



ETHIOPIA GOSPEL OUTREACH

WOODWARD PARK CHURCH OF CHRIST

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February 25, 2017

OUTREACH TO CHILDREN: A MINISTRY OF LOVE



Solomon wrote in Psalms 127:3, "Behold, children are a gift of the LORD....." In James 1:27, God tells us through the pen of the inspired writer that "pure religion" is tied to the caring of children with special needs. By 1974 our deaf school had grown from grade one to the 9th grade. Carl McDonald was a missionary for the deaf at that time and he suggested we accept younger children instead of waiting for the normal age for the 1st grade. Finances were a problem, so we dropped the 9th grade and added two lower grades; Beginner 1 and Beginner 2. That change proved very important for the ministry. For ten years deaf children had entered our school with almost zero communication skill and waiting until they were six or seven years old, compounded that problem. Bringing them into our school at 4½ to 5 years old made an amazing difference in helping them learn to communicate which greatly reduced the stigma of rejection by a society who didn't understand them. This experience helped us to discover that the public school system in Ethiopia didn't include kindergarten and we watched the expansion of "for profit" private kindergartens that catered only to children whose parents could afford the tuition. The poor were excluded from this opportunity, so we felt an obligation to do something for poor children in the areas where the church was located. The need was overwhelming and resources limited, so we were able to establish only 3 kindergartens through the help of many of you who read this report. These three serve nearly 300 of the poorest of the poor children in the communities where they live. The local leaders expressed their appreciation and provided beautiful campuses on which we were able to construct the facilities. The love shown to the children in our schools resulted in many parents and families coming and studying with our preachers. Amazing stories from parents telling how their children were able to excel when they entered the government school 1st grade because of the quality of education they had received from our dedicated Christian staff. All of you who pray for and support the children's ministry can know that the Lord is using your commitment to bring "the children to Him" (Mark 10:14)

TAMIRU AND YODIT'S WEDDING:



In the December 2016 News Letter we announced the news that one of our own young men, Tamiru, was about to marry and he, along with Brother Abebe had spent time teaching the gospel to the young lady he had chosen to become his bride. She obeyed the gospel and last month they were married. Upper left, Brother Demere is shown conducting the ceremony at the Mekanissa church building. Upper right is the wedding party. All of the groomsmen were raised in our orphanage. Left, the happy couple, Yodit and Tamiru. We are very pleased that our young men are faithful and feel the importance of having a Christian home. We extend our congratulations to Tamiru and Yodit.

Brother Behailu sent this note about Tamiru's coming to our school as a little child: "I remember the day

Tamiru's mother came to my office to talk to me. The first thing she did was to fall down on her knees and she said; 'Tamiru's father has died, and I have no income. We have to go without food for many days at a time. I want my son to go to school but I have nothing to support him. Please take him, teach and help him to become a self-supported person. There is no one who will help us. I don't want to see him living on the street as a homeless boy.' Then she broke down in tears. She touched my heart so much and I had to tell her to bring him the next day and he will be living with our other boys, and he will have the opportunity to go to school. The next day she brought him to us and he became one of our boys in our orphan home. Tamiru has always been a very humble and bright boy. It is so good to see him now getting married and to have a Christian wife and home."

UPDATE ON THE ROAD AND WATER TOWER CONSTRUCTION:



The road construction is almost completed. The wall beside the side walk used to be the front wall of our school compound and was over 8 feet tall. The road was raised about 5 feet, so now our fence is 3 feet tall. We have to rebuild the fence. Cement is being poured into the footing of the new water tower. It has been a long journey!

Thanks to all of you who faithfully pray for and support the Lord's work in Ethiopia. We pray that God will continue to pour out his blessing upon you.

Kevin and John Ed Clark