



The Nyadire Connection

The Nyadire Connection (TNC), based in Pittsburgh, PA, is a faith-based non-profit, all-volunteer organization that seeks to support and sustain the United Methodist Mission in Nyadire, Zimbabwe.

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TNC 15th Anniversary Event Set For Nov. 14 At Dutilh UM Church

To celebrate TNC's 15th anniversary in 2021, we will host an evening event on Nov. 14 at 6 pm at Dutilh UM Church in Cranberry Township. Please save the date and join us for appetizers and desserts, and to hear more about TNC's future from our Pittsburgh-based leadership team and perhaps some special guests from Nyadire. Tickets are \$25 each, or you can purchase a table of 8 for \$160. For more information or if you'd like to help plan the event, contact TNC's **Debbie Little** at deborah.little@dentons.com.

Faith Geer: A Woman With A Vision For Service

By Sandy McKnight

The late **Faith Geer** had a clear vision of her calling in life: service to others in the name of Jesus. Until she passed in 2019, she fulfilled that calling daily in her roles as mother, educator and church administrative director. She volunteered as a delegate to the Western PA Annual Conference of the United Methodist Church, a delegate to the General Conference, and was a board member of the Reconciling Ministries Network.

As a mother, she taught her children to follow their dreams. As an educator, she encouraged gifted students to excel in their studies. She had remarkable organizational skills that she put to use in developing church strategic plans. She was known for her unbridled energy and her ever-present organizational flip charts!



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TNC Leadership Profile: Molly Michael

Editor's Note: This is another in a series of profiles about TNC's Leadership team, highlighting their roles and why they are involved in TNC.

Hometown: Pittsburgh born and raised; now living in Baldwin, PA.

TNC Role: Been involved since 2015 in a variety of roles: Education Programs Area Leader, Leader of Hearing Innovation and Volunteer in Missions programs, and Co-Leader of Scholarship program.

What is your profession and how has that helped in your TNC role: I am an educator and teach Secondary Autistic Support. Prior to that I taught various grade levels and needs from alternative to general education. My job has taught me to maintain organization, consistency, and to continuously reflect and examine my impact. It has also taught me an abundance of patience and strengthened my critical thinking and response skills. This has helped me with team trainings, travel setbacks, and making the best of any situation.

How and why did you get involved with TNC: I knew from a young age that my life would take me to Africa. I went on my first volunteer trip in college (to India) and wanted to volunteer in Africa once I graduated. I was connected with TNC through **Pastor Allen Brooks** from **Baldwin Community United Methodist Church** where my mom is a member. He referred me to TNC and I joined the team that summer (2011) with **Pastor Kim Greway** as the leader. What an adventure! Afterward, I wanted to continue my involvement and knew I would travel to Nyadire again. Life took me in a few different directions, but I returned in 2015 with **Faith Geer's** leadership (photo at left) and then started to lead my own teams.



Why do you think TNC has been so successful: Because of the passion and dedication of the volunteers. The story of how TNC originated leaves me in awe every time I hear it. The people involved both in Pittsburgh and Nyadire are truly dedicated and invested in its success. I think that commitment is fueled by meaningful cross-cultural relationships and shared experiences. It's inspiring to be a part of something so special.

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TNC Leadership Profile: Molly Michael

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What do you like best about TNC: Watching the seeds that are planted take fruit. For me, traveling to Zimbabwe is most meaningful. Spending time with my friends and colleagues on the mission is a huge motivation. Knowing that the group all has a common goal and being able to share TNC stories with them.

How many times have you been to Nyadire and what's your favorite part about the trip: I've been to Nyadire 6 times. My favorite parts about making the trip are:

1. Watching everyone find their place/role in serving with the organization. How they adapt and transform over the duration of the trip;
2. Everyone has something to give and a unique way in doing so. There is something special about that;
3. Enjoying the irony when everything goes wrong and that leads us on a windy trail of strange occurrences and coincidences that eventually put us on the right path again!
4. Gaining so much more than I could ever give. My friends in Nyadire are true and fearless Disciples of Christ. They teach me valuable lessons through worship, prayer, hard work, and daily life.

How has your involvement with TNC helped you to grow as a disciple of Jesus Christ: TNC has been a constant in my life amidst changing and challenging seasons. The unity and friendships I've found with volunteers here in Pittsburgh and Nyadire fill my heart with joy! I've built true and lasting friendships that have led me closer to Christ. TNC has given me a purpose with my passion to serve abroad in a meaningful and sustainable way.



What Bible verse(s) inspired you to become involved in TNC: I wasn't inspired by a scripture to get involved with TNC. At that time, I wasn't really active in my relationship with Christ. I was inspired by my family, experiences, and my call to serve abroad. As my journey with Christ unfolded I've gained much inspiration from various scriptures and hymns such as when the **Home of Hope** crew sings "How Great Thou Art." Another hymn, The Summons: "Will you come and follow me if I but call your name? Will you go where you don't know and never be the same?" And Isaiah 49:16: "Behold, I have inscribed you on the palms of My hands." That scripture inspired me on my first mission trip. It's a beautiful reminder of God's love.

What's your message to anyone who's considering a trip: DO IT! Life is too short to put things off. Pray about it every day. If you feel called to serve internationally trust in Jesus. He will lead the way.

Faith Geer: A Woman With A Vision...

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Faith was a strong advocate for the marginalized and underserved. When she traveled to The **Nyadire United Methodist Mission** in Zimbabwe, she felt a kinship with her brothers and sisters in Christ whose goal is to serve community members most in need.

The rural mission, located a two hour's drive from the capital of Harare, is organized around the church, with a Pastor-In-Charge overseeing many departments. There is a hospital providing care to a large rural population, which it also extends through its responsibility for six rural medical clinics. The mission acts as a learning center, with a nursery, elementary and high schools, a teacher's college and a school of nursing. There is also one of Zimbabwe's three centers for educating and training deaf children. Visitors to the mission are naturally drawn to the **Home of Hope Orphanage**, which cares for and raises babies and children who have been orphaned, neglected or abused.

The mission presented Faith with a microcosm of all of her passions. On subsequent visits to the mission, she turned her focus to the many individuals of all ages who had never had an eye exam. How could students learn if they couldn't see? Adults seeking higher education or work opportunities were hampered by poor vision. Their enjoyment of life was diminished without the gift of clear vision.

Faith laid the groundwork for TNC's **Eyeglasses** program by first contacting **Mission Vision (MV)**, a non-profit located north of Pittsburgh. MV provided her with eyeglasses to carry in her luggage to Zimbabwe, along with training in conducting eye exams and in the use of an auto refractor that determines an individual's needed prescription strength.

Armed with these tools and 2,000 pairs of distance and reading glasses, she traveled to Zimbabwe again in 2015. There, she organized a small group of volunteers and set out to help community members.

Faith would be thrilled to know that through her loving gift of clear vision, thousands of individuals in Northeastern Zimbabwe have been enabled to glimpse the Kingdom of God here on earth.

As a tribute to her legacy, TNC recently renamed the program in memory of Faith, an early organizer and supporter of this vital effort: **The Faith Geer Memorial Eyeglasses Program**.



Mashambanhaka Clinic Nearing Completion

TNC has been involved in the refurbishment of **rural medical clinics** in northeastern Zimbabwe since 2013. To date, four of the six clinics affiliated with Nyadire have been renovated and the fifth, at **Mashambanhaka**, is nearing completion with a dedication planned for November.

We receive monthly progress reports and photos to stay in touch with the local leadership of the projects. Below are photos from June, which show bricks made by the local community (left) and construction of a toilet block (right).



TNC Featured In UM News Daily Digest

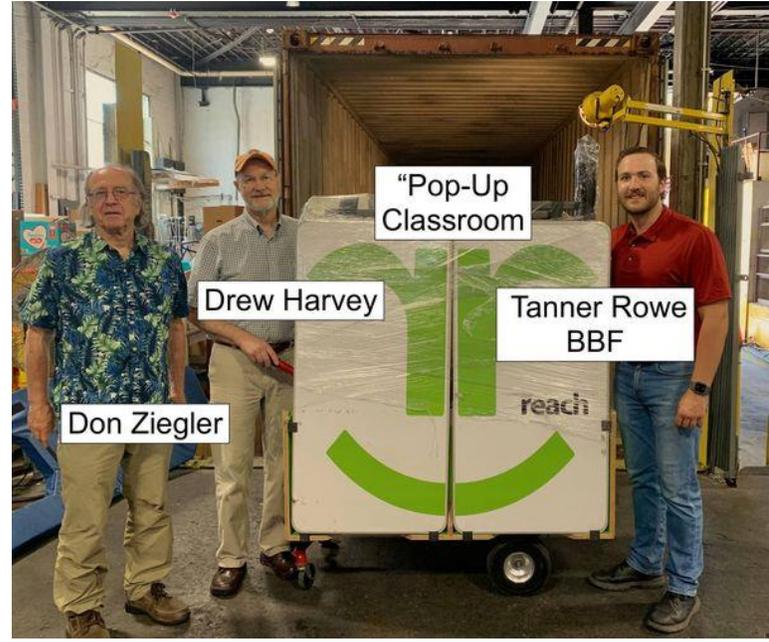
On July 20, the **United Methodist News Daily Digest** featured TNC and its 15th anniversary. The feature included a story, photos and videos compiled by **Kudzai Chingwe**, a local writer who visited Nyadire's rural clinics and talked with residents. She also interviewed **Rev. Lancelot Victor Mukundu**, Nyadire mission station chair; **Dr. Larry Tanyanyiwa**, medical superintendent; and **Drew Harvey**, TNC chairman.

We're grateful to Kudzai for her work on the story and to UM News Editor **Julie Dwyer** and her staff.

To read the story and view the photos and videos, please click on this link:

https://www.umnews.org/en/news/tnc-celebrates-15-years-of-sharing-gods-love?mkt_tok=MDc4LUYUS02NDMAAAF-ZMz4Z5L_TpVLRvVvMYShVMsIUeFlzLT4lvfT5ktHk0-3_Y09gCcJCHC1A-H8alakKvKBYj4g0-asac86tpYVWCPOBbe-Achnsgl8LVKGT91KVyAw

Another Container Heads From Pittsburgh To Zimbabwe



The long journey began on June 23, when TNC representatives and **Brother’s Brother Foundation** loaded another container. The container left Pittsburgh for the port at Baltimore, then a long ocean trip to Beira, Mozambique, then back on a truck through Zimbabwe customs and finally a delivery to Nyadire.

Over our 15-year history, TNC has sent perhaps 20 containers each filled with requested items enabling the many ministries of Nyadire. We try to purchase in Zimbabwe when we can, but some things remain more available and cost effective to send via container.

“Pop-Up Classrooms” From Computer Reach On Their Way

TNC purchased seven “pop-up classrooms” from our good friends at **Computer Reach**, and they’re on the way to Zimbabwe.

Each unit has tables, chairs, power strips, eight computers, and a projector all mounted on a movable cart. Teachers will set this up and provide computer training for seven students at a time. These will be used at the Nyadire and **Home of Hope Outreach** Schools.

These "classrooms on wheels” were designed based on an idea by **Dave Sevick** of **Computer Reach**, with help from **Garrett Rauck** of **Carnegie Mellon University** under the direction of **John Folan**, head of the Architectural Department.

For more information and photos, please click on this link:

<https://www.computerreach.org/cmu-thank-you/>

Program Highlights From TNC's June Meeting

Each month, TNC leaders gather – we've been using Zoom calls for the past year or so – to review our programs and discuss future plans. Below are highlights from our June meeting:

Health Area

- Eyeglasses: Seventy cartons of eyeglasses and related supplies were included in the current container being sent to Nyadire...**Sandy Kalmar**, who processes the eyeglasses we collect, has been very complimentary of the cleaning of the eyeglasses performed by the **Christ Church** group led by **Marie Hunt**.
- Ocean Container Shipments: See page 6.
- Girl Empowerment: The schools have provided an inventory of kit components, and this information will be used to determine the priority of local purchase. Preliminary results indicate that soap, flannel and sewing machine needles are in the shortest supply...Sewing machine donations continue and program leader **Bonnie Lawson** works with **Phil Jones** to determine where these can be best used.
- Medical Supplies: We're transferring funds for purchase of drugs to be used in the third quarter of this year.
- Rural Health Clinic Rebuilds: See page 5.
- Medical and Hospital Support: **Dr. Larry Tanyanyiwa** provided a list of needed hospital items and many are included with the container now in shipment. At a cost of \$800, TNC purchased from **Global Links** about half of the suture requested...Dr. Tanyanyiwa advised TNC of several areas that need additional support, including: Most hospital vehicles are not operational and need extensive repairs; creation of a rehabilitation/occupational therapy department; addition of specialized doctors so patients will not be transferred to other hospitals; new anesthesia and X-Ray machines, and new laundry equipment; renovation of the kitchen and additional housing needed for staff; reliable WI-FI; laptops and an IT group needed to move toward paperless operation; new batteries for the hospital solar system; salary stipends for staff as many have been forced to leave due to inadequate pay.

Education and Relationships Area

- Engineers Without Borders/CMU: The expected vendor for the biogas digester is the company of **Blessing Jonga** and **Lewis Makurumure**. We held a Zoom call in April and have followed up with emails to clarify outstanding questions...We expect there will be one digester located at the Primary School which will be fed with cow waste collected throughout the mission, as well as some small amount of food waste.

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Program Highlights From TNC's June Meeting...

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- Hearing Innovation: In addition to sweaters and hats, another generous donor graciously purchased socks for all of the students in the program...We're coordinating with the bursar at **Emerald Hill** to send funds for **Charles Niwitia**. As we develop a relationship with this school, we hope to extend the program to cover secondary education.
- Volunteer-in-Mission trips: **Charlie Moore** has organized a trip in November for dedications at Mashambanhaka, Dindi and Hanwa. **Bishop Nhiwatiwa** and other church leaders will participate. **Jim Gourley** and **Sue McCann** will be on this trip as well as other members of Charlie's group. **Ralph Duckworth** expects to join and possibly others from TNC...We're planning to start forming groups for 2022. Please advise program leader **Molly Michael** at mollyalice.michael@gmail.com if you are interested in joining, leading, or co-leading a team. We will continue to monitor any COVID-related restrictions.
- Sister Rut Scholarships: We're exploring funding strategies to keep the program strong, as fees have increased and are constantly changing...Three new candidates are looking to begin university studies in September.

Orphans Area

- Home of Hope: Four new children have arrived, and two already have sponsors. Three are a sibling group and little Natalia was found abandoned...**Lindarose** continues to tutor the children and is preparing for her studies at Midlands State...The **HOH Rummage Sale** was held in June at Christ Church, which resulted in proceeds of more than \$1,500 to TNC...The HOH maize harvest was bountiful, and the home purchased a small machine that removes the kernels from the cob.
- Home of Hope Outreach: Exam fees have been sent. The government subsidized a portion of the fees, so that each exam cost only \$8.50. Schools were asked, due to the compromised schooling of 2020 and 2021, to nominate only those students who will be prepared, and 37 candidates were announced...**Winnet (HOH/Tabudirira)** has started a business to make uniforms for the HOHO students (see photo). Many thanks to **Cardwell** for his advice and continuing assistance.



If You Have Newsletter Story/Photo Ideas...

In our newsletter, TNC strives to highlight a variety of our programs, and the efforts of our network churches and other supporters. If you have story/photo ideas that you would like us to consider for publication, please submit them to **Tim Wesley**, at timwesley61@zoominternet.net