

MKC - Meserete Kristos Church

Growth, practices,
leadership, and
challenges

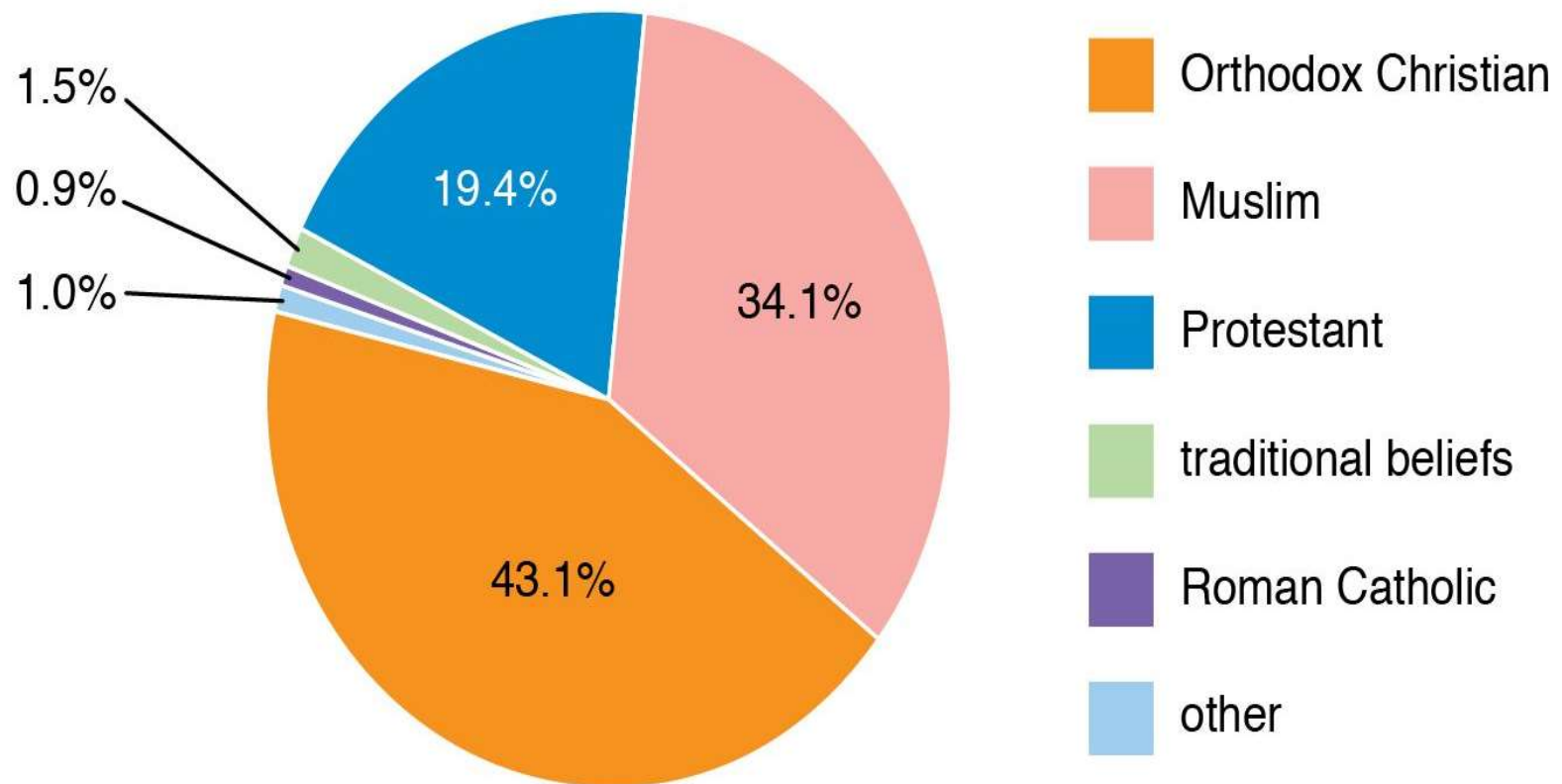


1. Ethiopia – country profile

- **Capital:** Addis Ababa
- **Area:** 1,104,300 sq km
- **Population:** 113.6 million
- **Languages:** more than 80 languages,
- **Life expectancy:** 65 years (men) 68 years (women)



Ethiopia – religious demography



2/ MKC- beginnings

Established by missionary efforts of
Mennonite missionaries from North
America – **Eastern Mennonite Missions**

The church was established 7 decades
ago **1951**

Initially, the church was **financially
supported by the missionaries**

The church was **led by missionaries**

2.1. Church planting strategies- prior to persecution



Four
points



Building schools to educate children
and share the gospel through life and
moral education

A) Opening clinics, praying
and sharing God's Word to
patients .



B) Providing humanitarian aid when communities were affected to show them, **we cared**

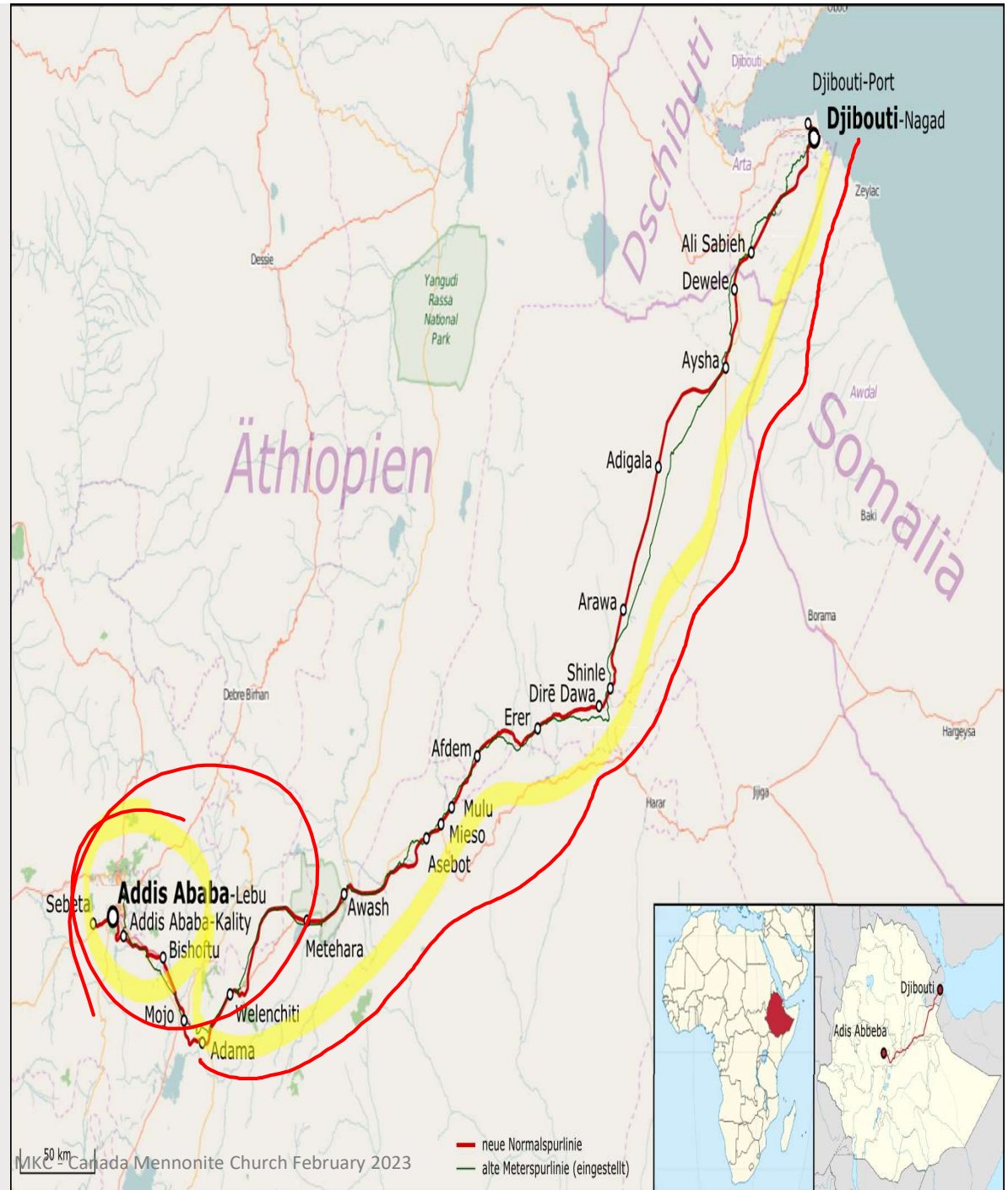


C) Opening
chapels for
those who
believed in
Jesus



During the communist government

- MKC local churches were planted along the Ethio-Djibouti railway
- MKC had 14 local churches
- 5000 members



Before and after communist regime

	Before	After	%
# of local churches	14	53	
# of church members	5000	50,000	10%
# of MKC regions	0	14	
Geographic coverage	Along Ethiopian-Djibuty railway	All over the country	

2.2 Factors contributing to the growth of MKC during the communist



(A) Home cell strategy

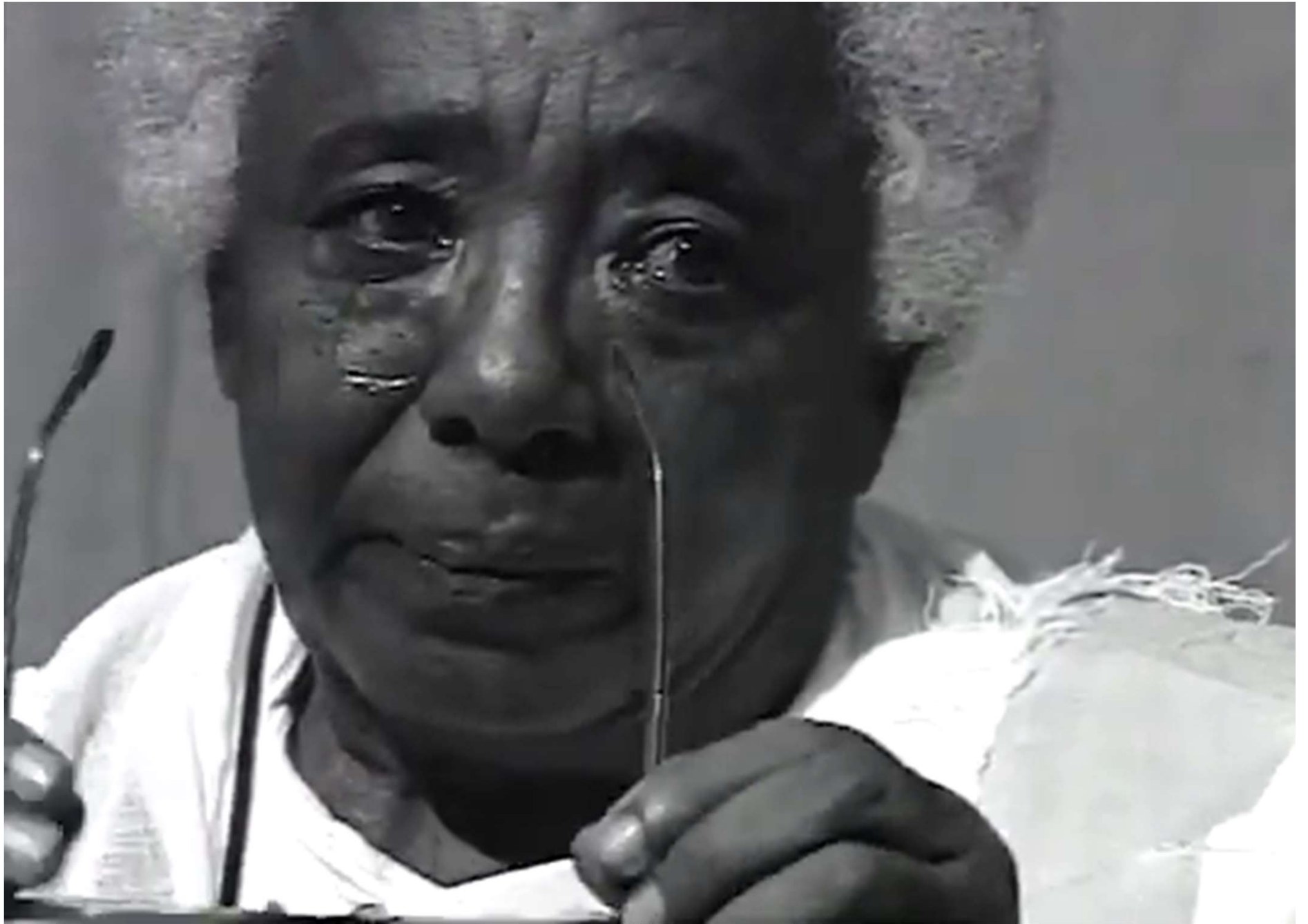
- All members were part of the **home cell groups**
- All members were devoted to Bible study
- Information sharing
- Maintain privacy
- **Home cell was Adopted from experience of churches in former USSR**




(B) Holy Spirit-led prayers

Believers pray in
**private and in small
groups** for the spread
of the gospel of Jesus
Christ


**Praying for sick people
for God's healing**





(C) One-to-one sharing of the gospel

Believers were encouraged to share the gospel of Jesus Christ to others in one to one





(D) Strong follow-up of new believers

1

Mature Christians
pray for new
believers

2

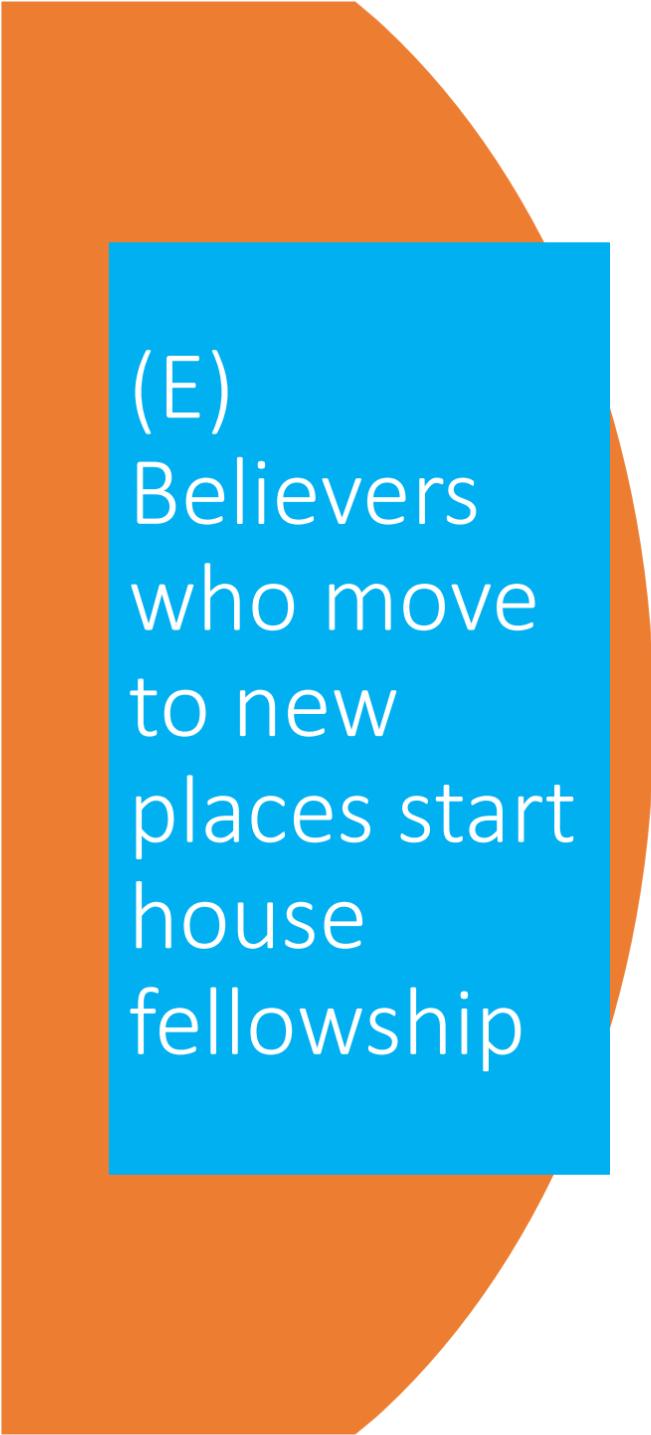
Small group leaders
visit and encourage
new believers

3

Support them when
they face challenges
in life

4

Teach consistent
basic Christian and
biblical teachings



(E)
Believers
who move
to new
places start
house
fellowship

- Believers who move to new places for employment or business start house fellowship with their family members
- The house fellowship expands gradually and becomes a local church
- Strong follow-up from the church leaders – Head Office
- Church planters were all believers, not just full-time ministers

3.Current realities – post communist

A/Use diverse
evangelistic and mission
strategies

B/ MKC remains a
missional church



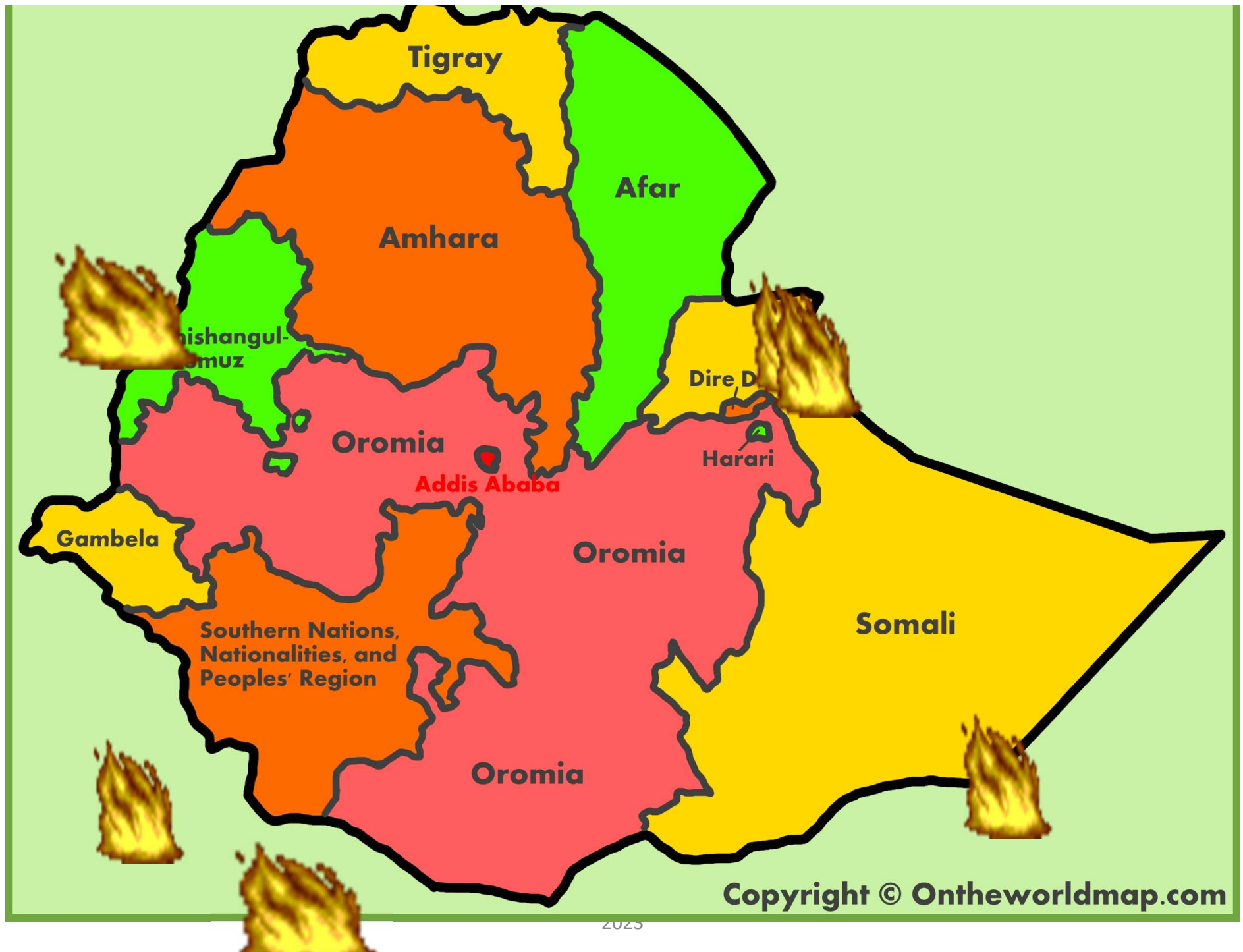
C/ MKC Holds revival conferences in strategic places

Hold spiritual conferences in towns and invite people to attend,

Praying for people who have various problems

D/ Place missionaries in strategic areas

- **Hostile areas** – strong persecution and resistance
- **Fertile areas** – to win many souls as soon as possible
- **Border areas** – to cross border and preach the gospel in neighboring countries



E) Using prison ministry to inmates

Reach out to inmates through prison ministry

Many inmates have come to Christ through the ministry

After they are discharged from the prison, some of them become church planters in their community

F)Using holistic ministry

- Running various community-based projects e.g. children and youth project that targets children and adolescents
- Relief and emergency services
- Serving the community with love, integrity, and respect



G) Policy-based strategy

- Limiting the maximum number of baptized members in one local church
- If above the maximum limit, the local church divides into two
- Each local church needs to have at least one outreach center
- A minimum level of church growth percentage is agreed by the General Assembly and all work towards that goal

H) Equipping and empowering local churches

Equip	Equip local churches with evangelistic tools
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Train	Train local missionaries, give refreshment trainings regularly,
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Give	Give responsibility to local churches to monitor the progress of assigned missionaries
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Assign	Assign local missionaries in their own communities (know the culture, language, have existing relationships)
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1) Mobilizing resources

- Mobilize resources from local churches through Gospel Day, gift catalogue (Bibles, tin for building new churches, motor bikes for missionaries, etc)
- Partner with mission organizations

MKC Head office staff



MKC - Canada Mennonite Church February
2023

4) Major Challenges of the Church and the country



MKC - Canada Mennic
2023



Challenges MKC is facing

High demand for middle-level competent leaders (regional or conference leaders)

Inadequate resources to discipleship teenagers, and young adults in the church

Poor spiritual nurture of children due to lack of relevant materials and trained teachers

Civil and poletical unrest in the county

Civil and Ethnic- based violence

- Mass protests from 2016-2018 – resulted in destruction of property and loss of lives
- Brought change in government
- November 2020 – war in Tigray
 - Loss of lives
 - Humanitarian crisis
 - More than 10 MKC churches directly affected
 - Church ministers were killed

Conflict in Oromia

Local churches
burned down

More than 350 MKC
members, fulltime
ministers and church
leaders were killed

Tens of thousands of
people including
Christians were
displaced

71 Local churches
have not conducted
services for the last
two years

full-time ministers in those local churches
are not being paid

5/ MKC Response to the conflict

Praying

- Praying for peace, stability, and people affected by the conflict

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Sending funds

- Smuggle funds to Tigray to help the churches during the war

Resource mobilization

Mobilizing resources
to support the most
affected Christians/
families

Locally and from
abroad



Expressing solidarity

- MKC local churches in other areas encouraging them through prayers and calling them by telephone

Voice for the voiceless

- Expressing concerns through media (e.g., BBC)

Visiting

- Visiting war affected churches and Christians when possible
- Encouraging them with God's word and prayer

Role of prayer

Prayer is our life.

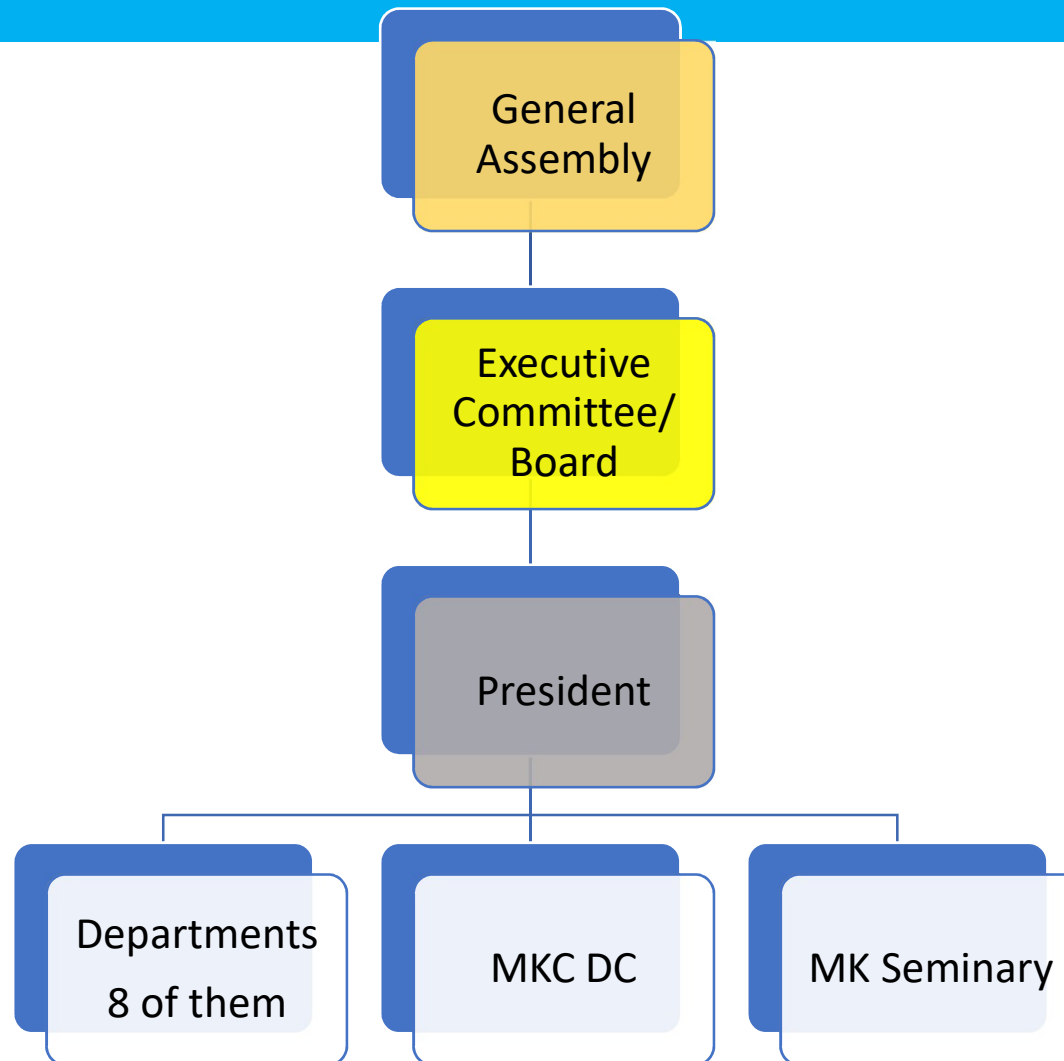
We pray for “Everything.”

MKC encourages and practices prayer

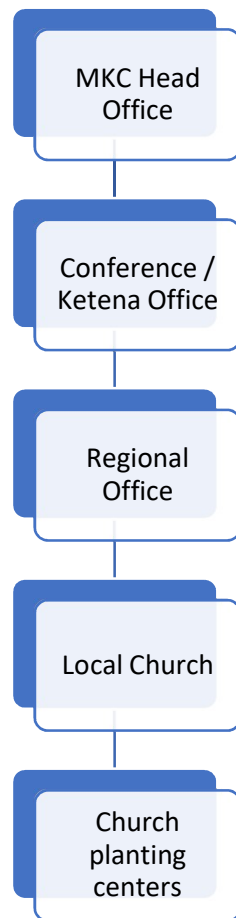
- Individually
- Collectively

MKC calls for special collective fasting and prayer

MKC leadership Structure



MKC Generic Structure



At each level

General Assembly

All baptized members for local church

Board (elders, board for from regional national level.

Executive Officer (President, General Secretary, Lead Pastor)

centrality of prayer and team spirit

- We listen to the guidance of the Holy Spirit through prayer and God's word
- Team leadership – listen to one another
- Has strong commitment to the growth of the church – sustaining the growth the church
- Executive committee has recently more focused on strategic issues rather than management issues
- More involvement of full-time ministers/ pastors in leadership



God bless

MKC - Canada Mennonite
Church February 2023