

Glenn & Susan Fluegge are missionaries with Lutheran Bible Translators and will move to Ethiopia in January 2026. As LBT's seminary program coordinator, Glenn cultivates partnerships with seminaries and churches worldwide to train and equip local Bible translators and Scripture engagement specialists. Learn more: [LBT.org/Fluegge](https://lbt.org/Fluegge)

"T" MINUS ONE MONTH...

Okay, it's one month and a few days. The plane tickets have been purchased, and the visa application has been submitted. We leave on Jan 16 and arrive in Addis Ababa on Jan 18 at 12:03 AM (yes, you read that correctly).

We arrive just in time for Timkat on Jan 19. Timkat is the Ethiopian Orthodox Christian celebration of Epiphany, a major public holiday, marked by massive outdoor gatherings, processions of replicas of the Ark of the Covenant, and water blessings, commemorating Jesus' baptism. It's one of Ethiopia's most significant religious festivals.



During the Timkat ceremony, priests carry the tabots (replicas of the Ark of the Covenant) on their heads to the waterfront. These tabots are considered very sacred.



WHAT I'LL BE DOING

My initial responsibilities in Ethiopia are threefold: Adapt to local life and work, become familiar with Amharic, and teach two classes at Mekane Yesus Seminary—Lutheran Confessions & Mission in the OT and NT. Additionally, I will teach an online graduate course via Zoom for Concordia University (the eleven-hour time change should make things interesting!).



Two theology students walk to class on the MYS campus.

Those are the tasks I need to accomplish. But first, my top priority is to build strong relationships with the church's leadership and the seminary's faculty and staff.

You might be thinking, "No duh, that should happen too," but it doesn't come naturally in a cross-cultural setting. It requires a lot of time and effort.

In our own culture, we generally understand how to "get along" with others. We pick up on certain cues, avoid certain actions, and refrain from saying certain things to prevent offending others. In a different culture, all of that "socially appropriate behavior" has to be learned.

But there's another personal reason—I'm typically task-oriented (just look at the post-it notes and To-Do lists scattered all over my desk!). My challenge will be to prioritize relationships over tasks, and I ask for your prayers!

MY PCT PILGRIMAGE - DONE!!

On June 24, I touched the US-Canadian border in Washington and started walking south on the Pacific Crest Trail. One hundred thirty-three days and over 2,700 miles later, on Nov 3, I arrived at the US-Mexican border. It certainly wasn't easy (to say the least!!). But it was a life-changing, transformative journey.

You can read more about it here:

<https://greybeardedhiking.wordpress.com/2025/12/04/final-thoughts-my-pct-pilgrimage-in-retrospect/>



The southern terminus monument of the Pacific Crest Trail is located in the small town of Campo, CA on the Mexican border.

The trail runs 2,655.8 miles through Washington, Oregon, and California.

My 'PCT Pilgrimage,' as I often call it, was part of a sabbatical research project on the benefits of walking pilgrimages. It's fascinating that many religions, including Christianity, have historically included walking pilgrimages as part of their spiritual practices. There's also a renewed interest in hiking and backpacking in the United States and Europe today. Could some of the reasons behind ancient religious walking pilgrimages explain the recent surge in outdoor hiking and backpacking? There appears to be a significant connection.

I'm working on a book tentatively titled *Backpacking as Pilgrimage: The Modern Practice of an Ancient Christian Tradition*. Its aim is to encourage Christians to incorporate backpacking and hiking into their spiritual practices. I'm also curious to see how pilgrimage is practiced in Ethiopia.



Here I am a week before finishing the trail. The wild beard's now gone, replaced with a tame goatee. LOL

PLEASE JOIN US!

Please consider partnering with us to get God's Word into the many languages in Ethiopia and throughout the world. Use this QR code to partner with us in the following ways:



- 1) **PRAY REGULARLY** – Please pray for us regularly (see below). Share this prayer letter with others and encourage them to sign up for our prayer letter.
- 2) **GIVE A GIFT** – Please consider giving a gift to support our ministry with LBT. You can also set it up to support us on a regular basis. *Recurring gifts are especially helpful as we prepare to head overseas.*
 - To give online: visit LBT.org/Fluegge.
 - To give by check: Make out check to "Lutheran Bible Translators" AND write "Fluegge Ministry" on the memo line. Send it to: Lutheran Bible Translators, P.O. Box 789, Concordia, MO 64020
- 3) **LEARN MORE** – Find out more about Lutheran Bible Translators (www.LBT.org). Host a Bible Translation Sunday (if you're interested, let's talk!).

PRAYER REQUESTS

- Pray for us as we move to Ethiopia on Jan 16. There are a lot of logistical details to work out!
- Pray that God would grant us a deep love and appreciation for Ethiopia and good relationships with the church's leaders and the seminary's faculty and staff. Pray God grant me wisdom on this front.
- Pray that God help me teach my classes well and that I establish a good rapport with the students.
- Pray for Susan as she carries out her current position with Concordia remotely (administrative assistant to the School of Arts and Sciences). Pray for wisdom, patience, and strength as she adapts to an eleven-hour time difference!

CONTACT

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