

Report of the General Synod Council on Global Mission

POLICY WORDING

The RCA will connect and engage people to what God is doing in the world, through mission partners that cross boundaries in word and deed with the love of God revealed in Jesus Christ and enabled by the Holy Spirit.

GENERAL SECRETARY'S INTERPRETATION

Mission becomes a way of life when we reach out to people with the gospel, meeting needs in neighborhoods, countries, continents, and throughout the world. Empowered by the Holy Spirit, we boldly give witness to the hope within us and willingly serve others by becoming the hands and feet of Christ in every corner of the world. The RCA commitment is to respond with God's love to meet spiritual and material needs around the globe. We are excited to engage mission through our churches by equipping mission leaders to maximize the impact their mission investment can make around the world. We are eager to move into a future where RCA Global Mission is part of a mission movement—a movement that comes from within our congregations and is built on the passions of our members. A future where we make connections through our history and expertise, where we connect you with faithful partners and help coordinate, inspire, and support you in mission.

Individuals and churches experience transformation as they open themselves to be used by God and reach out in giving and receiving, learning and sharing, and extending the kingdom of God through missional engagement. It means bringing the good news of God's grace in Jesus Christ to those who have never heard the message, mobilizing the RCA congregations to connect with global partners for greater kingdom impact, helping resource volunteers for expanding involvement in mission efforts, and extending compassion, mercy, and justice in places of discrimination, poverty, famine, disaster, and injustice. In a world of brokenness and need, we offer help, hope, and tangible expressions of God's love.

GLOBAL MISSION

Over the past 377 years, RCA Global Mission has impacted millions of people around the world with the love of God. Truly, God has blessed our work. Today, the way we engage in mission is changing, and the role of the denominational mission organization is changing, too. We are excited to engage mission through our churches by equipping mission leaders to maximize the impact their mission investment can make around the world.

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Progress

Community and Leadership Development

CEPAD (the Council of Protestant Churches of Nicaragua) continues to make efforts to establish a community organization responsible for coordinating efforts aimed at satisfying the basic priority needs of the residents, by training local leaders to carry out advocacy actions with state organizations and NGOs, promoting community participation and the use of local

resources available in the communities. This year, 240 community leaders were trained in this program. Forty pastors were also trained to promote social transformation, community development, change of consciousness, and theological thinking that promotes a more holistic pastoral action.

Since its inception, Setshabelo Family and Child Services (SFCS) in South Africa has been integrally part and parcel of the social development process in Botshabelo. The program continues to grow and serve various social needs of the community from promoting family-based models for child care to family preservation programs such as family counseling, children's right advocacy and training, and pre-marital/marriage training. To strengthen these programs, SFCS continues to partner with churches to provide robust value-based training to congregations and also equip church leaders with skills to address needs of their congregations. This year, nine new churches are working with SFCS based on the positive impact they have witnessed in Boshabelo.

Church Planting

Our newest strategic impact area, Brazil, has experienced growth in church planting and leadership development. With a vision of planting 100 churches and sending 100 missionaries by 2030, Global Mission in partnership with the Presbyterian Church of Manaus has facilitated planting seven new churches and training five new missionaries this year alone. In addition, through this partnership, Global Mission has supported a new medical doctor which has increased capacity for reaching more people through medical mission trips.

We are seeing momentum in church planting in Europe. Currently, we are supporting new church plants and planting efforts in Hungary, Romania, Netherlands, Germany, Portugal, and Spain. We are also looking to expand more through a network of interested RCA congregations. We recently hired a new missionary to lead an English congregation in Hanover, Germany.

Dr. Jang is our partner mission personnel, working at the University of China as a professor. He leads weekly Bible study groups in his apartment for students and others within the university. Two of the members who have regularly attended and participated in the Bible study group have committed to planting churches in their hometown. These two new churches are the wonderful outcome of this small Bible study group and indirect, personal evangelism through intimate fellowship under difficult circumstances given China's negative attitude and actions toward Christianity.

Current Goals

Our current goals are derived from our commitment to strongly reflect and mobilize passions and gifts of our congregations to serve. These goals include:

- Increase mutually beneficial collaboration between RCA Global Mission and all RCA congregations.
- Creation of new pathways and on-ramps for smaller congregations to get involved in the life and ministry of RCA Global Mission.
- Standardization of procedures to better onboard missionaries and to aid in the vetting of new mission partnerships.
- Communication of our field stories to our constituents, creating relevance for North American congregations and providing opportunities to serve with RCA Global Mission.