

Elyard April 2025 Update



Anthony and Trudi Elyard

Serving the Lord in Northern Ethiopia





Dear Friends,

We thank you all for your continued support and prayers. We can't be here without your partnership.

This past couple of weeks have been varied and full with

- Continuing language learning
- Two Christmases, New Year celebrations and Timket
- Meeting neighbours
- Visitors
- And visas





Our lives here feel like we are living in a world full of mumblers. We only understand occasional words, the culture and religion is complex, and so we often have to guess what is really going on. This means our brains are on full-time and we get tired easily. However, this shows the need to continue learning both culture and language.

*"The Lord said to him, "Who gave human beings their mouths?
Who makes them deaf or mute? Who gives them sight or makes
them blind? Is it not I, the Lord?"*

Exodus 4:11

Language Learning

Language learning has much improved with our new language nurturer, Frey. Trudi hasn't been as confused and frustrated as she was with grammar school. Anthony has been able to use language in everyday settings. For example, when going to the shops and saying grace when our neighbours came for dinner. We still have a long way to go, however, God is giving us a lot of opportunities to interact with others. We praise Him!





Celebrations

Much like Australia, many here think of Christmas day as a time for family get togethers.

The celebrating on the 7th of January for Ethiopian Genna (Christmas) was a two day immersion of culture and food. The difference here is that there is a large religious overtone, however, Mariam (Mary) takes precedence over Jesus. This is in part because of the reliance on the oral culture of learning that has resulted in the truths from the Bible being neglected.

Timket is probably new to most of you. It is a two day celebration of the Ethiopian Orthodox Church on the 19th of January where the Tabot, a replica of the ark of the covenant, is taken from the church to the nearby river. (Every church must have at least one Tabot and the Lord's Supper is served from it). At the river, the worshippers are sprayed with water, reminiscent of Jesus' baptism and of rebaptism for the person who is sprayed with what they believe is holy water. The next morning, the procession back to the church is highlighted by people lining the streets, singing and dancing, while dressed in cultural clothing. Many people praise Mariam by giving bread to the passing throng. As you see here, many Bible stories are mixed and often poorly understood. This shows the importance of training pastors and evangelists to have a firm grasp of the gospel's message of salvation through Jesus alone so that they can teach the authority of God's word.





Neighbours

For months, we have been praying to meet local friends. God answered this prayer with an outpouring. We have joined the monthly street breakfast, coffee ceremonies and Trudi has been asked to show some of the women how to make the yoghurt she gifted them. These are great opportunities to demonstrate our love for others, as Jesus modelled for us, even though we can't speak any more than in childlike sentences.





Visitors

The past month has had consistent and different combinations of people staying in our home. Many of these people came for medical treatment from areas that have limited resources as a result of the civil unrest. Sadly, Trudi's Ethiopian Mumma was diagnosed with secondary cancer and has been sent home to the village in a conflict zone. There was a lot of cultural learning along the way. A series of doctors were evasive regarding her results. The only way we found out was from a report that I promptly opened. No one wants to tell bad news here. There is no plan for care or pain control. Mumma hasn't been told, as those who do know are concerned she will stop eating or take rat poison. Oh, the ethics to wrestle with alongside the grief of it all. In all this, we know she has been cared for while here, loved, fed well and has heard about the assurance and hope we have in Jesus.





Mumma

Ayella is an important person in his community. He stayed with us for two weeks. While he did have medical treatment, he was also able to share his burdens (family, community and conflict), rest and hear about our Lord Jesus. He said he understood and could see how this message impacted our lives. Ayella told many that we loved and cared for him in a special way.



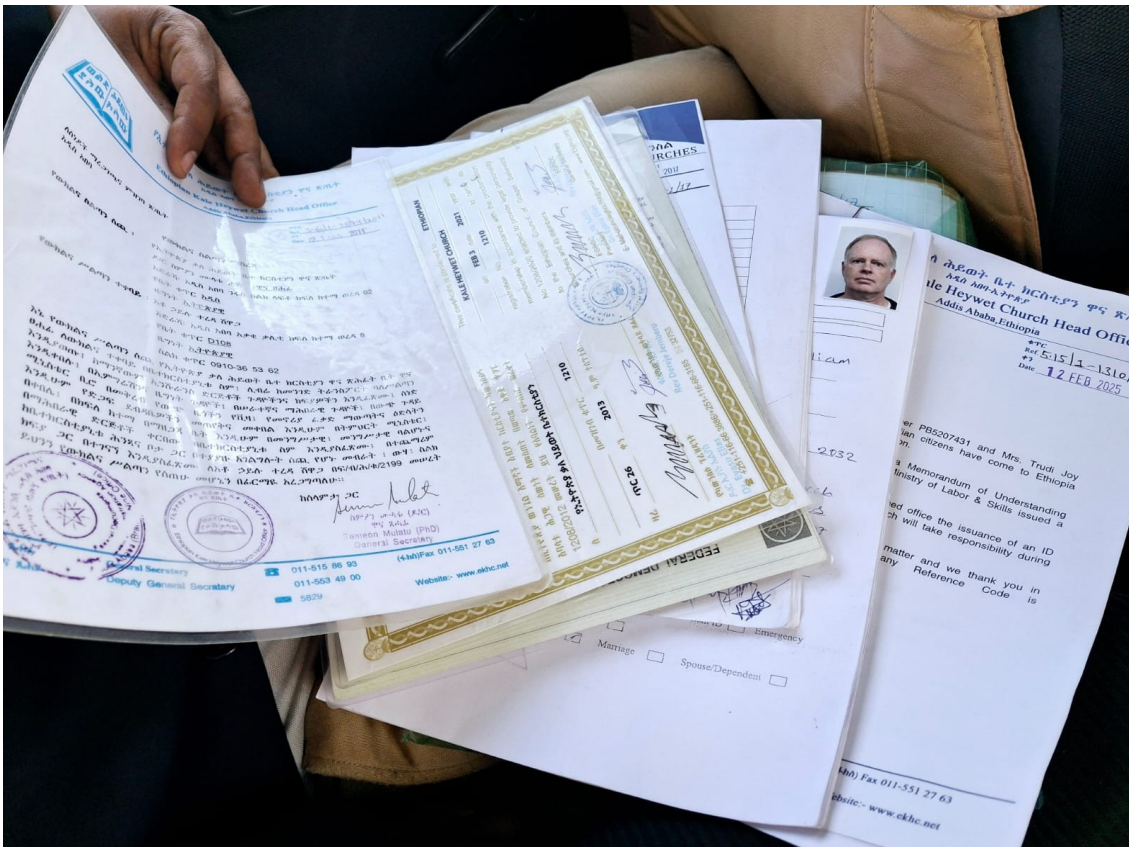


Ayella

Visa update

No visa. No work.

We are thanking God that our work permits have been approved, however these are not effective until we have our residency ID. Any day now, we expect to have this in hand. We are so thankful for the hard work that Hailu, our representative from the Kale Heywet Church, has put in. He has collected about 100 sheets of paper with signatures, stamps, photos and proofs of identity. The process has taken 2 months and will be needed to be completed each year.



Give thanks

- That language learning has improved with our new nurturer Frey.
- For Hailu, who is an amazing help re all things related to immigration and visas.
- That our house has been a place where people can rest and are able to seek medical support.

Please pray


- That we get our visas soon.
- For the continued impacts that the civil unrest has had on many, including access to medical support.
- For Mumma's understanding of God's love for her and comfort from those who surround her at the end of her life.
- That in such a complex religious context that people will understand the truth of the gospel.
- That we can faithfully live in a way that shows God's ways and life through him, even though we can only speak simply.
- That the fatigue won't make us grumpy with each other.

From Anthony and Trudi

Email: atelyard@cms.org.au

Profile: cms.org.au/elyardat

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