

STORIES OF FAITH IN ACTION

Planning for a Faithful Future

Our Redeemer Oromo Evangelical Church in Minneapolis, Minn., has been called many things—contagious, passionate, spontaneous—but “complacent” is not in this congregation’s vocabulary.



“The church is getting older and there will not be another generation coming unless we teach them,” said Masresha Gemechu, coordinator of youth and children’s ministry and the English-language program.

Our Redeemer is the largest African National congregation in the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA) and one of the fastest growing congregations in the ELCA Minneapolis Area Synod. The congregation, led by the Rev. Melkamu Negeri, draws more than 600 Oromo-speaking worshipers from across the Twin Cities weekly.

Oromo is one of more than 80 languages spoken in the East African nation of Ethiopia.

Worship at Our Redeemer is filled with “lots of spontaneous singing, clapping, praising. It’s a joyful community,” said Gemechis Buba, director for African National ministries, ELCA Evangelical Outreach and Congregational Mission.

Our Redeemer received a renewing ministry grant to reach “second-generation immigrants”—youth and young adults who emigrated from Ethiopia as children or who were born in the United States.

With local partners, Our Redeemer has taken medical and humanitarian trips to Ethiopia and supported Oromo refugees in Kenya and Sudan. And it has provided leadership training and support for those launching Oromo congregations across the country.

“This congregation is respected and loved and lifted up as a model for its love and its passion and its evangelism,” said Gemechis.

Masresha said that the English-language ministry “is not only for Oromo ... we are planning, with the grace of God, to reach others” in the neighborhood.

For more *Stories of Faith in Action*, visit www.elca.org/stories.
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God's work. Our hands.

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