

Robin Orner

From: Jodi and Steve Swanson in Tanzania
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Sent: Wednesday, June 7, 2023 3:51 AM
To: First Lutheran Church
Subject: Small Things that Grow



Loskito Gardening Club

June 2023

Dr. Stephen & Jodi Swanson
ELCA Global Personnel



Dear First Lutheran Church,

Nothing can beat the joyful smile of a child, the exuberance in which these kids embrace the ideas of nutrition and gardening is evident. Some of these new opportunities give us a fresh look at our work and impact, and keep us motivated and hopeful for the future. Steve and I are inspired by the young and motivated

doctors and nurses with whom we work as well as the students from the village that bring their enthusiasm to the garden.

While Jodi has been busy at Selian Hospital and the school clubs, Steve has been keeping the NICU humming along as well as training doctors, seeing children in his busy clinic, and answering loads of messages everyday from worried parents-- and planning for hosting the next international NICU Conference at the end of October! Stay tuned!!

Gardening and Nutrition Club

I have recently started a gardening/nutrition after school club at a nearby rural primary and secondary school. The area is a semi-arid environment and we made the most of the rainy season by planting 4 nutritional perennial leafy green vegetables that we hope will provide the students with a boost of vitamins and minerals in their school lunch.

For the gardeners and farmers who are interested... we planted chaya, moringa, new zealand spinach, and sweet potato (the leaves are eaten, not the tuber, and it continues to produce leaves).



Planting a perennial spinach for the future!

NICU - PEDIATRIC News

We continue to remain busy, with pediatrics at Selian Lutheran Hospital and ALMC. Established NICUs at both hospitals often run a combined daily census of 30+ babies, many of whom are born weighing less than 2 lbs. The work of our 11 Tanzanian doctors and 30+ NICU nurses inspire me, and sometimes I forget how far we've come over the past 10 years. Achieving high survival rates and seeing healthy infants and toddlers come back with their mothers to visit us and say "thank

you" (see below) offers a deep, soul-filling joy to members of our team, who work long hours in a hospital facing monumental challenges that cannot be easily put into writing.

Last month we were able to send 2 Tanzanian doctors to University of Minnesota for 6 weeks, to attend a Global Health Course and see how pediatrics is conducted in Minneapolis-St Paul. We look forward to their return this week to Tanzania, and their newfound enthusiasm for Global Pediatrics.

In October we will be hosting our 3rd annual "Advancing Care of Critically Ill and Premature Babies in Africa" conference in Arusha. The scope of this 5-day training conference has grown dramatically, as speakers and attendees arrive from across the African continent, Europe and North America. It has become one of the largest clinical neonatology conferences offered in East Africa.

May 2022:

Baby Giselle, born at 30 weeks weighing 3 lbs (1390 grams). She spent 33 days in our ALMC NICU.



May 2023:

Grace and Giselle.
Mother brought her into
our NICU on her 1st
birthday to say, "Thank
you for saving my
baby".

She even brought a
birthday cake for all the
nurses and doctors to
share! :)



Water is Everything

It is a common saying in Tanzania: Water is Everything. Since my last "weather report", the rains did arrive and we are so thankful. As you know, weather is linked to the nutritional status of the communities and food insecurity is one of our biggest challenges in addressing malnutrition.

The childhood malnutrition that we have been treating through an inpatient program at Selian Hospital has been humming along as well and we have 20+ children coming through the program every month. We also have been able to share hundreds of boxes on RUTF (Ready to Use Therapeutic Food) with surrounding hospitals and clinics which we received from MANA. Food insecurity is a reality especially in the rural areas so we continue to look for ways to support those who are hungry.

Kid's Korner

Indya celebrated her 17th birthday last month! She had a lovely day with friends and a hike to their "chai spot" and even though she had an AP exam that day, her laughter on the phone at the end of the day told us she had had a great day. We both headed up to Kenya in late May to see her at her Junior-Senior Banquet at Rift Valley Academy (RVA). This July, Indya will be finishing up her Jr. year. She has completed some of her major exams so she has some free time for things like... pottery and friends!

Caedmon and Hannah have both finished their school years and are headed into summer. Hannah just returned from her St Olaf College study abroad program in New Zealand and Australia, which was an amazing and educational adventure! She will spend the summer in a wildlife rehabilitation internship in MN.

Caedmon finished his Freshman year well though not without incident! He was doing some "free climbing" and had a significant fall which resulted in trauma surgery for a shattered patella and broken foot. He is recovering and will head up north in July to work at an outfitters for BWCA. Please pray for speedy recovery!

We are looking forward to getting the 5 of us back together for at least a few days later this summer!



It was a great joy recently to have our Pastor Christian and Molly Ruch here with us! Even though the time was short, we appreciated the opportunity to show them our work and home in Arusha and we were greatly encouraged in the time we had.

There are plenty of days that bring challenges and discouragement, but there are equal amount of days that bring us opportunities and hope. We are grateful for the opportunity to be here in Tanzania and serve this community. Thank you for walking with us.

Steve & Jodi

Care of hospitalized newborns and children, and training of doctors and nurses, is supported through your donations.

www.tanzanianchildren.com

or

<https://give.ghm.org/nicu>

New videos are now posted on the YouTube Channel, Neonatology Africa:

<https://www.youtube.com/@neonatologyafrica9640/videos>



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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.

Donations both inside and outside USA received through:

www.tanzanianchildren.com

Your support makes this work possible!

Our mailing address is:

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