

Elyard December 2024 Update



Anthony and Trudi Elyard

Serving the Lord in Northern Ethiopia



Dear Friends,

It is so good to know we have friends who are partnering with us. Your prayers are such an encouragement, alongside the many messages you have sent. Thank you!

We are out of our depth!

Have you ever felt confused or misunderstood, however, realised it was because you had actually missed the point of the conversation entirely? We have been in Ethiopia about two and half months now, enough time to start to settle, and also enough time to realise how much we don't know. And how few people know us!

God is with us

We have been reminded that God is with us, as he was with Israel:

*“So do not fear, for I am with you;
do not be dismayed, for I am your God.
I will strengthen you and help you;
I will uphold you with my righteous right hand.”*
Isaiah 41:10

Being out of our depth has not come as a surprise. CMS is committed to training missionaries for cross-cultural work before they engage with a new culture. St Andrew's Hall training has equipped us through extensive engagement and research into working with people from other cultures, encouraging us to keep seeking answers when we are confused and to learn through relationships. We are so grateful for this investment for our long-term flourishing in Ethiopia.

God has given us friends to bridge the gap

General set up

Our house is taking shape as we add furniture. Now we have a stove that doesn't give electric shocks, a fridge that withstands the frequent blackouts and a custom-made bed where Anthony's legs don't hang over the end. Buying that bed took us all over the place, learning how to do business, negotiate and find what was needed. Our housemate, Sami, has been amazing at seeking and finding, engaging tradies and turning away those who are not prepared for the task at hand (all while keeping peace and in good cheer). And together, we have eradicated an infestation of fleas!



The new bed.



This is what we had to work with.

Visas

The process for the next visa stage has begun. Firstly, there are no instructions, and so, it is a process of follow the leader for us. The documents we had authenticated, and also checked by the Ethiopian Embassy in Australia, needed to be witnessed. And stamped.

This process involved sitting in an order, waiting to be told to go upstairs to the window, then running upstairs with a group of twenty, crowding the window and waiting our turn. Without a word we handed over the documents and were given a slip of paper with an amount owing to pay at the bank. Run to the bank. It was closed. Run to another bank. Pay. Get receipt. Run back. Receive a receipt to say the bank receipt says they received the payment. The receipts and documents were handed to the original lady who proceeded to stamp and sign each document. Four stamps each! This took a record of one hour!

This story is told so that you understand the realities of life here. It is so different from what we are used to, but it all seems to work. We just don't know how, exactly, yet.

We head off to Kenya to apply for the next visa on the 9th of December and hope to submit our application for the work permit soon after. Then we will, no doubt, have other offices to visit and learn the required process. We are thankful for Hailu who is accompanying us in all things visa.





Church

We had hoped to be well entrenched in a church by now, however, after 7 weeks at one church with no one acknowledging us and our Ethiopian friends (so we are not taking it personally), dealing with headaches from the amplified music and shouty preaching, our household have decided to try to find another church. We are so thankful to be able to make these decisions with our friends.

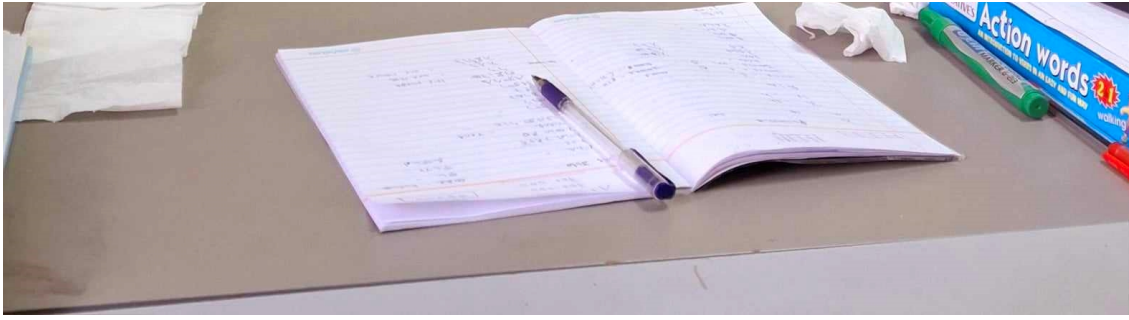




Language

Language learning is progressing and we have been celebrating each new achievement. In saying that, Trudi is struggling with the grammar heavy focus of the course and is seeking out a more relational method of learning. Anthony is aiming for personal bests, even though the lessons feel like a deluge. Our language teachers have been kind and continue to encourage us. There is an Ethiopian proverb that says, "Slowly, slowly an egg walks."





Trudi's Amharic teacher, Trhus

Give thanks

- For the people, especially for Sami and Hailu, who have been helping us in very practical ways.
- That the visa process so far is going as to be expected (Hailu says).
- For personal bests as we have been learning.

Please pray

- For trust in God, contentment and patience as we continue to navigate our lives in this culture that is so different from our own.
- For legs to stand on as we learn to walk the life and speak in the heart language of those around us.
- That we can find a place where we can attend church and get to know other believers.
- As the visa process continues.
- As always, please pray for peace in the North.

From Anthony and Trudi

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CMS is a fellowship of Christian people and churches committed to global mission. We work with churches to set apart godly people as long-term cross-cultural gospel workers. Our vision is for a world that knows Jesus. We aim to do this by: reaching gospel-poor peoples for Christ, equipping Christians as leaders in the church and the world, and engaging churches in cross-cultural mission.



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