



Ethiopia Newsletter

Joseph Chu (Jan to April, 2017)

Phil 2:13 may aptly serve as an opening for this Newsletter: “for it is God who is at work in you, both to will and to work for His good pleasure.” This Report will go far back to the beginning of ‘Abyssinia Camping Ministry’ (ACM), reviewing its two major milestones, and looking forward for this year of 2017.

ACM began at the turn into the New Millennium:

Started small with a Stable and other facilities at the borderline of Addis Ababa about 17 years ago, we, whether foreign missionaries or Ethiopian believers, nevertheless all conceived that our humble site was conducive to camping outreach to young people.

At the turn of the New Millennium we used to take boys and girls to our Site for horse-back riding, football, archery, netting fish, and hiking.....Plus a Bible time which still remains as the backbone of this Ministry. After these many years, things have changed a lot such as cluster after cluster of Condominiums (i.e. Government built apartment blocks for the mass) shot up all around (the photo with Shemson running on a meadow today being dotted with condominiums in the distant background), no more fish in the stream as being polluted, a heavy-duty six cable power line with towers running within view from our Site, and more and more people moving from the city taking up residence in our area.... In spite of the changing faces of all the surrounding, our Site still retains certain countryside flavor in her distant rolling mountains, the wooded area (being designated the government as ‘Green Area’) and water are still running in the nearby streams.

The first Milestone of ACM in 2005:

In early July of 2005 ACM was registered with the Government as a national Christian faith Ministry. As we look back, again our Lord was prompting us through His indwelling Spirit then that this Camping endeavor should be registered national but not foreign. After 12 years in 2017, when many NGO foreign Christian organizations included, are being faced with this trend – increasing difficulty in getting new work permits. We heard that the government has been more lenient with national entities in regard to granting work permits. Our Lord made no mistake in leading ACM into our first Milestone in 2005!

The second Milestone of ACM in 2016:

As being reported in a number of updates before, the Lord’s hand was helping enabling us to get through every hurdle that came up throughout the entire process. Just around 9 months of time during September of 2016, ACM had acquired our Title Certificate for 2,194 square meters of

land without time limit. It is common in Addis Ababa, whether private homes or organizations, in spending years to get the karta – without which no land could be legally occupied and developed. An Elder of an evangelical church recalled it took them 4 years in finally acquiring the karta! As we look back, we know that God’s invisible hand was helping us every step of the way in response to the prayer of His blood-redeemed children in diverse places!

What about the Sport Complex on the meadow?

Many of you have already known that for years we are contemplating another 6,500 sq. meters on the meadow to be used for our sports activities. However, we were faced with two big hurdles if pursuing this plot of land from the City government. The 1st hurdle is that to acquire open land free the City government requires a 70% deposit of the total amount to complete the proposed Project. That is to say if 10 millions birrs be required for the completion of the Sport Complex, the government needs to see 7 millions in our ACM bank A/C or no granting of land.

The 2nd hurdle is even more formidable, which is the requirement to enter an agreement with the government in ‘Serving the Community.’ (Note: in Ethiopia any ‘Serving the Community’ agreement with the government, as a rule, falls under Development thus by law no spiritual activities such as Bible or prayer were allowed) Input given us from experienced personnel have been: “be cautious for ‘Serving the Community’ could be tricky in its requirements down the road...” or “...this could lead to complication rapidly for ACM as a Christian entity...” In short, warnings to us not to compromise our Christian faith for a plot of land free from the City authorities.

Just around February how we thanked our Lord for 2 precious input, of the same nature, from 2 of our ACM members. Both pointed out a new feasible way that instead of pursuing another karta for 6,500 sq. m of land, we can contribute to build a medium-size soccer field on the same meadow, leveling the land properly and erecting 2 solid goals plus surrounding the field with short stone landmark. The local Kebele administration will appreciate this kind of contribution from our Camping Ministry. In this manner, we will be totally free from the two above mentioned big hurdles. The meadow land will always remain under the City government whereas the soccer field will serve the community youth plus of course we at ACM can also use the field from time to time. When God has put a desire in our hearts through His Spirit, He will also bring it to fruition in due course!

Embarking on ‘Phrase by Phrase Development’:

With much patience, we are still waiting for the final outcome of the new Addis Ababa City Master Plan, said to be in its final stage now. When the new Master Plan has emerged, our current Karta will be able to be amended in getting rid of this clause of ‘no masonry work permitted’.

With just around 2,200 sq. meters of land on our Site, we will stick realistically to our original goal of serving 100 campers – with facilities to lodge 50 boys and 50 girls. When the karta amendment being done, we will make known our ‘Immediate Phrase’, which we will set before our Lord for helping us to accomplish fully. Only with the ‘Immediate Phrase’ fully completed will we embark on another new Phrase. Each Phrase will be geared towards the final goal of serving 100

campers, plus if the Lord so directs to combine our future 'Abyssinia Youth Center' on the same Site of our Youth Camp. At ACM we shall not depart from our long tradition of '*Trusting in the Lord fully*' and steering away from any solicitation of funds.

Pray for laborers:

This final heading focuses on the need of God-sent laborers, whether a younger couple to serve as our Programmer (a commitment of at least 3 years) and a young man or woman with a God-endowed love for youth yet also possessing horsemanship in order to head up a riding program. Again a commitment no less than 2 years.

Then pray to our Lord for big brothers and big sisters so vital for all our program whether English or Amharic. With our past endeavor to some nearby churches for volunteers or youth department of denomination yet with little responses. Only our Lord can lead us to the right young man and woman (College age quite desirable) who fear Him and honor and love His word and who can be a living example before the youngsters. Today in Addis Ababa there are too many church young people who are pursuing after prosperity and health and who enjoy the so-called gifts of the Spirit yet so many do not even have a personal assurance of salvation! We never ask the Lord for this sort of laborers. We firmly believe that true laborers, sent by our Lord of harvests in response to the unceasing pleading of His children, will be the key to lasting fruitfulness at ACM!

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