



Rockrohr News and Notes

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Friends and Work in Ethiopia

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Ministry Information

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Look for us on Facebook too!



Friends Are Many

Ethiopia is a place where it is easy to make friends. As is normal in many African cultures, greeting is essential. A standard greeting for anytime is "Selam." It means "peace," and is related to the Hebrew "shalom."

In our environment at Mekane Yesus Seminary we are making a lot of friends. Carl is getting to know many of his colleagues better as he works with them on a daily basis. Since he is teaching three courses this semester he is also getting to know some of

Returning from a School of Theology staff retreat. (Left to right) Dr. Misgana, Mr. Gedion, Dr. Deborah, Mrs. Beza, Mrs. Ebise, Ms. Barbara and Mr. Motuma.

the students in the classroom setting. Carl is teaching two B.Th. courses: Creation/Redemption and Survey of Church History; at the MA level he teaches Advanced Homiletics.

Through his work as dean Carl has had contact through a number of other missions and churches as well. Since the EECMY was started and helped by many denominations and mission societies through the years, it has many

supporters from around the world. In the past few weeks Carl has been visited by or had meetings with people from Reformed Church of America, Lutheran World Federation, Finland Lutheran Mission, the Church of Sweden, a chaplain of Cambridge University, Church of England priests, an Edmonton University professor, Summer Institute of Linguistics missionaries, and Evangelical Lutheran Mission

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Financial Support Issues...

Our move to Ethiopia to help at Mekane Yesus Seminary has incurred unexpected extra expenses. We greatly appreciate your continued support!

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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(ELM) Hermannsburg missionaries. It is a dizzying array of names and relationships to learn.

Deborah is getting to know some of the seminary colleagues, but is also meeting other people outside of the seminary compound. She started Amharic language classes in November and will finish the first six week course before we return to the U.S. on December 19th. She is meeting many people through the class, both Ethiopians and expatriates connected with other organizations. Through her course and these contacts she is gaining a lot of infor-



Mrs. Ebise presents for the Theology Staff Retreat

mation useful for living in Ethiopia that we can't easily gather on-campus. For example, Deborah has learned more about shopping locations, reliable medical care, foods to avoid, additional information for visas and work

permits, location of reliable car mechanics, used car prices, etc.

Our many new friends and contacts are all extremely supportive and without them we would not have lasted even this first six months.

Challenges Are Many

In many ways this move to Ethiopia has been the hardest move in our lives. (That is saying something since we have moved our physical living location 33 times in 26 years of marriage.) This move included a complex move out of South Africa in September and October in which it took Deborah weeks to arrange shipping and financial details. Since we are the first LCMS career missionaries in Ethiopia



Traditional coffee making and service.

Ethiopia

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with a brand new working relationship with the EECMY, almost everything we have learned about work and life has been from scratch. Also, the infrastructure is challenging in Ethiopia. Electric and water seem to go out at the most inopportune times (like just before morning bath). Internet is on and off, as well as cell phone service. Often phone calls and text messages don't go through. (This makes planning meetings very difficult.) Tools and other basic equipment are hard to find and expensive. Driver's licenses are not easy to



Deborah with her Amharic language instructor and classmates at the Mekane Yesus Joint Language School. Left to right: Keffa, Instructor Mrs. Jallaie, Deborah, Travis and Emily

get; we aren't driving yet. New and used cars are very expensive and not easy to buy (97% tax on new vehicles). It took several months to work out a plan with LCMS on how to get a vehicle in Ethiopia; but we have not had time at all to move ahead on

the plan. So we walk or get a taxi or arrange for a seminary vehicle and driver when we need to go places. Books are expensive to ship into the country (\$7 duty per book, not including shipping.) Also, the terrorist threat is at a high level in Ethiopia. We are generally safe in our daily life, but the constant awareness of safe living habits is always on our mind. Of course, we dearly miss our children and their changing lives.

Challenging Goals

The EECMY has set big goals for itself. Concerning the seminary, the church wants to expand the new graduate program so that in five years there will be 200 MA stu-

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Thank you!

- To many congregations and individuals who continue their support.
- To our friends at St. Paul Lutheran Church in Farmington Hills, MI who stamped, labeled and stuffed the envelopes for this newsletter.
- To our colleagues at the LCMS International Center who are working hard to support us in many daily needs. To our LCMS colleague in Ghana, Mrs. Joyce Erber, who is our financial manager by email, and is helping us greatly.
- To Rev. Dr. Fred Baue with us in MYS as he fills our days with music and joy.



Dr. Carl teaching Advanced Homiletics for the second year MA students.

Students Eager for Lutheran Theology

Despite the challenges of too little classroom space, lack of library books and study space, broken down printing presses (Carl deals with all of these problems at least weekly) the students are very eager to learn!

Since the EECMY was started by a number of different missions and churches it does not have a tradition of one set theology. It is committed to the Scriptures, Ecumenical Creeds, Augsburg Confession and the Small and Large Catechisms—yet a number of different beliefs are held on creation, the nature of death, the lost image of God in man, the nature of Scripture, Pentecostal-type worship (and theology), etc. (There is only one Book of Concord available to students in the library.) In this uncertain theological environment, the students are gladly listening and inquiring of Biblical teachings as the LCMS teaches. This desire for doctrinal teaching encourages us each day.



Ethiopia



A small hand-cultivated field just in front of the house we rent on the seminary campus. The smaller building in front is a shed for cows. The two-story house behind that shed is where we live. The building has two units; we live in left hand side and LCMS short-term missionaries live in the right-hand side apartment.

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dents and up to 30 doctoral students. The challenges to reach these goals are immense. Required internet and computer equipment, classroom space, library holdings, funding sources, instructors with doctorates are all problems without obvious solutions. A complicating problem is that the dean's position has been somewhat unstable, with Carl being the fourth dean in three years. Thus some records and reports are somewhat confused or missing. This makes continued accreditation for the B.Th. program and new accreditation for the

MA program a challenge. While the LCMS plans to help supply instructors, this is not easy to implement. The seminary cannot easily use instructors for less than 8 week periods. LCMS visiting instructors are often only available for shorter intensive formats. We are thankful to have Rev. Dr. Fred Baue teaching for fall semester, and are working on arrangements for another instructor to come for 8 weeks in the spring term. Much of the weight of these various challenges are on the shoulders of Carl, which has led to some difficult days. The goals are good, but the resources don't match the goals at this

time.

Brief U.S. Visit

Because of work permit application difficulties we must return to the U.S. in December to renew our business visas.

- Milwaukee Dec 20-29
- Detroit Dec 29-31
- Ft Wayne Dec 31-Jan 1
- St. Louis Jan 1-3
- Jackson, MO Jan 3—6
- Concordia, MO Jan 6-8
- St. Louis Jan 8-14

We look forward to this unexpected Christmas visit with our families. Carl can preach/teach if in the area, please email us.

Photos of Blessings



Beautiful lilies at EECMY Tabor Evangelical College in Hawassa, Ethiopia



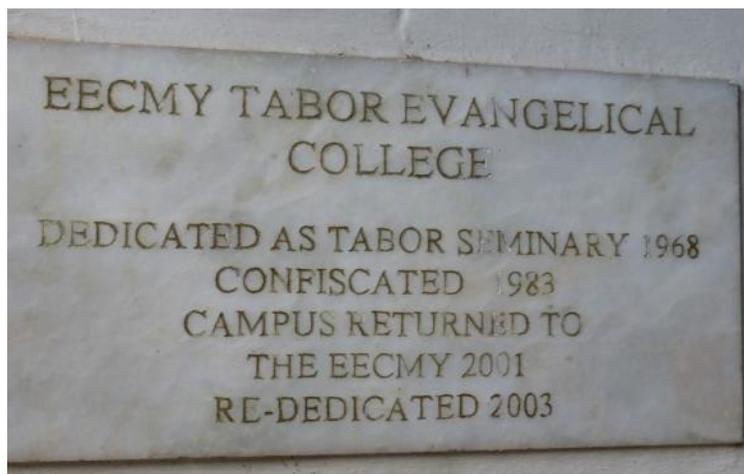
LCMS member Ralph Clements who came to help consult at the seminary for a month greeted at an EECMY congregation.



(Above) Our little Christmas tree we brought from South Africa. It has an Ethiopian scarf "comforting it" (ala "Charlie Brown Christmas").

(Above right) The dedication plaque for the return of the Tabor Evangelical College campus after the communist DERG regime.

(Right) Rev. Dr. Fred Baue who is teaching guitar students in the MYS Music School as well as Advanced English to MA students enjoys the view of the lake in Hawassa, Ethiopia.



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our work online:
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PRAYER REQUESTS:

- The peace of Christ in times of stress.
- Strength for Ethiopian colleagues especially Beza, Dr. Belay, and Dr. Berhanu.
- Thanksgiving for Deborah's good progress in learning Amharic.
- Clearness of thought for planning and solving problems.
- Safe travel to and in the U.S.; and return to Ethiopia.



Carl and Deborah on the rented bus taking theology staff to the retreat at Hawassa, Ethiopia (Nov 23-24)

Rest Stop in Ethiopia

On the return from the theology staff retreat we stopped at a wayside stop selling bags of charcoal and vegetables. There are many hills and mountains like this in Ethiopia.