

Facts about Namibia

Area: Namibia covers 824,292 sq km (318,259 sq mi). (roughly the size of California)

Population: Slightly more than 2.3 million (increase from 1.42 million in 1990)

Capital City: Windhoek

Date of Independence: 21 March 1990

System of Government: Multi-party Democracy

Head of State: President Dr Hage Geingob since 2015.

Prime Minister: Saara Kuugongelwa-Amadhila since 2015.

Independence Day: March 21, 1990

Languages: English, German, Afrikaans, Oshiwambo, Rukwangari, Silozi, Otjiherero, Damara, Nama, Khisan and Setswana

Economy: Namibia's dominant economic sectors are mining (diamonds, uranium and copper), agriculture (over half the population are subsistence farmers and herders), manufacturing, and tourism.

Literacy: The current literacy rate in Namibia is about 83%, one of the highest in Africa.

Religion: Freedom of religion was adopted through Namibia's Bill of Fundamental Rights. About 90% of the population is Christian.

The Lutheran Church in Namibia

The Lutheran church is the largest church in Namibia, and is split into three churches: The Evangelical Lutheran Church in Namibia (ELCIN), which grew out of the work of the Finnish Evangelical Lutheran Mission (earlier known as the Finnish Missionary Society) which began in 1870 among the Ovambo and Kavango people in the northern part of the country; the Evangelical Lutheran Church in the Republic of Namibia (ELCRN), which grew out of the work of the Rhenish Missionary Society from Germany which began working in the area in 1842; and the German-speaking Evangelical Lutheran Church in Namibia – German Evangelical Lutheran Church (ELCIN-GELC). In 2007 the three churches established the United Church Council of the Lutheran Churches in Namibia, with the ultimate aim to become one church.



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Being a Companion Synod

Companion synod relationships of the ELCA connect Lutheran churches throughout the world with ELCA synods and congregations. These relationships are concrete expressions of the communion and fellowship with the more than 140 Lutheran member churches of The Lutheran World Federation. Each of the 65 synods has at least one international church companion and many have additional relationships, resulting in more than 120 companion synod relationships.

These relationships are rooted in “accompaniment,” which promotes the values of mutuality, inclusivity, vulnerability, empowerment and sustainability. Through the program, companion churches and ELCA synods nurture and strengthen one another for life and ministry through prayer, study, communication, exchange of visitors and sharing of resources.

Our relationship with the Lutheran church in Namibia has been lived out in a variety of ways across the years. Several trips to Namibia from NJ Synod congregations and from Namibia to New Jersey have strengthened bonds of connection and transformed relationships. Sister churches, New Jersey Synod and Namibian congregations paired up have led to mutual learning and sharing. The New Jersey synod has also supported the ministry and work in Namibia by supporting their work around the HIV/AIDS epidemic, ministry with orphans, providing Sunday School materials, books and resources for those communities.

We are a church that believes God is calling us into the world — together. Companion church relationships enrich and deepen our ministries by exposing us to global challenges and perspectives as we seek to work with one another to build up the body of Christ and the world.