



Rockrohr News and Notes

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Assisting Lutherans in Ethiopia

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Ministry Information

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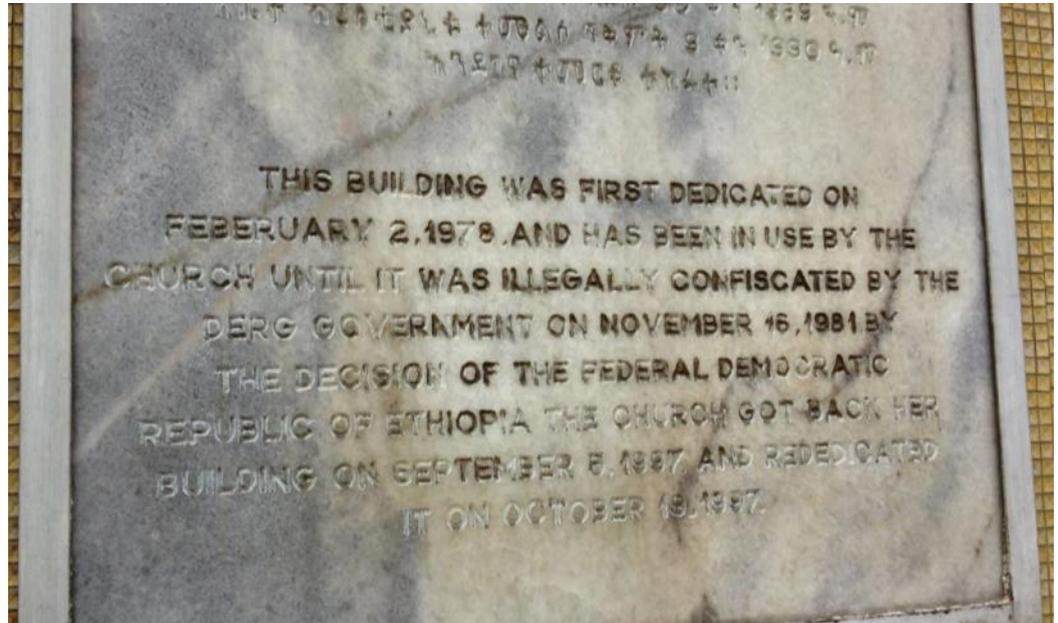


Photo above of signboard attached to building in the head office complex of the Ethiopian Evangelical Church Mekane Yesus: *“This building was first dedicated on February 2, 1978 and has been in use by the church until it was illegally confiscated by the DERG government on November 16, 1981. By the decision of the Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia the church got back her building on September 5, 1997 and re-dedicated it on October 19, 1997.”*

A government hostile to Christianity took over Ethi-

Sign board near the head office of the national headquarters of the Ethiopian Evangelical Church Mekane Yesus (EECMY). Other properties are also being returned to the church.

opia in 1974 and was in power for nearly 20 years. In many towns the government forced all protestant denominations to merge into one. What would your congregation look like after being persecuted for nearly 20 years? Only the Lord knows answers to such questions; the historical answer for EECMY is that the church grew. From the outset to the end of the persecution the church grew from about 400,000 to 1.5 million members.

Now about 22 years after persecution ended, the EECMY has increased to about 6 million members. The EECMY retains its Lutheran character in many ways, and it is also seeking to revitalize its Lutheran identity. There are about 8,000 congregations of various sizes, but only about 3,000 ordained pastors. Thus a main goal of EECMY is to increase its pastoral training efforts at its six seminaries and 40 Bible

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Financial Support Issues...

Our move to Ethiopia to help at Mekane Yesus Seminary has incurred unexpected extra expenses. We are currently about \$37,000 in the red in our missionary budget. We continue to need to build up more monthly and congregational supporters.

LCMS has recently published an overview of how the "Network Supported Missionaries" program works. Available at: <http://www.lcms.org/Missionarysupport>

To support our work financially, you may send a tax-deductible gift to:

LCMS
P.O. Box 790089
St. Louis, MO 63179-0089

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.

Ethiopia

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schools.

Of course, statistics don't clearly show the flesh, blood and souls of the Christians in the church. This "knowing the people" is what Deborah and Carl have been intimately involved in since early July. The many photos in this newsletter give some idea.

Carl as Dean of the School of Theology

Over the last 15 years two other "schools" have developed at the seminary. The School of Jazz Music and the College of Leadership and Management. Both of these departments have their own dean. In July, Carl took over the position of dean of the School of Theology. This school had only undergraduate studies in previous years. But a new seminary charter in 2012 put graduate studies, Theological Education by Extension (TEE) and the College of Distance Education (CoDE) all under the Dean of the School of Theology. Carl's position thus oversees the training of 3000+ pastoral students through these various programs. The very talented heads of TEE



Dr. Carl lining up MYS instructors for Summer B.Th. Graduation.

and CoDE remain in place so that not much of Carl's attention needs to be focused immediately on those programs.

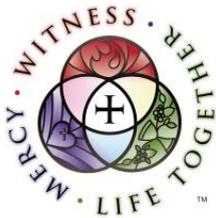
One activity that was already in full progress when Carl started in July was the Summer B.Th. Program. It consists of five summers of compressed studies so that students can earn an accredited Bachelor of Theology degree. This was the first year to graduate a class with 17 summer students. Carl quickly cut his teeth in the second week of July when there was a classroom scheduling conflict for a week. After that, things went rather smoothly. Carl served as a reader for one of the student's B.Th.

research papers. On Aug. 31st Carl led the graduation procession and was the leader for the graduation program. How happy were the B.Th. Graduates and their families!

The graduate school has taken most of Carl's time since returning to Ethiopia on August 23rd. Before Carl and Deborah traveled to the US for Rebecca's wedding in early August many plans were made to hold a week of applicant exams and interviews. The goal of EECMY is to train up to 200 MA students at the seminary over 5 years. The LCMS "Global Seminary Initiative" has provided a grant which assists with tuition costs so that up to 30 students might

Thank you!

- To many congregations and individuals who continue their support.
- To Evelyn Moellering at St. Paul Lutheran Church in Farmington Hills, MI who stamped, labeled and stuffed the envelopes for this newsletter.
- To Scott for taking our daughter, Rebecca, into his life as her husband.
- To Mike and Cindy Rodewald who continue to support us and all LCMS missionaries in Africa with wisdom, patience and prayers. (Mike is Regional Director for LCMS in Africa.)



Ethiopia

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start the MA program. 51 applicants from all around Ethiopia came for the week of testing and 28 have received the grant. Carl held many meetings and consultations to sort through the selection process. MA and B.Th. classes started the week of September 16.

What is Next at MYS

Currently Carl is with Deborah in South Africa doing the final pack to move to Ethiopia. He is keeping in touch with activities through email. Carl is also teaching three classes this semester: Advanced Homiletics for the MA students, and Creation-Redemption and Survey of Church History for B.Th. Students. As Dean



A LCMS Grant is helping to complete renovations to the MYS student cafeteria. Frequent flooding of the one story building led MYS to start building two more floors. We hope it will be ready in November.

there are a number of projects that need to be started to continue to upgrade MYS including improvements in MA study area and resources, a new academic catalog for the School of Theology, improved journal and book holdings in the library, etc. The MYS Ethiopian and expatriate faculty have really helped and cooperated with Carl to continue needed transitions at the seminary.

Deborah's Work

Since our initial transition from South Africa to Ethiopia occurred right after finals at the seminary in South Africa there really was no proper closing of accounts and apartment, selling and moving of possessions, etc.. Deborah has been very occupied with organizing and

finalizing the move from South Africa. We will be out of the South African apartment by the end of October. Unfortunately, moving books to Ethiopia is quite difficult and expensive so the majority of our library of about 1,500 books is moving back to the U.S. This is sad to us since the books with us are specifically for work in Africa, but it is the best solution.

Deborah will start learning Amharic, Ethiopia's official language, in November. After some months of language learning she will be assigned to a full-time position in Ethiopia.

To God be the Glory!



Carl's work as Dean of the School of Theology includes watching over the MYS undergraduate and graduate theology programs. This is the orientation of the graduate students on September 16.

Changes in Family Life (Part II)



Changes: (left to right) New daughter-in-law (since Dec 2012) Stacy started her pharmacy internship in June. Son, Paul, started vicarage in Milwaukee in July. Daughter Rebecca married Scott Johnson on August 10. Son, James, who started Marine officer training in May, announced engagement to Megan Frisque in September (Megan not shown). Megan started her first call as a LCMS grade school teacher in August. Son, Ted, transitioning from 18 months of school in South Africa, started boarding high school at St Paul Lutheran High School in Concordia, Missouri in August. He is enjoying classes and cross-country!

Other Family Changes...

- Congratulations to Deborah who is now, Deaconess Dr. Deborah Rockrohr. She successfully defended her dissertation in late August via telephone from South Africa! She has earned a Doctorate in Education (Ed.D.) specializing in Higher Education Leadership and Management. Her dissertation is entitled, "A Study of the Objectives for the Theological Preparation of Lutheran Church Missouri Synod Elementary Teachers." In short, Deborah studied the history of theological education for LCMS teacher training, as well as surveyed the theological curriculum for teacher training at all 10 LCMS universities and colleges.
- Congratulations again to Rebecca and Scott who are now expecting a baby! We thank God for His mercies and blessings on our family these past months. *We especially ask Jesus' care and protection for Rebecca and the little one.*

Changes!

The caption below the wedding picture summarizes many of the changes in our family over the last eight months.

Deborah and Carl were very happy to be in the U.S. for about 3 weeks in August. During that time they were able to be involved in the family changes.

The biggest change was the marriage of Rebecca to Scott Johnson. Scott is a new M.Div. graduate of Concordia Theological Seminary in Ft. Wayne. Rebecca has her deaconess internship near Ft.

Wayne and Scott is working on his S.T.M. at the seminary while also working as student editor for Concordia Theological Journal. At wedding activities we were happy to meet Scott's family and relatives for the first time.

The wedding gathered many family and friends together. Rebecca's wedding was held at Paul's vicarage congregation, Luther Memorial Chapel in Shorewood, WI (near Milwaukee) so we were able to visit with Stacy and Paul. Thanks to Pastor Wieting and to the congregation for their care

and hospitality. We also got to hear Paul preach, and he was a lector for the wedding. Carl preached the wedding sermon.

We had a great visit with James and Megan (now his fiancée). Congratulations on the engagement!

And of course, we took Ted to his boarding high school, St. Paul Lutheran in Concordia, Missouri. It is the alma mater of Deborah and her brothers, so we know the school well. We hear from Ted and he is doing great.



Photos of Blessings



Our son James and his fiancée, Miss Megan Frisque. They are planning their wedding for July 5, 2014.



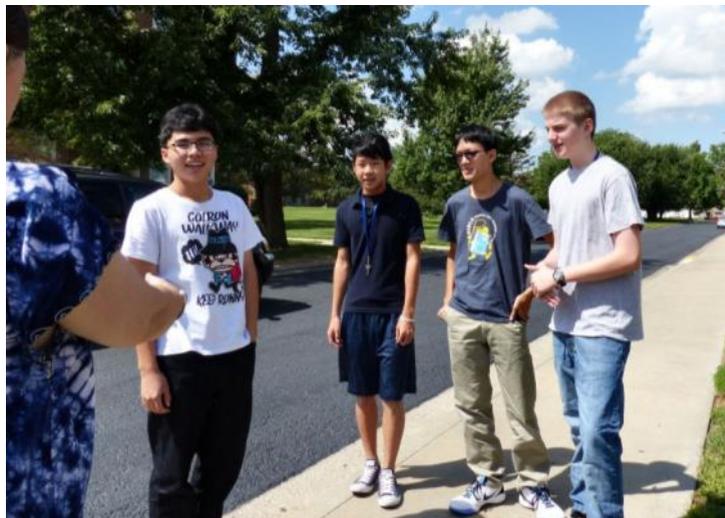
Rev. Dr. Fred Baue, a retired LCMS pastor and musician, with a doctorate in English literature has joined us in Ethiopia for six months. He is assisting at the MYS School of Jazz, and very helpfully is teaching Advanced English to our 32 first year MA students. This photo is from a guest appearance Dr. Fred made at a music festival on the MYS campus.



Mr. Kurt Baue came to Ethiopia with his brother Dr. Fred for a month. He was very helpful with maintenance and cleaning of the seminary housing into which we moved.



(Above) Ted on the day we dropped him off at his new home, St. Paul Lutheran High School in Concordia, Missouri. He is doing well!



(Left) Mrs. Beza, the School of Theology's Administrative Assistant, has been a great help to Carl. She has taught him much! In this photo she is updating the 51 student files for the recent MA applicants.

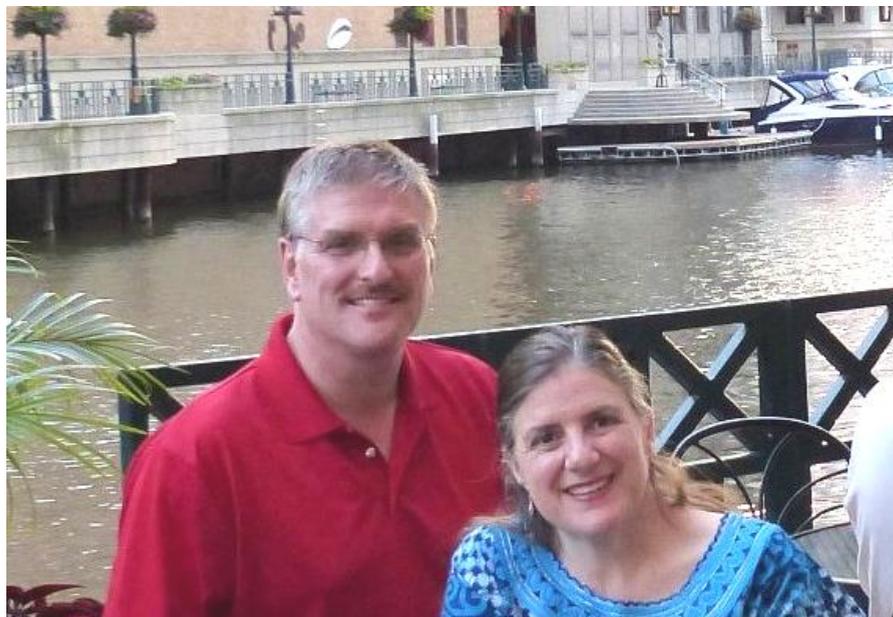
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Carl and Deborah at a favorite place during the week of the wedding... on the river in Milwaukee, Wisconsin.

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our work online:
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securely online through the
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Happy New Year!

The calendar is different in Ethiopia, there are thirteen months. Also, New Year's Day is September 11, and the year in Ethiopia is now 2006! Rev. Tsegaye, MYS acting-president, invited Carl to help bless and cut the traditional Defo Dabo ("fat bread") for a New Year's Eve party at the campus café. The bread is blessed in the name of the Father, Son and Holy Spirit and then cut and eaten.