
Konde Partnership Newsletter

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Editor: Jacob Maser cpo.jake@verizon.net

MPUGUSO YOUTH HOSTEL PROJECT

The members of St. Paul Lutheran Church of York had a burden laid on their hearts to help. They paid to have Pastor Njinga brought to York in order for him to attain needed training in finances at York College. The time spent helping Pastor Njinga fanned the flame of passion to help. St. Paul then financed the secondary education of thirty one Konde students for four years, and is even now seeking to continue this program with these children.

In 2004, Joseph Moyer from St. Paul visited their companion congregation, Mpuguso Lutheran Church. He met with the Mpuguso Church committee, and during those meetings an idea was discussed. The problem at Mpuguso was that there was a secondary school, but that many of the young ladies who attended there had to travel seven to ten miles to get to it. This did not create a safe situation for the girls, and the Mpuguso Lutheran Church

wanted to help solve the problem by constructing a youth hostel where the young ladies could stay while attending school. In 2004 Joe Moyer and St. Paul discussed ways to help Mpuguso with their dream of offering safe, affordable housing for the girls.



Digging the foundation

Elisha Mwamwaja, the Mpuguso Lutheran Church Elder with whom the construction process has been coordinated, has been in constant contact with the leaders at St. Paul. During recent years, Elisha Mwamwaja and the Mpuguso Lutheran Church developed architectural plans for the

youth hostel, designed to provide housing for forty (40) young ladies attending the secondary school which is in close proximity to the Mpuguso Lutheran Church. The projected plans call for a nine (9) stage construction project which will cost approximately \$63,000. St. Paul's has now approved the nine (9) phase project in its entirety.



Laying Bricks at the future Hostel

Pastor Ngogo from Mpuguso Church holds daily bible studies at 3 p.m. to ask the Lord's blessing and assistance on the construction process. The construction is moving along at a rapid pace, and the funding and purchasing of supplies is now over the halfway point.



Working on the substructure

Work on the roof has begun and soon the windows and shutters will be purchased and installed.

The next several years should be a very exciting time period for the Mpuguso Lutheran Church as the youth hostel project moves forward and as the Mpuguso Lutheran Church becomes financially self-sufficient



Work on Hostel with Mpuguso Lutheran Church in background

Joe Moyer and the leadership at St. Paul wish to highlight St. Paul's Mpuguso Youth Hostel project in the hopes that it may serve as a prototype for future projects of that nature elsewhere in the Lower Susquehanna Synod.

COMPANION GATHERING AT KIRCHENWALD

Camp Kirchenwald played host to the Companion Gathering's Virtual Tour of the Konde Diocese on Saturday, May 22nd. About forty people participated in the tour which was conducted by members of the Konde Diocese Committee, the Medical Needs Subcommittee and the Companion Relations Subcommittee.

The weather participated, and (being true to form in Tanzania) since getting anywhere is always half the fun, even contending with the bike race in Mount Gretna wasn't too much of a problem.

After devotions, everyone was given details on the plane ride to Tanzania and the schedule for the first day. Splitting into two groups, everyone attended various "stations", which included a medical center, a typical Konde kitchen, a worship service and school.

Upon their return to the starting point, all were given a typical Konde meal, while being entertained by Bumbada!, a group of women performing African drumming.



Tammi Hesson leads dancing

The education station was hosted by Karen and Fred Poe, who recently returned from Konde after having spent XX months teaching in Mbeya Lutheran Teacher's College.

The station was set up like a classroom, complete with blackboard, chalk, dusty erasers, and too few chairs, so people would have to share for everyone to sit down.

Typically Tanzanian!

The stage was set by beginning with a social studies lesson on the basic geography and history of the country.

Then they continued on to a brief discussion of education in the country, including languages used in instruction, the cost for students to go to school, and the fact that all students up to university level must wear uniforms.



Fred and Karen Poe at school

The Poe's shared that the syllabi for all courses come

from the Department of Education in Dar es Salaam, so all students everywhere in the country are learning the exact same thing.

The Poe's spoke of Mbeya Lutheran Teachers' College in particular, and its requirements for graduation. Then Karen taught a brief math lesson using Swahili numbers, and Fred spoke of some of his experiences in his English Communication class. At the conclusion, questions from many people were fielded by the Poe's.



An outdoor worship center

Another station centered on a typical Konde worship service, and it was hosted by Pastor Judy McKee, chairperson of the Konde Diocese Committee and pastor at Union Lutheran Church in York. In the worship session Judy talked about the liturgy - follows traditional Lutheran (Western) Rite; how far people walk to church, the length of the services, the choirs, the buildings themselves (hard benches, simple décor made colorful with draping of cloths; the offering - one brings what one has - if not money, then grain, or eggs, or a chicken, or firewood or sugarcane, or

handmade items like mats or baskets, etc. and then those gifts are auctioned at the end of the service; the large number of people who attend; a little about marriage ceremonies and about baptism and naming.

One station was devoted to "Daily Life in Tanzania". The entrance was lined with pictures taken in the Konde Diocese. Mary Kathryn Noll, who was a member of the first group from the LSS to visit the Konde Diocese in 1994, explained the difficulties in obtaining water.

Mary Jane Wilcox demonstrated grinding corn into a meal that is then used in making ugali, the main staple in the daily Konde diet. Mary Jane will travel to Tanzania in July with Laretta Stutzman. Laretta talked about cooking, cleaning, and the buying of produce that is available in the region.



Laretta Stutzman demonstrating a cooking area

Gaile Achey and Patti Gartner sold clothing and handmade items from Tanzania. Proceeds from the sale will of the shirts benefit the women's department of the

Konde Diocese, while the funds from the other items will go to the Konde Diocese through the Synod's Konde Diocese Committee.

Patti and Gaile have made two trips each to Konde, and developed projects and relationships to help the Konde women to improve their lives through self sustainability.



April Trout explains medical treatment in Konde

At the Kirchenwald infirmary we simulated Itete Hospital. While a slide show of hospital scenes was displayed on a computer, we talked about conditions at Itete and the lack of equipment and supplies they regularly experience. Presently the hospital is in need of a new x-ray machine, which will cost approximately \$100,000. The Medical Needs Task Force is earmarking all donations to the Itete Hospital fund for this machine; presently there is about \$2000 in the fund. Fortunately our partners in the German Lutheran Church are also helping with fund-raising.

We learned that Itete Hospital is responsible for several outlying village dispensaries and the health center in Tukuyu. This means

that the hospital must staff, fund, supply, and oversee each of these sites. The hospital also supplies maternal/child health care and ophthalmologic care in a number of neighboring villages. We discussed that the medical personnel at Itete are well-educated and current in medical knowledge and that the care they provide is limited only by the equipment and technology available to them.

Despite the "rustic" conditions at Itete Hospital - as at Kirchenwald - good work is done there.



April Trout clapping to the rhythm of the drums

At the conclusion of the event, all participants were treated to a typical Konde meal. Jake and Sue Maser cooked such foods as baked chicken legs, rice, mixed greens, beans, plantain bananas and ugali. Visitors to Konde are treated with these foods, with the exception of ugali. Guests are served rice instead of ugali. (Ugali is the staple food of many East African nations, and is made from adding white corn meal to boiling water and stirring for what seems like forever). Attempting to create a realistic

Konde meal, bottled water and Coke were provided to drink at room temperature, along with instant coffee and tea.

During the lunch, participants were treated to a concert of African drumming by Bumbada!, an all-women Africa drumming band led by Tammi Hessen.



Michael Youse, Kirchenwald Director and Laretta Stutzman discuss plans in preparation for the event

The Companion Relations Sub-committee thanks everyone who lent a hand in this year's Gathering Program. A very special "Thank You" goes out to the leadership of Camp Kirchenwald, who were so gracious in allowing the use of their facilities for this event.

WELCOME TO CAMP

As the camp staffs of Kirchenwald and Nawakwa begin staff training this week, please welcome Emmanuel Mchonvu, from the Konde Diocese. Ennamuel will be working at Camp Kirchenwald this summer.



Emmanuel is shown with the camping leaders, Mike Youse and Marianne Brock on a recent tour of Nawakwa

FOR MORE INFORMATION

Benevolence or general questions: Pastor Cliff Eshbach, Assistant to the Bishop, LSS. Email: ceshbach@lss-elca.org

Questions about Konde Diocese Activities and LSS Projects: Pastor Judy McKee, Konde Diocese Committee Chairperson, jmckee408@unionlutheran.org

Companion Congregation program: Pastor Sally Gausmann, St Paul, Trinity Road, York. Email: Pastor.Sally@comcast.net

To submit articles for possible inclusion in the newsletter: Jacob (Jake) Maser, cpo.jake@verizon.net