



Ministry Impact Report

OCT 2022 - SEPT 2023

A celebration of faithful partnership
and Christ's transforming work



The Reformed Church in America is a fellowship of congregations called by God and empowered by the Holy Spirit to be the very presence of Jesus Christ in the world.

Our shared task is to equip congregations for ministry—a thousand churches in a million ways doing one thing—following Christ in mission, in a lost and broken world so loved by God.

— From the statement of Mission and Vision adopted in 1997



A word from the general secretary

Dear friends,

Even in the midst of the challenging season we are living in these days as a denomination, there are signs of hope and reasons to rejoice! People always ask me why I find hope. My answer is simple: Christ. And it is Christ and the Holy Spirit, working together with faithful servants like you, who bring about hopeful stories like the ones you are about to read. These stories also give me hope for the future of the Reformed Church in America. May they give you hope, too.

We have made significant progress in many important areas of mission, multiplication, and ministry this year. Unreached people are coming to know the love and grace of Jesus Christ through continued global mission efforts, through new church starts, and through congregations' efforts to be more welcoming and to multiply disciples. God is up to something great in our present and our future.

This broken world so loved by God must hear the message of the good news of the gospel with passion and boldness through the ministry of the Reformed Church in America. Let us celebrate the good work already done, and let us move forward in hope and continued partnership, so that God's will may be done in all of us.

Grace and peace,

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Eddy Alemán". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Eddy" and last name "Alemán" clearly distinguishable.

Eddy Alemán
General Secretary



She Is Called / Ella Es Llamada

Celebrating Five Decades of Women in Ministry

In 2023, the Reformed Church in America marked five decades of women in ordained ministry, as elders, deacons, and ministers of Word and sacrament. This milestone was celebrated in myriad ways: in the sharing of stories, at special events (like an inaugural gala at New Brunswick Theological Seminary), at the Sunday evening plenary session at General Synod, with new She Is Called “biblical women & me” T-shirts, and more.

We honor and remember the trailblazers,

those who served before they could be ordained as well as those who bravely answered God’s call to be the first ordained elders, deacons, and ministers of Word and sacrament.

**Thank you for your faithful support
as we build God’s church together
and create a reality of Revelation
7:9 here on earth!**



Rev. Dr. Young Na (New York)

First Korean-American woman ordained minister

“I consider myself as a teaching pastor, knowing who I was, who I am, who I’m supposed to be—to serve God in ministry as his worker.”



Elder Carol Mutch (New Jersey)

General Synod 2000 president

“Throughout my years of service, God has opened doors and pushed me through. The Holy Spirit led, and I simply had to say, ‘yes.’ God took care of the rest.”



Deacon Hellen Harvey (California)

ordained in 2003

“I vowed to give more time back to the church.”



We celebrate the women who are courageously, humbly, and joyfully answering God's call today to build God's church together.

Snapshots of women's ordinations, installations, and commissionings this past year

❖ **Rev. Tiffany Fan** ¹

Grace Christian Church, New York City, Classis of Queens

❖ **Rev. Mornier Rich** ²

Queens Reformed Church, New York, Classis of Queens

❖ **Pastor Claudette Reid** ³

Newark, New Jersey, Classis of Passaic Valley

❖ **Rev. Ana Bautista** ⁴

Iglesia Cristiana Emanuel, Sacramento, California, Classis of the Americas

❖ **Pastor Josefina Ramos** ⁴

Iglesia Cristiana Emanuel, Ceres, California, Classis of the Americas

❖ **Rev. Lorena Serrano, Rev. Jael Altamirano Serrano, and Rev. Balerie Valadez** ⁵

Iglesia La Senda, Corona, California, Classis of the Americas

❖ **Rev. Corinne Ellis** ⁶

Prescott Community Church, Prescott, Arizona, Classis of the Southwest

❖ **Rev. Deb Rensink (Iowa)**

"God is working through me as I bring the hope and healing power of Jesus to families who have trauma wounds caused by domestic violence."

❖ **Rev. Olga Shaffer (Ontario)**

"This season looks different than the last, but God is still using me where he has placed me."

❖ **Rev. Dr. Mashona Walston (New York)**

"God is working through me to disrupt, to disturb, to empower, to engage, and to participate in all the wonderful things that God has before us."

❖ **Elder Kitt Jackson (New York)**

"God is working through me as a preaching elder to provide worship leadership to many different congregations, mostly small ones without established pastors. It's a blessing and a privilege to share the good news on a regular basis."

❖ **Deacon Melani Situmorang (New Jersey)**

"If you asked me how this experience of being a deacon and a clerk of consistory has been for me as a woman so far, I'd say that it feels like a blessing, but I hope that I'm not the only one being blessed."



Celebrating 75 years of RCA mission in Africa!

The RCA has been engaged in mission in Africa for 75 years!

The first missionaries, Wilma Kats and Robert and Morrie Swart, went to Sudan in 1948 in partnership with the American Mission, a joint mission endeavor with the Presbyterian Church. Their goal was to reach Anuak, Nuer, Murle, and other unreached people groups in southern Sudan along the Sobat and Pibor Rivers via healthy holistic mission inputs. To date, these people groups have been reached, and the Presbyterian Church of South Sudan has been firmly planted, with a membership of over 1 million members with 500 congregations and 265 pastors. This is all thanks to the Holy Spirit and the historic mission support of you and your churches.

Currently, your generosity makes it possible for RCA Global Mission's active mission engagement in South Sudan, Ethiopia, Kenya, Malawi, Mozambique, South Africa, Niger, and a new budding partnership in Rwanda. Your support backs the work of 15 mission partners and 30 missionaries through the work of church planting and holistic mission work among unreached and under-reached people groups.

In 1960, there were
approximately 30 million
Christians in Sub-Saharan Africa;
today, there are over
685 million Christians!

We praise God for you, your sustaining generosity, and for the privilege and opportunity to share in Christ's mission and the growth and development of the Church in Africa.



Building a welcoming presence



Rebuilding lives in Turkey and Syria

Last March, members of Fifth Reformed Church in Grand Rapids, Michigan, gathered after church on Sunday for a series of seminars led by General Synod Council ministry staff, all centered on building a welcoming presence. Topics included welcoming people with disabilities, people of different races and ethnicities, young leaders, and women leaders.

“It was a really great experience,” says Sam Eldersveld, student ministries director. “We wanted to bring outside voices in to show us areas of improvement and what the Lord might be calling us to do.”

After the pandemic, during intense racial reckoning in the U.S., the church wanted to engage and respond, says Eldersveld.

“Our main focus was racial reconciliation, but it’s bigger than

that. We’re trying to embody who Jesus is and welcome everyone with open arms,” he says. “Our church has taken steps in engaging those who are different from us, especially those who might not be connected to the rest of the church family, trying to notice them and make sure they’re comfortable in our church.”

In particular, the seminar on welcoming people with disabilities gave Fifth Reformed the opportunity to hear from people in their church with different disabilities, such as Mary, who lives with hearing loss, about ways the church can help her (and others) fully engage in worship. The seminar also prompted the church to have conversations about how the church building could be made more accessible, making sure that everyone can lead worship, speak from the front of the church, and participate in communion.

Thanks to your faithful support, churches are equipped to better welcome people who are often on the margins!

RCA congregations and individuals gave \$139,771.35

in response to the earthquakes that devastated regions of Turkey and Syria on February 6, 2023.

Your generosity helped our partners in Turkey and Syria provide immediate relief through gifts of food, clothes, and shelter, and to think about what might be next for rebuilding in these areas.

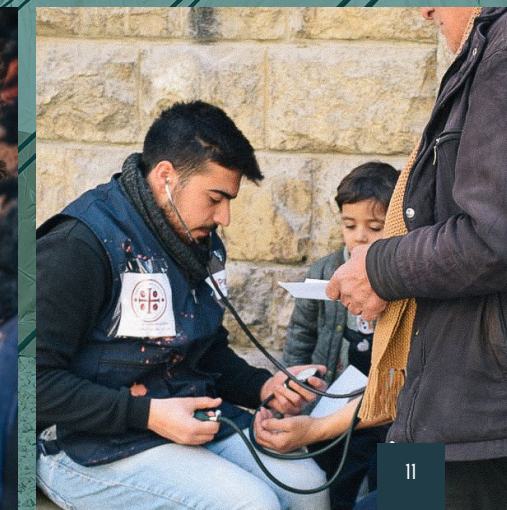
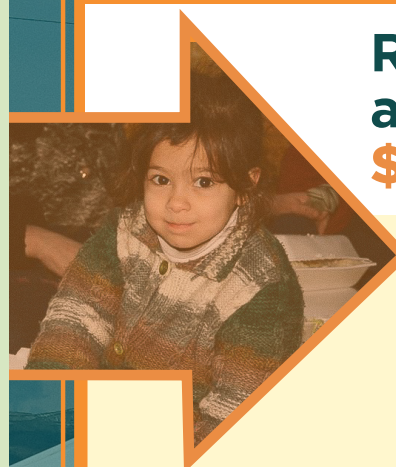
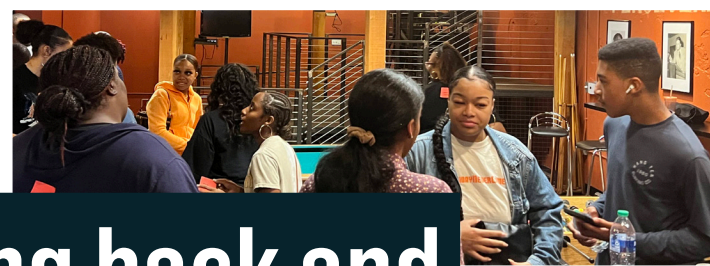
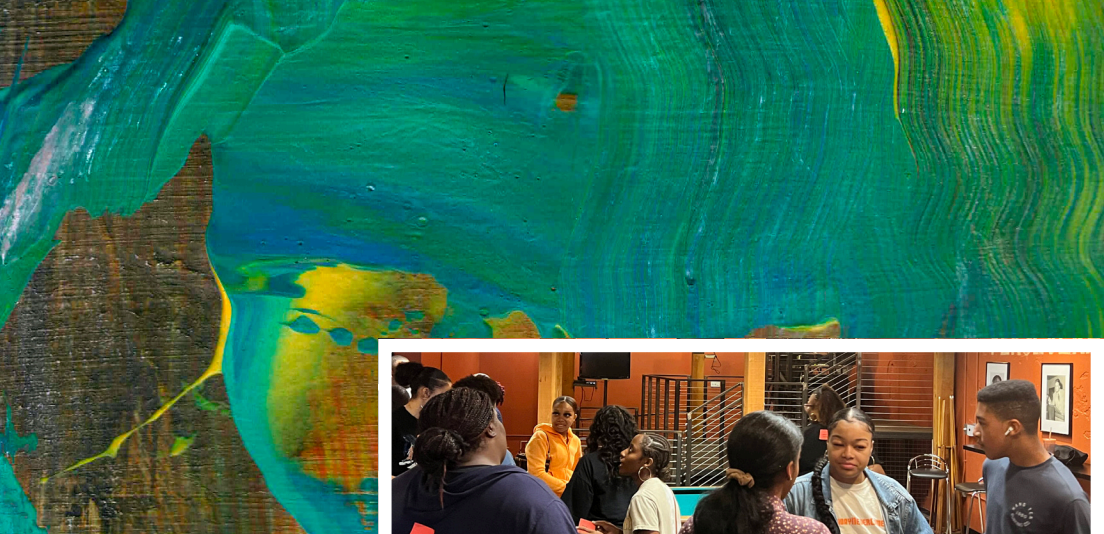


Photo credit: Partners Relief & Development



Looking back and learning together

Several Black pastors from inside and outside the RCA are journeying together through a sankofa experience over the course of a year, looking back at history in order to move forward. The group had their first in-person gathering in May after meeting via Zoom for five months. Topics presented by GSC staff and other RCA leaders included future church innovation and next generation engagement, trauma coaching, personal development and emotional intelligence, global mission, financial stability, and race relations and advocacy.

“We had an opportunity to delve deeply into some leadership topics and be equipped for our own ministry contexts,” says Pete Watts, coordinator for the RCA’s African American Black Council (AABC). “It was a great time of connection, fellowship, laughter, and tears as we continue to challenge our own perspectives about leadership and ministry models that we have come accustomed to.

“I believe that the AABC is positioned to grow more churches and strengthen existing ones. I believe that the AABC is positioned to equip leaders in the church for more fruitfulness and faithfulness. And I believe we are on track to accomplish the mission with God on our side.”



Joining together in prayer

Every Friday afternoon, general secretary Eddy Alemán hosts a Zoom call for pastors to pray together.

Retired minister Don Poest has been attending since the beginning—and has every intention of continuing, he says.

“It’s a standing date on my calendar and very few things bump it off. Why do I value this so highly? I’ve been the recipient of the prayers of others and I know how much this meant to me. I know that Eddy and his staff value prayer, and I value them. Prayer with others is a tangible way I can support this denomination that I love. And praying with others from around the world (we consistently have a sister from Argentina pray with us) gives me a preview of eternity to come. Praying with others unleashes the power of God, and I’m so glad God invites me to join in!”

Thank you for your prayers and financial support for this beloved denomination!



Living out a

Revelation 7:9 reality

With vibrant splashes of color and jubilant celebration, a new church joined the RCA. In a number of ways, the First Reformed Church of New Hampshire is the first of its kind. The church's very name, proudly announced at its classical service, reflects its standing as the first RCA church in the state of New Hampshire. It's notable, too, that this church is a majority Indonesian congregation—but very multicultural—and led by a woman, Rev. Jelty Ochoton.

The church has its roots in a Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) congregation established by Indonesian immigrants in 1997. Last winter, Ochoton met with Rev. Fransisca Rumokoy, president of the RCA's Council for Pacific and Asian American Ministries, GSC staff members, and leaders from the Classis of New Brunswick to find a way

forward in the RCA. On August 10, the church was officially founded as an RCA church, with Rumokoy's church as the sending church.

"They're so excited and honored to be part of the RCA," says Rev. Liz Testa, director for women's transformation and leadership, who was part of that initial meeting and present at the classical service. "There was a beautiful mix of cultures—so much hope and joy. God is doing a new thing in the RCA."

One of the first things the congregation did was to collect an offering for RCA Global Mission, designated for wildfire relief in Maui. After the service, the congregation and guests celebrated with a bounty of Indonesian food and cake frosted with RCA green and the RCA logo.

Your support helps launch and nourish new church starts as our denomination grows in new ways. Thank you!



Opening of the new King Hamad American Mission Hospital in Bahrain

In 1892, Samuel Zwemer and his co-founders of the Arabian Mission arrived on the rocky shores of Bahrain. The respect Zwemer developed for his Muslim neighbors and the relationships that evolved laid a strong foundation for the relationship between the RCA and Bahrain, now 120 years long and continuing. One of those memorable accomplishments was the establishment of the first hospital in the country—which still stands today as the American Mission Hospital.

Thanks to the generous support of His Majesty the King of Bahrain, the newest and largest state-of-the-art private hospital in Bahrain opened on the 120th anniversary—January 26, 2023—of Zwemer's original hospital. His Majesty the Crown Prince was in attendance, along with general secretary Eddy Alemán and JP Sundararajan, Scott Engelsman, and Derrick Jones from RCA Global Mission.

"The vision of the pioneers from the Reformed Church continues to impact the people of Arabia, with Christian love and the attitude of service," shared Joel Indrupati, the corporate communications director of the American Mission Hospital.

Your support of RCA Global Mission continues the legacy of mission with people in Bahrain. Thank you!



General secretary Eddy Alemán with Dr. George Cheriyan, corporate CEO and the chief medical officer of the American Mission Hospital, at the new hospital opening.

The new King Hamad American Mission hospital is a 125-bed, eco-friendly, solar-run, multi-specialty hospital with:

- ❖ A chapel built at the center of the hospital
- ❖ A special ward for women and children
- ❖ 5 floors, each with 4 wings
- ❖ 6 royal suites
- ❖ 28 super deluxe rooms
- ❖ 64 special deluxe rooms
- ❖ 75 beds for outpatient and emergency
- ❖ 14,000 square meters of greenery

“This trip was truly a gift from God. ... While the food was different, the customs may have wavered, and the language was definitely not the same, one thing did stay consistent to what I know in America. The love that the people of Christ had for Jesus was the same in Ireland, Portugal, and in my tiny city of Holland, Michigan.

We know that Yahweh is the God of the world, but it is hard to really know that until you explore the world. And in the moments of praise, of worship, and of prayer in these nations, a feeling of comfort was always with me, because even though I was thousands of miles from my home, I was so close to my God. The biggest impact for me on this trip was to see that the God I love, truly is the God of the world.”

–Jules Hidalgo,
Hope College student,
mission trip scholarship recipient
(pictured far right on opposite page)



Experiencing church in Ireland

This past spring, over 30 people—mostly young adults—gathered for a church planting summit in Northern Ireland. From there, smaller groups of leaders traveled to different geographical locations with RCA missionaries and partners to witness the incredible movement of God’s Spirit across the globe.

The goal of the trip, a collaboration between RCA Global Mission and next generation engagement, was for people to lean deeper into the work of RCA mission partners. But nobody anticipated the quick bond of friendship forged between participants, both young and old. What emerged from this time together was truly a shining beacon of church: the body of Christ-followers, gathering to share in fellowship with one another and communion with God.

Your generous support of RCA Global Mission and future church innovation continues to make opportunities like this possible for the next generation to engage God’s world in new ways.

Baptizing in the name of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit

At Fort Moore, Georgia, U.S. Army Chaplain John D. Barry has personally baptized over 50 people in summer 2023. RCA Chaplain Rev. Barry is now serving as a Chaplain at the U.S. Army Infantry School. In his Brigade, over 600 Trainees regularly attend Sunday Protestant services and nearly 200 were baptized in August and September 2023.*

**The views are those of the author and do not necessarily represent the views of the U.S. Department of Defense or its components. The appearance of U.S. Department of Defense visual information does not imply or constitute endorsement.*



Advocating for people with disabilities

“As a former special education teacher serving preschool through secondary age students, disability advocacy has always been extremely important to me. ... I was asked to serve on an RCA committee created to discuss the value of advocacy in the church. It was in this committee that the idea of having an individual in each church to oversee the needs of individuals and families living with disabilities was born.

“When, upon our retirement and subsequent move to a new RCA church home, I was asked by a pastor how I might become involved in that church, my response was ‘to facilitate the needs of individuals and families living with children with disabilities.’

“No single person can be expected to facilitate such a program, and I have been blessed by an active group of church members to aid in the support needed for assistance during child and youth programming. This is also a receiving experience as many children and youth living with disabilities are fully capable of not only having faith, but also expressing their faith both verbally and in service to others.”

—Martie Bultman,
Holland, Michigan, retired RCA disability advocate

Thank you for supporting RCA disability concerns, so that everybody belongs and everybody serves!



Journeying with South Sudanese refugees

Thirteen years ago, Joshua Scheid, pastor of Massapequa Reformed Church (New York) and vice president for General Synod 2024, was blessed with an opportunity to serve on a short-term mission project in Juba, the capital city of what became the independent Republic of South Sudan one year later. While there, his group saw and heard how lives and communities continued to be affected by decades of ongoing civil war. Through the years, the people of South Sudan have continued to occupy a special part of Scheid's heart.

When RCA missionary JJ TenClay and her husband, Tim, adapted a Meal for Peace—an intentional gathering to learn more about and be part of peace-building in South Sudan—for the Nassau-Suffolk Classis meeting this past summer, Scheid felt the Holy Spirit nudging him to consider again how he could join God's work of rebuilding and reconciliation that remains for citizens and refugees in South Sudan.

"It was so good not just to be reminded of RCA Global Mission's presence and partnership in South Sudan, but to be inspired to be a part of supporting that work. I can't wait to incorporate the Meal for Peace in my congregation," says Scheid. "I am so grateful for the Meal for Peace toolkit that makes doing so easily accessible. It's a helpful guide filled with simple ideas that can have a significant impact ... that helps bring South Sudan to you. What I love most about this is that our building community locally, by sharing a Sudanese-inspired meal around a table, can help rebuild community globally, in the name and love of Jesus. It doesn't get much better than that!"

Thanks to the generosity of many RCA churches and individuals who have hosted a meal for peace, RCA Global Mission is close to its goal of \$85,000 to provide peace and reconciliation resources to South Sudanese refugee camp residents.

Get your Meal for Peace toolkit at www.rca.org/meal-for-peace.



Growing the church in Latin America

It has been through your support—both financial and prayerful—of RCA missionaries Chuck and Jean Van Engen and the work of Latin American Christian Ministries that a multi-national, multi-denominational community of Latin American scholars, churches, and educational institutions have had access to advanced theological training in Spanish and Portuguese.

The fruit of your support is seen in the lives of the leaders who are formed through the Latin American Leadership Development doctoral program. In turn, during the coming decades, the graduates will influence hundreds of other leaders all over Latin America. Together, the countries where these graduates continue to lead and minister represent 29 national denominations in all but 3 Latin American countries.



Graduates by country as of June, 2023



Thank you for your faithful generosity!



A note from **LISA STOVER**, THE RCA'S INTERIM CFO

I am grateful to you, our faithful donors, grantors, and churches who continue to support the mission and ministry of the Reformed Church in America. Thanks to your generosity, we raised \$7.9 million dollars in fiscal year 2023. Your donations supported church planting, equipping, and revitalization efforts. You provided for missionaries and mission partners around the world who are spreading God's Word and strengthening the global church. You helped provide shelter and food to people affected by the earthquake that devastated Syria and Turkey. The needs are many, and you responded.

Despite a loss of churches in the denomination and challenging financial markets, we remain in a healthy financial position to face our future due to conservative budgets, prudent investment policies, and donors like you.

It is truly a blessing and an honor to steward the funds you have so generously given to the RCA. Thank you for the hope you have inspired through your faithful support of the RCA!

FINANCIAL RESULTS

REVENUE	Fiscal Year 2023		Fiscal Year 2022	
Contributions and Grants	\$7,904,834	51%	\$8,467,716	77%
Assessments	3,712,317	24%	5,542,829	50%
Other Income	3,923,140	25%	(2,961,610)	-27%
Total Revenue	\$15,540,291	100%	\$11,048,935	100%
EXPENDITURES				
The Center for Ministry and Multiplication	\$3,092,188	21%	\$3,436,560	22%
Global Missions	7,081,805	49%	7,125,651	47%
Work of General Synod	2,090,943	15%	2,573,033	17%
General Operations	2,167,725	15%	2,149,773	14%
Total Expenditures	\$14,432,661	100%	\$15,285,020	100%
NET INCOME	\$1,107,630		\$(4,236,082)	

These figures represent unaudited financial results. The RCA's 2023 financial statements will be audited by Plante Moran, PC.

Thank you for your support! The mission and ministry of the RCA cannot be done without you. There has never been a more important time than now for the life-transforming work of the RCA. We invite you to continue this journey of making a difference.

Please use the provided envelope to send your gift via mail.

To donate online visit
www.rca.org/ministryimpact.

By phone (U.S. only): Call Terri Boven at 616-541-0835.

By mail: Please send your check, made out to "Reformed Church in America" and designated "RCA On Mission Fund" or "RCA Global Mission" to:

U.S.
Reformed Church in America
Attn: Finance Dept.
4500 60th St. SE
Grand Rapids, MI 49512

Canada
Regional Synod of Canada
PO Box 1583 Stn Main
Woodstock, ON N4S 0A7

To designate your gift toward the RCA On Mission Fund or RCA Global Mission, please check the appropriate box on the envelope. If you don't designate your gift, we will apply it toward the greatest need.

Gifts may also be given online at
www.rca.org/ministryimpact.



This impact report is also available online and in Spanish. Visit www.rca.org/ministryimpact for either version.

