



North Eastern Diocese
Evangelical Lutheran Church in Tanzania



Southeastern Pennsylvania Synod
Evangelical Lutheran Church in America
God's work. Our hands.

Standing Together in Faith

On the evening of Thursday, September 1, several men armed with automatic weapons and grenades attacked the property of Sebastian Kolowa Memorial University (SEKOMU), a ministry of our Tanzanian companion diocese, the North Eastern Diocese of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Tanzania (ELCT). They raided the property, shot and killed a guard protecting the university, and shot and injured another. They then proceeded to set fire to two hostels housing nearly 40 students and faculty, threatening to shoot and kill any of them should they attempt to flee.



Rev. Dr. Anneth Munga, Vice-Chancellor of SEKOMU University, pointing toward the damaged hostels.

Finally, after several minutes and significant damage to the university, the terrorists fled the scene, thankfully allowing all of the students and faculty within to escape with their lives and attempt to extinguish the fires. The loss of life and property was far less than it could have been, but the overall damage was extensive.

Southeastern Pennsylvania Synod has been involved with the dream of SEKOMU University since the beginning. Nearly 10 years ago, we helped launch this ministry, sending a team to help clear land for the campus and together contributing nearly \$500,000 to make this dream a reality. SEKOMU was targeted because it is a bastion of Christ's love and hope for all people – women, men, the disabled – and it represents possibilities that some hateful groups do not want people to have.

It is now more important than ever that we stand beside SEKOMU and the North Eastern Diocese in their witness to Christ's love.



A delegation from our Synod led by Assistant to the Bishop Rev. Bradley Burke and former Assistant to the Bishop Joanne Carlson was visiting our brothers and sisters in the North Eastern Diocese at the time of this attack. Having visited SEKOMU just two days prior, they were able to pray with, grieve with, and stand in solidarity beside our hurting brothers and sisters as they began the difficult task of recovering from this hateful tragedy.

Now we are asking you to stand with us as we stand beside them – in solidarity, in prayer, in relationship, and in a special offering to help SEKOMU move forward in their rebuilding and recovery.

SEKOMU stands at an important crossroads – and we can provide a boost for them to move forward, rising from the ashes of this tragedy stronger, more determined, and more devoted to their mission than ever.

How You Can Help!

Our Synod is joining SEKOMU partners in Germany and Sweden to raise \$100,000 to rebuild and repair the campus. To contribute to our Synod's support for SEKOMU University, please follow the instructions below.

Option A: Make your check payable to your congregation for your local offering. Put "SEKOMU Support" in the memo line to designate your gift.

Option B: Make your check payable to SEPA Synod. Put "SEKOMU Support" in the memo line to designate your gift. **Mail to:** Southeastern Pennsylvania Synod, ELCA, 7241 Germantown Ave., Philadelphia, PA 19119

Thank you for your prayer, your love, your partnership in grief and hope, and your generous support for our Tanzanian brothers and sisters in Christ!