

There and Back Again

David Ford's Wycliffe Newsletter



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In Pictures: SIL Ethiopia's 50-Year Anniversary

I shared in my last issue about all the special celebrations planned in March to commemorate SIL Ethiopia's 50-year anniversary. These all went well, thanks especially to the dedicated leadership of our Director, Yonathan Zeamanuel, and now I want to share some of those events with you!

On March 2 we held our "SIL Fair", where over 80 outside attendees (mostly Ethiopians) came to learn about the ↓ diverse work SIL is involved with in Ethiopia. Each department had a manned booth (there were over a dozen—we are involved with a lot of different tasks!), often with an interactive activity or display. ↓



Our international executive leadership came for the main celebrations on March 16-20. Here, SIL International Director Dr. Michel Kenmogne is speaking during our celebrations with our religious partners; we had a similar day for our development partners. →



↓ The fancy dinner celebration at



the Sheraton is so far the only occasion during my nearly 12 years in Ethiopia that has convinced me to don a full suit and tie. I shocked quite a number of people! Here I am with my supervisor Andreas (Linguistics Coordinator) and his wife Corinna, our Personnel Coordinator.

The smiling boy on our anniversary poster is Yeleгой Ngakarama, now the young man on the right. As a boy, Yeleгой experienced the benefits of literacy, education and Scripture translation brought to his village by SIL missionaries Mike and Andrea Bryant; now he works in our office as head of the translation team for his own language, Suri, to which he is pointing on our Tree of Ethiopian Languages. →



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↑ The celebrations included a more informal "SIL family" party, with current staff joined by several former staff who had come to Ethiopia specially for this anniversary. We coordinated in traditional Ethiopian clothing.



↑ We are in the planning phase to develop the empty back lot of our office compound with a new building (most likely some form of apartments to help generate income). Here, Area Director Johnstone Ndunde, Executive Director Michel Kenmogne, and Associate ED Nelis van den Berg are symbolically placing the cornerstone for this eventual building.

On March 20 we hosted Ethiopia's first "Run for the Bibleless" in the park in the eucalyptus forest north of Addis. In Kenya, RftB is a large annual event giving prominent media attention to the need for Bible translation.

We hope that the seed planted at this fairly small event develops into something similar here in Ethiopia over the next few years. This was my first 5K run, and I did quite well, finishing in the top 10 and being the first non-African across the finish line. →



Praise and Prayer Requests

PRAISES

~For a very successful month of celebrations to commemorate SIL Ethiopia's 50-year anniversary and the work accomplished during those years.

~For positive media attention and awareness-raising generated by all the special anniversary events, that I hope will result in new partnership, staffing and funding opportunities for our organization.

~For the completion of Vision 2025 (seeing a Bible translation project started in every language that needs one by 2025) in Ethiopia this year. This additional milestone was acknowledged during the anniversary events.

~For an unexpected additional RCA congregation taking on financial partnership this spring, replacing support lost through the passing of a particularly generous individual supporter.

PRAYERS

~For SIL Ethiopia as we look to the future and the next phase in language work here in Ethiopia, that of seeing translations completed in every one of Ethiopia's languages.

~For peace in Sudan, the country I grew up in (I lived for 10 years in Khartoum) that is now going through a terrible time of civil war concentrated in the capital. (I expect you have seen reports of this on the news in past weeks.)