

Ethiopia Trip - Spring 2009

Thank you for praying for our journey to Ethiopia. Never did we think that we would experience such great joy this side of heaven. First: It was amazing to see the leadership of the SIM related church known as KHC or Word of Life Churches (now over 7000 with over 7 million members) at the national level and regional level honor my Dad for his years of service and three generations of Hardings serving with SIM in Ethiopia.



Kara, our daughter teaching at the school she went to as a child, my twin brother, Joe and his wife Kay and their daughter, Kelly and son-in-law, Ben, my youngest brother, David and his wife Merrie, Dad and Betty and Grace and I had a memorable reunion at Lake Langano. We had had wonderful times of ministry as we spoke to hundreds and recounted all that God has done through our years of service in that land. We were humbled and blessed.



Secondly: We were able to visit Kara. She was able to travel with us to Yirga Chaffe where she grew up as a child. It was an amazing gathering with friends and colleagues from the past. It thrilled us as parents to see Kara adapting so well to life in Ethiopia with all of its challenges. She is teaching 2nd grade and the kids just love her as do the parents. What a beautiful witness she is of Christ's love to these children. She is doing great!



Thirdly: Thirteen years ago I was able to visit the Tarra people of SW Ethiopia using the helicopter provided by Helimission. These people were totally cut off from the rest of civilization. They had never paid taxes. The government didn't know about them. A KHC evangelist, Bekele Minota, had a vision from the Lord to walk as far as he could go and that was to be the people group that he was to bring the gospel.

He walked for ten days and was caught between two rivers. It was here that he ministered to those who tried to kill him. I found him with the helicopter and he showed me the first believers. I was the first white guy they had ever seen. The

gospel took root. Now thirteen years later, Helimission had finally received permission after years of trying for years. The pilot asked if I would like to go into Tarra on the maiden voyage of the helicopter after 13 years. I was ecstatic. We flew in totally unannounced.

The Tarra peeked into the bubble of the aircraft and identified me. They began to chant “Mr. Bill, Mr. Bill, Mr., Bill”!!! Oh, what a reunion! Now to see six churches and hundreds of believers was joy unspeakable! All gathered to hear as my former students and I shared the Word and our hearts. We found out there are six thousand more Tarra on another ridge that have never heard the name of Christ. We sat with the elders and began to discuss how the gospel could penetrate those people.



Pray for the Tarra people. Pray that Helimission and KHC leadership will be able to implement a strategy to reach the remaining unreached Tarra.

Thanks for praying for us and standing with us.
Bill and Grace