

The Nursing Project – Tanzania
A Task Force of the Northern Illinois Synod

The Task Force for The Nursing Project – Tanzania is comprised of the Rev. Gary Erickson, Ms. Minnette Willard Scott, Mr. Ron Gustafson, Ms. Cindy Graves, Mr. Art Milton and Mrs. Linda Milton.

The Northern Illinois Synod has accompanied the North Central Diocese, Evangelical Lutheran Church in Tanzania for more than two decades. We have partnered for congregational development, education, support of the women's organization, parish to parish relationships, and building the Arusha Lutheran Medical Center. Accompanying the North Central Diocese has fostered great interest in local and international mission among our people. Thank you for being the cornerstone of these efforts.

Tanzania has a shortage of 50% or more in the number of nurses needed. To address this urgency, the Arusha Lutheran Medical Center opened a nursing school in 2014. Currently the nursing school rents classroom and dormitory space. The Tanzanian government does not consider a rented facility to justify full certification as a School of Nursing. The ALMC, looking for full accreditation, is in need of building their own campus.

In 2016 the Northern Illinois Synod Council created a task force to join an association working with the Arusha Lutheran Medical Center to make the vision of a fully accredited nursing school a reality.

The Nursing Project – Tanzania task force asked the congregations and people of our synod to join us in a project that will educate nurses, lift individuals and families out of poverty, create better health care in northern Tanzania, and strengthen our existing partnership with the North Central Diocese.

At the inception of the Task Force the goal was to build a brand-new school. Since then an opportunity has arisen for the ALMC to acquire an existing school that is no longer being used in Ilboru called Ekenywa.

In many ways, it is a much better solution than building a new school. It is similarly close to both hospitals that the students will train in. It is a larger facility which will allow us to develop a training center including other health training together with nursing. There are many more buildings, classrooms, and dormitories. The cost to renovate the existing buildings is much less than it would be to build the school from scratch.

The Task Force had set a goal of raising \$100,000 for the school. The members of the Task Force have done presentations on the project to congregations, women's groups and civic groups throughout the synod as well as maintaining a presence on Facebook. Due to all the efforts over \$100,000 was raised.

In January of 2019 a wonderful opportunity presented itself to the Nursing School and plans were made to take over part of an existing Secondary School instead of building a brand-new campus at a huge cost savings. In August of 2019 construction began on a new dormitory and a new dining hall/multipurpose room and kitchen as well as

remodeling of existing classrooms. Bishop Jeff Clements, Pr Gary Erickson and Minnette Scott, along with other members of the NIS had the opportunity to meet students from the nursing school today. In January of 2020 Bishop Jeff Clements, Pr Gary Erickson and Minnette Scott, along with other members of the NIS had the opportunity to visit the site and see the progress on the construction as well as visit the students in their existing classrooms. The contrast between the facilities was so striking and the need for the new site was very apparent.

Construction is expected to be finished so that students can begin having classes in the fall of 2020 and the added space will allow for more students and eventually new programs.

The students expressed their sincere appreciation for the generosity of the Northern Illinois Synod with this speech. I want to thank all of you from the bottom of our hearts. We know that you did not give money because you have a lot to give, we know that you gave because you care for us. We will pray for you and we promise to work hard and do our very best in our studies. Please pray for us that we will do well. We love you and God bless you.

The Nursing Project- Tanzania Task Force would like to thank those individuals and congregations that have generously donated to the project. We would also ask for continued support and prayers for the success of the project.

Peace.

Respectfully submitted,

Minnette Willard Scott, Chairperson