

Vocabulary Worksheet

(Source: www.elca.org/globalmission/welcomeforward/)

Learning a few words in the language of your companion can help foster communication. Below are some useful words and phrases. Ask someone who speaks the language of the country to help you translate the phrases.

Please _____

Thank you _____

Hello _____

Good bye _____

I'm pleased to meet you _____

Good morning _____

Good evening _____

Good night _____

God bless you _____

God be with you _____

Peace be with you _____

Breakfast _____

Lunch _____

Dinner/supper _____

Where is the restroom? _____

How much does this cost? _____

Very nice (general compliment) _____

Where is the church? _____

The hotel? _____

The bus? _____

The market? _____

Companion Synods Basics

The Companion Synods Program is a concrete expression of the communion fellowship of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA) with companion churches of the Lutheran World Federation (LWF).

More than 140 member churches from 78 countries (as of March 1, 2006) consider their communion within the LWF as an expression of the one, holy, catholic, and apostolic church. The relationships that ELCA synods form with other Lutheran church bodies seek to be an expression of this relationship among global Lutherans.

Through the program, companion churches nurture and strengthen one another for life and mission within the body of Christ. Companions participate in one another's life and ministry through prayer, study, communication, exchange of visitors and sharing of resources. Companion relationships open our eyes to the many challenges of the global context, and call us to deepen our commitment to be true disciples of Christ as individuals and together as a Lutheran communion of faith.

Benefits of companion relationships

As Christians, we are not fully the one holy and catholic church without a global perspective. A companion relationship enlarges our world view. Global connections help us see the world's challenges in a new way and examine our own problems and joys through new eyes. These connections also strengthen God's mission in the world.

Participants in the program

All 65 synods of the ELCA participate in at least one companion church relationship. Because many synods have developed more than one relationship, more than 107 companion synod relationships exist. Some ELCA synods, such as the South Carolina Synod and the Japan Evangelical Lutheran Church, relate to an entire church body while others, such as the Lower Susquehanna Synod and the Konde Diocese of the Lutheran Church of Tanzania, relate to a synod or diocese of a church.

The role of ELCA Global Mission within the program

The ELCA has mandated ELCA Global Mission to support, nurture, and strengthen relationships between ELCA synods and international companion churches. ELCA

Global Mission assists in establishing and carrying out these relationships on behalf of the ELCA, and helps educate and interpret the accompaniment model for mission as it is carried out through the Companion Synods Program.

The Lutheran World Federation: A global communion

There is one body and one Spirit, just as you were called to the one hope of your calling, one Lord, one faith, one baptism, one God and Father of all, who is above all and through all and in all. —Ephesians 4:4-6

The Lutheran World Federation—a communion of churches through which God calls us to be the body of Christ—was founded in 1947 in Lund, Sweden. In 2006, the LWF represents 66 million Lutherans worldwide. LWF member churches confess the triune God, agree in the proclamation of the Word of God, and are united in altar and pulpit fellowship.

The LWF acts on behalf of its member churches in areas of common interest such as communication, ecumenical

relations, human rights, humanitarian assistance, theology, and the various aspects of mission and development. For more information, go to www.lutheranworld.org

*“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.”*

—ELCA Global Mission

“Connection is everything. Relationship to God and to each other is life itself.”

—Heidi B. Neumark, *Breathing Space*

Accompaniment Basics

Central Africans have their own expression for accompaniment: maboko na maboko, which means “hand in hand.”

Companion synod relationships embody the accompaniment model for mission, the missiological vision of ELCA Global Mission.

Accompaniment—literally, *walking together* side by side—is a mutual relationship between companion churches who walk together in service in God’s mission. Each church has primary responsibility for mission in its own area.

Central Africans have their own expression for accompaniment: *maboko na maboko*, which means “hand in hand.”

The biblical roots of accompaniment are found in the incarnation of Jesus when God walks with us. One of the stories that unfolds this presence is 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, all provide images of our journey together in God’s mission. We walk with one another in a journey where the presence of God is revealed to us. God in Christ accompanies us in the fellowship of word and table.

The accompaniment model rose out of the changing paradigm of mission. A few generations ago, European and North American churches were the churches with resources, who sent missionaries to preach the gospel in places where it had not been heard. Today, churches throughout the world are now made up of people who have been Christians for generations. Instead of taking the lead on mission in their countries, we interact with one another as colleagues, fellow workers in the vineyard of Christ. Mature churches, each with their own strengths and characteristics, learn from one another in mutual respect. In places where there is no Christian presence, we partner with neighboring churches and ecumenical partners.

Receiving: a key part of accompaniment

In the accompaniment model “receiving” is as important to “sending.” The act of receiving acknowledges the wide variety of gifts and talents present in the global Christian family. Companions who walk together in accompaniment emphasize recognizing and embracing one another’s gifts. Being open to and appreciative of the gifts of companions is a hallmark of accompaniment and the Companion Synods Program.

Guiding principles

Accompaniment is more than an exclusive contract between two or more companion churches. It is walking together in Jesus Christ of two or more churches in companionship and in service in God’s mission. Companions who walk together in accompaniment:

- Honor one another’s integrity
- Make decisions mutually
- Value their interdependence
- Respect one another’s context, situation, and practical limitations
- Respect one another as interpreters of their own experience
- Are open to new experiences, new information, and in some cases, conflicting values
- Emphasize relationship over resources
- Acknowledge one another’s gifts
- Practice transparency in all matters
- Confirm that each church has the primary responsibility for mission in its area

Adhering to these principles in all matters will help build a foundation of trust that is essential to an honest, open relationship. Relational difficulties may occur when there is not a firm commitment to the principles of accompaniment.

Accompaniment Kyrie

Leader: As you walked in the Garden with Adam and Eve,

People: Accompany us, O Lord.

Leader: As you watched Jacob walk to meet his brother Esau,

People: Accompany us, O Lord.

Leader: As you led your people through the desert with a pillar of fire,

People: Accompany us, O Lord.

Leader: As you inspired Ruth to faithfully follow Naomi,

People: Accompany us, O Lord.

Leader: As you walked with your disciples, healing and preaching,

People: Accompany us, O Lord.

Leader: As you joined Cleopas and his companion on the road to
Emmaus,

People: Accompany us, O Lord.

Leader: As you traveled with Paul and Timothy on their missionary
journeys,

People: Accompany us, O Lord.

All: Amen.

Cross-cultural Relationships

1. Peerness should be the principal characteristic of our interaction with those different from us. Each human being is valid and should be actively affirmed by others.
2. We should be willing “to get to know each other.” This relationship process cannot be rushed. It is at the heart of establishing trust.
3. Expect some distrust until you have had time to establish your credibility. This will usually involve action, not just words.
4. Each of us should take full pride in our cultural identity and expect to be fully validated for who we are. We should want others to feel the same about themselves and learn to validate them.
5. Each of us should expect to cooperate with others, not feel that we or they have to accommodate or deny part of who we are for the sake of the interaction.
6. We should be fully aware of the various ways in which society excludes and discriminates against some members. We cannot be naïve about the realities of our social context.
7. When it occurs, we should admit to ourselves that we are afraid of those who are different from us. At times it is appropriate to admit this to others.
8. We should expect to make mistakes in cross-cultural relating. It helps to be able to say, “I’m sorry.”
9. We should not expect to have attention for this work if we have not taken care of nourishing our own support system.
10. It is important to consciously develop ally relationships with people from our culture. We need friendships.
11. We need to be able to share our history and ask them for theirs.
12. Periodically feeling like a failure is part of the process. There will inevitably be mistakes as we relate across differences.
13. Be able to articulate how cross-cultural relationships are in your self-interest.
14. Strive to understand just how you may have been taught to have biased feelings and attitudes toward others.
15. Acquire as much accurate information about other people as you possibly can.
16. Any effective relationship needs to have at its roots a sense of personal empowerment and self-confidence.

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Cultural Norms Worksheet

(Source: www.elca.org/globalmission/welcomeforward/)

What are the main food staples? _____

What kind of dress is customary? _____

What languages are spoken? _____

What holidays are celebrated? _____

Are there other specific customs that may be unfamiliar? _____

How do people regard physical proximity? _____

In what situations is behavior formal or informal? _____

To what extent are openness and confrontation valued? _____

With whom is it best to be discreet and polite? _____

What are the established roles for men? For women? _____

How do the genders relate to one another? _____

What is the concept of time? _____

What role does tradition play? _____

Is the orientation more towards immediate conditions or the future? _____

To whom, how, and from whom is respect shown? _____

What are the local definitions of honor and dignity? _____

A Code of Ethics for Tourists

Travel in a spirit of humility and with a genuine desire to learn more about the people of your host country.

Be sensitive to the feelings of other people, thus preventing what might be offensive behavior on your part. This applies to photography as well.

Cultivate the habit of listening and observing, rather than merely hearing and seeing.

Realize that often the people in the country you visit have time concepts and thought patterns different from your own; this does not make them inferior, only different.

Instead of looking for that beach paradise, discover the enrichment of seeing a different way of life through other eyes.

Acquaint yourself with local customs. What is courteous in one country may be quite the reverse in another. People will be happy to help you.

Instead of the practice of knowing all the answers, cultivate the habit of asking questions.

Remember that you are only one of the thousands of tourists visiting this country and do not expect special privileges.

If you really want your experience to be a "home away from home," it is foolish to waste time and money on traveling.

When you are shopping, remember that the bargain you obtain is only possible because of the low wages paid to the maker.

Do not make promises to people in your host country unless you are certain you can carry them through.

Spend time reflecting on your daily experiences in an attempt to deepen your understanding. It has been said that what enriches you may rob and violate others.

(First issued in 1975 by the Christian Conference of Asia)

Team Member Roles

First Aid Organizer/Giver

This person is aware of participant's medical conditions and gives first aid attention if necessary. Medical knowledge, including CPR and the Heimlich maneuver, would be helpful. He/she should assemble two small first aid kits, packed in different suitcases.

- Band-Aids®
- Ace® bandages
- Heat/cold packs
- Analgesics
- Decongestants
- Fever reducers
- Pepto-Bismol®
- Antidiarrheal medicine
- Antibacterial ointments
- Laxatives
- Antihistamines
- Sunburn relief
- Sterile syringes, for use in medical emergency
- Gloves
- Epipen® (antidote for bee sting)

Gift Coordinator

Lists and coordinates group gifts for local hosts: small or handmade gifts symbolic of the synod or area, or an expression of Christian fellowship, such as books, music, banners, or recordings as well. Pack in several suitcases.

Photographer

Takes photos on behalf of group so that eight people don't try to get same shot. Consider two photographers, one with a conventional camera and one with a digital camera, for a variety of media presentations upon return. On site visits, this person should ask local leaders for permission to take photos *before* anyone begins snapping.

Name and note taker

Records, with correct spelling, the names and titles of people who make presentations to your group during the trip—a detail that is often overlooked and is difficult to reconstruct later. Note addresses as well, for sending thank you notes after the trip.

Telephone/e-mail tree person

Phones or e-mails home when communication is available, initiating a phone tree to contact the families of other travelers. This is especially important if traveling to places where unrest may leave families at home anxious.

Journaling Worksheet

(Source: www.elca.org/globalmission/welcomeforward/)

Use your journal to:

- capture impressions of the journey
- process the experience as it happens
- remember the experience when it is over

Observe and record

Include details that capture the breadth of your experience: who you meet; what you see and do; what everything looked like

Feel

Feelings can serve as a barometer by alerting you to what's going on and can help you understand your reaction to a situation. They also help you clarify your expectations. What's hard? Hurtful? Challenging? Joyful?

Link observation and feelings about crossing cultures

A good way to process cross-cultural settings, recommended by L. Robert Kohls, is to divide the journal page into two columns:

OBSERVATION/DESCRIPTION

On this side of the journal, describe what you saw. Anything that strikes you as different, funny, weird, sad, etc. is appropriate. Feelings, emotions, judgments should not be expressed on this side. Just stick to the facts.

OPINION/ANALYSIS

On this side of the journal, describe your thoughts, feelings, etc. about the event. Then try to analyze why you feel this way. What in your cultural makeup may be affecting what you feel? How is that different from whatever values or assumptions may be at work in the new culture?

Interpret

Capture meditations that allow a pattern of meaning to emerge.

- What about this experience is particular, i.e., has to do with you who you are, what you intended?
- What has to do with objects, people, and causes in the world?

Reflect

How does this experience fit into your life story? What is its meaning for you? What makes this experience uniquely yours? What makes it universal? How does this experience help you understand your life as a person of faith, and to what does God call you in relation to it? What did you learn? What did you use from your education in the midst of the experience?

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Reread

Reread your journal entries once or twice during your trip. If more time in the country has changed or deepened your impressions, make notes. Save space for more entries when you return home. Reread your entries again, and write new ones about your feelings and observations now that the trip is over. What ideas were challenged? Questions answered? Hypotheses confirmed? Highlight or circle important passages you want to reread later. Use another color ink to make notes on your entries in the margins. Number pages, and on a blank page, create an index (“p 20: Tuesday, October 2; visit to Iglesia San Juan and lunch with parishioners”)

Things to include

- Notes from speakers, including time, date, names, and place
- Specific quotes you hear
- Day-to-day agenda
- Sights, sounds, and smells that you are experiencing
- Questions that arise
- Experiences that happen outside the formal agenda
- Stories, poems, sketches
- Dreams
- Hopes and visions you have for the people you meet and your loved ones back home
- Commitments you make to yourself or others, especially as they relate to your life back home

Make it easy

- Don't worry about grammar or even complete sentences. A list of sounds and smells or a couple of phrases can capture the feelings of the moment.

Start now

- Before you leave, answer these questions in your journal:
 - Why am I taking this journey?
 - What am I anticipating most about this journey?
 - What are my fears?
 - What questions and concerns do my family and friends have?
 - What are my key questions?
 - When did I have a “journey” experience in the past?
 - What was the effect of that experience on my life?
 - What does that experience tell me about preparing for the upcoming journey?
 - Who are some of the people I wish could accompany me on this journey? Have I told them? What are some ways in which they can accompany me?
 - How will my faith affect my attitude as I travel to a culture very different from my own?

Put your name and address in your journal, so it can be returned if it is lost.

Receiving International Visitors

Welcoming visitors is at the heart of *receiving*—that part of accompaniment in which we graciously receive gifts from others. When we open our lives and homes to offer hospitality to others, we create a space where gifts can be exchanged.

As you and your congregation prepare for your visitors, remember: our countries and our cultures are different. It's important for all participants in the exchange to be sensitive and flexible with one another as the gifts of our cultures are revealed.

PREPARING FOR THE VISIT

Read about your guest

Learn all you can about your guest before he or she arrives: name, age, home town, birthplace, and other background information. Special needs—diet, transportation, disability issues, etc.—should also be listed in his or her profile.

Sample the culture

Try to learn a little about your guest's culture and foods. Read a book or see a movie from your guest's culture. And try to learn a few words of welcome in your guest's language!

Remember your own experiences

If you have traveled outside the U.S., recall what it is like to visit a different

country. (If you haven't, imagine it! Or talk to someone who has traveled outside of the U.S.) What was a help to you, the last time you were in a new place for an extended period of time? Use your memory to make your guest's visit more comfortable. When your guest arrives, find out about his or her trips outside his/her country. What is it like for them?

WELCOMING YOUR GUEST

If it is your job to meet your guest at the airport, arrange a meeting place, be on time, and bring a sign with his or her name to make yourself easy to identify. At your first meal, pray a prayer of thanksgiving for your guest's safe arrival.

Offer your guests a gift on arrival *and* departure. A gift at the beginning of the visit may be something that will help during their visit—a journal, writing materials, or a book about your region. On departure, give something more meaningful, as you will know them better.

Gifts don't need to be expensive; in fact, expensive gifts may put a burden on the visitor to give a valuable gift in return. Look for something made locally. T-shirts or photo albums of the visit can also make great gifts. Think twice about objects that are heavy or fragile—they may have a long way to travel.

The best gift is to keep in touch after the visit. Write letters or exchange e-mail messages. Keeping in touch not only reminds your visitors that you are thinking of them, but helps synod members and congregations retain some of the vitality of the visit.

Introduce your guest to household routines

Make a list of household guidelines that will help make your guests more comfortable (sleeping arrangements, wake up time, using the bathroom, kitchen, laundry, TV etc.). Introduce your guests to the routines of the household and encourage them to ask questions if they are unsure about something. Go slowly as guests may be worried about their English ability at this point. Let your guests know what they are expected to do and not do around the house. Introduce your guest to any ritual activities (such as saying grace at meal times) that may be part of your daily life in the home.

Address food concerns

Sharing a meal can be one of the highlights of the visit...and a difficult transition for internationals who have never been to the U.S. before. Think back to your first experiences with international cuisine. If you have lived abroad, did you miss the food that you grew up with? Be sensitive to different palates and try to gauge what your guests may or may not want.

Encourage the guest to state food preferences. Don't push food on the guest, either in amount or kind. But do try to proceed as normally as possible, sharing your customary diet with visitors. Most guests will be curious about food and will be glad to try a new dish.

While guests should be willing to try the food in your home, please have some basic staples, such as rice, available for the guests. Their bodies may not be accustomed to the wide range of rich foods found in the U.S. Offer them the opportunity to prepare something for themselves if they want. It's a good idea to locate a grocery store that stocks food from the guest's home location, in case he or she misses something or wants to cook for you. Go shopping together so that they can pick out something they might want to eat. Some people may be shy about voicing their likes and dislikes, while others may be quite vocal!

Listen

After arriving, your guest may be overwhelmed with the stimulus of being in a new place. Your efforts to reach out in helpful ways during this time will go a long way in establishing a mutually rewarding friendship. Ask frequently and personally if your guest needs something. Guests may feel shy about asking for anything or asking "silly questions," but they may have questions about your city/town, the U.S. and about life in general here.

GETTING ALONG WITH YOUR GUEST

Cultural and personality differences
Recognize that everyone has a different personality. Some international guests will be outgoing, others shy. Some will have considerable experience abroad; for others, this will be their first international visit. It may take time to know your guest well. Be patient and consistent. Remember that your guest is coming from a very different cultural background, and may have some initial trouble adapting to life in the U.S. Be open and enjoy the diversity of opinions,

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cultural customs, food and habits. You may be surprised by your reactions to some of these differences. Ask your guest if he or she is surprised by anything here in the U.S.

Avoid judgment

All of us tend to evaluate behavior that is different from what we are used to. It may strike us as too much, too little, good, wrong, rude, etc. Resist the temptation to make judgments! Try observing the behavior, and asking questions instead.

COMMUNICATING WITH YOUR GUEST

Communicating can be difficult—even between two people of the same culture who speak the same language. The possibilities for misunderstanding multiply when people are from different cultures and speak different languages! Your guest may not understand what you are saying; you may not understand what your guest means. Keep these guidelines in mind:

- Make no assumptions about what your guest expects, what they know, or what they have understood: **ask**. For example, don't assume that silence means the guest has not understood you. Maybe they are waiting for you to finish, or thinking about an answer; maybe, in their culture, it is impolite to jump right in with an answer, the way we do.
- Encourage your guest to approach you about anything they do not understand.
- Pay attention to non-verbal cues—the “unspoken message” conveyed by eye contact, arms and legs, silences, nods. Some say 80% of communication is non-verbal, especially at the beginning of the conversation. Tone of voice and facial expressions are important clues too.

- Remember that under conditions of high anxiety or fatigue communication effectiveness decreases drastically. Do not overload your guest with information upon arrival. Give them a day or two to settle in.
- Keep in mind that trying to communicate in a foreign language all the time can be exhausting, and be patient with your guest and yourself.
- Know your own limitations and biases, and be open to cultural differences. Self-awareness and awareness of your own culture is essential.

Conversing

Follow these suggestions for better communication:

- Start slowly until you can gauge your guest's comfort level with English.
- Speak clearly and a little more slowly than usual. Avoid exaggerating and speaking broken English.
- Give instructions in simple language and ask the guest to tell you what he/she understood. Avoid asking, “Do you understand?” as the answer will always be yes, even if they have not understood!
- North American culture is characterized by indirect and euphemistic communication. Use very explicit, direct questions, not relying on such things as tone of voice and the guest inferring what you mean. State your assumptions.
- Expect some awkward silences in the conversation and don't expect to fill every gap.
- Give your guest enough time to form his or her sentences. Be flexible and rephrase your sentences if you are not understood.

- Encourage your guest to talk about himself/herself. Ask open-ended questions such as: “What sports do you like?” “Tell me about your family.”
- Listen until they have finished—right to the end. North Americans usually place the most important points at the beginning of their speech. In some cultures it is the exact opposite, with background information given at the beginning.
- Allow extra time, and be patient.
- Do things that don’t require lots of words such as outdoor games, sports, or taking a walk.

SCHEDULING YOUR GUEST’S TIME

Worship, potlucks, sightseeing, outings to museums, parks, zoos, and other cultural venues: North American life is fast-paced and fun, but may overwhelm visitors. As you plan your guest’s visit:

- Leave time for rest and relaxation
- Ask your guests about their interests, and take them to one event in that area (music, sports, theatre, etc.).
- Share local events. A high school ball game may be just as exciting as a professional one.
- Include interaction with many kinds of people—perhaps friends from other denominations, and individuals outside the Christian community.

FAQ FOR INTERNATIONAL HOSTS

Do I have to entertain the guest or plan special activities? Remember that adjusting to a different culture, and speaking a different language is physically, emotionally, and mentally exhausting—a balance of schedule is necessary. Offer options.

What do I do if my guest simply wants to stay in his or her room and read? This might be exactly what that guest needs to do to unwind. Remember, being far from home and having little privacy can be very stressful. It is best to offer the guest the opportunity to participate in family activities and then leave the decision up to him or her.

What do I do if a guest becomes ill or needs to go to the hospital? Seek help immediately. Your guest has emergency medical insurance through the ELCA. Take your guest to the doctor or hospital with the medical information form you received from your coordinator. Let the visit coordinator know that you are going.

Is there anything else I should know about hosting a guest with limited language ability? Yes, trying to speak in a new or second language for extended periods of time can be exhausting, so be patient with your guest and don’t be offended if he or she does not try to keep up a constant conversation. Also, some guests are embarrassed by their limited ability, so letting them see that you are pleased with their efforts is a wonderful way to encourage your guest to use this time with you to improve their English.