

I. Editorial Note – Sagalee Abdii, (the Voice of Hope)

By Admasu Simeso

We thank God for His *Words or Voice of Hope, (Sagalee Abdii)*, for it is always a blessing and what sustains us in difficult times and situation and reminds us that our *hope* is in the Lord.

It is not an exaggeration if we say that our world is in one of its most difficult times in its history, in particular our country of birth, that we all call our “*homeland,*” where our *umbilical cords were buried¹*, a significant description of *historical attachment in our Oromo culture.*

In the last few years and still today, war, displacement, drought, famine have intensified in Ethiopia and caused misery for millions of people and lately malaria rampant in many places in Oromia. While the utter wanton destruction and killings seem to be the norm of our time and real in many parts of the world, it seems that the so-called social media also seem to aggravate the situation: ordinary people continuously bombarded with psychological and physical wars, *in most cases manipulating and distorting the reports has become a hot business for many.*

Thus, when we witness the devastation caused in Ethiopia and Ukraine it is difficult to imagine how those who are in the leadership, in charge of running the countries when they look at the destruction caused under their eyes “against the ordinary people”, little bit of humanity left in them and feel remorse about it? It is unbelievable that in the 21st Century human beings are doing such inhumane things to one another, for that matter to any human being let alone to people of the country they are responsible to lead, care for and serve.

In this time that we live in now, we seldom hear good news, we always hear mainly negative news: one pandemic after another, wars, killings, droughts, famine, earthquakes etc. We have read and heard a description of these as signs of what to come in the Gospels where the Lord had said these things were to come as sign of the end time, (Matt 24, Mark 13 etc.) but He also said, “still not quite yet even when we hear and witness all these things”. He added that, “only His Father knows¹ not the angles, not even He himself.” So, what is expected from us all is just to try to be aware and “pray to God without ceasing” to be strong in Him and not to lose hope when we witness all these things happening around us.

Still in the middle of all these, all is not bleak. We still hear some positive news occasionally: the Gospel of the Lord still preached and reach to those who have not heard it yet. Our church is surviving with the Grace of God and, in some cases

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even thriving even though we have encountered some unexpected challenges from time to time, but we have seen that the Lord is indeed with His church.

Thus, during challenging times what sustains us is the word of the Lord, *the Voice of Hope.* Following the crucifixion of the Lord when His disciples were terrified and retreated to a house, shut the door, and sat in despair not knowing what will happen to them next, the Lord came in without the need to open the door and stood among them and said to them “**peace be unto you**”! Let His peace be with all His people, those who put their trust in Him during our challenging times and always. *Sagalee Abdii, (Voice of Hope)!*

July 2023



Sagalee Abdii

Midia

Isaiah 41:10 & 13

10. So do not fear, for I am with you; do not be dismayed, for I am your God. I will strengthen you and help you; I will uphold you with my righteous right hand.

13. For I am the LORD, your God, who takes hold of your right hand and says to you, Do not fear; I will help you.



II. Word from the Pastoral Office: By Asefa Melka Wakjira, in charge of OROECM Pastoral Office:

Jabaadhaa, innoo anaa, hin sodaatinaa!

Maatii Our Redeemer nagaan isiniif haa ta'u!

Har'ra jireenyakoo baadiyyaa keessaan waa isinitti hima. Jireenyan baadiyyaatti dabarse keessaa wanta ani hin daganne baay'eedha. Isa keessaa, erga bokkaan roobee caamee booda halkan dukkana keessa deemuun isa tokkodha. Deemuu barbaaddanii utuu hin taane, dirqamaan wanta manaa isin baasutu dhufa ta'a. Kanaaf, dhimma sana xumuruuf deemuuf dirqamtu. Akkuma isin beektan baadiyyaatti namni waan ittiin karaa ibsataa adeemu qabu baay'ee muraasa. Ijoollummaakootti dukkana akkasii sana keessaa yeroo garaa garaa deemee beeka. Waan tokkollee arguun hin dandaa'amu. Tarii karaa irra adeemtan kanarra guyyaa yeroo baay'ee deddeebitaniittu yoo ta'eef akkasumatti haalaan deemuu dandeessu. Karaa isin tasumaa hin beekne taanaan garuu baay'ee rakkisaadha. Deemsa akkasii keessatti gufuun nama rukutuu dandaa'a. Kana malees, boolla keessa ejjatanii kufuun jira. Walumaa galatti nama sodaachisa. Balaafis carraan saaxilamuu guddaadha.

Maatiyoos Wangeela isaa (14:22-33) keessatti waan akkas nama sodaachisu tokko barreesseera. Gaaf tokko Yesuus bartoota isaatiin gara gamaatti bidiruudhaan ce'aa jedhee isaan biraa hafe. Gara gaaraattis ol ba'ee halkan guutuu kadhachaa buleetu gara lafa barii jala isaan bira dhufe. Ergamoonni isaa bishaan walakkaa jiru turan. Yesuus ammoo bishaan irra adeemaa gara isaanii dhaqe. Bartoonni isaa garuu ekeraadha jedhanii iyyan. Iyyi sun sodaa fi lubbuu ofiif yaadda'uu keessaa madda jedheen yaada. Yesuus garuu 'Jabaadhaa, innoo anaa, hin sodaatinaa!' jedhee deebiseef. Pheexiroosimmoo 'Erga si ta'ee, bishaan irra gara kee akkan dhufu na abboom!' jedhee Yesuusiiin gaafannaan 'Kottu!' jedhee deebiseef. Innis akkuma Yesuus bishaan sana gubbaa adeeme. Gaafa inni dha'aa bishaanichaa sodaatee raafames Yesuustu isa oolche.

Jireenyaa fi tajaajila Waldaa keenyaa keessatti yeroon raafamaa garaa garaa akka dhufee darbe argitanii beektu. Yeroo tokko tokko utuuma walii wajjin jirru dukkana fakkaata. Nuuf ifuu dida. Yookiin ammoo waan nama sodaachisu keessa seenna. Yeroo akkasii kana akkuma bartoota Gooftaa keenya Yesuus gara Waaqayyooti iyyineerra ta'a. Tarii baduu keenya laataa? Inni ekeraa fakkaatu kun du'a nutti fidinnaa jennee raafamneerra. Haa ta'u malee, Yesuus ammoo innoo ana nuun jedha. Waaqayyo yeroo baay'ee rakkina nutti dhufu keessatti nu gargaareera. Yeroo nuti itti akkuma Pheexiroos rakkina sana irra adeemnes jira.

Kanaaf, amantii keenya keessatti qoramuun jira. Namatti dukkanaa'uun jira. Sodaachuun jira. Iyyuu fi wawwaachuunis jira ta'a. Garuu kana hunduma keessatti Yesuusiiin ilaaluun nurra jira. Barreessaan ergaa lbirrootaa 'Yesuus **isa amantii keenya jalqabee fiixaan baasuttii ija keenya hin buqqifannu'** jedha. (lbrootaa 12:2a). Yesuus Pheexiroosiin waan sadii jedhe. Tokkoffaa, jabaadhaa mogoleen isin hin bu'in jedhe. Lammaffaa, innoo ana jedhe. Ekeraa yookin wanta du'a isinitti fidee dhufu miti. Anuma isa isin guyyaa wajjin ooltanidha jechuu isaati. Sadaffaa irratti, hin sodaatinaa jedhe. Yesuus amantii qabaadhaa nuun jechuu isaati. Deemsa dhuunfaa keenyaa fi kan maatii keenyaa keessatti Yesuus akka nu faana jiru dagachuu hin qabnu. Hunduma caalaatti Yesuus Waldaa Kiristaanaa isaa wajjin jira. Kanaaf, amantii, abdiif jiaalalan jiraachuu fi tajaajiluutu nuuf ta'a.



III. Greetings and Statement from OROECM Church President Aadde Elizabeth Namara.

Elizabeth Namara, OROECM Church Council President

Dear Beloved friends in the Lord: Greetings in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ to all members of our congregation, Our Redeemer Oromo Evangelical Church, OROECM as well as our online followers and all the faithful members of Oromo Churches in Minnesota and across the globe.

May the boundless love of God the Father, the Grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, and the Communion of the Holy Spirit be with each and every one of you.

I am deeply humbled and grateful for the incredible privilege of being a part of this faithful and vibrant church since its inception. Over the past 33 years, I have witnessed the unwavering faithfulness of God, who has lovingly guided and protected this church for the glory of His sovereign purpose. I am so grateful to Him.

First, I would like to extend a heartfelt appreciation to all the members of our church, including the lay ministers and the leaders of the various ministries. Please be aware that God has chosen you to be His faithful servants in the life of our/your congregation. Thank you and may God bless you and your families abundantly for your commitment for the service you provide in advancing God's Kingdom.

We thank God for our children/youth ministry, (***) though it has lacked dedicated commitment for many years. It's vital to recognize the significance of nurturing and supporting our children, youth, and young adults as they represent the future of our congregation and have potential to make impact in their communities and the wider world. Strengthening this ministry is our top priority as a church. I urge the entire congregation to come together, support, and foster the spiritual growth of the younger generations in a collaborative effort. By committing to this cause and with God's grace and help, our church can create a lasting influence on the lives of future leaders and followers of Christ.

A little bit of History

As the first Oromo Christian Church in diaspora, throughout the years, our congregation, has experienced both joys and challenges, but in every circumstance, God's faithfulness has remained with us, helping us ensuring the continuity of our commitment to His kingdom. Through all, it is truly fulfilling to witness our congregation flourishing in the Word of God, love, faith, and hope, as well as seeing our numbers grow.

*** As the Youth Ministry of our church is our church President's top priority, she invited Mr. Nicholas Hinds from Forge to our church on Sunday, 18 June 2023, this year's Father's Day, he was with our youth and children. One of the points that he made that day that we remember was, Jesus's statement in Mathew 9:37-38, "*the harvest is plentiful, but the laborers are few*". He said, *now days we need more laborers, people who to take the message of the Gospel to those who have not heard it yet and that is why we need to work with our children from the beginning to prepare them for the task.*

We anchor faith on the truths of His Word—Faith, Hope, and Love—which have been our guiding principles in this journey, as stated in 1 Corinthians 13:13. In the journey of our Christian lives, these three pillars fortify our spirits and uplift our souls: Faith, Hope, and Love. These divine virtues serve as the bedrock of our faith as Christians, guiding us through trials, strengthening our firmness, and bringing us closer to God's abundant grace.

Faith is the unwavering trust we place in our Heavenly Father, even when the path before us seems uncertain. As we anchor ourselves in God's promises, we are reminded that He is always with us, leading us through both joyous and challenging times. Let us embrace the gift of faith, nurturing it through prayer, studying the Scriptures, and fellowship with one another.

Hope is the visual signal that shines brightly in the darkest of nights. As we navigate through the trials of this world, hope assures us of a better tomorrow. Our hope rests not in worldly possessions or fleeting desires, but in the eternal promises of our Savior, Jesus Christ. With hope in our hearts, we can face adversity with courage, knowing that God's divine plan unfolds in His perfect timing.

Love is the ultimate expression of our Christian calling. It is the unifying force that binds us together as one family in Christ. As we love God with all our hearts and love our neighbors as ourselves, we reflect the light of Christ to the world and fulfilling God's commandments. Let us seek to embody love in our thoughts, words, and actions, showing compassion, forgiveness, and understanding to all. Through love, we become true witnesses of the Gospel and agents of God's transformative power. The Word of God emphasizes the supremacy of love above all else. In Romans 13:8, it is beautifully written, "Owe no one anything, except to love one another, for he who loves another has fulfilled the law."

This verse shows the profound truth that love is not just a virtue but the very essence of fulfilling God's commandments. When we love others genuinely and selflessly, we are embodying the core of God's teachings. Love goes beyond mere obligations; it is a debt that we should willingly and joyfully carry in our hearts. When we truly love one another, we align ourselves with God's divine plan, and it brings unity, compassion, and peace. Through love, we can bridge gaps, heal wounds, and bring hope to the broken-hearts and we fulfill the true purpose of God's commandments and reflect His divine nature to the world.

As we dig deeper into the intertwined virtues of faith, hope, and love, let us remember that they are gifts bestowed upon us by our Heavenly Father. Let us nurture and cultivate these virtues in our lives, so they may grow and bear abundant fruit. Together, let us walk hand in hand, supporting one another in this journey of faith, knowing that our steadfast faith, enduring hope, and boundless love will illuminate the path towards God's everlasting kingdom.

May the grace of the Lord be with all of us.



Mr. Nicholas Hinder with the children and youth group.

Humbly in His service,

Elizabeth Namarra, President

OROECM, July 2023

IV. Events From Around OROECM

a) Resignation of the Senior Pastor, Pastor Wondimu, (Just for the record).

The *now former pastor* of our church, Pastor Wondimu Sonessa suddenly resigned at the end of January 2023. He had been the Assistant Pastor from 2013 to 2019 and the Senior Pastor until his resignation at the end of January 2023, his last sermon was on January 15, 2023, on the church's verse of the year 2023, "a good tree produces good fruit".

On Sunday 22 January 2023 Pastor Norma from the Minneapolis Area Synod, MAS preached at our church. *Part of her being there was to encourage and give spiritual support to the church because of some challenges that it was going through. She mentioned that the Synod asked the Pastor to consider to if he could change his mind on the resignation and continue to serve his church.*

However, she said, the Pastor said he would not change his mind because *the Holy Spirit told him to leave the church.* In conclusion she put it, "the Holy Spirit called the Pastor to leave your church into the unknown future".

On the same point our then newly elected church President Aadde Elizabeth Namara during her acceptance speech also mentioned that the Church Council tried several times asking Pastor Wondimu to change his decision and stay with the church but again he told them that the Holy Spirit told him to leave. So, she said, "who are we to argue or say anything against the advice of the Holy Spirit"?

Our church and our members wish him and his young family all the best in their life!

b) Election and Installation of the new Council members:

During the Congregational Meeting of our church on 08 January 2023 those members who were nominated earlier to serve as church council members were presented to the Church Congregational Meeting by the Election Committee members and the following people were elected to the Council.



Aadde Elizabeth Namara, President, Obbo Darasu Lola, V/President, Adde Lydia Ashana Member



The new Church Council members were installed by Pastor Wondimu, on 22 January 2023 as his last service at our church, Rev Yadesa and Pastor Norma were witnessing.

c) The Election Committee members were:

Aadde Tadelech Gedefa, Chairperson, Aadde Tsehai Wodajo, Secretary, Lalistu B Woyessa member, Obbo Asrat Tesfa, member and Obbo Aga Hora, member. While we welcomed the new Council members, we also extend our thank you to the former Council members for their services during their term, and also the Election Committee members for their hard work in organizing the elections, sometime difficult to convince people to accept the nomination to serve their church if elected.

d) **OROECM 2023 Easter Conference.**



Pastor Merga Negeri

We had our 2023 Easter Conference from Friday, 07 to Sunday, 09 April 2023, at which Pastor Merga Negeri from Frankfurt, Germany was our guest preacher. Obbo Yosef Galata from Power of Gospel (Oromo) Church in Minneapolis was the spiritual singer, and his 8 years old son Kena Yosef played the keyboard at the conference.

Our church had the Holy Week service the whole week starting from Monday, April 3, - to Maund Thursday on Apr 6, 2023

A brief note of some of the main relevant points Luba Merga made during the four days of the conference that we recall were:

- On the evening of Maund Thursday, the day that the Lord had His last Supper with His disciples and also established the Holy Communion that has become central as one of the parts of the practice of Christian churches worship, Pastor Merga said the Lord Jesus, King of Peace, the Sunday before, triumphantly entered Jerusalem riding on a colt a sign of humility.
- Thursday was a day of celebration and joy but to be followed by Friday to be the day of the suffering of the Lord and a day of grief.
- Friday, 07 April 2023 Good Friday was the “day of liberation for humanity but Jesus sacrificed His liberty on the cross for our liberation, He drank a bitter cup to save humanity.
- Sat, 08 April 2023 morning Spiritual Authority that God gave His Church and its leaders. The spiritual authority (aboo Hafuura) God gave to “man” from creation and Satan took it away and Jesus Christ restored to humanity by losing His own liberty suffering on the cross

- *Easter Sunday Saving Grace of God (Ayyaana Waaqayyo), Hope. Our church and our members wish him and his young family all the best in their life!*



Obbo Yosef Galata from the Power of the Gospel Church, (Oromo Church) in Minneapolis and Worship Team of OROECM leading the worship, his 8 years old son, Kena Yosef accompanying his father by playing Keyboard.



Luba Merga with OROECM Council Members.



Dawit, Luba Merga, Yosef & Kena, Asefa and Yifru. (Photo credit to Talilee Dureessoo)



Pastor Merga Negeri and Talilee Dureessoo

f) 2023 Mother's Day Celebration at OROECM:

The 2023 Mother's Day was on Sunday, 14 May 2023. Aadde Roman Tefera was named OROECM 2023 Mother of the Year, and the event was colorfully celebrated.



e) Baptism



Rev Yadesa conducting the Baptism ceremony of 4 children from our church baptized at our church, God bless all of them!



Aadde Roman Tefera, with OROECM women's group (Pictures credit to Chali Yadesa)



L to R Baeka Dawit Baisa, Sena Aaron Abdisa, Henan Edasa Argo and Oli Zakariyas Fayisa



Obbo Daniel Namara, Men's Group Leader leading discussions on Mother's Day



Among our God's mysteries of creation are the bond, love and care between mothers and newborns displayed even among domestic and wild animals and birds of the air. (Picture Credit BBC Earth).



2023 Father's Day was on 18 June 2023 and Lube (Rev.) Yadesa Daba was named OROECM 2023 Father of the Year. Rev. Yadesa is the former president of EECMY.



Luba (Rev) Yadesa with his family members

g) 2023 Father's day celebration.



Obbo Bekele Garba going from the Sanctuary to Gannoo (Aster) Salbaan's Hall



Seen from the celebration, 2023 Father's Day

h) Graduations:

God blessed many parents of our church and our wider Oromo community that we had many young people graduated from high school and colleges. This year must have been the largest number of graduates our people had since Minnesota became "Little Oromia", the "home" of the 2nd largest number of Oromo people outside of "Biyya Oromo¹" and Kenya.

This summer our people in the Twin Cities area were continuously on the move especially on the weekends attending graduation ceremonies, some days up to five or more. Among our graduates:



Ebise Tashale from University of Minnesota



Chaltu with her parents Adde Ayelech Salbana and Obbo Amsalu Bayisa



L to R Sotile Kibru, Loshe Garba, Jale Moti and Soran Kibru



L to R Chaltu Amsalu Bayisa, Augsburg University, Taliilee Michael Hundesa and Yohaannis Michael Hundesa fro University of Minnesota Duluth.



Ebako Qalbesa Gaga



Kena Abara



Selihom Amanuel Megerssa



Kena Tesfaye Robale.

i) Onesimus Nesib (Abbaa Gammachiis) Day:

On Sunday 25 June 2023 our church, OROECM celebrated Onesimus Nesib's, (Abbaa Gammachiis) Day with the Oromo Bible Society aptly declaring and introducing its latest publication date of our Afaan Oromo Bible on Abbaa Gamachiis Day, 21 June 2023



Abbaa Gammachiis (Onesimus Nesib) and Aadde Gannoo (Aster) Salbaan.

(Aster) played a major role in helping Abbaa Gammachiis in translating the Bible into Afaan Oromo. Many people of from our church and others from abroad participated via zoom to narrate the history of Abbaa Gammachiis: Luba (Rev. Dr) Tasgara Hirpho, Obbo Melkamu Duresso from Germany and Luba (Rev.) Itefa Gobena from Ethiopia.



Egere Gamtaa Kumsa with family



Luba (Rev. Dr) Tasgara Hirpho



Obbo Melkamu Duresso



Luba (Rev.) Itefa Gobena



Onesimos Nesib, Nama Biyya Oromo

Also, from our church people who know the history of Abbaa Gammachiis participated and contributed: Dr. Raggaasaa Oljira, Obbo Bekele Garba, Aadde Martha Namara, (on the involvement and contribution of the women), Obbo Mesfin Ayele preparing some informative questions **about** the history of Abbaa Gamachiis and his colleagues, Rev. Yadesa Dhaabaa, Obbo Ephraim Olani and Urge Abaye from the children read in English Abbaa Gammachiis’s letter that he composed recalling his ordeal of his early childhood. It was a moving recall. The participants thanked our church OROECM for the financial contribution we made toward the latest printings of our Bible in Afaan Oromo. We are pleased to that our church member and our former Church President Obbo Ephraim Olani is on the Board of Oromo Bible Society representing our church and also Asefa Melka Wakjira also participates.



Urge Abaye

As humans, it is just beyond our imagination to understand the life that Abbaa Gammachiis went through, it was simply God’s Devine plan to reach our Oromo people with the Gospel (Goodnews) of His Son Our Lord Jesus Christ. What Abbaa Gammachiis and his colleagues, the ladies like Gannoo (Aster) Salbaan accomplished was simply God’s miracle. One question that comes to our mind, how many of us have read the Bible from the beginning, Genesis chapter 1:1 to the end, Revelation 22:21?

But Abbaa Gammachiis and Gannoo (Aster) Salbaan translated the whole Bible carefully and meticulously a Century and quarter ago when the method of writing was not as developed as today.

Reflecting on his ordeal, the suffering he endured the imprisonments, we recall the Apostle Paul's statement in Philippians 1:12-13 which goes, "I want you to know, brothers, that what has happened to me has really served to advance the Gospel". Similarly, what had happened to the young child Hiikaa, Gannoo Salbaan and the others nothing else but God's miraculous plan so that the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ reach the Oromo people and eventually our neighbors which on the other hand became the envy of others up to these days.

One amazing thing that God blessed him with was the love and pride that God instilled in him as who he was, instilled in him at the young age, the feeling of nationalism. As he was the first Oromo to call himself "Nama Biyya Oromo" making all Oromos one people living in a country he unified by naming it Biyya Oromo. The other amazing initiative he took more than a century ago, after they came back home to Wallagga with his wife Dimboo Garbaa from abroad they changed the names of all their children into Oromo names from the names they were originally given when the parents were abroad. Thus, the name of their first son who was originally named Barnabas, was renamed Gammachiis, and **Onesimus Nesib becoming Abbaa Gammachiis (Father of Gammachiis) according to Oromo culture**, the girls Dina renamed Ayyaanee and Tamar, Yaadatee. This was nothing but only because of the vision God gave Abbaa Gammachiis to take His Good News to Oromo people. We simply say thank God! **From this in short what do we learn even today, we need to reflect on it.**

In Philippians 1:27 the Apostle says, "live your life in a manner worthy of the Gospel of Christ".

Therefore, we the followers of Christ of our time, the relatively easy time we are in now in all aspect, should be able to think about what **Oromo Saint Abbaa Gammachiis and Aadde Gannoo Salbaan and others went through to bring the Gospel of our Lord to our people, to our Land so that we "live our lives in a manner worthy of the Gospel of Christ". Let us Live for justice for all people of God, truth, and peace! May our God, God of justice, truth and peace help us to live our lives for His Glory!**

By Admasu Simeso

j) Guyyaa Yaadanno Birtukan Waggaa Tokko'ffaa: (By Admasu Simeso)



(Pictures credit Talile Duresso)

Namooti harra yaadanno Birtukan'iif asitti argamtan hundi keessan fayyaa ta'aa Waaqayyo hunda keessan ha'eebbisu jenna, hiri'onna ishee, firooti ishee warri karaa adda addaattin nu wajjin dhabbattanii qopheeh kana irratti hirmaattan baayyee Waaqayyo hunda keessan ha'eebbisu

Warri Media adda-addaa, Warri Tajaajila Dubartootaa waldoota hundumaa Minnesota. Lubooti waldoota adda-addaa irraa (waldaa obboloota keenya warra Adventisitii, Waldaa Oromo Warra Wangeelaa Minnesota, Waldaa Beetel, Waldaa Eagle (Joobiraa/Risaa) Warra Wangeelaa, Waldaa Ebenezer fi Waldaa Mekane Yesuus sagalee Waaqayyoo nuu fiddan. Fayyaa nuu ta'aa tajaajila keessan irratti Waaqayyo isin wajjin hataa. Faarffattoonni warri Birtukan wajjin iddoo adda-addaatti faarffannaan tajaajila turtan yoona waaqa irraa isin dhaggeeffatti fayyaa ta'aa, Waaqayyo isin, tajaajila keessaanis ha'eebbisu.

Waaqayyo Birtukan wajjin ture, ammammoo isheen Isa bira jirti. Waa'ee Birtukan nami baayyeen Abbaan Manaa, Obbolaan fi firooti ishee dubbattaniiru caaffataanis kaa'aniiru.



Dhugaa dubbachuuf ani waa'ee Birtukan caalaatti erga isheen nu'biraa gara Gooftaa dhaqkeen bare, keessumattuu namoota meeqa, hammam akka ishen karaa gaarii garaa isaanii tuqxe, namooti baayyeen garuu yeroo baayyee kara hintaaneen wal'tuqna.

Keessumaa'mmoo, isa yeroo lubbuun nu wajjin jirtu caalaa gara Gooftaa dhaquu isheetiin caalaatti waan walitti nu fidde. Kanammoo kanan jechuu danda'e tokkoffaa gaafa geggeeffamu ishe lammaffaa'mmoo kunoo har'ra waa'ee nami meeqa akka asitti walgeenyee dha, waan baayyee: qajeelummaa, nagaa fi jaalalaan fakkeenya nuu taate.

Birtukan nama gargaarsi barbaachisu gargaaruu irraa haalli kamiyyuu isee hindhowwu: bokkaan, cabbiin, halkanni ishee hindhowwan. Barsiisa Gooftaa dhugaa jiraatte. Kana gochuu ishe keessa'mmoo ofjajuuf' ofagarsiisuu malee dha. Tajaajila, guutuu, tajaajila dhugaa, Lubi Gudina'n jedhan jiraatte.

Yeroo hundumaa as fuula kana dura teessi. Yeroo barbaadde, yeroo Hafuurri Waaqayyo itti fidutti, "ameen jetti, ililchiti." Takka-takka gidduu'dhumaan ililchuun waan baayyee qajeelchiti: yoo gargaltee hinilaalleyyuu warra waldaa keessatti sillim jedhan damaqsiti, warri Waaqeffachiisan yoo walqixaachuufii dide ililchuudhaan yeroo laattiif, nami lallabu yoo akka danqamuu ta'an ililchudhann karaatti debifti, yeroo beeksisa waldaa himnulle yoo wanti nu jennu nu harkaa bade ililchuu isheetiin hafuura fudhannee qajeelffanna. Ililchuun kan Birtukan duwwaa kenname natti fakkaata. Kan Birtukan gaaffii hinqabu, maaltaate hinjedhamu.

On the occasion Luba Fikiru Etecha shared a pertinent moving word of God on the occasion on which an estimated more than 500 people came together from all communities. At the end of the program a room upstairs in OROECM church building near Luba (Rev.) Gudina Tumsa's room dedicated to her name as Birtukan Ayana Sima's Memorial Room, she became the 4th person a room named for, after Onesimus Nesib, (Abbaa Gammachiis), Rev. Gudina Tumsa, Adde Gannoo (Aster) Salbaan.



Luba Melkamu Negeri made prayer at the dedication.



Family at the dedication.



Birtukan Ayana Sima Room, named 18 Feb 2023.

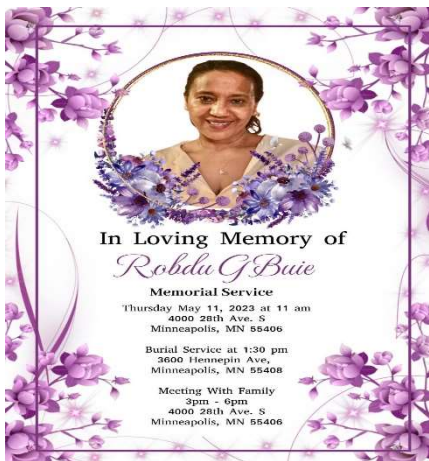


Birtukan lived an exemplary dedicated, holistic all-round true Christian life. It is befitting more than anyone to say, "I have fought the good fight, I have finished the race, I have kept the faith." 2 Timothy 4:7. Above all we thank our Almighty God for her life, and we all hope that we have learned something from her. "Glory to Him in the Highest, peace on earth and goodwill among all people." Luke 2:14

Note: A Memorial Fund in her name, Birtukan Ayana Sima's Memorial Fund, has been setup by her family and friends to help through our Oromo Churches back home our women who need help by providing support in their effort to generate income to support themselves and their family.

Minneapolis, MN, 18 Feb 2022, (revised July 2023).

I) The Memorial Service for Aadde Robdu G Buie



On 11 May 2023 memorial service was held at our church, Our Redeemer Oromo Evangelical Church in Minnesota, OROECM for Aadde Robdu G Buie. It was a solemn sendoff service for the young lady, wife, mother, sister, and friend for many in which at least more than 500 people from Oromo communities and non-Oromo communities as well as from all faiths groups attended to pay her a due respect. Aadde Rubdu 'is' the sister of our church, OROECM member Aadde Erkabnesh.

Her husband Obbo Tsegaye, their two children, all her close friends took turns to recall her care and kindness and pay her respect for what she had done for them in their lives. Pastor Dr Ijigu from Oromo Seventh-Day Adventist Church of Minnesota preached a very moving sermon comforting family and friends and concluding in prayer that she rests in peace with the Lord.

We all say let her sole rest in peace with the Lord and God be with her family!

By Admasu Simeso

k) OROECM Annual Church Picnic



Asefa Melka Wakjira, OROECM in charge of the Pastoral Office leading the service at the picnic...

On Sunday, 18 June 2023 our church had the usual yearly outing at the usual place at Minnehaha Park. This year the little difference was that we usually have our Sunday Church Service at our church and go after the service. This year we had the service at the park as well and had our luncheon meal and participated in various engaging and entertaining activities prepared by the organizers, our church Men's Group Leaders.

Sagalee Abdii, on behalf of our members says a sincere thank you to our Men's group led by Obbo Asrat Tesfa and Obbo Daniel Namara who every year take upon themselves to organize it and prepare the meals as well as entertaining activities. Here we are not listing all the names of all those who were involved as we do not want to take the risk of missing some., we just say thank you to all of them, may God bless you abundantly for diligently serving your church. It is a wonderful dedication of the holistic ministry of our church.

AS, July 2023

vii. On the Situation Back Home



A. Appeal from Wallagga Elders Council of Minnesota, WECM * (For information).**

Urgent Appeal to All People and Organizations of Goodwill: From Wallagga Elders Council of Minnesota, WECM, on the continued state of war against our people in Wallaga and several places in Western Shawaa, Northern Shawa and Guji in Oromia.

The latest news we get from back home, what our people are going through is heart breaking and extremely saddening to say the least.

During the month of April this year we issued two statements in support of and encouraging the peace talks organized by the international community that was held on the Island of Zanzibar in Tanzania between the Ethiopian government and Oromo Liberation Army, OLA. It was a promising move after many years of suffering of our people: not being able to move around to work in their field or the small traders all unable to work and support their families. In addition, they were and still are terrorized not knowing when government security forces come around, take out the innocent powerless people, kill the husbands in front of their families and the children in front of their parents etc.

At the start of the Peace Talks there was a glimmer of hope for peace for our people, the ordinary people, the innocents suffering for no reason whatsoever.

Following what appeared to be a pause of the peace talks, the statement put out by the government on the progress of the talks indicated that, although full agreement was not reached there was a positive and encouraging sign that both parties would get back to it and resume the negotiation.

But after a while, over the last 2-3 months and lately we have been hearing a very discouraging news that serious fighting resumed and is going on again at several places in Oromia, especially with the focus over Wollega.

Because of the conflict that has raged these areas for years, people do not have anything to feed their families; children are not going to school; malaria has become rampant; hospitals are not functioning; basic medicines are not available; thus, our people are in desperate situation. On top of that unprecedented human tragedy is unfolding in recent weeks; we learned that in a place called Qiltxu Kaarraa in West Wollega the government forces took out five young people from their homes, forced them to dig their own graves and buried them in it alive. In the following week in Mendi town of West Wollega another two young men Waaqgaarii Caalii and Boonaa Tuujjubaa were shot and killed in broad day light. Similar incidents have become common in Oromia.

The prevalence of such criminal acts in a country that claims to have ancient history, that is led by a Nobel Peace Prize winner, that has a population that is overtly religious, and that has seemingly civilized elite, is difficult to imagine. Things have fundamentally gone wrong; by our silence, we all failed not only our people but the entire humanity.

Please, can we all dare, come out and say something, "be the voice for the voiceless"? In Galatian 5:15 the Apostle Paul says, "if you continue to bite one another be careful that you don't devour and destroy one another".

We members of WECM though heartbroken never give up thus again appeal to all parties, all people of goodwill to commit ourselves to resolving the present predicament our people are put in without their fault and seek the way to stop the conflicts.

1. The killing of civilians must stop and those who committed such crimes must appear in court.

2. Although it may sound naïve to some people, we members of WECM again appeal to the Oromo people at home and abroad to put aside all our minor differences and be a voice for innocent civilians.

3. We also would like to extend our request again to the countries and organizations that were involved in the first round of peace talks: the Norwegian, Kenyan, US, and Tanzanian governments, to put pressure on the Ethiopian Government of Prime Minister Abiy Ahmed to seek peaceful solution for the conflict.

We wish and hope for genuine peace for the Oromo people who are more affected at present and all people of Ethiopia to have Peace of God.

WECM 15 July 2023

- 1- CC: US State Department
- 2- Norwegian Government via Honorary Consulate General of Norway in MN
- 3- Kenyan Embassy in US
- 4- Tanzanian Embassy in US
- 5- OAU

*** This was on various Oromo media network.

Note:

As a church we at OROECM always keep our people who are in difficult situation in our prayers. Our country in serious situation especially in Oromia, particularly in Wallagga and several other parts, our people with no fault nor cause of their own are subjected to suffering. We feel their pain. **We humbly and kindly ask and encourage all people of goodwill and faith groups to join in prayers and relentlessly work for justice truth and peace for all people of Ethiopia. Our people do Not deserve what they are subjected to!**

We sincerely appeal to the Prime Minister Dr. Abiy and his government, the parliament members the regional governments, elders of the country, Churches, Mosques and Waaqeffataa leaders all should pause, take time to reflect on what the ordinary people of Ethiopia, the young and the old are going through and seek genuine solution for the peaceful coexistence of all people.

Peace for Ethiopia, which used to “stretch up her hands to God!



This picture from Borana, speaks more than words about the situation.

Admasu Simeso July 2023

B) Oromia Orthodox Christians Quest to Worship God in their Own Language, Afaan Oromo.

Recently, for about a year or so we have been hearing that Oromo Christian member of the Ethiopian Orthodox Church, EOC expressed their desire to EOC that they want to worship God in their own language, Afaan Oromo. But we also hear that they faced a strong resistance from some of the leadership of the EOC but we believe that the dialogue is continuing.

We commend the wise and dignified peaceful approach of the Oromia Orthodox Church Synod in handling the situation, as God fearing and trusting people, not saying that they want to break away from EOC, but while keeping the unity of the church intact but worship God each and every one in their own languages, as God created all languages, like shown the day of Pentecost, the day that the Holy Spirit came down on the gathering of the believers at which everyone heard and understood one another's language. (The Book Acts chapter 2).

Disagreement in church history over doctrine and language is not new. In 1054 AD the church of that time split, (in the Great Schism) which led to the Western (Latin) and the Eastern Orthodox (Greek) over church doctrines, one of them whether to use a leavened or unleavened bread in the Eucharist. The EOC traces its root to the Eastern Orthodox, the Greek background but over time adopted Geez as the language of liturgy.

As Christians, followers of our Lord Jesus Christ, who while being the Son of God still showed humans humility, as a church our humble and genuine advice to all parties is to amicably seek workable solution, people worshipping God in their languages while keeping the unity of the church.

This is the age when the Unity of all Believers and dialogue among all faith groups that believe in the Supreme God is going on in all God given languages in our whole world. To get to this and achieve a peaceful solution to the situation all groups involved should handle it carefully and in sincere goodwill!

We say to the Oromia Orthodox Church Synod continue your quest without wavering and in dignity and good faith, and “God and history” will be on your side, and we are also humbly with you in our prayers as well.

“Glory to God in the highest heaven, peace on earth and goodwill among people”. Luke 2:14. If there is a genuine goodwill among people, especially those who believe in God, the Creator of all things, there will be peace on the whole earth leave alone in and among churches leading to “peaceful coexistence of all people”.

Admasu Simeso, June 2023

Announcement

We have been having quarterly issues of our church publication, Sagalee Abdii, annually and we apologize to our readers that we missed couple of issues this year. Thus, this is not as news but just brief historical record of our church.

¹ They say in our Oromo culture when the *umbilical cord* that connects the mother and the child cut, removed at birth it is not thrown away but buried as a respect because it has a significant value of attachment not only with the mother but also with the *birthplace*. (*Lafa handhurri keenya itti awwalame*).

¹ The thing we heard few months back that a number of people from Uganda convinced that this is the “end time” and Ethiopia is the place to be when the end comes and some of them migrated to Ethiopia, to the Southwest of the country over the last 6 months. Unfortunately, at this time Ethiopia seems to be where you don’t want to be and most of those people who were born there even avoid to visit leave alone living there.



Sagalee Abdii expresses its appreciation to those members who participated in one way or another to make this possible: Chali Yadesa, Talile Duresso and Asefa Waqjira for the pictures, OROECM Council President Aadde Elsa Namara and Asefa, in charge of our Pastoral Office for the articles they contributed, Gamachis Yadesa for formatting and Dawit Baisa for the posting. May God bless all of you for your dedicated service in your church.

We also say thank you to our Women’s Group and Men’s Group, our Young Adults, the Prayer Group, our Worship Team, the Media Team and those who quietly provide service for their commitment in serving their church.

If by any change we have missed mentioning any of our graduates we sincerely apologize, and also if we have misspelt the name any person covered in this different from the way they write we sincerely apologize also.

Sagalee Abdii



Sagalee Abdii Issue XVIII August 2023



Sagalee Abdii

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