

Quilt Made by Nigerian Women Living with HIV

Learn About the Stunning Quilt Used as Backdrop during our 2009 Indiana-Kentucky Synod Assembly



CHICAGO (ELCA) -- A quilt created by Nigerian women who are HIV-positive is now available to the congregations of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA). The 22-by-24 foot quilt, weighing more than 65 pounds, is based on a painting by Dr. He Qi, a Chinese Christian artist.

The quilt was used as a stage backdrop during the 2008 ELCA Global Mission Event this summer. It illustrates three biblical stories of "accompaniment" -- a method of mission defined by ELCA Global Mission as "walking together in solidarity that practices interdependence and mutuality." Congregations and global mission personnel of the church practice this methodology.

The 13 women who created the quilt are participants in "Women of Hope" -- a program of the Mashiah Foundation, Jos, Nigeria. The program serves about 140 women who have lost homes, jobs and family support because of their HIV status. It provides women living with HIV transitional housing, food and funds to pay for their children's education, and it offers to teach women sewing. Quilts, table runners and bags are made and sold by women as a means to support themselves and their children.

Many participants in Women of Hope have been able to purchase land and/or been able to return to their home villages, where they are now respected and recognized as women living with HIV.

The Mashiah Foundation operates a holistic HIV and AIDS education, prevention, testing, counseling and health ministry, including Women of Hope. It is supported by annual grants from the ELCA.

"The beautiful quilt is a tangible way of understanding what it means to receive the gifts of vulnerable women who are supported by the work of our church in relationship with our companions," said Sunitha Mortha, director for global formation, ELCA Global Mission.

ELCA Global Mission invests about \$30 million a year in support of God's mission in the world. In addition to making direct grants to companion churches and institutions to build institutional capacity, evangelism and Christian education programs, schools, water systems, health care facilities and more, the ELCA provides scholarships to develop and educate leaders, and it provides funding to train and support the work of more than 270 mission personnel.

The quilt is available for congregations hosting an event with more than 600 participants.

Information about ELCA Global Mission is at <http://www.ELCA.org/globalmission> on the Web. To reserve the quilt, call 1-800-638-3522 ext. 2448.