

News from Rev. Eric & Johanna Stinnett serving in Ethiopia

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## Did you know . . . ?

Much of each day in the country is spent hauling water. Clean water remains a challenge for Ethiopia, especially in some of



the rural areas. Jerry cans, such as the one pictured here, is the mode of transport for most to obtain water.

## FACEBOOK:

We are on Facebook, although consistent internet is a struggle. See our archived newsletters and feel free to share the work God is doing here with others. God is good!

## Nekemte Theological Seminary—Western Ethiopia



*Top left: Eric and Dr. Rabe (right) having lunch with two of their Master's students in a mud hut in Nekemte*

**Nekemte** —In August, we were blessed to be able to visit another of the EECMY regional seminaries and see more of my students in their home area, this time in Nekemte. Much of the earliest Lutheran mission work was done in Nekemte and it is still an important center for the EECMY. It is only about 150 miles west of Addis Ababa, but due to driving conditions here, it was a seven hour drive to get there. While the drive was stressful at times, dodging various domestic animals, donkey-drawn carts and pedestrians in the road (and natural features – at one point, driving along the side of a mountain, most of the road had washed down the mountain side so all traffic going both ways had to take turns using the one remaining lane) the scenery was absolutely beautiful – a mix of small farms with animals and cultivated fields and undeveloped

mountains. The adults enjoyed the uniqueness of the various scenes, traditional round grass roofed homes, oxen-drawn plows in the fields, many beautiful people dressed in the traditions of different regions...the children enjoyed the familiarity of farmland and mountains. Luke kept saying, "This is just like Montana!"

We arrived on a Saturday afternoon and were treated to a tour of the Synodical Headquarters/Seminary campus. We started at what I believe is the oldest active congregation in the EECMY. They have a weekly attendance of 2,500 with most having to sit outside because they have greatly outgrown their building. After that we saw the Synod offices and then the seminary campus. The seminary president came in that day just to give us a tour and visit with us about his school. We discussed many things from the difficulties of training pastors and evangelizing during the communist years to current challenges.

The next day was one of the most rewarding days I have had in Ethiopia. We went to church at one of my student's congregations in the countryside just out of Nekemte. That day he was preaching the last sermon in a three-part series on baptism and asked another of my students to lead the liturgy. It was great to see my students in action and to see my classroom efforts touching the lives of over 400 people in attendance. Afterward, he asked Rev. Mark Rabe and me to participate in a question/answer session with his congregation. We had fielded many questions and afterward, a few of his elders approached him saying, "They answered all the questions the same way you do!" I was glad to support him in front of his congregation.

As an added bonus, both of those students have returned to campus for their second year in the MA program. I have been able to reference their service a couple times to illustrate a point in class. I don't think it is possible to come up with a more personal or relevant example for teaching. What a great way to start the new year!

## Reaching Out in Love



This young mother found herself living on the streets after becoming pregnant. Her family could not afford to feed another mouth and so she was sent away. I had the privilege of meeting her new baby son when he was only two days old doing house visits with another nurse and some doulas. We did some health teaching and prayed with the mom for her future, health and wisdom in raising her little one. May God grant her mercy in the difficult task of raising a child alone.

**Amharic**—this is the language we are learning. To say: "Do you speak Amharic?", you would say አማርኛ ትችላላችሁ? (amarinnā təcälallāčchu) pl







## PLEASE PRAY FOR:

- Luke & Johanna recovering from parasites
- Eric teaching classes to his Master's students
- the Master's of Theology program: students, professors and administrators
- Ethiopia's peace and safety
- funding for visiting profs
- wisdom in serving the people of God here at the MYS

## GIVE THANKS FOR:

- Luke's recovery from being in the hospital for parasites and bacterial infection
- a great start to the school year
- the Ethiopian New Year—it is now the year 2010!

## PRAISE GOD FOR:

- the safe return of our students
- our new kitten who has brought the kids much joy and is keeping the rodents away
- that the flooding in our backyard did not enter the house
- all who uphold the Lord's work here with prayer and support
- the Rabe family here with us in Ethiopia

## What Have We Been Doing & Seeing Lately?



*Clockwise from top left: A woman serving coffee from a traditional jebuna; people traveling on the road to Nekemte in a horse-drawn cart; hiking to church after the road ended; there were 8 baptisms the morning we visited; an MYS country church attended by over 400 people; Qes Asfew—the Nekemte Seminary President; a young girl hauling grain; guarding livestock*



**Closing Thoughts . . .** Our Lord is always working through His people. We remember the Ethiopian eunuch: "So Philip ran to him (the eunuch) and heard him reading Isaiah the prophet and asked, "Do you understand what you are reading?" <sup>31</sup> And he said, "How can I, unless someone guides me?" (*Acts 8:30ff*) Thank you in Jesus' Name for your support of the work which God has laid before us.

*In Service to Christ— Eric, Johanna, Rachael, Naomi & Luke*

## Missions Anyone?

There are many opportunities to serve as short-term or GEO missionaries. Check out the current list and download an application at [lcms.org/service](http://lcms.org/service). Click on "Service Opportunities."

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