



RCA Missionary Update

from Caleb and Joanna Swart

The Daasanach 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 Daasanach 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

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Dear Friends,

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In a lot of ways, it's easy to forget holidays here. The weather is all wrong, the seasons don't cooperate and forget to change, and the over-marketing that contributes to the mood of holidays has yet to stretch its influence to South Omo. But that's okay. Because in this month of November, while we won't eat a turkey and our family will still be far away, I'm feeling thankful.

I'm thankful for the full flood of the Omo River and abundant rainfall this planting season for the Daasanach. In light of the continued reports of drought and the food crisis to the east, south, and west of us, every rain drop has truly been a God-send. We've lifted our faces to the sky and felt the drops fall on us, knowing that the Daasanach will fill their grain stores again this year. I'm thankful that despite 'progress' further up the river (major dam projects on the Omo River that will dramatically affect all of the people groups south of the dams who depend on the annual flood of the river for planting), this year, the river flooded its banks and saturated the earth. The sorghum is growing, thick and green, covering the land for miles.

I'm thankful for the continued faithfulness of the men and women who pour their lives out for the church in our village. Nanuk. Marta, Hanna. Berhanu. Nikkorman, Semola. Erogit. Sometimes, the work can be discouraging.

But still, these people faithfully open their homes and give. They open their hearts and share. They stay strong when the temptation to fall away is great. I'm thankful, because they are an example to us—to not give up, to keep praying, to keep our hearts open to the people around us.

I'm thankful for my kids. We've begun a new journey in our house: home schooling. After a couple of false starts, the last couple of months we've gotten into a groove and really started to enjoy this time together. With the help of some wise friends' advice and some most excellent books, home schooling has begun to seem like less of a certain failure and more like a precious gift I've been given.

I'm thankful. I'm thankful for you. For all of the notes we receive, the prayers lifted up on our behalf, the support and encouragement that comes our way, I am thankful. I'm thankful for the group of children in the middle of Michigan who went out of their way to connect with my children.

I'm thankful for the promise of the hope we have in putting our faith in Jesus. In the midst of uncertain times, continued difficulties with obtaining permits to stay in the

country, and the inevitable doubts that come about where we belong, we entrust it all to the One who holds us in His hands. With hope, we can continue what we're doing, knowing that the One in whom we put our trust is fully trust-worthy.

Giving thanks,
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.*

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