

Answering the Call

By Dagaga Gemachu

Meet Some Missionaries, June 2026

Answering the Call: Impacting Lives Through Faith and Mission

From Ethiopia to Kenya:

A Journey of Family, Church Planting, and Transformational Ministry Beyond Capacity by Faith

A Journey of Faith, Family, and Ministry Across Borders

My name is Dagaga Gemachu Regassa. I was born and raised in Ethiopia, a country rich in history, culture, and a deep Christian heritage. From an early stage in life, I sensed God’s calling that gradually shaped my journey into ministry. Today, I serve in Nairobi, Kenya, as a Global Worker of the North American Lutheran Church (NALC). My life and ministry are grounded in faith, obedience, and dependence on God. I hold a Master of Arts in World Mission, which has equipped me with theological understanding and practical missional training for cross-cultural ministry. This academic foundation has been instrumental in shaping my approach to church leadership, discipleship, and mission work across different cultural settings.



Rev. Dagaga Gemachu

Before coming to Kenya, I served with the Ethiopian Evangelical Church Mekane Yesus (EECMY), one of the largest Lutheran church bodies in Africa. I worked in a large congregation Biftu Bole as a Mission Office Coordinator, where I supported mission programs, organized outreach activities, and strengthened evangelistic structures. This experience prepared me for broader international ministry.

However, God called me beyond the familiar—to step into a new mission field that required deeper trust, obedience, and sacrifice.



Map of Kenya [public domain via PAT maps]

Family in Ministry: A Shared Calling

Ministry is never a journey alone. My wife, Bruktawit Samuel, is truly a woman of faith. She left her job in Ethiopia and joined me in Nairobi, embracing this calling with courage and deep trust in God. Her sacrifice reflects our shared commitment to serve wherever God leads. She remains a strong partner in ministry, prayer, and family life. We are blessed with two children, our son Naga and our daughter Ilii. As a family, we experience both the joys and challenges of ministry in a cross-cultural setting. Raising children in this environment requires intentional faith and reliance on God, but it is also a blessing as they grow up witnessing His work firsthand.

NALC Bishop Dan Selbo and Pastor Carol Fryer during their visit with my family at Nairobi, September 28, 2025. (l-r): Pastor Dagaga, Naga, Bruktawit, Ilii, Bishop Selbo, Pastor Fryer.



Ministry in Nairobi: Shepherding a Refugee Church

Since November 2023, I have been serving as the lead pastor of the Oromo Christian Fellowship in Nairobi, a legally registered church in Kenya. The Oromo Christian Fellowship is a small refugee church, yet it is engaged in a mission far beyond its visible capacity. What sustains this ministry is not human strength or resources, but faith in God. Despite its size, the church carries a vision that extends beyond what is naturally possible, showing that God often works through small and faithful communities.

The fellowship serves Oromo-speaking refugees and residents living in Nairobi. Many arrive in the city seeking safety, opportunity, and a new beginning. Some carry deep pain from displacement and hardship. The church exists to walk alongside them—offering worship, belonging, healing, and spiritual growth.



Our congregation in Nairobi main church Sunday Service Worship time, March 5, 2026.

Our ministry focus in Nairobi is discipleship. We are committed to helping believers grow in Christ during their time in the city. Through worship, Bible teaching, prayer, and personal mentorship, we walk with them as they develop a strong and living faith.

In addition to pastoring, I also coordinate the mission field, providing leadership and oversight for outreach work in both Nairobi and northern Kenya.

Mission in Northern Kenya: Church Planting and Gospel Expansion

Our second major mission focus is in northern Kenya, Isiolo and Marsabit County to Moyale along the Ethiopia–Kenya border, where we serve the Borena community. This region shares strong cultural and linguistic ties with the Oromo people, creating meaningful bridges for ministry. The Borena community is religiously diverse. Many practice traditional cultural religion known as *Waaqeffataa* (the traditional faith system of Oromo people), while others are Muslim. In this context, sharing the Gospel requires deep respect, patience, and relational engagement. We approach the community with love, friendship, and a desire to serve.



Borena Ministry church plant, Northern Kenya

God has opened remarkable doors for the Gospel among them. The hand of God is actively working in these communities, and many people are coming to Christ through the message of the Gospel and the witness of transformed lives.

One powerful testimony reflects this reality. A woman from a Muslim background in one of the villages became seriously ill and was hospitalized. Her family spent nearly 2 million Kenyan shillings on medical treatment, but her condition continued to worsen. Eventually, the doctors informed the family that there was little hope for her recovery.

After she returned to her village, our missionaries visited her, shared the good news of Jesus Christ, and prayed for her in faith. In the days that followed, she experienced a remarkable recovery and was completely healed. This testimony became a turning point for her family. Through this experience, her household came to faith in Christ, and their lives were transformed by the power of the Gospel.

This is one of many testimonies that show how God is working among the people of northern Kenya—bringing healing, hope, and salvation.



Having lunch with missionaries under the tree at Walda, one of our outreach churches in Marsabit County, after baptizing 106 people on April 24, 2026

By the grace of God, this mission has borne significant fruit:

- **16 churches have been planted**
- **Approximately 8,000 people have come to Christ**

These are not just numbers—they represent real lives transformed, families restored, and communities experiencing new hope in Christ.

Each church plant serves as a center for worship, discipleship, and leadership development. Local believers are being raised and equipped to continue the ministry within their own communities, ensuring that the work multiplies and becomes sustainable.

New believers received baptism and holding their baptism certificate at Moyale church 790 km (490 miles) from Nairobi, April 23, 2026



As I coordinate the mission field, I support church planters, strengthen leadership, and help guide mission strategy. This ensures that the work is not only expanding but also becoming rooted and stable.

The mission in northern Kenya is not without challenges. The region is vast, transportation is difficult, and resources are limited. Yet these challenges continually remind us that this work depends not on human strength, but on God's provision and faithfulness.

Mission by Faith and Partnership

This ministry is supported and sent through Awakening Lives to World Mission ([ALWM](#)), which serves as my sending agency. Through this partnership, we receive prayer support and raise financial resources for our family's living and ministry work. This support enables us to serve faithfully in Nairobi and continue mission work across northern Kenya.

Pastor Bill Moberly, Founder and Director of ALWM, and myself at our main church Nairobi Sunday Service sermon during his visit, November 2, 2025.



We are deeply grateful for churches, individuals, and partners who stand with us in prayer and giving. Their partnership reflects the unity of the global body of Christ working together in mission.

Conclusion: A Life Surrendered to God's Call

Through every stage of this journey, God has remained faithful. From Ethiopia to Kenya, from church leadership to cross-cultural mission, His guidance has never failed.

The Oromo Christian Fellowship may be small, but it carries a mission far beyond itself. Everything we do is by faith, trusting that God can accomplish great things through willing lives.

My prayer is that this ministry will continue to bear lasting fruit—that more lives will be transformed, more churches will be strengthened, and more communities will come to know Christ.

This is not only my story—it is a testimony of God's calling, sending, and transforming work across nations.

For more information about **Awakening Lives to World Missions (ALWM)** and its programs, please visit our website at:

<https://www.alwm.org/>



Rev. Dagaga Gemachu serves in Nairobi, Kenya, as a Global Worker of the North American Lutheran Church (NALC). Born and raised in Ethiopia, he is the Lead Pastor of Oromo Christian Fellowship in Nairobi, Kenya. His wife, Bruktawit Samuel, shares his commitment to serve wherever God leads. She remains a strong partner in ministry, prayer, and family life. We are blessed with two children, our son Naga and our daughter Ilili. As a family, we experience both the joys and challenges of ministry in a cross-cultural setting.

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Links:

Ethiopia: <https://www.britannica.com/place/Ethiopia>

Nairobi: <https://www.britannica.com/place/Nairobi>

Kenya: <https://www.britannica.com/place/Kenya>

NALC: <https://thenalc.org/en-us/>

EECMY: <https://www.eecmy-dassc.org/about-us>

Kenya map: <https://ian.macky.net/pat/map/ke/ke.html> public domain via PAT maps

Fellowship: <https://www.alwm.org/kenya>

Isiolo: <https://abiri.home.blog/counties/isiolo-county/>

Marsabit: <https://abiri.home.blog/counties/marsabit-county/>

Moyale: <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Moyale>

Oromo: https://joshuaproject.net/people_groups/19651/ke

Muslim: <https://www.britannica.com/topic/Islam>

ALWM: <https://www.alwm.org/>