



**February 2015**

Dear Friends,

I trust you have enjoyed a blessed Christmas and New Year with family and friends. I so appreciated a rare Christmas with my family. I exercised absolutely no self-control, which now needs to be remedied! I have also delighted in reconnecting with many of you as I have visited different churches over the past four months. I am grateful for Val, Pam and Colin's encouragement and support and for those in the London team too.

In my last newsletter I shared how much I love new things and am energised by new challenges. Happily our faithful God has brought some new opportunities to me for ministry in Ethiopia. I have been invited to teach a module on Communication and Conflict Management to masters' students at St. Frumentius Orthodox Theology College in Mekelle this April. This is a course I taught to previous masters' groups at the college. God has also wonderfully opened a door for me to teach in the new St. Frumentius' Anglican Theological College in Gambella, Southern Ethiopia. The Anglican College is led by Bishop Grant LeMarquand and his wife Wendy, and Rev. Dr. Johann van der Bijl and his wife Louise.



As you can imagine, after a lot of uncertainty, I am thrilled by these invitations to teach. God willing, I will visit the Anglican team in Gambella in April, after teaching the masters' course in Mekelle. The 70 Anglican churches in Gambella are served by 16 clergy, only one of whom has had theological training! Indeed theological training institutions have played a key role in strengthening biblical education for Ethiopian leaders. However, secular influences and health and wealth preaching have resulted in limited transformation of the church as a whole. Please pray that God would

*lead all of us involved in theological education in his purposes and according to his perfect plan – I remain confident that he has the best plan.*

I am always thankful for times that I have been able to sit, talk and spend time with students and colleagues. We often have a wonderful time sharing stories



together. Indeed we have so much that we can learn from the faith stories of Ethiopian students about the hardships that they have endured with courage, fortitude, strength, and dependence on God. I pray that they too are encouraged by my stories of faith, as I share from God's word and my experiences. *Pray that I will be an encouragement, and will communicate and teach effectively.*



I know many of you were praying for an opening into refugee work for me. But for some reason, known only to God, this door has not opened. Although a number of people have a burden for refugees and a desire to reach them with the gospel, I have found no one in a position to join me in ministry at the camps. I am confident that I should not go forward in this work alone and that for now taking up the theological teaching opportunities is the right way for me to proceed. Actually, several of you expressed concerns that refugee ministry would not utilise my teaching gift! *Please continue to ask God to bring a team of able people together to reach Eritrean refugees in the north and South Sudan refugees in the south of Ethiopia.*

As I continue to look to God for new ministry openings and guidance, I am also hoping that God will bring a church or other short term team together for outreach in Ethiopia this summer. There are many opportunities for sharing the gospel; I would love to be involved in facilitating this vital ministry. Teams always come with such enthusiasm and with a wealth and variety of gifts, but we particularly need those gifted in teaching the Bible to children, youth and young adults. *Ask God to bring together a team of his choosing for ministry in Ethiopia to build his kingdom there this summer.*

Crosslinks is continuing to review its mission strategy for Ethiopia with a planned visit to Ethiopia by Rev. Andy Lines, Crosslinks Mission Director, in May. Andy will meet with key Ethiopian partners and discuss his findings and recommendations at a residential General Council meeting in England in July. Colin, in the Belfast office, is busy putting a School of Biblical Training team together to teach a level 2 course to the 57 level 1 participants trained in Mekelle in 2013. They will provide this training under the auspices of Langham Partnership. *Do pray for Andy and the leadership team as they make key decisions for Crosslinks' Ethiopian ministry strategy. Pray too for Colin, Les and others as they teach church leaders, that God would give them health, energy and clarity in their teaching.*

**I can only pray?** I've said that more than once at some situation or another without really considering that prayer is not a last resort but rather the first and the last and everything in between. Jesus' ministry began with 40 days of prayer. Each day before he served the crowds began with prayer, and the last thing he did before going to the cross was to pray. Praying is the best thing any of us can do.

So thank you for praying for me as I prepare to return to Ethiopia in April.

***'First, I thank my God through Jesus Christ for you all, that your faith is spoken of throughout the whole world... that without ceasing I mention you always in my prayers, asking that by some means I may find a way in the will of God to come to you... so that you may be established, that is, that I may be encouraged together with you by our mutual faith.'*** Romans 1:8-12

In Christ's love,

Karen

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