F 18-4
To approve from the unspent reserves from the year 2017 to fund a half-time position, designated as the coordinator for interreligious relations, and a joint interreligious committee with the CRCNA. (ADOPTED)

REPORT OF THE GENERAL SYNOD COUNCIL ON DEVELOPMENT

The development team’s purpose and vision statement reads:

Our purpose is to develop relationships that make the mission of the RCA known, inspiring financial partnerships that make the ministry of the RCA possible.

Imagine … Strong relationships with prospects, donors, and churches; where we know the answer is “yes” before we ask.

Imagine … Finances are no longer an obstacle for ministry.

Imagine … Every RCA staff member inspiring financial partnerships.

This statement defines our goals on behalf of the RCA.

The development team’s responsibility is to encourage churches and individuals to generously give of the financial resources God has entrusted to them to support the ministry and witness of the Reformed Church in America. We coordinate all GSC fundraising efforts, including but not limited to support for RCA Global Mission, Transformed & Transforming, and the Church Growth Fund. We strive to develop and strengthen relationships with donors, potential donors, church leaders, and others to inspire financial partnerships but also to promote the mission and vision of the RCA overall.

Development team members raise financial support through outright gifts, bequests, life income plans, and grants. Gifts may be designated for a specific ministry area or left undesignated for the greatest need. Undesignated gifts are typically assigned to the RCA Ministry Fund, a fund that supports the operational budget and work of Transformed & Transforming. The development team also assists with raising resources through Church Growth Fund savings certificates, Partner in Mission (PIM) shares, estate planning, and special project funding, such as the Called Campaign. Gifts to the RCA enable and empower ministry throughout the church, transforming lives both at home and around the world.

The mission and ministry of the RCA is largely possible because of the generosity of God’s people. In fiscal year 2017, 52 percent of the RCA’s total income came from voluntary support. Only 33 percent was derived from assessments. Other income such as investment earnings and fees paid for services rendered account for the remaining 15 percent of the RCA’s income in 2017.

The funding structure of the RCA relies heavily on gifts received from individual donors and from churches that give above and beyond assessments. We are truly grateful for those who have chosen to invest in the ministry of the RCA. A copy of the 2017 Annual Report to Donors is available on the RCA website and was available in hard copy form at General Synod.
The development team represents the GSC throughout the RCA, but individual staff members work primarily in these regions:

Amanda Bruehl (abruehl@rca.org): Colorado, Michigan, New Jersey, New York, Pennsylvania. Amanda also coordinates the annual Ministry Fund appeal process.

Larryl Humme (lhumme@rca.org): Idaho, Illinois, Indiana, Iowa, Michigan, Minnesota, North Dakota, South Dakota, and Wisconsin.

Ken Neevel (kneevel@rca.org): Arizona, California, Florida, Michigan, Nebraska, Oklahoma, Washington, and the U.S. Virgin Islands.

Dann Stouten (dstouten@rca.org): Canada, Kentucky, Michigan, and Ohio.

We are searching for an additional team member to replace Troy Van Beek, who returned to pastoral ministry in the fall of 2017.

Additionally, Scott Engelsman is responsible for defining missionary and mission project support needs, the communication of those needs, and for guiding Global Mission fundraising. Michele Quick oversees development operations and donor research.

Called: The RCA's Campaign for Transformed & Transforming was launched in the summer of 2015 with a goal of raising $6.5 million. There were two primary foci of this campaign: 1) resource the strategic ministry initiatives of Transformed & Transforming; and 2) provide a ministry center and revised Michigan Regional Center to more effectively serve the church through the strategic initiatives. The campaign was formally and successfully completed on July 1, 2017, and as of January 1, 2018, a total of $6,797,474 was committed to the campaign. We praise God for the generosity of people across the church who embrace the vision of Transformed & Transforming and are supporting it with both prayer and financial resources.

The RCA continues to partner with the Barnabas Foundation for resources around estate planning, planned giving, and planned gift resource management. The easiest gift you can make is a gift through your estate plan. Consider tithing your estate to the ongoing work of the RCA. For information about how you can include the RCA in your estate plans, or how you can derive lifetime income from a planned gift that will benefit you during life and the RCA after death, please contact Michele Quick at mquick@rca.org.

The mission and ministry of the RCA can only happen with the generous support of people throughout the church. As was noted above, only 33 percent of the RCA’s work is resourced through assessments. Please consider including a gift to the RCA in your regular giving. To give an outright gift in support of the RCA’s ministry and mission, please visit the RCA website at www.rca.org/give, or contact a development team member directly.