

sified his desire to assist the church there immediately, and God opened the doors using mostly Ethiopian churches to assist him. This crisis has ignited a time when both Ethiopian churches and churches abroad are willing to work together for the Kingdom of God. We anticipate that his most recent trip in May 2015 will be far from his last and that others will be called to go and help as well.

Although joyful for the recent opportunities he has been blessed with, Tamirat continues to face the challenge of following God's call on his life as well as maintaining his financial responsibilities towards his family here in America. He is requesting prayer for his travels as well as financial provision during this time as he boldly steps out to where God is calling him.

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Make checks out to Monroe Park Vineyard and put Tamirat Bedane or Ethiopia in the memo line.

Ethiopian Gospel Bridge Ministry

“Princes will come from Egypt.
Ethiopia will hurry to put her hands
out to God.” Psalm 68:31



JESUS IS THE BRIDGE BETWEEN NATIONS

TAMIRAT BEDANE'S STORY AND THE BIRTH OF A BRIDGE...

Tamirat Bedane, a native to Ethiopia, has been living in America for the past twenty years with his wife, Alem Seifu and their two children, Yoseph Bekele and Elite Bekele. He came to Christ in the late seventies and has since held onto his original passion unto the Lord, to serve as a bridge maker and mender. The name of Tamirat's ministry is Ethiopian Bridge Gospel Ministry, or EGBM for short.

Through EGBM, he strives to build non-existent pathways that serve to unite Christians and churches of all ethnicities and backgrounds and to also repair pre-existing pathways birthed of well-intention, but left without shepherd. EGBM acknowledges that the essential key to bridge building is communication.

As a younger man, in his home country of Ethiopia, Tamirat was a Marxist rebel in against the Ethiopian monarchy which claimed they were “King of Kings”, and descendants of King Solomon and the Queen of Sheba. During this time, he was captured and became a political prisoner. It was in his time as prisoner in Ethiopia when he one day while chained between a judge and former minister of finance, that he received a vision of a man he was told to follow and that man was Jesus Christ, whom he previously had not known of. He confirmed the man's identity as Jesus Christ through another prisoner he was sharing a pit in the ground with. Within two weeks, Tamirat was freed from prison, which was a miraculous blessing from God. Upon his



release, Tamirat sought out to know Jesus and became a bond-servant to Him. His desire to glorify God has never ceased.

In his new walk with Christ, Tamirat immediately felt called to do what he simply refers to as “bridge work.” Through the Ethiopian Bridge Gospel Ministry, or EGBM, Tamirat became a full time minister in a time when the Marxist government came to power and practicing Christianity was considered an offense of treason.

Within only a few years of its existence, the new Communist government confiscated all of the churches' finances, nationalized all their property, and imprisoned any pastors they found. They declared religion, churches and the Bible illegal, punishable as a crime.

Although this was a very difficult time for all

Ethiopians, especially those who were followers of Jesus, Tamirat and many others held fast to their faith and hope in Jesus Christ, which had been a common tradition of Ethiopia for many generations prior and surely many to come. While the church was made illegal, its members did not cease to gather. Many simply moved underground, out of the view of the ruthless rulers, including Tamirat's church. This persecution of Christians lasted for eleven years and while underground, he decided to serve as an evangelist.

Finally in 1991, the Marxist government was overthrown by the Federal Democratic Republic. With this revolution, churches were now free to be reopened. However, with the traumatic brutality of the previous government, most Ethiopians were too terrified to interact with those in power regarding obtaining their previously owned properties or establishing new spaces to meet. Already eager and empowered through EGBM, Tamirat seized this new opportunity and took great initiative in communicating with the government the churches needs and negotiations concerning reestablishing themselves.



One day while walking through the government appointed office, Ministry of Agriculture, God spoke to Tamirat, requesting him to "take this building and use it as a church." Feeling skeptical at such a seemingly impossible request, Tamirat questioned God on the matter, which God only reiterated and urged Tamirat to go and ask the government. He brought this word of God to the elders of his church, who although thought he was crazy, all agreed to lean not onto their own understanding and supported Tamirat's appointed endeavor. Through God's grace and Tamirat's courage, not only did the government give his people complete use of the Ministry of Agriculture office three days of the week for two years, they were also given the space free of charge.

During this time, Tamirat was also approached by the leaders of another resurfacing church who were prepared to build a new church but possessed no land to build it upon. They asked him to negotiate their obtaining of government owned land, to which Tamirat agreed. He felt led by the Holy Spirit to request a very specific piece of land for this church, free of cost, and by the blessings of God, the government complied. It turned out the very land they were granted was the very land their prayer leader had fervently prayed to own many years prior.

Tamirat continued in his bridge ministry, connecting his fellow brothers and sisters in Christ to previously unvisited resources.

Soon after moving to Rochester, Tamirat met Ron Domina, the pastor of another local church, Bethel Christian Fellowship. Pastor Ron and Bethel offered Tamirat a support system, providing for him both financially and spiritually encouraging him in his ministry and passion for the gospel.

Tamirat asked God to open the eyes of his heart and truly reveal the calling He had on his life through EGBM. Over time, the Holy Spirit has shown him there are a great deal of resources available here in America for those in desperate need in Ethiopia. Tamirat's personal experience with being blessed by Pastor Ron only solidified the possibilities in his mind.

Many Ethiopians wish to come to America to attend our Christian colleges and Bible schools, yet because they are foreign to our country, the transition is not only intimidating, it's terrifying. Through EGBM, Tamirat has since partnered many Ethiopian disciples with American families who sponsor them through means of spiritual, emotional and financial support, housing, cultural education and teaching them to speak English. It usually only takes a few months for Ethiopians to become financially independent and contributors to our society.

In the years since he immigrated to the US, Tamirat has traveled back to his home country thirty-three times. He has taken along numerous American ministry leaders, where together they have preached, held revival meetings, seminars and workshops. In their time together, the miraculous work of God's hand has forever etched Ethiopia onto the hearts of his travel companions.

Around 2008, Tamirat became a licensed taxi-driver, stepping away from full time pastoring and evangelism to focus on financially supporting his family. This

included paying their bills, managing their mortgage and putting his two children through college. He maintained his ministry through nightly web conferencing.

In 2015 God reignited Tamirat's undying passion to serve through EGBM, leading him to travel the US and sharing his vision with many churches and he made the decision to return to full time ministry.

While speaking in Georgia he met a woman whom he had prophesied over while visiting Atlanta eight years before. When he'd previously met her, she was struggling with a massive debt of over \$100,000 and feeling desperate. Although he knew nothing about her he spoke into her life, telling her, "God will rescue you from a big debt and provide for you financially." Reuniting with her again in this trip, he learned that three years after sharing God's word with her, she made a huge financial breakthrough and lives today completely debt-free.

Moved by Tamirat's vision for EGBM and grateful for speaking into her life years ago, she decided to share her joy with him and purchased him a ticket to visit Ethiopia to continue his work.

His goal there is to establish outreaches to Ethiopians in Middle Eastern countries who are culturally Christian and facing persecution in areas with militant radical Muslims, though they don't always have a personal relationship with Jesus. Because of his past experience being part of the Underground church in Communist Ethiopia, he is working on using technology to help provide ongoing communications, evangelism and training for an underground church. The slaughtering of 28 Christian Ethiopians by Isis in April 2015 inten-