

Companion Synod Workgroup 2009 Report

May 2009 Nancy Larson, Assistant to Bishop Ullestad, led the first official synod trip to Namibia. Accompanying her from our synod were: Kathryn Koob, Pr David Grant, Pr Pat Shaw, and Steve Fritz. They will share their experience at the Synod Assembly.

Nov 2008 Pr Nancy Larson and Sharon Magelssen attended the Companion Synod Task Force for Namibia which consists of the 4 ELCA Synods who are companions with the three Lutheran Church bodies in Namibia. We gather in Chicago yearly to honor the covenant agreement with our companions to strengthen communication and collaboration between the synods.

Oct 2008 A youth from Namibia was invited to come for the Youth Gathering in New Orleans July 2009. The young person will be in our synod from July 11-19.

Oct 31-Nov 2008 Pastor Paul Hatani Kisting, Deputy Bishop of the ELCRN from Windhoek, Namibia was a guest of the Northeastern Iowa Synod. During the month of November he spent a week in four of our congregations: Ridgeway Parish (Madison, Ridgeway, and Peace), St John (Maxfield) rural Denver, Leland Parish (Our Savior and West Prairie), and St John, Western Douglas. He also visited Luther, Wartburg and Waldorf Colleges and Wartburg Seminary. There was an orientation for the host congregations before he arrived and a debriefing time for the congregations in early January.

Sept 2008 Namibia Summit held at Ewalu. People from Wartburg, Waldorf and Luther Colleges, Wartburg Seminary, Ewalu, congregations with Companion Synod relationships in Namibia and congregations who have hosted a Namibian pastor were invited to share information about relationships in Namibia. 26 people attended. This was a great opportunity for those attending to hear about what others are experiencing with Namibian partners and companions.

June 2008 Pr Joseph Shitaleni from the ELCIN (Northern Church) in Namibia participated in worship at the Synod Assembly, 2008. He was on staff at Ewalu last summer.

Step by step our companion journey continues as we experience accompaniment and learn about solidarity, capacity building, collaboration, transparency, cross cultural sensitivity, advocacy and friendship.

Sharon Magelssen
Companion Synod Coordinator

