

REPORT OF THE GENERAL SYNOD COUNCIL ON ADVANCEMENT

The advancement team's responsibility is to encourage churches and individuals to generously give of the financial resources God has entrusted to them in support of the mission and ministry of the Reformed Church in America (RCA). The team coordinates all General Synod Council (GSC) fundraising efforts while striving to develop and strengthen relationships with donors, potential donors, church leaders, business allies, and others that will inspire financial partnerships, but also promote the mission and vision of the RCA.

Team members raise financial support through outright cash gifts, will bequests, life income plans, and grants. These funds are primarily given as a result of personal solicitation on the part of an advancement team member and/or a member of the GSC staff's Strategic Leadership Team (SLT) or via direct mail appeals. The team's primary fundraising responsibility is to raise money in support of the On Mission Fund. Twenty-five percent of all On Mission Fund giving supports RCA Global Mission, and seventy-five percent of all On Mission Fund giving supports the General Synod Council and the Center for Church Multiplication and Ministry. The Center for Church Multiplication and Ministry comes alongside groups of RCA churches to strengthen and support existing congregations and new churches in the following areas:

- Race relations and advocacy
- Leadership development
- Disability advocacy
- Women's transformation and leadership
- Discipleship building and training
- Church planting and multiplication
- Local missional engagement
- Next generation engagement

The center is a place of connection and curated resources, for the purpose of making disciples who make disciples, and to the glory of God, whose mission we follow. In addition to supporting the work of the center, the On Mission Fund supports the ongoing work of RCA Global Mission. Your gift to the On Mission Fund makes ministry possible.

Advancement team members work with GSC staff in seeking to secure financial resources that enable the RCA to further its work. We seek to secure mutually beneficial partnerships that allow us to continue our work while providing the finances to do that work well—money following mission. Such mutually beneficial partnerships the RCA enjoys are with the Lilly Endowment Religion Department (Economic Challenges Facing Pastoral Leaders, Generation Spark, and Renovations) and the RCA Church Growth Fund (Flourishing Churches Grants, congregational revitalization, church multiplication grants, and Next Generation Missional Engagement Scholarship Fund). We thank God for these partnerships and pray God will open more of these doors in the future.

The mission and ministry of the RCA is largely possible because of the generosity of God's people. In fiscal year 2023, 51 percent of the RCA's total revenue was received via voluntary support (contributions, grants, and Partnership-In-Mission [PIM] shares). For a brief synopsis of the 2023 budget, please refer to page 26 of the most recent Ministry Impact Report (October 2022 through September 2023). You may request a Ministry Impact Report by calling 616-541-0881 or by emailing advancement@rca.org.

The advancement team has also taken on responsibility for leading the strategic goal (one of several goals set by the Strategic Leadership Team for 2023-2024 using the Entrepreneurial Operating System framework) of personally connecting with every RCA minister of Word and sacrament who is currently serving in an RCA congregation prior to the end of the current fiscal year for the purpose of establishing a relationship. These integral connections are being made by several different GSC staff members, either via phone or in person. While making the connection, staff are asking three primary questions of each pastor and cataloging their responses: first, how are you doing (or, better stated, how is your soul)? Second, how may the RCA walk alongside you? And third, are there others pastors in your network of support that would benefit from a call similar to this? The collective responses to these questions are being synthesized for common themes and possible ministry directives for the RCA center staff. We, the GSC staff, believe this is an important step into building and maintaining support and camaraderie with those with whom we serve.

The ongoing funding structure of the denomination relies heavily upon the generosity of individual donors, foundations, corporations, and churches that give over and above covenant shares. We remain truly grateful for all those who have chosen to invest in the mission and ministry of the RCA.

The RCA continues to partner with Barnabas Foundation for resources around estate planning, planned giving, and planned gift management. The easiest gift, and oftentimes the gift with the most impact, is the gift that is made through your estate plan. For information about how you can include the RCA in your final estate plan or how you can receive income for the remainder of your lifetime from a planned gift that will benefit the RCA at the time of your passing, please contact Larryl Humme at lhumme@rca.org or 708-778-3780.

The mission and the ministry of the Reformed Church in America only happens because of the generosity of people like you throughout the denomination. Please consider including a gift to the RCA in your regular giving and/or in your estate planning. For more information on how to make a gift, please visit www.rca.org/give or contact one of our team members:

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