

A Huge Ethiopian Thank You

This spring, the Presbytery asked a big ask of all of you: Could you or your church consider a contribution to a fund that would send the young people of our newest worshiping community, the fellowship of Ethiopian Anuak Christians led by Pastor Gilo Agwa Gora, to camp?

Here's a part of what Pastor Gilo said back in March:

The most difficult challenge we face today is raising up our children in Christian ways, so we don't lose them to the world. This puts us in an urgent situation to search for Christian programs and activities. However, due to our economic conditions, when most of us survive on minimum wages, it is hard to afford and sponsor successful programs and youth activities on our own. As parents, we would love our kids to keep growing in Christ and interact with fellow Christians around them.

We asked for your support, and ***you responded, generously and faithfully,*** individually and through your congregations, contributing ***\$11,150.***

Next week, because of you, 23 young people from our Anuak worshiping community will experience the kind of Christian gathering none of them have ever seen before: 14 to Clearwater Forest Camp and 8 (plus an adult sponsor) to Presbyterian Youth Triennium, the national high-school youth gathering. Here is Pastor Gilo's message to all of you:

Grace and peace to you from our Lord Jesus Christ.

I am writing this email on behalf of the Anuak ministry in order to share our joys for your financial support. We are grateful for your office and all the churches, and individuals who supported our youths to attend the high school youth Triennium and summer camp. There is no doubt that your gifts will keep memories that our kids and the families remember forever.

As a refugee community that has a lot of stressors, such an enormous support would not only tackle our current challenges, but also give us

hope and a bright future. Moreover, our kids would find assurance that we are not alone, but God has prepared people like you who comfort us, walk with us in all our problems, and hopes. Your financial support astonished us despite the growing individualism experiences, which many people believe it is at the peak. That is not what we feel now, but we feel love and hands that are stretch out (to give) than to keep. We feel that your gifts become a foretaste of care and love that our Lord Jesus Christ mentioned in Matthew 25:34-40.

Thank you for working with us to build our futures and grow a Christ-loving generation in our community. Thank you again "And God will generously provide all you need. Then you will always have everything you need and plenty left over to share with others." 2 Cor.9:8 (NLT).

Thank you, PTCA, for your generosity and your care for all of God's people. We'll share some photos when the young people return.

PRESBYTERY OF THE TWIN CITIES AREA
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The Congregations and Leaders of
The Presbytery of the Twin Cities Area
Presbyterian Church (USA)

The Congregations and Leaders of
The Saint Paul Area Synod
Evangelical Lutheran Church in America

Dear Friends and Colleagues,

Together, two denominations collaborating in one mission, we have helped birth a new and important ministry among refugees and immigrants from Ethiopia, especially those of the Anyuak tribe from war-ravaged western Ethiopia. Both denominations have committed time, training, and dollars to this ministry, and the fruit is remarkable. Here's how its pastor, the Rev. Gilo Agwa Gora, describes it:

It is now over two years since we started conversation of how we can work together. And friends, God has done many things through you. As refugees, our life journey is challenged by our newness to this country and suffering back home and in the refugee camps. We believe that God has truly connected us with you and your churches so we are surrounded by care and love always. And that is what brings to us a bright future, not only for our kids but also we the parents. We in the Anyuak community give thanks to the Almighty for the love and warm welcome we have received from you from the time we arrived here. You have opened your houses and places of worship for us. You made us feel home.

We want to continue to help this congregation grow and take the next steps in ministry and discipleship, and one of those ways is by supporting its young people. For decades, we have all known the strong and lasting impact of a summer camp experience for young people. When young people meet God and each other in the structured environment of camp and other youth gatherings, faith is formed and shaped. We want the same for the young people of this fledgling worshiping community. So do they. But there's a challenge. Pastor Gilo:

The most difficult challenge we face today is raising up our children in Christian ways, so we don't lose them to the world. That puts us in an urgent situation to search for Christian programs or activities to offer as an alternative to negative influence by some peers in the neighborhoods. However, due to our economic conditions, when most of us survive on minimum wages, it is hard to afford and sponsor successful programs and youth activities on our own. Before coming to the USA, our kids lived in a very difficult environment and have been raised to rely on