



## *EthioFaith USA: Developing Christian Special Education for Ethiopia*

### NEWSLETTER SPRING, 2019

*EthioFaith USA; 3500 Eastview Dr. NE; Grand Rapids, MI 49525*

#### **The Story Continues**

A visit by Steve and Barb Timmermans in February confirmed our belief that Faith School is thriving! The pictures tell the best story!



#### **A Surprising Story From Steve Timmermans**

One aspect of my job relates to participating in ecumenical relationships with denominations around the world, including the Presbyterian Church in Ethiopia and the Ethiopian Kale Heywet Church (EKHC). A new Deputy General Secretary, Dr. Ermais Mamo, began serving the EKHC last summer, and he came to the U.S. for a visit in November. I picked him up in Chicago and driving back, we began to get to know each other, asking each other about our families. He mentioned their youngest son is a teenager with autism, and because there are no special education services, he spends every day at home. He also mentioned that there was a new Christian special education school very close to where they live, but this new school declined enrolling him due to his advanced age. I asked "Was it Faith School?" "Yes, it was." My heart sank. I quickly explained my relationship with the school and said that the decision must have related to the fact that the current group of students are children, not teens. I also promised him that I'd explore the possibility.

Fast forward to January, 2019. Nathan, Dr. Mamo's son, began attending Faith School! In effect, we created a second classroom for this teenager. Nearly at the same time we hired a director (see below) who serves this new classroom for teens along with the school's jack-of-all-trades,

Tarekegn. For a young man who has never attended school, the adjustment has gone very well. Tarekegn provides much one-on-one and includes as much pre-vocational activities as possible. As Faith School adjusts to having a teenager, and Nathan adjusts to Faith School, my hope is that this God-led connection will lead to a new chapter for Faith School.



#### **Faith School Welcomes Yoseph Gebremariam**

With a staff of three (teacher, teacher aide, and Tarekegn), it has been challenging for Faith School to respond to all of the governmental challenges as well as to keep the school running well.

Thus, quite some time ago, the board thought it best to find a Director. Earlier this year a leader known to many associated with Faith School stepped forward: Yoseph Gebremariam. Yoseph previously worked for Yezelalem Minch (an orphanage-turned social service agency) and a US-based social service agency in Ethiopia. He began three months ago as a Teaching-Principal, both allowing the young man mentioned earlier to enroll and helping the school with all of its organizational demands. It is a blessing to have Yoseph at the helm!



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#### **Get Involved**

- For more information, reach us at [ethiofaithusa@gmail.com](mailto:ethiofaithusa@gmail.com) or go to the website: [www.ethiofaith.org](http://www.ethiofaith.org)
- Pray for continued stability and flourishing in Ethiopia
- Give on-line at [www.ethiofaith.org](http://www.ethiofaith.org)
- Mail a check to EthiofaithUSA; 3500 Eastview Dr. NE, Grand Rapids, MI 49525