



THE BRIDGE

A Monthly Resource from the Southeastern Minnesota Synod



AN INTERVIEW WITH REV. DEBORAH LYANGA

My name is Deborah Lyanga. I was ordained as a pastor in the Evangelical Lutheran Church of Tanzania in 2005. I hold a master's degree in Missiology from Tumaini University Makumira. I have worked as a parish pastor as well as the Woman General Secretary in the Central Diocese of the Evangelical Lutheran Church of Tanzania. I am married to Rev. Emmanuel Kaghondi, and we are blessed with two boys, Mercy and Abner.

YOU HAVE BEEN VERY INVOLVED IN PREACHING AND LEADING WORKSHOPS WHILE YOU'VE BEEN HERE IN MINNESOTA. WHAT DO YOU FIND MOST LIFE-GIVING ABOUT THESE EXPERIENCES?

First of all, I am so happy to be among of the members of this synod. In every parish that I visited, I have been so welcomed and I feel at home. Pastors and congregants are so kind, I experience love and care. All of the people I visit are eager to learn things. I feel happy and honored to work among brothers and sisters in the synod. Please contact me if you're interested in a visit to your congregation: debo7944@gmail.com.

THE GLOBAL MISSION COMPANION SYNODS TABLE FOCUSES A LOT ON THE ACCOMPANIMENT MODEL. WHAT DOES ACCOMPANIMENT MEAN TO YOU?

I relate the accompaniment model with two couples who were originally from different families, situations, backgrounds, etc but decided to live together as husband and wife or partners. What brings them together is the model of accompaniment. They have their differences but they are walking together, sharing their ideas, lifelong histories, and experiences which gives them a way forward to the present and to the future situation. Accompaniment for me is an act of sharing the stories and listening and growing together in strength, understanding and trust.

WHAT DO YOU MOST HOPE PEOPLE IN THE SOUTHEASTERN MN SYNOD WOULD COME TO KNOW ABOUT LIFE IN THE CENTRAL DIOCESE OF TANZANIA?

One of the things that I would like the people of Southeastern Minnesota Synod to experience in Tanzania is the community life. The basis for the 'Ubuntu African Philosophy' is a full recognition of our interdependence. It is the idea that we depend on each other...that we cannot be what we are without other people. So Ubuntu – or humanness - is to know, to understand and to value one another despite of our differences.

WHEN DID YOU BEGIN TO SENSE A CALL FROM GOD TO BECOME A CHURCH LEADER?

Actually my call was from outside, so it was very difficult for me to understand if it was a God's choice or my parent's choice. I did not want to be a pastor and I had no peace about it, but I got a little light of my call after four months of joining the theological college. For some reason, I found peace in my heart on becoming a pastor. Every day now I continue to understand and believe in God's purpose in my call through people I serve.

