



## November 2022

It's been just under three years since Lynne and I answered the call from RCA Global Mission to enter into a partnership with the Mekane Yesus Seminary in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, a call that was interrupted and then reconfigured by the pandemic. The call was to help revitalize a program established at the seminary to train church leaders in an empowering Christ-centered witness to Muslim neighbors. Ethiopia is a majority Christian country but has a large Muslim population, many of whom are immediate neighbors to churches served by the seminary. Those who have gone through this program since its inception in 2002 have made a great impact both in terms of being peacemakers in conflicted situations, and helping bring Muslim seekers to faith in Christ.

This program was in danger of shutting down two years ago due to a number of factors. Now, thanks to a visionary president and administrative and academic leaders willing to do what is necessary to bring revitalization to this essential ministry, things have taken a turn in the right direction. In my most recent trip to Addis (October) I was able to celebrate the positive changes that have brought it new life. This includes:

- A revitalized library of books and online resources replacing an outdated and inadequate stock. A database of over 1,000 new articles and books has been made available to students online. 196 new books are on their way in a shipment coming from the Theological Book Network in Grand Rapids to beef up the library. This will make a huge difference in the quality of education the students receive.
- There is a new M.A. level program (joining at B.Th. level program) which just graduated its first contingent of students in June of this year. They will be joined by 12 more who have entered the program this fall. The RCA is providing scholarships for these students.
- Proposals I and my colleagues made to strengthen the M.A. program were enthusiastically embraced by the president and administrative staff. These were necessary changes to give students the best possible education.
- The one full-time professor, Dr. Abdi Tadesse, has been joined by five excellent adjunct professors who are helping to cover the B.Th. courses. I am also teaching with Dr. Abdi what I would call hybrid online/onsite courses at the MA level. This has worked well.



*New professor – Mihret – who received life-saving heart surgery last year due in large part to a very generous donation from RCA church members in New Jersey*

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- Finally, a candidate to head up the proposed Center we hope to establish on campus to extend the reach of the program beyond the walls of the seminary traveled with me in October to begin the process of discernment needed for him and his wife to consider this calling. He is getting his PhD at present, but would be available to start just as my term of service is coming to an end. Pray for this discernment process as he really is an excellent candidate for this position.



*Dr. Abdi teaching the Intro to Islam class.*

**One major need remains:** providing laptops for the students who can't afford them (which is about 99% of them). A plan is in place to bring 15 computers with a mission team going to Ethiopia from a church in Sioux Falls in January 2023 (long providential story about how this happened!). IF YOU HAVE GOOD USED LAPTOPS THAT YOU COULD DONATE TO THE SEMINARY, PLEASE LET ME KNOW. I'M WILLING TO DRIVE MOST ANYWHERE WITHIN REASON TO PICK THEM UP! Also, if you would like to contribute towards the purchase of a new reasonably priced Christmas sale laptop (preferable) a donation of \$300 would cover its cost, software, shipping and handling, and virus protection. Contributions may be made via Mekane Yesus Seminary Resources [web link](http://www.rca.org/give/mekane-yesus-seminary-resources-ethiopia/) (www.rca.org/give/mekane-yesus-seminary-resources-ethiopia/). Please contact me directly regarding this need.

**So many things to celebrate.** So many reasons to give thanks to our God who has used this program to bring Christ's blessings to and through this dynamic community of believers who choose to call their church Mekane Yesus = "the Place of Jesus." Please pray that the things being put in place to strengthen this program will help it continue to bear fruit for the Kingdom that is among us as well as that which is yet to come.

And thanks again for the role you have played in allowing this to happen!

Blessings in Christ,  
John Hubers