



## GLOBAL MISSION NEWSLETTER



### Lugala Lutheran Hospital Seeks to Provide Specialized Care

Since 1934 the Lugala Lutheran Hospital has been providing care to the remote Malinyi region of Tanzania. The hospital operates as a ministry of the Ulanga Kilombero Diocese, our Companion Synod. In recent years, the hospital has been gearing up for various improvements, including offering specialized care, as a way to remain competitive given that a government hospital has recently begun providing service just a few kilometers away. One of the staff, Dr. Emmanuel Chogo, is furthering his education by studying Obstetrics and Gynecology in Moshi (northern Tanzania) at Kilimanjaro Christian Medical University College. The end goal is to provide specialized services, such as helping couples with fertility issues.

Last year, 2,295 babies were born at the Lugala Lutheran Hospital. Out of all the babies born, there were 5 maternal deaths, which is a rate of 0.002 percent. For the nation of Tanzania, the maternal mortality rate is 578 per 100,000 live births (0.00578 percent), and an infant mortality rate of 38 per 1,000 live births (0.038 percent). (This writer was not able to obtain the infant mortality rate for the hospital.) For context, the infant mortality rate in the United States is 5.69 deaths per 1,000 births. And the maternal mortality rate is 17.4 per 100,000 live births, which means the U.S. has the worst rate among similarly wealthy countries.

Women in the Malinyi region don't wait to go into labor to come to the hospital, because of the lack of transportation in this rural area. Instead they stay at the hospital towards the end of their pregnancy and hang out together in a ward, awaiting their labor and delivery.

The Lugala Lutheran Hospital has not had any patients admitted with Covid, but they remain prepared for treating Covid patients. The Tanzanian government tends to lag behind in getting reimbursement payments to the hospital, which intensified with the Covid economy really hurting the economy in Tanzania. Tanzania really depends on international tourism to bring in revenue. Last Spring, we put out a plea hoping to raise \$13,000 to help the hospital reduce their medical debt, which was making it difficult for them to order pharmaceuticals and supplies. We were able to raise about \$7,000, about half of

our goal. Regardless, the funds were appreciated by our Companion Diocese.

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