

HABESHA HAPPENINGS

The official newsletter of the Coleman Family



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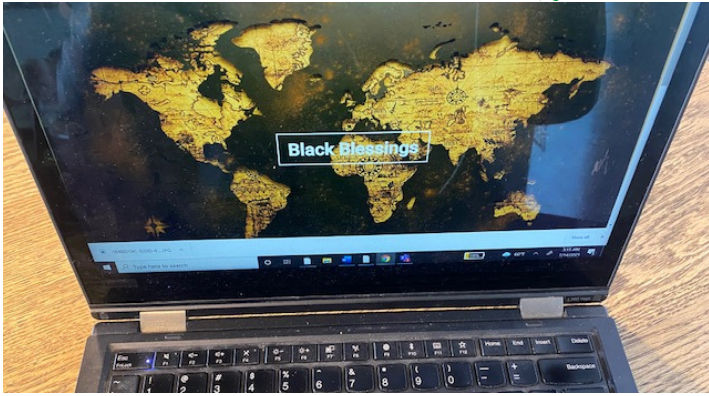
BICULTURAL

Amanda and I (Richard) were talking the other day, and we realized that we spend about 99% of our time with Ethiopians. Pretty much the only time we have with foreigners is on Sunday at church. Also, about half of the food we eat each week is Ethiopian. Injera, misir, and shiro have become as normal as what we ate back in the States. Our mannerisms, speech inflections, and even some of our approaches to life have all become more like the people we live among. Although we are still American in our hearts and in our passports, we continue to become bicultural. It's a beautiful feeling to be quite honest. To the right is a picture of us in our *Habesha libs* (Habesha clothes) taken a couple of months ago on Ethiopian Easter.

Since our last newsletter, we've really been feeling more settled than ever, that is, all of us at the same time. God has used a variety of means to make this happen. For Amanda, it has been through her friendships and the work she's put into developing a nice garden in our courtyard. For the kids it's been the addition of Tiki the cat, as well as Legos given to them by friends. For me, it's been meaningful work and a growing language ability. We thank God for hearing the prayers of so many of you who have prayed for our adjustment as a family. But, keep the prayers a-coming! We still have a long road ahead as we try to grow in all things Ethiopian.

Amanda and Amara plan to be in Georgia, Washington, Idaho, and Montana from July 16th until August 11th. This will be Amara's first ever trip to the U.S. and her first ever time meeting her extended family. The other kids will have me as a substitute teacher while their mom attends a home school conference and visits family and friends. Next July the whole family hopes to visit the States for a few months. Thanks for your prayers as we face the reality of having two "homes."





BLACK BLESSINGS

Finally, it's here! Back in the Fall of 2019 our family produced a prayer card and put a web address on the back. There was only one problem: the website didn't exist. It was my hope to get some help developing the site and then to launch it sometime in early 2020 at the latest. Needless to say, that didn't happen. Fast forward to June 24th of this year. With the help of a friend named Regina Williams in Charlotte, I launched blackblessings.com. The website is designed to educate, inspire, and mobilize Black Americans for cross-cultural missions. It will also serve as a resource for people of any color who are interested in the history, barriers, and opportunities associated with Black Americans in missions. God willing, new content will be added a few times a month. This will include a blog, information about current Black American missionaries, a calendar of upcoming events, and a list of resources for further study. I'm SO EXCITED about this new resource and hope it will serve to increase the overall involvement of Black Americans in global missions. Check it out!



TEAM BUILDING

Building trust, solving problems, getting to know others, facilitating reconciliation: these are just a few of the reasons for doing what are referred to as "low ropes" activities. Before we moved here to Ethiopia, I had gotten multiple certifications in doing low ropes activities. I began facilitating almost 20 years ago and had found these exercises to be a fun complement to lectures and sermons. It has been my great joy to introduce this form of experiential education to the EvaSUE team. My heart is made glad when I see staff members become kids all over again as they work together to tackle the simulated challenges set before them. This style of training is extremely rare in Ethiopia, so my heart is further made glad when I see the EvaSUE staff reproducing these activities on their campuses. God willing, I hope to stock about ten duffel bags with locally-bought items that will give EvaSUE leaders the ability to do up to 50 different activities for groups of various sizes throughout the country.



COLEMAN KIDS

The oldest three Coleman kids have worked really hard to get back on the "normal" school schedule. They started the current school year in December and should finish up in a few weeks, setting them up for a September start to the next school year. Amanda and I are so proud of them for their perseverance. They, like kids all around the world, have faced challenges and disappointments due to the global pandemic. That's why we did a self-guided debriefing in early July to give our family--especially the kids--a chance to process their feelings from the past year and a half. By God's grace, they all seemed to be doing well despite the challenges. Their resilience has been remarkable. We don't take it for granted.



MEET A FRIEND

Robel Chemeda serves as the General Secretary for the 50,000-student Evangelical Students' and Graduates' Union of Ethiopia (EvaSUE). It's under his leadership that our family serves. Robel is a Spirit-filled man who leads with great vision, humility, and compassion. With his mechanical engineering background, he has provided a lot of structure for the ministry. The whiteboard and windows in his office are always full of his many ideas. Robel has become a close friend and my go-to person whenever I'm trying to make sense of the way things work in Ethiopia. Our family is heavily indebted to him. Robel and his wife, KB, live here in Addis Ababa with their son.

JOIN OUR TEAM

Our work is made possible by the generosity of others. If you'd like to be a part of our support team, go to www.tms-global.org/give. Using ID 3104 you can give both one-time and recurring gifts. Or, to give to one of our projects, use ID 6002 (Vehicle) or 6003 (EvaSUE). For questions or just to say 'hi,' you can reach us email us at ethiopia4610@gmail.com.