

IS THERE HOPE FOR CHILDREN WITH SPECIAL NEEDS IN ETHIOPIA?

One beautiful example of God's work at Grace Center is shown through 4 year old Yoseph. Yoseph's mother is single and was very impoverished. In order for her and her 4 year old son to eat and have a mud room to sleep in, she needed to work. Yoseph has developmental and physical delays, and needs constant care and supervision. Having no other option for her son, she had to lock him in her mud hut each day when she went to work. Yoseph's developmental challenges became more severe than they would have been had he been able to socialize and be in the fresh air and sunshine.

Having no other option... she had to lock him in her mud hut each day when she went to work.

We happily welcomed Yoseph into our Grace Center Special Needs Day Care. He went from being afraid and hiding to taking steps, talking, learning and smiling. Yoseph's life was transformed and continues to be changed because of God's work at Grace Center!



Another example of God's transforming hand at Grace Center is in the life of 4 year old Debeba, a precious little boy with Down Syndrome, who joined our temporary care home. He was found wandering the streets and spent 9 days sleeping in the police station. He was screaming defiantly as we gave him the first bath he had probably had in months. His eyes and skin were both infected. He was very happy to be given new shoes and clothes after his bath! He looked at me and said in Amharic, "Tell them no more water!" I assured

him we were finished and we handed him a piece of candy. After lunch we had him rest. He laid down on a comfortable, clean bed while drawing a picture and said, "I'm happy!" He speaks some sign language which is a great clue to help us find his history. The first day was hard as Debeba did not trust us and thought we might hurt him. After a short time, he realized we were there to help him and allowed us to care for him. Debeba started out in our temporary care home. Being over four years old, we needed to find a solution for him,

out of temporary care. A kind person quickly volunteered to sponsor Debeba, allowing us to rent a home and hire a loving foster mother for him. Debeba is in our day program for children with special needs including breakfast, lunch, transport and care by Grace staff at the local school for children with special needs. Debeba is a happy and loving little boy who jumps into my arms and gives me the biggest hug when I see him! Debeba is one of God's reminders of why we do what we do!! What a strong, precious, determined little guy! Please pray that we can find his family so that they can be reunited!



Sadly, there are many more children with special needs in these types of situations (locked up at home or left abandoned on the streets) all around Ethiopia. As the co-founder of a program for individuals with special needs in the USA, I look forward to sharing my experience and growing this much needed program. These children are who God uses to keep us doing our work here no matter how tired we may be at times!! **It is imperative that we raise money so that our special needs day care, now assisting 4 children will be able to serve 30 children.** Thank you for your support!

From Amy Minard - On-site Director of Grace Center
in Bahir Dar, Ethiopia

So much happening at Grace Center:

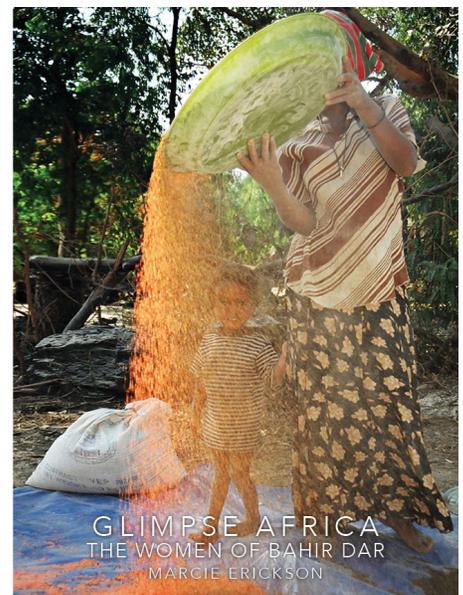
- Building Grace Center School - We have completed the Kindergarten classrooms and this has been in full use. We are currently expanding grades 1-4 and need to have this completed by September, but are in need of \$40,000 to complete this. We were hopeful to receive a grant, but it has not yet come through. Your assistance is greatly needed and appreciated.
- Marcie Erickson, Sefinew Mengistu and their children will be heading back to Ethiopia in August to work on expanding the program as well as other areas of need. Many thanks to Covenant Presbyterian Church for their great assistance with travel costs for them.
- Book sales continue and both books shown to the right are available at gracecenterfoundation.org, click *Purchase our Books*.
- Grace Center had an event in March, Experience Ethiopia, bringing awareness about Grace Center. It was a successful start to our fundraising year. The next event is scheduled for March 2nd, 2019.
- Grace Center continues to grow in foster care and local adoption.

We need to raise \$45,000 by the end of the summer to continue this life-saving work! This life saving mission is only possible through your support and we really need your help at this time.

Through your giving you are not only changing a life for a moment, but saving and transforming one for a lifetime and even eternity. Thank you! God bless you!

Marcie Erickson

Executive Director and Co-Founder of Grace Center in Ethiopia



MAMA MEHERET
MEMOIR OF A
MISSIONARY

MARCIE ERICKSON

