

Addis Baptist Church, Ethiopia

May 2-5, 2025

I spent 3 full days with Abdi and his family in Addis Ababa. Abdi works under the auspices of the Middle East Reformed Fellowship (MERF), broadcasting the gospel far and wide in his native Somali tongue. I often reflect how difficult it must be to compose programmes week after week, year after year, only speaking into a microphone, not knowing who, if anyone, is listening! But listen they do, all over the Horn of Africa and the Middle East, and he seeks to



visit where possible. He works together with brother ZE, specifically seeking to train Muslim background believers. My book, *Becoming a Christian*, which was published in Kenya, has been translated into Amharic and Oromo by Z. When Abdi's translation into his language is published it will be in the three major languages of Ethiopia. These two brothers run the training centre about 15 miles from Addis but because of unrest it was deemed too dangerous to visit. Ethiopia is

sadly experiencing much instability. Abdi has a great need for help in his ministry, especially as he is not getting younger! In Nairobi we met up with NH, who for a time was a member of TBC. He has a ministry amongst his fellow Somali's and in this digital age they can cooperate across countries.

On Sunday we worshipped with the Addis Baptist Church on the top 13th. floor of a commercial building. Everything was in the Amharic language and script (see the book cover). With such a script totally unrecognizable to me, one can't even make any sounds! I just recognized the name 'Jesus Christ' in speech. With up to 100 in attendance, mostly young, it was a full day. It began at 10 a.m. with Sunday School,



including for adults, where the pastor, Gedion Asgew, taught. I preached in the morning service on Mark 10:28-34. We had lunch together, the Ethiopian food 'injera' (fermented teff grain made into flatbread), and the very spicy 'wot' stew that I had to bypass. At 2.30 I preached again at the afternoon service on Matthew 10:37-39. That was followed by a time of discussion in groups arising from the day's ministry and I was requested not to contribute lest others say nothing! Despite the language barrier it was an encouraging day. Most of those present speak English so I was able to converse privately.

Apart from Somali refugees in Nairobi we had many from Ethiopia. In the 1990s Yared was one of them. As a very young men he fled when the military junta was overthrown as his father had led in the military. He thought he would be arrested as was his father. We

protected him in Nairobi for three years before he travelled down to South Africa where he has been for almost the past 30 years. He has continued to profess faith in the Lord, and it was lovely that he was visiting 'home' at the same time so I was able to meet up with him and his mother. He says his father was converted in prison and was released two years before he died some few years back.