

# 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 March)

### 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



When we think about Global Mission, we often think about sending missionaries to bring the Good News to people in distant lands. This is a great image and is, in fact, an important focus of the Christian Reformed Church's global mission effort.

Through Resonate Global Mission, the CRC is bringing the Gospel to the unreached in North America and in countries around the world. Please pray for those who serve in this way and pray that new ministry leaders would step forward to plant churches and to serve in unfilled positions!

At the same time, as we think about Global Mission, let's stretch our thinking to consider three additional dimensions of the CRC's global mission effort.

First, there is the use of technology and media to introduce people to Christ and disciple people in their faith. Back to God Ministries International (BTGMI) is a key part of the CRC's global mission efforts. It uses radio, cell phones, websites, and other technology

to connect with people in 10 different language groups around the world.

Second, the CRC trains church leaders who are serving congregations across the globe. In many places, pastors are hired to lead congregations despite having little theological training. Through Timothy Leadership Training Institute (TLTI), CRC missionaries and partners provide these local church leaders with a solid theological foundation and the skills they need to guide their growing congregations.

Finally, the CRC carries out Global Mission through ecumenical relationships with denominations around the world. Global Missions—it is exciting, 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 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



Christian Reformed Home Missions and Christian Reformed World Missions are now Resonate Global Mission! We are continuing the mission work of these agencies while also asking the question of what the Holy Spirit is doing in mission. The answer leads us to new ways we can join God on mission and live out the gospel both at home and around the world.

Resonate's work is organized by three desired outcomes. The first is **mission-shaped congregations**, which includes the work of church planting, strengthening churches, discipleship, and evangelism. The second is **missional leaders**, which includes the work of campus ministry, leadership development, and global mission education. The third is **holistic mission networks**, which includes the work of mentoring, linking, and connecting people for the purpose of developing a network of people engaged in mission work.

As we move forward as a single mission agency, some things stay the same while others change. Jesus' words in Matt. 5:16 still propel us forward as a mission agency: "Let your light shine before others, that they may see your good deeds and glorify your Father in heaven." Here are some examples of the way you are letting your light shine through the work of Resonate:

- Nearly six years after the massive earthquake that rocked Japan in 2011, the historic joint response from Resonate (then World Missions), World Renew, and other partners has made a powerful, lasting witness. The leaders you equipped and encouraged are having a reverberating effect even though the

Jonathan Barnhoorn (right) is a missionary with Resonate Global Mission in Nigeria

official response efforts of the CRC ended last year. Volunteers, pastors, and even survivors continue to serve and transform lives because of the support from CRC congregations like yours.

- Dakota, a member of Apex Church, which you helped plant in Littleton, Colorado, felt broken and forgotten while living on the street. But thanks to congregations like yours, Dakota discovered the joy of having a family of faith and living the Word. Now he regularly volunteers with other members of Apex Church to help those enduring homeless, and tries to express his gratitude to Jesus Christ by "paying it forward" to those around him.
- Pablo and Sheryl Canche, missionaries you sent to Mexico City, are working to develop holistic mission networks there. They are developing relationships with pastors from many different denominations. One pastor Pablo reached out to had been struggling and was frustrated in his work—until he found a Reformed Christian mentor in Pablo. Being a part of Pablo and Sheryl's holistic mission network helped this pastor find sound Biblical teaching and encouragement. That's the impact the Christian Reformed Church can have in the wider body of Christ!

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](mailto:kderaaf@crcna.org)  
 Western Canada: Rich Braaksma [rbraaksma@crcna.org](mailto:rbraaksma@crcna.org)  
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 Great Lakes: Amy Schenkel [aschenkel@crcna.org](mailto:aschenkel@crcna.org)  
 Western USA: Ben Katt [bkatt@crcna.org](mailto:bkatt@crcna.org)

## Back to God Ministries International



Back to God Ministries International sold its Palos Heights, Ill. Office and have moved operations to Grand Rapids, Mich.

Our mission is to proclaim the Gospel, disciple those who want to grow in faith, and strengthen the church worldwide. Through indigenous teams, we partner with local ministries and organizations throughout the globe, sharing God's Word in ten languages.

In late 2017, we formalized the relaunch of our Arabic ministry. I had the opportunity of signing a partnership agreement on behalf of BTGMI with the Media Council of the Evangelical Presbyterian Church of Egypt. This new partnership ministry will soon begin producing audio programming. Our goal is to expand outreach using the Internet, social media, and smartphone applications, reaching beyond Egypt to the rest of the Middle East and the world.

We are preparing for a transition in our Spanish ministry. After twenty-five years of effectively leading BTGMI's *Ministerio Reforma*, Rev. Guillermo Serrano will be retiring in 2019. Serrano and I have met with key Spanish leaders for strategic planning about relocating the ministry in a Spanish-speaking country.

The move of BTGMI headquarters from Palos Heights, IL to Grand Rapids, MI will be completed this spring. It is our hope that this move allows BTGMI to be more connected to the CRC agencies for collaborative global

### Tools You Should Know About

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](http://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*: An online resource for children and their parents, including an audio drama that helps kids apply faith in life, devotionals, and a Bible study course.
- *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.

ministry and make our discipleship resources more readily available to CRC congregations.

BTGMI does worldwide media ministry on behalf of the local CRC congregations, providing media resources that draws seekers to Christ and grows relationship with God. Visit [backtogod.net/ministries](http://backtogod.net/ministries) to discover the wide variety of people we serve and to find resources to share with those you may know who would benefit from Christian programming in their language.

KURT SELLES, DIRECTOR  
BACK TO GOD MINISTRIES INTERNATIONAL



## Classis Connection to Global Mission



On February 8, representatives from classes in the Great Lakes region gathered in Grand Rapids, Mich. for an afternoon of mutual encouragement and learning around the topic of Global Mission.

“We are aware of several classes that are giving significant attention to mission, vision and renewal,” said Al Postma, Classis Renwal Coordinator and one of the organizers of the event. They hoped that the get together would further enhance the mission impact of classes locally and regionally.

The event took its cue from the recent changes to Church Order Article 75, which encourage classes to have a ministry plan that includes evangelistic and diaconal witness. Over the course of several hours, participants explored the purpose of classis, best practices, and next steps to support ministry in their regions.

## our journey 2020

### Our Journey 2020

The Christian Reformed Church in North America is on a journey together. This four-year ministry plan is called “Our Journey 2020” and includes five “desired futures” that we’d like to step into together.

Desired future #1 reads, “Our congregations will flow like streams into their communities. We will meet our neighbors at community events and gathering places, listening to each other, learning from each other, and serving each other. By our presence we will become channels for the love of Christ and the Holy Spirit’s life-giving transformation.”

To learn more or to find resources for your congregation, visit [crcna.org/OurJourney](http://crcna.org/OurJourney)

### Want to Learn More:

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

- CRC News—subscribe at [crcna.org](http://crcna.org) for a weekly digest of stories in your inbox
- The Network—Visit [crcna.org/Network](http://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.
- Back to God Ministries International—Join our email list and stay updated

**Call 1-877-272-6201 with any of your ministry questions or visit [crcna.org/resources](http://crcna.org/resources) to discover tools you can use.**