



Christian
Reformed
Church

2019 Issue 1

Living the Call

A REPORT FROM THE CHRISTIAN REFORMED CHURCH IN NORTH AMERICA

GLOBAL MISSION

The Christian Reformed Church seeks to express God's love by living out five callings:

Faith Formation

As a community of believers, we seek to introduce people to Jesus Christ and to nurture their faith through all ages and stages of life. (Report in August)

Servant Leadership

Understanding that the lifelong equipping of leaders is essential for churches and ministries to flourish, we identify, recruit and train leaders to be servants in the Kingdom of God. (Report in October)

Global Mission

Called to be witnesses of Christ's Kingdom to the ends of the earth, we start and strengthen local churches in North America and around the world. (Report in February)

Mercy and Justice

Hearing the cries of the oppressed, forsaken and disadvantaged, we seek to act justly and love mercy as we walk humbly with our God. (Report in April)

Gospel Proclamation and Worship

Believing that faith comes through the hearing of God's Word, we proclaim the saving message of Jesus Christ and seek to worship him in all that we do. (Report in June)

From the Executive Director's Desk

Therefore go. These two words are engraved on our hearts and minds as the start of the Great Commission—a task to which we all are called as Christians, to share the Good News of the gospel with those who need to hear it.

Yet, too often, we get hung up on the second of these words and forget about the rest of the phrase. We emphasize the idea of “going” and limit mission work to those sent to foreign lands either as career missionaries or perhaps as short-term volunteers.

While bringing the Gospel to unreached people around the world is essential, the Great Commission is much broader than that. When we limit it to “going,” we forget that “making disciples of all nations” is something that all of us are called to do on a daily basis.

Fortunately, as the Christian Reformed Church in North America, we have several agencies and groups available to help us live out this calling.

Back to God Ministries International, for example, helps all of us “go” to make disciples by using radios, cell phones, websites and other technology to connect with people in 10 different language groups around the world. As we support their efforts, the Gospel is able to reach around the globe and

partner with churches on the ground to raise up disciples.

Similarly, Resonate Global Mission equips missionaries to carry the Gospel to communities in Central America, East & Central Asia, East & Southern Africa, Europe, Mexico, the Caribbean, the Middle East, South and Southeast Asia, and West Africa. Through them, we partner with local churches, train pastors, equip Christian schools, support seminaries, and assist in a variety of other ways to do the work of evangelism in these communities.

Resonate also works across the United States and Canada to help us make disciples in our own neighborhoods, whether it involves planting a church, starting an outreach ministry, or simply equipping people to share the gospel over a cup of coffee. In this way, the Great Commission is being lived out in a variety of ways in all of our churches.

Global Missions—it is exciting and life-changing and a key part of who we are as Christian Reformed people. It includes missionaries, but it also includes the many parts of Christ's body—including each one of us—as we work together all around the world to share the Good News in word and deed!

BY STEVE TIMMERMANS,
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Resonate Global Mission



Resonate has been focusing a lot of research and experimentation on new church development. New churches are one of our most effective means for reaching new groups of people!

At home in the US and Canada, as well as around the world, Resonate is helping start new churches shaped by a Reformed perspective. We hope you will be encouraged by these stories of church plants:

- Both of Olivia's parents passed away while she was a teenager. But Olivia was not left alone or without hope. God had already begun drawing her into a relationship with him and a new family. A friend invited her to Destination, a Resonate church plant in St. Thomas, Ont.—and even though she sat down with mostly strangers, she felt like she belonged. It was a turning point in her life. Thank you for sharing God's healing love! Read more at www.resonateglobalmission.org/olivia
- Ronnie Lopez became a Christian more than 50 years ago in the Philippines, when he met Resonate missionary Vince Apostol. Today, Ronnie shares his passion for Christianity as a church planter in Spring, Tex. Filipino immigrants who come to Filipino-American CRC appreciate the Reformed approach to reading the Bible. "They are becoming more familiar with the gospel and are more willing to share it," says Ronnie. Thank you for sending and equipping leaders! Read more at www.resonateglobalmission.org/ronnie

Worship at Resonate church plant Filipino-American CRC

- Vlad overcame a drug addiction, responded to God's call to ministry, and your support for Resonate helped him plant a church in Eastern Europe. Along his journey, Vlad attended a conference with a Resonate partner and received mentoring from a Resonate missionary. With encouragement from his missionary mentor, Vlad graduated from a four-year bachelor's program for pastors, and strives to form networks of ministry leaders in his town. Thank you for helping strengthen this new Christian community! Read more at www.resonateglobalmission.org/vlad

**ZACHARY KING, DIRECTOR
RESONATE GLOBAL MISSION**

Regional Contacts for Mission

Regional Mission Leaders: your connection to mission around the corner and around the world

Eastern Canada: Kevin DeRaaf kderaaf@crcna.org
 Western Canada: Rich Braaksma rbraaksma@crcna.org
 Central USA: Peter Kelder pkelder@crcna.org
 Eastern USA: Marco Avila mavila@crcna.org
 Great Lakes: Amy Schenkel aschenkel@crcna.org
 Western USA: Ben Katt bkatt@crcna.org

Back to God Ministries International



Moussa is sharing the gospel with Arabic speakers in Brazil.

In 1939, when the CRC established Back to God Ministries International (BTGMI), media ministry looked very different. As our world has expanded from radio to television to smartphones, technology has brought people together faster than ever before. Today BTGMI offers biblical content in 10 of our world's major languages.

BTGMI still has the same three goals from its original mandate: proclaim the Gospel, disciple believers in their faith, and strengthen the church. Yet every year, we are amazed at how God makes this possible in new ways. Not unlike many congregations across North America, increasingly we've seen more opportunities for diaspora ministry. Here are a few examples from the past year:

Sharing the Gospel

Moussa, a church planter in Brazil (pictured), partnered with our Portuguese ministry team to share the Gospel with the growing number of Arabic speakers in his community who are fleeing war-torn countries. Together they produced an Arabic translation of our Portuguese *Cada Dia* devotional.

"[The booklets] say there is a God who is close to us; there is a God who loves our language; a God who speaks our language; a God who respects us; a God who accepts our diversity," testifies Moussa.

Discipleship

Our Chinese ministry team is reaching students in North America, including at our denomination's own Calvin Theological Seminary (CTS). One CTS student shared, "Your videos give me a picture of how to be a Christian scholar as well as a father and a husband—and that's incredible."

Equipping the Global Church

Knowing that 80 percent of Spanish speakers in the United States have a connection to Mexico, we recently established a memorandum of understanding with the National Presbyterian Church in Mexico (INPM) in anticipation of a long-term partnership for Spanish media outreach. This will open up the door for continued ministry in South and Central America as well as for North America.

**KURT SELLES, DIRECTOR
BACK TO GOD MINISTRIES INTERNATIONAL**

BTGMI Reaches Our World through Media in these languages:

- Arabic
- English
- Chinese
- French
- Hindi
- Indonesian
- Japanese
- Portuguese
- Russian
- Spanish
- Korean (in partnership with the CRC's Korean Council)

For more information about these ministries visit backtogod.net/ministries.



Tools You Can Use

ReFrame Media, the English outreach of BTGMI, produces a wide array of media experiences through six programs that invite you to see God's story in your life.

Visit reframemedia.org and discover how the following can benefit your congregation:

Today: A daily devotional that helps people refresh, refocus, and renew their faith.

Family Fire: An online community exploring what it means to be "Holy Spirit led" in our family relationships.


Kids Corner: A half-hour kids audio adventure for radio and podcast. Fun stories show kids how they are an important part of God's big story.

Think Christian: An online magazine where Christians bridge the perceived gap between faith and culture.

Groundwork: A half-hour radio program and podcast that helps you build a biblical foundation for your life.

Church Juice: A website where church leaders can learn how to intentionally engage their congregations and communities in meaningful ways.

Registration Now Open!
AUGUST 1-3, WINDSOR, ONTARIO, CANADA



Global Mission will be a key area of focus at Inspire 2019, with workshops such as:

- Go(ing) Local: What All the Fuss Is About
- Thinking Christianly in a Media-Saturated World
- Street Psalms: Social and Spiritual Urban Transformation
- Giving Birth to an Immigrant Congregation
- Comeback Churches
- Rural Folks Do Neighborhood Ministry Too
- Interfaith and Intercultural Engagement: from the University Campus to your Congregation and Community
- Learning Leadership Development from the Global Church
- Parenting Churches Well
- The Effective Church Website
- And much more . . .

Register at crcna.org/Inspire

Want to Learn More?

Stay up-to-date on what the CRCNA is doing in Global Mission:

CRC News — Subscribe at crcna.org/subscribe for a weekly digest of stories in your inbox

The Network — Visit crcna.org/Network to post your questions, participate in discussions around the topic of "Global Mission", or review available resources

Resonate Global Mission e-updates — Stay up to date with ministry stories and prayer requests by

subscribing to our email updates.
resonateglobalmission.org/resources

Back to God Ministries International — Join our email list and stay updated BacktoGod.net

Call 1-800-272-5125 with any of your ministry questions.