



EthioFaith USA: Developing Christian Special Education for Ethiopia

NEWSLETTER SUMMER, 2020

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

EARLIER THIS YEAR

The previous newsletter reported that Vinnie Adams, board member and special needs teacher/ministry director, was going to Addis Ababa and do training with Faith School teachers and parents. Thankfully, the trip happened a month or so before the pandemic began, and it was a great success. Vinnie confirmed that good teaching was occurring and helped the staff take further steps toward individualization in their teaching.



Fekadu Timmermans and Emmanuel Tewodros served as translators, particularly important for the parent session that Vinnie led and the parents appreciated.



THE PRESENT SITUATION

Covid 19 is in Ethiopia as it is in the U.S., but the situation there is better than here in North America. One report indicates 5846 cases and 103 deaths since the beginning of the pandemic. While one could wonder whether testing is widely available and whether the counts are accurate, it is miraculous to see such low numbers. When the pandemic first surfaced, instead of focusing on hospitals and respirators, the government focused on masks and social distancing—with all of the challenges close urban living and remote rural situations provide.

When these orders went into effect, like schools in the U.S., Faith School discontinued classes. Yet, like many schools here, the staff has continued to work, staying in touch with the families.

Families in Addis Ababa have had to confront the same issues we have: jobs have disappeared and unemployment (before the pandemic already, some suggest, at 40+%). Thus, staff members have been helping provide food for the families hit economically. In summary, like schools here, staff have remained on the job” but doing new things as a result of the shutdowns.

In addition, there has been another similarity to the U.S.: uncovering racism. The largest ethnic group in Ethiopia is the Oromo people. However, despite being the largest group, they have been discriminated against and shoved aside for years. While there has been hopefulness in that the current Prime Minister is from the Oromo people group (a first!), an event at the end of June upended the country in ways similar to the killing of George Floyd here.

Haacaaluu Hundeessaa, a popular Oromio singer was killed in an ambush while driving. The result has been protests in Addis Ababa and around the country. Unfortunately, these protests have result in a number of deaths—more than 160 according to some reports. The government has shut down the internet, so it’s difficult to know for sure what’s really going on. But for the current unrest and the continuing challenge of the pandemic, pray for Ethiopia! And pray that Faith School will be able to open in the fall, since the Faith School students have so little opportunities to learn and participate apart from school.

LANSING CHRISTIAN SCHOOL

Beginning before the pandemic, Lansing Christian School (Illinois) kindergarten teacher Alexa Groen (with special education training) challenged the students of Lansing Christian to raise money for Faith School.



As a result of her challenge, the students of the school raised \$5,000 for Faith School! We’re eager for schools in the U.S. and in Ethiopia to be able to start up in the fall so that we can better connect the schools together so that the Faith School students and families can provide their appreciation to the students and families of Lansing Christian School!

-----Get Involved-----

- For more information, reach us at ethiofaithusa@gmail.com or go to the website: www.ethiofaith.org
- Pray for solving the Covid 19 challenge, a return to stability, and flourishing in Ethiopia and in the U.S.
- Give on-line: www.ethiofaith.org or by mail: EthiofaithUSA; 3500 Eastview Dr. NE, GR, MI 49525