



THE RUSSIAN ORTHODOX CHURCH
Department for External Church Relations

Representatives of Ethiopian Church attend the "See and Hear" festival of contemporary church art



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From October 14-20, a delegation from the Hamere Berhan Center of Traditional Arts and Crafts, which works under the auspices of the Ethiopian Patriarchate, visited Russia to participate in the 2nd All-Russian Festival of Contemporary Church Art titled "See and Hear." The delegation included deacon Tinsae Tesfamyheal Hailu, vice-president of the Center, and icon painter Berhanu Derbe Alemu.

The guests were accompanied by deacon Alexander Cherepenin, a staff member of the Moscow Patriarchate's Department for External Church Relations (DECR).

The delegation was met at the festival venue by its organizer, Mr. Dmitry A. Trofimov, a corresponding member of the Russian Academy of Arts. The exhibition featured icons of the Holy Mother of God and Abune Gebre Menfes Quidus painted at the Hamere Berhan Center.

As part of the event, representatives of the Ethiopian Church participated in master classes on "Smalto mosaic" and "Gilding of woodwork and wood panel icons." Also, they attended concerts given by the choir of St. Andrew's stavropegic monastery, the choir of the Moscow Sretensky monastery, the chamber choir of the Moscow Theological Academy, the Asmatikon ensemble of ancient Russian and Byzantine singing, and the chamber choir of the Popov Academy of Choral Art.

During their stay in Russia, the delegation visited the Intercession stavropegic convent, the Andronikov stavropegic monastery, the Andrei Rublev museum, the Lavra of the Holy Trinity and St. Sergius, and the metochion of the Zaikonospassky stavropegic monastery in the city of Ruza, Moscow region.

On October 15, representatives of the Ethiopian Church met with hieromonk Stefan (Igumnov), DECR secretary for inter-Christian relations.

On October 17, deacon Hailu gave a lecture on the history and symbolism of Ethiopian iconography at the small hall of the Moscow House of Artists as part of the "See and Hear" festival.

The festival's closing ceremony took place on October 18. Representatives of the Ethiopian Church gave Mr. Trofimov a letter of gratitude from Mr. Kirubel Tamirat Gebrehana, President of the Hamere Berhan Center, and presented him with an icon of the Holy Mother of God brought for the exhibition.

During festival, members of the delegation spoke with Metropolitan Amvrosiy of Tver and Kashin, chairman of the Church and Public Council under the Patriarch of Moscow and All Rus' for the Development of Russian Church Singing.

On October 19, members of the Ethiopian delegation visited the Museum of Russian Icons, where they were shown an exhibition of Russian icons and a unique hall of Ethiopian art. Deacon Hailu gave detailed answers to the questions from museum staff and explained the purpose and symbolism of Ethiopian art.

On October 11, the choir of the Moscow Holy Trinity youth community of the Ethiopian Church, known as Mahibere Selassie, performed liturgical hymns.

The Hamere Berhan Center of Traditional Arts and Crafts (Amh. ስፋሪ ስፋሪያ translated as "Ark of Light") is an Ethiopian church and public organization. The center was founded in 2018 with the blessing of His Holiness Patriarch Abune Mathias of Ethiopia. The idea to establish the centre belonged to a group of clergymen and parishioners of the Holy Trinity Monastery in Debre Berhan, Amhara region, including a group of specialists in the making of church utensils. Thanks to the support of the synodal structures of the Ethiopian Church, the Addis Ababa Culture and Tourism bureau and private benefactors, the Hamere Berhan Center soon managed to build up a network of production facilities across the country and started a series production of various church utensils, including traditional Ethiopian icons, crosses, candles, and various liturgical items, as well as books, including leather-bound parchment manuscripts.

Since 2022, the Center has housed an Academy of Arts which trains future specialists and implements cultural, educational, and youth projects, including international exhibitions of Ethiopian church art.

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