



# THE SANDY TEACHER

Deanne Gochanour's Newsletter; Happy Holidays!; January 2022

## Happy Holidays!

Merry Christmas from Addis Ababa, Ethiopia! Although I thought the holiday season would look very different while living in Addis, it turned out “normal” compared to what I’m used to growing up in Wisconsin and attending school in California.

Because Bingham Academy is an international school, we didn’t have off school for Thanksgiving Day or Black Friday. We have staff and students from many countries, which means we can’t have off for every culture’s holidays or we would never have school! My roommates and I hosted a potluck style Thanksgiving dinner for the singles working at Bingham. We ended up with 12 people, only 7 of which are American. Football (both American football and a World Cup football game) were projected on the wall with some explanations on American football rules after dinner. Because we can’t easily buy turkey, chicken cooked like turkey was the main dish with plenty of green bean and vegetable casseroles to accompany! As the British, Swiss, Bolivian, Singaporean, and Ethiopians asked for explanations on the food and traditions, the Americans learned there are a lot of regional differences during Thanksgiving. Who would have thought people have deviled eggs as a staple at their Thanksgiving dinners? Those serving with LBT in Ethiopia gathered for lunch and walked to a Thanksgiving dessert party carrying pies, pumpkin bars, coffee, and our own forks. Look at my beautiful apple pie on the right!

Part of living abroad is learning how to make things from my home country, specifically from WI. I love pumpkin bars with the cream cheese frosting, but there’s not canned pumpkin here. So, I had to buy a pumpkin, cut and roast it, puree it, and then add all the pumpkin pie flavors to make the bars I normally would have. To my surprise, they turned out great and my roommates request them often!

Another thing that surprised me is that December doesn’t look that different here either. Although it doesn’t snow, it’s still chilly and Christmas attire is more than welcome! My December was filled with Christmas concerts and plenty of baking for cookie swaps/parties. Redeemer, the church I attend here, had a Christmas Eve service where we sang in 7 languages ending with a candlelight “Silent Night”.





## Visa Troubles means Visa Travels

I entered Ethiopia with a visa back in August while waiting for my degree to be authenticated. To get a residence permit in Ethiopia, my documents need to go through an authentication process in the States, which has taken about 6 months. This means I had to leave Ethiopia to renew my visa before it expired. Because I had to leave the country, and a few friends wanted to travel, we ended up in Egypt for a little less than a week. I saw the pyramids and some of the rich Egyptian history, but some of the best parts were the meals! Chicken is expensive and sometimes hard to find in Addis, so chicken was a must at every meal!

After returning from Egypt, I entered Ethiopia with a new visa, but had to leave again because my residence permit was still not approved. This time I took a quick, two-night trip to Kenya. A friend from Bingham happened to be there at the same time on a work trip, so I joined her on a hike around a national park. I was very thrilled to buy some ham and cheese to bring back before returning to Addis with a new visa. The same friend had to leave Ethiopia in December, so I joined her to enjoy Austria and Germany and to renew my visa days.

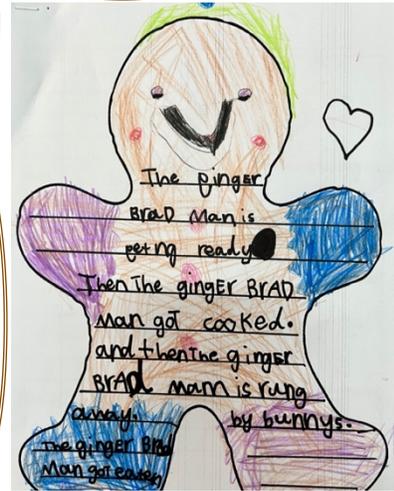
I already know I must leave again in March but having left in December allows this next trip to align with Bingham's spring break. Although it sounds like I'm having all kinds of adventures, it's very disruptive to constantly be leaving, returning, and wondering when this paperwork will be finalized. Please pray for this whole process so that I can be more settled here without the continuous upheaval of traveling due to visa complications. Thankfully, Bingham is covering these extra travel and legal costs while also assisting with the exiting and reentering process.

## My Students!!

During the fall semester I had 13 students, but that will increase to 15 when the January semester starts. In Cambridge Curriculum we focus heavily on English, Math, and Science. My students are incredibly advanced in reading, which allows us to do fun activities like recreating stories. They highly enjoyed being able to add their own ideas to the classic Gingerbread story, and because they did so well, we did the same activity with Frosty the Snowman.

We had a very busy December in KG2! Our last day of school was Tuesday December 20<sup>th</sup>, but my students were working all term on their Nativity performance. KG1 and 2 perform a Christmas Nativity together as their yearly activity. We also had a K-8 carols concert where the KGs sang a song called It's Christmas Eve from their nativity and Go Tell it on the Mountain. The concert was outside on the field and in the sun!

Not only were my KG2 students busy, but my grade 9 athletes were hard at work starting their basketball season. Although we only had one game before Christmas break, they did great! One of our girls was knocked to the ground and escorted to the nurse, and another girl was hit in the face and started bleeding- we won 40-0 though! I also volunteered to coach the U12 (4-6<sup>th</sup> grade) girls' volleyball. We didn't get many practices in before break, but it's fun to see their love for the sport.



### Praise God:

For the friendships being made here and for my incredible students and athletes!

### Prayers Requests:

For my documents to finish the process in the States and for the residence permit process here.

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Deanne's Details  
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