



**EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH IN THE REPUBLIC OF NAMIBIA**  
**EVANGELIES LUTHERSE KERK IN DIE REPUBLIK VAN NAMIBIË**

Gai-Aha Kerkb Lutheri di Namibia Ina - Ongerki Evangel ja Luther mo Namibia

**Office of the Deputy Bishop**

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October 5, 2011

The Rev. Richard H. Graham, Bishop  
Metropolitan Washington, D.C. Synod  
Evangelical Lutheran Church of America  
1025 Connecticut Ave., NW, Suite 904  
Washington, D.C. 20036

Dear Bishop Graham:

Greetings to you and to all our ELCA brothers and sisters in Christ living in the Washington, D.C. metropolitan area! I want to convey my deep thanks and appreciation for the container of materials you sent to the children staying at our hostels. It arrived at our offices in Windhoek one week ago, and our staff is very busy sorting boxes and items to distribute among the 19 hostels.

As you may know, Namibia is a country twice the size of California with a population of just two million people. The Lutheran tradition here is strong and stems from the work of Rhenish and Finnish missionaries dating back to the early 1800s. Our circumstances also reflect the legacy of the apartheid policies that were put in place when Namibia was under colonial rule. Although we are a country rich in natural resources and beauty, we have one of the most unequal distributions of income in the world. Today, our unemployment rate stands at about 50 percent and the United Nations estimates that 35 percent of Namibia's population lives on U.S. \$1 per day or less. (56 percent lives on U.S.\$2 per day or less.)

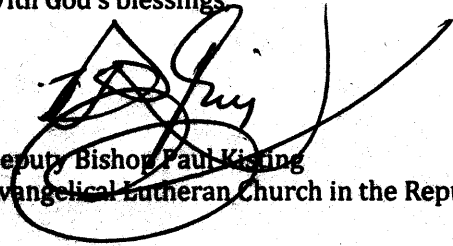
From our beginnings as an independent church, the Evangelical Lutheran Church in the Republic of Namibia (ELCRN) has served marginalized, disadvantaged, and underserved populations in response to what we see as a clear Biblical mandate. One means of fulfilling our mission has been to provide hostel care for children who are poor and whose families live far away from schools so that those children have an opportunity to pursue their education. In 2009, ELCRN's department called Desk for Hostels and Kindergartens (DHK) cared for about 1,650 children who typically come from families that live on farms 10-100 kilometers away from the nearest school. Some of the children have lost one or both parents to HIV/AIDS and all are economically disadvantaged.

Your generous donation is a testimony to the strength of the important ties between Lutherans living in America and Namibia. I understand that about 25 congregations from Washington, D.C., Virginia, and Maryland participated in the "Fill the Container" campaign. To each of those congregations, I want to say, "You have been a blessing to our ministry and the children in our care!" The materials, time, and financial support you donated will help ensure that poor children from very remote parts of Namibia continue to have the opportunity to pursue their education. I also especially want to thank Rev. J. Lowell Knauff, Ms. Mara

Schleicher, and all the members of the Namibian Task Force of your Global Missions Committee who organized this effort.

This project is a wonderful example of how our Lutheran congregations support one another as our Lord Jesus Christ has taught us to do. Your work is helping to improve the lives of children from some of the most remote parts of our country. You have our thanks and love.

With God's blessings

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Paul Kisting', written over a circular stamp or seal.

Deputy Bishop Paul Kisting  
Evangelical Lutheran Church in the Republic of Namibia