



**MCEC**

201 - 50 Kent Avenue,  
Kitchener ON, N2G 3R1  
Telephone: Local 226-476-2500  
Toll Free 855-476-2500  
Website: [www.mcec.ca](http://www.mcec.ca)

October 2, 2024

**Dear Friends and Supporters of Meserete Kristos Seminary,**

Happy Thanksgiving! I am incredibly grateful for your ongoing support of the seminary and its mission. Thank you for your ongoing prayers and financial support!

Several weeks ago, Ethiopia celebrated the beginning of their new year, 2017, marking a time of renewal and fresh beginnings. For Meserete Kristos Seminary, it also signaled the start of a new academic year, filled with opportunities and challenges alike. This year, as you may already be aware, the Seminary is faced with some unique obstacles. A major devaluation of the nation's currency, by nearly 50%, and the compulsory demolition and relocation of the front campus fence have placed an unexpected strain on the budget.

Despite these challenges, the seminary continues to be a source of hope and transformation. Your generosity has always been a fruitful investment, and we ask that you keep the seminary in mind as you consider your giving in this Thanksgiving season. Your contribution can make a tremendous difference in helping overcome these hurdles and continue to train leaders who will impact their communities for years to come.

Enclosed, you will find the September issue of the Meserete Kristos Seminary Newsletter, which provides further updates on the seminary's work and ongoing needs. It also includes a summary of my recent visit to the Seminary.

Thank you again for your commitment to the Seminary. Your partnership is invaluable, and we deeply appreciate your dedication to supporting the mission of Meserete Kristos Seminary.

With gratitude,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Norm Dyck", with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Norm Dyck  
Mission Minister



# Meserete Kristos Seminary



Photo by Jonathan Gomez

September 2024

*Newsletter*

For Interested Friends of Meserete Kristos Seminary

## *Fraternal Visitors Encourage*

On August 29, 2024, we witnessed a powerful moment in the ongoing journey of MK Seminary. Doug Klassen, Executive Minister of Mennonite Church Canada, Norm Dyck, Liaison Worker for International Witness, and Fanosie Legesse, visited our seminary. Engaging in an inspiring dialogue with Gishu Jebecha, Principal of MK Seminary, they highlighted the vital role our institution plays in shaping future leaders for the church and society.

This gathering reaffirmed the unwavering support Mennonite Church Canada has extended to MK Seminary over the years. Together, they are committed to fostering education, spiritual growth, and social change, thus igniting hope and renewal for generations to come. Their discussions were not just reflective; they focused on actionable steps toward the seminary's future sustainability and financial independence.



Principal Gishu Jebecha engaging in dialogue with fraternal guests from Canada, Doug Klassen, Fanosie Legesse, and Norm Dyck

Bishop Glenn Kauffman, lead pastor at Capital Christian Fellowship and overseer of a cluster of seven churches in the Washington-Baltimore area, addressed the MKC General Assembly, reminding us of the heart of missions. While many might point to the journeys of Barnabas and Paul or the Great Commission from Jesus, Bishop Kauffman reminded us that missions are rooted in the very nature of God. From the moment of creation, God's desire to reveal Himself and connect with His creation has been evident. He created light so that His work might be seen, inviting us to join Him in His mission.



Pastor Joseph Alexander, Bishop Kauffman, and Pastor Dawit Tefera, representing the Lancaster Mennonite Conference (LMC), planted a seedling in front of the MK Seminary Multi-Purpose Hall.

# *From Deep Waters to Deep Impact: a Gathering of Faith and Action in MK Seminary*

At the MKC General Assembly, Executive Minister, Doug Klassen, brought heartfelt greetings to MKC from Mennonite Church Canada.

During his devotional, Doug drew inspiration from the biblical passage Luke 5:1-11, which recounts the calling of the first disciples. The story highlights how Simon, after an exhausting night of unsuccessful fishing, was initially hesitant to cast his nets again. Yet, at the urging of Jesus, he ventured into deep waters. To his astonishment, they caught so many fish that their boats nearly sank.

This gospel narrative serves as a powerful reminder that miracles often occur when we take bold steps of faith. It is easy to cling to the safety of the shoreline, avoiding risks stemming from frustrations or past disappointments. Far too often, we find ourselves preoccupied with minor issues, neglecting the pain and suffering of those around us. We may shy away from challenging conversations, choosing comfort over engagement.

\* \* \* \* \*

Our seminary’s commitment to academic excellence and financial stability is driving our vision for growth for July 2024 - July 2025. This comprehensive strategy focuses on enhancing the quality of theological education, supporting our dedicated students and faculty, and ensuring we meet rigorous accreditation standards. The plan calls for the following initiatives:

### **Enhancing Academic Excellence Through**

- refining our curriculum, attracting qualified faculty, and forging partnerships that will provide our students with invaluable real world experiences and career pathways.
- Student Support: Our strategy includes robust initiatives for admissions, financial aid assistance, and smooth transitions for students entering seminary life, ensuring they are well-equipped for their journeys.
- Community Engagement: MKS is committed to strengthening our ties with regional Bible colleges and schools. We will conduct needs assessments, collaborate on curriculum development, and provide on-going faculty training.
- Campus Revitalization: Our plan includes revitalizing the campus environment, including fostering spiritual growth through devotional sessions, mentorship programs, and practical ministry experiences.

### **Financial Plan**

To sustain our mission, MKS projects an income of ETB 61,448,350 (USD 1,078,042) through a diversified revenue model, which includes educational services, facility rentals, farming product sales, and generous donations. Our expenditures will be directed toward essential operational costs and strategic capital investments.

### **Challenges and Opportunities**

We acknowledge the challenges presented by the recent devaluation of the Ethiopian birr, which has led to rising inflation and increased operational costs. Nevertheless, MKS remains steadfast in its commitment to identifying innovative solutions to mitigate these impacts.

### **Fundraising and Future Vision**

To solidify our financial foundation, MKS recognizes the critical importance of securing ongoing funding through donations, generating local income, and establishing strategic partnerships with churches and businesses. We aspire to develop mixed-use buildings that can further support our initiatives and strengthen our community ties.

### **Call to Action**

We invite our valued supporters to continue their generosity, as your contributions are vital to MKS's success. Together, we can pave the way for a brighter future in theological education and community development. Thank you for being an integral part of our journey. — submitted by Gishu Jebecha, Principal

## A New Faculty Member

I am Michael Hailemariam. I was raised in a Christian family where I was taught to know and serve my Savior, Jesus Christ. I am married and have two sons. Currently, I am a member of Meirab Addis Ababa Meserete Kristos Church.

My ministerial journey began as a choir member in a local church. I continued to serve God during my time at Gondar University, where I studied Economics (BA). While at the university, I devoted my time to serving the Lord by actively participating in the Christian Students Fellowship. I contributed to organizing events, leading Bible study programs, and providing counseling.



**Michael Hailemariam**

After I graduated from Gondar, I worked as a project coordinator for the Butajira ET-463 project, a compassion project that raises children holistically. After four years of service, I joined the Ethiopian Graduate School of Theology (EGST) as an assistant registrar. While working in the registrar's office, I had the opportunity to pursue my MA at EGST. In July 2021, I graduated with a Master's degree in Leadership and Management from EGST.

Completing my MA has opened new opportunities for me to serve as a translator and content producer in the Borana Gospel Focus Ministry. While serving at Borana, I translated three Bible commentary books: "Saving a Fallen World," "Unspoken Lessons about the Unseen God," and "You Are My Witnesses" from English to Amharic. Furthermore, I taught leadership courses at various theological institutions in Addis Ababa.

In October 2021, I joined Meserete Kristos Seminary as a faculty member and coordinator. Currently, I am teaching leadership courses and coordinating the MK Seminary Addis Ababa campus. Here, I would like to extend my appreciation to our seminary principal, Mr. Gishu Jebecha, and our academic dean, Mr. Yimenu Adimas, for placing their trust in me with this important responsibility.

I want to invite anyone with a burden to serve God to join Meserete Kristos Seminary. It is a place where one can gain knowledge and cultivate deep discipline for serving Jesus Christ. I firmly believe that joining our seminary will enrich your life and ministry!

## Please Pray for Us!

The recent devaluation of the Ethiopian birr has pushed the cost living much, much higher. Inflation is not just a statistic. It affects the everyday lives of countless families, making it increasingly difficult for those who struggle to provide for their loved ones.

In these challenging times, we turn to our community for support. We humbly request that you keep our country, our church, and our seminary in your prayers. Your thoughts and prayers will not only uplift our spirits but will also guide us as we navigate these turbulent waters, seeking hope and resilience in our mission. Together, we can weather this storm and continue to nurture minds and hearts in our beloved Ethiopia.

- Pray for peace in Ethiopia, that the authorities may be guided with wisdom in settling the huge troubling issues in a just and equitable manner.
- Pray for the churches as they face opposition and persecution, that they will be strong and follow the Prince of Peace in their attitudes and actions.
- Pray that the strong peace witness in word and deed of God's people will have a reconciling impact upon the societies wherever they are.
- Pray for the leadership in the Seminary and the faculty and students, that a spirit of true Christian brotherhood and sisterhood might prevail and exemplify the unity that Christ gives as they face their troubled environment.



Photo by Jonathan Gomez & John Buckwalter

Arial View: Meserete Kristos Seminary Bishoftu Campus, March 2024

## *Demolition of Front Fence: An Unforeseen Challenge*

As we reflect on the spirit of community that defines our beloved seminary, we find ourselves at a pivotal moment—one that carries both challenges and opportunities. With a heavy heart, we reach out to you to share the significant alteration our cherished campus is undergoing.

On July 03, 2024, we received an unexpected order from the governing authority that requires us to establish a mandatory setback of 2.5 meters from the front of our property. This means we must part with approximately 625 square meters of our campus—a place that has been a sanctuary of learning, faith, and communal growth.

This change brings unforeseen costs and challenges. We have had to dismantle essential components of our campus, including the front fence, security house, and parking shades. While we have quickly erected temporary barriers to keep our students and staff safe, we now face the daunting task of rebuilding these structures in a way that meets the newly imposed municipal government regulations. This necessary re-construction represents a financial burden of \$61,321 that we cannot shoulder alone.

**This necessary re-construction represents a financial burden of \$61,321 that we cannot shoulder alone.**

As you envision our campus, consider the dedicated students striving to become tomorrow's leaders. Picture them studying in the shadow of an unfinished fence; their sense of security, belonging, and focus disrupted. Imagine our devoted faculty, who pour their hearts into nurturing and guiding these students, navi-

gating a space that feels compromised and incomplete. This is the reality we are facing—a challenge that we cannot overcome without your compassionate support.

Every contribution, regardless of size, plays a vital role in our mission. Your generosity will help us rebuild not just a fence, but the safety and integrity of our community. Together, we can ensure that our campus remains a welcoming, secure environment where future leaders, scholars, and servants can flourish.



**The fence down**

### **Please designate your gift to:**

“MK Seminary Scholarships”, “MK Seminary Building Fund”, or “MK Seminary as Needed”.

**We are happy to provide tax-deductible receipts.**

**Write your check to ....**

“MK College Link” and send to MK College Link, Box 1701, Harrisonburg, VA 22803, USA

Or “**Mennonite Church Eastern Canada**”, and send to Mennonite Church Eastern Canada, attn: Meserete Kristos College, 201-50 Kent Ave. Kitchener, ON N2G 3R1 Canada (Or, if you prefer, you may send your gift to your Regional Church office)

Or “**Northwest Mennonite Conference**”, and send to Northwest Mennonite Conference attn: Meserete Kristos College, Box 1316, Didsbury, AB T0M 0W0, Canada

Or **wire funds directly** to: Bank of Abyssinia, Bole Branch, Addis Ababa, SWIFT Code: ABYSETAA, to **Meserete Kristos College Account # 31976**. Notify Gishu Jebecha by separate communication at [gishuj@yahoo.com](mailto:gishuj@yahoo.com).



### **Contact us:**

**Editor:**

**Gishu Jebecha**, Principal

Communication and Documentation, PO Box 1869, Debre Zeit, Ethiopia,

**Associate Editor:**

**Carl E. Hansen**, 1523 Park Road, Harrisonburg, VA 22802, USA.

**E-mail:** [mkcollegenewsletter@gmail.com](mailto:mkcollegenewsletter@gmail.com)

**Tel.:** 251-911-42-1887 or 540-830-0902

**Website:** [www.mkcollege.org](http://www.mkcollege.org)