

## February

### Week One- Eritrea

The members of the Evangelical Church of Eritrea live in a country where 65% of the people live under the poverty line. Life expectancy is 54 percent; 80percent of the population are farmers; 58 percent of the people are literate and 43 percent do not have safe drinking water. This small church of 12,000 members works in cooperation with the LWF Ethiopia program. The main effort is centered on water. We are constructing micro-dams, digging fresh-water wells, drilling bore holes and educating the people about the necessity for clean water. The Evangelical Church of Eritrea joined the LWF in 1963 and has a membership of 12,000.

1.1 billion people in the world do not have clean drinking water. 2.2 million people in developing countries die each year from diseases related to contaminated water. Most of those are children. Every single day 6,000 children die due to lack of water or water-born diseases.

*Gracious God, we thank you for the gift of water. We pray for those who do not have access to clean water. Watch over the children who are dying for a drink of clean water. Put your loving arms around the women who walk miles each day in search of water for their families. Bless all those who are at work today digging wells and providing a means for communities to share in the earth's water. Help us to understand our own use of water resources. Give hope to Mr. Jan Schutte as he works on our behalf in this effort.*

### Week Two- India

A plot of eight acres of arid land was lying unused in the Kandenjula area of India. Three women, Golapi, Puspa, and Alhadini wanted to work the land, although the rainfall was very irregular in this drought-prone area. To encourage the women, the LWF staff assisted them in irrigating the land, taught them some basic farming skills and gave them a loan. Family members are helping them work the land. They have selected a variety of vegetables that will grow during different seasons. In addition to the vegetables, they are planning mango and teak as long-term ventures. The women have brought hope to their families and have demonstrated to other villagers that this land can be made productive!

The Ethiopian Church Mekane Yeses joined the LWF in 1963 and has a membership of over 4 million.

*Holy God, we give thanks for the courage of these three women to change their lives and the lives of their families. Grant them good crops and an abundant harvest. Keep us mindful of the gifts which you have given us. Watch over your servant Edwin Ramathal who serves in Eritrea through the LWF.*

### Week Three-Ethiopia

Rev. John Halvorson, an ELCA pastor who serves as the LWF program director in Ethiopia, says this: "God is good. People really believe that here. In spite of all the difficulties that confront this land, from famine to deep poverty, to HIV and AIDS, to environment devastation, to civil strife and disorder, people do believe that God is good

and that God continues to be merciful and just. (The LWF) responds to the unconditional and encompassing love of God in Jesus Christ for all people on earth.”

In one area of Ethiopia (the Chinaksen District) the LWF works with village women to improve health and education and to assist them in becoming self sufficient through small loans and farming education. We provide vegetable seeds and teach appropriate farming crop production and poultry farming.

*Creator God, thank you for the women of Chinaksen District, Ethiopia and their commitment to learn new ways to provide a sustainable lifestyle for their families. We pray for good soil, abundant rain and warm sun so that their crops may flourish. We rejoice in the knowledge that their children are no longer hungry. Give courage and strength to Pastor John Halvorson who works on our behalf as the LWF lead staff in Ethiopia.*

#### **Week Four- Nepal**

Nepal is a poor country with a fledgling democracy severely challenged by a Maoist insurgency. The intensified level of killing, abduction and sabotage, has resulted in thousands of civilian deaths. In addition, over 100,000 Bhutanese refugees in seven camps in southeast Nepal constitute a decade-long-refugee problem and human rights crisis. Many young girls are denied their right to education in remote places of Nepal. The LWF has a program to empower children and provides scholarships to disadvantaged girls.

*Loving God, we pray for the people of Nepal and for the Bhutanese who are confined to refugee camps within the country. Give the children of Nepal opportunities for education and a bright future. Care for all whose lives are impacted by the violence within the country. Thank you for the gifts brought to the LWF program by staff person Marceline Rozario.*

