

# Bits of Hope

## Unified For A Purpose

by Vivian H. Dersu

Philippians 2:1-4

Therefore if you have any encouragement from being united with Christ, if any comfort from his love, if any common sharing in the Spirit, if any tenderness and compassion, then make my joy complete by being like-minded, having the same love, being one in spirit and of one mind. Do nothing out of selfish ambition or vain conceit. Rather, in humility value others above yourselves, not looking to your own interests but each of you to the interests of the others.

My heart filled with joy as I looked around the room. Over the course of the next few months, this group of more than twenty individuals would become a team. This team would travel 8,000 miles to serve in the Borana region in southern Ethiopia. Some would serve in the cities of Mega and Yavello, while others would go out into the surrounding villages. Everyone would share God's love in their own unique way.

In the months leading up to the trip the group met together twice a month to pray, prepare and bond. Unity among team members was a priority. It was amazing to see God knit all twenty-two individuals together as one body. Each person in the group was challenged to think about

how they wanted to be perceived as a team. Over the course of a few weeks, Philippians 2:1-4 was chosen as the team verses. During the weeks leading up to the trip and also during the trip, the team would read through these verses countless times.

As their departure drew near, God continued to knit the team together. To say the team was diverse would be an understatement. This was not only the largest team I had led to Ethiopia, but it was by far the most diverse. Team members ranged from a young middle school student whose laughter would lift our spirits, to a business owner in his sixties who never failed to remind each one of us how much we were loved. Nearly half of

the team of 22 had been to Ethiopia before, whereas the other half were in for a totally new experience.

I was in awe of how God took a group of individuals with different strengths, personalities, and interests, to come together for one purpose. Each team member brought a unique quality to the team, without which, the team would not have been complete.

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2014 Ethiopia Mission Team

## HOH Children's Program — Ethiopia

### HOH Children (Ethiopia)

#### Yavello Area

Aster Abeduba  
Wako Abeduba  
Galgalo Abeduba  
Hana Abeduba  
Gemetchu Abeduba  
Meskerem Abeduba  
Biftu Abeduba  
Dyan Meseret  
Meron Meseret  
Borisyelse Meseret  
Minyahahe Meseret  
Amanuel Meseret  
Adanech Elgudda

#### Mega Area

Kaliti Galma  
Boru Liban  
Halkano Boru  
Galma Arero  
Takalin Nuguse  
Abdata Denge  
Garo Konso  
Hama Mamo  
Gedi Jatani  
Dabaso Legese  
Sara Dida  
Hamma Shanko  
Ali Hussein  
Guyo Halake  
Dabala Shibru  
Quru Boru  
Abdi Yidris  
Halima Yidris  
Muda Molu

#### Miyo/Hidilola Area

Wariyo Boru  
Duba Abduba

#### Moyale Area

Buke Shane  
Galgalo Guracha

#### Negele Area

Dhaki Doyo  
Tume Doyo  
Darmi Doyo

A highlight of each mission trip is the chance team members have to meet the HOH children and share a meal with them. The 2014 Mission Team enjoyed an evening meal and time of fellowship with twelve of the fourteen HOH children in Yavello. It was a joy to be around these children, who radiate with the love of Christ. It is such a blessing to know that they are all involved in their local church and serving God. HOH team members were able to encourage the children to continue serving God and focusing on their education.

A few days later, the team served lunch to 26 HOH children from the villages surrounding Mega, Moyale as well as from Negele. This group of children were much different from those in Yavello; although several of these children are Christians, near-



Abeduba Children in Yavello

ly half do not know Christ and many are Muslim. Following lunch, each child was recognized and given a backpack filled with school supplies. The team had also brought a lot of used clothes, that the children were able to go through and pick out a few

items for themselves. It was so much fun to watch them go 'shopping'.

Please pray for the HOH children. Many of the children do not know Christ. Pray that the seeds of love shared with them will take root and grow.



HOH Mission Team Members serving lunch to the HOH Children in Mega.



HOH Children in Mega 'shopping' for New Clothes



The Mission Team praying over the HOH Children in Yavello



HOH Mission Team Member, Alex Roberts, together with the Meseret children in Yavello

# HOH Children's Program — Kenya

There are 22 children in the HOH Children's Program in Kenya. This past July, Phil Dillingham and Randy Wright, both members of the mission team that went to Ethiopia, had the opportunity to travel on to Kenya and meet the HOH children there. Randy had previously met many of the children in 2013 when he travelled there with Sam Dersu, HOH Founder; however, for Phil, this was a first!

HOH children. The 15 year old boy is blind and despite the many challenges he faces, he does well in school. Through the generosity of a HOH supporter in the United States, Phil and Randy were able to present Waqo with two new walking sticks. He was overjoyed! Waqo had been without a walking stick since his old one had broken a few months prior.



Waqo Abduba is pictured here with his 2 new walking sticks.

Although their time was short, Phil and Randy were able to meet several of the children and share a meal with them. One of the highlights of their time in Kenya was the chance they had to give a special gift to Waqo Abduba. Waqo is one of the



HOH Mission Team Members, Phil Dillingham and Randy Wright enjoyed lunch with HOH children and their caregivers in Sololo.



Randy Wright enjoyed a lunch with some of the orphans and their caregivers at the Grand Hotel in Isiolo.

## HOH Children (Kenya)

### Isiolo Area

- Abdi Abduba
- Wachu Hassan
- Qabale Abduba
- Waqo Abduba
- Loko Hassan
- Jamila Adhi
- Molu Buke

### Marsabit Area

- Nadi Boru
- Daki Roba
- Lata Boru
- Nasibo Roba

### Sololo Area

- Boru Jarso
- Gurach Dido
- Wako Roba
- Guyo Malich
- Nasibo Abdikarim
- Sake Duba
- Abdirahman Gollo
- Somo Anna

### Moyale Area

- Dido Abduba
- Dida Buke
- Ikraim Said

## Hassan Bagaja — Volunteer Coordinator

Hand of Hope Ministries relies on volunteers to coordinate the HOH Children's Program in Kenya. It would be impossible to run this program without the faithful support and sacrifice of volunteers. HOH is blessed to have Hassan Bagaja serve as Volunteer Coordinator over the HOH Children's Program in Kenya. Hassan understands the plight of the children being served, be-

cause he, too, was an orphan. Hassan has a strong desire to minister to as many children as possible and is happy to play a role in making a difference in their lives. Hassan is responsible for follow-up with each of the 22 children and their caregivers. Hassan ensures that HOH guidelines and policies for the program are adhered to and regularly reports and communicates with HOH volunteers in the U.S.A.

Thank you, Hassan, for your willingness to give your time and talents to serve these precious children.



Hassan Bagaja is pictured here with his wife and their child.

## 2014 Mission Trip — A Pictorial

Hand of Hope was blessed to have a 22 member team go to Ethiopia this past summer to minister in various ways to people in the Borana region of Ethiopia. There is no way to to put into words all the work that God did through the team during their two weeks in Ethiopia. Each member was asked to choose a favorite photo of the trip and then tell why they chose that picture. Through the following pictures and comments, you will get a small taste of what team members experienced.

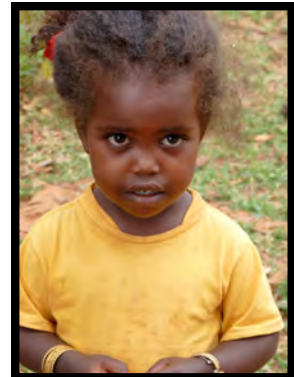
### KAREN PIERCE

This young lady captured my heart the moment I met her. I didn't know that she was an orphan sponsored by Hand of Hope. I believe that meeting her was a gift that God gave to me for an important reason, and I am thankful for the privilege of showing her that she is important, and that God has a good plan for her life, that He knows her and loves her.



### GENE PIERCE

I chose this picture of a beautiful little girl who caught my eye and my heart. Her smile was always so captivating.



### MEGAN DERSU

I chose this picture because when I look at it, all I see is complete joy and it gives me so much joy just to see the expression in the picture.



## 2014 Mission Trip — A Pictorial (continued)

### DAN MIDGETT

We did the foot washing almost expecting something spiritual, and were surprised to find the Ethiopians treated it as an everyday occurrence. They got in there and just got the job done. There was no fanfare, there was no praying over the feet of those being washed; they just got in there and washed. It was beautiful sight.



### PHIL DILLINGHAM

An important part of the trip for me was the pastors conferences that were held in Mega and Kenya. It was such a blessing to gather with such dedicated and spiritually hungry pastors and evangelist. One of the challenges is always how to communicate cross culturally. This year we were blessed with two outstanding translators. The gentleman pictured here with me was one of our talented translators in Mega. His gifts at explaining difficult English words and phrases was invaluable.

### CHRIS BOEING

I spent an afternoon in Mega at the end of the Pastor's conference and was given the opportunity to fellowship and speak with some of the pastors who attended the conference. After we shared a meal, I was drawn to a group of them and they welcomed me into their conversation. Though many could not speak much English, and I spoke practically no Oromo, that made no difference. We were in fellowship and delighted to be in each other's company. Eventually, someone joined us who spoke more English. They wanted to know everything about the United States. I asked them to ask me any question about it they wished. They asked about how homes were constructed, did people ride motorcycles, and all sorts of questions. I believe that afternoon was an encouragement to them and it certainly was for me. I felt like I was able to give them something that was unique to me...my own experience and knowledge. The background (Mega Church) of the attached picture shows where our fellowship took place, and the foreground is my beautiful daughter and some of her friends.



## 2014 Mission Trip — A Pictorial (continued)

### AMANDA BOEING

I like this picture because it sums up the point of our trip so well. If someone asked me what we were trying to accomplish I could just show them this. I love how it shows all the kids wearing their t-shirts and being united through Jesus.



### ANNA SNYDER

I chose this picture because this was one of the first days that we got to Ethiopia. It was one of my first interactions with the kids and I was nervous, but they welcomed me anyway. It was one of my favorite days.



### HANNAH GILLIAM

I love this picture because it just captures what my whole trip was. I was constantly with children, loving and playing with them.



2014 Mission Trip — A Pictorial (continued)



**DANIELLE GILLIAM**

I love this photo because it just displays the willingness and humility of each child I encountered. Children have such great faith. They know who their Father is and they believe in faith when they pray that He will answer them. We adults need to learn from little ones such as these.

**JAALANNE DERSU**

This picture was taken on our last day in Mega. I chose this picture because I have a great time with these girls every time I go to Ethiopia and I love them so much!



**RANDY WRIGHT**

I chose this picture because it's a blessing to see so many children come back on Sunday, realizing that this is His future for Mega area.



**ALEX ROBERTS**

The picture I included here of Meron and me is my favorite from the trip. This captured moment represents the deep love and joy I felt at being among both the Meseret children and the Oromo people. Their language was like music. Their songs easily became dance. The most profound love was found in the simplest praise. And the kindest words I've known have been on these foreign tongues. I truly hope God sends me back.



## Evangelism — A Partnership

**Please remember to  
PRAY for our Evangelists**

### **Arsi-Negele Area**

Tafesse Masebo  
Bate Wario

### **Yavello Area**

Dido Guyo  
Ermias Shura

### **Teltelle Area**

Guyo Tade  
Godana Duba

### **Mega Area**

Nuno Aga  
Jaldeesa Kanchora  
Dokole Katelo  
Halake Salesa

### **Hidilola Area**

Dida Boru  
Galaba Tache

### **Moyale Area**

Sisay Getachew  
Kala Huka

Evangelism is at the heart of everything that Hand of Hope is involved with. We have been blessed to partner with churches throughout southern Ethiopia who share our burden for taking the Gospel to remote villages. HOH has 6 partner churches located in Hawassa, Yavello, Teltelle, Mega, Hidilola and Moyale. Each partner church is given a budget based on funds available to HOH. The budget is to be used solely for evangelism in remote villages. HOH encourages the partner church to supplement funds provided through HOH in order to have increased ownership in the work taking place. Evangelists are hired

by the local church and held accountable to church leaders. The church is responsible for gathering reports and following up on work that the evangelists are involved with. Once the church has gathered the reports, they must submit them to HOH. If the church fails to provide reports to HOH according to the Partnership Agreement, HOH will withhold funding until the requirements are met.

One of the challenges that many of the evangelists are facing is a lack of teaching materials. There is no Bible teaching material available in the Oromo language. This presents a problem to the current generation who only understand Oromo. HOH has been able to provide each of the evangelists with some simple teaching materials that were written and compiled by volunteers in the United States and translated into the Oromo language by a volunteer in Canada. HOH would like to continue to

find ways to provide even more material to the evangelists in order to assist them in reaching more souls with the message of the Gospel.

Another challenge that many of the HOH evangelists face is an adequate place of worship. As congregations in remote villages grow, believers outgrow homes where they are meeting and need a building large enough to accommodate all of them. Members of these congregations do not have sufficient funds to build a church, so these small congregations rely heavily on outside support to provide necessary backing.



Evangelist Dido Guyo, ready to share the Gospel. He serves in Dhadach Dhaba, in the Yavello area.



Pictured here is the church being build in Saarite, in the Teltelle area.



Pictured above is one of the Bible story flip charts that were written and assembled by volunteers in the U.S.A. and translated into the Oromo language by a volunteer in Canada. Evangelists are using these as they spread the Gospel of Jesus Christ in remote villages throughout southern Ethiopia.



# Letter from Reverend Golicha — Teltele Area Evangelist Coordinator

Mr. Samuel Tuffa and Hand of Hope Family:

Grace and peace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you. I praise God for you all because you are the ones God is using for His purpose during this century. God bless you more and more.

When the Hand of Hope team recently came to Mega, I was in Mega representing the Teltele Parrish. I witnessed some of what the team was doing and heard about much more. When I returned home to Teltele, I told the Teltele Parrish Committee about everything that the Hand of Hope team was doing. The members were very impressed and appreciative of the work that was done. I am writing this thank you letter by the instruction of the Teltele Parrish Committee.

To all Hand of Hope Mission Team Members: You took your time, spent your own money and came to share your knowledge. You served us with many different gifts and in many different ways to expand God's kingdom. We thank those of you who are supporting Hand of Hope and bless you with the following two scripture verses.

I Corinthians 15: 58 "Therefore, my dear brothers and sisters, stand firm. Let nothing move you. Always give yourselves fully to the work of the Lord, because you know that your labor in the Lord is not in vain."

Hebrews 6:10 "God is not unjust; he will not forget your work and the love you have shown him as you have helped his people and continue to help them."

May God bless you more!

Reverend Golicha Guyo, Teltele Parrish Committee Leader



Pictured above is Rev. Golicha (center), along with Zeleke Tadesse (right), the team's bus driver, and his son, Gamachu Zeleke (left).



Pictured above are the children in Saarite singing praises to God during the VBS conducted by the HOH Team.



Pictured to the left are members of the HOH Team conducting VBS for the children in Saarite.

## Passing the Torch

When I started thinking about what to share about the 2014 mission trip, a lot came to mind. It is hard to even decide on which topic to pick and write about. It is difficult to explain to others what transpired on the trip this year unless whoever is reading this was there. All the faces of people we met and worked with, but left behind in Ethiopia, come to mind. Traveling with my daughters to the villages of Gaayo and Saarte to do God's work made me so proud of them. When I was out in the villages and in the town of Mega, I would often step back and look



Above is a picture of Sam's father, Tuffa Deresu going out to preach the gospel in southern Ethiopia sometime in the early 1950's.

at this group of Americans interacting with the local children. I wondered if the children even knew how lucky they were to have someone travel 8000 miles just because they love them. That is my human mind thinking. What would God say? I get goose bumps thinking about it. I am sure God would say, "Sons and daughters, you served well, respected well and loved well. It is for this reason I created you and called you my own."

My father, Tuffa Deresu Badane, passed away one week before we arrived in Ethiopia. I wish he could have waited another week so that he could have met the new team members, whom he had not yet met, that I brought from America; but it was all God's timing and I will accept that. Tuffa was one of the first evangelists in the Borana area. He served for many years travelling from village to village in southern Ethiopia to preach the Gospel. He reached many, and our team was able to see the fruit of his work. Many people came to know Christ through him. He is one of the reasons that I am a believer today. I remember us having a weekly Bible study in our home when I was growing up. Tuffa was a strict father when it came to attending church. There was no way any of my siblings, or myself, were allowed to miss church unless he was out of town.

I have always considered myself to be the fruit of missionaries. Without missionaries, I would most likely not be a believer today. My father was the only believer from his side of our family. I can see why some of his family had nothing to do with him since he moved away to preach the Gospel. European missionaries came to my father's village in the Showa region of Ethiopia, northwest of

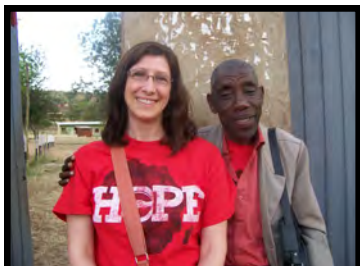
by Sam Dersu



Sam Dersu is pictured here with two of his daughters, Megan and Chaltu, during the recent mission trip.

the capital city of Addis Ababa. It was through the work of these missionaries that my father came to know Christ as his personal savior and ultimately to travel with them to southern Ethiopia to spread the Gospel among the Borana people. Tuffa continued to work with Scandinavian missionaries, and our entire family was greatly influenced by these missionaries as we grew up. Missionaries built a school behind our house, and all of us children were able to attend school from an early age because of these missionaries. I am truly the fruit of missionaries. There are thousands like me out there.

Before my father passed away, he knew our mission team was on the way to do God's work. I am confident that he died happy, knowing that the torch he passed on will continue burning and touch others with the wonderful news of the Gospel of Jesus Christ.



Janean Bollinger is pictured here with her dear friend, Bake Chenfo, in Mega, Ethiopia.

I love the country of my birth, but Ethiopia is the country of my heart. In a God-created moment, I fell in love with Ethiopia and her people in 2008 and now go visit as often as I can. The people I have met have become family, so going to Hawassa and Yabello and Mega is really much more like going home than visiting. This trip reminded me that the Lord fills His people with His gifts for His good purposes. As I watched both the Ethiopians and the Americans walk out their spiritual gifts, doing the work set before them, I saw the joy that comes from cooperating with God in His work. That's where I always want to be - in the center of God's joy.

~ Janean Bollinger, HOH Mission Team Member (2008, 2011 & 2014)

## Love Always Gets the Last Word

by Alex Roberts

If I could choose three words to sum up my trip to Ethiopia, one of them would definitely be humility. Our team collectively felt that Philippians 2 was our passage. It says:

“Do nothing from selfish ambition or conceit, but in *humility* count others more significant than yourselves...Have this mind among yourselves, which is yours in Christ Jesus, who, though he was in the form of God, *did not count equality with God something to be grasped but emptied himself* by taking the form of a servant, being born in the likeness of men. And being found in human form, he *humbled* himself by becoming obedient to the point of death, even death on a cross. (emphases added)

It was with this Scripture in mind that God showed me that even though I'm not a worship leader or evangelist with loud and up-front gifts, I was still of use in His kingdom. He let me see that even dancing in *dhoke* (something that apparently comes quite naturally to me) is a way to serve Him and others. But it was not just in my own walk that humility was evident. The people were ever ready to give and serve. Hospitality and generosity oozed off their homes and spirits. Every gesture, simple or grand, came from a place of utmost sincerity, and that was supremely special. Another word would be joy. How could I not include this word? Yes, there were hard times. I experienced trials and difficulties physically, emotionally, mentally, and spiritually. And yet, all I can recall when I think back is a soul-deep joy pervading my every memory. Every smile and tear from every person — both Oromo and American — filled my spirit with a lasting joy. And that's the difference between happiness (which is what the world wants) and joy (which is what God gives): it lasts. Finally, though, the last word is love, always love, because Love will always get

the last word. God is love, and He was more tangible on this trip than any of us in our physical bodies were. He came in power. He came in quiet. He came in song. He came in healing. He came in conversations. He came in prayer. He was inexorably present.

Reflecting back, there's no single answer to what impacted me on my recent trip to Ethiopia. There's no single story or theme that transcribes the amazing experience that was this short excursion into Africa. God made Himself new to me. I have “tasted and seen” that the LORD is good, but it tasted and looked different in Ethiopia. I heard new cadences in His voice. I felt new joys in His presence. But most importantly I saw that God was truly everywhere.

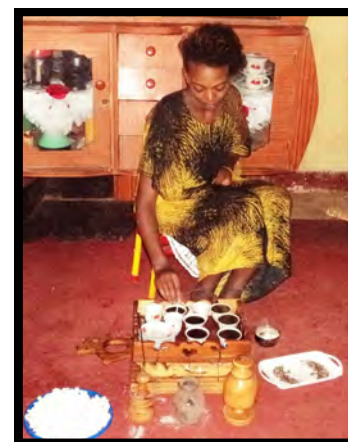
It's not that I didn't expect to find Him in Ethiopia—I most assuredly did. I was simply unprepared for the amount of Him that was there. I already have so much of God in my life, I couldn't have imagined there was so much more of Him to be had. I knew this conceptually, of course. I knew He was far more vast than anything I could conceive. But in Ethiopia, I felt this truth.

Everything about my time there showed me more about God. But, of course, it was the people that God used to reveal His simple beauty and living majesty. Even with cultural and language barriers, I came to adore Meron and Ammanuel. I miss them every day. I miss Meron's coffee and Ammanuel's laugh. I miss hearing them (and others) randomly yell, “Satawa!” It's amazing how in the Kingdom of God one can even feel loved when being called a giraffe.

Their pictures hang on my wall.



Alex Roberts enjoyed much of what southern Ethiopia has to offer...even embracing a termite mound!



Meron Meseret is pictured here making coffee for team members who were helping make repairs on the home she shares with her brothers.



Alex Roberts is pictured here with her friend, Amanuel Meseret.

# Evangelism Thru VBS

One of the objectives of the recent HOH Mission Team was to hold a three-day VBS in the town of Mega for 200 children. In addition, the team's agenda included holding a one-day mini VBS in four different villages where HOH has evangelists working to spread the gospel. God blessed and the team successfully carried out all of these objectives.

VBS consisted of four parts: a simple Bible Lesson, a fun craft, learning a Bible Verse through song, and having fun playing games outdoors. The VBS in the town of Mega looked very different than those held in the villages. In Mega, all of the attendees were children from the ages of 4 through 15. In the villages, curious adults joined the children to see what was going on. In all locations, the gospel and the plan of salvation were presented. Each child who attended VBS was given a t-shirt and a draw-string backpack filled with school supplies.

God was at work in both Mega and the villages. Several people in the villages accepted Christ as their Savior, including some converts from Islam. On the next couple of pages, you'll see pictures from each of the locations where VBS took place. Pray that the seeds planted will take root and grow.

## Mega VBS — 3 days, 200 children



Bible Story Time



Singing



Crafts



Games

## Deeda Jaarsa — Mini VBS



Janean Bollinger sharing the Bible lesson with children in Deeda Jaarsa.



Team Members leading the singing at VBS in Deeda Jaarsa.

### Evangelism Thru VBS (continued)

#### Saarite — Mini VBS



Pictured above is the team who went to Saarite to serve for one day. The ladies conducted the VBS and the men helped assemble benches for the church. (L-R) Chris Boeing, Sam Dersu, Jennifer Kidd, Danielle Gilliam, Anna Snyder, Megan Dersu and Alex Roberts.

#### Gaayo — Mini VBS



HOH Team members, Anna Snyder and Megan Dersu, led the children in a game of Red-Light, Green-Light'.



Children in Saarite gathered under a tree to listen to the Bible lesson during the VBS held in their village.



Children in Gaayo enjoying candy they received at their VBS.

#### Dhaadach Dhaaba — Mini VBS



The small church in Dhaadach Dhaaba was packed with children and adults, eager to experience VBS.



Pictured here is the road to the village of Dhaadach Dhaaba.

## Why did you go? What did God teach you?

Each of the team members who travelled to Ethiopia this past summer were asked the questions, “Why did you go on this trip?” and “What did God teach you?” For nearly half of the team, this was their first experience in Ethiopia — here is how they answered these questions.



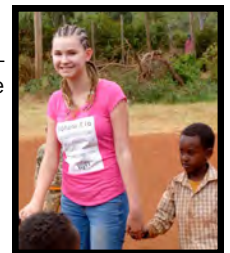
**Noah Bollinger:** I went because I have been going through the past few years of my life not knowing what God's plan for my life was. I went because I had seen so many people return saying how the experience changed their lives. I was hoping that if I went God would show me his plan for my life. I learned that people in other parts of the world live drastically different lives than we do and they are satisfied. They may not be happy with their lot in life but they don't complain.

**Hannah Gilliam:** I went on this trip because my whole family was going and I felt like I should go too. I didn't think that the trip would change my life as much as it did. I am so thankful I chose to go because God showed me so many things. One good thing that God taught me through this trip was that love and trusting God are the most important things in life. If you do those to things, you will find the key to happiness. There was never a time that I didn't feel loved when I was with people in Ethiopia. They poured love out without even thinking about it.



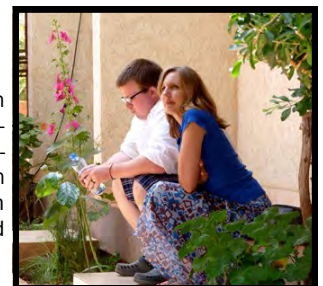
**Karen Pierce:** I went on the trip to Ethiopia because I felt that God was calling me to go. I have watched several other teams go out from PLCF, never sensed the call, until the 2014 trip was announced. I learned that I should not put “God in a box” by having a bunch of expectations of what He's going to do. Instead, I kept my eyes and mind open, and my heart soft, and I saw Him move in sweet, wonderful and surprising ways.

**Amanda Boeing:** I wanted to go on the trip because I thought it was a good opportunity to gain a different perspective of the world and to be able to help people. God taught me to be grateful for all the easy things we have in the United States.



**Danielle Gilliam:** I was hesitant to go to Ethiopia at first, because I didn't feel called to go. God moved on my heart and I went simply because I felt like there were some thing He needed and wanted to show me. He taught me to always live open handed and to live a life of humility. It's easy for me to plan every thing out and to become prideful in my own way of thinking. God really stripped me of pride and showed me that His plan is always, always good.

**Jeneva Midgett:** I went on the trip to Ethiopia to see how God might desire to use me in the ministry in Ethiopia. I wanted to meet the people, see the needs, experience the spiritual and physical atmosphere, and mutually bless each other as the body of Christ. I knew that God desired to use the Ethiopian people in my life just as much as he wanted to use me in theirs. On this trip God opened my eyes in a new way to the meaning of showing love, respect, and the giving of gifts. The Ethiopian people with whom I became friends honored me with their time and helpfulness and shared gifts with me that had personal meaning.



## Why did you go? What did God teach you? (continued)



**Anna Snyder:** The main reason I went on this trip was because I prayed and felt that it was the right time. I had wanted to go every time that it was announced, even in previous years, but never felt that I was in the place financially to do so. This time, I felt like I should go for it anyways. I have seen God provide for things that are His will throughout the years—and I trusted Him to do so this time as well. My husband and I were blessed to see His provision. Through this trip, God taught me a lot about different seasons of growth and different giftings. It was very obvious that Ethiopia is in a different season—everyone that we met there was eager to here about God. It was "harvesting season." It was beautiful to see God coming after a people like that, beautiful to see Him pursuing people all over the world. It was also beautiful the way that our team was able to work together. I got to see all of our gifts working together as a body.

**Jared Snyder:** I mostly went on this trip for two reasons: 1) my wife, Anna, really wanted to go overseas and so I wanted to be part of that and 2) I wanted to learn more about a mission that one of my elders holds so dear to his heart. This trip taught me that one can never share enough love.



**Alex Roberts:** I went to Ethiopia because God has been calling me to missions since I was 16. When I first came to Priest Lake Christian Fellowship a few years later, Hand of Hope was getting a team together to go. My inner missionary begged and pleaded, but it wasn't God's timing. When the next trip began to be planned, though, I cried out to God, "Here am I! Send me!" And He did.

The most profound lesson I learned while in Ethiopia was that God uses ME, not just my gifts. As Christians, it can be so easy to get caught up with what we are "supposed" to be doing. But God isn't really concerned with that. He looks at our hearts. He sees who we truly are. He saw my heart in Ethiopia and used it to His glory. My spiritual gifts were rarely at use on this trip. Instead He most often let me bless through silliness, laughter, and service—foundational aspects of my personality. And I realized that that is who I am in Christ. My gifts are only a part of who I am in the kingdom of God, not everything.



**Chris Boeing:** I went on this trip to keep my part of my obedience to God's calling. I had felt for a number of years that if my children ever wished to go to Ethiopia with our PLCF team, that I would go also. It was simply one of those statements so impressed upon my heart that I never had to question or analyze it. When that day came and my oldest daughter approached me with a desire to go on the next trip, it was an easy call for me to make. God helped us exceed our financial goals for the trip, opened up my schedule from a demanding job, and surrounded us with loving and supportive team members. My loving wife made extraordinary efforts to make sure we had everything we would need, and she excelled in both raising and earning funds for the trip. The Lord taught me the importance of reliance on Him for everything. It had been a very long time since I had travelled to a location in which basic face-to-face communication could be a real challenge since English is not spoken by many folks. That would immediately invoke fear and feelings of vulnerability to which I would be very susceptible - except God's Spirit quelled those negative emotions every time they popped into my head.

## Hand of Hope Ministries

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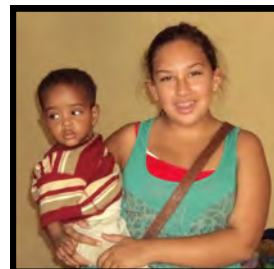
We're on the web!  
[www.hofhm.org](http://www.hofhm.org)

### When Dots Connect...

When dots connect it is a beautiful thing, especially when God is the one connecting the dots! This past July, God connected the dots between Hand of Hope Ministries and True Love Children's Center in Hawassa, Ethiopia. True Love Children's Center is an orphanage founded by Mr. Messele Abebe and is currently home to nearly 40 children. Messele's heart for the orphan grew out of his own experience as an orphan. Founded on James 1:27, True Love Children's Center not only cares for the orphan, but also works with impoverished women to teach them how to be self sustaining and care for their children. When members of the HOH Team paid a surprise visit to TLCC, they were greeted by warm and loving care-givers and the faces of happy children. The grounds were clean and it was obvious that the children were well loved and cared for. Each member of the HOH team was greatly impacted by TLCC and left with the sense that God was doing a mighty work within the small compound.

TLCC is facing many financial challenges. Due to recent changes in government regulations, much of their funding has basically come to an end and Messele is trying desperately to find individuals and/or organizations who are willing to partner with him to keep the doors of TLCC open.

#### HOH Mission Team Members loving on some of the children at TLCC



#### *TLCC's Vision Verse*

*"Religion that God our Father accepts as pure and faultless is this: to look after orphans and widows in their distress ... ' James 1:27*