

Sabni dukkana keessa jiraate ifa guddaa isaa arge (Isa. 9:2)

# OUR REDEEMER OROMO EVANGELICAL CHURCH IN MINNESOTA

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# SAGALEE ABDII

Issue # 4

A PERIODICAL NEWSLETTER OF OUR REDEEMER OROMO EVANGELICAL CHURCH

[www.romochurchmn.org](http://www.romochurchmn.org)

June 2013

## Youth Spiritual Music Concert, Sign of Growth & Hope for Our Redeemer Oromo Evangelical Church in Minnesota

“First seek the Kingdom of God and His righteousness-----;”

According to Matt 6:33, Jesus said, “First seek the Kingdom of God and His righteousness, and all these things will be given to you.” It means, in whatever we do or wish to do if we put our trust in God wholeheartedly, we will be abundantly blessed. The Lord will take care of the rest of our needs; if we only have a little faith, the size of a mustard seed and trust and leave the rest to Him we do not have to really worry about anything. God knows our needs more than we do. Of course it does not mean that we do nothing but put our faith in Him and do our part.



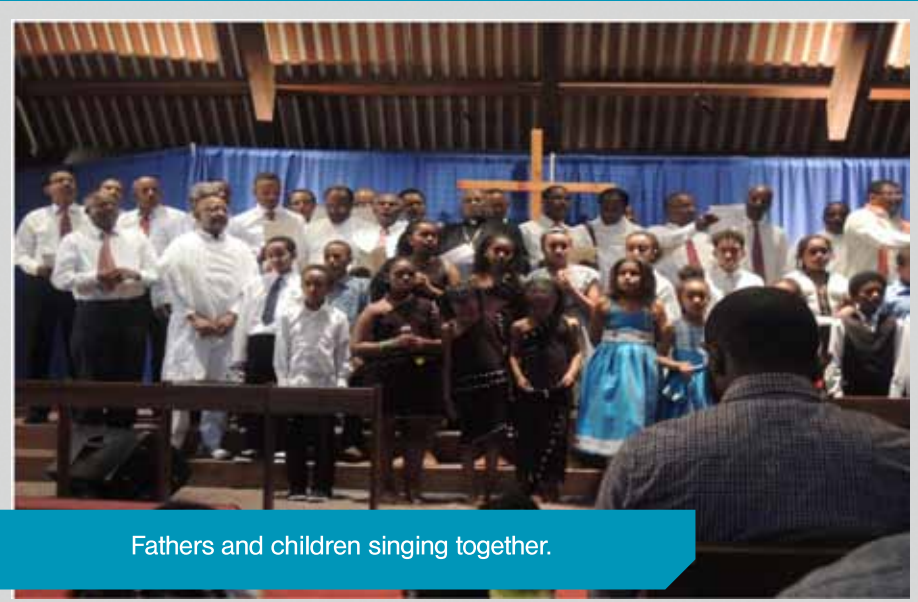
“We are one in the spirit...” all age groups singing together

Whatever our responsibilities are in the church of the Lord we should be humbly involved only for His Glory not remotely bothered about anything else. The OROECM Youth Spiritual Music Concert of Saturday 04 May 2013 was a good example. The continued growth of our church in number, spiritually and the commitment and dedication of its members are confirmation for us that all will be well if we truly try to live according to Jesus's words in Matthew 6:33.

We have a lot of reasons to praise God for what He has done and is doing for Our Redeemer Oromo Evangelical Church in Minnesota, OROECM. He has been and is good to us abundantly all along but more so during the recent few months for what we have seen and experienced - during the Easter Season: 1) Easter Celebration was a time of blessings; for our church, the whole week starting with Palm Sunday, and Easter Conference, (the theme of the conference, 'Christ is our Peace, taken from Ephesians 2:11-18, 'see a separate article on Easter'). 2) Hosting the visitors to our church from the Gudina Tumsa Theological Forum on Saturday, 13 April 2013, was of historical significance, (see a separate report as well). 3) The OROECM Youth Spiritual Music Concert held on Saturday 04 May 2013; 4) Mother's Day celebration, (05/12/2013) and the conclusion of this year's Easter Season aptly with the Day of Pentecost, Sunday, 05/19/2013.



Certainly the Music Concert turned out to be a pleasant spiritual surprise for our church and the invited guests. It was an example of Matthew 6:33 in action for the youth group and their leader our brother Jote Batal. Jote volunteered to be in charge of this important program in the life and ministry of the church, sacrificing a lot of his time quietly and diligently concentrating on strengthening the program.



Fathers and children singing together.

He worked relentlessly to help the youth to get involved in their church, to understand and to be understood, and for the continuity and future of our church and possibly its future leadership. He has shown and proven that a good work can be done quietly. On behalf of the entire congregation Sagalee Abdii editorial team is pleased to recognize his commitment as an exemplary, quietly serving in this very important area of the life of our church. During the conference we all witnessed that he commands great respect and love from

We also noticed quite a number of youth members, boys and girls on whom Jote has a positive influence and is their mentor, taking their responsibility seriously and becoming good role model for the very young ones. The performances by various groups were eye opening for most of us, still without fully grasping how much time and energy, organizational skill and commitment it required to put together such an impressive show. One thing was clear though, the practice they put in during the preparation and the time they had together instilled in the young ones some cultural aspects of their roots, which came out during their performance. The concert was a big success for the organizers and for our church; good experience to take us one level higher if we carefully build on it. People were impressed by the performance of the young, from the teenagers to the very young pre-school, singing and praising God in the language of their root, Afaan Oromo, even though their first language is in reality English.



Musicians, worship leaders and some choir members in Oromo traditional dress.

Few more highlights we need to mention briefly: 1) we had several young spiritual singers and musical instruments players invited from other churches making the concert our local 'ecumenical' coming together: Keeti Ayana Sima, Jalal Teshome Wage, Samuel Francis Estifanos and Sereste-Aab to mention a few. We say God bless them abundantly for their talent and willingness to support OROECM Youth. 2) The pre-school children, the 3-6 years group, the teenagers group, Nehemiah Choir, the worship-team, Ebenezer Sisters Choir, the mothers and finally the fathers all sang as



A picture from one of the Friday Evening Prayer Group in Afaan Oromo, 1987/88, from Obboo Admasu Simeso's file.

individual group and also together forming one grand choir. 3) Our regular music team, the media team, those who cooked and served the food, the ushers and others whom we might have overlooked to mention, Sagalee Abdii says God bless us all together and watch over us for His work. Lastly but not least, on behalf of the whole congregation, we would like to take the opportunity to say 'thank you to Obboo Tsega'aab Hailu and God bless him' who of his own initiative quietly has taken upon himself and involved in providing an important service in our (his) church, an excellent example for many of us, especially the men. Again we say God bless him!

Other noteworthy parts in the program were; 1) four people representing from four different age groups each read verses from 2 Timothy 3:15-17 as a symbolic commitment to pass the gospel on to the successive generation. 2) The introduction to the congregation of some of the people who were part of the people who started the Friday Evening Prayer Group & Home Bible Study in Afaan Oromo in Minneapolis back in 1987 out of which in 1993 the Oromo Evangelical Lutheran Church in Minnesota established, (the first Oromo Church under Oromo name ever), and became Our Redeemer Oromo Evangelical Church in Minnesota by 2005 to accommodate all those who come from various denominational background. People who sang in the quire and also who served as Church Elders (Council members) in the early days of the church were also recognized. It was pleasing to see some of those who were young and teenagers back then now grown up people and serving in our church in various activities and leadership positions. That is a sign of growth and hope of a living church!

At the closing of the concert we all sang, 'Nuu hafuuraan tokko, Gooftaadhaanis tokko'; (We are one in the spirit; we are one in the Lord) in unison.

On Sunday, 05 May 2013 the church was full again, although people spent Saturday from morning to the late evening at the church they still came back for more. The sermon of the day from the Pastor was poignantly from 2 Chronicles 7:14-16.

This reminds us one of the very meaningful Oromo spiritual songs composed by one of OROECM choir members, which goes; "Itti fufe, yaa'ee hinccinne, yaa'ee hinccinne; ebbi Waaqayyo nuuf qabu; kan ulfinaa kan Guddinaa". (The abundant blessings of honor and growth that God has for us are continuing and keep flowing)!

That is Matthew 6:33 in action in the life of our church. "Seek first the Kingdom of God all the rest will be added for you"; All praise and glory to His Name!

(By Admasu Simeso)

08 May 8, 2013



# Lolichi Kan Waaqayyooti

(2Seena Baraa 20:15-117)

From the Pastor, (Pastor Melkamu Negari)

Waldaan Kiristiyaanaa rakkina guddaa keessa turte faarfannaan mo'icha Waaqayyo amantoota yaadachiisu baay-eetu faarfataamaa ture. Keessumaa bara dargaguma kootti kan faarfataamaa ture(afaan Ingiliffaa irraa kan hiikame) tokko amma har'raatti nan yaadadha.

"Waaqni keenya humna keenya . Inni gaachana keenya. Yeroo gaddaatiif fi dhiphinaatti. Nui isa in abdanna... Abdiin waaqayyoo dhugaadha. Nyi isa jabeeffanna. Si'achi nui mootii waaqaaf. Sodaa malee in lolla... "jedha.

Faarfannooti kana fakaatan kan amantoonni Waaqayyo lolaa isa jabbaa ta'uu isaa ittiin yaadatan bay-eetu turan, hari'as jiru. Faarfannaa kana fakkaatan faarfataa baayyeen isaanii gara mana hidhaa soda malee dhaqaniiru, baayyeen isaanii abboota firdii dura ija jabinaan dhaabataniiru, wal'aansoo fi gidiraa garaagaraa sababii amantii isaanii niitiif isaanitti dhufe hundumaa mo'anii keessa darbanii wangeela nu biraan ga'aniiru.

Macaafa seenaa baraa isa lammaffaa 20: 15-17 keessatti jechoota kanatti aananii jiran akkas jedha."Lolli kun

kan kooti malee kan keessan miti"; (L.15)"Isin ofii keesani loluu isin hin barbaachisu"; (L.17) "Iddoo qabadhaatii dhaabbadha";(L.17) Waaqayyoon lola gargaaruun hin danda'amu.Akaataa itti inni loluu fi nui loluu barbaannu garaagara. Mi'l lolaa isaa fi kan keenya wali hin fakaatu.Yaadnni nui ittiin kaanee lola gegeessu barbaannu lola qulqulluu isa kan Waaqayyoo wajjin hin adeemu.

Lola hafuura nu irratti ka'u (waldaa issa irratti) kan lolu Waaqayyo dha. Yeroon dhaabbatanii lola Waaqayyoo lolu ilaalanii fi ofii lolatti darban addaan baasanii hubachuuf ogummaa isaa Waaqayyoon gaafachu barbaachisa.Waaqayyoo wajjin lolatti ba'uudhaaf murteeffannaa guddaa barbaachisa. Waaqayyo qophaa isaa lolaa waan ta'eef gargaarsa namaa hin barbaadu, Garuu nui gegeessaa isaatiin keessatti

qooda akka fudhannu duwaadhaaf itti nu waama. Yeroo waamu immoo warra murteefatoo barbaada malee warra of kennuuf hin murteefatin keessatti qooda hin fudhachiisu. Lola Waaqayyoo lolaa jiru keessatti yeroo inni dhaabbadhaa ilaalaa jedhu dhaabbachuu qabna. Amma inni yeroon kun kan keesaniitti seenaa jedhutti eeguu barbaachisa. Egaa yeroo Waaqayyoo lolee boojuu boojuu irra tuulutti lolicha keessaa dhabuun namatti hin tolu ta'a. Waaqayyo garuu "lolichi kan kooti malee kan keessan miti " jedha. Yeroo Waaqayyo dadhaabaaf darbee lolu attam namtti tola !Gedewon saba lolatti ba'een akka jedhe," Namni isin keessaa sodaatee lapheen isaa sirbu tulluu Gli'aadi irraa ka'ee gara manaatti ha deebi'u... "(Ab.Firdii.7:3) . Motichi Solomoon immoo, " Ati bara rakkinaatti yoo raafamte , humni kee muraasa" (Fa-keenya.24:10)jedhe.

Waaqayyo lola hafuuraatti gara kuteeyyi waama malee warra gara toletti goran hin waamu.Warra wangeela Kiristos nuun ga'an abbooti keenya(kan seenaan isaan yaadatu) du'aa fi hidhaatti dabarsanii of kennanii wangeela nutti dabarsan.

Macaafa qulqulluu keessatti, Waaqayyoo yeroo baayyee ofii isaatii lolatti darbee iddoo saba isaatii bu'ee yommuu inni lolu argineera. Waaqayyoo yeroo saba isaa biyya garbummaatii baase lolicha ofuma isaatii jalqabe, ofuma isaatii gegeesse akkasumas ofuma isaatii akka gaariitti xumure. Bara garaagaraa kan hojii isaa irratti ka'an gegeessitootaa fi biyyota in mo'amu jedhamee hin yadamne waaqayyoo seenaa isaanii geddaree duuka buutota isaa akka inni dinqifachiise seenaan macaafa qulqulluu fi seenaan waldaa kiristiyaanaa nu hubachiisa.

"Iddoo qabadhaatii dhaabbadhaa"; yeroo lolli jireenya namaa yookis kan waldaa Kiristiyaanaa sodaachisu gegeefamaa jirutti, dhaabbatanii ilaaluun attamitti danda'ama? Umaaman namani haala akkasii keessatti kan inni gochuu barbaadu , amma danda'e mi'a qabuun loluu yokiis

immoo humna isaa ol yoo ta'e baqachuudha. Isa kana lachuu iyyuu otuu hin godhin ija ofii duratti lola gegeefamaa jiru ilaalaa dhaabbachuun hin danda'amu. Haala akkasii keessatti dhaabbatanii ilaaluun amantii barbaachisa. Namni Waaqayyoo amantiidhaan lola waaqayyo lolu dhaabbatee ilaala. Amma waaqayyo inni lola sana gegeessu ajaja kennuttis eega. "dhaabbadhaa" yommuu jedhu homtuu isin irraa hin eegamu jechuu duwaa otuu hin ta'in, dhaabbattee waan sodaachisaa kana ilaaluuf iyyuu humna nama dhaabu qabaachuu barbaachisa jechuudha. Humni sunis Waaqayyo isa lola sana gegeessaa jiru irraa argama. Lola biyya lafaatii bifa garaagaraatiin namatti ka'u dura dhaabbachuuf isa lola sana gegeessaa jiru amanachuu fi itti of kennuudha. Akka inni dabarsee diina isa balleessuu barbaadutti nama hin kennines hubachuudha.

Akka dhuunfatti yookiis akka waldaa Kiristiyaanaatti lola Waaqayyo bakka keenya bu'ee nuuf lole keessa darbinee as geenye. Lola diinni nutti kaasu tokko tokko yommuu ilaallu waan keessa darbinee har'a geenyu nutti hin fakaatu ture. Iddoo baayyeetti qoodi nui keessatti fudhanne gara isa lola sana lolaa jiruutti iyyuu duwaa ture. Deebii nui argataa tures "Isin ofii keesani loluu isin hin barbaachisu" kan jedhu ture. Eyyee , innis nu hin yeellaasifne boojuu diinaattis dabarsee nui hin kennine.

Macaafa Faarfannaa keenyaaa keessaa (130) faarfannaa kanatti aanee jiruunan xumura.

"Lolaa, Waaqayyo lolaadha

Jabaa Amaanu'eel jabaadha

Isatti of kennii eeggadhu amanamaadha"

Egaa, Waaqayyo isa bara hundumaa lolaa jabaa sanatti amantiidhaan of kenninee hojii inni itti nu waame hojjechuu akka dandeenyu Inni nu ha gargaaru.



# EASTER-

## THE CELEBRATION OF THE LIFE AND VICTORY OF CHRIST OVER DEATH

Easter- which comes from the Jewish festival of Passover is a period during which Christians celebrate the life, death and resurrection of Christ is undoubtedly the most important event in Christian events calendar. In Latin it is called Pascha. From the preparation and the festive mood of the season Christmas is probably the most celebrated; however, Easter is the most important.

Christmas is the celebration of the birth of Christ, the coming of the Expected One, the Messiah- God sending His only Son to earth on a mission. Easter is the celebration of the conclusion of Christ's mission to earth in triumph. Without Christ's resurrection from the dead His birth wouldn't have any more significance than that of the founders of the other major world religions. At best He would have been simply considered as one of them. So Easter is very important for Christians to remember, reflect on and celebrate His triumph, a sign of hope and affirmation for us to continue living with Him beyond this life; "the resurrection of the body and the life everlasting".



Holy Communion service on Thursday, the Holy week

Easter is commercialized just like Christmas although in lesser degree: Easter Eggs and Easter Bunny made of chocolate are the hot stuff for sell mainly for commercial purposes during Easter, nothing to do with Christian remembrance of the crucifixion, death and resurrection of Christ. The celebrations of Christmas and Easter have become more of cultural events than faith for many, because everyone, Christians and non-Christians celebrate or observe them together. While it is OK to enjoy the celebrations, however Christians should be aware not to get lost in the euphoria of the commercials and forget the real reason behind the importance of Christmas and Easter to our faith.

Easter season includes lent; a period of forty days of fasting, prayer and penance and the crucifixion, death and resurrection of the Lord. His post-resurrection appearance to His disciples on several occasions, His ascension to heaven, and the coming of the Holy Spirit on the day of Pentecost; all considered part of Easter season.

Easter is a movable Christian festival from year to year established by the Council of Nicaea in 325 AD, (to fall on one of the Sundays between 22 March and 25 April for Western churches who follow Gregorian calendar and between 4th of April and 5th of May for Eastern churches who follow the Julian calendar).

This year we at Our Redeemer Oromo Evangelical Church Minnesota, OROECM; celebrated Easter starting a week early on Palm Sunday, on 24 March 2013, the day the Lord triumphantly entered Jerusalem followed by the Holy Week; Maundy Thursday, the Good Friday up to the following Sunday, the Lord's Resurrection from the dead. We had services at OROECM every evening the whole week of the Holy Week. We had a special service on Maundy Thursday celebrating the Lord's Supper as a remembrance of its establishment by the Lord and a three days Easter conference starting the evening of Good Friday, continued on Saturday and on Easter Sunday. The theme of the conference was, "Christ is Our Peace" taken from Ephesians 2:14-22.



Easter Service

While we celebrated Easter on Sunday, 31 March 2013, Eastern Orthodox Christians (according to the Julian calendar) celebrated on Sunday the 5th of May 2013 five weeks later. Although they come from different historical background all the churches back home, the Evangelicals, the Catholics and Orthodox celebrate the same day; Christmas on the 7th of January and Easter on the day it falls each year.

The Resurrection of the Lord affirmed that the birth year of the Messiah "at the set time in history", to become

Year One of the New Era, and we have come two thousand thirteen years since then. At Our Redeemer Oromo Evangelical Church in Minnesota, OROECM we celebrated Easter on 31 March 2013, with the rest of the Western Christian World with the message of, "Indeed the Risen Christ is Our Peace".

(Admasu Simeso)

Minneapolis, MN, 07 May 2013.



# NEWS FROM OROEC

## CHILDREN BAPTISM



Sagalee Abdii is pleased that nine children, (eight boys and a girl) were baptized and joined Our Redeemer Oromo Evangelical Church in Minnesota (OROECM) on Sunday, 24 April 2013. We thank God for the lives of the children and send our congratulations to the parents who brought them to the House of God.

## MOTHERS DAY

Our Redeemer Oromo Evangelical Church in Minnesota joined the nation in celebrating Mother's Day on 12th May 2013, according to the tradition of their new country but also with some aspect of Oromo culture relevant to motherhood; honoring mothers, for the more than their share family burden and responsibility they carry and the role they play in the society as a whole. It appears that this time the OROECM mothers had not only Mother's Day but Mother's Week. They had Mothers' Friday and Mother's Saturday out together and concluded with the Sunday 12 May 2013 Mother's Day.

On Friday during the usual women's evening prayer meetings they had wonderful time of singing and prayers together at the church; and at the end they had dinner together. On Saturday, 5/11/13 about 50 mothers and grandmothers went to Hilton Hotel in down town Minneapolis for dinner. They prayed and sang songs at their tables at the hotel during the dinner which turned

out to be an outreach witness to the city. People of the hotel were curious and wanted to know from where all those look-alike, well-mannered beautiful women came from, the first of its kind in Minnesota and the hotel itself. The curious people were informed that they originally come from Biyya Oromo (Oromia), and they came from OROECM for Mother's Day eve dinner together.

On Sunday, 12 May 2013, the Mother's Day was a special day at OROECM in every aspect. Everything was just beautiful: most mothers, grandmothers and young girls dressed up in traditional cloth. The women were responsible for all Sunday services, leading the program, singing, ushering and the sermon. The only involvement of the men was from the young men who played musical instruments for the worship team and the quire group, and the Pastor saying benediction at the end of the service.

# NEWS FROM OROEC

## MOTHERS DAY



Mothers' Day eve (Saturday after dinner)

Aadde Masrasha Gammachu preached, taking her sermon from Proverbs 31:10-31. The message was all encompassing: love, care for one another, responsibilities to our spouses, family, community, nation and above all God. One could sense that what was said was well said, well-meant in love as Christian families to the Glory of God, and well received by the congregation. She had a lot of Biblical based well thought out and convincing points, for families, especially Christian families, to have a peaceful loving home environment; but the point that summed it up all was, "lafa walitti dhiituudhaan nu 'hinbaasu!" (It does not work to stomp the ground and threaten one another). It was truly

free marriage counseling, based on the teaching of the Lord, 'love one another'. She emphasized her point by underlining the fact that a woman was created by God from the very rib of the first man which symbolizes the absolute bondage between married couples. This work of God heralds the message that a wife and a husband are one body and soul, inseparable under any circumstances except by death.

After the service the celebration continued; all men, young and the old, all lined up on both sides of the corridor applauding and singing praising to God, and honoring the mothers and women also singing as they passed between the lines from

the sanctuary to Aster Gannoo's Hall where the lunch was prepared. The mothers were served first by a team of talented chefs led by the President of the Church Council, the food was delicious. God bless the chefs who made the OROECM men proud. We have come a long way to realize that it is an honor to serve our mothers, our wives, and mothers of our children, our church, our community, our people and above all our God.



# NEWS FROM OROEC

MOTHERS DAY



The Chefs, "kitchen Choir" with 2013 & 2012 OROECM Mothers of the year

The chefs as the master of the ceremony called them "the kitchen Choir" not only cooked delicious food but were also good at singing well- the favorite song of the day was, "Gararraa dhaa taliila robe".

The atmosphere in Aster Gannoo Hall was one of joy and genuine expression of love and fellowship. There was a feeling of the presence of God.

There was a Power Point presentation, history 101 on Mother's Day and reading poems in Afaan Oromo honoring mothers and; and honoring Aadde Warqitu Jigsa unanimously as Mother of the Year 2013, the second OROECM Mother of the Year following Aadde Aster Namara who was mother of the year in 2012.

Sagalee Abdii extends its congratulations to the mothers of our church and also we say thank you to the men who worked behind the seen in preparing such a wonderful program in honoring mothers, grandmothers and our loved ones.



Mother of the year (Aadde Warkitu Jigsaa)

# NEWS FROM OROEC

MOTHERS DAY

From all indication that we are doing well and our church has become a place of true expression of God's love caring for one another, strong feeling of belonging and involvement of one's own initiative. This is a Sign of Hope for further growth that we are ready and should think of moving beyond our surrounding turning our focus on our mothers in our home land. It is not enough to confine ourselves only in our comfort zone and not think about the situation that our mothers and sisters live in back in our homeland. It would be advisable and wise to build on the momentum of the enthusiasm, love, care and Oneness in Spirit, 'nu hafuuraan tokko' that God is blessing us with and experiencing.

The Youth Spiritual Concert was the most memorable event of the year at our church but within one a week we had another memorable day, Mother's Day a superb event of historical significance-all the sign

of the degree of growth our church has come through. All praise and Glory to our God!

We conclude with the verse from



Mothers in procession from the sanctuary to Aster Gannoo Hall.

Proverbs 31: 29: "Many mothers, (women) have done excellently but the mothers of OROECM surpass them all". (Hadhotii baayyeetu wanta gaarii hojjetu, haadhotiin Waldaa Kiristiyaanaa Oromo Minnesota hunduma isaanii caaltu". Fakkenya 31:29.)

Waaqayyoo nagaa fi fayyaan wagga waggaan Ayyaana Haadhotiin ittin nu'hagau!

(Dr. Kano Banjaw and Admasu Sime-so)

05/14/2014



Rev. Gudina Tumsa

## GUDINA TUMSA THEOLOGICAL FORUM

**LUTHER SEMINARY, ST. PAUL, MINNESOTA, USA, APRIL 12-13, 2012**

The Gudina Tumsa Theological Forum (GTTF) was founded in 2008 by a group of Ethiopian young theologians who, in the tradition of a visionary church leader martyred in 1979 under the Marxist regime of Ethiopia; aspired to restore the leading prophetic role of the Ethiopian Evangelical Church Mekane Yesus (EECMY) and provide a platform for sound theological reflection on the direction of developments within the church and society at large.

These young theologians were convinced that the only way EECMY and other African churches can reach the desired level of spiritual maturity and the capacity to serve the whole creation is through developing biblically-sound, contextually-appropriate, and missiologically-effective theology. So they wanted to participate and contribute to the effort towards the vision.

The ideal and inspiring figure behind this move was the life and service of Reverend Gudina Tumasa, former General Secretary of the EECMY who was murdered in 1979 by a communist military junta that ruled Ethiopia from 1974 to 1991. Many scholars have compared Rev. Gudina with and called him the Dietrich Bonhoeffer of Africa.

One of the areas in which Gudina Tumsa's legacy has endured is in his articulation of the theological basis of ecumenical relationships that was more focused on the development efforts of the EECMY in collaboration with partner churches. He was the main architect behind the EECMY's theology of "serving the whole person," which the church published in 1972 and has since used as a guide for its development programs.

At the core of his theology is the notion of "holistic ministry," of serving both the spiritual and material needs of the human person. Gudina's particular brand of "holistic ministry" is deeply rooted in an African concept of the place of human beings vis-à-vis God's creation and centers on the idea of "integral human development" which views proclamation of the gospel and human development as having the same objective of transforming the human being.

Gudina Tumsa articulated the theological basis for his church's work at the height of the so-called the "golden age" of development and put forward his ideas as a critique of the dominant ecumenical debate over the nature of the relationship between the new independent churches in the developing world and their missionary counterparts in the West.

We now live in a different world where conceptions about church relationship have changed, the center of global Christianity has shifted to the global South, and globalization and climate change have presented new challenges. It seems the church's work in issues related to theologies that guide church-to-church relationships need to be discussed and adjusted to respond to the new challenges.

This year, theological forum was held at Luther Seminary in Saint Paul, Minnesota from April 12-13, 2013. The theme of the forum was: "Ecumenical Challenges: Working in Love, Transforming Lives." The Forum was aimed at initiating conversation that will continue after the conference among church leaders in Africa and the West. The goal was to develop a Biblical based vision about the present challenges of ecumenism—to engage in a dialogue anchored in Biblical understanding of what it means to be a Body of Christ.

The overall purpose of the conference was to bring students and pro-

## GUDINA TUMSA THEOLOGICAL FORUM

fessionals from a wide range of theological backgrounds to share and explore ideas and practices of ecumenism. Several ecumenical scholars and few theological students at Luther presented papers reflective of Rev. Gudina's life, service and contribution enriching ecumenical movement. Among them were Rev. Dr. Paul Wee a student colleague of Rev. Gudina when they were at Luther Seminary and who remained a good friend of Rev. Gudina until his death in 1979, currently Professorial Lecturer at George Washington University, Washington DC; and Dr. Sarah H. Wilson, Assistant Research Professor at the Institute for Ecumenical Research in Strasbourg, France. There followed an open discussion on the relationship between "faith and partnership."

At the conclusion of the two day Forum the participants visited Our Redeemer Oromo Evangelical Church in Minnesota (OROECM) in Minneapolis; which included visiting the Onisimos Nasib Chapel, memorial prayer in Gudina Tumsa Conference Hall and Aster Gannoo's Fellowship Hall where they had luncheon hosted by the church, a historical event both for members of OROECM and the participants.

Samuel Yonas Deressa (PhD Candidate at Luther Seminary) Forum coordinator



# ULAA QILXUU

The Fundraising Committee of Our Redeemer Oromo Evangelical Church in Minnesota (OROECM) presented a drama called Ulaa Qilxuu on April 7, 2013 in Aster Gannoo Hall of OROECM. This was a follow up of last year's event in which the Committee successfully organized the "Pastor Celebration" day for the first time.

The objective of this year's event was to raise fund toward the support of OROECM, in a relaxed and harmonious environment after the church service. The drama, Ulaa Qilxuu was meant to convey message of forgiveness for everyone.

The drama aimed to convey the word of GOD, with some aspect of

Oromo traditional way of worshipping and glorifying God through culturally meaningful expressions including "walaloo" poem in Afaan Oromo. At the end the committee raised a total of \$7350:00.

We affirm our commitment to work harder to contribute in whatever

we could to support the work of OROECM.

We believe that GOD will build our house if we first help in building His church.

Israel Taera  
Committee Member

## DAY OF PENTECOST AT OROECM

In the Old Testament Pentecost was the second most important Jewish festival observed on the 50th day, seven weeks after Passover. It was known as 'feast of weeks' commemorating the receiving of the law from God by Moses on Mt Sinai and the harvest festivals in which the first fruits of the field were brought to the House of the Lord as thanks giving. Pentecost comes from the Greek word penta (five).

In Christian Church calendar it is the celebration of the coming (descending) of the Holy Spirit upon the disciples gathered in a house in Jerusalem, on the day of the Pentecost according to the Old Testament practice, 50 days (the 7th Sunday)

after Easter and ten days after the Lord's ascension to Heaven. (Both numbers, 7 and 50 have great significance in the Jewish tradition, 50 is  $7 \times 7 + 1$ ).

Our church, Our Redeemer Oromo

Evangelical church in Minnesota, OROECM joined the rest of the Christian world in celebrating Pentecost on Sunday, 19 May 2013. Pastor Wandimmuu L. Soneessaa preached on Acts 2:1-21, on the coming of the Holy Spirit.



Pastor Wandimmuu Sonessaa-Preaching

The Lord on several occasions told his disciples that when He goes to His father He would send the Holy Spirit, the comforter, the power giver, (John 14: 16 & 17, 25). He instructed them to remain in Jerusalem and wait. Following His ascension the disciples and few women including Mary the mother of the Lord stayed together in a house in Jerusalem, partly scared because of not knowing what would happen to them and partly honoring His instruction to wait.

Lately in some church circles there are some who think that the celebration of Pentecost started the day the Holy Spirit descended upon the disciples. Still some equate Pentecost with the Holy Spirit; they think Pentecost means the Holy Spirit and the Holy Spirit means Pentecost. But the Holy Spirit came upon the disciples on the day of Pentecost which was there way back from the days of the OT. The disciples were gathered to celebrate the day quietly as they were in a state of fear. People were in Jerusalem coming from all over the Middle East as far as from Libya for the yearly celebration. The disciples and some other people, about 120 altogether were in the house; while they were praying, the scripture says, "And suddenly there came a sound from heaven as of a rushing mighty wind, and it filled the house where they were staying and all started speaking in different languages-----", Acts 2:1-6.





Some of Worship Team members (Pentecost Sunday)

The unexpected event of that day and the continued work of the Holy Spirit in the life of the Church thereafter were foretold in Joel 2:28. "In the last days, God says, I will pour out my Spirit on all people. Your sons and daughters will prophesy, your young men will see visions, your old men will dream dreams."

No more afraid, it was then that they all spoke in tongues; people heard the noise coming from the house and gathered around it, curious to know what was going on. It was then Peter the Rock boldly stood before everyone and spoke about the Christ they crucified. At the end of his speech more than three thou-

sand souls joined the new movement, which marked the beginning of the Church of Jesus Christ, affirming the Lord's statement to Peter while still on earth, "And I tell you that you are Peter, and on this rock I will build my church.....", Matthew 16:18.

Pastor Wandimuu reminded us the Lord's words to his disciples in Acts 1:8 before His ascension, "But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes on you; and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth." Now the waiting was over and they moved out or dispersed throughout the region witnessing for the Lord; followed by formal establishment of the first Christian church on earth in Antioch, from there it grew and spread to the end of the earth and reached us.

Pastor Wandimuu further emphasized that we should be aware of some of the present day understanding or misunderstanding about the gifts of the Spirit, the view in some circles that unless one visibly be in some kind of trance, speaking in tongues and bring messages that one does not really have Holy Spirit in him/her, therefore not considered to be true

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Christians. He stressed that if we have believed in Jesus and baptized in His name we all have the Spirit of God, the Holy Spirit in us; and each one of us endowed with different gifts of the Spirit. The Apostle Paul, in his letter to the church in Corinth, 1st Corinthian chapter 12, 13 and 14 stresses this point, that as the different parts of the body with different gifts and skills work together for the good of the whole body so Christians should work together in harmony for the Body of the Lord, His Church. The purpose of the different gifts of the Spirit that Apostle Paul lists in chapter 14, he stresses, should be to build one another to grow in one's faith in Christ not to discourage. The different gifts of the spirit are all essential if they are

used responsibly to strengthen the church spiritually and for the glory of God. The church should give attention to these 3 very important chapters in the New Testament and teach emphasizing that no one feels as having no gift of the Spirit and end up feeling less worth. No one should made feel unwelcomed and feel at the periphery but welcomed as part of the Body of Christ and encouraged to use his/her gift for His glory. In Ch. 13 Apostle Paul concludes by underlining that the most import gift of the Spirit to be love. Without love, void of love all of our other gifts that we claim to have come to nothing.



Some of Worship Team members (Pentecost Sunday)

The churches also need to keep in mind the warning from John the Apostle in 1st John 4:1, in which he says, "Beloved, believe not every spirit, but try the spirits whether they are of God" that all the claims that at the end go around may not be from God. Therefore, we should not and must not doubt about our faith in Christ whatsoever even if we have not experienced the various physical manifestations yet that people take as the only signs of true faith. Just trust in Him, He is the only one that sees our hearts. (Admasu Simeso)



# United Youth **for** CHRIST SEVENTH ANNUAL CONFERENCE

The United Youth for Christ seventh annual conference was held in the Twin Cities from Friday 24 to Sunday 26 May 2013.

The first two days it was held at Zion Ethiopian Evangelical Fellowship Church in St Paul and the last day, in the evening of Sunday 26 May 2013 at Our Redeemer Oromo Evangelical Church in Minnesota, OROECM.

Dr. Alemu Biiftu was the speaker at both venues. During the meeting at OROECM, Pastor Melkamu Negari, Pastor of OROECM opened the

participation in the planning and preparation of the event is a good example of Christian outreach. The coming together of our youth set a good example for the churches also to explore further common grounds on which they could come together and organize events of 'goodwill among people of God', worship together from time to time regardless of their ethnicity, language and denominational views. In Isaiah 56:7 the Lord says, "for my house will be called a house of prayer for all nations", which we believe means together as people of God, for we shared the produce of the land and water from our springs back home and confess the same Lord in this land.

The OROECM Young Girls Choir dressed up in various Oromo traditional dresses sang, Waaqayyo Aangoo Koo, (God is My Strength) originally sang by Child of Destiny Choir of Biiftuu Boolee Church with artistic spiritual movements from different regions and tradition of Biyya Oromo (Oromia) which practically brought the whole sanctuary; parents and guests all on

their feet and join the choir in singing and applauding from the start to the end.



Sagalee Abdii congratulates the Youth Leaders of OROECM for actively taking part in planning and organizing the conference and bringing for its final closing to our church. God bless them, they made us proud with absolute dignity for the glory of God.

conference and welcomed all the guests and the participants, reading from Galatians: 3: 26-29.

The United Youth for Christ first started in 2006 at OROECM. The active and continued OROECM Youth

all came together in Aster Gannoo Hall and had meals and refreshments together and continued to visit and got to know one another more. We all join one another in prayers for the youth of our churches and support them so that they become good role model and example in the society especially for their peers. The Lord blesses them all!

(Admasu Simeso)

05/27/2013