

# Ethiopia



## Today in Ethiopia...

Named the Berhan Media Ministry (BMM), the Lutheran Hour Ministry (LHM) center in Ethiopia was opened in the capital city of Addis Ababa in December 1996.

Ethiopia has been a strategic location for broadcasting the Gospel for many years. However, "The Radio Voice of the Gospel," a radio station belonging to the Lutheran World Federation (LWF), was confiscated by the now defunct military regime about 20 years ago.

Since then, the broadcast of religious programs over the radio has been prohibited by the government, which owns all the stations in the country.

Religious programs have been allowed only during public holidays. The one way for Ethiopians to hear religious radio programs is by tuning into stations located outside of Ethiopia, such as Trans World Radio from South Africa.

The BMM has begun an extensive Bible correspondence course to help spread the Word of God in Ethiopia. More than 25,000 people enrolled from 1997 to November 2001, after the course was announced through local magazine and newspaper advertisements, as well as on posters.

While most of the correspondents are "unchurched," some are people from Orthodox backgrounds.

Also, the correspondents include newly converted Christians who are interested in studying the Word of God, and some Muslims.

Several Lutheran Hour Ministries booklets are being translated into local languages. These booklets will serve to support the Bible correspondence courses by addressing many of the questions triggered by these studies.

Outside Addis Ababa, mass evangelization is conducted. These weekend events are always attended by no less than 1,000 people each time. Christian films and dramas are shown and performed that enhance the Gospel message and the outreach program. Videos and audio cassettes are also being loaned to people locally.



## Religion in Ethiopia...

About 40 percent of all Ethiopians belong to the Ethiopian Orthodox Church, which has been a leading cultural influence since the fourth century A.D. This autonomous Christian church is headed by a patriarch and is closely related to the Coptic Church of Egypt.

Ethiopian Christians are quick to point out that their country's rulers adopted Christianity before many western nations were exposed to it. In fact, the Evangelical Church (Lutheran) Mekane Yesus has nearly four million members and is growing.

Muslims account for another 40 percent of the total population. Most of the rest of the people in Ethiopia believe in animism, with traditional religious beliefs that stress a reverence for all living things.

## The Ministry...

### Office Established:

Addis Ababa, 1996

### Director:

Berhanu Moges

### Population:

67,851,281

### Media Outreach:

Radio broadcasts of religious programming are prohibited by the government

An extensive Bible correspondence course is very successful

Lutheran Hour Ministries' topical booklets are being translated into local languages for distribution

A drama team travels and performs around the country

## The Country...

Ethiopia is a landlocked country located on the Horn of Africa, in the northeastern part of the country. It covers more than 435,000 square miles, making it approximately the same size as Texas and California combined.

Ethiopia is the oldest independent nation in the world, with a history that spans more than 3,000 years. It is known as the “land of Queen of Sheba,” the “birthplace of the Nile” and the “cradle of mankind.”

Amharic, a Semitic language related to Hebrew and Arabic, is the official language of the country. Amharic, Tigrigna and Oromiffaa are the most widely spoken languages. However, more than 80 other tongues are spoken as well. With dialects, the figure rises to more than 200.

Though only 12 percent of its land is arable, Ethiopia’s economy is based almost entirely on subsistence farming and animal husbandry. Wealth is often measured in the size of a person’s cattle herd. Coffee is the main cash crop, accounting for 60 percent of all export earnings.

Ethiopia is divided into 14 states and two autonomous cities (Addis Ababa and Harer). Each state has its own parliament, but the local leaders are ultimately responsible to the federal government. A president, elected by parliament, has mostly ceremonial duties. The Prime

Minister is head of the government and has strong executive authority.

## The People...

Ethiopia’s population is nearly 70 million people. Historical tensions between the various ethnic groups remain a problem for the nation. Small factions of these groups are still fighting for their autonomy. This animosity makes it very difficult to create unity or to build a sense of national identity among Ethiopians.

While Addis Ababa, the capital, has nearly 2.2 million inhabitants, most people live in rural areas. The extended family is prominent throughout the country.

## Your Opportunities to Serve...

Pray to the Lord for He is good... We give thanks for the opportunity given to us by our heavenly Father to bring His good news of hope and salvation to the people of Ethiopia.

Indifference can be a powerful enemy to the work of the Lord. If we choose to do nothing, those that are without hope in their lives will not know His mercy and salvation. Through the blessed work of Lutheran Hour Ministries, we can break down the barriers of indifference.

Through your support, the ministry of Ethiopia can continue to reach out to the

lost souls around the world. Become a sponsor or increase your level of giving to help us continue our mission of “Bringing Christ to the Nations – and the Nations to the Church.”

## Contact Information...

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Our world is full of people who NEED to know they are loved. Please join us in reaching out to them—with God’s love.

### How You Can Help:

Become a sponsor and assist LHM Ministry Centers around the world. Call 1-800-944-3450 for details, or visit our Web site at [www.lhmint.org](http://www.lhmint.org).

For the latest listing of fact sheets for all the countries in which Lutheran Hour Ministries is carrying out its vision of “All nations, all peoples, all in Christ,” visit our Web site listed above.

For more information, write to the Int’l Lutheran Laymen’s League at 660 Mason Ridge Center Drive, St. Louis, MO 63141-8557.

The Int’l Lutheran Laymen’s League, with its outreach through Lutheran Hour Ministries, is an auxiliary of The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod and Lutheran Church—Canada.



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