



Global Mission in the Twenty-first Century

A Vision of Evangelical Faithfulness in God's Mission



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INTRODUCTION

Two primary considerations prompt the Division for Global Mission (DGM) to rethink a strategic plan appropriate for global mission in the twenty-first century: 1) the nature of God's mission in the world, and 2) the nature of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA).

As the author of life, God continually works to redeem the world. God's work in history leaves global footprints. Global mission is largely the story of the emergence of new churches as the result of God's mission. A church in mission continually re-examines the global context of God's mission with respect for all other expressions of God's church. The surprises occasioned by God's mission lead the church to search for global signs of emerging trends within itself and God's world.

Each Christian community has its own peculiar character and vitality, shaped by its context. The ELCA, like all other expressions of the church, has special gifts. In reviewing its past and present planning, strategies and programs, it searches for the best gifts it has to contribute to the mission

of the global church. In terms of global mission, the ELCA prays that its gifts intersect with the most pressing needs of companion churches and the global context, and is open to receiving the gifts of its companions in order to meet its own most pressing needs. Together they may selectively combine their gifts for mission in a new area where no church exists.

This vision for mission is shaped by three major factors:

- 1) a theology for mission,
- 2) the global context, and
- 3) an inventory of the ELCA's gifts and needs.

This strategic planning process has reviewed the DGM's past planning documents, examined the global context from many perspectives and now recommends how the ELCA can best use its gifts and receive those of others at this time. Building on the DGM's foundational planning documents of the last decade, this planning document concentrates on a concept called *accompaniment* as a promising vision for invigorating global mission at the beginning of the new century.



I. *Accompaniment:* The Missiological Vision

A. Background

1. The Concept

The concept of *accompaniment* is becoming a central theme in an emerging vision of global mission. Its promise lies in inviting the ELCA to take seriously the contributions of other expressions of the global church. The interaction of companion churches around the world reflects their evaluation of and attitudes about their relationships with other Christians in both North and South.¹ Their evaluations of past and present interactions offer valuable insights into how the ELCA can learn to participate effectively in God's mission together with other Christians.

The lessons the ELCA learned in bilateral relationships internationally and from discussions within the LWF communion of churches² became associated with the word *accompaniment* via an action taken by the DGM board in 1995. In that year the board of the DGM called for a re-evaluation of DGM's participation in Latin America, resulting in the document, "Mission Strategy for Latin America." The keystone of the strategy is the concept of a "pastoral *accompaniment*" (*acompanimento pastoral*) which is described along with its implications for the ELCA and the Latin American churches.

We understand *accompaniment* as walking together in a solidarity that practices interdependence and mutuality. The basis for this *accompaniment*, or what the New Testament calls *koinonia*, is found in the God-human relationship in which God accompanies us in Jesus Christ through the Holy Spirit.

This pastoral *accompaniment* calls upon the ELCA and the Latin American Lutheran churches to:

1. Affirm the diversity of viewpoints that exists among our sister churches;
2. Encourage our churches to question and analyze among ourselves the priorities and practices of our churches;
3. Be transparent and engage in honest and sincere dialogue;
4. Move beyond the traditional relationships of the past between North and South and South to South;
5. Involve the churches and agencies affected by a decision in decision-making processes; and
6. Acknowledge that the churches in both the South and the North will be in solidarity with one another in their weaknesses, struggles and mission.³

Many terms have traditionally been used to describe the relationship between and among companion churches. As political colonialism declined after the Second World War, the word "partnership" was used to describe the relationship between the former sending churches and the emergent international churches. Some churches prefer this term and will continue to use it because it best expresses their concept of cooperation in God's mission. The implications of this term have come under scrutiny by other churches and often been found wanting.⁴ Critics note that the term "partnership" may mask an unequal yoking of a supposedly powerful giver and a weaker receiver; i.e., it preserves the ecclesiastical counterpart of colonialism.

The implications which emerge from the concept of *accompaniment* have global relevance and call for fundamental change in the implementation of global mission

strategies and programs. If the strategic planning with which the ELCA-DGM approaches the twenty-first century does nothing more than help it to understand *accompaniment* and lead to the implementation of the attributes of companionship in relationships between the ELCA and companion churches, it will have served its purpose.

Accompaniment is more than an exclusive contract between two or more companion churches. It is a walking together in Jesus Christ of two or more churches in companionship and in service in God's mission.⁵ In the walking together on the road to Emmaus, the Lord reveals himself to his companions. While walking together, each of the two disciples' and Jesus' stories become interlocked. Their three stories become intertwined. As the stories come together, God's plan in Jesus' resurrection becomes clearer. A new community, the church, begins to emerge in Jerusalem. In sharing a meal the companions recognize the presence of Jesus with them.

Accompaniment emphasizes relationship before resources. Development of programs and allocation of resources flow from how companions relate, rather than vice versa. *Accompaniment* is valued for its own sake as well as for its results. It is open-ended with no foregone conclusions. The companions learn together in the journey. *Accompaniment* binds companions more closely to their Lord and further informs their mission.

A primary reality of *accompaniment* is the mutual respect of the companions. The conversation is no longer between a giver and a receiver but between two churches, each of which has gifts to give and to receive. The difference in kinds of gifts is not prioritized. Mutual respect also applies to regions. In *accompaniment* each church has the primary responsibility for mission in its area. In conversations between the churches, each will describe its gifts for outreach in its own country. A fruitful outcome of the conversation is the discovery of the outside church's gifts that may assist in mission in a church's own country.

In hearing the ELCA's perspective that a church has primary responsibility for mission in its area, some churches may question if their associations with current North American or European companion churches are being diminished. On the contrary, *accompaniment* is a means toward establishing stronger community among churches in relationship with their Lord.

2. The Use of the Planning Document

Global Mission 21 is a planning document of the ELCA. Most of its content comes from two sources: the history of the interaction between DGM and its companion churches and the current lessons learned from the churches, agencies and individuals with whom the ELCA is in conversation. It points to those issues which the ELCA intends to concentrate on in mission at the beginning of the 21st century, as opposed to providing a comprehensive assessment of major global mission issues. As a document intended to promote stewardship of resources, it intends to focus ELCA-DGM efforts in mission by selecting those issues which the ELCA is best equipped to address.

This planning document has a variety of audiences, and different portions of the document are intended for specific groups:

- A working document for the DGM board as it designs and evaluates policy, and for staff and missionary personnel as they implement programs.
- A brief summary document for companion churches and others who want a condensed description of what the DGM is and how it does its work.
- A foundational document for preparation of Bible studies and education for mission study materials among congregations and synods of the ELCA.
- A foundational document for theological and missiological discussions in ELCA seminaries and schools.

B. Missiological Statement: The Mission of the Triune God—Good News of Life

The Triune God is a missionary God. As Father, Son and Holy Spirit, the Triune God creates, sustains, liberates, and restores life in all creation. Scripture uses many metaphors to describe the life-saving work of God in Jesus Christ: forgiveness, justification, reconciliation, liberation, sanctification, seeking the lost, adoption, ransom, expiation, salvation, new creation, and the coming of the Kingdom of God. The Book of Acts uses new language and metaphors as Christian mission moves from a Hebrew context to Greek and Roman cultural contexts. In cross-cultural mission, Christian witness finds metaphors that communicate most meaningfully within each new context. This paper focuses primarily on God, the Giver of Life, as a meaningful metaphor for speaking the gospel in today's global context.

As we reflect on the relational nature of the Trinity and the mutuality and reciprocity expressed in the community of Father, Son and Holy Spirit, we find also that the mission of the Trinity is relational and expressed in community. Life created and sustained by God is life in relationship. In terms of God's missionary purpose, life is a state of well-being where each member of creation lives in right relationship with God, itself, and the whole creation.

As Christians baptized in the name of the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit, we are incorporated into the family of God, and called and sent to be fellow workers in the life-giving mission of the Triune God. Through God's presence in the Word and the sacramental meal, we are nurtured in our faith and empowered for our missionary vocation in the world.

1. God's Mission in Creation

God is on a mission to create and sustain life. The early biblical testimony in Genesis pictures the **wind**⁶ of God blowing back the watery chaos and creating all of life. When God breathes into earthen clay, the human creature comes to life. When God speaks, all creation is called into being and called good. God accompanies the creation by being present and in relationship with it, even when it is marred by sin and rebellion.

Biblical history witnesses to the life-creating God who is present and active today. In the beginning and also today, God is present and continues to create life throughout the universe. Each baby that is born and each galaxy that evolves bear testimony to God's mission of life. God's mission is a continual creation of life through the power of the Holy Spirit.

Humanity, male and female, is created in the image of God (Genesis 1:27) and is intended to live in community with God and one another and in relationship to the whole creation. Each human being is of infinite worth and is to be honored and respected as a bearer of the image of God. As bearers of this image, humanity is called to participate in God's creative and life-sustaining work. Every human heart bears the imprint of the law and wisdom of God (Romans 2:15) and all people are called to protect and preserve creation.

God's life-endowed creation is marred and destroyed by human irresponsibility and rebelliousness, and by the powers of sin, evil, and death. Yet God continues to accompany, renew and liberate the creation that groans in its bondage to decay. God reclaims us for life-giving relationships with God, each other, and all creation. God works in the hearts of all people, preparing them for the Good News of God's re-creation of life in Jesus Christ who "is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn of all creation" (Colossians 1:15).

2. God's Mission in and Through Jesus

God is on an incarnational mission to heal, restore, redeem, and liberate life. God as life-giving creator is incarnate in Jesus of Nazareth who is born of Mary and the Holy Spirit's power. When Jesus is baptized by John, the Holy Spirit descends on him and a voice from heaven speaks, "You are my Son, the Beloved; with you I am well pleased" (Mark 1:11). In Jesus "the whole fullness of deity dwells bodily" (Colossians 2:15). Jesus is God's accompanying nature made visible in a man.

Jesus, the embodiment of God, announces his mission in Nazareth by quoting the prophet Isaiah: "The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he has anointed me to bring good news to the poor. He has sent me to proclaim release to the

captives and recovery of sight to the blind, to let the oppressed go free, to proclaim the year of the Lord's favor" (Luke 4:18–19). Jesus' ministry is God's mission to overcome the enemies of life and to restore life as God intended it. Wherever the powers of evil and death have diminished or destroyed God's intended life for all creation, God in Jesus is on a life-giving mission of love, bringing food for the hungry, water for the thirsty, forgiveness for sinners, self-worth for the marginalized, good news for the poor, peace for the conflicted and war-ravaged, intervention for the outcast and oppressed, deliverance for those enslaved by evil powers, and life for the dead and dying. Jesus said he came that we "might have life, and have it abundantly" (John 10:10).

Jesus' ministry is a radical struggle for life. This puts him in continual conflict with those who would limit and destroy life. Jesus ultimately expresses God's vulnerable love for all humanity in his willingness to die in this struggle. Finally, he is put to an unjust, humiliating and yet redemptive death on a cross.

The resurrection of Jesus is God's reaffirmation of life and a sign of hope in a world marked by sin and death. It declares that God's salvation, the restoration of life for all people and all creation, is rooted in God's compassionate and vulnerable love embodied in Jesus' ministry and death. For those who die seeking and trusting in the God who was incarnate in Jesus of Nazareth, his resurrection is the promise of life in the eternal presence of the living God. The proclamation of Jesus' resurrection calls forth faith in God "who gives life to the dead and calls into existence the things that do not exist" (Romans 4:17).

The resurrection of Jesus is also God's affirmation of Jesus' way of mission in the world, a way of servanthood and commitment to struggle to bring life for others. Jesus calls his followers to mission in his way: "If any want to become my followers, let them deny themselves and take up their cross and follow me. For those who want to save their life will lose it, and those who lose their life for my sake, and for the sake of the gospel, will save it" (Mark 8:34b–35). Jesus promises to meet us as a living presence today in those who suffer hunger, thirst, nakedness, sickness, and imprisonment (Matthew 25:35–36).

Before leaving his disciples, Jesus promises to send the Holy Spirit who will continue God's worldwide mission in and through us. ". . . you will receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you; and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth" (Acts 1:8).

3. God's Mission by the Holy Spirit

In the Holy Spirit, God is on a mission to create a new life-giving community. When the promised Holy Spirit falls on the Pentecost gathering of disciples in Jerusalem, the Christian church is created and its mission is launched (Acts 2). The message of Jesus is heard and understood in many languages, a sign that God's mission is intended to reach people of all nations. From the beginning, God's mission through the Holy Spirit is accompanied by preaching, healing, baptizing, and teaching the new disciples to live by faith and trust in the grace of God. As new members are incorporated into the church, the Body of Christ, new communities are formed to nurture new believers and equip them for service and witness.

The Holy Spirit accompanies the new community with power, endowing it with a variety of gifts, all of which are to be dedicated to the mutual building up of the Body and to the equipping of the members for their ministries (1 Corinthians 12). The members bear the fruits of the Spirit (love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, generosity, faithfulness, gentleness, self-control), living a life of discipleship guided by the Spirit (Galatians 5:22–25).

The Body of Christ lives in a rhythm of gathering and sending. The church gathers for nurture and equipping. Thus empowered, the members of the Body are sent out to be God's incarnate mission of life in the world. In this respect, all Christians are ministers, called and equipped to embody God's life-giving word and deed in their daily lives. All Christians are called into ministry in their daily lives. However, the church calls some to the ministry of leadership and equipping of the other members. As a new community, the Church receives God's life through Word and Sacrament, is empowered by the Holy Spirit, and lives as God's sacrament of grace in the words and deeds of life in the world.

4. The Nature of God's Mission

As individuals and as a church, we are called to participate in God's mission of life locally and globally. As the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, we respond together as one community of faith, most often by accompanying other Christian communities in God's mission. Together we send and receive missionaries who witness to God's good news, exchange gifts that support the mission, bear one another's burdens, and advocate for God's righteousness and justice in the world. Together we develop relationships of witness with those who do not acknowledge faith in Jesus Christ. The mission of God that we share as a church has the following characteristics:

a. Evangelical

Evangelical, derived from the Greek word meaning "good news," identifies the Christian message as God's good news in Jesus Christ. The Lutheran Reformation primarily identified this good news (gospel) with God's justification of sinners by grace through faith in Christ apart from works of the law. In the medieval culture marked by the experience of guilt in the presence of the terrifying justice of God, and in a European church that offered a multitude of ecclesiastical activities whereby God could be appeased, Martin Luther proclaimed that all human efforts were fruitless and unnecessary. God in Christ offers forgiveness and justification as a free gift of God's grace. This was and still is good news for frightened, guilty sinners. This is a courtroom metaphor where the guilty hear life-giving good news: the pronouncement of acquittal. The New Testament uses a variety of metaphors to communicate the good news of Jesus Christ: justification, forgiveness, kingdom of God, liberation, finding the lost, sanctification, accepting the outcasts, and resurrection. This good news is the motivating power of the mission of the church and is continually being translated into new images and language as the mission moves out from Jerusalem to the ends of the earth.

Today's global church also perceives that the biblical good news should be proclaimed in a variety of metaphors in order to communicate effectively God's good news of life in Jesus Christ. Among the poor, marginalized, and oppressed peoples of the world, the gospel announces that suffering

and pain are not the will of God but are shared by God and intended to be overcome. When people experience alienation or feel God's absence or judgment, God's good news promises that God is with and for them in their suffering and humiliation. Good news is the resurrection hope in the presence of death, the affirmation of the value of human life in the face of economic materialism, the conviction of purpose and meaning in a secularist wasteland, the promise of the Holy Spirit's liberation for the demon-possessed, and the hope of transformation for those who seemingly have sold out to the gods of violence and war.

b. Discipling

The church in mission is called to make disciples, baptizing and teaching them in the way of Jesus (Matthew 28:17–20). New believers are baptized into the mission of Christ. They are trained and equipped for their missionary vocation, to share their faith with others. They are sustained by regular proclamation of the Word of God and the gift of the Eucharist. They are taught to pray and to study the scriptures. Disciples with leadership potential are identified and prepared to take up leadership responsibilities in the community.

The discipling task implies the birthing of communities of faith to sustain the new disciples. As new faith communities form, the existing church is called to nurture their development and sustain them in the faith. The discipling task includes building churches with theological and missiological purpose, indigenous expression of the Christian faith and life, trained leadership, accountability of members and leaders, and structures to adequately nurture the faith and extend the mission of God's life in the world.

c. Contextual

God's creating word became flesh in Jesus. The word of God that brought creation into being is the same word that became embodied in Jesus. God is incarnate in the specific human person of Jesus of Nazareth in order that the people of Israel might experience this saving, transforming power of God. It is significant that the New Testament is written in Greek rather than Aramaic, the language in which Jesus carried out his mission. It testifies to the power of God's

mission to adapt to new people, cultures and situations in order that God's good news might be known. The history of the Christian church is a history of the gospel taking root in new contexts, new geographical locations.

The mission of God continues to transcend familiar cultural forms and theological formulations in order that Jesus Christ, as the creative Word of God, might be a transforming power in every cultural context of the globe. Workers in mission are committed to the contextualization of the gospel and the indigenization of the church in each context and each culture.

d. Wholistic

The mission of God is a ministry dedicated to transforming all reality. Biblical visions of God's saving power are wholistic visions. All forms of evil (alienation, exploitation, oppression, destruction, and death) are to be overcome so that life may flourish within God's creation. The land will be fruitful, the wolf and the lamb will eat together, every human family will dwell securely within its own home, and God will be known as the source and presence of love and life.

Jesus' ministry reflects this wholistic vision as the sick are healed, lepers are cleansed, the demon-possessed are liberated, the marginalized are placed center-stage, sinners are forgiven, the alienated are reconnected, and money-changers are driven out of the temple. God's mission will continue to incarnate this vision of the whole creation made new. "I saw a new heaven and a new earth . . . I saw the holy city, a new Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God" and there will be no more tears and weeping, "for the first things have passed away" (Revelation 21:1–4).

Today, God's mission is molded by this wholistic vision. It is a ministry of word and deed, reaching out to restore life to the whole person, the whole community, the whole creation. The old dichotomies of body and soul, flesh and spirit, are overcome as ministries of both evangelism and service, of outreach and healing, of witness and development, are understood as integral expressions of the mission of God.

e. Transforming

God's mission transforms human society through prophetic critique of personal and corporate life from the perspective of God's vision for life and community. Human behavior that limits or destroys life is questioned and challenged by the God who creates and sustains all creation. Societies and cultures which do not protect and preserve life are called to repentance in order to participate in the transforming power of the reign of God. The church, in faithfulness to God's vision of abundant life for all, speaks out within society and advocates for justice and righteousness.

The mission of God is transforming as it critiques the household of faith and its leaders. The church should always be reforming itself in order to fulfill its God-intended potential as a new community. The eyes and ears of Christians must be open to God's call for repentance in order that the church might be a worthy instrument of God's mission. The Christian community examines itself, develops leaders, and establishes structures and practices which are faithful to God's vision. A church that is faithful in mission calls itself, as well as nations and societies, to be accountable to their God-given responsibility to care for human life and creation and to overcome the destructive powers of evil and death.

f. Dialogical

In a world of religious pluralism, the Christian community is called to witness to the God made known in Jesus Christ. We believe that, even though God as revealed in Jesus is unknown to some people, God is already present in their lives and their religions, and God's wisdom and love is woven into their existence. Christians believe that God desires that those who have already been touched by God's presence and power might come to know the fullness of God's life-saving power in the crucified and risen Jesus Christ.

Christians around the world live in daily contact with people of diverse faiths. The mission of God calls Christians to develop relationships and enter into mutual conversations with these people. Conversations should encourage neighbors to acknowledge the power, beauty, and integrity

found in each other's faith. Christians will respect others and allow them to speak for themselves in interpreting the meaning of their religious faith.

Christians will be open to being changed—to expect that their faith might be strengthened even when they do not embrace the other person's faith. Within these relationships, Christians have the privilege of witnessing to Jesus Christ as God's ultimate and life-giving word for the universe. Christians are called into such conversations and dialogue not knowing where they will go, but sustained by the hope that, in the end, every tongue shall "confess that Jesus Christ is Lord to the glory of God the Father" (Philippians 2:11).

g. Ecumenical

God's mission is, by its very nature, ecumenical and reconciling. The Church of Jesus Christ is one. There is "one Lord, one faith, one baptism, and one God and Father of all" (Ephesians 4:5–6). In the Gospel of John, Jesus prays for the unity of his disciples in order that the world might believe that God has sent him (John 17:20–22). Jesus relates the effectiveness of the church's participation in the mission of God to the unity of the disciples.

Reconciliation and community are signs of the reign of God. The world is marked by alienation, division, and the resulting disastrous consequences for life. Within that divided world of enmity, Jesus is the Prince of Peace and God's instrument of reconciliation. Love and community are marks of God's presence and signs of God's future among us.

The mission of God works to overcome all divisions within the Christian community in order that it might witness to God's ultimate destiny of unity for the human race. Mission activities should seek cooperation among denominations, establish procedures for mutual support and mutual admonition of one another, and work for the unity of the whole Christian church.

h. Inclusive

The mission of God embraces people of all nations and all conditions of life. In God's mission, people of all ethnic groups and all social classes make up the identity of the

community. God's church and God's mission honor the image of God in all. In baptism, there are no distinctions of gender, ethnic group or social class (Galatians 3:27–28). In the mission of the baptized and in the communion of the church, the gifts and burdens of all are honored and welcomed into the fellowship and ministries of the Body as it gathers and scatters in mission. The church is most effective in God's mission of word and deed when it embraces the wide diversity of people and their gifts. Mission programs develop policies and build structures that preserve and enhance the variety of gifts of men and women, and of people of all ethnic groups, cultural backgrounds, and social conditions. The wide diversity of all God's people and their gifts is to be celebrated and nurtured for the sake of God's mission in the world.

i. Local ↔ Global

The mission of God calls the Christian community to be equally committed to mission in its local and global contexts, from Jerusalem to the ends of the earth. Each congregation is called to witness and service within its own fellowship and its immediate neighborhood. God's mission also calls us to join other congregations in mission across cultural and national boundaries. Neither calling can be neglected in the mission of God. The mutual exchange of gifts and resources for God's mission takes place within this calling. Just as the local community of faith offers its gifts for the global mission of the church, so it receives gifts from the global Body of Christ for the strengthening of its local mission.

j. Cruciformed: Shaped by the Cross

God in Jesus took the form of a servant, shared human suffering, embodied God's compassion and prophetic struggle for righteousness, and was crucified. Christians participate in God's mission in a manner that is in harmony with the humility and servanthood of Jesus. At times our witness to Jesus Christ has been misheard and misunderstood because we have failed to participate in mission in the mind and manner of Jesus. Because of our cultural ties and enculturation, we have often created the impression that Jesus' Lordship and the ministries of the church are synonymous with cultural and political domination. ELCA

members belong to a nation and a church that moves in the global context with immense power and influence, and we are called to empty ourselves of the power and privilege associated with those identities. Our conduct of mission is to be cruciformed, shaped by the cross of Jesus Christ.

C. **Accompaniment in God's Mission: A New Model for Mission for the 21st Century**

We are committed to proclaim that the risen Lord, Jesus Christ, is the crucified suffering servant, and we are committed to take part in God's mission in a manner that is in harmony with Jesus' servanthood.

This section seeks to stimulate discussion within the ELCA and among global colleagues by:

- 1) presenting *accompaniment* as a model for mission as we enter the 21st century;
- 2) describing the changing paradigms in global mission over the past decades;
- 3) examining how we are present in mission within the contexts of other nations and cultures;
- 4) describing the effect of the changes within the ELCA context; and
- 5) articulating ELCA's commitments toward mutuality in mission with companions worldwide.

1. **The Accompaniment Model**

Recognizing that the nature of the Triune God and the nature of God's mission is fundamentally relational, the ELCA's Division for Global Mission seeks to express its mission activities *in relationship* and in cooperation with companion churches, agencies and institutions. Mission is also lived out in respectful and listening relationships with those with whom we would proclaim the gospel and share the life of God: people of all living faiths and those who claim no faith. DGM is grateful for the concept of *accompaniment*, a gift from the Christian community in Latin America. This visionary gift recognizes the key relational nature of mission and provides a model for participating in cross-cultural global mission today.

Accompaniment literally means *walking together* side by side. Its biblical roots are found in Luke 24:13–35, the Easter story of the friends walking on the road to Emmaus. The disciples on the road, the accompanying stranger, the dialogue and examination of scripture, the extending of hospitality and a meal, and finally, the revelation of the risen Christ in the breaking of bread, are all elements of the story that provide images of the journey together in God's mission. We walk with each other in a journey where the presence of God is revealed to us. God in Christ accompanies us in the fellowship of word and table.

Walking together in God's mission implies mutuality and interdependence. We journey together side by side, with neither companion ahead or behind, above or below, the other. When we are side by side we can listen and hear one another. *Accompaniment* implies companionship of mutual respect and signals mutuality in our relationships. It assists us towards living into the gift of *communio*.

The *accompaniment* model holds the potential to create a radical shift in power within today's global relationships. The mutuality of walking side by side means equal sharing of decision-making and resources. It insists that old assumptions be challenged and that we listen to companions' interpretation of their vision of mission and reality. It means talking together, listening, and consulting with one another about how we will walk together in God's mission.⁷

DGM is committed to developing the concept of accompaniment as the working terminology and practice of its program and relationships in mission.

DGM is committed to accompanying local churches as they assume primary responsibility for God's mission in their contexts, and is committed to inviting companion churches to accompany the ELCA as it takes primary responsibility for God's mission in its context.

DGM is committed to re-examine its mission practices and create discussion and reflection about the manner of participating in God's global mission in the next century. It will use the accompaniment model of walking together with other companions as it conducts this examination and reflection.

2. The Challenge of the 21st Century

a. The Calling

God calls us to proclaim God's love in Jesus Christ among peoples of all nations, an urgent calling in today's world. Two-thirds of the world's peoples have not heard or fully heard the gospel of Jesus Christ. God's intention for abundant life for all of creation is diminished and destroyed by sin and conflict, suffering and oppression. God in Jesus Christ calls us to participate in word and deed in the coming of God's renewal and transformation of life to the whole creation. Christians and Christian churches need to walk together, share their gifts, and coordinate their work in order to meet this tremendous mission challenge today.

b. The Communion

We share God's call to mission with all members of the Christian family. The Lutheran World Federation defines itself as a *communio* of churches through which God calls us to be the Body of Christ. The *communio* is God's gift through which all Christians and all churches are called to live in God's mission and fellowship together. We do not choose these relationships nor may we determine to share with some and neglect others. All members are God's gift to us. As a church we are not only a human-made structure and organization. We are the Body of Christ, a *communio* in which we live out our callings in God's mission, bear one another's burdens and receive one another's gifts. While we understand that *communio* expresses the total reality of the Christian community, *accompaniment* describes a manner or model for the way we will live in communion and walk together in mission.

As a member of the Lutheran World Federation and the wider community of churches, the ELCA recognizes that global mission today is carried out within a complex network of relationships, memberships and common histories. The ELCA participates in God's mission as one of many churches and Christian organizations seeking to fulfill its responsibility to share the good news of Jesus Christ with the whole world. While the ELCA-DGM cooperates in mission directly with dozens of churches, it is also committed to full cooperation and coordination with the Lutheran World Federation and other conciliar bodies and forums in which mission is planned and implemented.

c. The Changing Paradigm

As the ELCA seeks to answer God's calling to be in mission globally, we recognize that some of the perspectives and approaches of the great missionary movement from Europe and North America in the 19th and first half of the 20th century are no longer adequate or appropriate.

1) Changing Landscape.

Basic to this discussion is an understanding that the landscape and context for global mission has changed in many ways.

- a) The church of Jesus Christ, which was not present in many regions of the world at the beginning of the modern missionary movement, now exists in almost every nation on earth.
- b) The center of the Christian missionary movement has shifted from Europe and North America to growing Christian churches in Latin America, Africa and Asia.⁸
- c) The United States is the world's fourth largest mission field with its traditional "Christian" population becoming increasingly unchurched, and with a growing religious pluralism comprised of people of many diverse faiths and religious backgrounds.
- d) Large areas of the world once closed for relationship and cooperation in mission are now open, particularly since 1989.

The changing landscape calls for recognition that churches that were once the mission fields of Northern mission agencies are active participants and initiators in global mission. The changing landscape also indicates that global mission has come home to our own doorstep. The ELCA constitution recognizes this reality when it states that in addition to being responsible for mission outside the territory of this church, the division . . . *shall be the channel through which churches in other countries witness to this church and society* (ELCA constitution 16.11.F91).

2) The Emerging Church Within Historical Realities.

The changing makeup of the *communio* presses us to review old assumptions and methods of mission. Several factors need our attention:

- a) Churches in the so-called South and ELCA members of African, Asian, Latino, Arabic/Middle Eastern and

indigenous American descent are challenging the imperialism and systemic racism of white privilege in the church, the dominance of Western contextual theology and styles of church structures, and the power and influence exerted by those who hold control of the global Christian community's financial resources.

- b) Churches in the North are being called to be accountable for the legacy of the modern missionary movement which lived within, benefitted from, and was influenced by its historical context(s) of colonial expansion, slave trade, the Enlightenment, and legalistic elements of Pietism.
- c) Western Protestant denominationalism is being challenged by post-denominational churches and the ecumenical movement.⁹

3. Examining the Past and Present Global Mission Context

a. Birthing the Church (self-propagating)

The following column format is intended to visually portray some of the shifts and changes that have taken place in global mission, particularly in the past three or four decades (see chart below). Though this format requires some code words and shorthand language, the narrative material further expands on the columned outline.¹⁰The indented

commitments propose how DGM might respond to the shifting paradigms.

Traditionally, emerging Christian communities have taken responsibility for sharing the gospel early in their life. As people first became Christians in response to missionary witness, they took responsibility for sharing the gospel among their people. After a few years of pioneering evangelistic work by the missionaries, local evangelists became the local missionaries, effectively carrying the gospel among their own people. The expatriate missionaries most often moved into support roles with the evangelists, equipping them and guiding their evangelistic work. Stories abound about the growth of the church when European and North American missionaries were absent during the two great world wars. The latest testimony to self-propagation, maintaining of the gospel witness in the absence of expatriate missionaries, is the story of the church in China during the past 50 years.

The continuing and often phenomenal growth of the emerging churches indicates that they have taken responsibility for propagation of the gospel in their contexts. The greatest need for outside support and participation becomes the development of leaders, pastors, and training systems, and providing technical and professional assistance in the area of health care ministries and community development.

Birthing the Church (self-propagating)¹¹

Establishing the Church	Accompanying the Churches
Mission fields.	Local and national churches.
1800 - 23.1% of world's population was Christian; 1980 - 32.8%; 1990 - 34.4% ¹²	2000 - 32.3% of world's population will be Christian.
1900 - 87% of world's Christians were in Europe and North America.	1997 - 60% of world's Christians are in Latin America, Africa and Asia.
1950s - ELCA's predecessors had about 25 mission fields in Latin America, Africa and Asia.	1997 - ELCA works globally with 70 Lutheran churches and about 25 others.
Through the efforts of the great missionary movement, the church was planted in almost every nation on earth.	ELCA is a member of the Lutheran World Federation (124 churches), the World Council of Churches (330 churches) and cooperates in many forums where churches cooperate together in mission.

The effectiveness of churches in the task of evangelism poses new opportunities for the commitment of their gifts for evangelism in new areas of their own country and beyond. It indicates they have evangelistic gifts and resources to offer Northern churches whose growth is flat or declining and who are not keeping pace with opportunities for evangelism in their own contexts. Increasingly, evangelistic efforts are multilateral and cooperative in nature. The former North to South direction is shifting to South-South and South to North.

DGM is committed to prioritizing funding/personnel in the areas of leadership development.

DGM is committed to receiving companion churches' expertise and gifts in evangelism to enable the ELCA to develop its skills in sharing the faith with others.

DGM is committed to communicating and coordinating with appropriate local churches before DGM enters new areas and begins new mission activities.

DGM is committed to facilitating and supporting South-South and South-North mission relationships and programs.

b. Organizing the Church (self-governing)

As many new nations emerged at the close of the colonial era in the mid-20th century (1940s-1960s), the organizing of many national church bodies followed closely behind. In response to growing nationalism, missionaries and local Christian leaders began to turn mission fields and mission areas controlled by missionaries into constitutionally-established national churches.¹³

In the early years of these new churches, missionaries often maintained their leadership roles even as presidents or bishops of the church. As local leadership emerged, missionaries have, for the most part, receded from leadership roles to specialized assignments and/or equipping roles.

The fulfillment of the self-governing goal is still, in some cases, limited by the presence and power of human and material resources from the North.¹⁴ Some churches have taken bold steps to become independent of Northern resources and/or missionary presence. Most churches carefully define the invitations and role of missionaries and maintain local control of decision-making within the church. ELCA missionaries are trained in the self-understanding that they are guests serving in another land and church, that they work under the direction of the local church leadership and should support local decision-making processes.

Organizing the Church (self-governing)

Establishing the Church	Accompanying the Churches
Mission board-centered, missionary-centered program.	National church-centered; missionaries serve at invitation of local church/agency.
Large well-organized missionary associations with constitutions, handbooks, directors, officers; missionaries often first presidents or bishops of new national churches.	National church with constitutions, policies, elected leadership; some with few or no missionaries; structure often inherited from Northern mission agency.
Decisions primarily by home boards and expatriate missionaries.	Decisions by local initiative and governance; churches with large numbers of mission agencies often relate to them through a coordinating committee.

DGM is committed to interdependence and mutuality as it shares life and mission with companion churches.

DGM is committed to facilitating South-South dialogue to explore models and share common experiences and challenges.

DGM is committed to the principle that expatriate missionaries should not serve in local church leadership positions, and that such positions currently filled by missionaries should be on a timeline for localization.

Sustaining the Church (self-supporting)

Establishing the Church	Accompanying the Churches
Mission organization introduced Western church styles and structures, and developed large infra-structures.	Church structures based on Western values (such as individualism and product-driven economies) continue to challenge national churches.
Large institutions and facilities; management and implementation dependent on missionary leadership and funds from mission board.	Struggle to meet costs of inherited structures and institutions; sometimes dependent on outside resources (personnel and funds). Future goal: interdependence in sharing of gifts and resources.
Planning often based on <i>needs</i> approach that inadvertently emphasizes deficiencies, e.g. “What do we need?”	New planning models focus on <i>assets</i> , e.g. “What are the gifts and strengths we have to meet the challenges?”

c. Sustaining the Church (self-supporting)

With the establishment of the national church and the emergence of free societies in formerly communist contexts, the issue of funding the church and its ministries remains the greatest challenge for most churches. Two major factors impact this reality: 1) inheritance of costly Northern church structures and Northern-initiated ministries, and 2) depressed local economies.¹⁶

There is a new emphasis on *capacity building*, focusing on efforts that build a church’s or project’s capacity to sustain itself. One bishop whose church is faced with declining support from its Northern partner has embarked on a plan for restructuring and reducing the cost of the national church. He says, “If you are going to accompany us with personnel or grants, commit it to those programs that build our capacity to stand on our own, not to those costs that are basic to doing the work of the church.”

Some churches have become totally self-supporting. Others face reduction of grants from mission agencies and the Lutheran World Federation. This creates a variety of responses: restructuring and reduction of costs, development of income-generating projects, increased local support, and seeking new financial partners. Some churches composed primarily of people who are very poor are developing without large grants and outside support. Most of their ministers are bi-vocational, supporting themselves through outside employment. The ministry is shared by several persons organized as pastoral teams to lead parishes in evangelism, community education, social ministry, community transformation, catechesis, and Word and Sacrament ministry. Financial assistance is generally in the form of start-up grants and assistance to developing self-reliant projects. Missionaries and volunteers from outside are used primarily in capacity building roles, and their service is time limited.

DGM is committed to the principle of capacity building through: a) support of leadership development through institutions and programs, b) placement of missionaries who fulfill equipping and leadership development roles, c) offering international scholarships for potential church leaders, and d) committing funds to stewardship education and stewardship development programs.

DGM is committed, in most cases, to avoid supporting local congregation costs such as pastors' salaries and church buildings.

DGM is committed to avoid placement of missionaries in church leadership roles or as pastors of congregations. (Pastors in international English-speaking congregations would be an exception.)

DGM is committed to place its resources in areas of greatest need and in areas where it is critical to express solidarity with the local church.

DGM is committed to help the ELCA learn from churches developing new forms of ministry and working among people who are poor. These forms of ministry hold the potential for offering to the ELCA models for ministry in economically impoverished areas. They offer alternatives to ministries in traditional patterns (fully-salaried ministers, loans for building facilities) that cannot sustain themselves.

d. Contextualizing the Church (self-articulating)¹⁵

A fourth "self" is emerging in this generation. It is related to self-governance but has important and subtle nuances of its own. *Self-articulation* by church leaders and members is

Contextualizing the Church (self-articulating)

Establishing the Church	Accompanying the Churches
Gospel not always differentiated from Western culture; some Western forms such as hymnody or organizational structure seen as feature of Christian identity.	Gospel expressed in many cultures; growing self-consciousness about understanding culture as the vessel, not The Message.
Mission sometimes articulated primarily as evangelism and church expansion with service and education ministries as important additions to the real purpose of mission.	God's mission is one, a whole that includes evangelism, service, justice; Northern churches are challenged to examine their dualistic theology and practice that separates the spiritual and physical realms in its ministries.
Mission past perceived as successful, sacrificial, heroic.	Assessment and critique of mission history by emerging churches and local theologians and historians.
Mission and flow of resources primarily one-directional: North to South, West to East.	Mission-in-reverse, resource sharing many ways; all the gifts of the body of Christ belong to and are needed by all the members of the communion.
Bilateral relationships: mission agency to mission field or emerging church.	Multilateral relationships through cooperating committees, ecumenical bodies.
Mission agencies were not always aware of the reality of "white privilege" and racism in their relationships and practices of mission.	Many contemporary forums and interchanges give opportunity for Northern agencies to become aware of and address issues of "white privilege" and racist attitudes and practices.

their self-conscious and confident expression of their vision for their church and their insights on a wide range of theological, ecclesiological and contextual matters. They are speaking their mind from their own context and experience.

These companions are challenging traditional Northern/Western assumptions about their culture and context, about the Christian faith and church life, and about the mission of Jesus Christ in today's world. They speak out of their cultural milieu and categories. They are reinterpreting and rewriting the history of their church and their people. They are developing worship forms that express the Christian faith in the languages, music, thought processes and world views of their contexts and cultures. They are challenging Northern partners to give up sole control of the definition of the Christian faith and to honor a diversity of expressions from a variety of contexts. They are challenging Northern partners to examine how gifts of human and financial resources are given with strings attached. Self-articulation expresses insights from different contexts and presses for changes in theology and approaches to mission and its relationships and priorities.

Today, we have opportunity for a much-needed process of *truth-telling and healing*. An important step on the way to mutual ground in relationships in mission is healing the pain and injuries of the imperialist and colonialist past. If we are going to move forward toward true mutuality between mission agency and church, we must find healing and forgiveness of past abuses in the mission movement. We who represent mission agencies today are accountable for the past and for our own behavior and response in mission relationships today. We need to overcome defensiveness and create openness and space to receive the critique. Persons in companion churches have much to say, many stories to tell, much pain to reveal. Our relationships will not mature into mutuality until we walk through this needed process of truth-telling and reconciliation.

Sometimes members of mission agencies carry discomfort or bitterness from being used and manipulated by some who seek resources. Sometimes we observe the misuse and mismanagement of resources and struggle to give an accounting of such situations to the church members who donated the gifts. However, the misconduct of a few should not cancel out the overwhelming need to take responsibility for a listening and healing process. The burden of opening the conversation and receiving the critique falls primarily on those who have been in the position of power over emerging churches.

An African woman theologian spoke to ELCA members at a 1996 synodical global mission event: "We must re-examine our mission. We have made objects of one another. Northern mission agencies made us objects of their evangelism programs and counted the numbers of us they converted to Christianity. We, in turn, made objects of you, seeing you as object, as source for the funds and resources we need. We must get beyond this objectifying of one another and honor each other as subjects in our mission relationships, as brothers and sisters in Christ."

DGM is committed to learning how to listen to those who wish, on behalf of themselves or their church, to express their experiences of pain within mission relationships and to work toward healing and transformation within our relationships.

DGM is committed to developing a climate of mutual affirmation and admonition in its relationship with companions, in order for all companions to be more effective in Christ's mission.

DGM is committed to dialogue and consultation in joint planning and decision-making with companions in mission.

DGM is committed to providing anti-racism training for its board and staff members, missionaries and missionary candidates, synodical global mission leaders, theologians and others who participate closely with the DGM program.

4. Participation of ELCA Constituency

Establishing the Church	Accompanying the Churches
Missionaries on one-year furloughs were the chief teachers and interpreters of global mission to the congregations.	275 adult ELCA missionaries with two-month home leaves every two years; reliance on Companion Synods Program, Global Mission Events (GMEs) for main education and interpretation, along with Missionaries in Residence (MIRs).
Only the mission executive/area secretary visited the mission field regularly; almost no local church representatives visited the United States.	Many visitors both ways; growing number of ELCA synods regularly send/receive visitors; 80 international scholarship students in the United States; many more individuals travel internationally.
Missionaries as primary source of information for newsletters, magazines, interpretation.	New addition: companion visitors speak for themselves, interpret their own situation.
Two-way communication by surface mail and air mail took weeks, even months.	E-mail, faxes, satellite telephones mean instant communication and expectations for immediate responses.
Direct relationship between congregations and missionaries, close communication between donors and missionaries; missionaries were active fund raisers, told stories, gave accounting of how gifts were used.	Missionary Sponsorship redesigned and re-emphasized; some distrust and suspicion of sending money to church-wide office; donors desire direct relationship to the gift, to follow the gift to its recipient.
Independent mission agencies fold into church body structure.	Large centralized global mission program; increase in independent mission ventures by congregations and individuals.
Identity of North American church member is perceived primarily as donor, a giver to others who are in need.	Growing perception that Northern church has needs that can be met by companions' gifts including their missionaries; growing identity as giver/receiver .
Missionaries seen as faith heroes; missionary-go-home movement develops; ambiguous feelings; international missionaries are primarily Northerners.	Some ambiguous feelings about missionaries; missionaries as co-workers with national churches; volunteer missionaries; South-South missionaries; missionaries/church workers to the ELCA.
Thousands of missionaries responded and served, many at great personal sacrifice including giving their lives or lives of family members.	Difficulty in recruiting physicians and theological professors; difficulty in sustaining long term service; high financial cost to support.

The planners of the ELCA structure recognized the changes in global mission when they gave DGM the mandate to be a channel for companion churches to witness to this church and society. The DGM organization included a new department: *mission education* (now called Global Mission to the ELCA). This department's mandate went beyond the traditional responsibility for interpretation, that of telling the constituency about global mission. The education-for-mission program set the aggressive goal of engaging ELCA members in theological learning and determined that companion churches and direct cross-cultural encounters are integral to that undertaking. Recently, stewardship education and mission support have been fully integrated into the program.

The education of ELCA members for commitment to global mission emphasizes changes in attitude and behavior. Its primary methodology is experiential learning. A heavy emphasis is placed on listening to companions as they directly interpret their own faith, Christian experience and mission context.¹⁷

The global Christian community has become directly accessible to the congregations and members of the ELCA through the shrinking of the global village and the development of communication technology and convenient travel opportunities. Still the old models, images and paradigms for global mission sometimes prevail, many rooted in the colonial past. Our perception of ourselves in the global contexts tends to be as donors and givers and less as receivers in need of gifts others offer us. The power of our resources and expertise sometimes distorts mutuality in relationships. Some well-intentioned encounters and experiences undermine the autonomy and self-determination of companion churches and their members. Sometimes so-called unreached people or less affluent Christians are approached through mission initiatives birthed in the

North without proper consultation with local churches or without adequate education and sensitization in cross-cultural relationships.

In fulfilling its mandate to be a channel through which companion churches witness to this church and society, the Division for Global Mission has intentionally established programs and systems for sharing global mission experiences and relationships with the ELCA constituency. Much of the education program has increased the direct participation of ELCA members in relationships to the various companion churches and their members. DGM's emphasis within all these programs and encounters is that companionships in mission be based on relationships of mutuality and that the sharing of resources serve the development of these relationships. DGM's goal is to adequately educate and equip ELCA participants within the model of *accompaniment*, walking side by side in mutuality and interdependence with international companions.

DGM is committed to providing mission education for ELCA members that offers experiences that create change in attitude and behavior, and that provide opportunities to receive the witness and gifts of companion churches.

DGM is committed to increasing the portion of its budget allotted for global encounters and for direct participation and education of ELCA members.

DGM is committed to increasing its orientation and education programs for members participating in global encounters.

DGM is committed to finding more avenues for sharing its missiological vision and accompaniment model with seminaries and other leadership programs of the ELCA.



II. Global Context

A. Global Mission Trends

The DGM conducted discussions on global mission among representatives of various perspectives in its constituency, the leadership of companion churches and other groups. Those responses contributed to this report and its analysis of the current global environment for mission. The following six factors are particularly critical in creating this changed context.

1. Religious Pluralism

On the planet there are approximately one billion 995 million Christians, one billion 154 million Muslims, 850 million Hindus, 328 million Buddhists, 100 million adherents to traditional religions, millions of Confucianists and Taoists and a rapidly growing number of secularists.¹⁸ Religious pluralism has always been a factor in global life. However, increased travel opportunities, the speed of communication and technology, and waves of immigration have brought religious pluralism home to the residents of Souix Falls and Berlin as well as to the residents of Beijing. Pluralism affects the ministry of local congregations as much as that of global mission.

2. Globalization of the Market Economy

Globalization of the market economy refers to the growth of trade and foreign investment in the world, with its accompanying integration of local economies and information into a global market. With the dismemberment of the Soviet empire, socialism is seen as a failed economic system

in many areas. State-sponsored social programs are considered ineffective, and various forms of capitalism are seen as the one global alternative. Several issues raised by globalization challenge the church's mission:

a. Increased Communication

Improved communication technology is a major factor involved in globalization. As information is exchanged more quickly, the formation and maintenance of various networks is enhanced. Communication technology brings more acquaintance with other cultures as it makes neighbors of almost everyone on the globe, but it does not automatically produce better cross-cultural understanding and clearer communication.

The new information technology is dominated by the most technically advanced countries. Thus Western culture, materialism, and market values are being exported around the globe. Improved communication is beneficial mainly to those who have access to the new technology and can use it to market their products.

b. The Widening Economic Gap

One of the most blatant results of the global economy is the growing gap between the advantaged and disadvantaged, between those benefitting from globalism and those on its fringes. The widening gap exacerbates the exclusion of disadvantaged groups from decisions and resources which affect their lives. As the United States experiences the effects of globalization, people feel distanced from decisions which affect their welfare.¹⁹

c. Increased Migration

Another consequence of globalization is the relocation of production facilities seeking cheaper labor costs. This results in the relocation of large numbers of migrant workers seeking employment. Today there are more than seventy million migrant workers around the world. The wholistic mission of the church includes a message to systems of production about their effect on world population as well as to their treatment of migrant populations and racial communities resettled in countries other than their own.

3. Exploitation of Women and Children

Women and youth bear the brunt of exploitation resulting from the gap between rich and poor. They are often left behind as men leave their homes to follow employment opportunities. In overcrowded urban centers, women are often forced to turn to degrading work, and children go begging on the streets. Women are often unprepared to participate equally in their societies because prejudice and cultural traditions limit their educational and economic opportunities. Disrespect for women is global as is their exclusion from leadership positions in societies and churches.

4. Ethnic Identity and Resurgent Fundamentalism

The dissolution of the Soviet Union as a world superpower has brought rapid change globally. Reactions to the change include ethnic groups reasserting their needs, solidifying their national identities and clashing with one another. As globalization increases contact with other cultures, nations and faiths, people react to the increasing complexity by retreating to familiar simplistic solutions. Religious groups exhibit an impulse toward fundamentalism. Some nation-states impose state religions.²⁰

5. Religious Demographic Shifts

In 1982, David Barrett predicted that the global center of Christianity would be in the Southern hemisphere by the turn of the century. His prediction has come true more quickly than expected. In 1997, there were 526 million Christians in Europe, 450 million in Latin America and the Caribbean, 309 million in Africa, 299 million in Asia, 202 million in North America and 19 million in Oceania.²¹ In 1900, 87% of the world's Christians were in Europe and North America. As of 1997, 60% of the world's Christians are in Africa, Asia, Latin America, the Caribbean and Oceania. At the same time an increasing number of people in the United States do not claim church membership.

As the numerical center of Christianity shifts, much of the church's vitality now flows from the South and Asia to Europe and the United States. Most Africans find the notion of atheism inconceivable. Their zeal for evangelism and that of some of the Asian churches is inspiring to their European and North American Christian brothers and sisters.

6. Decentralization

Agencies and individuals which once worked through intermediaries are increasingly establishing direct contact with international communities. Technology forms a global web of individuals and groups in direct communication. In the church this contact encourages relationships which are no longer as dependent on central offices or designated representatives. Self-appointed agencies and missionaries are multiplying. Churchwide staff are challenged to support and educate constituency in a decentralized environment without dampening enthusiasm.

B. Companion Churches

For Christians, a significant change in the global mission context is the changing role of companion churches. Global ecumenical conversation is moving to a round-table discussion format. As a result the churches in companion-ship with the ELCA better inform American churches about changing perceptions of mission. In 1994 the DGM sponsored a survey of partner churches and mission agencies conducted by the ELCA's Department for Research and Evaluation.²² The results are consistent with the current global environment described in *Accompaniment in God's Mission: A New Paradigm for the 21st Century*.

1. Companion Churches as Sending Agencies

Sixty percent of the churches/agencies reported sending out their own missionaries into new areas in their own countries and beyond. South-South exchanges of medical, educational and evangelistic missionaries are increasing.²³ At the same time, some of these churches are growing so fast that it is difficult to train ample pastoral leadership for the churches' own congregations.

2. Leadership Development

Because of their rapid growth, or in the case of Eastern and Central Europe their isolation during past decades, churches strongly support leadership development as a primary task for missionaries. Churches share with the ELCA the need to develop leaders for the next century. Graduate training is no longer seen solely as study in Northern schools. Fifty percent of the respondents called for an increase in South-South scholarships, i.e. graduate education in Asian and Southern hemisphere institutions.

3. Changing Role of Missionaries

The churches continue to affirm that expatriate missionaries make significant contributions to the mission of the churches to which they are sent. The relationships missionaries foster with companion church leaders are essential to their task. The missionaries' roles are increasingly being defined on the basis of their ability to train and to mentor or to apply a specific type of expertise to a strategic need. Missionaries are most effective when they walk with national Christians in building the church's capacity to meet specific needs. Because of the rapidly changing environment, the churches may creatively call missionaries in the future to tasks not yet envisioned.

4. Wholistic Approach to Mission

The churches/agencies' responses reflected a wholistic approach to the gospel, i.e., the gospel as God's good news for the healing of the results of evil in humanity's spiritual, physical and societal life. Addressing poverty, disease and oppression are high priorities on their agendas. Training in evangelism is not as clearly differentiated from community development as it is in the North. The local evangelist or pastor is also a community leader expected to witness through community development. Where evangelism is illegal, Christian witness is shown more through community programs.



III. Directions for the ELCA into the 21st Century

Given the missiological vision of *accompaniment* and the current global environment, what direction should the global mission of the ELCA take at the beginning of the century in order to best share its gifts and receive those of its companions in global mission?

A. DGM Planning

The ELCA states as part of its *Statement of Purpose*: “To participate in God’s mission, this church shall . . . carry out Christ’s Great Commission by reaching out to all people to bring them to faith in Christ and by doing all ministry with a global awareness consistent with the understanding of God as Creator, Redeemer, and Sanctifier of all.”²⁴ The ELCA then mandates that DGM shall “be responsible for this church’s mission in other countries and shall be the channel through which churches in other countries engage in mission to this church and society.”²⁵ The ELCA has given prominence to global mission as reflected in its budget. As one of six program divisions within the ELCA, DGM received 27% of the churchwide annual budget (1997).

1. Long Range Goals

In 1989 the board of the DGM adopted four goals which were foundational for the DGM’s future strategic planning, called Long Range Goals:

To participate in God’s mission and to be in mission shaped by the cross, the Division for Global Mission intends:

- Goal I: To share the good news of Jesus Christ with those who acknowledge no faith, people of other faiths and adherents of various ideologies; and*
- Goal II: To take part in God’s life-giving purpose for all people, especially by being in solidarity with and advocating for people who are oppressed, poor and suffering; and*
- Goal III: To seek more effective ways of relating to and cooperating with churches around the world that express the unity of the body of Christ and further the mission of the church; and*
- Goal IV: To develop our gifts as a church, acknowledge our limitations and embrace the gifts of others in engaging in global mission.*

2. Commitments

In carrying out its mandate within the ELCA, the DGM has long given a priority to strategic planning. Primary among the DGM’s documents for strategic planning are *Commitments for Mission in the 1990s*. The *Commitments* emphasize:

- a) proclamation of the gospel to those who have not heard
- b) planting new congregations and churches
- c) witness to people of other faiths
- d) inter-faith dialogue
- e) mission in harmony with Jesus’ servanthood
- f) advocacy for righteousness, justice and peace

- g) interdependency within the global Christian family
- h) ethnic and gender diversity
- i) increasing ELCA congregations' concern and involvement in Christ's mission.

3. Priorities

Building on the *Commitments*, a set of *Priorities* lists the top five interests of the DGM in the last decade of the century and strategies for how they will be pursued. The five are:

- Evangelism
- Leadership
- Eliminating Poverty and Oppression
- South-South Relationships
- Mission to the ELCA.

The DGM currently carries out its programs and uses its resources in ways which implement the *Commitments* and *Priorities* above. It finds its current planning and strategy documents relevant for the global mission of the ELCA at the beginning of the 21st century. They are the foundational documents on which planning continues to build.

Although the policies continue to be applicable, the context in which they are to be implemented calls for a new understanding for doing mission.²⁶ The current context calls for a walking together of companion churches in global mission. Walking together requires further clarification and implementation of the DGM's policies and the further sensitization and education of ELCA constituency to their underlying theology so that *accompaniment* may be better understood and used as a guide for mission.

B. Goals and Program Objectives

The overall purpose of the Global Mission 21 strategy is more effective witness to Jesus Christ. This goal in the current context can best be pursued by churches effectively walking together in companionship. Within a rapidly changing environment for global mission, the purpose of strategic planning is not so much a new structure based on predictions of the future as it is a method of working that can remain open and respond quickly to change. *Accompaniment* facilitates rapid response by respecting the calling of

the companion church, the church closest to each changing context.

Because the goal of Global Mission 21 is pursued via *accompaniment*, mission programs are directed as much by a vision as they are by budget. A shared vision with companion churches can extend the usability of resources. An African companion church president observed that the South sees life in relationships whereas the North sees life in resources. Resources allocated on the basis of relationships and strengthened by *accompaniment* will be used more effectively than those allocated unilaterally.

Following the overall purpose of Global Mission 21 are the DGM's four foundational goals. They and the objectives flowing from them in the context of the 21st century are cast below in the language and intent of *accompaniment*.

1. GOAL I - Program Objectives

To participate in the life-giving mission of the Triune God and to be in mission shaped by the cross, the Division for Global Mission will:

Share the good news of Jesus Christ with those who acknowledge no faith, people of living faiths, adherents of various ideologies, and those who have become inactive in or have abandoned their Christian faith.

- a. Share the good news of Jesus Christ and nurture the birth and growth of new communities of faith, and develop their leaders.
 - 1) Equip and send missionary personnel who can articulate a witness to Jesus Christ.
 - 2) Support and accompany evangelistic outreach programs.
 - 3) Cooperate with other Christian churches and communities in outreach programs within their contexts.
 - 4) Include a leadership development component within outreach programs.
 - 5) Integrate evangelistic witness where community development and health care programs are the primary focus.

- b. Build relationships of respect, listening, understanding and sharing of faith with Muslims.
 - 1) Review and evaluate results of education programs including follow-up with missionaries, international leaders and professors; make plans for subsequent training and resourcing.
 - 2) Support programs of dialogue among Christians and Muslims both in contexts where relations between Christians and Muslims are tense, misunderstood or volatile and in contexts where relationships are positive.
 - 3) Support centers for development and health care among Muslim populations.
 - 4) Develop programs and resource materials on Islam for education of U.S. constituencies in cooperation with ELCA seminaries, the NCCCUSA and other churches in the United States.
- c. Build relationships of respect, listening, understanding and witness among Hindus, Buddhists, Confucianists and other faith traditions in Asia as well as among modern secularists.
 - 1) Develop education and training networks based in the United States in cooperation with Asian study centers and Asian study programs; support and participate in conferences and events.
 - 2) Support programs of dialogue between Christians and other faith traditions.
 - 3) Develop programs for training and equipping ELCA personnel in Asian contexts.
 - 4) Support study programs both in the United States and in Asia undertaken by Asian church leaders and professors.
- d. Invite and cooperate with efforts by other divisions of the ELCA for evangelization and renewal among ourselves and in areas where commitment to the gospel has declined or disappeared.
 - 1) Support training in church life, outreach, stewardship, and theological leadership.
 - 2) Develop more active exchanges between church workers, pastors, and congregational members of the ELCA and companion churches in Europe.
 - 3) Provide ELCA congregational sites for European seminary students to engage in ministry.
 - 4) Engage actively in programs of outreach and nurture among children, youth and young adults.
- e. Support international congregations in their outreach ministries.
 - 1) Offer ELCA or other suitable pastors, interns and lay workers for leadership.
 - 2) Offer ELCA's resources from its own diversified cultural background and church life.
 - 3) Encourage local church bodies to assume responsibility for these ministries within their contexts.
- f. Increase cooperation with other ELCA agencies and those of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Canada for mission in North America.
 - 1) Work with agencies that have primary responsibility for outreach and evangelism in North America, particularly among communities of people who have immigrated to the United States.
 - 2) Promote the use of personnel or other resources in companion churches for the evangelization of North America.

2. GOAL II - Program Objectives

To participate in the life-giving mission of the Triune God and to be in mission shaped by the cross, the Division for Global Mission will:

Be in solidarity with and advocate for people who are oppressed, poor and suffering, and share our resources to meet human need.

- a. **Health**— Support and develop health ministries that reach people who are the most vulnerable.
 - 1) Focus support of personnel and financial resources on primary health care programs in companion churches or countries whose health care systems are the least developed.
 - 2) Continue to maintain a close relationship with Global Health Ministries and expand on the Bangladesh “consortium”²⁷ model for initiation, program development and ongoing support.
 - 3) Support health care services for orphans and marginalized communities.

- 4) Promote preventive health education and counseling, and provide care for families of people living with HIV/AIDS, especially orphans of AIDS victims.
 - 5) Promote South-South exchange of medical personnel among ELCA companion churches and agencies as well as the sending of medical personnel from the North to the South.
 - 6) Provide leadership development opportunities for medical personnel in companion churches.
- b. Development**— Support integrated community development programs and activities.
- 1) Focus support of personnel and financial resources on development programs in two-thirds world²⁸ countries.
 - 2) Work with the Lutheran World Federation communion of churches, Lutheran World Relief and other ecumenical organizations and companion churches to promote health care and development.
 - 3) Promote environmental rehabilitation and protection in Africa, Asia and Latin American countries where the ELCA has active involvement.
 - 4) Continue support for the development of the Theology, Development and Evangelism (TDE) curriculum at ELCA seminaries.
- c. Education**— Enlist the educational resources of the ELCA in supporting general education programs of companion churches in countries with special educational needs.
- 1) Maintain on-going support to general education programs in Japan, China, Slovakia, Tanzania, and Namibia.
 - 2) Focus on specific countries for general educational assistance and exchange.
 - 3) Respond to requests for teachers and materials for English language programs in seminaries, Bible schools and general educational programs; support training of local English language teachers.
 - 4) Develop a Global Educators Network for purposes of recruitment and support of teachers, support of teacher development and education, and mutual exchange of educational personnel and resources.
 - 5) Encourage companion synods to support education programs in their companion churches and to support students in companion synod relationships.

d. Advocacy — Participate in public and prophetic advocacy programs.

- 1) Cooperate with the ELCA's Division for Church and Society, the communion of churches within the Lutheran World Federation, the World Council of Churches (WCC) and U.S. ecumenical partners and companion churches in public as well as informal advocacy efforts.
- 2) Enlist members of the ELCA for sending messages and other activities impacting policy makers and others in positions of power.
- 3) Focus on a limited number of selected major issues and advocacy concerns in selected countries, in consultation with companion churches.

3. GOAL III - Program Objectives

To participate in the life-giving mission of the Triune God and to be in mission shaped by the cross, the Division for Global Mission will:

Accompany churches around the world and invite them to accompany this church in expressing the unity of the Body of Christ and in cooperating in the mission of the Triune God.

a. Leadership Development - Give priority to leadership development within churches.

- 1) Increase by one-third the annual budget of the International Scholarships program.
- 2) Increase the scope of the International Scholarships program to include church workers in areas such as finance, health and development.
- 3) Give priority to development of women leaders with a minimum of 50% of ELCA's international scholarship resources.
- 4) Support women's studies programs.
- 5) Give priority to missionary positions with assignments that develop local leadership and capacity for self-reliance.
- 6) Develop a program for developing, tracking and recruiting ELCA theological professors, especially women, for international teaching ministries.

- b. **South-South** - Give priority to South-South opportunities for exchange of personnel, mutual consultation and sharing.
 - c. **Decision Making** - Develop mechanisms for participation in ELCA-DGM decisions by those affected by those decisions (round tables, advisory groups, representation in ELCA processes).
 - d. **Education** - Provide increased educational opportunities on the concept of *accompaniment* for ELCA leaders and members who are engaging in direct international relationships.
 - e. **Ecumenism** - Give priority to ecumenical avenues of cooperating in mission.
 - f. **ELCA Communities** - Support development of international relationships and involvement of ELCA members and communities of African American, Asian, Hispanic-Latino, American Indian-Alaska Native, and Arab-Middle Eastern descent.
 - 1) In a five-year cycle, provide annually a grant for exchange and/or consultation between an ELCA community and the communities of its international origin(s).
 - 2) Provide annual budgetary support for incentives for service in missionary and volunteer opportunities.
 - g. **New Relationships** - Develop guidelines and processes for establishing new relationships with churches and institutions.
- a. **Global Education** - Give priority to experiences and educational opportunities that challenge the ELCA to receive the witness of the global church.
 - 1) Provide educational experiences to ELCA through public global events.
 - 2) Develop, produce and distribute global education tools and resources.
 - 3) Expand the current global mission network to include ELCA congregations and members, ecumenical partners, ELCA seminaries and institutions of higher learning, global companion churches, global mission resource persons and other specific groups (youth, children, men, women, bishops, educational leaders, multicultural communities).
 - 4) Assist in providing educational leadership training to international personnel in preparation for conducting global mission education within the ELCA.
 - b. **Global Relationships** - Give priority to the development of relationships between the ELCA and international companions.
 - 1) Connect the ELCA with international companions and ecumenical partners for the purpose of facilitating global relationships and networking.
 - 2) Support the ELCA through education, assistance and training to strengthen global relationships.
 - 3) Provide the ELCA with opportunities for deeper understanding of and response to global concerns through personal encounters.
 - c. **Stewardship** - Join other ELCA units in articulating a vision of stewardship that will enable the ELCA to participate fully in the mission of the church.
 - 1) Challenge the ELCA to participate in a stewardship program that has a global focus.
 - 2) Ask the ELCA to provide financial gifts in support of global mission.
 - 3) Provide the ELCA with stewardship and educational programs and materials which support their ministry of participating in global mission stewardship efforts.
 - d. **Prayer** - Inspire ELCA members to a renewed and active prayer life for God's mission in today's world.

4. GOAL IV - Program Objectives

To participate in the life-giving mission of the Triune God and to be in mission shaped by the cross, the Division for Global Mission will:

Work with the ELCA in developing our gifts as a church and embracing the gifts of others as we walk together in global mission.

C. Criteria of Accompaniment Twelve Signposts

The proclamation in word and deed of the gospel of new life in Jesus, the Christ, underlies every program of the ELCA. As the ELCA draws on the church's understanding of God's calling to mission it walks along the road with its companions in the global body of Christ at the beginning of the 21st century. While specific, the *Signposts* below are criteria that are in transition. By its very essence, *accompaniment* assumes a process. The companions are on the road together, learning along the way. As an open-ended road of mutual learning, *accompaniment* assumes mutual respect among churches in which each has gifts to give and to receive. *Accompaniment* implies a process of movement together where community is both a means and an end.

Where "we" is used in the *Signposts*, it refers to the Division for Global Mission and the churches, agencies and individuals with whom it is in companion relationships. The implications of the *Signposts* can be useful for congregations and synods of the ELCA, and the DGM invites synodical global mission and companion synod committees to make use of them. As they engage in mission locally and globally, they may find the *Evaluation Questions and Implications for Walking Together* helpful in planning and evaluating their programs.

The insights of the DGM's previous planning, the needs presented by the present global environment and the implications of *accompaniment* offer these *Twelve Signposts* as criteria for the internal and shared evaluation of DGM programs by board, staff and companion churches.

1 Witness in Word and Deed

God offers life in Jesus to all people. Every human being on the planet has the right to hear the Good News of Jesus Christ.

a. Evaluation Questions

Does the ELCA witness to the gospel internationally among those who have not heard, have inadequately heard or who wish to dialogue regarding the Good News of Jesus Christ?

Is evangelism in both word and deed a high priority of the ELCA's programs?

Does the ELCA equip missionaries to articulate, witness and participate in God's mission?

b. Implications for Walking Together with:

ELCA Constituency	The DGM will devise a strategy for expanding annual coordination and education meetings for ELCA members and agencies involved in the Companion Synod Program in order to better equip them for involvement in global mission.
Missionaries	DGM missionary candidates will be chosen and missionaries evaluated on their ability to give a clear witness to the Gospel.
Ecumenical Partners	The DGM's regional and country strategies will exhibit increased commitment to and working with ecumenical partner churches for programs and placement of personnel in areas where ecumenical partners are active and for work in new areas.
Board	The board will monitor the DGM administration to ensure adequate resources and staffing for the Global Mission to the ELCA (GMELCA) department of the DGM in order to enhance the ELCA constituency's gifts for mission.
DGM Staff ²⁹	The DGM staff will note new areas for evangelism in countries in which it works and explore companion and ecumenical opportunities for outreach.

2 Witness under the Cross

The church witnesses from a position defined by the cross of Jesus Christ. In its attitude and actions it seeks to witness to the world from the servant stance of vulnerability and compassion.

a. Evaluation Questions

Does the ELCA listen respectfully to the people it seeks to serve and demonstrate that it is willing to rethink the cultural values inherent in its programs and methods?

Does DGM model a servant approach in relationship to staff and constituency?

Do the DGM's and companion synods' programs primarily serve the needs of the companion churches as well as their own or their constituency's needs?

b. Implications for Walking Together with:

Companion Churches	DGM will negotiate country strategies with companion churches that adequately address companion churches' expressed issues.
Missionaries	The DGM staff will work with missionary staff in their role as servants for walking together with companion churches.
ELCA Constituency	GMELCA will emphasize a theology of witness under the cross in its educational programs with its constituency.
Board	Board orientation will continue to emphasize global mission from the perspective of witness under the cross.

3 Interfaith Witness and Dialogue

Religious pluralism is a reality of the global environment for mission for both the ELCA's membership and companion churches. The ELCA is committed to include interfaith witness and conversation in its programs in order that there might be mutual understanding and respect between the ELCA and people of diverse faiths.

a. Evaluation Questions

Do the DGM's programs internationally, nationally and locally reflect a consciousness of and sensitivity to the world's faith traditions?

Do the DGM's programs nurture relationships that are the basis for interfaith witness and conversation?

Does the ELCA assume a stance of "gentleness and reverence" (I Peter 3.15) rather than an opponent stance toward members of diverse faiths and an openness to the transformation that we as Christians can experience through interfaith conversation and Christian witness?

Does the DGM resource personnel training programs and produce literature that will further interfaith witness and conversation by its constituency and companion churches?

b. Implications for Walking Together with:

Companion Churches	The ELCA will accompany its companions' exploration of interfaith programs for witness and conversation.
Missionaries	The DGM will continue to equip missionaries for interfaith witness and conversation.
ELCA Constituency	GMELCA will include sensitivity to interfaith witness and conversation in its educational programs with its constituency.
Ecumenical Partners	The DGM will make the most efficient use of its resources by including ecumenical partners in its planning for interfaith witness and conversation.
Board	The board will direct staff to continue efforts toward interfaith witness and dialogue.
DGM Staff	DGM staff will make use of ELCA seminars in advising missionaries and companion church leaders on training opportunities for interfaith witness and dialogue.

4 Ecumenical Approach

The ELCA will converse with its ecumenical partners when planning mission with companion churches in new areas. It will be open to new and varied ways of working in God's mission ecumenically.

a. Evaluation Questions

Do the DGM's plans reflect conversations with ecumenical partners for increased working together?

Do the DGM's plans include cooperation with the ELCA's full-communion ecumenical partners?

Do the DGM's programs consider delegating responsibilities among ecumenical partners?

b. Implications for Walking Together with:

Companion Churches	The ELCA will model a positive attitude toward other denominations in its relations with companion churches.
Missionaries	Missionaries will include in their agendas the promotion of good ecumenical relations in their areas of work. They will also work at building bridges to Christians with whom the ELCA has not had ecumenical relations.

Ecumenical Partners	As part of the communion of churches within the LWF, the ELCA will in its global mission planning communicate appropriately with the Lutheran World Federation both directly and through its Regional Office in North America. It will share its planning with the denominations in full communion with the ELCA, the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Canada, and Church World Service and Witness. It will communicate its plans to the World Council of Churches, Lutheran World Relief, regional councils of churches, and the Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod.
Board	The board will direct staff to include in its reports information from the global mission of denominations in full communion with the ELCA.
DGM Staff	DGM staff will continue placing missionaries in ecumenical settings and will try to prevent the export of denominational differences in the United States to international settings.

5 Wholistic Approach

The DGM will approach its programmatic decision making from a wholistic perspective. It will consider in its programs the implications of the Gospel for both spiritual and physical, individual and communal healing.

a. Evaluation Questions

Does the ELCA's involvement with companion churches or in new areas reflect witness in both word and deed?

Does the DGM's budget planning and distribution of resources reflect concern for physical as well as spiritual needs?

b. Implications for Walking Together with:

Companion Churches The ELCA will invite and listen to companion churches' reflections on the interpretation of the gospel from a wholistic perspective.

ELCA Constituency	Where common goals exist, the DGM will recognize and accompany other ELCA agencies in mission with companion churches.
Ecumenical Partners	The ELCA will request the help of its ecumenical partners' particular gifts in order to reach program objectives.
Board	The board will monitor the DGM's involvement in evangelism, interfaith dialogue and witness, health, development and global education from a wholistic perspective.
DGM Staff	DGM staff will try to find a dynamic balance of word and deed in the DGM's country strategies.

6 Justice, Peace and Integrity of Creation

The ELCA is a church situated within a wealthy world superpower. Recognizing the strengths and limitations of its situation, the DGM will pursue in its programs justice, peace and the integrity of creation by advocating for and identifying with people most affected by injustice, repression, and degradation of their environment. "... our active participation in concerns ... for justice, peace and the integrity of creation align us with God's final work of fulfillment. ..."³⁰

a. Evaluation Questions

Does the ELCA respond with intentional concern for companion churches whose gifts are repressed by racism, colonialism, economic deprivation, politics or gender inequity?

Is the ELCA mobilizing its constituency to publicly witness within U.S. society its concern for justice, peace and the integrity of creation?

Do the DGM's programs take into consideration the particular needs of children and youth?

Do DGM programs evidence concern for environmental issues as they impact individual lifestyle, physical well-being and life in society?

b. Implications for Walking Together with:

Missionaries	In considering the effects of repression on the people they serve, missionaries will explore the influence their status as U.S. citizens has on their ministries.
ELCA Constituency	ELCA members will evaluate the positive and negative influences their status as U.S. citizens has on their role in global mission.
Board	The board will monitor the staff's inclusion of justice, peace and integrity of creation issues in DGM programs. The board will note the influence North American traditions have on the formation of global mission policy and practice.
DGM Staff	The DGM staff will listen to the critiques of companion churches and evaluate the influence its U.S. traditions have on its decision making and formulation of policy.

7 South-South Programs

Many of the churches of the South are growing rapidly, producing capable leaders and high quality training agencies. The DGM will seek where possible to promote South-South placement of evangelistic, medical and educational missionaries and the training of leaders in institutions in the South.

a. Evaluation Questions

Is the ELCA encouraging the sending and receiving of missionaries from the South among its companion churches?

Does the DGM encourage appropriate ownership of South-South programs by its companion churches?

Is the number of international scholarship students studying in the U.S. and in Asia and the Southern hemisphere balanced?

b. Implications for Walking Together with:

Companion Churches	The DGM will work to open channels for South-South exchanges of personnel among its companion churches.
Ecumenical Partners	Wherever possible, the ELCA will explore with its ecumenical partners the availability of South-South resources in the ELCA's and in the partners' respective areas.
DGM Staff	DGM Staff will consider filling personnel positions through South-South exchanges wherever possible.
Board	The board will monitor the use of the South-South commitment in reviewing policies which govern international personnel, international scholarships and development.

8 Racial Diversity and Gender Equity

Racial diversity and gender equity are a source of energy and creativity in the church. The DGM will encourage racial diversity and gender equity both in the United States and in working with its companion churches. It will reflect in its strategies the high priority it places on respect for women by promoting the development of women for positions of leadership and full participation in church and community.

a. Evaluation Questions

Does the churchwide and missionary staff of the DGM reflect racial diversity and gender equity?

Does the board of the DGM reflect racial and gender diversity?

Do DGM programs encourage the full participation of women in leadership positions?

Does the DGM commit resources to and offer training toward respect for and systemic change toward racial diversity and gender equity?

Does the ELCA encourage racial diversity and gender equity within its companion churches?

b. Implications for Walking Together with:

Companion Churches	The DGM will encourage racial diversity and gender equity in South-South and other programs.
Missionaries	The DGM will work at strategies that promote racial diversity and gender equity in its missionary staff.
ELCA Constituency	The DGM through GMELCA will sensitize its constituency to the need for racial diversity and gender equity in synod and local global mission activities.
Board	The board will monitor the implementation and effectiveness of racial diversity and gender equity priorities within DGM programs.
DGM Staff	The DGM will maintain a diverse churchwide staff.

b. Implications for Walking Together with:

Companion Churches	Companion churches and staff will work to increase their capacity to communicate by equipping themselves with the most affordable and effective communication technology.
Missionaries	Missionaries will be involved and informed early on in the DGM's financial and other planning processes so that they may appropriately represent the ELCA in their ministries with companion churches.
ELCA Constituency	The DGM will equip ELCA constituency for effective and appropriate communication with companion churches and DGM staff.
DGM Staff	DGM staff will work at fostering and enhancing direct and transparent communication, including the area of finances, between the ELCA and companion churches.

9 Transparency in Communication and Finance

Communication among companions is open and honest, i.e., transparent. The DGM will strive to reflect an accurate picture of its motivations, programs and budgets in the mutual accountability it assumes between itself and companion churches.

a. Evaluation Questions

Do the DGM and its companion churches reflect in conversations their mutual strengths and weaknesses within their mission calling in their respective cultures?

Does the ELCA minimize practices which hinder mutual building up, and expect mutual accountability and admonition in consultations with its constituency and companion churches?

Is there direct church-to-church communication between the ELCA and companion churches rather than communication through intermediaries?

Is there mutual transparency in the sharing of overall budgets and program funding?

10 Shared Decision Making

The *accompaniment* model assumes that decisions are made through consultation. The DGM will consult with its constituency and companion churches to clarify practices for making decisions.

a. Evaluation Questions

Are the ELCA's companion churches participants in conversations leading to decisions affecting them?

Do DGM churchwide staff and missionaries model shared decision making?

Does the ELCA's constituency have access to information that will increase its capacity for involvement in God's global mission?

b. Implications for Walking Together with:

Companion Churches	The DGM will consult with companion churches in the preparation of regional and country strategies and share with companions data that enables them to be informed consultants in decision making.
Missionaries	The DGM will draw on the specialized information of its missionaries as consultants for decision making.

Board	The board will work to include the periodic input of a companion church leader from each of the five regions in which the ELCA is involved globally.
DGM Staff	Area program directors will consult with companion churches in the review of country strategies.

11 Diversity of Gifts

The DGM will seek to foster appreciation for a variety of gifts. It will work to appreciate gifts such as vitality, cross-cultural sensitivity and evangelical zeal as much as material gifts.

a. Evaluation Questions

Do the DGM's planning processes begin from a *gifts-based* rather than a *deficit-based* assessment?

In its exchange of gifts with companion churches, is the ELCA open to the flow of the gifts the companion churches choose to share with the ELCA?

b. Implications for Walking Together with:

Companion Churches	The DGM will encourage companion churches to identify ELCA needs and share their special gifts with the ELCA.
Missionaries	The DGM will work with missionaries and volunteers in affirming the various patterns of service in its planning.
ELCA Constituency	The DGM's educational programs will encourage the constituency to receive companion churches' gifts in ELCA congregations and synods.
Ecumenical Partners	The ELCA will utilize existing resources of ecumenical partners to reach regional and country objectives wherever possible.
Board	The board will encourage policies which utilize the diverse resources of companion churches for DGM regional and country programs wherever possible.
DGM Staff	The DGM will make the flow of gifts from South to North a high priority.

12 Contextualization

The ELCA will work with church bodies, agencies, individual Christians, and people of diverse faiths in order to contextualize programs. It will work to increase contextualization through leadership training.

a. Evaluation Questions

Does the ELCA's missionary staff encourage local leadership and train replacements for themselves among local church leaders?

Does the DGM give sufficient priority to the leadership development of youth?

Do the DGM's international scholarship training programs enable students to contextualize their theology and skills?

Does the DGM work with companion churches in doing mission in new areas?

b. Implications for Walking Together with:

Companion Churches	Communication with companion churches will emphasize the priority of national and international training programs and scholarships enabling members of the companion church to assume leadership positions.
Missionaries	Missionaries will commit themselves to learning how to adapt the gifts they bring to their mission context in appropriate ways.
ELCA Constituency	The ELCA will encourage its constituency to use its gifts in a way that does not foster dependency on outside resourcing or interfere with local programs or leadership.
DGM Staff	DGM staff will evaluate its planning from the perspective that mission is primarily the responsibility of the churches in a given region. It will acquaint itself with the understandings which motivate the companion church's mission outreach.

D Ongoing Use and Evaluation of Strategy

The DGM staff will publish the *Missiological Statement*, *Accompaniment in God's Mission, Goals and Directions*, and the *Twelve Signposts* in formats suitable for education and use by congregations of the ELCA.

The DGM board will use Goals and Program Objectives, *Goals and Directions*, and the *Twelve Signposts* and their supporting documents as primary criteria for evaluating the adherence of DGM's programs to the board's policies and its supervision of the executive director.

The DGM board will review Goals and Program Objectives, *Goals and Directions*, and the *Twelve Signposts* and their supporting documents within five to ten years and consider their suitability for evaluating the DGM's policies.

The DGM's executive director will use GM21 as a primary guideline for reporting to the board and for supervision of staff.

The DGM staff will use Goals and Program Objectives, *Goals and Directions*, and the *Twelve Signposts* as the primary guidelines for program formulation and implementation and for personnel placement.

The DGM will initiate a process that invites companion churches to share in the evaluation of DGM programs and the ongoing revision of the criteria used to evaluate programs.



APPENDIX I

**The Preparation of Global Mission 21
GM21 CALENDAR**

1997

Gathering of material, review of previous planning documents and receipt of ideas from study groups composed of various constituencies in global mission

1998

January Writing of first draft
March Board and staff reviews of first draft
April Rewrite

May Review by planning team
July Rewrite and mailing of second draft to companions' synods, missionaries, synods, congregations agencies and individuals for review
September Rewrite and review by planning team
October Review of second draft by board and staff
November Rewrite

1999

January Review by planning team and staff
February Rewrite
March Final draft to board

APPENDIX II

The Programs of the DGM

Underlying Commitments

The primary commitments of the DGM below are drawn from its planning documents prepared by the DGM board in the past ten years. Especially relevant to the current global environment for mission are:

a. Ecumenical Stance

Since the Reformation, there has been a strong global communion of Lutherans in fellowship around the world. Through the Lutheran World Federation and sometimes bilaterally, the ELCA is involved with fifty-six million Lutherans in sixty-eight countries. This communion of Lutheran churches enables the ELCA to learn from other churches with similar experiences in the challenges the ELCA faces in today's global context. Via its membership in the World Council of Churches (WCC) the ELCA also cooperates with the member churches of that body. At its 1997 Assembly the ELCA moved into full communion and thus increased networking on programs and resources with the Presbyterian Church (USA) (PCUSA), the Reformed Church in America (RCA) and the United Church of Christ (UCC).

b. Respect for Diverse Faiths

The DGM's efforts in interfaith understanding help the ELCA respect the world's diverse faiths and to be more effective in its Christian witness, rather than approach other faiths as adversaries. It offers programs in Islamics through which most of its missionaries and many of its pastors have become better acquainted with the tenets of Islam instructed by Muslim and Christian teachers. In many of the international areas in which it works, the ELCA through its companion churches and missionaries has daily contact with Buddhism and Hinduism. Several ELCA missionaries are specialists in world faiths. Respect for and advanced education about other faiths is a gift the ELCA can bring to

companion churches who live in areas where people of those faiths normally view one another as opponents.

c. Respect for Women

Repression of women is a worldwide phenomenon often fueled by cultural and religious tradition. Neither the U.S. nor the ELCA can claim to have achieved respect for women as an accomplished fact. However, in its positioning of women in leadership positions, the ELCA has a message of respect for women to which it can witness. Its missionaries and companion churches can help reinterpret Scriptural texts and customs used in support of the suppression of women. The goal is to free and more fully engage the powerful gifts women bring to the work of mission.

d. South-South Strategy

One of the most effective and efficient ways the church has found to multiply ministries is to facilitate the movement of missionaries from one country in the Southern hemisphere to another. The movement is a triangular arrangement among the missionary's home church, the church in which the missionary serves and the ELCA. Companion churches contextualize theological education by sending their scholars and leaders to Southern academic institutions.

e. Commitment to Diversity

From its inception the ELCA has been committed to embracing racial diversity. Although the ELCA membership increasingly reflects a diverse racial background, its history reflects a majority of members with Northern European traditions. The ELCA's record is not yet significant in increasing diversity, but diversity has always been a major goal. If the ELCA keeps commitment to diversity as a major item on its agenda, this commitment is a gift it can bring to other churches struggling with their own racial and regional concerns.

Programs

International Scholarships

The International Scholarship program offers possibilities for leadership development to ELCA companion churches and institutions. Scholarships, primarily for graduate-level theological education, are offered for persons designated by their companion church to study outside their home country. While many come to the U.S., almost half receive South-South scholarships to institutions in their own region.

Development Grants

Currently approximately one-third of the DGM's annual budget is allocated to development.

Health Ministries

DGM is committed to maintaining the current level of support for health ministries of companion churches. Positions of missionaries in key health ministries who have left missionary service are retained in future budgets. In Bangladesh, we have been invited to expand the current program and to develop other new programs. Health programs world-wide, including the United States, cannot simply operate on charges made to the patients; outside resources are needed.

Global Mission Events

GMEs are popular events in the ELCA attended by between three and four thousand participants each summer. Their purpose is to address the challenge of global mission to ELCA members. They include innovative, internationally resourced worship, Bible studies, films and videos, meetings with representatives of companion churches and Global University sessions based on dozens of global mission topics. Children and youth have their own special programs.

Companion Synods Program

Synods of the ELCA are paired with companion churches or districts of companion churches. The purpose of this program is to strengthen the ELCA and companion churches for life and mission. Each participates in the life of the other via prayer, study, communication and exchange of people and resources. All sixty-five synods of the ELCA are or have been in companion-synod relationships with eighty-one international churches or districts/dioceses.

Patterns of Missionary Service

Long-term Missionaries

Persons who see international mission as a long-term option are called with salary to serve companion churches with a requirement of ten to twelve years as a basic commitment. As of December 1997, there were 207 missionaries serving in 38 countries.

GM2 Missionaries

Persons who would like to make a two-year commitment are sent to serve in more specialized positions with companion churches and receive a modest stipend. In December 1997, 39 short-term missionaries were serving in 13 countries.

ELCA Global Volunteers

Terms for volunteers range from two months to two years as they serve in a wide variety of roles with companion churches using various forms of self-support. In December 1997, 90 volunteers were serving in 27 countries.

Letter of Agreement Staff

This term refers to missionaries who serve in special salaried positions under contract with the Division for Global Mission for various lengths of time, but not long enough to be considered long-term missionaries. In December 1997, there were 14 such persons serving in 11 countries.

FOOTNOTES

¹ For purposes of clarity, DGM has described the “South” as churches of the Southern hemisphere as well as churches living in oppressive contexts or in minority status such as in Asia, Central Europe, and Eastern Europe. “North” primarily refers to churches of the Northern hemisphere, especially the United States, Canada, and Europe.

² For a discussion of “communio” see LWF Report 26 by Eugene L. Brand, “Toward a Lutheran Communion: Pulpit and Altar Fellowship,” published by the Lutheran World Federation, 150 route de Ferney, Geneva, Switzerland.

³ See “Mission Strategy for Latin America,” pp. 9,10.

⁴ For evaluations of partnership, see “A Consultation on Companionship” by Dr. Prasanna Kumari or “Partnership in Development—a View from Ecumenical Funding Agencies” by Cees Oskam, available from the World Council of Churches, Geneva, Switzerland.

⁵ The DGM will continue to sponsor projects outside of North America not directly connected with a companion or other churches located in the project’s area. In such instances, however, it will consult with the Christians resident in the area.

⁶ See NRSV footnote for alternative translation: spirit, Genesis 1.2. See also Genesis 1.7 and Psalm 104.

⁷ *Accompaniment* easily translates into the active verb, *accompany*, and describes the liveliness of relationships in mission: as a missionary God, God *accompanies* us in Jesus Christ; we *accompany* God’s mission in a certain place, among certain peoples; a companion church *accompanies* us in God’s mission in the United States and the Caribbean; we *accompany* people of diverse faiths, developing relationships that form the basis of mutual witness and for walking together in common cause for justice and service to humanity.

Other derivatives of the word easily follow, such as *companion* and *companionship*: we are *companions* in God’s mission; we cooperate with *companion* churches; we share a *companionship* in mission.

The etymology of *accompaniment* and *companion* is Latin: “panis”=bread and “cum”=together. Eating bread together indicates a deep sense of fellowship. For the Christian, this deep meaning is evident in the Emmaus story (Luke 24:13–35) when, at the end of day’s journey, the companions break bread together.

The model of *accompaniment* and its resulting terminology can remind us to avoid language that implies mission as conquest, pioneering take-over of frontier territory, making people objects of mission, engaging in a “numbers game” evangelism strategy, and taking inappropriate initiatives as outsiders. *Accompaniment* language continually pulls us back to the image of walking alongside one another.

⁸ Memberships and resources for mission in mainline denominations in the North are declining or at best holding stable while churches in the South continue to grow, some at rates of 10% or more annually. “The momentum and leadership in world evangelization has shifted to the Two-Thirds World to the extent that North America no longer carries the lion’s share of the burden.” James F. Engel, *A Clouded Future*, 1996.

⁹ Post-denominational churches such as in China and Laos ask that denominational identity not be re-introduced in their countries. (Some would say these churches are pre-denominational.) The ELCA has already accepted full communion with three Protestant church bodies and has proposals for more.

¹⁰ The change from the old to new paradigm is a movement over many decades, a continuum, not simply a quick leap from past to present. It is also clear that different churches and different relationships are at various places on the continuum. All statements are generalized and globalized, and there are exceptions in several circumstances.

¹¹ In organizing this summary of the development of global mission in the past century and the emerging of autonomous local churches, the concept of the “Three-Selfs” will be used: self-propagating, self-governing, self-supporting. This concept was developed in the mid-1800s by Rufus Anderson (American Congregationalist) and Henry Venn (British CMS) as a remedy to inattention given by the nondenominational mission societies to the development of local confessional churches on the mission field. It would be over a century before Northern mission agencies, pressed by the development of independent nations from former colonies, seriously nurtured the organization of independent local national churches.

¹² Barrett, ed: *World Christian Encyclopedia*, p.3.

¹³ In many cases, mission fields of various Northern agencies in one country became the geographic districts or dioceses of a national Lutheran church or a federation of Lutheran churches. In some cases, they developed as several separate Lutheran churches within the same country and continue to express the theological stance or church practice of the parent mission agency.

¹⁴ In some cases, it is the non-present Northern partner, a sort of absentee landlord, who makes decisions in the North that have vast implications for the churches in the South. Some local Christian leaders wonder if they are really free to make their own decisions as long as they are still dependent on decisions, funding and personnel of the North. Some churches feel manipulated by subtle and sometimes not-so-subtle influence from the North. A few Northern representatives threaten to withdraw support if a church does not comply with their church practice or doctrinal stance.

¹⁵ This term comes from Justo Gonzalez, *Mañana*.

¹⁶ Organization of new national church bodies often meant simply a transfer of foreign mission work based on approaches and structure from Europe and North America. The mission agencies continued to send personnel and funds to support work that was now under local control. This ensured the continuation of the mission-initiated structures and ministries. In some churches, funding still continues to go directly and bilaterally to the individual districts or dioceses formerly associated with Northern mission agencies. The ability of the national structure to lead and coordinate the ministry of the whole church is undermined when Northern agencies continue to cooperate directly with segments of the church. This continuing practice creates injustice among the various segments of the church and leaves new mission districts, or districts with less affluent Northern partners, with fewer resources and relationships than the older districts have.

Today, many Eastern European, Central European and Southern hemisphere countries sag under the weight of outside debt and the debilitating influence of the new global market economy (based on capital and with few controls). The dreams of independence and prosperity of a few decades ago remain unfulfilled and there is a widening gap between rich and poor, internationally and internally. Many churches' memberships are primarily people who are poor and have few resources to support costly church structures, facilities, and ministries. Some churches are being asked by their governments, who are struggling under the weight of structural adjustments imposed by the global economic system, to take up more of their society's burden of health care, development, education and social ministries. Some are taking over the large development programs that have been begun and maintained in their countries by Lutheran World Federation and other international relief and development agencies. Maintenance of these programs will continue to rely on outside support.

¹⁷ The Global Mission to the ELCA program developed with the recognition that, given their short home leaves, missionaries are no longer the primary educators in mission. Traditionally, missionaries comprised the major portion of the global mission budget. If we calculate that every sixth year was spent in deputation, traveling and speaking, we must assume that a large percentage of earlier mission budget was spent in connecting church members to the missionaries and the global mission program, a portion many times the size of today's investment in the mission education program.

Given the changing role of the missionary in interpreting and educating the supporting constituency, DGM's mission education department offers major programs to reach ELCA members and congregations. Global Mission Events annually engage several thousand members in a rich educational and motivational experience with active participation of international speakers and teachers. The Companion Synods Program links each of the 65 ELCA synods with one or more companion churches or dioceses. Missionaries in Residence (MIR) programs provide direct contact with active missionaries. Visitation programs send visitors both directions, creating face-to-face encounters between leaders and grass roots members. Direct placement of international missionaries from companion churches in ELCA congregations, synods, seminaries, outdoor ministries and other settings is a growing program.

There are increasing opportunities for ELCA members to serve in volunteer and short term mission assignments. The direct involvement of the ELCA constituency in supporting volunteers increases their participation and awareness of global mission. The Missionary Sponsorship program, support of the increasing numbers of volunteers, and designated giving opportunities all serve to enable more participation through relationships.

¹⁸ Barrett, David B., "Annual Statistical Table on Global Mission: 1997" in *International Bulletin of Missionary Research*, Vol. 21, No.1, January 1997, p. 24.

¹⁹ See p. 55 ff. in *Give Us This Day Our Daily Bread: Sufficient, Sustainable Livelihood for All*, a study on economic life, Division for Church in Society of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, October 1996.

²⁰ See report of The World Council of Churches - Unit III Commission Meeting, Nairobi, Kenya, January 1997.

²¹ Barrett, David B., *ibid*.

²² *A Survey of Partner Churches and Mission Agencies*, Division for Global Mission, 1994.

²³ The term "South-South" refers to exchanges between churches largely in the Southern hemisphere, as opposed to the exchanges of personnel from North American or European churches with Southern churches, known as North-South exchanges.

²⁴ ELCA Constitution, Bylaws, and Continuing Resolutions, 4.02.b.

²⁵ *Ibid* 16.11.F91

²⁶ The *Priorities* as written are intended for use to the year 2000. They will be superseded by the *Program Objectives* in Global Mission 21 Report.

²⁷ Lutheran Health Care: Bangladesh is a consortium of ELCA congregations and related organizations formed to work with the DGM to develop and help support a health ministry in Bangladesh. The program is focused on a preventive health care system, community development and a mother and child care clinic.

²⁸ Those sections of the world not yet industrialized or still developing into industrialized nations.

²⁹ Throughout the Criteria section, *DGM Staff* or *Staff* refers to DGM staff located in or deployed from the Lutheran Center, with the exception of those designated as *missionaries*.

³⁰ "Costly Unity" p. 11, a report resulting from a World Council of Churches consultation on Koinonia and Justice, Peace and the Integrity of Creation at Ronde, Denmark, February 24-28, 1993.