



Medical Sea Container Sent to Tanzania

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Tanzania

LIFT Chapel Concerts

JOY in the Hollers of West
Virginia!

Community Library to Open in
Shartlesville

Companion Synod Opportunities

The Potter in the Pulpit



By Larry Brubaker

In early November 2008, a 40-foot sea container loaded with medical supplies arrived at the Bulongwa Lutheran Hospital in the Livingstone Mountains of southern Tanzania.

The container was the result of efforts by the 16 Northeastern Pennsylvania Synod congregations with companion congregations in Tanzania, together with Global Health Ministries (GHM) of Minneapolis, Minnesota.

The Northeastern Pennsylvania Synod is in a companion synod relationship with the South Central Diocese (SCD) of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Tanzania. Bulongwa Lutheran Hospital is located in the diocese.

Opened in 1968, the hospital mainly serves people of low economic means, and poverty is increasing. AIDS is the major medical issue. Approximately 70 percent of deaths are due to AIDS and HIV-related complications.

The hospital has been floundering and was ready to close because much of the support of European countries has dwindled. Members of St. Paul Evangelical Lutheran Church in Fleetwood knew the newly appointed administrator of the hospital, Edward Masevella. Through letters and emails, Mr. Masevella told the congregation of the need for "everything" to keep the hospital operating.

Our South Central Diocese companion synod team contacted GHM and requested help in supporting the Bulongwa Hospital. Transportation costs to send the container were in excess of \$19,000. The Witness and Service Ministry Team provided a



grant for \$5,000 for the project; the companion congregations also provided donations. The value of the container full of medical supplies was estimated at over \$120,000.

The container left the U.S. in July and was received amid much cheering and celebration in Bulongwa in early November.

In an email sent to our companion synod team on November 8, hospital administrator Edward Masevella writes,

Dear friends, sisters and brothers in Christ.

We have all reasons of thanking you before God.

I am leaving for a three week seminar with the Doctor In charge.

When we will be back we will be in a position of sending a report of the uses.

Today we send some photos of the special day when we had a special prayer, receiving and unloading the container.

Thanks be to God.

Love Edward.

Another container containing dental supplies and other much needed items to improve the living conditions and education of the people of the SCD is being planned for some time in 2009 or 2010. A group of at least twenty people from five Northeastern Pennsylvania Synod congregations is planning to visit their companion congregations in September 2009.