Sarah Reed, moved to the violent slums of Mexico City with their two young daughters to plant living room churches against a backdrop of legalism in the local Catholic church, as well as suppression by the local cartels. They reached out to us in December with a need for 150 NLT Bibles printed in large-print, Spanish, which they could gift to their church plant families as they go.

In March, we had the Bibles printed at a local printer in Aguascaliente. Fast forward to mid-June and we received the following message from Dustin:

"Brooks, hey brother, how are you doing? I wanted to send you a couple pictures. This is a really cool thing that one of our friends, who's a local pastor, organized with other pastors in the community. We just had elections in Mexico and all the political parties wanted their [the pastors'] nomination in this upcoming election. So, what Julio did is he invited three of the political parties and their candidates to come speak. At the end of each presentation, Julio gave the politicians one of these Bibles. Each of these candidates represent two to three million people that live here in one of the most dangerous neighborhoods in Mexico. And Julio told them that with this Bible they could govern well. This Bible has everything you need to know about justice and peace and how to govern well. One of the candidates said he is a Christian and this is the nicest Bible he's ever been given, so thank you so much for this gift. Every single politician was grateful for the gift, every single one of them represent people that live here in one of the most dangerous neighborhoods in Mexico. And Julio told them that with this Bible they could govern well. This Bible has everything you need to know about justice and peace and how to govern well."



It was grace and so who knows, but the Bibles that Cheerful Givers donated are now in the hands of the political candidates of one of the most dangerous barrios of Mexico City. So we pray that each one of these candidates will open their Bible, come to Jesus and govern with his power and with his wisdom because we know that authority is only given by God. We each have a choice to use the authority that we're given in the name of Jesus, to govern with wisdom, or to use our own power for our own devices. So thank you so much for what you've done, it really is making an impact in Mexico, and we just pray that these Bibles in the hands of these leaders would be used and would give them knowledge and power and wisdom".



Mexico City & Romans 13:1-7 in Action (cont'd)

WOW...God is so good and we give Him all the glory for this plan and for inviting us to be instruments in His will. This is just such a perfect demonstrate of how important obedience to God's will is because His plan is so divine and so beyond what we could ever fathom ourselves. When we lean to our own understanding, or our own planning (see Js. 4:13-17), or our own devising, we risk missing out on God's incredible work.

We are so excited to continue being part of Convivir's ministry, including a potential trip to Mexico City this fall to visit them and to see where God wants us engaged in their community in 2025.



Join one of our Zoom Bible Studies

For the last year, we've been hosting Bible studies via Zoom, which are attended by participants from all around the country

No matter how early or how far along you are in your faith journey, we would love to have you - our groups are so much fun and the spiritual growth we've seen across our members over the last year has been nothing but phenomenal. Hallelujah!

Recent study blocks include:

- *The Gospels and a walk through Jesus' ministry*
- *The nuances of faith, as demonstrated in John 3 and 4*
- *Paul's theology as taught in Romans 1 - 10*
- *The Book of James; he packs a serious punch!*
- *The Book of Revelation and what is the promise that Jesus brings us*

We have two groups going currently at the following times:

Wednesday, 9:00p ET

Sunday, 12:45p ET

Email brooks@cheerful-givers.com or
brooke@cheerful-givers.com to learn more and plug in!