

FaithBIT



The Faces of God

Reflection by Bev Osekowsky

As I headed to Africa with the Taste of Tanzania group from Immanuel, I figured I would see the face of God, but I never expected to see so many faces of God.

I looked forward to going to Arusha Lutheran Medical Center (ALMC) to see the work that Dr. Stephen Swanson was doing with premature babies. I had heard some of his stories both at our church and on a video tape and I knew the passion he had for these little ones. When we met him at the hospital, I not only saw his passion for the health of these preemies but his love and concern for them and his innovative methods to treat them. He didn't have many resources, so he was very creative in his treatment, plus he wanted his practices sustainable if he were to leave.

As we were touring the neonatal unit, he would point out doctors and nurses in the unit and he would praise them for their hard work and knowledge. It wasn't about him; it was about others.

“It was humbling and made me question myself, ‘How can I be the face of God to those around me?’”
- Bev Osekowsky

In addition, while we were there, we meet two young RNs from Minnesota who had taken time out of their careers to work in this neonatal unit for a month.

After visiting ALMC, we visited Selian Lutheran Hospital. Here Jodi Swanson, Dr. Stephen Swanson's wife, worked with children with malnutrition. She too had great love and empathy for the children. She talked about things that she had tried to improve the nutrition of the children and then realized that these methods did not work for the life styles of the parents. This did not stop her. She continued to look at other options that would work for the children and parents. It wasn't about her but about what was best for the families.

These are only a few people in which I saw the face of God on this trip. There were several others who showed me the face of God. It was humbling and made me question myself, “How can I be the face of God to those around me?”