



RCA Missionary Update

from Caleb and Joanna Swart

The Daasanech people, who live along the Omo River in southern Ethiopia, depended on the flooding of the river to provide food for their families until windmills were introduced to irrigate gardens along the river. Caleb and Joanna Swart are continuing and expanding the RCA mission work of the Windmill Project. Caleb has plans to build an additional fifty windmills, which will be owned and maintained by the Daasanech people. Joanna, a nurse, will work in prenatal and immunization clinics. Caleb and Joanna have three children, Elsa, Ezra, and Daisy and they join Caleb's parents, Dick and Donna Swart, in this work.

Ethiopia facts:

- Population: 73,053,280
- Size: 1,119,683 square kilometers (slightly less than twice the size of Texas)
- Major religions: 45-50 percent Muslim, 35 percent Ethiopian Orthodox, 12 percent animist, 3-8 percent other



MINISTRY

Evangelism and Medical Work

LOCATION

Southern Ethiopia

PARTNER

Kale Hiwot National Church of Ethiopia

CONTACT

Caleb and Joanna Swart
Box 127
Addis Ababa, Ethiopia
Email:
swart.joanna@gmail.com

Dear Friends,

June 2010

Writing an update has been at the top of my "To-Do" list (the one that keeps getting written and re-written on tiny pieces of paper that I inevitably lose) for far too long, so here we are...finally! Let us just rewind six months and take it month by month.

December: December found us spending a quiet last month at home before taking off for home assignment and maternity leave. We enjoyed a great Christmas at home and spent the last couple of weeks getting everything ready for our house and compound to be left unoccupied for four months. Caleb was able to finish putting up the final windmills, completing the first set of 10 that were to be built and distributed. We left everything in the hands of Erogit and Goradit, our two windmill workers, and said good-bye to our friends for the next six months. We were incredibly thankful that Berhanu and Hanna, our evangelists, had returned just in time to be around to minister to and support the church during the time we were to be gone. We left right as the mission upriver was finalizing the final

turnover of their health project and clinics to the government, opening up a major hole in the health ministry to the Daasanech.

January: The kids and I arrived in the US on January 1. We spent the first two weeks in Washington State, taking time to be with my family. Caleb joined us mid-January and we all headed down to Atlanta, Georgia, to wait for our baby to make her appearance. The time we spent in Washington was precious, to be able to see Elsa and Ezra interact with their cousins and actually be at an age to really form bonds with all of their Washington family.



Daisy Ray, born February 8, welcomed with much love by Elsa and Ezra

February: Welcome to the world, Daisy Ray! Born February 8, we spent the rest of the month adjusting to being a family of five and soaking up time with Caleb's parents and sisters, both of whom also had babies during the month. We were able to see Caleb's grandparents on two different occasions, precious times in light of Caleb's grandfather's illness.

March: We set off to make the drive

from Atlanta to Holland, Michigan, where we planned to spend 6 weeks visiting our supporting churches in the states of Michigan, Minnesota, and Iowa. We arrived in Michigan on a Saturday night and after speaking in one church on Sunday morning, we received the news that Caleb's grandpa, whose pancreatic cancer had been responding amazingly well to treatment, had just learned that the cancer had metastasized to the brain. We decided to leave Michigan and head back down south so that we could say good-bye to him and be accessible in the coming months. We spent one last weekend with the majority of the Giles family at Grandma and Pa's home in Johnson City, TN, and are so thankful that we had that time there.

April: Caleb traveled to supporting churches on the weekends while the kids and I stayed in Atlanta. Caleb was able to spend another week at his grandparents' in Tennessee. We all drove up to Orange City, IA, to speak in churches the last two weekends of April. We returned to Atlanta at the end of April in order to get ready for the kids and me to fly back out to Washington.

May: The first week of May found the kids and I flying up to Washington state and Caleb staying on the East coast to finish up three more weekends of speaking in churches. On May 16, Pa went home to be with the Lord. Caleb had the privilege of being with Pa, Grandma, and all four Giles kids during the course of his last week. Daisy and I flew back to Tennessee to attend the memorial service while Elsa and Ezra stayed in Washington with my parents. Witnessing his memorial service and seeing all of the lives he touched come together to pay him tribute was an experience we will not quickly forget. Daisy and I returned to Washington and Caleb followed after finishing up his last speaking engagement.

To say it's been a busy six months is an understatement. These past six months have been exhausting, exhilarating, challenging, bitter and sweet. We have experienced every emotion possible—the excitement of saying hello and the dread of saying good-bye; the thrill of welcoming our little girl and the heartbreak of losing Pa; the sweetness of being with family and the fatigue of traveling with three small kids. We feel home but not home, as any furloughing missionary could attest. Thank you dearly for the prayers that have bolstered us during this time, especially through the pain of losing Caleb's grandpa. Please continue to cover Caleb's family, especially his grandmother as she walks through these first weeks without him.

What comes next? We will spend our last two weeks in the states here in Washington, soaking up time with family and getting things packed. June 16 we return to Ethiopia. We are ready.

Thank you to those of you we were able to visit with during this time in the US. We enjoyed our times visiting with supporters and sharing in churches immensely. Thank you for the great encouragement. For those of you we were unable to see this time around, check out our missionary profile, letters, and the videos we made to share with churches at www.rca.org/cswart.

As always, we could not do this without you. Thank you for your continued prayers and support.

In Him,

Caleb, Joanna, Elsa, Ezra and Daisy Swart

To access extensive information about Caleb and Joanna Swart, or to make a financial gift for their ministry, simply go to www.rca.org/cswart.

*Did you know that you can receive Dear Friends letters directly to your own e-mail and that by doing so you are helping RCA Global Mission be a good steward of your gifts?
To sign up, contact Eva Fennema at (800) 968-3943 or efennema@rca.org.*