



JANUARY 2010



## MISSIONARY IN RESIDENCE

### FROM THE EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH IN NAMIBIA

We give thanks to our host congregations: St John, Ocean City; Christ, Whiting; St Stephen, Woodbury and Good Shepherd, Somerville.

Rev. Eliakim Shaanika is the fourth born member of the Christian family of Mr Andreas and Mrs. Hertha Shaanika. He was born on May 26, 1959 at the place called Oluteyi in Omusati Region, Namibia.

After his high school education, he underwent his theological seminary at Paulinum Theological Seminary in Namibia 1980 – 1983. He was ordained into the pastoral ministry in July 17, 1984, served Eengolo Lutheran parish as from 1984 – 1990. In August 1990 – 1993 furthered his theological studies at Waterloo Lutheran Seminary, Waterloo, Ontario, Canada, where he obtained his Master of Theology.

Returning back to Namibia, he served as a School Chaplain and a teacher for various Senior Secondary Schools as from 1994 – 1999.

Local pastor for Oluteyi Lutheran parish 1999-2000, an Administrative Secretary of ELCIN at the ELCIN, based at the Head Office Oniipa (2001). Appointed as a Secretary of Education, Oniipa Head Office (2002 -2207), General Secretary of ELCIN as from 2007 till now.

In May 26, 2009 he turned 50 years. He is enjoying very much in celebrating such age as means of God's blessings in his life.

Married to Julia Naambo Shaanika (a teacher) on 4 January 1985. The Father of five children three boys and 2 daughters.

Pastor Shaanika's sermon preached at St. John, Ocean City

*Text of the Sermon: Mark 10:1-16*

***The theme: We are called into a life of walking together***

I still do remember the words of Iyaloo, my last born daughter at the occasion I bid a farewell to my family on 27.09.2009. Tears were running down her cheeks. She was sad but courageously she shared her faith with me, saying **“Dad! I know you are going far away, to a continent which sometimes experiences natural disasters: like hurricane Catharine, Rita and others. The world nowadays is no longer a safe place. A horrible incident of the Air France which sunk down deeply into the ocean is still terrifying. Dad, what I just offer to you is my prayer. May God the Almighty protect you. May God the Gracious bless the American people.”** It was so great! What amazing faith she shared with me! Her faith brought me to realize how strong it is to be bound into the fellowship all my ways. It tells me that I am not alone. I am walking into a journey together with somebody else. It is a journey of fellowship and companionship.

The scope of the gospel we have read; portrays to us two concepts of marriage, the Pharisaic concept, and that of Jesus' concept. The Pharisees understand marriage to be a fun, whereby a husband has all the power over his wife. The Pharisees view the wife to play a role in the marriage. Therefore they understand a man to possess a superior characteristic over a woman. The Pharisees also teach that the children do not have any saying over the family matters. For Jesus: Marriage is a gift from God. It is something to be equally welcomed and shared by both partners. Both parties are equal partners. No one is above the other. Jesus

views marriage as constituted to be a vehicle of relationship for both parties. In which the two spouses are sharing the beauty, the secrets, the ups and the downs of their life together. Jesus also goes further a step to explain how the children too do have the important role to play as far as the matters of the family are concerned. They too do have the right to share in such companionship.

The apostle St Paul compares the church of Christ to a holy matrimony, where Christ is the head of it. All Christians are equal partners into this body, and all should share this life together with full dignity, and to the glory of God. They should walk together and cherish one another in times of joy and that of sadness. This is what the church ought to be and should be. The words of St Paul declare: **“You obey a law of Christ when you offer each other a helping hand.”** Gal 6:2. The question remains as to whether we are doing the same. The gospel invites us to walk a life of companionship. In so doing, our purpose, goals and mission of companionship will be certain.

It is against this background, the ELCA and the Lutheran Churches in Namibia thought it to be wise and joined together in a practical and meaningful Lutheran companionship, where both parties are sharing their faith together. Jesus in his apostolic prayer declares: **“Holy Father, I am praying that they will be one with each other as you and I are one.”** John 17:11. On this basis therefore I am here today, sharing the worship service with you, sharing together the gospel message, praying together and offering together our thanksgiving and sacrifices. This is what companion means and what it should be. In my conclusion therefore I would like to invite you brothers and sisters, to join me in sharing the strong faith of Iyaloo when she said: **“Dad, what I just offer to you is my prayer. May God the Almighty protect you. May God the Gracious bless the American people.”** We all need God’s grace to be with us all the ways. May the Almighty God bless us all as we are embarking in the process of sharing our being-ness, our possessions, our faith, our strength and shortcomings, our companion exchange programs, as for this companionship may bear constructive fruit of fellowship to the generations to come. Amen.

Eliakim Shaanika  
St John Lutheran Church  
Ocean City, New Jersey  
04 October 2009

## Celebrate Namibia Sunday

January 24, 2010

In praise and thanksgiving to God, we celebrate our 20<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of partnership with the Lutheran Churches in Namibia. In June 1990 a delegation from the New Jersey Synod first visited with our sisters and brothers and a global relationship was established. Together we proclaim the good news of Jesus and pray for each other as companions in Christ.

Please add the following petition in the Prayers at worship this weekend:

Almighty God, you sent your Son Jesus Christ to reconcile the world to yourself. We praise and bless you for those whom you have sent in the power of the Spirit to preach the gospel to all nations. We thank you that in all parts of the earth a community of love has been gathered together by their prayers and labors, and that in every place your servants call upon your name; especially in Namibia. Great empowerment in the calling to mission, comfort in times of crisis and despair, and boldness in their witness to us and to all the world; for the kingdom and the power and the glory are yours forever. Amen