

# Bits of Hope



FALL 2011

## Blessing Through Sacrifice

Vivian H. Dersu

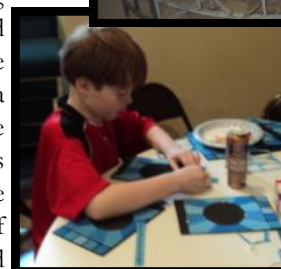
Sacrifice. Hand of Hope Ministries would not exist today without the sacrifice of many children of God — from those supporting the ministry through prayers and financial support, to those sacrificing their time and talents for the sake of the gospel. This ministry is blessed.

During the recent mission trip my husband and I led to Ethiopia, I was reminded of how so many people made sacrifices to make this trip successful. Many friends and family of the ET2011 Mission Team contributed financially to enable all team members to go on this trip. PLCF church members sacrificed their time to help prepare for the VBS that the team would hold in Mega, Ethiopia. Countless people in Ethiopia sacrificed their best so that our team members were well cared for. Team members sacrificed their summer vacation with family to spend two weeks ministering in southern Ethiopia. Family members, left behind in the U.S.A., took on the challenge of caring for children of team members.

During the two-week mission trip, I witnessed acts of sacrifice in every direction. Team members gave up free time to work on stuffing backpacks and painting t-shirts for children attending the VBS in Mega. Ladies in Mega worked tirelessly over outdoor cook-

ing fires, as they prepared daily meals for the mission team during our time in Mega. Partners with Hand of Hope Ministries in Ethiopia worked behind the scenes to make sure the mission team members had everything they needed. Our team was invited into homes to share fellowship and a meal. Each time we were served a feast. In the midst of a drought, our hosts searched out vegetables for our team — a luxury in southern Ethiopia.

Through all these acts of sacrifice, we were loved well — both by those supporting us at home in the U.S.A. and by those supporting us as we ministered to their own people in Ethiopia. What a privilege it is to be involved with God's work and to have the love and support of God's people around the world!



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## Meet the ET2011 Mission Team Members

A couple of months after returning from Ethiopia, each team member was asked to reflect on the trip and answer the following questions: When you think of Ethiopia, what three words come to mind, and why? Read what they had to say.

### RANDY WRIGHT

**LOVE:** I felt love from almost everyone I met in Borana land.

**SELFLESS:** There is such a ready willingness of the Ethiopian people to sacrifice for us and share everything they have.

**CHILDREN:** Smiling children, running towards you, just needing a physical body to touch, spend time with, and share His love.



### JENNIFER KIDD

**UNCONDITIONAL LOVE:** I was so loved and accepted everywhere I went.

**STRENGTH:** Being a mother, I am in awe of the women of Ethiopia and their strength and ability to serve their families.

**BEAUTIFUL HEARTS:** All the people we know and the new people we met, all have beautiful, giving hearts. The things that are truly important: God, family, and loving our neighbor is what I saw happening all around me.



### JANEAN BOLLINGER

**HUNGRY:** Hungry for the Lord and His Word, eager to soak in His love and grow in His presence. Also hungry to grow into a more prosperous place in the world economy. And sadly, just plain hungry.

**COMPLICATED:** A place where the past and the future are interwoven, where big problems beg for big answers.

**WARM:** There is a welcoming warmth to the people that invites us to linger just a bit longer and make a new friend.



### VIVIAN DERSU

**SIMPLICITY:** I love the simplicity of life in Ethiopia. They have taught me to appreciate the simple things in life.

**SERVANTS:** Everywhere I turned, I was served so well. It's humbling to be served by servants of God who loved us so well and made sure we were well taken care of.

**BEAUTY:** God's creation is indescribable. In Ethiopia, I am able to see the beauty of His creation in its natural form — both in the landscape and in the people.



### CHALTU DERSU

**FAMILY:** I have a lot of family in Ethiopia and I think about them a lot.

**CHILDREN:** We worked a lot with children, like the VBS and then we gave the orphans presents.

**LOVE:** Everywhere we went, people showed us love.



### MAUREEN HUEY

**HARO, BAKKE, ZELEKE:** My people.



### PHIL DILLINGHAM

**JOY:** My heart is full of joy every time I think of my trips there and the possibility of more visits.

**ADVENTURE:** On a trip like this you never know what is going to happen — especially with Zeleke driving! What a wonderful brother I have found in Zeleke.

**LOVE:** I have such deep love for our Ethiopian brothers and sisters and I have received their love for me.



**Meet the ET2011 Mission Team Members – continued**

**RANDI WRIGHT**

**BEAUTY:** The land, the people, the culture, the struggles, the hope and the sacrifice — everything about it is beautiful to me.

**SELFLESSNESS:** Nearly everyone we came in contact with was so giving and welcoming. God’s love shined through all of them.

**GOD:** I feel closer to the Lord when I’m in Ethiopia. I focus on Him and His will more. I feel like Ethiopia is really one of my callings. While in Ethiopia, God’s love and support is seen through everyone we meet.



**SAM DERSU**

**RESPECT:** We were shown so much respect by everyone we met.

**OPPORTUNITY:** There are many opportunities for service in Ethiopia. I thank God for the opportunity to serve the orphans. God brought these children to us and they have touched me deeply.

**DEDICATION:** When I think about Bakke, dedication comes to mind. He dedicates much of his time to head up the HOH Children’s Program. I wish everyone had his dedication.



**DAN MIDGETT**

**POTENTIAL:** I see great potential for the Borana people; if they can get beyond their mindset, they can be a great force for good, blessing others through their great faith.

**LOVE:** I have great affection for those who love us so well.

**DRY:** Lack of rain has left the southern region so dry.



**MEGAN DERSU**

**SACRIFICE:** The people of Ethiopia have so little, yet they sacrificed so much for us, even though we have a lot.

**BEAUTY:** The culture, the land and the people are beautiful.

**POTENTIAL:** I see a lot of potential in Ethiopia on many levels — both economically and spiritually.



**JAALANNE DERSU**

**AMAZING:** I’m amazed at how beautiful Ethiopia is.

**POOR:** The people there are really poor, but they are happy.

**DIFFERENT:** Ethiopia is very, very different from America but I like a lot of things about Ethiopia.



**CONNIE DILLINGHAM**

**BEAUTY:** The country is beautiful and diverse, and the people — especially the children — are so beautiful!

**SMOKEY:** Because so many people cook over wood fires, even in the largest cities, you smell and see smoke all the time.

**GRATITUDE:** I am thankful beyond words that I have been able to go to Ethiopia. I am so thankful that I *want* to go because I know that the connection I feel is a gift from the Holy Spirit. Before we even landed in the U.S., I began thinking about the next trip! I am so thankful that I get to help teach VBS to children who otherwise have nothing like this experience. I am so thankful to call some special people in southern Ethiopia “friend.” I am so thankful that PLCF is so invested in God’s work in Africa.



# Hand of Hope Evangelists

Hand of Hope Ministries currently supports 15 evangelists throughout southern Ethiopia. Support is passed through local churches who have partnered with HOH in evangelistic efforts among the Borana and Arsi Oromo people.

Please pray for these 15 men of God, and their families, as they serve God and share the Gospel of Jesus Christ with those who do not know Him. Pray for rain — much of the area where the evangelists work continues to suffer from severe drought.



Sisay Getachew  
— Serving in Tuka

**Moyale Area  
Evangelists**



Kala Huka  
— Serving in Elamu



Galaba Tache  
— Serving in Miyo

**Hidilola Area  
Evangelists**



Dida Boru  
— Serving in Miyo



Nuno Aga  
— Serving in Melbana



Dokole Katelo  
— Serving in Gayo



Ermias Shura  
— Serving in Sadeko

**Yavello Area  
Evangelists**



Dido Guyo  
— Serving in Sadeko



Halake Salesa  
— Serving in Deeda Jaarsa

**Mega Area  
Evangelists**



Jaldesa Kanchora  
— Serving in Wardele



Dida Barako  
— Serving in Ghandille

**Teltelle Area  
Evangelists**



Guyo Tade  
— Serving in Kalo



Tafesse Masebo  
— Serving in Gubata Arjo

**Arsi-Negelle Area  
Evangelists**



Bati Wario  
— Serving in Kofole Arsi



Godana Duba  
— Serving in Dalemale

## A New Church Building in Chariturura!

Chariturura is a small village in the heart of Borana land in southern Ethiopia. Hand of Hope Ministry has a long history with this village and the church serving this community. One afternoon, while the ET2011 Mission Team was in the area, several of the team members were able to visit Chariturura and see the progress being made with the building of their new a

In 2008, HOH representatives visited Chariturura and were able to see firsthand how this group of believers had

outgrown the church building. At that time, the church had been trying to raise funds to purchase materials to build a new, larger building. Some money came from contacts in Norway, as well as the local community. Slowly, but surely, a new church building began to take shape.

HOH recently contributed \$3,500 to help the church in Chariturura purchase much-needed supplies to complete the new building.



**Members of the ET2011 Mission Team, along with leaders from the church, stand in front of the new church building in Chariturura that is nearing completion.**



**Pictured here is the old church building in Chariturura. The congregation outgrew this building several years ago, but still meet here, as they wait for their new building to be completed.**

It was a joy to spend time with Yohannis Wako, an elderly saint, who played a key role in planting the church in Chariturura more than 35 years ago. Yohannis showed the team around the new building and shared about the history of the church.

During the visit, church leaders shared their vision of building a boarding house that would house students coming from outlying areas to attend the small school in the village. A boarding house would attract young people to the area and provide opportunities for evangelism. Please pray that God would provide the necessary funds for this project.

## Mega Clinic Update

The Mega Clinic is a small clinic run by the Mega Mekane Yesus Evangelical Church in Mega, Ethiopia. Over the years it has served the residents of Mega and those in the surrounding area. From 2007 through 2010, a group in the UK partnered with the clinic and was able to provide financial assistance to ensure that the clinic could serve the community by meeting basic health care needs. Unfortunately, due to difficulty with obtaining donations, the group is no longer to provide financial assistance to the clinic.

Maureen Huey went to Ethiopia in 2008 with the Mission Team from PLCF, led by HOH, and saw the clinic for the first time. Since then, she has had a burden for the Mega Clinic. Maureen joined the ET2011 Mission Team with hopes of helping the clinic out in some way. Although her initial plans for helping didn't come to fruition, she was instrumental in raising money to help the Mega Clinic purchase some much-needed medical supplies. These supplies were purchased and delivered to the Mega Clinic during the Mission Team's visit



in July. Thank you, Maureen, for being instrumental in providing the Mega Clinic with a van-full of supplies!

## Hand of Hope Children's Program

God continues to expand the Hand of Hope Children's Program beyond our wildest dreams! Over the past five years we have grown from two children to nearly forty. One of the purposes of the ET2011 Mission Trip was to visit each of the Hand of Hope Children. We are thankful that the team was able to spend time with these precious children, share a meal with them, worship with them, pray with them, and just love on them.

In the Yavello area there are fourteen HOH children. One night, while in Yavello, the ET2011 Mission Team was able to spend a special evening with the eight Abeduba children, four of the five Meseret children, and sweet little Adanech, from nearby Soda. The team arranged for a meal to be catered in for everyone to enjoy. After dinner, the team presented the children with various gifts brought from the USA. The time spent after dinner proved to be one of the highlights of the two-week mission trip.

Sam Dersu led in a time of sharing. He had the Abeduba and Meseret children, as well as Adanech, share their stories with the team. There was not a dry eye in the room as these dear children told of losing both of

their parents. They expressed their deep appreciation to HOH for being their "father" and their "mother." A sweet time of praise and prayer followed, and the team was able to witness first-hand just how much these children love God. The team spent some time praying over the children. Then the children asked if they could pray for the team. Wow! What a blessing it was for the team to be



**Pictured above are the HOH children in Yavello praying over members of the ET2011 Mission Team.**

prayed over by these precious children. The evening ended all too quickly. Words can't express the emotions each of the team members felt as they returned to their hotel rooms that evening.

A few days later, the team was able to share lunch in Mega with the remaining twenty-three HOH Children. The majority of these children live in the



**ET2011 Team Members are pictured above with the HOH children in Yavello.**

Mega area; however, some of them come from the Moyale and Negelle areas. The dynamics of this group were much different from the children in Yavello. While the children in Yavello are all Christians, several of the children we met with in Mega were from either the Muslim or Ethiopian Orthodox faith.

After sharing a delicious meal together with these sweet children, we were able to bless them with Frisbees, jump ropes, clothes and other items. Their faces glowed as they picked out their gifts! Many of these items were purchased with funds from the Hendry sisters from Priest Lake Christian Fellowship in Antioch, Tennessee. This past year, Mary and Lilly Hendry decided that instead of receiving gifts at their birthday party, they would request that their guests make a monetary donation to Hand of Hope Ministries, specifically for the HOH Children's Program. Their birthday party brought in over \$140 that was used to bless these children! Thank you, Mary and Lilly, for playing such a large part in bringing smiles to the faces of the HOH children.

God is using the Hand of Hope Children's Program to change lives through ordinary individuals with a heart to help those less fortunate than



**ET2011 Team Members are pictured above with the HOH children in Mega.**

## An Evening with the Evangelists

One of the highlights of the ET2011 Mission Trip was the opportunity the team had to meet each of the fifteen Hand of Hope evangelists face to face.

One evening, we joined the evangelists for fellowship and worship. We met with the evangelists and their wives at the Mekane Yesus Hostel Compound in Yavello. Kebede Assefa made arrangements for some local women to prepare a feast for us to enjoyed.

After a brief introduction and welcome, each member of the ET2011



**Dan Midgett serves Evangelist Dido Guyo his meal.**

Mission Team served the evangelists and their wives the evening meal. What a blessing it was to serve our brothers and sisters in Christ. During dinner, we were able to visit with some of the evangelists and learn a little bit about them. What an amazing group of men!

Following the meal, Vivian Dersu took a few minutes to recognize each of the wives of the evangelists and to thank them for standing behind their husbands in their ministry. So many times women are overlooked, and we wanted to make sure to recognize the importance of their role in ministry. Each wife was presented with a gift bag containing scarves, chap stick, jewelry, lotion, money and some other

miscellaneous items. It was really neat to be able to present these lovely women with a small token of appreciation and let them know how much they are loved. The money in the gift bags was contributed by Hand of Hope Ministries; all other items were donated or hand-made by women from Priest Lake Christian Fellowship (PLCF) in Antioch, Tennessee.

Once the women had been presented with their gifts, time was taken to recognize the evangelists. Sam Dersu,

along with men from the ET2011 Mission Team, presented each of the evangelists with several items. Phil Dillingham, pastor of PLCF, presented gifts on behalf of PLCF. Sam gave each of the evangelists a Bible, Bible Story teaching materials in the Oromo language, flash-



**Evangelist Kala Huka pictured here with his solar powered battery charger, batteries and bible story flip charts received from the ET2011 Mission Team.**

lights, and a solar powered battery charger (see "A Labor of Love" on page 10). All of this was topped off with a bag of candy for each evangelist.

The evening ended with a time of praise, worship, and prayer. What a joy it was to be able to worship with

(continued on page 8)



**Vivian Dersu, presenting a gift bag to Evangelist Sisay's wife (above) and Evangelist Nuno's wife (right).**



## An Evening With the Evangelists (continued from page 7)

our brothers and sisters, in both English and Oromo! It was a little taste of heaven on earth as all of us were reminded that although we come from very different backgrounds and live very different lives, the bond we have in Christ is something that breaks down any barrier posed by culture or language.

The evening ended too soon, but the memories will stay locked in our hearts and minds for a very long time.



Members of the ET2011 Mission Team worship together with the evangelists in Yavello.

## Teaching the Evangelists

One of the objectives of the ET2011 Mission Trip was to hold a three-day seminar for HOH evangelists. In the months leading up to the mission trip, the seminar was expanded to include all area evangelists. On July 5, 2011, Sam Dersu opened the three-day seminar, held at the Mega Mekane Yesus Church, with an overview of Hand of Hope Ministries.

We wanted to cover topics that would be helpful to the evangelists and better equip them to serve. Phil Dillingham was the featured speaker and taught sessions on 'Family Ministry and the Minister's Life', 'Why We Preach the Gospel,' and 'The Mission and the Missionary.' Dan Midgett taught a session on the 'Power of Prayer' and Randy Wright spoke on 'The Biblical View of Marriage.'

More than fifty evangelists gathered daily and soaked in the teaching as well as the fellowship with other evangelists. Lunch was prepared by ladies from the Mega Mekane Yesus Church

and shared by the seminar participants and ET2011 Mission Team members.

Hand of Hope received overwhelming positive feedback from the evangelists.



Above: Tsega-ab Bekele (L) interprets for Phil Dillingham (R) during the seminar for evangelists.

Left & Below: Evangelists who attended the seminar.

All of them expressed a desire to have more of these seminars held in the future.





## VBS in Mega— A Joint Effort Across the Ocean

Picture four rooms with fifty children packed into each room. Go ahead and figure the math: That's 200 children! Two of the rooms are roughly 625 square feet (at the most) and the other two are maybe 300 square feet. That is exactly what the ET2011 Mission Team was faced with when they arrived in Mega on July 5th!

A bit overwhelming for a team of 12? That would be an understatement. The team came prepared for 200 children but were fully aware of the challenges that lay ahead. Each team member knew that the only way they would be able to pull off a successful VBS would be with the power and strength of the One who sent them, Jesus Christ!

The theme of VBS centered around the love that Jesus has for each of us. God's gift of love to us, the birth of

Jesus, was covered on day one. Day two dealt with the reality that Jesus loves men, women and children. Day three was centered around the death and resurrection of Jesus.

Each day, the children rotated through four rooms. In one room, Janean Bollinger, through her translator, told the Bible story. Jennifer Kidd and her translator handled crafts in the second room. In the third room, Connie Dillingham led children as they colored in coloring books that corresponded with the day's Bible story. If you followed the beautiful sound of children singing, this would bring you to the fourth room, where Randy Wright and Dan Midgett, along with a couple of interpreters, taught the children a tune each day to go along with a Bible verse. Randy did an amazing job putting music to the memory verses — in Oromo!

Megan Dersu and Randi Wright helped out in the craft room, while Chaltu and Jaalanne Dersu pitched in and helped out wherever they were needed. What a joy it was to witness our children ministering to the children in Mega.

Vivian Dersu made sure that the team stuck to the schedule and that



team members had what they needed for their assigned task. Sam Dersu had one of the toughest jobs. He served as the gatekeeper. Our team only had enough supplies for 200 children, but every day, additional children showed up at the gate of the Biftu Baari School (whose facilities were used for the VBS) hoping to get in. Sam had to turn them away.

On the last day of VBS each child was given a backpack filled with school supplies and a t-shirt. The backpacks had been donated by Integrity Events and the school supplies were donated by PLCF church members.

So — although the VBS team in Ethiopia only consisted of 12 people, the number of people who actually played a role in the success of this VBS is impossible to count. The team in Ethiopia was being sustained by the prayers of many, thousands and thousands and thousands of miles away.



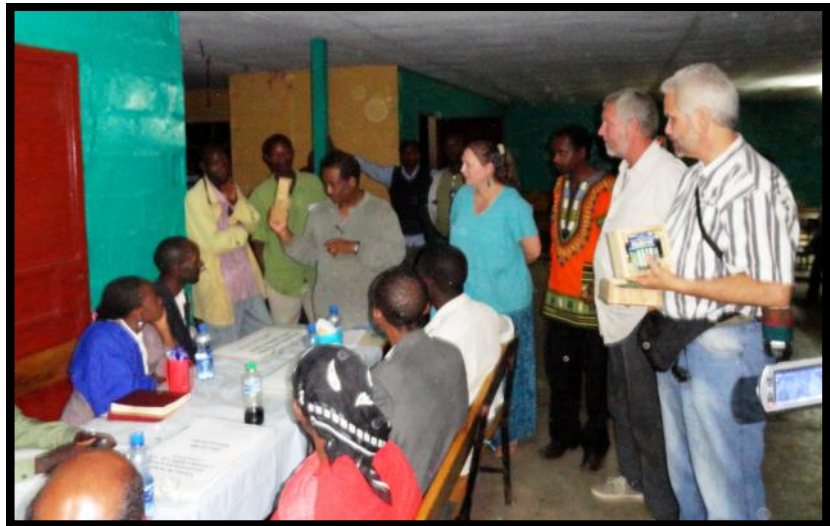
## A Labor of Love

Hand of Hope is blessed to have the support of many individuals, each with different skills and gifts. It's exciting to see God put something on someone's heart and then be able to deliver the results!

Chris Boeing and his family are part of Priest Lake Christian Fellowship in Antioch, Tennessee. Nearly a year ago, Chris and his daughter, Amanda, approached us with an idea they had. They had learned to make a solar-powered battery charger and wondered if this was something that HOH evangelists would be able to use. HOH evangelists work in rural areas throughout southern Ethiopia and do not have the luxury of common conveniences that most of us in the United States take for granted.

Chris and Amanda showed us a model of their solar-powered battery charger. After seeing it, we knew that this would definitely be something that our evangelists would be able to use.

Chris got to work, and with the help of Nick Manginelli, an elder at PLCF, improved the model so that it would be more durable and hopefully work



**Sam Dersu (pictured center) explains to the evangelists how to use the solar-powered battery charger before presenting each evangelist with his own.**

well for the evangelists. Chris assembled the inside components of the chargers, and Nick did the casing. Over several months they were able to make thirteen of these units, enough for each of the thirteen evangelists being supported by HOH at that time.

The ET2011 Mission Team had the joy of presenting each of the evangelists with one of these solar-powered battery chargers during the July mission trip. Along with the chargers,

each evangelist was given four rechargeable AA batteries along with a high-quality flashlight (that utilized AA batteries).

There is no way to explain the look of excitement and joy on each of the evangelists' faces when they received their chargers, batteries and flashlights.

Thank you, Chris, Nick, and Amanda, for your labor of love and for allowing God to use you beyond your local community.

## VBS: Behind the Scenes

Although the VBS in Mega was only for three days, months of preparation went into making sure materials and supplies were ready. HOH is grateful for Janean Bollinger's willingness to step forward and organize the VBS. Janean spent hours writing the curriculum, selecting appropriate crafts, and making sure the necessary supplies were purchased.

After writing the curriculum in English, the script was then translated into Oromo by Tadesse Adugna. Tadesse is from Mega, but he currently resides in Canada.

Once the script had been translated, the team went to work creating large, laminated, Bible-story flip charts for each of the Bible stories. Janean found pictures to correspond with the script. Then fellow team member Vivian Dersu went to work laying out the Bible-story flip charts with the picture along with both the English script and the Oromo translation. A total of fifteen sets of each story were printed and then work began to laminate each page and assemble them using metal rings. Why so many sets? This material would serve a dual purpose. It would not only be used for VBS, but

one entire set of three Bible stories would be given to each of the HOH evangelists, so that they could use these teaching materials in the rural villages where they serve.

A VBS workday was held at Priest Lake Christian Fellowship (PLCF) in March, where church members came together to help with assembling the Bible-story flip charts as well as sorting and assembly of various craft items. It was a blessing to feel the love and support of the PLCF church family as they played an important role in evangelizing children in Ethiopia.

## **Hand of Hope Homes in Mega**

Hand of Hope was able to distribute much-needed household items to the residents of each of the six homes in Mega. Thanks to a generous donation, each home was presented with bed frames (to go with the mattresses they received from the ET2010 team), a table with three chairs, a water tank, blankets, and various household items such as pots, pans and dishes. Bakke Chenfo served as the hands and feet of Hand of Hope by coordinating the purchase of these items.

Each of the bed frames, tables and chairs were made by Kassa Badilu, a local resident of Mega. Although Kassa is a teacher at the local government school, he has a gift of carpentry. We thank Kassa for the numerous hours

he donated to help us furnish the Hand of Hope homes.

We praise God for His provision and for allowing HOH to play a small part in improving the quality of life for the residents of these homes.



**A view of the Hand of Hope homes from the main road coming into Mega.**



**Kassa Badilu prepared to assemble one of the bed frames he made for the Hand of Hope homes.**



**Bakke Chenfo (left) gives instructions for distributing items for Hand of Hope homes.**



**A resident of one of the Hand of Hope homes thanks HOH for blessing her family.**



**Shown above is one of the families living in one of the Hand of Hope homes. They are pictured here with many of the items they received from HOH.**

*"If anyone has material possessions and sees his brother in need but has no pity on him, how can the love of God be in him? Dear children, let us not love with words or tongue but with actions and in truth."*

*1 John 3:17-18*

## Hand of Hope Ministries

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*We welcome input from our readers! Please email [handofhopeministries@gmail.com](mailto:handofhopeministries@gmail.com) with any comments or words of encouragement you may have.*

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## Prayer & Praise

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### 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.
- the thirty-nine Hand of Hope Children. Pray that each of them would come to know the love of our Heavenly Father in a very personal way.
- additional prayer and financial supporters.
- volunteers to come forward both in the USA and in Ethiopia to help with the many organizational and administrative needs of this ministry.

### Praise God for....

- a successful ET2011 Mission Trip in July 2011! We thank God for His protection over the team and for the way He allowed the team to accomplish all that they set out to do.
- churches in Mega, Hidilola, Yavello, Teltelle, Moyale and Hawassa who partner with Hand of Hope Ministries.
- the faithful prayer and financial support for this ministry.