



MKC NEWS # 47

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**Send questions or
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Be Focused

*Pastor Desalegn Abebe
MKC President*

When the elders in my community see someone very busy with many things, they advise the person by saying, “A person with two legs cannot climb two trees at the same time.” Their message to the busy person is to calm down, set priorities, and do one thing at a time.

In the ministry of the church, there are many things that a leader sees and wants to fix. There are many people out there who need to hear the gospel of Jesus Christ. Some people seek the advice of the pastor or church leader. The spouse and children also want to get their fair shares and demand to get time. His/her mind is troubled by many things.

Jesus set a pattern of life and ministry that we should imitate. We are called to follow the pattern of Jesus Christ. Jesus had limited time on earth. Many people sought his service. However, sometimes Jesus stopped the service and withdrew to lonely places.

“One of those days Jesus went out to a mountainside to pray and spent the night praying to God. When morning came, he called his disciples to him and chose twelve of them, whom he also designated apostles” (Luke 6:12-13).

Jesus should have been more busy in ministry than any of us. Since Jesus was ministering filled with the power of the Holy Spirit, we can imagine that he could minister without rest for a long time. But Jesus rested after giving a proper service. At times, he departed from the crowd when they needed him. We might think that he was indifferent to people’s needs. Jesus kept the balance between ministering to others and personal devotion to God.

Jesus did several public services: preaching the gospel, healing people, performing miracles, and feeding people. However, his focus was on making disciples. He spent more time with his disciples teaching them, directing them, warning them, and answering their questions. He wanted to produce strong disciples who would take his mission to the next higher step. He did the right thing. After his resurrection and ascension, the disciples were the ones who took the gospel to different countries. As leaders, let us focus on what we are supposed to do. May the Lord help us to discern the most important thing, and deliver what God expects from us.

MKC REGIONAL ASSEMBLIES HELD IN MANY PLACES



*Pastor Sebrela Kedir
Pastoral Ministry Director*

The Meserete Kristos regions held their annual assemblies. The regional assemblies in summer (June and July) usually hear the annual ministry performance of their respective regions and approve the regional annual operations plan for the coming fiscal year.

Some regions achieved more than the annual growth rate expected of them during the fiscal year. The national office is extremely grateful for the performances of these regions and praises God for His abundant grace. These regions will be recognized during the annual general assembly of the Meserete Kristos Church to be held in September 2023.

In most of the regional assemblies, representatives from the MKC head office were present. Below are some of the photos of the regional assemblies.



Kaffa Region



Southwestern Shewa Region



Meta Sheno Region



Arbaminch Region

Self-Help Group Formation Seminar



*By Kelemua Tefera
Women Ministry Coordinator*

The Meserete Kristos Church Head Office in partnership with Hope International Saving Ministry organized a seminar on self-help formation and biblical principles that guide self-help groups at the Bishoftu Campus of MK Seminary. The seminar was held for five days.

Pastors and church leaders from four MKC regions around Addis Ababa and MKC head office staff participated in the seminar.

The facilitators were from Hope International Ministry.

The participants are expected to go to their respective regions and train other church leaders and pastors to begin self-help groups within the church and in the community to enable people to engage in income-generating activities.

MKC aims to involve many women in the church in the training so that they form saving groups to create a platform for them

to fellowship and learn skills to start their income-generating activities.



The Meserete Kristos Church translated the training materials into the local languages so that people in rural areas can use them for training.

Children – Forgotten in Peacebuilding Activities



Mekonnen Gameda
Peacebuilding Director

For the past two years, we have been working with communities and local institutions to restore peace between warring ethnic groups in the Nono district of the West Shewa Zone of Oromia Regional State.

The targets of the peacebuilding projects are mainly youth and adults. MKC facilitated different types of training, trauma healing sessions, and community conversations in conflict-hit villages. The reconciliation process has been progressing well and is now at its final stage to settle the issues.

Last week, I was in the area to discuss the reconciliation process with the traditional elders and the local government authorities. I got an opportunity to meet with woman who received the training and facilitated community conversations on peacebuilding in their villages.

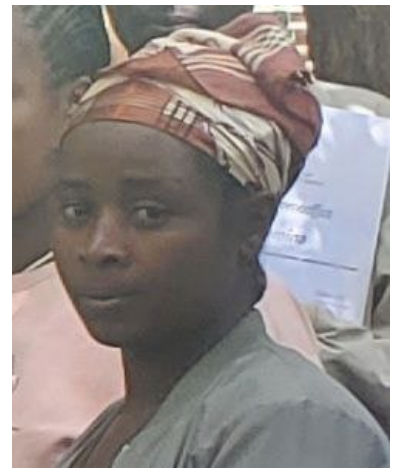
Her name is Bontu. She lost her husband after two years of married life. She bore one child before her husband was killed during the ethnic violence three years ago. Bontu was identified by the community as one of the survivors who needed trauma healing because of what she went through during the violence. She participated in a series of trauma healing sessions, and she recovered from the trauma.

Now, she is one of the active volunteers who is helping other women who were affected by the ethnic violence in the community. She told me how the training and trauma-healing sessions helped her recover.

However, during our conversations, she shared with me something I did not expect. Her three years old son asks her to buy him a gun. He presents his request every evening when they are alone in the house. She thought he wanted a plastic gun (a toy).

Recently, he told her that he wanted a real gun to kill a person who killed his father. She said that she almost fainted. She did not imagine that her son was preparing himself for revenge at this age.

Her son was told by other children in the village that his father of killed by someone from the other ethnic group and that he should revenge when he grows up. She asked me if MKC could help children affected by ethnic violence. It was a question that I was not prepared to answer. I have recognized that this is one of the needs of the community that we should address. The sustainability of the peace we are trying to restore now depends on the type of children we are nurturing.



Evangelium Mission Supported the Mission Activities in Drought-hit Borena

By *Abayneh Anjulo*
Evangelism and Church Planting Director

The Evangelium Mission supported the mission activities of the Meserete Kristos Church in Borena. Borena was one of the most drought-affected areas in Ethiopia. The people lost many animals due to the long drought.

The local churches in the area could not support the mission activities in the area due to lack of resources. Local churches did not have money to pay the salaries of their missionaries and full-time ministers. The Evangelium Mission addressed the problem by supporting the missionaries working in planting churches. Furthermore, individuals and families who were identified as the most affected were given basic needs to sustain their lives.



In July 2023, Roman Retta visited the MKC local churches in the Borena area. He was accompanied by Pastor Kelbessa Muleta (MKC Vice-President), and Pastor Abayneh

Anjulo (Evangelism and Church Planting Director).



During the visit, Retta shared the word of God with the church pastors. He also preached on Sunday and prayed for the people. In his message, he encouraged pastors, church leaders, and believers to continue seeking God's will and depend on him to meet their basic needs.

At present, there are 5 Meserete Kristos local churches and 40 church planting centers in Borena.

Annual Review Meeting of Evangelium Mission – Ethiopia

By Addisu Legesse
EME Coordinator

Evangelium Mission in partnership with the Meserete Kristos Church conducted an annual review meeting of its ministry at the Dire Dawa Training Center. The main purpose of the review meeting was to reflect on the ministry performance of MKC regions where the Mission has been operating.



During the review meeting, the strengths and growth areas of the regions were identified,

and each region agreed to develop action plans to improve its performance in the coming fiscal year.

After the review meeting, the Summer Training Sessions were conducted. The Summary Training program was started to equip evangelists and pastors serving in rural areas who do not have adequate formal education to enroll in theological institutions. This summer the training was given by Roman Retta and Yota Retta. A total of 42 trainees from 12 MKC regions participated in the training.



Seminar for Pastors on Core Ministry Competencies



*Haymanot Adamu
Pastoral Ministry*

The Pastoral Ministry Department of MKC Head Office in collaboration with the MK Seminary organized a seminar for pastors on Core Ministry Competencies.

The competencies addressed during the seminar include biblical knowledge, history of the church (Anabaptist theology and traditions), Christian discipleship, emotional health, mission/evangelism, and leadership. In addition, emotional intelligence and building healthy relationships were addressed.



The seminar was facilitated by Pastor Marilyn Rudy-Froese. She came from Canada. Pastor Marilyn is a Church Leadership Minister who works closely with pastors, and leaders and supports them in discerning their calling and acquiring necessary ministry skills.

The main purpose of the seminar was to create awareness of the core ministry competencies so that pastors and church leaders will continue growing in the knowledge and skills they need for their ministry.

The seminar was held on July 10-12, 2023. A total of 27 pastors attended the seminar.

The seminar participants said that the seminar was eye-opening to know their strengths and growth areas and giving them a sense of direction to work on developing the core competencies.

Unwavering Faith

By Kebede Bekere

No matter what situation we go through, it is a very good thing that our trust in God continues to grow. It is a blessing to live on this earth without wavering in our faith.

This world is full of challenges. In this world, Christ's followers will be tested by hardships as well as comforts. Many people started on good terms with God and ended up not being good in terms of faith. On the contrary, many people of God persevere through all the trials they face in the world and are steadfast in their faith.

One of those who persevered in their faith until old age was a man named Caleb. When the Israelites were on their way to enter the Promised Land, Moses, the leader of the people, chose one person from each tribe to spy out the land and sent 12 spies to the land of Canaan. Caleb was one of the men chosen by the tribe of Judah to spy.

Caleb was a 40-year-old man when he was sent to spy. The spies who went out to spy on the land came back and reported. Some reports were supported by evidence. They brought the fruits that were in that land and showed them to the people. The ten spies said that even if the land is as good as it is said to be, they cannot win because the people there were powerful. And they discouraged the people. The people were afraid. Then they rose against Moses. They said it would have been better for them to die in the land of Egypt.

When this happened, Caleb and his friend Joshua stood up and said that they would inherit the Promised Land by defeating their enemies with the power of God. (Read Numbers 14:6-10).

Two lessons:

First, Caleb was a man who followed God with all his heart. Caleb believed in God's promises and had full confidence that God would fulfill His promises in any situation. He was sure that God, who helped the people in the past by doing wonders and miracles, can still get them through the challenges ahead of them.

Second, Caleb was not driven by the opinion of the masses. God's truth does not change with the opinion of many people. The truth is what God says, not what many people have accepted or supported. Caleb did not support the position taken by the ten spies who were with him. He did not remain silent either. He spoke out the truth that he believed. As a result, he faced opposition. But Caleb did not change his position. Caleb's position was in line with the will of God.

Many of us remain silent when people think or act outside of God's Word, knowing that it is wrong. Even if we don't accept it in our hearts, we choose to remain silent and may not have the courage to speak the truth. Holding fast to God's truth when others oppose can make us vulnerable. However, if what we think is what God's word supports, we need to stand by our words regardless of what others might say or do.

Greetings from one of the last surviving missionaries of the early days of the MKC

Dear friends at the MKC:

Greetings from St. Catharines, Ontario, Canada. I am one of the first North Americans to have worked with the MKC in the early days. I came as a single nurse--I was Helen Witmer at the time--in 1949 to work at the Haile Mariam Memorial Hospital in Nazareth/Adama. In 1956 I married my late husband Dr. Joe Burkholder who was serving at the hospital in Deder. (He passed away in 2018.)

During my time in Adama/Nazareth, I got to know Gameda Beruda and his wife Aster Debose, as well as Bati Insermu--all of them very key to the growth of the church in the 1950s and 1960s. I rejoiced when my son Byron showed me the article about them in the MKC News publication. We read the article together here in my apartment, where I am living in my elder years (I am 98 years old--one of the last surviving missionaries of the early days of the MKC.)

I would be pleased if you could pass on my fond greetings to Aster, whom I remember well. Tell her that I remember well the coffee times we spent in the hospital's lab. Please find attached a photo of me and Byron, with the article. I want her to know that we give thanks for the role that she, along with her husband Gameda, and Bati, played in the amazing growth of the church in Ethiopia.

Sincerely in Christ,

Helen (Witmer) Burkholder (with the help of my son Byron)





MKC Head Office employees congratulated Tigist Habte, MKC Finance Officer, for her academic achievement.



PRAY FOR MESERETE KRISTOS CHURCH



“ Let us then approach God’s throne of grace with confidence, so that we may receive mercy and find grace to help us in our time of need.” (Hebrews 4:16)

Pray

For MKC leadership

For MKC to get adequate resources to carry out the Great Commission

For healing, recovery, and rehabilitation of people affected by conflicts in the country

For persecuted Christians

For peace and stability of the country

About Meserete Kristos Church

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The Meserete Kristos Church (MKC) was established in 1951. At present (August 2022), MKC has 1 Ketena office, 52 Regional Offices, 1462 local churches, and 992 church planting centers in all the regional states of the Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia.

Vision

MKC aspires to be a missionary church empowered by the Holy Spirit to preach the gospel of Jesus Christ and expand God's Kingdom in Ethiopia and beyond.

Mission

The Meserete Kristos Church exists to preach the Gospel to all people and teach those who believe in Jesus to make them disciples of Christ.

Strategic Goals

The Meserete Kristos Church has the following strategic goals:

- To preach the gospel of Jesus Christ to all people
- To provide effective pastoral ministry to church members
- To equip church leaders and ministers for the ministry of the gospel
- To promote justice and peace in the society
- To provide holistic service to address the basic needs of people

