

December 1982

Dear Family and Friends,

We write to you knowing that this will be our last Christmas here in the United States for awhile. The knowledge of this floods our emotions with the imminency of our departure for Africa, and stimulates our love for you as we reflect the role each of you has played in our lives. May the joy of the Lord be multiplied in your hearts as we celebrate together the birth of our Savior whose life we share.

In our last letter we were sharing with you our anticipation of heading for Ethiopia. In the last few months, however, it has been made evident that there are underlying factors and complexities which demand patience and much prayer. Upon the counsel of mission leadership we have been advised to determine a deadline of January first for an invitation to be extended to us. The deadline will stimulate action by the National Church and give us more certainty to make plans and preparations for ministry and life in Africa. It is in this matter we need your diligent prayer, for in these few weeks our destination of ministry will be determined. We do have great concern for Ethiopia, but at the same time acknowledge that God uses circumstances like these to try our faith and give us direction in our lives.

Beginning in January the majority of our time will be spent traveling and sharing our ministry with friends like you. The month of February will be spent in the Southeast. Let us know if we can share with you in a special way.

Many of you have been asking similar questions. Here are some of the answers:

Where will you make your home base before leaving for Africa in August '83? 435 O'Farrell, Collinsville, IL 62234 (Praise the Lord for the sale of our home after being on the market for only three weeks!)

When can we begin sending financial support to you? NOW, because what we don't use for living and ministry expenses will be directed toward out-going expenses.

Where do we send our gifts for you? Make checks payable to Sudan Interior Mission, Cedar Grove, NJ 07009 with a note attached designating gift for Bill and Grace Harding's support.

As we enter this Christmas season, different things trigger special memories of times spent with each of you. How exciting it is to KNOW the Christ of Christmas - our Savior - who was born to die that we might live. What a thrill to anticipate sharing Him with many who've never heard. As we continue to prepare, we remain as always,

Yours in Christ,

Bill and Grace Harding