

OUR REDEEMER
OROMO EVANGELICAL CHURCH
 IN MINNESOTA

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Scoti chubbana keewana jirrate ifa guddaa isaa arge (Isa. 9:2)

A Periodical Newsletter of Our Redeemer Oromo Evangelical Church

SAGALEE ABDII

Issue #3

December 2012

EDITORIAL NOTE

God's Message of Hope:



By Admasu Simeso

There is a famous Christmas song which goes, “This is the most wonderful time of the year”. According to the church calendar, we are in a special time of the year, the Advent, which covers the period of one month prior to Christmas, when Christians prepare to celebrate the birth of our Lord, Jesus the Christ. This year’s Advent started on the 2nd of December and goes up to the mid-night of December 24, 2012. The origin of the word advent was Latin (ad-venio) literary meaning to come to. During the four Sundays of Advent each week a candle is lit, the first candle represent hope, the hope that foretold by prophets of the Lord that the Messiah, the Savior would be born from a virgin to free His people, the people of Israel from bondage.

The Israelites were looking forward to the arrival of the Messiah who would liberate them from successive oppressive empires of Egyptians, Assyrians, Persians, Babylonians, and Greek and finally Roman who had their brutal shares over centuries in oppressing God’s people.

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TOUR OF THE HOLY LAND

by Pastor Melkamu Negeri

The dedications and commitments to serve the church of Christ by members increased beyond expectation. Church members came together and initiated the idea of preparing a day of appreciation for the employees of the church. They did whatever it took and the celebration happened successfully.

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HAWII GAARII KAN AYAANA DHALOOTAA KIRISTOS FI WAGGAA HAARAA ILAALCHISEE LUBA WALDAA IRRAA

Ayyyaanni dhaloota gooftaa keenya Yesus Kiristos kan eebbaa fi jajjabinaa akka isinii ta’u isinii hawina. Akkasumas immoo barri haaraan itti adeemnu kun bara nagaa fi bara hojii wangeelaa tokkummaadhaan itti hojjennu nuuf ha ta’u. Bara sabni keenya gargar ba’uu irraa gara tokkummaatti dhufu ha ta’u akkasumas bara tokkummaa fi jaalalan waliin jiraatu waaqayyo nuuf ha godhu !

Waaqayyo iddoo jirtan hundaatti isin ha eebbisu!

APPRECIATION DAY

The year 2012 was a remarkable historical period of time for Our Redeemer Oromo Evangelical Church of Minnesota. This is so, because we experienced turmoil of church conflict on the issues that never directly concerned our church. The devil, who is always working against the unity of Christ’s church, has temporarily achieved success in dividing the people of God who otherwise have been together for many years. This affected families, beloved brothers and sisters. It was painful and heart breaking to see all the negative effects of division and the aftermath it has brought about.

Even so, the Almighty Lord who is taking care of His people did not abandon His children even in the course of those difficult days. In the book of Jeremiah God has given the following promise. *“In those days and at that time I will make a righteous Branch sprout from David’s line; he will do what is just and right in the land (33:15).*

When we think it is the end of the story, He begins with a fresh start and everlasting promise for His children. The Almighty God exactly did the same for our church. A new day and fresh beginning have come and we started experiencing the sense of commitment and genuine love in the church. The authentic spiritual communion between brothers and sisters, a fresh vision for the church, sense of belonging and ownership appeared creating a new atmosphere that was not witnessed for many years.

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¹ Isaiah 9:6 (About 700 years before birth of Jesus)
‘For to us a child is born, to us a son is given, and the government will be on his shoulders. And he will be called Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, and Prince of Peace’.

God's Message of Hope (cont.)

Israelites did not understand that the Kingdom of their Messiah was not meant to be of this world nor limited to liberating



Shepherds' field church (Taken during Holy Land Tour-Nov,2012)

“And there were shepherds living out in the fields nearby, keeping watch over their flocks at night. An angel of the Lord appeared to them, and the glory of the Lord shone around them, and they were terrified. But the angel said to them, ‘Do not be afraid. I bring you good news that will cause great joy for all the people. Today in the town of David a Savior has been born to you; he is the Messiah, the Lord. --- suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host praising God, and saying, Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good will toward men’”. Luke 2:8-11.

This was the message of hope (Sagalee Abdii) for all people of God. From the beginning, the prophesy was understood that the Savior was to come only for the people of Israel. But when he came, at the set time, (yeroo barichi Waaqayyo jedhe ga'eetti) His coming benefited all those who believed in Him. There was no more distinction between the Jews and the Gentiles, there to be no more barriers. Salvation in Christ became free, free because He paid the price for it so that all those who believe in Him become the children of God. This was God's message of hope for all humanity.

Thus this time is supposed to be a time of preparation for the coming of the Lord, the Prince of peace who would leave His place of honor, incarnated to save humanity. But we are also aware that we are constantly distracted by different competing voices and interests from what should be a solemn preparation. The most distracting thing is the commercialization of the Christmas celebration, the misrepresentation of the meaning of gifts. In the 2nd issue of OROECM Sagalee Abdii we read an article by our Pastor, Pastor Melkamu, under the title Kamiin Dhaggeffanne Kamiin Dhiifna? (Which voices to listen to and which ones to ignore?) This question is very pertinent; to keep in mind especially during this time of advent

so that we are not lost in the different competing voices or messages as what is important to us. As Christians our focus should be on the greater hope, voice of hope, hope for the world not the confusing different voices.

We very well remember that last year at this time we were in difficult situation and literally begging those who were in the leadership of our church to give us a break from the confusion so that we spend time in prayers and celebrate the coming of the Lord, the Prince of peace in the spirit of advent, looking forward to His coming. But our congregation was not allowed an opportunity. Indeed we may not want to remember what we were subjected to, however, whether we like it or not we cannot help but remember, not for any ulterior motive but only to praise our God for carrying us through the difficult time by His grace. One year after the uncalled-for challenges, thank God now we have peace, love, understanding and caring for one another as a congregation, free to celebrate His birth in one heart and mind as it is ought to be celebrated.

The Gospel of Jesus Christ carries the message of hope of healing and salvation for our troubled world. To some this may sound naïve but we have seen it, experienced it, convinced and believe that the Gospel of Jesus Christ is the only hope for the world to give it the peace, the true peace it needs. As the prophet has said He rules with justice and righteousness, He is the hope for the poor and the oppressed, not only the hope for the world to come but now in this world to ease their burden.

At this special time of the year, as we join Christians around the world looking forward to celebrate His birth, it is with great joy that our church, Our Redeemer Oromo Evangelical Church in Minnesota (OROECM) extends God's message of hope, the message of love and good-will to all our friends far and near. Our best wishes and His blessings up on everyone at this blessed time of the year and in the New Year to come as well!



Altar in the shepherd field cave

“Gallanni Waaqayyoof waaqa irratti, lafa irrattis nagaan, namootaafis jaalalli (fedhai) gaariin!”, Luqqas. 2:14.

² But when the right time came, God sent his Son, born of a woman, subject to the law. Galatians 4:4

Tour Of The Holy Land (cont.)

Thus, as a gesture of appreciation for the pastor a gift of touring the Holy Land for ten days was planned for me and my wife. Prior to the day of departure for the Holy Land, we had to go through the travel processes attended meetings organized by a travel agency.

Our trip itinerary looked as follows.

October 31st, 2012

My wife and I left Minneapolis to Chicago for our connection flight to Frankfurt, Germany. We flew from Frankfurt to Tel Aviv, Israel and arrived there on November 1.



Partial view of Tel Aviv from our hotel room

November 2nd

Our group consisted of sixty eight people of different denominational backgrounds amongst which my wife and I were the only people of African origin. Even so, we were very much welcomed in the group and enjoyed the fellowship up to the last day of our tour.

On our second day in Tel Aviv on November 2, we continued with our interesting visit. We toured around Caesarea by driving north from Tel Aviv and visited the fascinating ruins of the Crusader's fortress, the Roman amphitheater, the aqueduct that carried water from Mt.Carmel to Caesarea.

From Caesarea, we drove to Megiddo to visit the museum, ruins of the city and Solomon's Stables and then to Haifa to ascend Mt.Carmel (where Elijah killed Baal's priests-1Kings:18) to view the sea and the harbor. Also Carmelites Monastery and Elijah's cave were one of the interesting areas visited.



Harbor view of Haifa

November 3rd

On the third day of our visit, we crossed the Sea of Galilee on boat to Capernaum which was the center of Jesus' ministry in Galilee. From Capernaum we continued to Tabgha, which was the site of the Miracle of the Loaves and Fishes. Then we continued to Mount of Beatitude where Jesus preached the famous Sermon on the Mount and chose the Twelve Apostles, (Mt.14:13-21, Mk.6:30:-434; John.6:1-14).



Crossing to Capernaum (On the Sea of Galilee)

November 4th

We departed via Tabgha and Magdala for Cana, the site of Jesus' first miracle of turning water into wine (John 2:1-12). Then, we proceed to Nazareth, the boyhood home of Jesus and visited the church of Annunciation and the old city.

November 5th



Prayer at the Wailing Wall is common for tourists

Starting from the fifth day of our tour, we stayed in the city of Jerusalem and made walking tours as most of the historical sites are close to one another. We visited the Temple Mount and the Pool of Bethesda where Jesus healed the crippled man as well as Dome of the Rock, the El Aqsa Mosque and the Wailing Wall (Western wall). Numerous historical monasteries and churches were also one of the interesting sites we visited.

Above all, the "Via Dolorosa" (Latin, "Way of Grief" or "Way of Suffering" –the traditional way Of the cross to the church of the Holy Sepulcher) was one of the most interesting sites

³ Isaiah 2:4 He will judge between the nations and will settle disputes for many peoples. They will beat their swords into plowshares and their spears into pruning hooks. Nation will not take up sword against nation, nor will they train for war anymore.

to see. It was the route Jesus carried his cross on his way to crucifixion. It has fourteen stations and many people literally carry a cross and walk through the fourteen stations. Many of them sing in choir or read their Bible all the way to the last station. On this day, we also visited the Garden Tomb that is believed to be Golgotha (Mk.15-16).



Many people carry cross on the Via Dolorosa

November 6th

On this day, we visited The Mount of Olives. Descending the Mount of Olives to the Garden of Gethsemane, we walked along the ancient olive trees viewing the Kidron Valley. Most of the olive trees have been there for about two thousand years. One can easily see from the trunk of the trees that they have been there for centuries and still produce fruits. Jesus spent the night before he was arrested with his disciples in the Garden of Gethsemane and prayed to God with a heavy sense about his coming betrayal (Mat. 26: 36=46). We also visited the Upper Room, which is considered to be the traditional site of the Last Supper. Then we drove to Bethlehem to see the church of Nativity -the birth place of Jesus (Lk.2:1-20).

November 7th

We drove to Bethany to see Lazarus Tomb and the village of Mary and Martha. Then we continued to see the biblical Jericho through the valley of Jordan River. Jericho is believed to be one of the oldest cities in the world, inhabited as far back as the Middle Stone Age-ten thousand years ago (Josh.1-6).



We viewed Elisha's spring and The Mount of Temptations and continued to the Dead Sea, which lies 1288 feet below sea level. This is believed to be the site of ancient Sodom and Gomorrah. We also stopped at the Caves of Qumran where

the Dead Sea Scrolls were discovered. On the east side of the Dead Sea are the Moab Mountains and Mount Nebo where Moses viewed the Promised Land.



Crossing to Masada by cable car

We also saw the site of historical stronghold of Masada where we ascended by cable car to the fortress where 967 Zealots (Jews) made their last stand against Rome in 73 AD and back to Jerusalem.



Many Christians renew their baptism in the River Jordan

November 8

This day was our last day of the most interesting and inspiring tour in the Holy Land. It was a free day and we individually visited the city.

November 9

Returning to the United States.

Conclusion

Our Redeemer Oromo Evangelical Church in Minnesota has registered a significant historic event by sending her pastor and his wife to the Holy Land. When the people of God unite and trust each other, there is nothing that they unable to do. Our church members have fully participated in the realization of this historical mission. They contributed their money, time

and wisdom to make this visit to materialize.

In the letter of Hebrews 10:24 the following is written “And let us consider how we may stir up one another on toward love and good deeds...” (“Jaalala agarsiisuudhaaf ,waan gaarii hojjechuudhaafis kottaa tuttqnee yaada waliin kaafna!”). Spurring one another for some thing good builds the unity brothers and sisters and leads towards growth, while spurring one another for the contrary will only lead to division and destruction. As Christians, our mission is to be a living and inviting example in this spiritually dark world. We can do this only if we are united as children of God.

A brief summary of the Holy Land visit was presented to the congregation of Our Redeemer Oromo Evangelical Church on December 03, 2012. It was also on this date that the establishment of the “Holy Land Visit Account” was formally accepted by the congregation. The objective is to raise fund to send more of our church members to visit the Holy Land site in Israel and share with the congregation on their return so that church members learn more about the Holy Land. I believe we can do that! Finally, we are so grateful to all our church members who have taken part in the realization of this wonderful mission and those who have originated this fresh idea.

God bless you all. The future is bright!

Appreciation Day (Cont.)

Church members started to think differently and everyone expressed commitment and dedication to the church without pressure from outside. The new program of ministers training the church has organized after the division, was crowded with dedicated members who are ready to serve their church. Four weeks training plan was extended for more weeks as people did not want to stop the fellowship while enjoying weekly breakfast together.

Worship team, choir group, prayer ministry ...were organized instantly and every gap was filled within few weeks. Looking at all those changes, we were so astonished and filled with joy. The clear atmosphere filled our church members with a lot of plans that will be accomplished in the church. Visit to the Holy Land was the result of the unity of all our church members.

CHRISTMAS OR XMAS

by Dinkissa L. Bato (Pastor)

Although Christmas has become one of the most popular and highly celebrated holidays in the Western world, a growing

number of people do it for sheer fun and lots of other reasons than celebration of the true subject of Christmas. Many think of Christmas simply as a time of giving and receiving gifts, a practice that commercialized the season wherein the world’s largest transactions take place. Many others connect Christmas to a mere ritual of decorations (Christmas trees, jingle bells, candles, garlands, roping, swags, ribbons, poinsettia, and Christmas tree ornaments). For yet another group of people, Christmas is strongly associated with the carols, snow, Santa Clause, and other objects of memory cherished from childhood. A significant proportion of people still consider it as a time of family get together and socialization.

Where is Jesus in all this! One may wonder about the missing birthday child in this Christmas paraphernalia. Most Christmas decorations do not depict Him, the family reunions and ensuing conversations barely mention His name or any of His deeds, and even worse the incessantly revised carols and Christmas music systematically diverge from singing Him. Christ-less Christmas seems to fill the air everywhere. This trend, shockingly, is not unique among non-Christians who celebrate Christmas for own sake but is growing among Christians (Catholic, Orthodox or Protestants).

History of Christianity tells us that the early church was not in the habit of celebrating Christmas for it was busy bearing the cross (persecuted) big time. There is no hint in the New Testament that the church celebrated Christ’s birthday on any specific day for, who knows, Christmas might have been an everyday event way back then though not the way we celebrate it today, I surmise. What is certain is that, however, the Apostles doctrine emphasized the death, burial and resurrection of Christ, not his birth.

The modern world has sidelined and left every stone unturned to remove Christ, “the reason of the season,” from Christmas. Not only atheist and secular modernists but also uninformed Christians inadvertently tend to interpret Xmas (the short form of Christmas) as a celebration of somebody “x” representing anything or any god one wishes to celebrate. Nonetheless, even a little effort to refer to some of the popular and easily accessible sources of information could have saved the day. Accordingly, “x” commonly stands for “Christ” and its compounds, including “Christmas” and “Christians” have been abbreviated for at least the 1000 years, long before the modern “Xmas” was commonly used. The first two letters in the Greek word χριστος (Christos): chi (x) and rho (p) were used in ancient abbreviations for Christ and are still widely seen in many Eastern Orthodox icons depicting Jesus Christ. The two letters (XP), in their capitalized form, are combined into one popular Christian symbol (☩) to represent Christ in

many Christian faith traditions.

On the other hand, one may further argue that the “x” in Xmas can symbolize and remind us of the cross as the crux (also a root word for the English word “cross”) of the mas (old English suffix meaning festival, feast day or mass). But wait, who in his right mind wants to think of the cross (pain, suffering...) in this joyous holiday? To be honest, however, Christ’s birth was the beginning of his cross (suffering and pain): Born in a manger in Bethlehem after a long and tiresome trip his expectant mother made all the way from Galilee. Thence, in a little while, he fled his birth place under death threat from Herod and migrated to Egypt as a little baby. To make matters worse, he grew up in a poor family with a hand-to-mouth existence. Which of our Christmas accouterments, therefore, resonates with these experiences of Jesus? Where in the world, for instance, did you notice a cross (even a shiny one) hanging somewhere in the Christmas tree or along the decoration lining the staircase?

I think it’s time for us to stop and think about the significance of the cross in Christmas. Without the cross (x) in Xmas, what remains is a mere “mas” (objectless festival and even a “mess”) devoid of vigor. Again, it is time for us to revitalize Christmas by restoring the subject (Christ) of the celebration back in His rightful place as the wise men from East (magi or

kings) showed us long ago. They presented gifts to the Christ child and worshipped Him: “We saw his star in the east and have come to worship him” (Matthew 2:2). Here, as their words rightly show, their worship and gift was exclusively directed to him even though Mary and Joseph were there, too. How would this inspire and shape our worship and gift-giving? Who is the center of our worship and giving during this holiday season? For the most part, it seems that in our gift-giving today, we focus much on pleasing one another. What would we think of someone, for instance, celebrating our birthday by giving gifts to other people around us but giving us nothing? It seems that many people forget Christ all year-long, and celebrate His birth by giving gifts to others. What are we giving Him?

Gift giving to one another during the season of Christmas and even beyond, in and of itself, is not bad but it must equally incorporate the celebration and worship of Christ the King, if it has to make a fuller sense and be well-pleasing to God. As it is clearly depicted in the shape of the cross (X) and even more in the “Xmas”, both the vertical and the horizontal lines (relationships) must strike a balance between our love and gift to God and the simultaneous love and gift to our fellow brothers and sisters whom Jesus loved.

Oduu Gaggabaabaa

Waldoota Oromoo Warra Wangeelaa Iddoo Addaaddaa Irraa

1. Tokkummaa Waldoota Oromoo irraa

Tokkummaan Waldoota Oromoo Kan Warra Wangeela Addunyaa 2013 jalqabe Las Vegas irratti walga'ii wagaa godhachuudhan dhimma waldoota kana ilaallatu dada addaa irratti dubachudhan xumurameera.

Walga'ii kana irratti gegeesitoonni tokkummaa haraan waggaa lamaaf kan filaman yommuu ta'u akkasumas immoo tokkummaan waldoota Oromoo kan jabeessu ibsa baasuun isaa hubatameera.

Walga'ii kana irratti walda Our Redeemer Oromo Evangelical Church Minnesota bakka buanii kan irratti hirmatan Luba keenyaa Luba Melkamu Nagari, itti'aanaa dura taa'aa Jarsolii Waldaa Keenyaa Obbo Asfaw Banti fi Barreessa Waldatti Obbo Isarael Gobana ti.

2. Cuuphaa daa'immanii

Guyyaa gaafa Sanbata Guddaa Mudde(Dec.) 10, 2012 ijoolleen (daa'immoonni) afur kan waldaa keenyaa cuphamanii tokkummaa amantootaatti makamuudhaan miseensa ta'aniiru. Kunis lakoobsa ijoolloota amma ammaatti waldaa keenyatti cuuphaman lakoobsa isaanii garaa 177 ga'uu isaa yommu mirkaneessu ammas cuuphaa eegataan kan jiran ijoolloni jiraachuun isaaniis hubatameera.

Maatii isaaniitiin бага gammaddan ittiin jenna

3. Fo'amu gegeesitoota waldaa(OROEC)

Guyyaa gaafa Sanbata Guddaa jechuunis Mudde Decc.) 17 2012 fo'annaa jarsoolii walda keenyaa irratti itti aanaa dura ta'aa waldatti kan ta'anii waggaa laman darbaniif tajaajila turan Obbo Asfaw Banti fi akasuma miseensa kan turan Obbo Gamachu Galata wagoota lamaan dhufaniif tajaajila isaanii akka itti fufan ta'e fu'amaniiru.

4. Sinoodoosii Wallagga Lixaa irraa

Waldaa Makaane Yesus Itiyoophia keessatti luuba warra jalqabaa keessa tokko kan turan Lubni Namarraa Callaa tajaajila bara dheeraa booda umurii 94tti dorgommee isaanii isa lafa irraa raawatani, amantii isaanii eeggatanii ulfinaan gara abbaa isaanii gara waaqayyoo adeemaniiru. Lubni Namarraan fooniin nui irraa adda ba'uu isaanii dhageenyee gaddi nutti dhaga'ame iyyuu karaa gara biraa immoo bara jireenya isaanii gara caalaa hojii wangeela Gooftaa keenyaa saba keenya gidduutti baball'isuu irratti waan dabarsaniif akkasumas tajaajilli isaan waldoota Oromoo waliin qabaataa turan fi seenaa isaan lammiwan isaanii keessatti galmeesan hundi yaadatamuudhaan gaafa Onkoloolessa(Oct.) 6,2012 waldaa Our Redeemer Oromoo Minnesota keessatti waaqayyoon galateefachuudhaan yaadannoon godhamee gegefamaniiru,

Check a Token of your Biblical Knowledge

1. The original Bible was written in the following three languages:
 1. Aramaic, Hebrew and Latin.
 2. Hebrew, Aramaic, and Greek.
 3. Greek, Hebrew and Latin.
2. How many times are lions mentioned in the Bible?
 1. 25 times.
 2. 105 times.
 3. 55 times.
3. Onesimos Nessib died at an approximate age of
 1. 84 years.
 2. 75 years.
 3. 66 years.
4. Who was the most energetic Apostle to spread Christianity extensively across the Mediterranean world?
5. In which Books of the Bible does the word “Christian” appear?
 - 5.1. John chapter 7, verse 21, and Luke chapter 5, verse 9.
 - 5.2. Acts 11:26; 26:28; 1 Peter 4:16.
 - 5.3. Proverbs chapter 14, verse 13 and Revelations chapter 6, verse 11.
6. How long did Apostle Paul live in Corinth?
7. The 66 Books of the Bible have:
 - 7.1. 1,981 Chapters, and 41, 102 verses.
 - 7.2. 1,198 Chapters, and 41, 102 verses.
 - 7.3. 1,189 Chapters and 31, 102 verses.
8. The date when the Oromo Bible was written in Qubee for the first time was:
 - 8.1. 1991
 - 8.2. 1899
 - 8.3. 2001
9. From where does the English version “Jesus” (name of the Lord) originate? Can you spell that original version?
10. Could the given Oromo name of Onesimos have had a prophetic transcendence to the work he was remarkably able to accomplish in his life time?

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