



TINY FEET

OCTOBER NEWSLETTER

“MOVING FORWARD”

FROM

Dr. Stephen and Jodi Swanson,

ELCA Global Personnel

Arusha, Tanzania

October 2025

Dr. Stephen & Jodi Swanson
ELCA Global Personnel
Arusha, Tanzania



Dear First English Lutheran church,

Each of us entered the world so small, vulnerable and fragile. When we see the tender feet of newborns, we wonder- where will he go? What will she do? Where will these feet take her? Mostly, we look with wonder and marvel at a creation so beautiful. We are so blessed to have such daily moments in our work here in Tanzania.

After a busy summer of traveling, our feet took us back to Arusha. Though we announced our resignation with ELCA effective October 31st, we look forward to ways that we can continue to partner with the ELCA and ELCT in support of Arusha Lutheran Medical Centre and Selian Lutheran Hospital. The Neonatal Intensive Care Unit (NICU) at ALMC, and the Pediatric Medical Ward, will require Steve's ongoing presence and support to continue its current level of services.

As we come under the umbrella of Institute for Child Healthcare Africa (ICHA), we continue to do the work we have done before while expanding into new areas! Our mission is provide evidence-based, compassionate medical care to children strengthened through education, research, and collaboration with African hospitals. Service and Training. What we do falls under these two areas.

Service: This is through our establishment of the NICU at ALMC, and the care of malnourished children at Selian Hospital. Another area of service is the opening of the Arusha Pediatric & Maternity Health Centre in early 2026 (See below).

Training: Bedside training provides an opportunity for one-on-one mentoring and hands on instruction. The same will be true as we mentor physicians and nurses at the Arusha Pediatric & Maternity Centre. And we are supporting a number of Tanzanian physicians in their pediatric training in Kenya, South Africa, and Minnesota!

Then ... there is the training that happens at the Tiny Feet, Big Steps Conference African Neonatology Conference, which is coming this Nov. 3-8!!

Tiny Feet, Big Steps Conference 2025

The Institute for Child Healthcare Africa (ICHA) will be hosting the 5th annual “Tiny Feet, Big Steps” (TFBS) conference this November 3-8. We look forward to welcoming nearly 300 African healthcare professionals from 20 African countries and 150+ hospitals to TFBS 2025 Arusha conference, as well as the 60+ instructors coming from all parts of the globe. Some of our instructors have come to all 5 TFBS conferences in Arusha!

We are so grateful for the enthusiasm that both the participants and the instructors bring to the table. With such a genuine desire on both sides to improve care for sick and premature infants, the impact is seen and felt far and wide. What a blessing to be a part of advancing care for these little ones. This year will be our largest conference ever, and will be followed on December 4 - 6 with a TFBS Ethiopia conference in Addis Ababa.

Almost none of the participants can pay the total cost of the conference so we subsidize the conference considerably. We would appreciate your sponsorship of this conference if you are able. You can contribute to the conference or sponsor an attendee at www.tinyfeetbigsteps.com



At the previous conference, Godbless uses a green pepper to instruct participants in the placement of a chest tube.

Arusha Pediatric and Maternity Health Center

Through ICHA we will be opening northern Tanzania's first, dedicated Pediatric Centre for children, 0-18 years old. It will also provide antenatal care for pregnant mothers. There is a great need in Arusha for anticipatory guidance, urgent care, sick and well child check ups, and general health education. Steve spends up to 2 full days in clinic at this time and manages patient care through text messages throughout each day (and night!). The training of Tanzanian physicians to provide pediatric outpatient care will free up Steve's time to focus on other areas of training and administration and is an important step in our succession plan. Arusha Pediatric & Maternity Centre will open early 2026 at the site of a former international school, and include full laboratory and pharmacy services, therapy services, and specialty services for children (ENT, orthopedics, ophthalmology, PT/OT, etc).

We have two wonderful Tanzanians who will be joining us in 2026.

Dr. Andrew Mwajonde (L) was sponsored by us for the past 3 years to train in pediatrics in Nairobi, and just completed his residency! Dr. Deborah Mwaipopo (R) is entering her final year of pediatric training, receiving support through us. Both worked with me before going to residency, and are

immensely gifted, compassionate, and committed doctors. Watching them return to Arusha and join our team fills us with joy!



Thank you for walking this journey with us! It certainly has called for a lot of patience and endurance, but along the way we have had wonderful moments. It's a joy to walk with our doctors and nurses, and care for families and children. We are grateful for the 12 years of our work under the ELCA and the faithful support of so many friends, family, and churches.

We have chosen to remain in Tanzania and see a new chapter written, as a new pediatric clinic is born and existing projects are strengthened.

As we end our final newsletter as ELCA missionaries, we remain in Tanzania, in the service of this beautiful country and children that God deeply loves.

Thank you for journeying with us,

Jodi and Steve

Institute for Child Healthcare Africa (ICHA) arises out of a decade of innovative pediatric and neonatology work, especially in the Neonatal Intensive Care Unit (NICU). It is a 501(c)3 tax-exempt organization, and a registered international non-governmental organization (NGO). Care of hospitalized newborns and children, and training of doctors and nurses, is supported through your donations.

You can see more at: www.ichafrica.org

For more information and videos:



**Evangelical Lutheran
Church in America**
God's work. Our hands.

ichafrica.org
or
[Neonatology Africa](http://NeonatologyAfrica.org)

Funds are received through **Institute for Child Healthcare Africa** (www.ichafrica.org) or **Global Health Ministries** (<https://give.ghm.org/nicu>) are 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.

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