

Summary: Companion Synods Program Synod Questionnaire 2003

Victoria Flood

Department for Research and Evaluation, ELCA

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The Companion Synods Program, operated by the Division for Global Mission (DGM), pairs ELCA synods with church bodies around the world. The Companion Synods Program has grown to include over 105 pairings between ELCA Synods and Companion Churches in at least 52 other countries. Many of the pairings are well past the establishment phase and are looking to determine what will best characterize a long-term, sustainable relationship. In addition, the DGM has recently established a new model for its churchwide operation of the Companion Synods Program and continued emphasizing the importance of the ministry of accompaniment – the foundation for the Companion Synods Program – throughout its activities.

Therefore, DGM is working with the Department for Research and Evaluation (DRE) to conduct an in-depth evaluation of the Companion Synods Program. As part of this evaluation, DGM and DRE staff created a questionnaire for each synod to complete that would provide current and detailed information regarding the status of each companion synod relationship. Synods (primarily global mission chairs and companion synod liaisons) were mailed the questionnaire and DGM staff provided assistance in completing the questionnaire. Every synod has at least one companion relationship and several synods have more than one. We received completed questionnaires for 74 companion relationships for a response rate of approximately 70 percent.

A few of the companion synod relationships began within this past year while others have been in existence for over 15 years. Respondents to the questionnaire indicated their relationships were initiated as far back as 1987 and as recently as 2003. Nearly 80 percent of those responding to this question are in relationships that were established before 2000.

DGM categorizes its global work into four geographic regions of the world: Africa, Asia, Europe/Middle East, and Latin America/Caribbean. The following table shows a breakdown of the total number of companion relationships in each of these geographic regions and the number of relationships for which we received a completed questionnaire.

Table 1: Total Companion Relationships and the Number of Relationships with a Completed Questionnaire

<u>Geographic Region</u>	<u>Total number of Relationships</u>	<u>Number of Relationships with a Completed Questionnaire</u>
Africa	50	36
Asia	12	7 ¹
Europe / Middle East	23	13
Latin America / Caribbean	20	18 ²

¹Relationships with Malaysia and Singapore were reported as one.

²There are two synods with relationships to Cuba. Currently, there is no activity to report from either synod.

The report that follows is a summary of the response data by questionnaire section. Percentages are used to make comparisons easier among the geographic regions since there are differing numbers of responses from each region. Please see the attached document for the complete response data.

Communication with Companion

Synods were asked to indicate the various means of communication used both in communicating to their companion and in how their companion communicates to them. All means of communication listed in the questionnaire are used to varying degrees, but e-mail was chosen most frequently for communication in both directions. Telephone/fax was used least by relationships with African companions and letter/newsletter was used least by relationships with Asian companions. Tables 2 and 3 show a breakdown of these responses by the percentage of synod relationships in each geographic region.

Table 2: Communication from Synod to its Companion

<u>Means of Communication</u>	<u>Percentage of Synods by Geographic Region</u>			
	<u>Africa</u>	<u>Asia</u>	<u>Europe / Middle East</u>	<u>Latin America / Caribbean</u>
Letter / Newsletter	83%	57%	77%	89%
E-Mail	89%	86%	100%	100%
Telephone / FAX	47%	71%	69%	78%
Personal Visits	92%	100%	92%	94%

Table 3: Communication from Companions to the Synods

<u>Means of Communication</u>	<u>Percentage of Synods by Geographic Region</u>			
	<u>Africa</u>	<u>Asia</u>	<u>Europe / Middle East</u>	<u>Latin America / Caribbean</u>
Letter / Newsletter	72%	43%	69%	83%
E-Mail	86%	86%	100%	94%
Telephone / FAX	39%	57%	62%	61%
Personal Visits	72%	100%	92%	83%

Synods also responded to questions about the frequency of communication, both that they initiate and that their companions initiate. In general, a small number of relationships have contact as frequently as once per week. Overall, the highest number of responses for communication initiated by synods was ‘At least once per month.’ The highest number of responses for communication initiated by the companions was ‘Quarterly.’ Tables 4 and 5 show a breakdown of these responses by the percentage of synod relationships in each geographic region.

Table 4: Frequency of Synod-Initiated Contact

<u>Frequency of Contact</u>	<u>Percentage of Synods by Geographic Region</u>			
	<u>Africa</u>	<u>Asia</u>	<u>Europe / Middle East</u>	<u>Latin America / Caribbean</u>
At least once per week	3%	0%	15%	17%
At least once per month	44%	57%	39%	28%
Quarterly	28%	14%	23%	50%
At least once per year	17%	14%	8%	0%

Table 5: Frequency of Companion-Initiated Contact

<u>Frequency of Contact</u>	<u>Percentage of Synods by Geographic Region</u>			
	<u>Africa</u>	<u>Asia</u>	<u>Europe / Middle East</u>	<u>Latin America / Caribbean</u>
At least once per week	3%	0%	15%	11%
At least once per month	31%	14%	46%	39%
Quarterly	36%	43%	15%	44%
At least once per year	14%	43%	8%	0%

Synods were also asked to describe any difficulties they have in communicating with their companions and to describe what works well. Nearly half of the respondents to the difficulty question (45 percent) indicated that the primary difficulty is slow communication or getting no response. Other difficulties included language, technological problems, financial issues, and travel restrictions. Thirty respondents indicated that translation is necessary when communicating with their companion while 42 respondents said translation was not necessary.

In terms of what works well, over half of the respondents (54 percent) stated that e-mail works well. Under 20 percent of respondents indicated each of the following that also work well: letters, visits, phone, and fax.

Communication Within Your Synod About Its Companion

Synods were asked about what types of resources either the synod or specific congregations had produced about the companion relationships for various uses within the synod. Overall, brochures had the highest number of responses. However, as indicated in Table 6, brochure production varies widely by synods with relationships in the four geographic regions. Brochures are produced by 72 percent of synods in Latin American/Caribbean relationships as opposed to only 14 percent of synods in Asian relationships.

Table 6: Resources Produced about the Relationship

<u>Resources</u>	<u>Percentage of Synods by Geographic Region</u>			
	<u>Africa</u>	<u>Asia</u>	<u>Europe / Middle East</u>	<u>Latin America / Caribbean</u>
Brochures	58%	14%	46%	72%
Flyers	47%	0%	62%	50%
Videos	47%	43%	23%	50%
Newsletters	50%	57%	46%	50%
Websites	39%	29%	23%	56%

What is unclear from this data is whether it is the geographic region that plays a factor in the differences among resource production or whether there are other factors, such as the level of synod support or type of congregations involved in the relationships, that affect the production of resources. Regardless of the factors involved, the data show that, in general, those synods with Asian relationships produce the fewest resources about the companion relationships for use within the synod. This may mean that individuals within these synods have fewer ways of learning about the companion relationships than those in synods with relationships from other geographic regions.

When asked to name the types of events that the synod provides to encourage participation in the companion relationship, over 20 percent of all respondents listed visits, global mission events, and synod assemblies as the top three events. Fewer than 20 percent of respondents also listed companion congregation gatherings and mission Sundays.

Recent Visits TO Your Companion [For more information about visits, please turn to p.11, the section titled, “Visit Description Form A.”]

Synods were asked to describe various aspects of a companion visit, including how people are typically selected, prepared, and debriefed and how people typically share their experiences after the visit. Nearly 60 percent of respondents to the question of selection indicated that people volunteer, or self-select, to go on a visit. Other factors that affect the selection are whether they are on a synod committee or task force, whether they have a reason to go, and whether they have the financial resources to pay for the trip.

In terms of how people are prepared for the trip, 63 percent of respondents indicated there is an orientation provided by the synod. Other activities for preparation included using people who have gone before and using DGM materials.

Most synods (86 percent), use post-trip meetings to debrief people after their visit. Although debriefing once back in the U.S. is encouraged by DGM, 9 percent of synods indicated they debrief people during the trip and 5 percent of synods indicated they provide no debriefing at all.

Nearly 60 percent of respondents to the question of how experiences are shared with the synod indicated that people give presentations. Congregational visits and written reports were also listed as ways that people share their experiences.

Overall, synods indicated that the highest number of visits to their companions occurred in 2001. It is not surprising that the number of visits would decrease since 2001, given the September 11, 2001

terrorist attack in the U.S., the subsequent war, warnings about travel to certain parts of the world, and a weaker U.S. economy. As shown in Table 7, visits to companions in Africa and in Latin America/Caribbean remain relatively high with over half of the synods in these relationships planning visits for 2003. However, none of the synods with relationships in Asia is planning a visit for 2003, which is a significant decrease from the previous two years. Follow-up with these synods may be advised to determine if there are any problems that need to be addressed.

Table 7: Visits to the Companion

<u>Year of Visit(s)</u>	<u>Percentage of Synods by Geographic Region</u>			
	<u>Africa</u>	<u>Asia</u>	<u>Europe / Middle East</u>	<u>Latin America / Caribbean</u>
1999	44%	29%	15%	61%
2000	58%	14%	39%	50%
2001	61%	57%	54%	78%
2002	64%	57%	39%	61%
2003*	58%	0%	23%	67%

*Synods indicating that at least one visit to the companion is planned for 2003.

Recent Visits FROM Your Companion [For more information about visits, please turn to p.12, the section titled, “Visit Description Form B.”]

As might be expected, given the relationship of resources in other countries to the resources in the U.S., more visits have typically occurred to companions than from companions. Also, similar to the trends in visits to companions, the data show that synods with relationships to African and Latin American/Caribbean companions have had more visits from their companions than those in relationships with Asian and European/Middle Eastern companions. Interestingly, this fact changes for 2003 for three of the four geographic regions. In 2003, a higher percentage of synods are expecting visits from their companions in Africa, Asia, and Europe/Middle East than are expecting to make visits to these geographic regions. And, the most striking increase is visits from companions in Europe/Middle East. The comparison of the number of visits to and from companions is interesting to monitor as this balance (or lack of balance) may be one indicator in the level of mutuality that exists in a relationship.

Table 8: Visits from the Companion

<u>Year of Visit(s)</u>	<u>Percentage of Synods by Geographic Region</u>			
	<u>Africa</u>	<u>Asia</u>	<u>Europe / Middle East</u>	<u>Latin America / Caribbean</u>
1999	28%	14%	23%	50%
2000	36%	14%	23%	39%
2001	47%	43%	23%	56%
2002	39%	29%	31%	56%
2003*	60%	17%	67%	44%

*Synods indicating that at least one visit from the companion is planned for 2003.

Global Stewardship [For more information about projects, please turn to p.14, the section titled “Project Description Form C.”]

This section was supposed to provide summary giving and project data for the past five years. However, the information provided by synods in this section was not consistent, especially in stating how much direct financial support they have given or in describing the kinds of education/training and materials they have provided. It seems that summary information about giving is not maintained by most synods. More detailed information about specific projects was provided on Form C, though, which is discussed later in this report. Also, over half of the respondents did not answer the final question of this section related to whether they plan to initiate any new projects with their companions in 2003.

Synods did respond as to whether they had provided any of the types of support listed in Table 9, even if they did not further describe the specifics of this support. Table 9 shows that the typical trends of higher percentages among synods with relationships in Africa or Latin America/Caribbean do not hold true across all types of support. For example, the lowest percentage of synods with relationships in Latin America/Caribbean provided education/training support and the highest percentage of synods with relationships in Asia provided support through materials.

Table 9: Types of Synod Support Provided to Companions Over the Past Five Years

Type of Support	Percentage of Synods by Geographic Region			
	Africa	Asia	Europe / Middle East	Latin America / Caribbean
Direct Financial Support	69%	43%	46%	72%
Education / Training	44%	43%	46%	28%
Materials	44%	71%	23%	39%

Overall, the number of synods funding projects for their companions increased every year from 1999 through 2002. In general, Table 10 reflects this trend in each geographic region. Similar to trends in previous sections, a higher percentage of synods with relationships in Africa or in Latin America/Caribbean have funded projects for their companions than have synods with relationships in Asia or Europe/Middle East.

Table 10: Synod Funding for At Least One Project for its Companion

Year of Project	Percentage of Synods by Geographic Region			
	Africa	Asia	Europe / Middle East	Latin America / Caribbean
1999	39%	43%	23%	39%
2000	53%	14%	15%	50%
2001	53%	29%	15%	56%
2002	58%	29%	31%	61%

Advocacy

Advocacy is an area in which synods are encouraged to become involved and is one way of practicing accompaniment. The questionnaire results indicate that full participation in advocacy with companions has a long way to go before being achieved. Currently, it is the highest percentage of synods with relationships in Africa that report being involved in advocacy and in advocacy-related organizations or campaigns.

Table 11 shows the percentage of synods that report the listed areas of advocacy as being primary issues facing their companions. For African relationships, the highest percentage of synods report Disease, for Asian relationships it is Justice, for European/Middle Eastern relationships it is Peace and Human Rights, and for Latin American/Caribbean relationships it is Justice.

Table 11: Areas of Advocacy Facing Companion Churches

Area of Advocacy	Percentage of Synods by Geographic Region			
	Africa	Asia	Europe / Middle East	Latin America / Caribbean
Peace	22%	29%	23%	33%
Justice	31%	43%	15%	61%
Human Rights	25%	29%	23%	50%
Hunger	67%	0%	15%	22%
Disease	78%	0%	8%	17%
Poverty and Wealth	64%	29%	15%	56%

Overall, synods reported a nearly 50 percent split as to whether their companions ask for advocacy facing either its people or its church. However, the breakdown by geographic region in Table 12 shows that a significantly higher percentage of synods in relationships with companions in Africa and Latin America/Caribbean report being asked for advocacy than do synods in relationships with companions in Asia or Europe/Middle East. In fact, none of the synods with relationships in Asia reported being asked for advocacy. In contrast, 72 percent of synods with relationships in Latin America/Caribbean reported being asked for advocacy.

Table 12 also shows that a lower percentage of synods report being involved in advocacy on behalf of their companion than report being asked for advocacy – especially among the synods with relationships in Latin America/Caribbean. It may be that synods need guidance on how to become involved. If this is the case, DGM may be in the best position to provide this guidance and to connect synods who are interested in becoming involved with those that already are involved.

Table 12: Desired and Actual Involvement with Advocacy

Advocacy Responses	Percentage of Synods by Geographic Region			
	Africa	Asia	Europe / Middle East	Latin America / Caribbean
Yes, companion asks for advocacy	61%	0%	23%	72%
Yes, synod is involved in advocacy	53%	0%	15%	44%

For synods indicating that they are involved in advocacy on behalf of their companions, they listed various programs, education, writing letters, and prayer as the ways that they become involved. Table 13 also illustrates the results reported for involvement in listed organizations or campaigns because of the synod’s companion relationship. As previously mentioned, synods with relationships to companions in Africa reported the highest percentage of involvement.

Table 13: Organizational Involvement Because of Companion Relationship

<u>Organization or Campaign</u>	<u>Percentage of Synods by Geographic Region</u>			
	<u>Africa</u>	<u>Asia</u>	<u>Europe / Middle East</u>	<u>Latin America / Caribbean</u>
ELCA Hunger Appeal	64%	14%	8%	28%
Stand with Africa	83%	0%	8%	6%
Lutheran World Relief	47%	0%	15%	33%
Lutheran World Federation	42%	29%	15%	28%
Church World Service	14%	0%	8%	6%
Operation Bootstrap Africa	14%	0%	8%	6%
Bread for the World	31%	0%	8%	11%
Heifer Project International	28%	0%	8%	17%
Global Health Ministries	44%	14%	8%	11%
Jubilee USA Network	11%	0%	8%	6%
Churches for Middle East Peace	3%	0%	15%	6%
Peaceful End through Peaceful Means	0%	0%	8%	11%
Lutheran Disaster Response	28%	0%	8%	6%
Luth. Immigration and Refugee Service	19%	0%	8%	6%
Africa Network ELCA	28%	0%	8%	6%
Mwangaza Education for Partnership	36%	0%	0%	11%
Lutheran Partners in Global Ministry	3%	0%	8%	11%
World Mission Prayer League	8%	0%	8%	11%

Congregation-to-Congregation Relationships

Congregation-to-congregation relationships have been highlighted as one way to actively involve more people and as a way to make the relationships stronger by creating more personal connections. It is important to note, therefore, that a few respondents indicated that their companion has asked that they NOT pursue congregation-to-congregation relationships. In addition, it is the policy of at least one ELCA synod not to establish congregation-to-congregation relationships. It may be helpful if DGM were to clarify its expectations with respect to these types of relationships and to share guidelines for when and how these relationships can be created.

In response to whether the synod is actively promoting congregation-to-congregation relationships, the respondents were nearly equally split between ‘Yes’ and ‘No.’ As might be expected, however, Table 14 shows there were differences among the geographic regions. Synods in relationships with African companions had the highest percentage of ‘Yes’ responses. In addition, the majority of synods with a high number of these relationships (over 15) are synods with companions in Africa.

Table 14: Congregation-to-Congregation Relationships

Congregation-to-Congregation Relationships	Percentage of Synods by Geographic Region			
	<u>Africa</u>	<u>Asia</u>	<u>Europe / Middle East</u>	<u>Latin America / Caribbean</u>
Yes, synod actively promotes	64%	14%	38%	39%

Synods were asked to comment on how they promote the congregation-to-congregation relationships, any difficulties they have encountered, any benefits that these relationships offer, and the role that the synod plays in these relationships. Synods reported promoting these relationships in the following ways:

- Publicizing the program,
- Matching congregations,
- Providing training,
- Facilitating communication, and
- Providing coordination between congregations.

In terms of difficulties, nearly half of the respondents listed communication. Others listed follow-through, unrealistic expectations, and financial issues as difficulties. Fewer than five percent of the respondents listed competition and jealousy as a difficulty.

A high percentage of respondents (71 percent) listed expanding awareness and perspective as a benefit of these relationships. Others included that these relationships help to achieve accompaniment and provide the benefit of financial support.

Finally, synods indicated similar answers for their role in these relationships as they answered for how they promote the relationships. Synods listed their role as:

- Recruiting and promoting the program,
- Matching or assigning the pairs,
- Providing coordination between congregations,
- Providing financial support, and
- Supporting a task force or committee.

Cross-Companion Relationships

Synods with multiple companion relationships were asked to comment on how they connect their companions with one another. Most of the respondents (84 percent) stated they have no plan to connect their companions. However, a small number of synods responded when asked in what ways they have already connected their companions. The activities included:

- Visits and trips,
- Conferences,
- Synod and LWF Assemblies,
- Consultations, and
- The Global Mission Committee.

Based on the responses, it seems that not much activity is happening currently to connect the companions in synods with multiple companion relationships. If this is a desire or an expectation that DGM has, it will likely need to work more with synods to make this happen.

Relationship Goals and Experiences

Synods were also asked to comment on both their short- and long-term goals for the companion relationship, their most positive experiences to date, and their major challenges to date. The positive experience responses were too individual to categorize or summarize. Responses to the other questions are as follows.

Short- and long-term goal responses were similar, though some goals had a higher percentage of synods working to achieve them in the short-term while other goals had a higher percentage of synods working to achieve them in the long-term. Table 15 summarizes these percentages for both the short- and long-term goals.

Table 15: Short- and Long-Term Goals

<u>Goal</u>	<u>Percentage of Synods Reporting for the Short-Term</u>	<u>Percentage of Synods Reporting for the Long-Term</u>
Visits	37%	15%
Education (about the program and in companion countries)	20%	16%
Establish more congregation-to-congregation relationships	16%	19%
Better communication	8%	10%
Financial and Other Resource Support	8%	9%
Involve Youth	4%	3%
Exchanges	4%	10%
Establish a missionary or volunteer presence	1%	6%
Carry out the mission	1%	10%

In terms of the major challenges that synods have had with their companion relationships to date, at least 15 percent of respondents listed the following:

- Communication,
- True accompaniment – as opposed to just financial dependency,
- Financial issues in general, and
- Sustaining involvement.

Division for Global Mission

Synods listed three primary ways that they relate to DGM with respect to the Companion Synods Program, including 1) through staff members, 2) at consultations, and 3) through obtaining information and advice. In addition, synods were asked what resources produced or supported by DGM they have used in developing their companion relationships. Table 16 shows that all the

resources have had a relatively high usage among all synods, with the exception of international consultations for synods with companions in Europe/Middle East. Overall, Global Mission Events have the highest usage among all synods.

Table 16: Use of Resources Produced or Supported by DGM

<u>Resource</u>	Percentage of Synods by Geographic Region			
	<u>Africa</u>	<u>Asia</u>	<u>Europe / Middle East</u>	<u>Latin America / Caribbean</u>
Country Packets	69%	71%	54%	72%
Global Mission Tool Kits	69%	71%	54%	50%
International Consultations	58%	71%	23%	44%
Global Mission Events	83%	86%	69%	61%

Synods were also asked to respond to the kinds of assistance that would be helpful to receive from DGM. Table 17 shows that synods with companions in the different geographic regions have differing desires over the kind of assistance they would like to receive. For example, all synods with companions in Asia indicated an interest in consultations in other countries whereas 46 percent of synods with companions in Europe/Middle East indicated an interest in such consultations. Overall, synods with companions in Asia or in Latin America/Caribbean expressed more interest in consultations than did those synods with companions in Africa or Europe/Middle East.

Table 17: Desired Assistance from DGM

<u>Assistance</u>	Percentage of Synods by Geographic Region			
	<u>Africa</u>	<u>Asia</u>	<u>Europe / Middle East</u>	<u>Latin America / Caribbean</u>
Consultations in Chicago	42%	71%	31%	61%
Consultations in ELCA regions	33%	86%	31%	33%
Consultations in ELCA synods	42%	71%	46%	44%
Consultations in other countries	53%	100%	46%	78%

Visit Description Form A – for visits to your companion

Synods were asked to complete a form for each visit that they made to their companions from 1999 through 2002. [A sample of this form, Form A, is found on p.8 of the attached questionnaire.] Some synods indicated they were unable to complete a form for each visit either because there were too many or the person completing the form did not know. Some synods returned the questionnaire without completing a form for any visits. Thus, the number of forms returned does not represent the total number of visits made during those four years.

There were 117 forms completed by 53 synods, representing 67 visits to Africa, 24 visits to Latin America/Caribbean, 14 visits to Asia, and 12 visits to Europe/Middle East. Based on these responses, from 1999 through 2002, synods with companions in Latin America/Caribbean averaged

2.4 visits to their companion; synods with companions in Africa and Asia averaged 2.3 visits; and, synods with companions in Europe averaged 1.5 visits.

Most visits lasted one to two weeks and most visits included fewer than 10 participants. The participants generally included a mixture of men and women and lay and clergy. Bishops went on fewer than half of the visits.

When asked whether the visit was a specific congregation-to-congregation visit, 85 percent of the respondents answered ‘No.’ Of the 17 respondents indicating ‘Yes,’ 10 were in relationships with African companions, 5 were in relationships with Latin American/Caribbean companions, 2 were in relationships European/Middle Eastern companions, and 0 were in relationships with Asian companions. This corresponds with the responses indicating that the highest percentage of synods with relationships in Africa actively promote congregation-to-congregation relationships.

Many synods (66 percent) indicated that at least one aspect of their visits could be characterized as social, meaning they visited with the purpose of getting to know the area and visiting with the people from the companion church. Table 18 shows that more synods indicated their visits had social and/or service-related aspects than education and cultural or ministerial exchange aspects.

Table 18: Category of Visits to Companions

<u>Category of Visit</u>	<u>Percentage of Synods by Geographic Region</u>			
	<u>Africa</u>	<u>Asia</u>	<u>Europe / Middle East</u>	<u>Latin America / Caribbean</u>
Social	61%	86%	67%	67%
Service-Related	36%	21%	50%	54%
Education	21%	7%	17%	29%
Cultural or Ministerial Exchange	15%	14%	25%	25%

Comments describing the purpose for the visit and the activity that took place were varied and included specific detail for each visit. In general, most comments discussed visiting certain people, touring, assisting with a project, providing or receiving education, or sharing in ministry.

Comments about the effect that the visit had on the relationship between the synod and its companion were generally positive. Specific comments included:

- It strengthened or deepened the relationship;
- It strengthened trust;
- Projects were identified;
- It developed an increased awareness, understanding, or interest in the companion; and
- Personal relationships were developed.

Visit Description Form B – for visits from your companion

Synods were asked to complete a form for each visit that their companion made to their synod from 1999 through 2002. [A sample of this form, Form B, is found on p.9 of the attached questionnaire.] As with Form A, some synods indicated they were unable to complete a form for each visit either

because there were too many or the person completing the form did not know. Also, as with Form A, some synods returned the questionnaire without completing a form for any visits. Thus, the number of forms returned does not represent the total number of visits made during those four years.

There were 102 forms completed by 48 synods, representing 57 visits from Africa, 24 visits from Latin America/Caribbean, 12 visits from Europe/Middle East, and 9 visits from Asia. Based on these responses, from 1999 through 2002, synods with companions in Latin America/Caribbean averaged 2.4 visits from their companion; synods with relationships in Africa averaged 2.3 visits; synods with relationships in Asia averaged 1.8 visits; and, synods with relationships in Europe/Middle East averaged 1.5 visits. These averages are nearly identical to the average number of visits to companions during this same time period.

In comparison to visits made to the companions, more of the visits from companions lasted longer and had fewer participants. On average, these trips had 5 participants, with many trips having just one participant. As with the visits to the companions, these visits generally included a mixture of men and women and clergy and lay.

When asked whether the visit was a specific congregation-to-congregation visit, 86 percent of the respondents answered ‘No.’ Of the 13 respondents indicating ‘Yes,’ 6 were in relationships with African companions, 5 were in relationships with Latin American/Caribbean companions, 2 were in relationships European/Middle Eastern companions, and 0 were in relationships with Asian companions.

Similar to the visits to companions, many synods (67 percent) indicated that at least one aspect of the visits from their companions could be characterized as social, meaning they visited with the purpose of getting to know the area and visiting with the people from the synod. However, one difference between visits to and from the companions, as indicated in Table 19, is that a higher percentage of synods reported the visits from their companions as having a cultural or ministerial exchange aspect.

Table 19: Category of Visits from Companions

<u>Category of Visit</u>	<u>Percentage of Synods by Geographic Region</u>			
	<u>Africa</u>	<u>Asia</u>	<u>Europe / Middle East</u>	<u>Latin America / Caribbean</u>
Social	56%	100%	83%	71%
Service-Related	21%	0%	33%	0%
Education	25%	11%	25%	25%
Cultural or Ministerial Exchange	47%	44%	42%	17%

Comments describing the purpose for the visit and the activity that took place were varied and included specific detail for each visit. In contrast to the comments included on Form A, comments on this form more often discussed specific events that the visitors attended, such as synod assemblies or youth gatherings.

Comments about the effect that the visit had on the relationship between the synod and its companion were generally positive. In addition, these comments included much more about the effect on youth than did the comments from Form A. Presumably, more youth were able to be involved in the visits from companions than are able to travel to other countries for visits to the companions. Specific comments included:

- It helped to build the relationship;
- It strengthened or deepened the relationship;
- It made the relationship more real;
- It developed an increased awareness and commitment to the relationship; and
- Personal relationships were developed.

Project Description Form C

Synods were asked to complete a form for each project that was (or would be) funded to assist their companion from 1999 through 2003. [A sample of this form, Form C, is found on p.10 of the attached questionnaire.] There were 85 forms completed by 40 synods. Fewer synods completed one this form than the other two forms, however, some synods completed one form for projects that spanned more than one year. Other synods indicated they were unable to complete a form for each project, and some synods returned the questionnaire without completing a form for any projects. Thus, the number of forms returned does not represent the total number of projects funded during these years.

Synods were asked to choose all the ways in which funding is raised. Overall, congregations were chosen most frequently and synod budgets were chosen least frequently. As shown in Table 20, there is some variation among synods. The highest percentage of synods with relationships in Africa or Latin America/Caribbean indicated congregations for the source of funding. The highest percentage of synods with relationships in Asia indicated synod budget for the funding source. The highest percentage of synods with relationships in Europe/Middle East indicated individuals for the funding source.

Table 20: Sources of Project Funding

<u>Sources</u>	<u>Percentage of Synods by Geographic Region</u>			
	<u>Africa</u>	<u>Asia</u>	<u>Europe / Middle East</u>	<u>Latin America / Caribbean</u>
Synod Budget	34%	43%	33%	22%
Special Synod Campaign/Appeal	39%	29%	0%	70%
Congregations	68%	14%	33%	82%
Individuals	64%	14%	67%	70%

As shown in Table 21, the amount of project funding also varies by synods across the four geographic regions. Synods with relationships in Africa have provided far more project funding than synods with relationships from the other three geographic regions.

Table 21: Total and Average Project Funding

Project Funding	Synod Funding by Geographic Region			
	Africa	Asia	Europe / Middle East	Latin America / Caribbean
Total Project Funding	\$2,556,815 ¹	\$68,650	\$39,753	\$589,950
Average Funding per Project	\$39,918 ²	\$11,442	\$9,938	\$22,690

¹One project had total funding of \$1,000,000.

²Does not include the one project for \$1,000,000.

However, when removing the one project for \$1 million and then averaging the total amount given by the number of synods responding, it is synods with relationships in Latin America/Caribbean that reported providing the most funding per synod. Synods with relationships in Latin America/Caribbean averaged giving of \$65,550; synods with relationships in Africa averaged giving of \$64,867; synods with relationships in Asia averaged giving of \$17,163; and, synods with relationships in Europe/Middle East averaged giving of \$13,251. There is a very large difference in average synod funding for projects in synods with relationships in Africa and Latin America/Caribbean as compared to those with relationships in Asia and Europe/Middle East.

For each project, synods were asked to describe who made the request for funding, the process for approving the project funding, and the process for sending the funds. It was an even split among projects for who made the request for funding between a person or group related to the companion and a person or group related to the synod.

As for who approved the funding, the responses show there are different processes across the synods. The highest number of project responses, 22, was for approval by the specific companion synod task force or committee. Other responses included the Synod Bishop, the Synod Council, and the Synod Assembly. Most responses indicated an approval at the synod level, with a small number of responses indicating approval at the congregational level. Responses for two projects indicated their synod approval came in consultation with DGM.

The process used to send funds is overwhelmingly any method that sends funds directly to the companion. Responses for 45 projects indicated sending money directly to their companion through electronic transfer, mail, or personal delivery. Most did not report any problems with these methods. Responses for 13 projects indicated sending money through DGM, with one respondent expressing concern that the money stayed in Chicago too long before it was sent on to the companion. Other problems reported for two projects were lost or uncashed checks, while two other projects reported accountability problems in their companion.

Given that projects are requested either by the companion or the synod, that project funding is approved primarily at the synod level, and that many synods report sending the money directly to their companion, it is not surprising that DGM has very little record of funding provided by synods to their companions. Knowing these amounts, however, is important in understanding the breadth and depth of this program. Therefore, DGM may need to determine how a more comprehensive set of these records could be retained and shared by the synods.