

Bits of Hope

Summer 2010



New Name...Same Mission

by Vivian H. Dersu

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The past several months have brought many changes to Gospel For All, but our mission and vision remain unchanged. Our goal is to spread the love of Jesus Christ through evangelism, HIV/AIDS education outreach and ministry to orphans and the poor. With the various facets of our ministry, we have chosen to change our name to Hand of Hope Ministries, as we feel this is a better representation of the overall scope of our work.

When this ministry was founded in 2004, the focus was strictly on evangelism. We supported several native evangelists in southern Ethiopia and partnered with Borana Outreach based in Hawassa, Ethiopia, who assisted with overseeing the evangelists and compiling valuable reports for us. Between 2004 and 2009 we grew from four to eleven evangelists. In 2006, we expanded our ministry and began our Children's Program which was designed to reach out to orphans throughout the Borana Region and provide them with a place to live and the resources to obtain an education and to receive medical care as well as basic every day needs, such as food and clothing. The Children's Program started out with two sisters, who had lost both of their parents to HIV/AIDS. By the end of 2009 the program was supporting 21 children – most of them left orphaned as a direct result of HIV/AIDS.

Around the middle of 2009, it became apparent that the ministry needed to re-think the way our operations were run in Ethiopia. We took a step back from the ministry and looked to the Lord for guidance. After much prayer we decided to restructure the ministry. We decided to reach out to local churches throughout southern Ethiopia and partner with them in our evangelistic efforts. The local church (instead of Hand of Hope Ministries) would be responsible for hiring evangelists and overseeing their work in the rural villages. This was met with much enthusiasm by the local churches and by the end of 2009, agreements had been signed between Hand of Hope Ministries and five churches. Hand of Hope Ministries provided each of the five churches with an allotted budget for them to use exclusively for evangelism in rural villages. To better facilitate the compilation of reports, HOHM has enlisted the help of Gospel For Unreached Nations Ministry (GFUNM), directed by Tsega-ab Bekele. HOHM and GFUNM will share a coordinator who will be responsible for quarterly visits to all of the areas where HOHM has evangelists. The coordinator will contact our partner church and will visit the evangelists. He will be responsible for getting ministry reports from each area and forwarding them to HOHM in the U.S.A.

Along with the growth of the evangelistic end of the ministry, the Children's Program has grown to a level where it is necessary to have a coordinator oversee this program. Bake Chenfo has volunteered to serve as coordinator of the HOH Children's Program. He is responsible for following up with all 21 children in this program and making sure that funds are disbursed to their host families in a timely manner. He also makes sure that the children stay in school and sends us quarterly reports on the progress of each of the children. Bake also informs us of any new children who may be eligible for this program. We praise God for His faithful servant, Bake, who works tirelessly to coordinate the HOH Children's Program as a volunteer. By June of 2010, nine additional children have been added to the HOH Children's Program bringing our total to 30! Wow! Isn't God good? It is only by the hand of God that we have come this far.

We're excited to see where God leads this ministry as we continue on through 2010. Our desire is to be faithful to the ministry He has entrusted to us. Please pray that many more prayer and financial supporters would rise up to join Hand of Hope Ministries as we spread the love of Jesus Christ through evangelism and reaching out to the poor and the orphans throughout southern Ethiopia.

Touching Lives One By One

by Sam Dersu

In March, I traveled to Ethiopia accompanied by 3 men from Priest Lake Christian Fellowship for a 2-week mission trip. Through God's help, we were able to accomplish the 5 goals we had mapped out. We were able to 1) Spend time with the orphans; 2) Help build the new church in Teltelle (Ghandille); 3) Work with kids in the Mega church; 4) Spend time with evangelists and leaders of the churches that Hand of Hope Ministries has partnered with; and 5) Finish up the house in Mega for the poor and pass it on to whomever the Government chose.

The trip was full of highlights and God's presence was upon us throughout the entire two weeks. One of the high points of this trip was spending time with the children sponsored through the Hand of Hope Children's Program. My favorite memory is spending time with the orphans and hearing them tell their story in their own words. Until this trip, I had not been able to spend much time with any of them. We spent one evening in the home of the 8 siblings being sponsored through HOH Children's Program. These children lost both of their parents a few years ago. We spent the evening eating, sharing, praying and worshipping together. Hearing their story encouraged me. These children have been through so much and have held firm in the faith their parents instilled in them prior to their death. I am glad they felt free to open their hearts and share their story with us.

One highlight for me during this trip was getting to see Gaaro. Gaaro is a little girl from the village of Deeda Jaarsa who has been a HOH child since 2008. Gaaro's mother abandoned her, leaving her with her father. Gaaro was an outcast in her own family – suffering from a medical condition. Her father basically gave up on her and didn't really give her a chance to live. Gaaro's other siblings all went to school, but Gaaro was not given the same opportunities that were given to her healthy siblings. All of this changed in 2008 when the PLCF Mission Team traveled to Ethiopia for a mission trip. One of the team members, Jennifer Kidd, spotted Gaaro while walking around during the grain distribution in Deeda Jaarsa. Jennifer noticed a young girl standing off to the side looking sickly and with some sort of skin condition. Due to this, she kept most of her body covered. Jennifer took a picture of her and through an interpreter tried to find out as much about the girl as she could. Jennifer had to leave as the mission group was heading back to Mega, but she couldn't stop thinking about Gaaro and wondered if there was something she could do to help this girl. What happened next is nothing short of a miracle – a perfect example of God at work.



Above: Gaaro in 2008



Right: Gaaro in 2010

To make a long story short, Jennifer talked to my brother Efrem and asked him to go get Gaaro and see what could be done to get her some medical help. That is the moment that changed Gaaro's life. Since July of 2008 Gaaro is being sponsored through the HOH Children's Program. Below is a picture of Gaaro that I took this year – just 2 years after Jennifer found her. Look at her now. She's healthy. She's beautiful. She has hope! She wasn't going to school before -- now she is. Isn't God great! Look at His divine appointment. If it wasn't for our trip in 2008, what would have happened to her? She might have been just like her sister who died from a sickness similar to what Gaaro suffered before getting help. In 2008 we didn't plan to go to Deeda Jaarsa to see Gaaro; we went to Deeda Jaarsa to distribute grain and worship in the small church there with Christians in the area, but God knew there was a little girl who needed our help.

Gaaro is turning into a beautiful young lady. Seeing her brought tears to my eyes. I look at her and think....our trip in 2008 was worth it if all we did was help this one girl. We don't always get to see the changes that are made in someone's life. I'm thankful that I was able to see Gaaro this year. I'm thankful I was able to hug her and let her know that someone cares about her.

— Sam Dersu is Founder of Hand of Hope Ministries.

With God You Can

by Tsega-Ab Bekele

Some believe there is nothing one man or one woman can do against the enormous array of the world's ills. Yet many of the world's great movements, of thought and action, have flowed from the work of a single man. A young monk began the Protestant reformation, a young general extended an empire from Macedonia to the borders of the earth, and a young woman reclaimed the territory of France. It was a young Italian explorer who discovered the New World, and 32 year old Thomas Jefferson who proclaimed that all men are created equal. 'Give me a place to stand,' said Archimedes, 'and I will move the world.' These men moved the world, and so can we all. — Robert F. Kennedy

God is not looking for an organization, committee, person's vote, impressive title, or our ability, but He is looking for those who are available and willing to stand in the gap by taking a risk in order to become a blessing for somebody in need. I thank God for the seeds of divine vision that He entrusted with Sam and Vivian some years ago. That seed grew into a vision and is now spreading to the precious people of God at PLCF, to other faithful individuals, and very soon it will attract the attention of the government. This is not because of the personality of the visionary couple, but it is the nature of the divine vision. This is just the beginning of the great ending.

Through the humble beginnings of this vision, God is giving hope to the hopeless, touching people's heart with His great love, giving a brighter future for children who have suffered under the yoke of poverty, and shining the Light of the Gospel among the unreached people groups in the jungle. It is totally astonishing to see the real transformation which is going on here in the frontline through this vision.



Evangelist Tsega-ab Bekele

Recently, God gave me the great privilege to accompany a group of men from Priest Lake Christian Fellowship in Nashville, Tennessee, who came to Ethiopia on a short-term mission trip to minister through Hand of Hope Ministries. The four-member team was here from March 15 – 24, 2010. During this time I was able to travel with them and to see what God is doing through HOHM on the field. I thank God for the refreshment, love and wonderful time of worship I experienced together with this team. We had a lot of fun while visiting evangelists, orphans, and churches while sharing from the Word and praying for people in need.



Above: Randy Wright, Tsega-ab Bekele, Berhane, and Todd Anderson showing off their 'muddy' hands after helping build 'mud' walls of the new church in Teltelle.

I was so touched by the concern, commitment and love in action these men showed for our people in need in the remote villages in which HOHM ministers. I want to thank them. The four lovely men, who represent PLCF, are godly men with various gifts accompanied by a passionate heart for God and His people. O, I miss those men and I am very eager to see them all on future HOHM Mission Trips. I love these men and I continue to remember all of them along with their families in my prayers. May God bless these men abundantly in every area of their lives.

My message for Sam and Vivian is this:

Remember, this is the beginning of a great journey ahead of you. Don't limit God's vision by confining it into your small-thinking box. God is ready to enlarge your territory and use you beyond your imagination. You will be a source of encouragement, divine blessing and hope — not only for Borana — why not for Africa and the world? God is able and you can. It is a privilege, honor and blessing for GFUNM to be partners with YOU.



Above: Kevin Williamson, Randy Wright and Sam Dersu pray for a young lady.

— Evangelist Tsega-Ab Bekele is Founder & Director of Gospel For Unreached Nations Ministry (GFUNM) based in Hawassa, Ethiopia. He resides in Hawassa with his wife and 3 children.

Highlights of My Trip to Ethiopia

by Randy Wright

So many thoughts flood my mind when I think of my latest trip to visit Ethiopia, and I don't want to take up the whole newsletter.... As I reflected on the trip and prayed about what to share, I have to say that what kept coming back to me over and above all, was simply the blessing of being able to see, hug, and fellowship with my brothers and sisters in Christ who live in Ethiopia! Although it didn't seem quite that long, because their names and faces are all regularly in my prayers, it had been almost two years since the last visit.

I hesitate to list 'highlights' as there were many, and it's difficult to determine which to mention, knowing that I'll inevitably leave something or someone out! After much consideration, I've come up with a short list (for me, anyway)... of SOME highlights of my visit this time (in no particular order).

- It was such a blessing to be able to spend more than a week with Zeleke and Tsega-ab. I was able to learn more about their lives and see who they are in Christ. Now, that I know them better, I find myself loving them even more than before.
- It was an honor to present Bake with a framed print as a small gift of appreciation for his service and the blessing he is to us. When I talked to him the following day, it was a joy to find that he was even more blessed when he realized there were 'love notes' written on the back, from those who made the trip and met him in 2008.



Our driver, Zeleke



Presenting Bake a small gift of appreciation at the Mega Church (Pictured from left to right: Sam Dersu, Bake Chenfo, Tsega-ab Bekele and Randy Wright)



Believers in Melbana, led by Evangelist Nuno (far right), worship the Lord.

- I had the opportunity to travel 'off-road' to visit and worship with evangelists and several of the villagers in Melbana, Sadekho, Tuka and Soda. I enjoyed worshipping with my brothers and sisters in Christ in these different villages.

Highlights of My Trip to Ethiopia (continued)

- Traveling to Ghandille (definitely off-road) and having the opportunity to see Dida and his family again was a special time for me. It was good to hear how God is working in the area and have the chance to help mud the inside of the new church building there. When I visited this group of believers in 2008, we worshipped together in a small hut, but now we can look forward to coming back and worshipping in the new church on the next visit. I look forward to singing again of Christ, the Solid Rock, and continue to pray that all in the area will come to know that HE ALONE is their Rock, Refuge, Strong Fortress, & Defense!



Randy Wright with Evangelist Dida Barako and family in Ghandille (Teltelle).



Daabo, the young lady we prayed for in Mega.

- We saw God orchestrate a Friday afternoon in Mega. We were initially disappointed to be unable to visit Deeda Jaarsa due to the rain, but, then we were asked if we could pray for a young girl at Nuno's house. We were blessed to be able to do so that afternoon and again the next day. When we saw her again at church on Sunday, her countenance was obviously improved. It was arranged for her to spend several months with Nuno and his wife. Daabo remains in our prayers.
- We welcomed the Holy Spirit's incredible, unquestionable, Presence with the eight Hand of Hope siblings in Yavello. We were blessed to have been invited to dinner in their home. They shared the amazing story of how God led Sam to them when all seemed hopeless many years ago and how He has continued to meet their needs, through Hand of Hope and others since. Sam presented a cash gift that had been raised by some of the children from our home church, PLCF. We prayed and then blessed them with a song. He inhabited our worship, filling the room-- and us, ministering mightily to everyone.

- We got to pray for one of the folks living in the Hand of Hope Mega houses and watch the new tenants when receiving their keys. We saw the surprise and joy of all when they received the lanterns from the government and then Sam announced they were all getting new mattresses.

This doesn't even come close to scratching the surface of all I experienced on this trip, but I hope that it has given you a glimpse of how God's hand was at work throughout this trip.



2010 Mission Team with the 8 Hand of Hope siblings in Yavello.

—Randy Wright is an elder at PLCF in Antioch, TN. He was a member of the 2010 Ethiopia Mission Team as well as the 2008 PLCF Ethiopia Mission Team.

Moyale Area



Moyale is located on the border of Ethiopia and Kenya. It is a highly Muslim populated area. Evangelists are working in two small villages outside of Moyale in the village of Mudihambo and Tuka.

Sisay Getachew works in the village of Tuka, and Abera Tantu works in Mudihambo.



Evangelist Sisay Getachew

Mega Area

There are three evangelists working in the Mega area. Mega is located about 90 kilometers from the border of Kenya.

Evangelists are working in three villages in the Mega area. Nuno Aga ministers in Melbana. It was a blessing for the group of four men from Priest Lake Christian Fellowship in Antioch, Tennessee, to be able to worship with the group of believers in Melbana.

Hand of Hope Ministries has had a long-time connection with Deeda Jaarsa, where Evangelist Kala Huka serves. Deeda Jaarsa is the home to Gaaro, one of the children sponsored by the HOH Children's Program.



Left: Randy Wright, Tsega-ab (back center), and Evangelist Nuno (far right) with believers in Melbana.

Below: Believers in Melbana



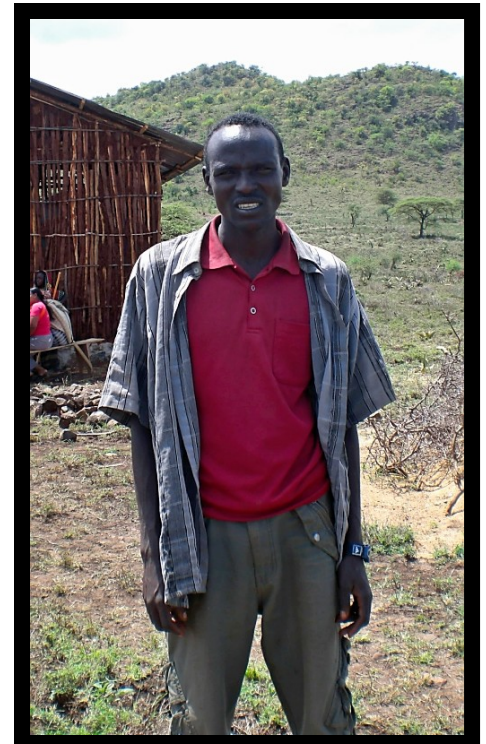
Left: Kevin Williamson connects with children in Mega during his recent trip to Ethiopia (more on this in the next edition of *Bits of Hope*).

Evangelist Update

Teltelle Area

Teltelle is a difficult area. Transportation to this region is tough and in order to get out to the village where our evangelists are working, a 4-wheel drive is essential. The evangelists in this area travel by foot. This area has been a challenging one for the Gospel, but little by little God's church is being built and believers are being added to the kingdom. Evangelists Dida Barako and Guyo Tadhi minister in the village of Ghandille. Dida has been serving here for several years and is beginning to see the fruits of his labor.

Traditional beliefs have a strong-hold on the people in this area and it is difficult to share the gospel with them. In March, a group from Priest Lake Christian Fellowship in Antioch, TN, visited Ghandille and spent a day helping mud the walls of the new church being built. It is encouraging to see God at work in Ghandille. Please continue to pray for Dida and Guyo as they serve.



Evangelist Guyo Tadhi



Evangelist Dida Barako with Todd Anderson



Left: Todd Anderson, Randy Wright and Sam Dersu standing with believers from the Ghandille church in front of their new church building.



Above: Todd Anderson and Sam Dersu help mud the walls of the church in Ghandille.

Hawassa Area



Evangelist Tafesse Masebo



Evangelist Bate Wario

Evangelists Tafesse Masebo and Bate Wario work under the Tabor Church in Hawassa, Ethiopia. Both of these evangelists work in highly populated Muslim areas and face many challenges.

Please pray for Evangelist Tafesse as he ministers in Arsi Negele and for Evangelist Bate as he serves in Kafelle.

Hand of Hope Ministries is excited to be able to participate in spreading the Gospel in this area.

Yavello Area

Two evangelists are working in the Yavello area. Evangelist Dida Guyo works in Chari and Evangelist Ermias Shura ministers in Sadekho.

The group of 4 men from Priest Lake Christian Fellowship were able to meet Evangelist Ermias during their visit in March. They enjoyed spending a short time of prayer together with him as well as witnessing the funeral of a Christian man in Sadekho.



Evangelist Ermias Shura



Funeral of a Christian man in Sadekho



Beautiful children in Sadekho

HOH Children



HOH Children in the Mega area with men from PLCF.
Back Row (L-R): Kabale, Hamo, Sam Dersu, Galma; **Middle Row (L-R):** Gaaro, Gedi, Dabaso, Ribka, Sara, Kaliti; **Front Row (L-R):** Israel, Ribka, Takalin; **Seated (L-R):** Randy Wright, Todd Anderson

Bake Chenfo continues to coordinate the Hand of Hope Children's Program. He is responsible for following up with each child in HOH Children's Program and making sure that they are staying in school and receiving the care they need.

In March, Sam Dersu along with three other men from Priest Lake Christian Fellowship in Antioch, Tennessee, were able to visit with all of the Hand of Hope Children along with their guardians in Yavello and Mega. During their visit, they were able to give each of the children a gift of money that had been raised by several children at Priest Lake Christian Fellowship. Several girls at PLCF raised \$275 by selling baked goods. This money was divided among all of the 21 HOH Children to be used for whatever they wanted. What a special gift! God bless these girls from PLCF!



17 year old, HOH child, Aster prepares coffee for the PLCF men during their visit with her and her seven brothers and sisters in their home in Yavello.



Sam Dersu (L) presents the gift of money from the children at PLCF to the Hand of Hope Children in Yavello.



Kevin Williamson (seated in back), Tsega-ab Bekele (standing in center) and Sam Dersu (standing to the right) pray for the HOH orphans in Yavello.



Welcome to the Hand of Hope Family!!

Hand of Hope Ministries is always looking for needy children to add to the HOH Children's Program. Many times we become aware of children when members of the community come to us asking for help; however, there are times when through a divine appointment we are led to children who are truly in need. This is one of those stories....

In March of this year, Sam Dersu and three men from Priest Lake Christian Fellowship went to Ethiopia for two weeks of ministry. During their stay, their base was in Yavello and daily they made trips to various surrounding areas. On their last day as they were traveling out of town and preparing for their long trip home to the United States, something caught Sam's eye as they were leaving the town of Yavello. He noticed a white tent with many people gathered and realized that a funeral was taking place. He turned to Tsega-ab, founder of Gospel For Unreached Nations Ministry and partner with Hand of Hope Ministries, and asked him who had passed away. Tsega-ab mentioned the name of the deceased and Sam asked if she had left any children behind. Tsega-ab was not sure of the family's situation, so Sam asked him to see what he could find out and email him.

Just a couple of weeks after returning to the United States, Sam received an email from Tsega-ab. Tsega-ab had contacted the Yavello Full Gospel Believer's Church in Yavello to find out more about the family of the deceased. He learned that the lady who passed away was Negele Burno. Negele came to know Christ shortly after her husband passed away five years ago. She had five children ranging in age from 10 to 19. Negele was headmaster of a primary school in Yavello and since accepting Christ as her Savior was devoted to serving God with all of her heart. She was a testimony to her children and each of them followed in their mother's footsteps and accepted Christ into their lives as well.

Negele had built a good house for her children and wished for them to remain together. Shortly after Negele's death, her relatives as well as her husband's relatives made plans to split up the five children among different family members living in various places. All of these relatives had been strongly opposed to Negele's conversion and were upset with her for leaving their traditional faith practices. They instilled fear in the children by telling them that if they were not willing to separate and live in different households, then they would die in an empty house. They gave the eldest daughter, Dina, the impression that if she moved away that they would pay for her college expenses. Dina is currently in her first year of nursing school, so this offer was very tempting.

When the church elders learned of this, they came in and shared what Negele had shared with them prior to her death. Negele had shared with church leaders that she believed that God would provide a way for her children to stay together in the house that God had enabled her to build for them. She desired for her children to love, support and encourage each other. She was adamant when she said, "Do not take my kids to any ungodly family or relatives."

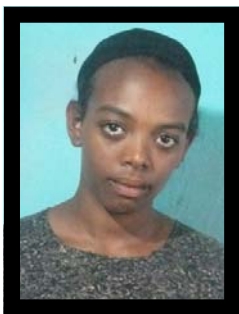
In the end, the church elders and relatives of Negele and her husband were able to come to an agreement. They agreed that the children would stay together in Yavello in their own home and continue to worship God as long as there is a way for them to be supported. The church did not have any way to support these children financially and so the church leaders immediately started to pray, believing that God would make a way for these precious children to stay together and that they would be able to continue to worship God in their daily lives.

When Sam heard this story, he immediately knew that Hand of Hope Ministries should begin supporting these five siblings. In June, Negele's children became the newest members of HOH family. We thank God for the way He led us to these children and pray that they will be able to grow in Christ, encourage one another and stay in school — just as their mother had desired.

We are thankful that Sam listened to the prompting of the Holy Spirit when he was leaving Yavello.



Dina, age 19



Meron, age 14



Borse, age 12



Adola, age 11



Amanuel, age 10

God's Promise for Gospel For All

by Darara T. Gubo

My involvement with Gospel for All (GFA) started in early 2000 when I was going to law school at Addis Ababa University. Since then, I have continued to witness how God is using this ministry to expand the work of His Kingdom. The Lord has also helped me to grow as I got involved with GFA.

When I started working with GFA, the ministry was at its nascent stage. It's a ministry that came out of passion to reach our community with the good news of Jesus Christ.

I have seen how the Lord used this ministry in bringing hundreds to His Kingdom. Several churches have been built, and thousands have heard the gospel of Jesus Christ through this ministry. The power of the gospel of Jesus Christ has set many free from demonic oppression and physical ailment.

I have also grown due to my involvement with the ministry. I closely worked with GFA when I was in Ethiopia and the Lord used my time with the ministry to prepare me for what he has been doing in my life in the past few years. Since 2007, the Lord opened the door for me to work for International Christian Concern (ICC), a Washington, D.C., based Christian human rights organization.

ICC advocates on behalf of the persecuted Christians, provides assistance to the Christian victims of persecution, and raises awareness about the plight of the persecuted believers. We also support underground pastors and missionaries in Christian-persecuting countries.

The experience I gained and the work of God I witnessed working with GFA has tremendously benefited me in what I am doing at ICC. I am delighted to see how God has continued to use GFA. I hope and pray that He will keep on touching lives through this ministry.

GFA is a ministry that is affecting and transforming communities in Ethiopia. It's God Himself who started it and I have no doubt He will sustain it. The Word of God, in Philippians 1:6, says, "Being confident of this, that he who began a good work in you will carry it on to completion until the day of Christ Jesus." I can't agree more!

The Lord has brought this ministry through ups and downs. And He will continue prospering it, for He has promised in Job 8:7 that, "Though your beginning was insignificant, yet your end will increase greatly." I can't wait to see how the Lord is going to greatly increase this ministry!



Darara T. Gubo

— Darara T. Gubo works for International Christian Concern (www.persecution.org).

Being confident of this, that he who began a good work in you will carry it on to completion until the day of Christ Jesus.

—*Philippians 1:6*



Hand of Hope Ministries

(Gospel For All)
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*100% of all gifts
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*Look for the following in the next edition of
Bits of Hope —*

- Update on HOH Houses for the poor in Mega
- Learn how Kevin Williamson ministered to children in Mega
- An American teenager's impression of Ethiopia

***To the world you may be just one person, but to one person you may be the world.
~Author Unknown~***



Praise God for....

- His protection over the four men from Priest Lake Christian Fellowship during their recent trip to Ethiopia.
- churches in Mega, Yavello, Teltelle, Moyale and Hawassa who have agreed to partner with Hand of Hope Ministries in our evangelistic efforts.
- the faithful prayer and financial support of this ministry.

Praise & Prayer



Pray for....

- protection over the evangelists as they share God's Word throughout the countryside of southern Ethiopia.
- Tsega-ab Bekele and Gospel For Unreached Nations Ministry as they continue to train church leaders throughout Ethiopia.
- additional prayer and financial supporters.