

El Salvador Summit + Chicago +

Friday, January 20, 2012

ILS Update

From Bishop Gomez: Items to be addressed included: 1) Current situation 2) Work in the micro regions 3) 2011 emergency situation 4) 2012 projections

Current situation: Bishop Gomez begins 2012 with hope. Despite the October crisis, the church are strengthened by God's Spirit and is anxious to share the feeling and face of hopefulness, especially when it meets to work with the people most impacted by climate change. **Violence:** El Salvador has huge problems with insecurity issues. Violence is pervasive; churches exist in climates of violence. News is regularly received of the deaths of young people from gang violence. In Soyapango, a 13-year old has disappeared. For that reason, there is a fall-off in attendance at youth events. Parents are afraid to let their children come. Violence is a big problem. **Poverty:** Jobs are scarce. Many Salvadorans continue to emigrate, particularly the young. In the past, the Bishop could dissuade young people from leaving the country and was even able to find employment for them. Now he simply prays that their journey will go well. At Christmas, many took advantage of perceived border security laxness to emigrate. **Hunger and Assistance:** Funds received have allowed food distribution to the population; it is received with smiles and gratefulness. Those who have visited El Salvador will understand that the only time the Salvadoran population receives assistance is during a disaster. For example, after an earthquake, a young girl received the gift of a doll – her first one. Her response was “Thank God for the earthquake.”

In the midst of this situation, churches are responding appropriately and the Bishop is proud of their work. They give of themselves, they don't keep “hours”; they hold nothing back. Recently, there was the 20th Anniversary of the Peace Accords: The celebration was very stimulating. The Iglesia Luterana Salvadorena was recognized for their contributions to the peace process. The Roman Catholic Church was recognized as was Rivera Idama, deceased, and Rosa Chaves, Auxiliary Bishop. The presence of El Salvadoran President Fuentes at the 30th Anniversary of the El Mozote massacre was significant. In his remarks, the President gave instructions to the army to change their education of the armed forces. He asked them to revise military history, especially where it concerns those military leaders who had been shown as heroes; now they are to be shown as leaders of the massacre. Finally, as head of the government, he asked for forgiveness from the people, the victims and their families for government acts during the war. They were greatly impacted by the President's words and are now feeling better about President Fuentes. It should be noted that President Fuentes' remarks led at least one military leader to call for war. That individual is in the minority; most are happy with these recent events.

Mission of The Iglesia Luterana Salvadorena: Rededicated to be agents of peace, promoting peace and justice and defending human rights. The evangelical churches in El Salvador have grown greatly, preaching their gospel of prosperity. They seek political power and do not preach peace.

A two-day Peace Consultation is planned for February 24-25. They have asked a military leader and a member of the FMLN to make presentations. In addition, they have asked the Lutheran World Federation to send someone who was present during the peace process. The World Council of Churches and Edgar Palacias, a Baptist, have also been invited. (Edgar was part of the churches involved in the peace process.) They invite participation by members of the U.S. partner synods as well. The program head of the Lutheran World Federation is looking for ways to cover the budget for this event. They expect a document, perhaps even a booklet or book to come from this consultation outlining recommendations to the world regarding peace.

Representatives to attend the Consultation: The historical church, civil society, women, youth, labor unions, war veterans. They want to capture their thoughts.

Micro Regions - Guadalupe Cortez: The ILS has evaluated 2011, completed 2012 planning and developed a three-year strategic plan to guide discussions. ACT Alliance churches include Lutheran, Reformed, Baptist and Episcopal plus the Lutheran World Federation in El Salvador. They are working together on project development.

Sustainability – Working on concrete actions: food security, climate justice, right to water and educating lay leaders. They have existing agreements on sustainability. In 2012, Gustavo Real, LWF, will return to El Salvador. It is important to link sustainability to the Encuentro. Their challenges are many; they do the best they can in their communities, working to help the people seek solutions to their problems.

Disaster Relief – ACT assisted 150 families in 5 micro regions. They received help from Germany for an additional 115 families. In total, 350 families have been helped. An additional 280 families from the SW micro region received food from St. Matthew's "Feed My Starving Children."

Sustainability in congregations is not just financial. Empowerment of the laity to participate in congregational life, using their talents, is also important. Congregations are being encouraged to list their needs and then to assess how local skills could be used to address those needs.

A retreat attended by the staff and pastors of Iglesia Luterana Salvadorena led to the \$1 per Lutheran campaign. This was a response to their budget deficit and the low salary levels of the pastors. They want, as Salvadorans, to contribute to the Pastoral Salary Endowment Fund. They want to develop an inventory of resources and gifts within their congregations and make that list available for all churches.

Studying the impact of emigration by their young people on sustainability is important. There is a lack of vocational opportunities in El Salvador which leads to their departure. The scholarship program is viewed as being very important in fighting this loss of human capital. Their national youth council works with organized youth groups in congregations. This is also very important.

Stewardship and Risk Management – Santiago Rodriguez: El Salvador is one of the most vulnerable countries in the world – moving from one emergency to another. In October, the emergency system was on the alert along the Pacific Coast, but then the weather system stalled and it rained for ten days, impacting the entire country. As a result, they are now focusing on advocacy plans at the municipal level for water, risk management and food security.

The agricultural school will run classes to train and organize the people for emergency preparation and prevention. They want to strengthen people's ability to respond to disasters in Health, Food Security, Communication and Psycho-social issues

Emergency response is improving, but slowly. The new government had exhibited more openness. However, communities expected a stronger government response to the emergency. Initially, the government response was deemed acceptable. The church was involved in food distribution with food coming through the government.

The larger problems require greater advocacy and government involvement: abatement of flood and mudslide damage such as retaining walls along rivers that regularly overflow their banks, housing, agriculture, road bridge repair and construction. It is now clear that government response to these larger problems will not be what had been hoped for. As a result, the church must become more involved, get organized and make coordinated demands/requests of governmental authorities, pressuring government entities as necessary.

An example of action by the people: Government response to flooding of the Paz River was inadequate. The people organized, demonstrated, blocked the road in the area and generally made noise about the situation. As a result, the government is promising to appoint a commission to look into the government's response. See Appendix A.

Q: How can the U.S. synods and churches help? A: Perhaps to meet with commission members to express our concerns. They would like to develop an accompaniment plan to address disaster risks. They asked whether the ELCA has a disaster prevention planning group. They also suggested that U.S. bishops come to El Salvador in August as disasters seem to occur in October and November.

Youth and Family – Abelina Gomez: In February, 2012, they will begin a program with 14 modules targeted at youth council members and youth leaders in the micro regions on religion, culture and ethics. Youth enrolled will make a commitment to the program, to themselves and to each other. The catchphrase is "Transforming the World Together."

These youth will then train other youth in their communities. In addition, they are addressing food security issues.

Election observation – Cecelia Alfaro: The Supreme Election Tribunal has asked for a high-level team to work the upcoming elections (March 8-12) where candidates for the national assembly as well as mayors will be elected. Work on elections is ecumenical. The government seeks out the religious community to work as election observers which they did during the 2009 elections. All observers will be accredited by the government. Independent candidates are running in these elections, so more oversight is needed. A group will come from the U.S. to participate as observers. This work is very visible. This is helpful, for the country and for advocacy efforts. The government is aware and watching the participation by the churches. Lutheran World Federation, World Council of Churches and the Latin American Churches are coordinating an event to take place September 16-23, 2012. Government and church representative will come together to work on efforts for cooperative work.

Closing prayer – Norma Castillo: She is happy that this meeting has taken place for fraternity and to become, together, the hands and feet of outreach. She prays that the Summit will be beneficial for all and prays for God’s guidance of the discussions.

Notes on presentation by Megan Bradfield, Program Director for International Disaster Response, ELCA Global Mission: Important web and contact information: www.elca.org/disaster; megan.bradfield@elca.org Communications for disaster response: matthew.ley@elca.org.

Disaster Response operates within the strategies and priorities set by the companion receiving aid. The work centers around advocacy, disaster risk reduction and emergency preparedness. The ELCA lifts up and builds on the strengths of organizations already on the ground in the countries where they work. U.S. presence helps when local organizations request face time with government officials. There is also work through other historical partners in countries requiring aid.

ACT – The ELCA works together with ACT on climate change, disaster risk mitigation and shrinking humanitarian space. For the October flooding, \$130,000 was released from undesignated funds for work in El Salvador. To date, \$6,000 has been received from congregations and synods to offset that outlay. Maintaining a undesignated funds on hand for use in meeting emergency needs is critical to a fast response.

Notes from greeting from Bishop Mark Hanson

We become simultaneously myopic and global in our vision...our passion can cause us to have very narrow vision.”

You are immersed in El Salvador but you are also committed to relief work in Japan, and other countries. We are the sum of our parts. If our partner relationship singularly defines our church’s global vision and mission, then we are limiting God’s work...

As ELCA we need to think about this...we are ELCA but also LWF and the holy apostolic church...

We forget Central America sometimes as this church...what are our trade policies, how do we relate church to church, what can we learn from our companion churches which will impact us here? We have a deeper confidence in the Holy Spirit than what I see made manifest. We have been given a particular moment in which we are not ceasing to proclaim the gospel but in a way in which is not being heard, we live in a privatized politicized culture and we have lost the sense of being the public. We are a public church and understand the calling of the Holy Spirit. We have a gift of understanding ourselves as a public church and how do we live out our passion as that church?

With tiredness and weariness we turn inward. We need to see Christ in our neighbor. In whose face did I see the face of Jesus today and for whom was I the face of Jesus today?

Can we be a community of public lament? (sadness about losing members). We have low expectations of the Holy Spirit. Set people free in Christ to help the neighbor and care for creation.

The radical prophetic word for today is reconciliation – not dividing word as in the past...

Notes from Synergy: An Unholy Word for Lutherans by Rafael Malpica Padilla, Executive Director of Global Mission

Synergism – to work together or to collaborate. A word used to talk about the relationship between God and humans for salvation...We talk about radical grace. We are free in Christ. This is a contrast to the Roman Catholic system of collaboration between God and humans – cooperative grace in which the human makes the first move for salvation. Why do Lutherans have a problem with that?

Infused grace is Lutheran. Third article, by our own strength and work, we can do nothing. The Spirit gathers, enlightens, etc. Read [The Shack](#) – good example of thinking differently about the Holy Spirit. Keys are identity, meaning and directionality.

Global Mission is not a ministry of a department of the church but the whole church. We are part of the Lutheran Communion.

How do we restore community – and what is my role in that? Read the creation story – Genesis Chapters 1-5. Genesis 1:26: God is a community of persons Let us make humankind according to our image...in our likeness...When God looked into the world he could not find himself there so God created humans in his likeness...humanity is a reflection of what God is – a community of persons, Father Son and Holy Spirit. Distinct but together. Each one dwells within another – mutual indwelling. In the beginning, there was a community of 3 and not the solitude of 1. Radical hospitality and relationality.

But what God planned did not stay too long. God was walking in the garden, asking “where are you?” The response: “It wasn’t me. . . the woman made me do it.” God was walking in the garden. . .”where is Abel?” Cain’s response: “am I my brother’s keeper?” This is the story of sinfulness and the breaking up of community.

God’s business is to restore community. For those who follow God’s restoration through Jesus restore community (see 1 Corinthians)

We do theology with a purpose – to guide and to shape what we do <in ministry and in life>. If this is our understanding of God, how do we express this restoration of community that we do together? That is where synergy comes in. How do we walk with the Salvadoran Lutheran Church, and how do they walk with us? As congregations, as synods, as churches? In Global Mission, how do separate actions contribute to a common goal? How do we reach the common goal? How do we reach that common goal as two churches walking together for the sake of mission? What is the role that each of us has in that walking together? At a table like this, this is the forum for that. We engage through our Latin American desk and that gives us a strategy.

Examine the lens and methodology Accompaniment which is defined as: walking together in a solidarity which practices mutuality and interdependence. We highlight the values of accompaniment and how they assist us in developing an ethic of reconciliation.

Values of accompaniment:

Mutuality

Inclusivity

Vulnerability (power)

Empowerment

Sustainability

We seek actions contributing to commonly agreed upon goals...how do our actions fit with the 5 values...as we engage in the restoration of community?

For example: How do we share power? Scripture reference: Philippians 2:1-11.

Paradox: If you talk about sharing power then you have it and you are deciding to share it...we want to think more about mutual power.

How do we build our capacity to engage in restoring community? What does the word catholic mean...universal...but more...all-encompassing. Justo Gonzalez of Cuba – book recommendation: Reading the Bible with Spanish Eyes – catholicity = according to the whole. Perspectival theology – you see this, I see that, you put it together and we see the 360 degree picture...see concepts according to the whole.

How do we get to the catholicity of our walking with the ILS and they walking with the ELCA...we bring our skills, competencies, perspectives, etc. we put together the picture and ask, what does this mean for the picture of us walking together. Not “either/or” but always “both/and.”

Think about this...

“What do you do for a living?” “I am a Lutheran pastor.” (conversation typically ends)
Or.

“What do you do for a living?” “I work toward extreme makeover(here details are shared about people and programs that transform...the conversation continues) ”Well what is the organization you work for?” “Oh it is called the church, I am a Lutheran.”

Young Adults in Global Mission – “Life without Consumerism”, article by Heidi Torgerson-Martinez in Journal of Lutheran Ethics

Notes from Accompaniment and Companion Relationships, Mary Campbell, Manager for Relationships, Latin America and the Caribbean, Global Mission History

Accompaniment started with advocacy during the 1980's

Travel has increased greatly

Money entered the picture

This has changed the way we do accompaniment.

Description of a companion synod visit: Synod group had a great experience, talked about sustainability etc. but no real connection about mission was made so no new life brought into the relationship. Why? Those traveling were white, middle class people not involved in ministry and mission in their congregation. The people who should travel should be those who are at the grass roots ministry level – the experiences in El Salvador inspire the mission and work back home.

What do you do with your experience when you come home? Does it change your participation in God's mission domestically?

1) God's mission today is to restore community – we have been invited by God to be a part of that mission – the church in ES asks us frequently to help restore community – cross-cultural training is key to understanding –

In the early days we asked, “how can we individually advocate for our companions?” Today, with our companions we ask “how do we engage in advocacy together to rebuild community?”

Sharing question: Where are you participating in God's mission to restore community and how?

2) The spirituality of giftedness – we are all gifted from God. But our gifts aren't all the same.

Pre-accompaniment question: What do they need?

Early accompaniment question: What do **you** need?

Question now is: What can we learn from our companions that will help us address our challenges

Sharing question: What have you learned from your local or global companions that has shaped your participation in God's mission?

3) The globalized world brings interconnectedness – sustainability is a challenge for all of us

Pre-accompaniment question: How can we train them to be church? (our way)

Early accompaniment question: How can we help resolve economic disparities and poverty?

Why do you have a partnership? Need a partnership? “To help someone” is not a good reason...it is not partnering – it is helping. Each has to give and to receive. Partnerships need a vision. Unless an organization, congregation, synod, etc. has recognized a gap, it does not have a reason to partner. How is our companionship being called to teach us?

Mutually ask: what are the sustainability challenges you are experiencing in ministry and mission where you are called?

Question now is: What are your priorities for ministry and mission?

Sharing question: what are the sustainability challenges you are experiencing in ministry and mission where you are called?

Notes from Accompaniment and Sustainability for Mission and Ministry Raquel Rodriguez, Program Director for Latin America and the Caribbean, Global Mission

A word about Global Mission structure – Different internal structure. Global Community = regional desks, scholarships & Young Adults in Mission program and relationships; Diakonia = international development & disaster response; Mission Formation = Global events & education materials; Finance, Administration There is an executive committee of the team leaders of all the above teams

LAC team is Paulina (1/2 time administrative staff); Mary Campbell (relationships and companion synod); Raquel = director + 3 people out in the region – Stephen Deal, Kate Lawler (Argentina Chile), David Wunsch (Argentina, Peru, Bolivia)

Accompaniment is the model and paradigm but also the tool GM uses to do mission work. Very different than the concept of doing mission than a lot of our constituency has...different from that used in decades. The past is not wrong, but in this day and age we need to use a methodology which is more welcoming and open to our companions and does not make our companions the object of our mission work. It is also not loosey loose... the second c is challenge.

Emmaus story – we are challenged by the Word of God

The church is the Body of Christ. The church is not the ELCA or ILS but the church is the body of Christ. It's not our church – it is entrusted to us.

Accompaniment values

The concept of vulnerability – baggage – we see places from our own context. Poverty is relative. “We do not want to be defined by the rubble.” What we see in El Salvador might not be what we are looking at...we do not perceive vulnerability as a value...it is a negative in our culture. When we make decisions we have too much baggage. The people in our congregations have good intentions but that is not good enough – you have to analyze the reality and not pass judgment.

Mutuality happens at the table on Sunday morning – the table set by Jesus Christ where bank accounts don't matter.

Empowerment is not us empowering other people. We can provide the space for empowerment but the rising up comes from within.

Sustainability is more than finances. Environmental sustainability is where that concept began – we should use our resources for the benefit of the whole but retaining life for the next generation. The church needs to do mission and ministry in a way so that they are not depleted and the church can continue onward into the future.

The LWF established a program to provide tools to churches in Latin America for use on the theme of sustainability. The church in Latin America inherited models that are not sustainable. Ordained ministry is not sustainable. The model of seminary for 5 years of study and then go to a church and serve at a church which cannot pay is not sustainable. Think about what makes up The Lutheran Identity. We cannot say what Luther said in the 16th century now because it has no meaning. The market for churches is big...competing with tons of ways of doing church. Lutheran identity in context developed by churches is very important. Doctrine may be talked about but not implemented only by the pastor. We value the Priesthood of all believers.

Stewardship – this has not been addressed well in the churches...the colonialism and way that protestant churches came to Central America propagated the idea that the north had endless resources and had power to make decisions. Most of the budget needs to come from outside of the ILS. Need to develop stewardship of human resources and financial resources.

Work with the poorest of the poor. Pentecostal churches do this, and they live by their own means. There are churches that do this. If we have models that are not appropriate for that context, then of course they will not work. The companions need to study themselves to figure out how to continue forward into the future.

There is no endpoint to sustainability – it is a process.

At this time, 125 lay-leaders being taught at the micro-region level by Pastora Vilma, etc. – one area of study is stewardship education. What role do external resources play as they come into this mix? Are they sustaining mission and ministry but not necessarily sustaining the institution. The church needs an asset map and to affirm the gifts people

have. This is important especially for people who have not been valued for their gifts. There is a three-year training cycle. The curricula include: climate change and pastoral, theological and practical conversations. The new reality is disasters every year.

Scripture for sustainability – 1 Thessalonians: Paul is not paid but called; Acts: the church held things in common

Worship together

Study the word of God together – everyone wants to pick the fruit but you cannot bear fruit unless you plant the seed first. We plant seeds in each other...if we don't go back and forth to visit one another, we never see the fruits. It's important to ask about the good times and not just the times of the war and the bad times

Unload our baggage, listen more to what Pastora Norma has to say about walking hand in hand. Not focusing on the money but focusing on the relationships

We all have issues with relationships among ourselves – we might have some rough times but building relationships is the top priority

Listening – Important to sit down with our brothers and sisters in El Salvador and work on our understanding of accompaniment. Together we can come up with a mutual understanding...this is something we can really work on as a given for our partnerships. The pastors in ES are at all different levels. We need to find a way to mutually understand and walk together, not “this is the accompaniment I want you to accept.”

We are all human beings. Our companions are too.

Notes from Saturday morning, January 21, 2012

Skype call with ILS with 1) Presentation of people in ELCA group 2) Presentation of ILS group (Guadalupe Cortez, Bishop Gomez, later joined by Santiago Rodriguez and Norma Castillo)

Questions posed by ELCA participants in italics:

What is the most important thing for ILS to tell us?

Bishop Gomez: Our desire is always to take the opportunity to strengthen the church. In the past we were considered a subversive church, and we were persecuted, but thanks be to God right now we don't have this problem. With the current government we have cooperation. We have to provide for the legalization of the church and all of the properties of the church. We are in conversation with the ministry of governance to make a process for reforming our governing documents of the church. More than 35 years we were legally established but the regs at that time were for a tiny church. At that time we had 7 congregations. Now we have more than 50. We have a team of more than 100 people on our pastoral team.

We have made a plan that some pastors have received recognition as diaconal pastors for 15/20 years and now can be ordained as presbyters. We are talking about a group of pastors who are not salaried but took on the work as part of the call of Christian responsibility. There is a deficit always due to pastor salaries we cannot pay. This year we took money from the endowment fund and when we communicated this the pastors were happy and there were tears because we were able to complete the salary for the year and the 13th month payment.

We had informed them the pastors that probably we would need to cancel the 13th month but with endowment money we were able to complete that responsibility.

What are the priorities for this year?

ILS Church priorities

1. Institutional Strengthening of the church (ILS)
2. Formation of pastors and evangelization
3. Pastor salaries

Diaconal priorities

- A. Food security is top priority
- B. Attention to the emergencies,
- C. Advocacy for peace and human rights. This is what the church is thinking it needs to carry out.

What should we pray for?

The worry about the insecurity in which we live, some pastors have had extortion threats. Last year Pastor Carlos Najera had to pay 5000 dollars or his family would be killed. The money had to come from the church to pay that. The police – we have contacts and

advice from them – advise not to give in to the threats of extortion. But pray for the protection of the people and the pastors and our congregations.

Also, that the church may continue working with the government toward the completion of its responsibilities under the Peace Accords, especially with respect to economic and social justice.

Prayers from US:

- Learn more about partnerships and strengthen them
- Inspire people here to return to churches from the distractions by so many other things
- Holy Spirit inspire us in our work in the US
- Pray for children who live in poverty and in need of more love and care
- That we may be more in contact with the Salvadorans who live in the US, esp. in LA
- Pray for the ELCA staff.

Theological conference: Pastor Anna Kari-Johnson: We love your idea of a theological congress. Bishop Dean Nelson asks for your advice regarding the congress in order to talk about pastor themes and Latino ministry in the US with Latin Americans. There is interest in this theme here among the companion synods.

Decision: Dates of the Encuentro: 2nd week of November 11-16 with theological congress Nov 7-10. Opening service of Encuentro on November 11 with participation of Bishop Dean.

Pastor Norma: Greetings from each of your sister churches. Of the 52 ILS churches, 12 do not have partnerships. As the Lutheran Church we empower them through the micro-region structure. With some relationships we move forward in a step by step process. The companion of St. Matthews is Casa Esperanza, also might have a micro-regional relationship. The family and gender ministry – Sunday School – they accompany all of the communities with food security. As a Synod we are doing an evaluation, working in line with you we will present the priorities of our sustainability plan. We are taking steps maybe not visible but we are taking steps forward. Part of this process is with the microregions so they can consolidate their work and work together with their relationships. Encuentro – we'll present the advances also requests made at end of 2009.

The partnerships are very important as a blessing for us, helping us to dignify the life in our communities and in our churches with mutuality.

Do you suggest churches inquire about relationships with micro-regions? Historically we have two types of partnerships... (1) local church to church, and (2) church or synod with the whole synod with accompaniment of various ministries of the synod. Within a micro-region there may be several partnerships, the potential exists to accompany all of the churches in the micro-region, synergy...think about how to strengthen micro-region and all the churches within it.

Endowment Fund – BG has already talked with you about our worries about salaries. Pastors as servants of God should receive pay. The Endowment Fund is for us a blessing we see ourselves making the commitment to work together with you on it. We are taking steps as best we can, we are a poor people so we do what we can, but we are taking initiatives. We also give thanks to our sister churches and ask for their support to unite with us and work toward this goal.

Dollar Campaign – In October at the pastor meeting we talked about and presented the total problem about the economy, this idea was proposed by the pastoral body. On this day we had a raffle with a gift from Pastora Martina Bonilla, everybody participated and they raised \$65 in that one raffle. On this day we also talked about economic questions, differences between us and agreed to an economic restructuring of the aid we receive, that out of the money we receive that 5% will be contributed for the administration of the church, but we also know that we need to consult with you as well so that you know about it. So some pastors are already taking the initiative and have started with this.

We also want to consult with you about that and also for the support for the endowment. In the \$1 campaign we are also making other activities to earn money for the fund. We also want to say – we are asking of our people working on a stewardship campaign

Kevin Witt question- violence in the community, accompany us in prayer hopefully St. Peters can come back and visit. Our children and our youth have to work on their attitudes of studying - that support is important from all of you which allows our children to move forward.

As we walk together we give thanks to God in order to provide dignified life for all people. We are hoping that you can provide us with a report from your meeting together, with all of the suggestions for the Encuentro.

Are you thinking these 12 congregations need partnerships? Should we pray for them? What do you want us to do for the 12? Mutually we should pray for them working together in communicating the realities and the hopes. Concretely, it is good to arrange visits to these places and to learn more about them and ultimately think about how that issue could be resolved. In addition to visiting your companion. visit these so you can provide more equity between congregations. In November. we will have a micro-region encuentro so that all of the partnerships in the microregion can get together and see how all the churches are working together.

The 12 churches – some in the east, some in the west, and Santa Ana, Sonsonate, centrosur in the San Salvador area. There are some that have sister parishes with relationships in the US but which have cooled off and the committees have stopped being so active. This is a mutual work to see what we can do about the cool relationships to see what will happen next. Norma can send an email re the 12

Micro-regions – how can we pray for and get involved at this level. In November we will have a proposal about this. We'll also talk about the economy but also the way microregions work together at workshops etc. Sustentabilidad Process with LWF

About the 5% admin charge-- we will distribute it between the endowment fund and the administration. Auditing, funding, etc.

What is your understanding of accompaniment and think about it and give us a report in November How is accompaniment present in the hermandades? What can we do to achieve a common understanding of accompaniment?

We are starting some workshops with the pastors, and so we will think about this and have a dialog, we are already thinking along this line.

Encuentro Suggestions

Before going to the list, we wish to Acknowledge Norma's work in responding to the last Encuentro –eg microregion meetings, distribution of sister parish directory and other follow-up done.

Activities together:

1. Worship
2. Visits to microregions and/or congregations
3. The three questions which are on the wall
 - a. How did you first connect to the ILS/ELCA?
 - b. Which community or ministry inspires you?
 - c. What gift do you bring to this global relationship
4. Meal times with good conversation
5. Bible study together in small groups, faith sharing could we do the bible study like Walter did? Where did you see Jesus?
6. Meetings with other people who have relationships with same congregation this will happen within the microregions – those who have relationships can connect with the have-nots so that the whole microregion is strengthened. Synergy.

Areas of possible discussion:

7. Presentations on contextual reality of ILS mission today and dreams for the future.
8. Microregions – understanding them and talking about how sister parishes and companions can support micro regions
9. ILS understanding of sustainability/ELCA understanding of sustainability
10. Discussion of accompaniment and work toward mutual understanding – at last encuentro lots of abstract presentations on accompaniment, but how do you implement accompaniment in relationships, with groups working together, wrestling with the concept of accompaniment and implications for the relationship...concrete.

11. Logistics of coordinating delegations,
12. Discussion about when it is appropriate to bring stuff or share money resources
13. Presentations from international partners as we had last time
14. Discussions suggested from the List from last encuentro
15. Discussion about how to facilitate more ILS visits to the US
16. Conversation about what companion synods/congregations are doing (networks, companion synods, congregations) – what ways are they in accompaniment with the ILS
17. Discussion about accountability – there is a cultural difference in our understanding of accountability. As a piece of accompaniment, come to a common understanding of accountability – not in terms only of money, but in terms of relationships, what we are doing. Open up the concept and come from both sides.
18. Discussion about transparency – what does that mean for us internally and for us mutually with our ES companions.

General suggestion: After feedback in 2009 – too much one way presentation – speaker to a large group all passive recipients, more time in small groups, mixed groups, partners with Salvadorans, discussion, more interactive work

ELCA El Salvador Network – List of hopes, expectations and dreams

- Holy Spirit is a constant presence
- Sustainability in our congregation
- Connect with others who are in relationship with the same community
- Even out our ministries – balanced and equitable relationships
- Congregation to congregation // synod to synod – how to live those out
- Connect with national ILS ministries such as the schools
- Working toward common goals
- Mutuality, life-giving ministries in both places
- Be inspired by each other, learn best practices
- Learning each other's gifts and assets – mapping, strengths and passions
- Each synod can work on behalf of all
- How to sustain lines of communication
- Understand “missionary” – change in paradigm and explain to congregations
- How do we help more ELCA educational institutions to connect to Lutheran university
- Money and relationships
- How to get Lutheran partners into Global Mission (eg Thrivent)
- How do congregations who are not in companion synods relate to the holistic relationships? Eg. Minnesota connects with GMS

Added on 1/21:

- Networking on logistics
- Bible study as an important piece of relationship

- Working with common companions
- More about what individual congregations of ILS doing
- Mutual understanding of accountability
- Facilitating south-south relationships world-wide
- Immigration as an advocacy issue
- Security questions
- How do we minister to the Salvadoran community in the US
- Scholarships

Next Steps:

1. Listserve
2. Time to meet together in ES at Encuentro time?
3. Quarterly conference calls? Or Webinar?
4. Face to Face gathering – annual or bi-annual
5. Evaluation of this event, give honest feedback to Mary