



Rockrohr News and Notes

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Moving to Ethiopia

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Ministry Information

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Carl and Deborah with EECMY General Secretary Dr. Berhanu Ofgaa and Dr. Al Collver, LCMS Director of Church Relations

Our move to Ethiopia is becoming a reality more each day. During June 10 -20 Carl and Deborah visited Ethiopia to learn more about the Mekane Yesus Seminary (MYS) and the wider work of the Ethiopian Evangelical Church Mekane Yesus (EECMY).

The EECMY is the second largest Lutheran church in the world, with about 6,000,000 members throughout Ethiopia. (The LCMS has about 2.4 million members.) It has been growing very fast, and has not been able to train enough pastors for

all its congregations. Currently there are about 3,000 pastors for the 8,000 congregations. Besides meeting the current shortage of 5,000 pastors, the church wants to witness to 30 million Ethiopians in the next five years. All told, EECMY would like to train 12,000 pastors in five years. Pastoral training in the EECMY is provided by six seminaries, 40 Bible schools, TEE (Theological Education by Extension) programs as well as the College of Distance Education.

[Note: Carl misspoke on a recent video in which he said 12,000 pastors trained at MYS, he meant to say MYS assists to train 12,000 for the church.]

How did the LCMS come to be in Ethiopia at this time?

EECMY was not historically a mission church planted by the LCMS, but by various European Lutheran churches and missions, as well as by the ELCA. However, the

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Moving to Ethiopia

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EECMY has rejected the adoption and promotion of same-sex marriage by some of their historic partners, specifically the Church of Sweden and the ELCA. After several years of discussions, the EECMY formally broke relations with those two churches earlier this year. It was after that break of fellowship that the EECMY made an official request to the LCMS to assist in its central seminary in Addis Ababa. Part of this assistance was the request that LCMS supply a missionary to be the Dean of the School of Theology. One of the main goals is that the seminary would become an accredited graduate school at which EECMY could train its own professors for its seminaries and Bible schools. Carl has been asked to fill that role of Dean of the School of Theology for several years.

Studying the Scriptures Together

There are some differences in theology between the LCMS and EECMY. Mekane Yesus Seminary holds to the Scriptures, Lutheran teachings, and approach-

es many moral issues in similar ways as the LCMS. One significant difference is that some synods of EECMY (comparable to LCMS districts) ordain women to be pastors, while the LCMS does not. Carl and Deborah's work with EECMY (and other LCMS missionaries and professors as they also join the work) does not indicate altar and pulpit fellowship between the two churches. There are theological differences, but at the same time there is an invitation by EECMY to LCMS to come and assist with its theological education. LCMS teachings will be shared at the seminary with EECMY students and members. We will study the Scriptures side-by-side to learn God's Word on many issues.

Big Goals!

No doubt the goal of MYS to become an accredited graduate school with many masters and doctoral students enrolled within five years is a tremendous goal. No doubt the desire



Deborah met a resident of the seminary campus

of EECMY to train 12,000 pastors at its six seminaries and 40 Bible schools; and to reach out to 30 million people in the next five years sounds incredible to our ears. But these are the petitions of the bishops, pastors and members of the EECMY and they have invited the LCMS to be a part of their prayers by helping guide the theological instruction of the church.

Carl and Deborah thank you for your prayers and support to be wise, faithful and humble servants of the Lord Jesus.

To support our work financially, you may send a tax-deductible gift to:
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P.O. Box 790089
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Make checks payable to The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod.
Sign check memo "Support of Rockrohr Family."

Gifts can also be given securely online through the LCMS website, on our online giving page at www.lcms.org/Rockrohr.



Changes in Family Life



Ted confers with fellow future students of St. Paul Lutheran High School, Concordia, Missouri (a LCMS boarding high school) as they prepare to fly out of South Africa. Left to right: Ted Rockrohr, Seth Rodewald and Matias Gomes. Thanks to Cindy Rodewald for being the adult for their travel!

Thank you!

- To many congregations and individuals who continue their support.
- To the Roedel family at St. Paul Lutheran Church in Farmington Hills, MI who stamped, labeled and stuffed the envelopes for this newsletter.
- To staff and faculty at Mekane Yesus Seminary for graciously receiving Carl and Deborah in the start of their work in Ethiopia.
- To the mission support team at the LCMS International Center in St. Louis for helping process the applications for the work permits for Ethiopia.
- To Pastor Wieting and the congregation of Lutheran Memorial Chapel for not only receiving our son, Paul, as vicar but also hosting the marriage service of our daughter, Rebecca to fiancé Scott Johnson.
- For all your prayers on our behalf.

Carl and Deborah are officially “empty nesters” as of 24 June. Ted’s semester at Hilton College boarding high school was a great experience, but for many reasons we know that St. Paul will be good for him for his high school years. Not the least is that his siblings and grandparents are all in the U.S.

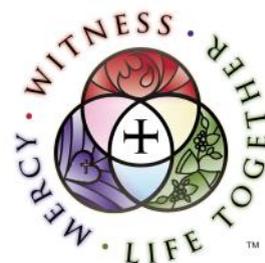
Since Carl and Deborah are coming to the U.S. in August for daughter Rebecca’s wedding on 10 August it won’t be too long until we see Ted again for a few days.

Our eldest son, Paul, will be installed as vicar at Lutheran Memorial Chapel in Shorewood, Wisconsin on July 7th. Our prayers

are with him and his lovely wife, Stacy, who were married last December. Paul and Stacy have been apart most of these first six months because Paul was finishing his second year of seminary, and Stacy was finishing classes in pharmacy school. Now Paul is a vicar in the Milwaukee area and Stacy is doing her pharmacy internship in the area as well. We thank God that they are now together. We also thank God for Paul’s supervising pastor at Luther Memorial Chapel, Rev. Dr. Kenneth Wieting.

We thank Pastor Wieting for serving as the premarital counselor and off-

er for Rebecca and Scott’s wedding. With Dad on the road, it is good to have a brother pastor help out.



Photos of Blessings



Rev. Abdi Tadesse has served as the acting Dean of the School of Theology for about two years. He is also the head of the Christian-Muslim Relations program at the seminary. Rev. Abdi faithfully endured five arrests and episodes of torture for being a Christian during the communist regime in Ethiopia, 1974-1991.

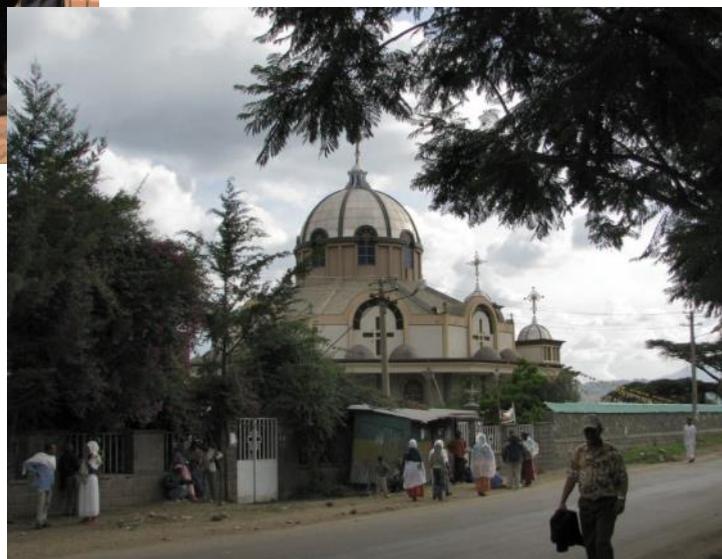


Deborah invited her deaconess students for a closing work day and lunch just before final exams at Lutheran Theological Seminary in Pretoria.



Ted, standing 4th from left, says goodbye to schoolmates at Hilton College on last day of the semester, June 21.

An Ethiopian Orthodox Church about one mile from Mekane Yesus Seminary. About 43% of the people in Ethiopia belong to the Ethiopian Orthodox Church, with other Christians making up an additional 19%. Lutherans are about 7% of the population.



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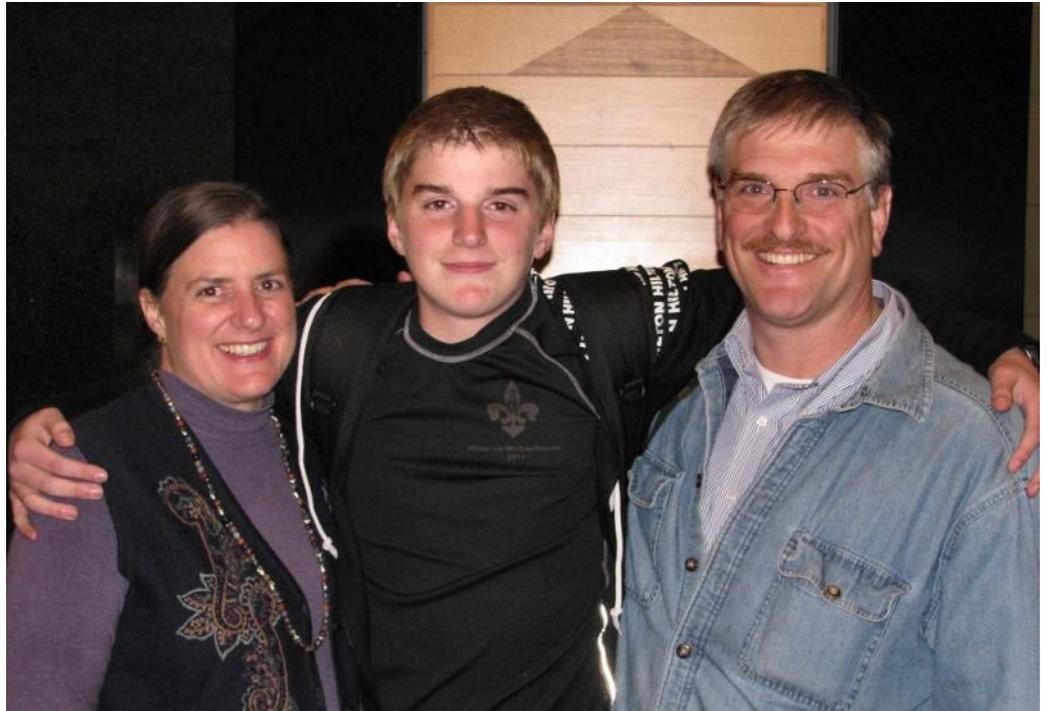
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Carl, Deborah and Ted at the Johannesburg airport on June 24th, as Ted moves to the U.S.

Move to Ethiopia



Map courtesy National Geographic Education.

Carl and Deborah are moving to Addis Ababa, Ethiopia to work with Mekane Yesus Seminary of the Ethiopian Evangelical Church Mekane Yesus. Ted will start boarding high school in the U.S. at St Paul Lutheran High School, Concordia, Missouri.