Alumni
GORDON CONWELL

Alumni Spotlight: Frew Tamrat (MANT ‘02)

Current title: President at Evangelical Theological College (Ethiopia)

Family: Wife: Yeni, Children: Lydia, Ammanuel

Favorite professor: Dr. Timothy Tennent, Dr. Greg Beale, Dr. Sean McDonough, & Dr. Bill Mounce

Favorite class: Interpretation of New Testament

A favorite memory: I do not forget the love and kindness that I received from all Gordon-Conwell family after I fell on ice on the Hamilton campus and broke my elbow. Specially, I vividly remember the care I received from Mrs. Lita Schlueter, who was the Dean of Students at that time.

Please tell us more about your role as Principal at Evangelical Theological College.

The Evangelical Theological College (ETC) exists to prepare servant leaders for the Ethiopian church and beyond. As the principal/president, my primary role is to provide overall leadership and oversight for the institution. To fulfill its mission, I am actively involved in equipping men and women with the Word of God so that they may become Godly servants in the Ethiopian church.

Additionally, I work closely with my leadership team to ensure that ETC continues to fulfill its founding mission of training leaders. This involves recruiting and building a team that embodies the institution’s mission and vision. Together, we strive to prevent mission drift, keeping ETC focused on its vision of fostering a mature and continually growing Ethiopian church that fulfills the Great Commission for the glory of God.
I am also engaged in fundraising efforts for student scholarships, as well as operational and capital budgets, to ensure that ETC remains a vibrant and growing institution capable of responding to the church’s evolving needs in Ethiopia.

How did God weave together your Gordon-Conwell education with other life events to bring you to where you are now?

I praise God for opening the door for me to study at Gordon-Conwell. Next to God, I attribute much of my preparation and shaping for my current position to Gordon-Conwell. I am deeply grateful for the sound biblical and theological training I received, learning under the guidance of godly and esteemed faculty members who impacted my life and ministry—not only through their classroom teaching but also by modeling a Christ-centered life.

When I returned to Ethiopia after completing my studies at Gordon-Conwell, the positive impact of my education was evident to many, especially to the board and management of ETC. As a result, I was unanimously called by the ETC board to serve as the next

principal/president. Gordon-Conwell provided me with a strong biblical and theological foundation that equipped me for seminary leadership and later helped me in the process of completing my PhD at Columbia International University.

Once again, I am very grateful to God and to Gordon-Conwell for equipping me to serve as both a leader and a servant in His Kingdom work.

What are some things you love about serving in your capacity there at ETC?

What gives me great joy is seeing the lives and ministries of our students transformed as a result of their studies at ETC. I love investing in the younger generation, preparing them to be godly servants in the Ethiopian church and beyond. I deeply enjoy my classroom interactions with students and take great joy in seeing and hearing about the impact our graduates are making wherever they serve. That is the fuel that keeps me going.

What are the challenges of the Principal's role in general, and in your context specifically?

As a seminary leader responsible for preparing servants for the church, the role carries a significant burden. Being a seminary president requires personal sacrifice, as much of my time is dedicated to the institution's work, leaving little time for personal rest and family.

In my context, there are high expectations from faculty, staff, students, and the church. I am expected to model a godly life and ensure that the institution remains faithful to its mission. Additionally, since ETC is located in one of the poorest countries, so raising funds within Ethiopia for operational and capital needs is a major challenge. Financial shortages create leadership stress, particularly when it comes to providing decent salaries and retaining full-time faculty members, who might leave due to financial constraints.

ETC is a purpose-driven institution, not a for-profit entity. To train more students for the Ethiopian church, we highly subsidize tuition fees, which makes it difficult to offer competitive salaries to faculty. Those who serve at ETC do so with a deep sense of calling, committed to their ministry despite financial limitations.

Do you have any publications or links you would like to share?

- PhD Dissertation: “Perceived Principals Leadership Styles and Faculty Job Satisfaction in Higher Theological Institutions in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia: Is There a Difference?”
- Contributed a chapter for a book, Breath and Bone: Living Out the Mission of God in the World (2017)