



Sagalee Abdii

A Periodic Newsletter of

Our Redeemer Oromo Evangelical Church of Minnesota

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Editorial Note

By Admasu Simeso

I- **Sagalee Abdii XIV (Voice of Hope) What is God Saying to US at this Time?.**

Greetings and peace in the name of the "Prince of Peace" our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, to all readers of Sagalee Abdii (*Voice of Hope*) at this challenging time in the history of our entire world due to the coronavirus pandemic, covid-19. This issue of Sagalee Abdii is a *special edition* as we are in a peculiar, anxious time and we will focus mostly on what is currently unfolding, our current live experiences in real time. (This Issue covers the Lent period, the Holy week, Easter, the current situation, and Mother's Day 2020 etc.).

The pandemic affected the whole world without sparing any country rich or poor; the entire people of the world put under some kind of restriction, prisoners in their own homes; thank God at least it is in our own homes. There is a familiar expression in which people usually say, "I have never seen such a thing in my life". The current pandemic unprecedented in the modern history of the world is where we often hear people, including government leaders, newsmen and scientists saying, "we have never seen such a thing in our lives". In our Oromo figurative expression, they say,

“gola Waaqayyo nama dhaabe hidhaa malee ijaajju” (where God puts a person you remain standing without being tied down or chained). In the present situation we are all sort of in prison without being locked up, though if we violate the order of *staying home, isolating ourselves* we would literally be locked up.

At the beginning of the year when we welcomed the New Year 2020 the news of the coronavirus just started to come out; we never imagined that the world would find itself in such a situation. We welcomed the New Year with hope and bright future and the Year 2020 looked full of hope. But soon the world found itself caught off-guard and we are restricted in most aspects of our lives and forced to practice a new concept we learned, *social distancing*. People could not be together in a large number for such things as sport events, concerts, going to movies, graduation, going to restaurants, shopping. Weddings ceremonies are conducted in empty sanctuaries by pastors with few witnesses. Families and friends cannot visit or see their family members once they are admitted into hospital with the virus and cannot bury if they die, There are no funeral services, and chilling to hear that bodies of those who died from the virus or all dead bodies are stored in cold gigantic storages costing millions of dollars because burials cannot be performed.

We also realized the importance of what we used to consider ordinary services such as haircut, and the service cleaners and janitors provide which were used to be not that important, now suddenly they are called frontline essential services and their importance realized. Some people bought hair clippers for the first time in their lives.

On the spiritual side, we are missing our church services on Sundays and some weekdays: *we miss our seats in the church, we miss our pulpit and the fellowship.* Most notable was, in the history of Christian Churches we do not recall when churches are closed down during Holy Week and Easter when usually churches are fully packed.

Here is where we need to pause and ask ourselves, “what is God telling us at this time in human history”? It is here also where and when we need the word of God, voices of hope (sagalee abdii) to sustain us more than ever before. It is astonishing to watch the impact the pandemic is having on the entire world; sort of dramatic and noticeable is the fact that it seems the entire world from East to West North to South wearing “uniform”, the face/mouth mask; as if God is saying that we have been talking too much in self-praise and telling us to “shut up” for a while and listen to Him. At this time in the history of the universe, it is beyond our imagination that certainly we are in the most uncertain time in world history. We do not have any clue what the future holds and unfolds tomorrow or what the future holds if there will be future for humanity.



The face mask: 1) It snugly but comfortably against the side of the face, 2) be secured with ties or ear loops include multiple layers of fabric, 3) allow for breathing without restriction and 4) be able to be laundered and machine dried without damage or change to shape. (Copy right CDC).

We thank the Lord, although we were not physically together to celebrate the Holy Week and Easter; still we did celebrate them in Spirit *and the Truth* together from our homes, from far and near. We also thank God for the committed few of our members; our Pastor and few of those who bring us the Word of God, who continue to bring us the *voice of hope* we need at this critical time, our Church President, the Council, the media people, people who led the worship by singing from the stage to the empty sanctuary and those who decorated the church befitting the Church season and made it possible that we are interconnected to worship together. Yet it is uplifting to imagine still the Word of God preached without interruption from our church, OROECM at the center and spreading to all parts of the world starting from each one of our homes in Twin Cities, to different parts of our State of Minnesota, to all parts of USA and the rest of the world; Europe and Africa including our Homeland. The reaction and feedback from all over have been overwhelming. We thank God! *We also thank God for giving us a place, our OROECM church from where we worship Him and as a center from where we reach out to our members far and near and others as well with the word of God.*

Recently as few of us exchanging messages on the impact in which the world found itself, caught off-guard, one of us said, *“we did not imagine the world finding itself in such situation in 21st Century, when humans claim that everything being under our control, to limited extent including even outer space. In a short response, in 3 words sentence one of our young men Dawit Baisa said, “it is humbling”.* Indeed, it was humbling for me to get such powerful all-encompassing response, descriptive of our time from a truly wise and

intelligent but humble young man. Indeed it is humbling at a time when the word *“humble”* has become rare with young and old, with world leaders supposed to be model for their citizens at large, and above all even with some religious leaders who we assume have read and are familiar with the Lord’s Sermon on the Mountain, particularly Matthew 5:5 where humility is stressed.

Yes, it is humbling, and God is telling us to physically retreat to our place of temporary dwellings, pause and re-evaluate our faith, those who still hold some resemblance of faith and values. While doing that our focus should be on the Lord in prayers and humility not to listen to those who grab on the situation and try to make themselves the center of attention instead of the Lord. In one of his sermon during this difficult time from the pulpit of our church, our Pastor said, *“yoo’lee nuti mana keenyatti hidhamnee waldaa keenya dhufuu hindandeenye’lee Sagaleen Waaqayyo garuu hin’hidhamu, hinuma nubira ga’a”;* (even though we are sort of in prison in our homes and cannot be in our church the word of God cannot be imprisoned, is still coming to us).

As humans certainly we are in uncertain time; no one knows, even the scientists, when this plague is going to pass. The extent of the uncertainty is exasperated by what we daily and continuously hear on the news. We live in rather weird time. Some of the things we hear are unbelievable and we do not understand what is going on; we do not know if we are in our dreams or really hearing those strange things at this time in 21st Century; advice such as to inject and ingest bleaches to treat the virus. It is simply unbelievable to hear this at this time! Here, among the most amazing secret God kept from humans is knowing or

telling what the future holds. We cannot even tell what will happen in the next minute let alone the future. Only God knows and is in control of everything, that is amazing and indeed humbling. **Imagine living in the world where humans know the future and try to manipulate it. To a certain degree a segment of humanity has been living in complete illusion behaving that we are in control of our destiny and the fate of all creation denying the existence of a Creator.**

One particularly important thing that we need to give urgent attention to is, as no country is spared the current plague our Homeland, the land of our birth is also affected and the news of it trickling out. Considering the reality of life there, where even clean drinking water is scarce let alone for washing hands it greatly concerns and worries us. Our church should keep our people in our prayers and not only praying but also respond in ways we can to the urgent need as a holistic ministry of our church. **It is our national and Christian call!**

Last but not least, while taking seriously all the advices the experts give us we should pray without ceasing to the Lord who rebuked the wind and the sea in Mark 4:39 saying “Peace, be still” and there was calm. As Christians we believe without any doubt that God the Almighty is in control!

In conclusion, one simple but amazing thing we start to hear since the onslaught of this pandemic has been, some news anchor people, when they conclude their interview or discussion about the virus, saying “**God bless you**” which we have never heard before. We thank God to hear that phrase uttered on major news outlet! **God bless us all and save us!**

Waaqayyoon kan abdatan fayyaan iaanii hin’eegama; hinsodaatan, nagaa qabu, hinraafaman. Abdii Isaanii Jiraataa Dha!

05/18/2020

II. Word from the Pastor (Luba Waldaa Biraa: Waaqayyo Haala Keessaan Waa Hojjeta)



Luba Wondimu Legesse Sonessa

Biyyoota Amantiin Kristiyaana aariyannaa mootummaadhaan qindaa’e irraa bilisa geggeffamaa jiru keessatti gamoon waldoota Kristiyaanaa cufame waaqeffannaan mana manatti dhuunfaadhumaan ta’uun (virtual worship) seenaa waldaa Kristiyaanaa ishee har’aa keessatti waan hin eegamne dha. Kun waaqeffannaa karoora lubootaa fi geggeessitoota waldaa Kristiyaanaatiin alaa yoo ta’e iyyuu, karoora Waaqayyootiin ala jedhanii yaaduun hin danda’amu. Dhiseen Korona kan vaayirasii COVID-19 jedhamu kan yeroo ammaa saffisaan addunyaa maratti tamsa’ee lubbuu namoota hedduu gaaga’aa jiru ayyaana Du’aa Ka’uu Gooftaa keenya Yesus Kristos isa bara 2020 utuu amantootni gamoo waldaa Kristiyaanaa keessatti walitti hin qabamin akka kara sab-quunnamtii (social media) ayyaaneffannu nu godheera. Waa’ee kanaa wanti nuyi shakkii tokko malee dubbachuu dandeenyu waa tokko qofaa dha.

Innis, “Waaqayyo maaliif akka dhibeen hamaan kun yeroo kana addunya mara akka naasisuuf akka eyyame hin beeknu,” jechuu qofaa dha.

Waaqayyo walga’ii amantootaa jibbe moo waldaa Kristiyaanaa cufee? Waaqayyo bara Kakuu Moofaatti karaa Amos raajichaa, “Ani ayyaana ayyaanefchuu keessan nan jibbe, waa’eeisaas nan dhiise, walga’iin keessanis anatti in ajaa’e. . . .lyya faarfannaa keessanii ana irraa fageessaa! Sagalee maseenqoo keessaniis ani dhaga’uu hinbarbaadu” (Amos 5:21-23) jedhee saba Isaa ifatee ture. Haata’u malee, kun karaa inni saba Israa’eliin waa’ee cubbuu gidduu isaanii jiruu akeekkachiisuun gara qalbii jijjiirannaatti waame dha. Waaqeffannaa mudaa hin qabne akka isaaf dhi’eessaniif malee walga’ii isaanii raaw’atee cuftee Waaqayyo isaanii ta’uu didee kophaatti isaan dhiisee hin deemne. Kanas immoo “Qooda akanaa bulchi qajeelaan akka bishaaniitti, qajeelummaan is akka laga yeroo hundumaa yaa’uutti haaburqu” (Amos 5:24) jechuun ibseera. Akkasuma, Waaqayyo haala balbala nama cufachiise kana keessatti waldaa Kristiyaanaatii fi amantoota kophaatti dhiisee waan hin deeminiif, waan hamaa kana keessaa warra isatti amananiif waan gaarii baasuu akka danda’u amanuun gaarii dha. Balbala mana keenyaas ta’ee balbala gamoo waldaa Kristiyaanaa Keenya vaayirasii dhibee *Korona* of irraa ittisuuf cufanne malee Waaqayyoon alatti hambifnee cufanne miti. Inni karaa keessatiin balbala nuu cufee nuu wajjin ta’ee ergamaa du’aa nu irra dabarsaa jiru Waaqayyo dha. Kanaafis hamma mana keenya teenyee Waaqayyon amanachuu itti fufnetti waaqeffannaan ittuma fufee jira waan ta’eef, Waaqayyo waldaa Kristiyaanaa hin cufne jechuu dha.

Akkuma waggoota 2000 dura bartootni Yesu fannoo irratti du’ee awwaalamuu Isaa irraa kan ka’esodaatanii balbala isaani cufatanii utuu ta’aanii gidduudhaan misiraachoon du’aa ka’uu Isaa dhaga’amee haala sana jijjiire (Mat 28:1-

10), Waaqayyoohar’as haala amma addunyaan keessa jirtu jijjiiruu nidanda’a. Akkuma yeroo oduun faannifamuu fi awwaalamuu Yesuus Kristoos guutumaa biyyattii raasaa turetti Yesu du’aa ka’ee Maariyaam ishee Magdallaa fi Maariyaam ishee kaanitti mul’ate, akkuma bubbee glaana irraa isa bishaan unkuree bidiruun bartoota Isaa akka fuulduratti hin deemne godhe sana gidduu dhaan Yesu oljedhee sagalee isaa dhageessisee ifatee qilleensichaa fi bishaanicha gab godhe (Luq 8:22-25), har’as Gooftaan Yesu sagalee gabii fi nagaa addunyaa ishee har’a COVID-19 n unkuramaa jirtu kanaa iddootti deebisuun mul’achuu nidanda’a. Nama amanuuf abdiin jira.

Humni haala jijjiiru Waaqayyoon biraa nuu dhufa. Maariyaam isheen Magdala fi Maariyaam isheen kaan awaala ilaaluu dhaqanii achitti “ergamaa gooftichaa” argan. Iddoon awwaala iddoo dhaquun isaa namatti tolu miti. Yesuus inni waaqa irraa dhufe waan namootaan ajjeefamee awwaalameef Maariyaamfaan sossodataa fi yaadda’aa dhaqan. Yaaddoo isaanii keessa tokko “dhagicha balbla awwaalichaa irraa” humnaa ittiin garagalchinee dhagna Yesu urgooftuu dibnu eessaa argannaa kan jedhu ture. Humni dhagicha garagalche Waaqayyoon biraa dhufe. “Kunoo, ergamaan gooftichaa waaqa irraa gad bu’ee, dhufee dhagicha balbala awwaalichaa irraa garagalchee waan irra taa’eef socho’l lafaa guddaan isaa ta’e” (Mat 28:1-2). Yommuu nuyi waan akka dhagaa nutty ulfaatee jiru human ittiin sochoofnu dhabnee sodaa fi yaaddoon raafamnu, Waaqayyo nu irraa gargalchuu dhaaf ergamaa Isa biyyalafaa sochoosue rguu danda’a.

Yommuu beekumsi namootaa hojjechuu didu Waaqayyo hojii isaa jalqaba. Luboonnii warri angafoonnii fi Fariisonni waan Yesu waa’ee guyyaa sadaffaatti du’aa ka’uuf akka jiru isaanitti dubbatee ture yaadatani, awwalicha eegsisuuf Philaaxos biraa eeyama, “Warra eegan fudha dhaadhaqaatii akka beektanitti

eegsifadhaa!” (Mat 27:62-65) jedhu fudhatan. Maatewos, “Akkasitti isaan eegdota sanaa wajjin dhaqanii, dhagichatti mallattoo godhanii, awwalicha eegsisan” (Mat 27:66) jedhee dhugaaba’a. Kun hamma beekumsa namaatti dhagaan awwalich ittin cufame akka hin sochoonetti cuqqalamee jechuu dha. Yeroo oduun Yesuus du’eeawwaalamuun Isaa odeeffamu kana keessatti aangoo fi humni ajjeesuu fi jiraachisuu harka sabaa Yihuudaa, harka Philaaxos, fi harka luboota warra angafootaa fi Fariisotaa akka jiru yaadamaa ture. Yeroo namni amma humni mana moototaa jira jedhee yaadu, yeroo geggeessitootni amantaa awwalichi akka hin banamneef mallattoodhaan cufanitti, Waaqayyo garuu warra akka gowwaa lafa abdiin isaanii itti dhume, iddoo awwaalaa dhaqanitti human Isa mul’ise. Waanti nu irraa eegamu lafa abdiin keenya itti awwaalameera jenne yaadnu sanatti deebinee achii adeemsa Waaqayyo isa abdiin cite haareessuu wajjin jalqabuu dha.

Dhibee *Korona* isa humnaa fi beekumsa biyyootaa qaroominaa fi qabeenyaan beekamaniin to’annaa jala oolchuun dadhabame, Waaqayyo garuu to’achuu ni danda’a. Yeroo ergamaan gooftichaa waaqa irraa dhufee dhagicha isa luboonni warri angafoonnii fi Fariisonni eyyama mootummaatiin mallattodhaan cufanii eegduu itti ramadanii turan sana “balbala awwaalichaa irraa garagalchee . . . irra taa’e,” “warri eegdonni awwalichaa isa sodaachuu irraa kan ka’e rom’anii, akka waan du’anii ta’an” (Mat 28:2-3). Jarri kun warra seera mootummaa da’oogodhatanii akka abdiin Waaqayyo afaan raajootaatiin dubbate warra eeggachaa turaniif hin raaw’atamnee itti suuf lubootaa warra angafootaa fi Fariisotaan kaa’aman dha. Kana irraas kan arginu mootonnii fi geggeessitootni amantaawan taa angooisaaniitiin ittisuunii fi eeyyamuun isaaniif kenname addaan baafachuu dadhabuu isaanii dha.

Har’aas warri biyya bulchaniin fi warri Waldaa Kristiyaanaa geggeessan kana irratti rakkina qaban of irratti arguun yeroo isaan itti fudhataa jira. Isa dhugaa jal’isee yakka hojjetu nibadhaasu, isa haqaa fi dhugaa dhaaf dubbatuimmoo nihidhu, nidhiphisu, nidhiibu, niajjeesu/ajjeesisu. Waaqayyo tarii kanaaf nutty dallanee walga’ii keenya jibbe malee waldaa Kristiyaanaa ishee deebi’ee dhufuu Kristos eeggachaa jirtu matumaa hin cufne.

Wanti bayy’ee nu gammachiisuu qabu garuu, kunis hamma Waaqayyo gadi bu’ee hojjetee hundumaa iddoo iddooisaatti deebisutti qofaa itti fufa. Akkuma gaafa “ergamaan gooftichaa waaqa irraa gad bu’ee, dhufee dhagicha balbala awwaalichaa irraa garagalchee” sanaa, yeroo beekumsi fi aangoon warra abdiin Waaqayyo kennee fi yaadni Waaqayyo nama tokkoof, maatii tokkoof, waldaa Kristiyaanaa tokkoof, saba tokkoof, biyya tokkoof, akkasumas saba biyya lafaa hundumaaf qabu akka fiixaan hin bane ittisuuf seeraan cuqqaalanii eegduu ramadanii eegsiisaa jiran hojjechuu itti dadhabu nidhufa.

Gaafase eegdonni isaanii isa Waaqayyo hojji saatiifergu, isa “Bifni isaa akka bakakkaa, uffanni isaa akka cabbiadii” ta’e sana dura dhaabachuuf ija jabina hin qabaatanu. Yeroo Waaqayyo iddoo namni hin eeginitti gadi bu’ee hojjetu, warri sobaa fi jal’inaan iddoo qabatanii hojjetan immoo “sodaachuu irraa kan ka’e rom’anii, akka waan du’anii” ta’uuf jiru. Yeroo Waaqayyo hojjetu hojiin dukkanaa fi aangoondu’aa iddoo gad dhiisu. Yeroo akkasi warra dhugaan fi haqni akka awwalame beekanii naannoo abdiin isaanii itti awwalame sana marsaniif garuu sagalee jajjabinaatud hufuuf jira.

Akkuma warra awwalicha ilaaluu dhaqanitti misraachoon, “Isin Yesusin isafannifame ture akka barbaaddan anuu beeka. Hin sodaatinaa! Inni asi hin jiru, akkuma jedhe ka’eera; kottaa iddoo reeffi isaa kaa’amee ture ilaalaa!” (Mat 28:5) jedh uhimame, har’as humni Waaqayyo aangoo du’aa cabsee, oduu du’aa isa ji’oota

darbaniif mata duree oduu ta'ee karaa raadiyoo, TV, fi gaazexaa gurra nuu duuchaa jiru kana "oduu gammachiisaatti" jijjiiruu nidanda'a. Gaafas Waaqayyo waan gadi bu'ee hojjeteef, laftini sochoote, awwalichi inni mallattoodhaan cufame eyyama mootiin ala nibaname; eegdonni bakkee bulanii awwalich aegaa turan manatti oldacha'aniiruu; warri oduu du'aa ka'uu abdiidhaan eeggachaa turan immoo utuu gammachuudhaan gara manatti deebi'aajirani, "Yesus isaanitti dhufee, nagaa isaan gaafate; isaan immoo itti dhi'aatanii miilla Isaa qabatanii sagadnii f"(Mat 28:9). Innis, "Hin sodaatinaa, dhaqaa" namootatti himaa jedha manii hojii misiyonummaatiif ergamaniiru kan jedhu dha. Ergaanisaaniis "Inni du'aa ka'eera!" jedhanii nama hundumaatti labsuu dha. Lafa dhaqxanii labsitan hundumaattiimmoo namootaan "achitti akka naarguuf" jirtu (Mat 28:10) jedhaa itti himaa kan jedhuture.

Nuyis akkuma amma "manaa hin ba'inaa, wal irraa fagaadhaa" jedhamne kana "gad ba'aa hojjedhaa," "waldaa Kristiyaanaa dhaqaa waaqeffadhaa," "Yaada qullaa'aatiin waldhungachuudhaan nagaa walgaafadhaa" (Rom 16:16; 2 Qor 13:12; 1 Tas 5:26) "achittis goofticha arguufjirtuu" jedhamuuf akka jirru Waaqayyoon biraa abdi qabna. Waaqayyo yeroodhaaf gamoo waldaa keessatti utuu wal hin ga'iin akka waaqeffannaan itti fufu godhe malee, waldaan Kristiyaanaa hin cufamne. Nutu wal hin arginaa jedhame malee Waaqayyo haaluma kana keessa dhokatee nuu wajjin jira, nu argaas jira. Egaa firoota ko, hamma qaamaan walitti sassabamuun nuu eyyamamutti, haala amma biyyilafaa keessa jirtuu ilaaltanii abdii hin kutatinaa. Nuyi lafa irrattis maqaa Yesusiin fayyina argannee jirra. Yoo lafa kanaa irraa godaanuun dhufeimmoo achitti Yesusiin arginee isaa wajjin bara baraan jiraachuuf jirra. Kana'aachi, akkuma Phaawulos Ergamaan warra Efesooniin jedhe, "Hidhaa nagaatiin tokkummaa Hafuura

Qulqulluu of harkatti eeggachuudhaaf dhama'aa!" (Efe 4:3). Ameen

III - Greetings from the President of the Congregation,

Obbo Addisu Shunkuri:



Greetings to all in the name of our savior Jesus Christ. I am very confident all of you are keeping safe and healthy. Although we all have not been able to come together in one place, we all are having great time rebooting our spiritual life through His word that is coming to us by our Pastoral office and media ministries.

I also would like to take this opportunity and say thank you to all of you for keeping in touch with each other, check on one another by phone and the church viber channel.

Finally, Happy Easter and Mother's Day. We all miss you and hope to see you all in the Church soon. Please keep our church and our people back home in your prayer In Christ.

Addisu Shunkuri

IV - Lent and Ash Wednesday, (02/26/2020) at Our Church:

By Admasu Simeso

In the Christian churches Lent is a period of fasting for 40 days and 40 nights prior to Easter, the Resurrection of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ from the dead. (*The Lord's date of*

birth eventually was adopted and became the basis of the calendar of most of the modern world). Lent period covers six weeks, 46 days but the fasting is only for 40 days excluding Sundays, although in the Orthodox Churches, especially in Ethiopia they also fast on Sundays.

The occasion was in commemoration of the time the Lord spent in the wilderness for 40 days and nights fasting and praying to His Father, prior to starting His ministry. In the wilderness the Lord was tempted by Satan to break His fast at the time when He must have been very hungry and physically weak and exhausted. But God helped Him, and He did not succumb to the temptation, the ploy of the Devil by sort of acting nice, which we should keep in mind and pray on it in all the temptations that we face in life, Satan will make it sure to tempt us during the time of our weakness. **(The Lord was led to the wilderness to face temptation but at the end He was “delivered from the evil one”).**

The commemoration of Lent was agreed upon by the early Christian leaders at the Council of Nicaea in 325 AD which was initiated by Emperor Constantine of the Roman Empire, the first Christian Emperor in History. Lent became the time of fasting and reevaluating oneself before God. Many denominations including our Lutherans as well as Roman Catholics conduct service on what is termed Ash Wednesday, the Wednesday 40 days before Easter. At the starting of Lent, which drives its name from the Anglo-Saxon term “*lencten*” meaning spring, the first day of Lent starts with Ash Wednesday, 40 days before Easter. On Ash Wednesday some churches have services in which they put ash on the forehead of congregation members reciting, **“you are of earth and you go back to earth”**, reminding each one of them they will

eventually all pass away from this life to the next.

Ash Wednesday



*Remember that you are dust,
and to dust you shall return.*

ECCLESIASTES 3:20

This year's lent season started on Wednesday February 26, 2020 and lasted through April 9, 2020. In our church, on Wednesday February 26, 2020, during our regular Wednesday Evening Service we took sometimes to discuss/reflect on Lent. Our church's Children and Youth Program Coordinator Asseffa Malkaa Waaqjiraa led the discussion/reflection; people participated and expressed their understanding of fasting and what it meant for them.

Fasting according to the practice of some churches is to avoid rich food such as meat, milk, and eggs while it may be 'OK' to have some drinks. From all Christian churches, denominations there are quite a number of Christians who seriously take time and fast and spend a good part of their time in prayers and asking God for the forgiveness of their sins. There are some especially in the recent Evangelical Churches who in the name of 'revival' ridicule the idea of fasting and make fun of it, which may be misguided. Besides the faith aspect of it, fasting or abstaining from bodily indulgence of any kind is good for our body and also gives us time to reflect on our spiritual life and salvation in the Lord.

During our discussion suggestions came up to take time and think from what we think we may refrain from or fast during this lent time and

beyond. Every new year we make resolutions with regard to what we should cut down or accomplish during the new year. On Wednesday, February 26, 2020 those of us who were at our Wednesday Evening Program made new resolution/pledges as what to cut down, fast and try not to do and what we would like to spend more time on to be more productive. Asseffa said, “we don’t necessarily fast for our salvation because our salvation is mainly by believing in and trusting our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ who died for us on the Cross.” But there are other benefit in fasting including even salvation as we have the opportunity to take more time with God in prayer. Some of the things people mentioned; to try to control themselves not to do, include cutting down on food, control our emotion from anger, especially when we drive cars, spending less time on Facebook, watching TV, watching movies, gossips and etc. Someone said refrain from calling people on cell phone or answering. ON the other hand, spend more time on exercise and readings. People also mentioned about drug and alcohol addictions cutting it down and self-discipline and in doing so God would help them.

During the second part of our time our former church President Obbo Ephraim Olani briefly shared the word of God with us to wrap up our discussion. He read for us from the Old Testament from Isaiah 58 as what the Lord God had to say to the prophet about a true fasting; especially about caring for the strangers, the poor and the afflicted. (it would help to read this chapter often just to refresh our thinking or understanding of fasting). The Hermits of Orthodox and Catholic Churches give up lives in this world and abdicate to live in fasting and prayer in the monasteries for the rest of their lives.

As we have mentioned above the Lord retreated to the wilderness to be alone with His Father and He did not have anything to eat for 40 days and night. (We wonder if He had water to drink during those 40 days). Obbo Ephraim underlined the significance of two things during his sharing the Word of God with us: the significance of number 40 in the Jewish history and culture in the Old Testament and also the spiritual metaphor of “climbing mountains”. The number 40 is mentioned 146 times in our Bible, he said: 1) During Noah’s Flood it rained for 40 days and nights. (Genesis 7:4); 2) Moses lived in Egyptian Pharaoh Palace from his childhood up to his 40th year, God led him into the wilderness as a sheep herder for 40 years and went back to Egypt to lead the Israelis out of Egypt another 40 years. He was on Mt Sinai for 40 days and nights with God. 3) The Prophet Elijah walked for 40 days and night to Mt Horeb as the angel of the Lord directed him.

Ephraim mentioned the physical and spiritual toll/benefit of climbing the mountain: Moses and Elijah climbed the mountain to be with God, Jesus at the end of His time on earth after 3 years of ministry taken up on to the cross and was crucified, and taken down and buried but after 3 days of His resurrection from the dead He was lifted back to heaven to be with His father. Ephraim added that sometime Christians feel as if they are on the top of the mountain in their spiritual life and continue that until they are finally taken up to be with the Lord when their time comes.

As we have seen above, Elijah walked for 40 days and night to Mt Horeb where he got to be with God. Before Elijah started his journey the angel of the Lord advised Elijah to get up and eat as a long way was before him. (*Ka’ii nyaadhu karaa dheeratu si fuula dura jira,*

Macaafa Moototaa Isa Duraa 19:5-8)! Here we should understand that Elijah walked for 40 days and 40 nights sustained by the last provision (galaa) of food and water the angel of the lord provided to him.

The Lord walked to get from place to place during His last 3 years of His Ministry and the 30 years before that.

To reflect upon the life and experience of our people in which walking is part and parcel of life some of us may not fully understand what it means and how it feels to walk your entire life, when you do not have any other choice.

Walking was (is) part of the life of our people all over Oromia for that matter all over Ethiopia. Our people know what it means to walk down the valleys and up the hills and mountains of our Homeland. Even today probably 90% of our people walk their whole life.

We do not really grasp the driving force behind but in the 1950s /60s young people (teenagers) from Western Oromia (Biyya Oromo) walked from such places like Mandi, Najjoo, Booji, Aira and Gimbi; up and down Abbaa Seena hills, walking through the dense forest, hot and humid Dhidheessa River valley for 100 to 200 kms, depending on from where they started to Naqamte to go to attend high school, because at that time a high school was only available in Naqamtee, the capital of the region. Others from Ghidaami and Begii walked Caakkaa Laaloo, Caakkaa Meceqeddoo and Qabarichoo crossing such rivers as Cappi (Cabbi), Kojjii; (Cappi fi Kojjii gidduu lafa dhiirri wal'diddu), Laga Hiddaa, Garee and Gatti etc. to Dembi Dollo. We drank from running rivers collecting the water with our palm and we rarely got sick because the water flowing from those rivers of our hills and mountains were clean.

Of course, many young people walked from other rural areas of Oromia; Center, East and South they all walked in pursuit of modern education. From Iluu Abbaa Booraa, (Biyya Abbaa Gammachiis) walked from all directions for elementary and high schools from such places as Algae, 70 KMs away from Gore crossing Soor and Gabbaa rivers

There were those who walked from Anfilo, the coffee land 42 KMs NW of Dembi Dollo for school. Others walked from Daallee and Sadii for days crossing challenging rivers during rainy season such as Buruuri, Indina, Kombolcha and Qexoo to get to Dembi Dollo.

Young people from neighboring communities West of Oromia from the Anyuak (Gambella) and Nuer (Jikawo/Itaang) ethnic people in Western Ethiopia and from Dinka and Shuluk ethnic group from South Sudan walked up the highland to Dembi Dollo in pursuit of education at Bethel Evangelical Secondary School, BESS. Other students came to BESS from Assoosaa, Begii, Mandii, Najjoo, Aira, Gore, Jimma Abbaa Jifaar, Maajii and Mizaan later even from Finfinnee.

*People carried their travel provisions, **galaa**, (akaa'ii [roasted barely], cuukkoo, or a loaf of home-made bread). On the way when they felt hungry and tired they rested by river side, broke piece of the bread, ate, and drank the water from the river, saving some of the bread for later on. The concept of "galaa" provision you carried on travel is very deep, we do not have equal expression in English, because words are made (used) to describe the need. We need our galaa in the Spirit and Word of God to sustain us on our journey in life.*

Having said that, the mystery that is hard for us to grasp on now is, what gave those young

people the determination and resolve to walk for days year in and year out in pursuit of education? The only thing we can say now is that it was only divine guidance and we really mean to thank God that He gave us the vision and longing for education. Now days it is common to hear people, when they talk about distances to saying, it is far, it takes 2 hrs. to drive and 12 hrs. to fly. But we also understand that everything is relative, in this case time and place!

Here also we must pause a little and think. All these drive for education, the divine guidance that we now appreciate, and thank God for it, is rooted in and was because the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ found us and opened the eyes of our people. By the way unless people stretch it too much our Oromo traditional faith in one Supreme Waaqa (God) fundamentally does not have any conflict with Christianity. The only thing was the Gospel, the teaching of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ found our people in Western Oromia around the turn of the 20th Century, got to us through the back door, through Sudan when other passes were closed to our land by our neighbors.

Our fathers and mothers, those who first welcomed the Gospel and the generation that followed took it throughout our land on foot, walking. They walked for days and were provided their meals by people who were kind enough to host them, while opening their hearts and homes to the Gospel and the messengers. Again, those people remind us the Prophet Elijah who walked for 40 days to Mt Horeb and the angel of the Lord telling him before he started his journey, "to get up and eat because a long way was before him".

The foundation and growth of our mother church, the Ethiopian Evangelical Church Mekane Yesus, EECMY was built on "walking" not driving nor flying which came later to a limited extent with time. Our early Pastors and evangelists tirelessly walked only carrying their walking sticks and their Holy Bibles in their hands. (The Bible was translated into Afaan Oromo by Abbaa Gammachiis in 1898 again with the Lord's Devine guidance).

Of course, some better off Pastors and Evangelists had mules to ride to take them from place to place for their work of the Gospel. Others did not have mules, vehicles nor salaries. They toiled the land from Monday to Friday and on the road on Saturdays for Sunday services and preaching the Word of God. We could list names of those fathers and mothers through which "the Gospel found our land and our people" but that we leave it for some other time. We may even have few people among current members of our church, OROECM who during their younger ages followed their fathers walking behind the mules to help take the Gospel forward, "gaangoo qabuudhaan tajaajiltoota", (provided services by treading along after the mules and taking care of them). Waaqayyo isaan ha'eebbisu! It was clear that "services" were purely for the spread of the Gospel, no other motives nor for self-aggrandizement as it became the main motive now, in some cases. "Lord give us that old time religion, faith"!

There are other things that people now days take for granted as well: we think everyone, every home in our homeland has telephone lines, running water and indoor toilets. If we go back home some of us may ask "where is the toilet, where is the switch"? We always thank God that He created and put in us the vision

and desire for His Gospel in our early church fathers/mothers followed by the desire for education, opened the opportunity for us, protected us in every aspect during our walking down and up in our mountains and valleys, (bu'aa ba'ii) of our homeland, both metaphorically and in reality. We thank God and are proud but in humility before God that He brought us thus far in our faith as well as in our lives in this world. Above all we should keep in mind our root and our people and our Holy Land of birth, also the dedicated Pastors and Evangelists of our mother church, EECMY and her Synods who still “walk” to take the Gospel to those people still not reached. We also need to share our rich history with our younger generation at this difficult time and remember our people, our parents who sacrificed everything to give us the opportunity. The younger generation should be aware and proud of its root nothing to be otherwise!

So, walking is sort of self-discipline of Lent period during which we refrain from luxury of indulgence, so we should keep walking in our faith in the Lord proud but in humility!

04/28/2020

V - Palm Sunday and the Lucky Colt (Young Donkey)-

By Admasu Simeso

Back home in Oromia, (Biyya Oromo) and in Ethiopia as a whole while donkeys are the most hard-working domestic animals they are the less appreciated, we do not understand why. Donkeys carry and move probably no less than 50% of the goods (loads) of the country, the other 40% carried by humans themselves and the rest by mules and modern means of transport. People seldom use them for ride except children once in a while for fun.



It is sad while donkeys are the carriers of the loads for the people they are not taken care of

well, instead they are looked down upon and not appreciated. It is quite common in Ethiopia when people insult one another, which is quite common to say, “*ahiyaa* (donkey Amharic) and “*harreen kun*” (Oromo). The other metaphor of insult is ‘*saree*’ (dog), here in the USA and Europe they are loved and cared for as much as children if not more. It seems that this culture is of the entire Middle East, which has a history of itself.

In Finfinnee donkeys have been the carriers of essential needs, (goods and services) of the city for over hundred years; firewood, cowdung for fuel and straws (*cidii*), water and essential food supplies brought in every day from surrounding Oromo communities. They are hit to move faster with their burden and mistreated. When they enter the city from every direction in large numbers at the same time they literally block the traffic and they do not care just tread along.

Some years back we went back home, and we were in Finfinnee with our children, at that time they were early teenagers. They saw the loads the donkeys carry and move, at the same time hit. They felt deeply sorry for the donkeys and almost cried saying “*why is he hitting them like that what did they do*”? But lately we hear that there is an Animal Right Organization Donkey Sanctuary in Ethiopia looking after donkeys giving them shelters. The other new development we never heard before; they say demand for donkey skin/hide are high now. We are not sure what they use them for nor what they do with the meat. (*Safuu'dha!*)

There was one lucky and blessed young donkey in the history of donkeys, the one that Jesus rode on and triumphantly entered Jerusalem, was a blessed donkey we could

say, although it was still carrying the Lord. Although sometime we misuse God's blessings in Gen 1:28 in which He said to Adam and Eve, “be fruitful, multiply and fill the earth and rule over the rest of His creation”, we forget that it is with responsibility, not only to subdue it and use it in abusive manner but also to care for it.

However, without overly praising ourselves, it is important to mention, especially our younger generation know that our Oromo culture, our people had/have great respect for nature, God's Creation: water, trees, plants, and animals. Trees and plants are not cut down indiscriminately; they only get what they use and very much care and take care of their animals and plants.

In conclusion the colt (the young donkey) was in a way honored by the Son of God riding on it, the donkey walking on the cloth and palm branches the people spread on the road for the Lord's honor, fulfilling the several century old prophesy in Zechariah 9:9. Actually, it seems the Lord already knew the donkey before even seeing it; because He instructed His disciples saying, (go and fetch it, it was tied on the side of the road, if anyone asks you why you take it, tell him that the Lord needs it, Luke 19:31).



“Rejoice greatly, O daughter of Zion; shout, O daughter of Jerusalem: behold, thy King

cometh unto thee: he is just, and having salvation; lowly, and riding upon a colt, young donkey". (Zechariah 9:9). As He entered the City of David a large crowd followed Him singing, "Hosanna to the Son of David! Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord"! They even tried to crown Him King of the Jews although they were under the Roman occupation at that time. 04/29/2020

VI - Easter 2020 at OROECM

By Admasu Simeso

As we have said in other part of this publication, because of the coronavirus pandemic all aspects of the social and religious life of the people of the world is very much constrained. We are not quite sure whether to say we celebrated or observed Easter this year as we were not being able to gather at our church and celebrate the Resurrection of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. Nevertheless, we proclaimed from wherever we were; in our homes, saying, *"the Lord is risen, indeed He is risen"! In our Oromo saying, "akka baran dhiisanii akka baraatti jiraatu" jedhan. (You live not according to what you were used to but according to the situation of the time"*.

We started our church 'stay at home worship' from our homes on Sunday, 29 March 2020. Palm Sunday, the day the Lord gloriously entered Jerusalem sitting on the back of young colt (donkey) was a week later on Sunday, 04/05/20. On Palm Sunday the crowd which met the Lord at the entrance of the City of David, Jerusalem chanted praising Him, attempted to draft and crown Him King of the Jews. Following Palm Sunday, we had online service the whole week, during the Holy Week starting on Monday, 04/06/20. Maundy, Thursday, the night the Lord sat with His disciples for Passover meal was on Thursday, April 09, 2020; that evening is remembered in

church history, the evening where he washed the feet of His disciples, to set an example of meek service and also established the Holy Communion by breaking the bread and taking the cup of wine blessed and shared with His disciples. *We greatly missed that special time of communing together this year for the first time in our church history. ("ammas akka baran dhiisanii akka baraatti jiraatu")*. It was Thursday evening after the Passover Meal that became Maundy Thursday in church calendar that the Lord was betrayed by one of His disciples and taken by the "religious leaders" to be crucified.

Good Friday, the day the Lord was crucified was on 10 April 2020 this year and observed/worshiped from our homes again. This year the Jewish Holy Week of Passover and our Christian Easter observed during the same week. Both have common root and are known as Abrahamic Religions; actually Christianity, Judaism and Islam are known as the 3 Abrahamic Religions. (In Christian religion Jesus is also called as our Passover Lamb.)



Luther's Cross



A crown of thorn crafted by an African artist (Malawian) from African wood depicting the suffering of the Lord, Jesus

The Lord was betrayed by one of His own disciples, taken before the Roman colonial governor of Judea Pontius Pilate by Jewish religious leaders for trial and crucifixion. Although he knew that Jesus was innocent Pilate failed to exercise his authority and free an innocent man because of his indecisiveness, instead he washed his hands symbolically claiming that he had nothing to do with what would follow against Jesus.

On Easter Sunday, 04/12/2020 our Pastor, Pastor Wondimu in his sermon said, when religion and politics cooperate on evil justice is compromised and it is not good for citizens. Here we witness that the Jewish religious leaders and the Roman authorities more or less agreeing on injustice against Jesus. The Pastor further said that we currently witness the same thing, that religion and politics widely cooperating on unjust acts in which the citizens are oppressed.



Easter weekend, Pastor Wondimu at the pulpit in empty sanctuary.



OROECM Youth & Children Program coordinator, Asaffaa Malkaa Waaqjiraa.



Dawit Baisa from Media Ministry

Pictures by Chali Yadesa

The most interesting piece of divine intervention, a lasting piece of history was the role Simon of Cyrene a man from North Africa played. The Roman soldiers forced Simon from among the crowd that was following Jesus' forced march towards Golgotha, to carry the cross that Jesus was to be crucified on, the rest of the way when Jesus could not move any more with it because of the beatings and mistreatment that was inflicted up on Him. Of all people, out of the crowd that was following Jesus' march towards the cross, *Simon* was forced to carry the cross because he was a *black man*. We wonder why and how Simon travelled all the way from North Africa to Jerusalem, a distance of about 730 KMs, taking a very fit person about 3 weeks at 6 hrs. walk a day; did he walk or rode a camel? For the Jews it was customary to travel to Jerusalem yearly for Passover but for the black man? It is also important to keep in mind the central role Africa has in the narrative of the coming of the Lord, the Son of God coming to earth to save humanity. When Jesus was an infant under one year, His mother Mary and Joseph took Him to Egypt as a *refugee* to spare Him from the killing spree of children under 1year ordered by King Herod. They went back home to Israel after Herod himself died. *Here at the end again at the end of the Lord's ministry on earth in His human body an African man was sharing the burden.*



Simon of Cyrene sharing the burden of the Cross with Jesus.

But humans do not understand how God works and His plan. Pilate shunned responsibility and remembered by history for his indecisiveness. Out of all the crowd of people that were following Jesus to the cross history remembers Simon of Cyrene, a black man who probably was beaten and mistreated with Jesus that Friday, the day of crucifixion the only person on the side of the innocent Son of God and Lord. As Africans we are proud and thank God that Simon an African man shared the *heavy burden* of the cross with Jesus who suffered to save humanity and through the act of Simon we cherish the sharing of the burden. When the Jewish religious leaders and the crowd were chanting crucify Him, Simon was the only one treading along with Jesus carrying the cross. Now we wonder where Simon would be and watching what is going on in the world during this coronavirus pandemic.

The Lord was crucified that Friday and rose from the dead on the 3rd day on Sunday. In the word of God, he shared with us online from his home in Hagerstown, Maryland on one of our Wednesday Evening Church Program, on Wednesday, 22 April 20, Pastor, Dr. Kibereab Gudeta who also served us during our Christmas/New Year Spiritual Conference in

early January this year, said, *“the Cross is a symbol of suffering but also holds hope because after the cross comes hope in resurrection”*. *Abdiin keenya Jiraataa dha.*

04/23/2020

VII - Other OROECM News: Thank You and God’s Blessings from OROECM to Some of its Members Who Are Doing Extra in Support of Their Church.

1. Our church is blessed with really committed people going out of their ways to do everything possible to support their church which has given the church a solid ground in its ministry at this difficult time. We are thankful to God that He has given selfless people with talent and vision to His church. They are meek and humble just doing what is needed to be done and right for their church.
2. The Pastoral Office and the Council: The Pastoral Office’s focus on nourishing the members with theologically sound spiritual service. Since due to the coronavirus church services are conducted online, the weekly Sunday services, Wednesdays and other days have been remarkable with people tuning in from the Twin Cities and from around the world. The Council members also quietly leading effectively in line with their responsibility.
3. Led by our Pastor, Pastor Wondimu, the preachers (the Pastor, Assefa Melka, Obbo Ephraim Olani, Luba Yadesa Dhaabaa and Luba Michael Hundesa), from the Worship, Aadde Birtukan Ayana and Aadde Hiwot Wayyessa and from Media Team- Dawit Baisa, Gamachis Yadesa, Chali Yadesa and Zecharias very committed individuals going extra miles to be at the church every Sunday on time to give necessary support in music, leading the worship and

channeling online to provide solid service without interruption.



Dawit, Hiwot and Assaffaa



Dawit and Chali, (Picture by Chali Yadesa)

4. Building and Maintenance Committee led by Obbo Daniel Namara, Dawit Baisa and also the President Obbo Addisu Shunkuri, organized spring cleanings in addition to numerous repair and maintenance they have been working on. The decoration and beautification of the sanctuary and pulpit area according to church seasons is carefully taken care of and done by Aadde Talile Dureso and Aadde Huriyaa Leenco Lata.

5. Women's Group having their program online three Friday evening of the month continuously, the last Friday of the month being reserved for All Night Prayer of the church though not all night, only to about mid-night.
6. Members of our church Health and Wellness Team on March 08, 2020 provided briefing and information sharing on the coronavirus pandemic, its symptom and how it differs from regular flue and for what to watch. The briefing was given in Aster Gannoo Hall and was very useful. The participants were Aadde Lensa Deresu, Obbo Kibru Tadese, Aadde Huriya Lencoo Leta, Aadde Genet Yadata and Aadde Hirut Amante. Aadde Caaltu was working that day. (see a separate article on coronavirus by the team).

7. The church leadership also would like to express their profound thank you and God 's blessings upon quite a number of our members who are committed and continue to pay their tithe and contribution online as well as by bringing it to the church when assigned people are at the church to receive it. Unless there is commitment it is not easy to do so at this time

VIII - Mother's Day 2020 at OROECM

By Admasu Simeso

Mothers' Day, celebration in our church, OROECM in honor of all mothers was always a special occasion, colorful befitting the honor of all mothers. This year it was on May 10, 2020. In Oromo culture the expression "*haadha*" (*mother*) has a significant meaning which words cannot express enough but the heart knows.



From L to R, Aadde Warkitu Jigsaa, Harmee Tasfaa) 2013, Aadde Asnaaqech Riqituu, 2014, Aadde Berhane Alazar, (Aadaadee) 2015 and Aadde Aster Namara 2012 OROECM Mothers of the year from 2012 to 2019 (Picture by Chali Yadesa).



Aadde Lydia Ashana Mother of the Year 2017 in the picture also Aadde Erkabush, 2016. Aadde Tsehay Banti Lamu (Harmee Mule) 2018, Aadde Dinqee Abdisaa 2019 Mother of the Year with other Mothers of the Year.

Haadhootiin waldaa keenyaa; akkasumas haadootiin dhi'oo fi fagoo jirtan hundi бага Waaqayyo Gooftaan keenya nagaa fi fayyaan eegee Guyyaa Ayyaana keessaniin isin ga'e galata Isaa jenna! Akkasumas bara dheeraaf waggaa, waggaa Haadhotii Waldaa keenyaa, OROECM taatanii kan fo'amtan hundi lafa jirtanitti Waaqayyo бага Ayyaana Haadhootiin isin ga'e; akka seenaa waldaa keenyaattis ammayyuu, yoomiyyuu isin haadhotii waldaa keenyaati! Egaa Waaqayyo Gooftaan haala cimaa kana dabarsee waan hundumaaf Isa galateeffachuuf Mana Isaa keessatti waltii nu haa'sassaabu! Ijoollee keenya, ol'adeemtota keenya, haadhotii gara fuula duraa isinis Waaqayyo Gooftaan didhaa, jabina, dandeettii fi amantii haadhotii keessanii isiniif hakennu; ga'aa argaa, itti gaafatama ebbaa Waaqayyo Uumaan isinitti kenne ba'aa! (Sagalee Abdii).



Again, in our culture when people are tired and exhausted they say “yaa haadha koo”! Oh, my mother, sort of saying I wish you were here with me. But when the situation gets tough and challenging, when they face serious matter, they say, “hoo'abbaa kootii”! (Oh, my father what is the way out of this?).

As of 2018 the population of the world was more than 7.7 billion people. All of us, men, women, young and old at one point were carried for 9 months in the wombs of our mothers and delivered with painful labor, (miixuu), a secret that God hid from the men,

and we will never be able to find out. God blessed mothers with the gift of enduring pain to have a precious gift at the end. It is tough enough to carry a gradually growing, sometime moving around creatures from the inception in their womb for 9 months and finally deliver with great pain with the help of God. In old days and even today mothers in our homeland do not have the luxury of being helped in hospitals to deliver; some were helped to deliver by traditional midwives. Our mothers used to say once the baby is born and the mothers sees the precious thing they immediately forget about the pain they went through and soon

they have another one and continue to have more babies. There were mothers who went through the labor eleven or twelve times and gave birth to children. ***Thus one of the most amazing secret of creative power of God hidden from humanity that He blessed mothers with is the gift of enduring the labor of giving birth, even mother animals.***

The burden of the mother does not end with giving birth, especially in our homeland and the rest of rural Africa, where life is difficult; mothers took care of their children to bring them up in addition to the demand of getting the means of livelihood for the children and the family.



1- A mother with a baby on her back and a load on her head in one of rural African countries.

2) Mgogo, Burundian refugee camp in Tanzania, 1993, one of the innocent child affected by the war as if saying, "God save me from the act of the grownups". They say, "pictures speak more than words".



A young Oromo mother with her baby boy. (Photo by Ms. Ulpu)

Mother's Day, that is what we men think we celebrate although still we do not fully understand what price mothers pay to be mother.

On this year's Mother's Day our church was lucky and blessed with hearing the Word of God from Pastor Zahara Said Ali from Stavanger, Norway, herself a woman and a mother. We thank God to have such a wonderful world-class Oromo female theologian in Pastor Zahara Said Ali formerly a graduate of EECMY Seminary and a staff member of Western Wallagga Bethel Synod in Dembi Dollo.



Pastor Zaharah's sermon was based on the verses from the Gospel of John 14:1-3 in which the Lord encouraged His disciples, "*let not your heart be troubled, you believe in God and believe also in me*". In reference to the current situation because of the coronavirus pandemic she said, it is easy to be troubled and worry in the face of the unknown, but we as Christians

should put our faith and trust in the Lord the Almighty, the Living God.

She also mentioned the secret that no one else knows except God and the mind and heart of an individual that are secret and kept from others. Well, among the secret that God kept from others, that only the mothers know is the labor and the pain a mother goes through to be a mother. Our church, our home-land and our world is blessed with God's gift of motherhood. We all thank God for the "*mothers*" their lives and the gift God endowed them with, the propagation of humanity. In God's blessings of Adam and Eve at the beginning in Genesis 1:28 as the first couple in which He said, "*be fruitful, multiply and fill the earth*" it seems that the major task of propagation fell upon Eve.
05/11/2020

IX. COVID19 PANDEMIC

By OROECM Health and Wellness Team

What Novel Coronavirus is, the signs and symptoms, prevention measures, and its emotional effect on individuals. See the Reference)

On March 8th, 2020, the Health and Wellness Team of the OROEC gave an awareness presentation to the congregation. It was explained that the Novel Covid19 is a family of viruses causing upper respiratory illness similar to the common cold. The virus that causes Covid19 is referred to as SARS-COV-2 and was first discovered in Wuhan, China, late 2019. The name 'Corona' originated from the spike shape of the virus, and 'novel' is to emphasize that the virus is a new type of virus. Since late 2019 the virus has spread worldwide; by the end of January 2020, the

World Health Organization had declared Covid19 as an alarming pandemic.



Aadde Lensa Deresu leading the presentation.
(Picture by Aadde Dune Silga)

Corona Virus is transmitted from one person to another through respiratory droplets from an infected person's cough or sneeze. Contact transmission is another method the virus spreads, droplets from an infected person's cough or sneeze drop on an object, and once touched by hands that then touch the face, nose, or mouth the virus gains access to the upper respiratory tract.

Information regarding Covid19 is frequently changing. The signs and symptoms appear between 2-14 days and have three categories, namely, mild, moderate, and critical symptoms. The mild symptoms refer to the symptoms similar to the common cold, such as running nose, sore throat, headache, and body aches. Individuals in this category do not require to be hospitalized. Self-isolation and comfort care at home is enough. The moderate category means individuals have mild symptoms in addition to shortness of breath and require hospital admission for oxygen supplementation

and treatment. The critical type implies an individual has fully contracted the Covid19 and requires vital medical care.

There is no cure yet for Covid19. Therefore, prevention measures are highly advised. One of the most advised prevention measures is the frequent washing of hands for 20seconds with soap and water. In the absence of soap and water, the alternative is sanitizers with alcohol content above 70%. Physical distancing is another prevention measure as it minimizes the transmission of the virus. It is highly advised that individuals, especially when outdoors or in public places, maintain at least 6 feet of physical distance and to wear cloth face masks. Not touching one's face is highly recommended. When coughing or sneezing, it is strongly advised that one does so in an elbow rather than on the hands.

It is inevitable for individuals and families to be emotionally affected by the pandemic. Self-care and the need to connect with others is an essential aspect of minimizing psychological disaster. Mental health and positive wellbeing are crucial to coping with the pandemic. As stated by the WHO and CDC, fear and anxiety destabilize and weaken the immune system making individuals vulnerable to the virus. Focusing on life's positivity can positively impact mental health. It is important to know and acknowledge that God is in control, and there is little human beings can do during this devastating time. A positive impact can also result from eating healthy, staying active, and connecting with God's Word.

In conclusion, the pandemic has shaken the world, and the uncertainty is worrying. The frequency in changing symptoms and the effect on individuals is alarming. The media's tendency to focus on death rates than recovery cases raises anxiety in people. It is vital to shift more focus on preventive measures such as the washing of hands, wearing face-masks in public areas, and physical distancing.

References

BMJ 2020:368:M800, MDH, WHO, CDC

X- DHAAMSA NAGAA BAAR GAMAA!



Obboleettoota fi Obboloota Waldaa Our Redeemer Warra Wangeela Oromo Minisoota. Nagaan Waaqayyo Abbaa jaalalli Gooftaa keenya Yesus Kiristoos, tokkuman Hafuura Qulqullu isini fi habaayyatu jechaa hawwa koo fi isin yaadu koo ibsa.

Oromon ‘akka itti mana ba’an malee akki itti deebian hinbeekamu’ inni jedhu erganarrattiraawwate wagga sadai fi guyyoota muraasatu hafa. Hata’u male ‘lafa ‘Gooftan nama dhaabe hidhaa male ijaajju’ akkuma jedhamu gargaarsa Goofta fi kadhanna fi degersa miseensoota waldaa, maati koo, hiriyyoonni fi lammin nacinaa dhaabatten, naanno koo waacan haguutu male keessi koo tasgabii fi abdiin guutame yoona ga’e. Kadhanna keessan oso hintagolchin kan naafkadhattan deebin isaa yeroo Gooftatti akka raawwatu shak bat hinjedhu.

Baroonnisadan isin irra fagaadhe ture keessatti wallanso baayye dabarsitan. Lafan jiru taa’e miixachun koo takkaa hinafne. Hamma raawwatutti raajii Waaqayyo eeggachun, qooda ofii adda baasuun, obsa nama ficisiisa. Dhunmni isaa gammachun afaan nama

qabachisuta’a. Namni tokko, ‘gammachuun lafa rakkoon hinjirre oso hintaane, dandeetti ittiin keessa darban qabaachudha’ jedhe. Waaqayyo, kan isinifi oogumma kennefii hundi keessanimmoo akkuma addaaaddatti tole jettani simachu keessaniin dhugoome. Taaten kun waldaa kana fi haara miti. Guddina fi danumma ilaalcha amantii keessa kan burqe oso ta’e, bu’aa barumsa qabaachu danda’a. Fedha dhuunfaa yookin sabababiroo, bule’oole Waaqayyo ifa hin baasa. Karaa waldaa waantooti irratti xiyyefachu daganne jirachu mala. Qilleensa haala ilaallate damaqu kanaa fi walattajji mijata miseensonni hedduminan akka salphaatti burjaajoofnu kan taasise jira jedheen yaada. Haala falammii sana keessa darbu keenya gammadu male sababaisa fi fulduratti maal hafoyyesinu kan jedhu irratti xiinxalu hirrina kan qabnu nattifakkaata. Ammayyuu yeroonisa wanta hindarbine fi, gurmu kana irratti Wangeelaan, caasa waldaan, seera fi heera waldaa yeroo waliin walqabsiise yaada qoranna dhi’essu oso ramadame, egeree waldaa hingargaara jedheen abdadha.

Dhumarratti hadholi fi shamarran waldaa keenyan hunduman, бага Waaqayyo isinin uumudhan dhaloota baayyisee guyyaa Ayyana Haadhooliin isin ga’e! Waldatti isin tajajiluuf haalli mijatu haa’hafu malee, maatiidhum keessatti hinraawwata jedheen abdadha. Jaalalli Kiristos inni sammun olii, fayyina fi nagaan isin habadhaasu.

Amma ija nagaan foonin walarginutti egaa shaawoo!!

Massun Ayyalaa London irra

Hubachiisa: Obboleessa keenya Mesfin: Dhaamsa nagaan miseensota waldaa keenyaaf ergiteef fayyaa, ta’i, Waaqayyo si ha’eebbisu. You know we all miss you a lot. Waaqayyo Gooftaan keenya maatii keetti, maatii

waldaa keetti dafee akka si deebisu yeroo
hunda hin kadhanna. Hamma kadhati keenya
nuu deebi'utti iji
keenya gara Isaa ilala. Jabaadhu, Waaqayyo si
wajjin jiraa!
Nagaan!
Sagalee Abdii

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Sagalee Abdii

