

**Eritrean Mission Project
September-October 2023
Report to partners**

I am so grateful for all your support. The Lord has blessed me with people like you who love Him, the author and sustainer of our lives, who loved the world and gave us the privilege to tell His story to those who do not know Him.

My trip to Eritrea began with a TEE orientation in Addis Ababa with three other Eritrean pastors sent by the ELCE. We joined tutors and tutor candidates from Mekane Yesus for a three-day orientation, September 20-22.



I left Addis Ababa for Eritrea on Sunday the 24th. This trip was very significant, in that, we were able to decide on major projects to begin the process of preparing Beleza to be an accredited School of Theology to train the future leaders of the ELCE:

1. I met with the BOD of the Evangelical Lutheran Church of Eritrea to report on my library, solar energy, translation of the Book of Concord into the Tigigna language, and the implementation of the TEE program. These are the decisions made by the BOD:
 - a. I will continue to work with the Chemnitz Library Project of Concordia Theological Seminary Fort Wayne, Indiana, to supply adequate books and set up the library system for Beleza for an accredited B.Th. school of theology.
 - b. Decided to install solar panels for Beleza and the Central office to address the energy source challenges for both places.
 - c. Decided to start TEE, certificate, and the B.Th. levels in February of 2024. The B.Th. level will be a hybrid program that includes intensive courses combined with tutor-led discussion groups. I will then lead or facilitate the offering of the intensive sessions and serve as the lead tutor.

- d. The translation of the Book of Concord began in August by a team I organized in the USA. 75% of the Luther's Large Catechism is already translated. I have begun to edit the translation and will be ready for review by the ELCE pastors in December. The BOD endorsed the translation work organized in the USA.
2. Setting up Beleza to start TEE (Theological Education by Extension): A two-day orientation was held in Beleza for 43 pastors who will be potential tutors for the certificate-level TEE and are candidates for the B.Th. program.



- a. Registration for the B.Th. program will start soon. I will travel to Eritrea to introduce the program and teach four intensive courses in February of 2024, and an assistant tutor will set up group facilitators to continue group discussions for the rest of the semester.
 - b. Certificate-level TEE materials will be translated into the Tigrigna language and will be open for registration to begin in February or June. When we start this level will depend on the translation of six months' worth of materials; I am hoping that the director of the school will set up the team soon to accomplish the project by the end of January.
 - c. The director of the school will work with a contractor to install solar panels by the end of January.
3. Seven candidates were ordained during the worship service on October 8. Two more candidates will be ordained later after the completion of their vicarage.



4. National Lutheran Women Conference: I was given the opportunity to present at the National Lutheran Women Conference on the Role of Women in a Mission Movement. This gave me an opportunity to cast the vision for the TEE program to raise women evangelists, deaconesses, and professional church workers. This is very strategic for the mission of the ELCE. I was able to raise awareness and pique the interest of women for further theological education.



Please thank our good people for their prayers and faithful support!

Peace and joy,

Yohannes

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