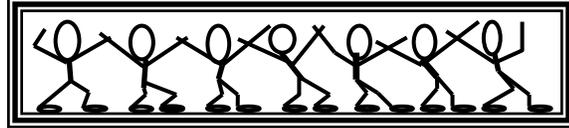


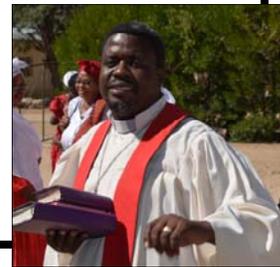
# COMPANIONSHIP NAMIBIA 2012



On May 16, three members of the Namibia Network traveled to Namibia to attend an official consultation with the three Lutheran Church bodies of Namibia and the other three ELCA synods with companion relationships.

Pastor Patricia Shaw, Network Facilitator, Pastor Rhea Evanson and Pastor Nancy Larson, staff and trip coordinator, attended the Consultation on behalf of the North-eastern Iowa Synod and Bishop Ullestad. Following the Consultation, the envoy traveled to strengthen connections with pastors and church leaders in Swakopmund, Oniipa, Otjiwarongo, and Windhoek.

The Consultation itself included Bible Study, worship, and sharing of the current challenges and joys facing each entity involved. Conversations over meals and a field trip to a current project of the government and church brought many insights. By the end of the Consultation, the covenant that had been adopted by the seven partners in 2005 was reviewed and amended. We all remain committed to mutual growth in our relationship of walking together side-by-side for many years to come.



Pastor John Guidao##oab after worship in Otjiwarongo on Pentecost Sunday 2012.

## *2012 Visiting Pastor*

*Once again this fall we anticipate hosting a pastor from one of the Companion Church Bodies of Namibia. Since 2006 we have hosted six pastors from the ELCRN and the ELCTN. In 2011 we hosted Pastor Jeremiah Kashululu from the ELCTN Edonja parish. He spent time about a week at Zion, West Union; Salem, Lake Mills; Trinity, Belmond; St. Timothy, Hudson. If your congregation would be interested in hosting this year, call the synod office.*



Pastor Jeremiah Kashululu and Pastor David Grant upon Kashululu's arrival on October 20, 2011.





## ***Reflections on a Journey***

*It has been two years since I traveled to Namibia, and even longer since the nine months I spent in the archives at Wartburg Seminary researching and writing about the relationship between the church and the struggle for Namibian independence from South Africa. Knowing much about the complicated history of this twenty-year-old country, I embarked on a journey to experience this young country first hand and meet some of the people I had read so much about.*

*While the history I knew gave me much insight into the culture of Namibia today, I learned a great deal about the challenges of the church in a new and developing country. The struggles they face put our own in perspective: a 50% unemployment rate, a majority of people living in poverty, HIV/AIDS, malaria, and a lack of educated adults. Proclaiming the gospel has been and still is very different than it is in the United States. As I reflect back on the journey, I find great joy in the relationship that has been built between the ELCA and the Lutheran church bodies in Namibia.*

*Christ is their source of hope and ours. Lutherans here have walked with the Namibians on a long and difficult journey, sharing the good news, and living out the gospel in our actions. They are a people and nation deeply rooted in the freedom and unity that comes from Christ; they have much to teach us about caring for each other in adversity and proclaiming Christ to those who have little else to hope for. Even in our differences, we are remarkably similar in the struggles we face and the hope we share. Our companion synod program keeps us connected in this deep and historical relationship that it is an honor and a joy to be a part of.*

***Pastor Dena Stinson***



*“When companions engage one another in authentic relationships, everyone’s lives are changed.”*