

A ZENA WENDEL
MINISTRY
PUBLICATION



A quarterly news-
letter of Zena
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NEW

HOPE

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Message from the founder

There are about 4 million blind and visually impaired people living in Ethiopia according to a national survey taken recently. Out of this figure, 1.2 million are totally blind or visually impaired and the remaining 2.8 million are with low vision. We want to reach a significant number of these people through the Gospel.

Most of the blind and the visually impaired Christians do not have access to Braille Bible or audio devices of the Amharic Bible. So we believe that the Bible and other spiritual materials should be available in appropriate formats suitable to the need of the blind. The blind should also be given equal opportunity to participate in their local churches like the others.

In Ethiopian context, especially in rural areas, blindness is far beyond a physical disability that attributed to

mental problem and psychological instability. It is even perceived as a curse for wrong-doings and blind people are not treated equally to their sighted counterparts in terms of getting proper education, training and employment opportunities.

Accordingly, our ministry is thus committed to promote equal access to the Gospel, education, training and employment opportunities to blind people by means of integrated adaptive technologies. We also work to build the skills and capabilities of blind people and promote the formation of inclusive communities so that blinds could prosper in their spiritual, social and economic life. In line with this, our ministry will launch Braille literacy campaigns and give basic computer trainings with speech software to the blind. We will also provide an integrated resource center service



to the blind equipped with adaptive technologies that suit the needs of people with visual impairment.

When my Christian friends and I started Zena Wengel Ministry, we had nothing in hand. We only trusted in God believing that He will provide everything to bring into reality the intended project activities based on the vision and mission of the Ministry. Now we are already getting generous gifts consisting of essential materials, assistive devices and equipment including, computers, Perkins Braille writers, slates and styluses, Braille paper, ►

Dear a Prayer Warrior

In order to keep our partners well informed and updated, regarding our progress in the course of our endeavor to realize our objectives Zena Wengel Ministry has started

issuing a News Letter known as "New Hope" to be published regularly on quarterly basis. This will be the first issue.

The current issue happens to be rather long. But in the future, we will keep it as brief as possible.

Message from...

white canes, CD's, an Amharic Bible in DVD, a digital recorder, and large print books, boxes of Braille papers from our newly found Christian friends for which we praise our wonderful God and feel grateful for our generous and helpful benefactors.

The Prophet Elisha in 2 Kings Chapter 3, verses 16, 17 and 20 "... Thus saith the LORD, Make this valley full of ditches. For thus saith the LORD, Ye shall not see wind, neither shall ye see rain; yet that valley shall be filled with water, that ye may drink, both ye, and your cattle, and your beasts. ... And it came to pass... that, behold, there came water by the way of Edom, and the country was filled with water."

In the same manner, God has flooded our state of emptiness with

blessings from an unexpected corner of the world by intervening through a brother who opened the way for the stream of Christian friends who are eager to uphold and support Zena Wengel Ministry and are committed to its vision and mission.

Currently, we hold devotional programs for the blind and the visually impaired individuals living here in Addis Ababa twice a month and we are on the verge of launching most of our activities for full-scale operation of project components.

To this effect, Zena Wengel ministry wants a suitable building to be used as an office and a resource center. Our primary prayer request in this month is for a suitable and accessible building to be used for the intended purposes. In line with this, we have declared every fourth Saturday of the month for praying and fasting by our prayer warriors.

Therefore, you are kindly requested to observe September 26 in prayer and fasting to seek the face of the Lord who brings our prayer request to fruition and continue to do so every fourth Saturday of each month. Our Mighty God is merciful. God's majesty is beyond human understanding. His Grace is transcendent and timeless. Our Lord Almighty is invisible to the secular world. But we Christians can see the invisible Lord through prayer. If we can see the invisible, then we can do and get the impossible.

God Bless.

Berhanu Belay

Founder and Executive Director

Zena Wengel Ministry

Life testimony



"...There I was able to listen to the word of God with sincere attention..."

Ato Mekonnen Sembeat is the General Assembly and Executive Board member of Zena Wengel Ministry. He has given his testimony. And so we have included his picture and testimony in this first issue of New Hope.

"I was born in Western Ethiopia, Wolega Zone, Nedjo town in 1958. I had my elementary and high school education in schools located in Nedjo town. Then I joined the Addis Ababa University in 1978 where I studied history. I graduated in 1982 and was assigned in

Nedjo High School to teach history.

During my university years I considered myself to be a committed communist as was true for most young people at the time. I rejected religion and became an atheist, caring only for my material needs. I considered people that practiced religion, whether Christianity or otherwise, as backward members of society and looked at them with disdain.

In 1987, something that changed my life happened to me. I lost my sight in one

eye and my vision in the other became poor and later in the same year got completely blind. I was terribly upset and did not know what to do. No medical treatment could help me. Some people advised me to go to the local Protestant Church where they could help me regain my sight through prayer. I consented and went to the Church and started attending church services. There I was able to listen to the word of God with sincere attention, thus abandoning all my "progressive" views of my socialist ideology".