



Dear Friends in Christ,

I will be making a trip to Africa this month with Rick Chipman and Patty Allen. Our trip has two purposes. First, we are going to a refugee camp in Western Ethiopia where many refugees from South Sudan live. Our South Sudanese friends in Harlan have family and friends in that camp. They all send money back to the camp to provide food and other necessities for refugees. Several members of Immanuel have committed to sending a monthly gift to provide food supplements for the refugees there.

Feeding hungry children is central to the mission of the church. Our mission is to tell the world of the love of God given to us in Jesus. But we can't tell people about the love of God without first showing people the love of God at work through us. Jesus fed crowds of hungry people and he has provided his Church with the resources to do the same. We live in a hungry world, and as our government is cutting back on feeding the hungry, now is the time for the Church to take up its calling to feed the hungry.

We have asked the local churches around the Sherkole refugee camp to organize a committee to use our gifts to purchase and share food. During our brief time in Ethiopia, we plan to meet with the committee, tour the camp, and discuss how best to use the funds that we will be providing each month.

Over \$6000 has been donated through the first 6 months of 2025 for this program. I am very grateful to everyone who has contributed either in an annual gift or in monthly gifts. It would be helpful if we could know how much Immanuel members plan to give so that we can budget a consistent amount each month.

This month we will start a list in the church office to keep track of how much members plan to contribute. I would ask everyone who has contribute or who plans to contribute to call the church office and let us know how much you plan to give for the year 2025.

Then we can divide that amount by 12 each month and provide a regular donation.

We will spend a little over a day at the refugee camp and then we will travel on to Tanzania to celebrate our 20-year partnership with the Lutheran Church in Kidugala. I was there in 2015 and enjoyed getting to know our mission partners there. This year will be an opportunity to affirm our friendship and the mission we share. Then the hope is that we will be bringing back with us 3 ambassadors from Kidugala for our celebration of our 20-year friendship and partnership.

Our 20-year relationship with Kidugala and our new opportunities in the Sherkole refugee camp are gifts of the Holy Spirit who calls God's people into the mission of sharing the grace of God with the world.

Yours in Christ, *Phil Nielsen*