



October 2018 update from:

Dr. Stephen & Jodi Swanson

ELCA Global Personnel



Every breath counts, no matter how small

Just 5 years ago, we took a giant leap across the Atlantic Ocean and the grand continent of Africa to set our feet in Tanzania. The end of October marks our arrival anniversary!

Though we still face many challenges, we have certainly seen incredible gains and opportunities continue to open before us. Steve has had the opportunity of traveling to Dar es Salaam and recently led neonatology training sessions for Tanzanian healthcare providers from across the country. The news is spreading and there are more requests for training. At the same time, there have been considerable steps that Jodi has been able to take toward addressing the malnutrition on a community level in outlying areas.

Life at home continues to buzz with kid's activities as well as work, and one of our biggest challenges seems to be finding balance between work, family, and rest. Please pray for us to find this balance, and to face each day with strength and joy.

God's Work. Our Hands.

A wonderful team of ELCA videographers visited us earlier this year and have produced this video to help our supporters better understand our work. Please take time to view and feel free to share with others!! It's a window into our work. God calls the church to be His hands, His feet in this world. To feed the hungry, to comfort those who mourn, to bear each other's burdens. As we partner with the Lutheran Church of Tanzania within these health facilities, we have an opportunity to share our resources, our skills, and show God's kindness to many who find themselves to be in vulnerable place in life.



Capacity Building is Relationship



Dr. Joseph Sameji was the first Tanzanian doctor that I was privileged to work with in 2012. I immediately recognized his gifted mind and keen interest in caring for sick kids. I set about to teach him as much as I could about pediatrics. A few years later, Joseph left under government scholarship to complete a formal 3-year pediatric residency.

In September, Joseph returned to Selian Hospital. He is our hospital's first-ever Tanzanian pediatrician! An incredible person, and a gift to untold numbers of children through his future work in pediatrics. I could not be more proud of his accomplishment!

Teaching and Training

In June, I (Steve) was invited to Tanzania's national referral hospital (Muhimbili National Hospital) in Dar es Salaam, to teach doctors and nurses how to administer pulmonary surfactant. Surfactant is a potentially life-saving medication that can help a baby with immature lungs be able breathe (see www.vimeo.drswanson/breath). This medication, which costs \$220/dose, is administered directly into a baby's lungs and has helped our NICU save many premature babies. We were the first hospital in Tanzania to acquire and use pulmonary surfactant.

Over 80 doctors and nurses attended the lectures and intubation workshop. The enthusiasm for saving premature babies lives was high. In November we will be helping Muhimbili Hospital and the Pediatric Association of Tanzania hold Tanzania's first-ever national conference on Neonatology. The conference is entitled "Every Breath Counts", after our [video](#). Prematurity is now the leading cause of infant death in Africa, and the opportunities to assist Tanzanian hospitals in caring for these babies only continues to grow.

[Our NICU has a web page!](#) It was created for the Fund Raiser last spring with additional photos of the work.



Doctors from around Tanzania, who attended a training workshop in Dar es Salaam



I (Jodi) have had the joy of working alongside my Tanzanian colleagues at the hospital as well as the government officials out in the community. Elly, our community development worker, is pictured above, challenging Masai villagers to address the presence of malnutrition in their community. Other officials raised awareness along with us and the response from the villagers was great! A lively discussion broke out in 3 of the villages that we visited and all of them resulted in a request for us to do nutritional education in their community. Now we REALLY have our work cut out for us! Four villages, four primary schools (averaging 1,000 kids/school), one secondary school, ... it's an amazing and somewhat overwhelming opportunity. Pray that we might have wisdom (and energy) to develop a strategy that results in changed communities!



Kid's Corner



Hannah has officially begun her Sr. year at Rift Valley Academy! We are grateful she is in a good place with supportive friends and challenging classes. We miss her especially as she turned 18 this past month. We look forward to celebrating in the bush with her during her mid-term break this October.

Caedmon is growing and active! One of the joys of living in a place like Tanzania are the wide open spaces. He has been thoroughly enjoying the exploration of the bush on bike. School and sports keeps him plenty busy.



Just last week, **Indya** popped into the car after school and said, "I love my school and living in Tanzania!" When asked what prompted this, she said, "the sun feels so nice and warm on my skin, and as I walked across the field with Mt. Meru in the distance, a lilac breasted roller flew by." Such is the beauty of life.



Grateful for You

We appreciate your ongoing prayers for our work, our children- for health and well-being, for guidance for the future, for peace both in hearts and in our home, and for God's blessing to be upon the country of Tanzania. Thank you so much for partnering with us!

Jodi and Steve Swanson

We are supported through the gifts of churches with the ELCA. Additional gifts can be received through the ELCA:

<https://community.elca.org/Tanzania>

Information regarding tax-deductible contributions for pediatric work can be found at:

www.tanzaniachildren.org

All funds are received through Global Health Ministries (GHM), and directed in entirety towards clinical pediatric training of doctors and nurses in Tanzania, care of babies in the neonatal intensive care unit (NICU), medications, bed fees and food for malnourished children.

Your support makes this work possible!

GMC will send you a tax-deductible receipt.