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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Wartburg Theological Seminary Celebrates the 20th Anniversary of Namibia's Independence

DUBUQUE, IA – March 8, 2010 – On March 21st, Wartburg Theological Seminary, through its Center for Global Theologies, will celebrate the 20th Anniversary of Namibia's independence as well as the seminary's own partnership with the Namibian people in their struggle for freedom. The celebration will include a presentation by guest lecturer Ralston Deffenbaugh, a fellowship meal, and worship.

Wartburg Seminary's partnership began in the early 1970s with a Namibian Lutheran couple, Selma and Abisai Shejvali, who was studying for and completed his Ph. D. degree at Aquinas Institute. Through hearing their stories of suffering and degradation under the apartheid system, many on the Wartburg campus were moved to accompany them and the people of Namibia in their struggle for freedom. This grassroots movement on campus, which grew to national and international recognition, spread to Lutheran and other ecumenical congregations across the USA.

Guest lecturer, Ralston Deffenbaugh has worked for three decades with Lutheran organizations concerned with international affairs. A graduate of the University of Colorado and Harvard Law School, Deffenbaugh has advocated extensively for human rights. His service includes working on the staff of Lutheran World Federation (LWF), acting as Director of the Lutheran Office for World Community in New York, heading the Lutheran Immigration and Refugee Service, and observing political trials for Amnesty International. In 1975-76, during the South African occupation of Namibia, he served with Lutheran World Federation in Namibia, observing political trials and helping the Lutheran churches' legal

defense efforts. In 1989-90, the year of transition to Namibian independence, he acted on behalf of LWF as legal advisor to the Namibian Lutheran Bishops, advising the bishops and the Council of Church in Namibia on the elections process, and on relations between the United Nations and the South Africans. Additionally, Deffenbaugh served as an informal consultant to members of the committee drafting Namibia's constitution.

The event begins at 3:00 pm and concludes 6:00 pm. Cost for the meal is \$10.00. If you wish to join in the fellowship meal, please RSVP attendance by March 11 to (563)589-0200. For more information contact Wartburg Theological Seminary. All are invited.

Wartburg Theological Seminary is one of eight theological schools of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA). Wartburg is accredited by the Association of Theological Schools and educates women and men to serve the church as ordained and lay leaders. Established in Dubuque, Iowa in 1854, Wartburg Theological Seminary is in its 156th academic year.

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