

April 17, 2009

**Ethiopian Mission Net work Conference (meeting)
April 23-25, 2009
Fremont Presbyterian Church
Sacramento.**

Brief Overview of the EECMY Bethel Synods for the year 2008 and first quarter of 2009.

**“In Him we live, and move, and have our being.”
Acts 17:28**

Warm greetings from Bethel Synods coordination office.

Background

As it is clear the Ethiopian Evangelical Church Mekane Yesus is one of the fastest growing Churches in the world. The EECMY Bethel synods are the Presbyterian background Synods in Ethiopia. From the 21 Synods in EECMY five of them are Bethel Synods. All Synods have got traditional partners with whom they are strongly serve together, especially these days when the idea of block grant is diminishing traditional partners are strengthening relationship and working together than ever. We as EECMY Bethel synods are happy to be part of the Ethiopian Mission Net work.

1. Evangelism

The great commission Jesus gave to His disciples was to go out and preach the Gospel, and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the father and of the son and of the Holy Spirit. Based on that great commission we were able to get the Good News from the first Americans 90 years ago. As we have received from Lord through the first missionaries, Evangelism work is our first priority. When it not possible for us to go reach others, God has brought and bringing Many Muslim from Eastern and northern part of our country to western and southwest of our areas to the catchments Areas of the five Bethel Synods, through the resettlement program. It is a challenge in one way and at the same time it is also an opportunity. Praise the Lord even if there scarcity of fund to reach others it was possible to reach many thousands of people in the last few years. From the

total membership of the EECMY in the year 2008, 5,000,000 about 1,000,000 are from the Bethel Synods. It was possible to reach people even out of our catchments areas up to the Rift valley areas in Eastern Shewa and western Arsi Zones. This Challenge is for all of us including the Ethiopian mission net work.

A. Low Cost Church Building

As the church continues to grow, one of the most important problems the synods face is for bigger worship places. With the help of the Bethel Synods partners and Mr. Alex Booth, through the Outreach Foundation

We have been able to support churches buy corrugated iron sheet for new roofing when they expand their building or build new ones at the areas where new congregations have been planted. We would like to take this opportunity to thank the Outreach Foundation and all concerned, for listening to our pleas when we talked to them and also sent our requests.

Along with the Church building program the program started to be implemented in our Synods is Tent Making Program. Many servants of God especially volunteers are benefited from this program and they are strongly serving the Lord. The other program is the rural literacy program which has opened another new door to reach others. The church school program was a Presbyterian tradition from the beginning in Ethiopia, but during the Derg regime when church buildings were closed and confiscated the church school was closed down, since then there was no church school as that. Praise the Lord through this program the church school got resurrection. We are thankful to Rev Dr. Rob Wiengartner for his cooperation and commitment with these projects. Made possible to read their Bible. Especially women got more opportunity through this program to be able to read their Bible even in programs in prison ministry.

Illubabor Bethel Synod and Western Wollaga Bethel synod has got another opportunity as part of the Eleven Oromo speaking synods of EECMY through the Joint Functional Oromo literacy programmed. (The reason I mentioned this is because I know about the program in detail as chair for the council for the eleven synods mentioned earlier.

The other new program we have started towards the end of 2008 was Leaders capacity building. The first workshop was implemented in December 2008. The leaders have found out that this programmed is fruit full for our church leaders at all levels ,so we have planed to seek for more fund to run this workshop one at BSCO level as TOT training and at all five synods to train leaders at all levels at presbytery level and also at congregation level God willing.

We were able to start computer training for synod leaders last year. I would like to thank the Rev. Martin and Dough Sensabaugh from Shenandoah presbytery for their willingness to come to Ethiopia and gave the training. we would like to thank the presbytery for sending them for the training .The Synods are looking forward to get this training at their respective areas this year also God willing.

B. Bible Schools

Our Bible schools in deferent Synods continue to train evangelists and church leaders. We are thankful to the Lord and partners for enabling our synods to implement this service.

1. The Gidada Bible School in WWBS has got 43 students this year from this 7 of them are girls one of the students is from Arsi zone (Arsi Oromoo) in southern part of the country. From this 27 of them will be graduated this year and the rest are first year students.

2. Baro Bible school in WGBS has 15 students this year 10 of them are from the synod 5 of them are from Sudan Lutheran mission.

3. Dan Mac lure Bible school is in EGBS has 21 students this year.

.4 Charles Haspel Bible School in SWBS has 62 students this year.

5. Terfa Jarso Bible school in IBS has 52 students this year. These days there is new decision that unless one goes through proper theological training, he or she shouldn't be hired to be evangelist. Because of this number of people who want training at Bible Schools and Seminaries are increasing from time to time.

2. Education

1. The Bethel Mekane yesus school in Addis Ababa.

This year there are 1150 students in the school. Even though it is not possible to teach Bible in classes these days because of the new government curriculum through the chapel program it is still possible to reach others. The challenge we have with this school and with other schools is that well trained teachers leave the school because of salary scale is low compare to Government scale and some NGOs, and also because there is no on job training opportunity in place in our schools.

The building of the new chapel which has resident for expatriate is in good progress. We would like to thank all who have contributed to such blessed service. There is another opportunity for extending education in Finfinee (Addis Ababa). The agreement for opening new schools in Addis Ababa is made with Oromia regional state a year ago. We believe it is good opportunity for our church and partners to be able to expand our services.

2.. The Bethel Evangelical Secondary school in Dambi Dollo is serving in better atmosphere this year. The school has enrolled 486 students this year. Gemachu the new Director is working hard to bring back the school to the previous status. There is hoping to get English teacher for next year God willing by the name Larry and Barbara Moir. Invitation from EECMY is on the way for them, the school and the community are happy for this. Gemechu the school director needs

to share his concern ,that there is great need for teachers especially in the field of science Biology, Chemistry and so. Another concern of the school is also renovation for some of the school buildings, if a volunteer group can be requested like in the past great things can be accomplished. The big problem of the school and Dembi Dollo area is Intern ate problem this days. On behalf of BESS, BYES and Gidadaa Bible schools and the benefiting communities I would like to take this opportunity to thank The Ethiopian Education Endowment fund committee members and all who are contributing in many ways to this blessed service.

3. The Birihane yesus Elementary school is also serving in good condition. The school has got one English teacher from America by the name Sharon Curry. This year the school has 600 students.

4. Gilo Primary school in EGBS is serving the community the school is from grades 1-4 up to now. This year the school has got 522 students in rolled. The big challenge of the school is running cost .There is no ECO for this school. We appreciate if ways and means can be found to open ECO for this school.

5. In WGBS there is a process of opening one school from Kindergarten level. The name of the school on process is called Nyinanyang God willing. We also appreciate if ways can be found to open ECO for this school as well.

We were able to get English teacher for Bethel Mekane Yesus School in Addis Ababa. Mrs Lorra wearty with her husband Mr. Bruce weary, who education specialist to serve the Bethel synods, but after finishing their language school and stared service when students, the parents and the school community were happy about getting an American English teacher the health problem of Mr. Bruce was saddening news, for which they have to leave the country within short time for treatment. Even though it is shocking we are still praying for them .Getting an English teacher for this school is an urgent issue for us.

3. Health

All the Bethel Synods Clinics are giving service to the community as much as possible. Gatcheb clinic in SWBS, Pokkio and Gilo Clinics in EGBS, the clinics equipment were destroyed during the unrest last time. The clinics need to be restored they have trained staff, but medication equipment like Laboratory, and other equipment for examination needs to be purchased, but there is no fund for that in place. Adura Clinic in WGBS is also giving service. In IBS Chaalo and Aramii Clinics,

The Tulu Goppo Clinic in WWBS is also giving service. At some areas there are pressures from the Government to up grade the Clinics, but on the other hand they appreciate Church clinics because they are located in rural areas to serve the neediest people in the country side. Most of the clinics were being visited by Dr, Bob Ellis, Frank E. Dim mock and the Rev. Michael Weller in February this year.

HIV/AIDS

The effort to bring awareness in communities of the seriousness of HIV/AIDS is the ongoing effort of the Bethel Synods. We hope you get activity reports from synods about this program. There is great need in all corners of Ethiopia these days for orphans support since there are so many people in our arias who are affected. This is one of the challenges that needs close attention by our partners and PCUSA. The funds that come to church and the Synods are not enough to respond adequately to the requests of the community.

4. Synods

The five bethel Synods are doing their best even though there are many challenges these days. I am very happy to report that this year it was possible to form the five Bethel Synods in cluster for Development services. We are also happy that PCUSA has already sent on Mission coworker to strengthen this

service. The name of the mission coworker is Mr. Nathaniel Veltman .He is already in the country following up his language course. He will be serving as Development adviser at Cluster level residing in Mettu where the office of the cluster is located. One general challenge of the Synods is Economic challenge, and the other one is the new Bethel Movement which is becoming Head ache for Bethel Synods as well as for the entire Church EECMY at large.

Three of the Synods, SWBS have got Partnership with Washington Presbytery, IBS has got partnership with Shenandoah Presbytery, WWBS has got partnership with Susquehanna Valley presbytery, But the EGBS and WGBS did not get partnership up to now. The WGBS has changed its leadership last month. The newly elected president is called Rev. Ding Gach. Also the WWBS had its 28th Convention last week and elected Rev. Korssa Yadessa to be the President for the coming four years.

5. The Bethel Synods Coordination office

A. Fence Project: the fence project is completed. We would like to thank all who took part in this project let it is by prayer, buy contributing fund etc. After the completion of the project another challenge we were facing was new small shops brought on our fence area. Our office was forced to go Court to resolve the matter, while we were waiting for decision from court at His timing God brought another solution. A new highway is going to be constructed from Piyasa to Asko. As result the owners of small shops are ordered to move the shops as soon as possible, and already 98% of them are moving praise the Lord. God is good.

In order to serve our Guests more effectively , both Expatriate and internal to solve the problem of internet usage we have plan to solve the existing problem by having **Wireless Internet service**. If this can be effective BSCO office Bethel Mekane Yesus School and also Guests from abroad

and also from synods can be benefited. We also appreciate if one presbytery or one congregation can be requested to support this project.

B. The Bethel Synods Guest house

The guests' house was renovated to meet the need of our guests as much as possible. Since there are more guests from internal and external are demanding to use our guest house, many guests at the average of fifteen per day do come and cannot get rooms. To solve this problem at once, there was complex building proposal prepared years ago, but it was not possible for many to accept for the time being. Because many people were commenting on that, we were forced to revise and prepare another smaller one as extension for the guest house, the proposal for this revised one is about one million ETB or 100,000 USD. One thing we should know in connection with this that , when new better road is planned ,our area is becoming more important area where more eyes will rest on it ,so unless we do our best to build some reasonable buildings there will be some fears in the future. The important area, God gave to us through our fathers shouldn't be under insecurity at our time, "our" The Bethel Synods and Partners (The Ethiopian mission net work).

C. Running Budget:

As approved by BSCO 69th Administrative committee meeting the 2009

Working budget of BSCO and its units is as follows

1. Bethel Synods Coordination Office	606,186.00
2. Bethel Mekane Yesus School	2,618,175.00
3. Bethel Synods Upper /Lower Guest house	<u>327, 787.00</u>
Total Budget	<u>3,552,248.00</u>

6 Conclusion

On Behalf of Bethel Synods Coordination office and the Five Bethel Synods I would like to thank The Presbyterian Church USA, The Out Reach Foundation, The Ethiopian Education Endowment Committee members, All Partner Presbyteries, other partners, Mission coworkers, The Ethiopian Mission Net work for your continued prayers and support in many ways.

Above all we are thankful to the Lord for His mercy and guidance for us to serve Him and his people at this corner of the world at a time when Jesus Christ is on the gate for His second coming.

Please know that the Rev. Yonas Yigezu EECMY DMT Director, The Rev Michael Weller Liaison officer for the Horn of Africa (PCUSA) and Rev. Gillo from EGBS, will be able to elaborate more issues which are not clear God willing. Wishing you God's blessings for all I remain.

Respectfully submitted,

Teferi Berkessa (Rev)
BSCO, A/Coordinator