

**MINUTES
REGULAR SESSION
SYNOD OF MID-AMERICA, RCA
March 5, 2011, 9:00 AM (CST)**

I. Introduction, Devotions, Prayer

The Regional Synod of Mid-America met in its regular session on Saturday, March 05, 2011 by means of teleconferencing. Because of the nature of the meeting the Executive Council had decided that this particular meeting can be held using this method. The recommendations were acted upon by the annual session after receiving detailed information and reports. No oral reports were given. The reports that are listed in these minutes are the written reports given to the delegates to the annual session. There was no new business.

President Chad Schuitema presided at the meeting and began with prayer and devotions based on verses from Acts 21.

II. Roll Call

Delegates to Regional Synod of Mid-America, RCA participating in the meeting:

Classis of Chicago

Pedro Windsor
Dave VanKley
Rich Schuler
Bruce Hansen

Classis of Illinois

Edie Lenz
Phil Doeschot
Julie Mann

Officers and staff

Chad Schuitema
Jimmie Stevenson
Elmer VanDrunen
Randy Kooy
Wayne Van Regenmorter

Classis of Illiana

Don MacDonald
Drew Poppleton
Dave Weemhoff
Randy Farmer
Mike McGeehee

Classis of Wisconsin

Cary Winn
Bob Wierenga
Bob Frohlich
Scott VanBuren

A quorum was present.

III. Special rules-of-order for the teleconference meeting

In order to have an orderly teleconference meeting, special rules of order were established for this annual session. Those special rules were distributed to the delegates prior to the special session and are listed here for information:

1. The teleconference meeting will utilize a toll-free call-in system
2. Guests to the meeting: A limited number of guests will be allowed to participate in the meeting. All guests must pre-register for the meeting and receive approval. Requests to register as a guest and to be a part of the meeting must be made to the regional synod (contact Randy Kooy – rkooy@msyn.org or 815-464-9181) no later than March 2, 2011. The synod reserves the rights to deny the request of anyone to be a guest and/or to limit the number from any one region of the synod. Greater weight will be given to requests that come from a classis of the synod. The following rules apply to classis guests:
 - a. Guests will be given privilege to speak to the matters before the synod following the same rules as that for delegates – any limiting of the right to speak will be the prerogative of the president
 - b. Guests may not vote
3. Resource persons and Executive Committee guests: Synod staff and other designated persons will serve as resource persons as part of the annual session. Resource persons and designated guests have privilege to speak with the same rules as delegates but may not vote.
4. A verbal roll call will be taken at the start of the meeting

5. The president will preside unless yielding the chair to the vice president; the president will begin the meeting with devotions and prayer
6. The purpose of the meeting will be the business as listed on the agenda and supporting reports.
7. Any special rules for the session will be stated.
8. Any changes in the previously distributed recommendations will be explained
9. No oral reports or reading of written reports will occur.
10. The recommendations in this agenda will be considered as motions without moving and seconding by the delegates.
11. The president will present each recommendation/motion and open it to discussion.
12. To speak to a matter a person must first be recognized by the president and then state name and representation before speaking. Each person is limited to speaking for two minutes and speaking twice to a matter unless requested by the president. Only asking a clarification question will not count towards the number of times addressing the issue.
13. The clerk of the synod will be the resource person for the president giving input to the president as needed or requested.
14. The chairperson of the Overtures and Judicial Business committee will be the parliamentarian for the meeting advising the president as needed.
15. Voting:
 - a. Only classis delegates plus the president and vice president vote
 - b. Voting will be by voice vote with the following exceptions:
 - i. If there is any doubt regarding the majority of the vote, the president will rule to have a roll call vote with the clerk facilitating the process
 - ii. Any voting delegate may request a roll call vote
 1. The president may choose to honor that request, or
 2. If at least four persons request a roll call vote (original person plus three others), the president will rule that the vote will be by roll call
16. If unforeseen circumstances occur and the president believes it unwise to continue the meeting by teleconference he will adjourn the meeting until a date that will be specified for an in-person reconvening of the adjourned meeting.
17. Any new business will be automatically referred to the Executive Committee (Team) of the synod. The president may make an exception in the event of a timely issue, but that may necessitate adjourning to an in-person reconvening of the adjourned meeting.
18. The session will be closed with prayer.

IV. Approval of minutes of previous sessions

The previous regional synod gave authority to the synod's Executive Committee to approve the minutes of the 2010 session of the Regional Synod of Mid-America as published. The Executive Committee reported that the 2010 minutes were approved as published.

A recommendation to approve the minutes of the special session of December 16, 2010 was before the synod.

➔ **VOTED to approve the minutes of the special session of December 16, 2010 of the Synod of Mid-America.**

V. State of Religion Report

President's State of Religion Report March 6, 2011

Change (v.) \chānj\ : to cause to be different; to give a completely different form or appearance to; transform.

In my years on the Executive Council of the Synod of Mid-America, I've seen a lot of change. It has often left us with the question: "What are we supposed to be doing?" At times this has been frustrating because council members and delegates alike want to do the work God has called us to do in the synod

and we aren't sure how to do that. But at other times it has been exciting because we are on the cutting edge of the next thing God is doing, and that can be a scary, but exciting ride.

Yet for all the changing we have done, here we are, facing yet another change in structure and function. But this change isn't just about causing something to be different, it isn't just giving the synod a different form, I believe it's transforming how we seek to equip and support classes.

With classes implementing and living into new structures, we are faced with different challenges than we were in the past. Sometimes these challenges take the synod and its leadership in uncharted territories and that can bring with it some aspects of fear and even pain. But I liken it to a roller coaster: the initial ascent on a roller coaster is a fear-inducing climb, and when you first look over the top arch and see nothing you feel it in the pit of your stomach. But as you head down that hill, lighter than air, the excitement is so great it's almost indescribable. So it is as we follow God on this journey.

In preparation for this report I didn't have the classes reports to look over because we are having this meeting earlier than usual. But what I did have were the reports of previous presidents. Many times those reports sounded the alarms of declining membership and dying churches – they painted a pretty bleak picture. Thankfully that is no longer the picture before us. Thankfully we have changed and are continuing to change.

Respectfully Submitted,
Rev. Chad R. Schuitema
President, Synod of Mid-America

VI. Executive Council Report

Executive Council of the Synod of Mid-America Report to the Annual Session of the Synod of Mid-America, RCA March 5, 2011

The duties of the Executive Council as are *currently* stated in the Bylaws of the Regional Synod of Mid-America include that it will:

- a. Be responsible to carry out the Mission of the Synod, to establish policy to realize the Vision of the Synod, and to continually evaluate the progress towards realizing the Vision of the Synod.
- b. Act for Regional Synod between sessions, and on all matters referred to it by Regional Synod.
- c. Report annually to Regional Synod concerning its actions and deliberations.

Since the last annual session of the Synod the Executive Council has met on four different occasions.

During our fifth year with a Council functioning under a structure where the Council consists of delegates appointed by the classes of the synod plus the officers, it was decided that we need again to look how we function to best serve God's kingdom. Currently the majority of the business of the synod funnels through the Executive Council between sessions. Work is either initiated by the staff, by the Council, or is ongoing work. Classes are encouraged to provide some regular means for its delegates to the Council to regularly report to their appropriate classis. The Council has decided to propose a new way to be structured and to do business – more about that later in this report.

Synod staff and ministries

The synod is staffed by two persons: a visionary leader, Wayne Van Regenmorter, and a coordinator/administrator, Randy Kooy. Wayne will report separately on his activities within the synod. My activities as the coordinator/administrator include the day-to-day running of the regional synod. Much of my work is reflected in this report.

Some of the other synod-wide ministry occurs through contract arrangements, namely Living Fire Leadership Ministries and work with youth and youth workers within the synod.

Living Fire Leadership Ministries

The leadership development program, Living Fire Leadership Ministries, has been a very valuable leadership tool in the churches that are utilizing it. The Synod has contracted with Larry Bolt to

administer this program. Larry is the executive administrator of Faith Church in Dyer, Indiana. Faith Church was one of the original synod churches participating in Living Fire.

Living Fire is a three-year intensive cycle that develops leaders to new levels each year. Here is a short description of each of those three years as reported by Larry:

This is an exciting time in **year one** because the participants are telling their own stories and seeing how God has always been present in their lives. This can be a very emotional time but also a freeing time as they recognize that their story is a part of God's story. It is such an encouragement to see how God uses all the circumstances of our lives to draw us to Him.

In **year two** the participants are developing individual and corporate projects. One church collected food and personal supplies for a home for abused spouses. When they brought the goods to the home, there were so many that the home could hardly handle them all. These potential leaders are also studying direct lessons on how to be a leader.

The **year three** participants are discussing how to develop other Christians as leaders while continuing their own spiritual growth. Many of them are seeing themselves unleashed in a ministry of their church and are serving God in that way.

Larry recently reported:

"January is the month for the second training session for leaders of years one and two Living Fire. Leaders from various churches joined together to study how to implement the second half of the Living Fire year. Two days were spent in these training sessions and instruction and discussion took place as leaders were able to share their joys and frustrations as they worked with their groups. It is also a time for personal reflection on how God is working in their individual lives.

"I want to encourage each of you to take back the message of how Living Fire can impact individual churches. Leadership training is difficult to implement well in a church and Living Fire does it exceptionally well. You do not have to be the pastor of the church to lead a group because lay leaders are trained to facilitate their groups. One does not have to be "the sage on the stage" to facilitate a group but be open to what God wants to do in the group."

Youth and Youth Workers

The synod contracts with Manitoqua Ministries to provide leadership for work with the youth and youth workers within our synod. Manitoqua facilitates this through their program director, Nathan Phillips. Separately you will find a report from Nathan.

Major issues

During this past year there were two major issues that took up much of the efforts of the Executive Council: 1) the action proposed and then taken involving the combining of the classes of Florida and Illiana, and 2) looking at reorganizing the way the Executive Council and the annual session of the synod functions. This latter item will be substantially acted upon at this annual session.

Combining of the Classes of Florida and Illiana

On December 16, 2010 the Synod of Mid-America met in special session and took action to combine the classes of Florida and Illiana. Much has been written and reported about all that led up to this action. Rather than repeating that information here I will refer you to two documents that you can read or obtain online. The first is the background information that was shared with the delegates to the special session of the synod. It can be found here: <http://msyn.org/pdf2/BriefBackgroundSpecSessDec2010.pdf>. The second document contains the minutes of that special session. It can be found here: <http://msyn.org/pdf2/MinutesSpecialSession16122010.pdf>.

Synod Executive Council and Annual Session Restructure

Over the last year-plus the Council has been discussing how the synod might better function from a structure point of view. The Council has two areas of functioning: operations and visioning. Effort has been made over the last few years to have a concentrated time at each in-person meeting to investigate

a major visioning piece. The council members believe that this should be its main function; however, it did not always think that those at the table were the best to be determining the vision of the synod since much of that vision gets carried out at the classis level. Classis leaders need to be involved in regional synod visioning.

While it is understood that someone needs to run the synod between annual sessions, the council believes those currently at the council table are not who needs to do this; rather it can be a smaller group since much of the work of the operation of the synod is carried out by staff.

In March 2010 the Council took action to form a task team to work on a plan to revise the structure of the Executive Council and to present that plan to the council. A meeting of the task team was held in August 2010 to brainstorm ideas about how the council might be better structured to improve functioning. Out of that meeting it became apparent that the annual session of the synod needed to be looked at as well.

Over the last few years, the annual business session has been held in conjunction with a resourcing event. While those have been helpful, the task team and ultimately the council looked at how, when, and where those might best happen. Missing from much of this are the leaders of the classes who are driving the classes in how they function; they need to be involved both with the synod, with resourcing each other, and with help from "experts".

A report from the task team was given to the council at its September meeting. There it was discussed and determined that this is the correct course to pursue. Action was taken to continue, with a more detailed plan being developed and presented to the council for recommendation to the synod.

General Overview of the Restructure

The changes proposed will move the operations/supervisory functions of the Council to a small group that will be similar to what is now known as the Executive Committee of the Council. This group would assume those responsibilities from the current Executive Council. The Executive Council will move to what is now known as the annual session, but more functional than the current annual session. It would have a semi-permanent membership made up of people who are "connected" to the local classis. The persons who make up the members would be suggested by the synod but chosen as classis representatives and would be their delegates to the synod. The delegates in the annual session would set the vision and direction for the synod.

In a new non-governmental structure, the synod would have leadership assemblies. This would regularly bring together the leadership from the synod's classes for resourcing purposes. The "new" Executive Council would meet with the leadership assemblies to learn and network with the greater classis leadership; work that the "new" Executive Council does may flow out of the leadership assemblies.

Additionally, from time-to-time the synod may sponsor resourcing events in regional areas in cooperation with the local classis. They would focus on needs of the churches of the synod and/or the particular area and will not necessarily be connected with any of the other structures.

Specifics of Restructure

Executive Team (the renaming of the Executive Committee)

1. Will have responsibility of the operation of the synod between sessions
2. Will consist of the president, vice president, immediate past president, stated clerk, treasurer, and Visionary Leader
3. Continues to be the nominating committee
4. Will assume all the duties of the current Executive Council with the exception of two of the existing ones as follows:
 - a. Be responsible to carry out the Mission of the Synod, to establish policy to realize the Vision of the Synod, and to continually evaluate the progress towards realizing the Vision of the Synod.
 - b. Be responsible for long-range plans and goals of the Regional Synod.
5. Will meet in some form on a monthly basis – great flexibility will be given to how the committee meets – it could be by conference call – it could be by communicating together by email – that communication could result in no meeting – the committee will need to meet in a substantive way at least quarterly

6. Regular written reports will be received – similar to current reporting by staff and other groups
7. Will report to the synod regularly, especially when the Synod Assembly meets.
8. Will be subject to the decisions and directions of the synod embodied in the Synod Assembly.

Synod Assembly (the renaming of the Executive Council – now acting as the synod as it meets in annual session)

1. Will be the ultimate authority of the synod – it is the synod as defined in the BCO
2. Will meet officially at least annually
3. In practice will meet twice-a-year (including the annual session) – the second meeting will either be informal or a called special session
4. It is the intention that meetings be held in conjunction with Classis Leadership Assembly gatherings
5. Members are delegates of their classis
6. The Executive Team or the Synod Assembly will suggest the members/delegates that a classis will appoint – ultimately it is the classis' decision
7. Effort will be made to have members/delegates who are connected with the leadership of the classis
8. Effort will be made to have a balance of ministers and elders, but a classis must have at least one person that fills each office in its delegation
9. Terms of office of the member/delegates will be three years but may be reappointed without a limit on the number of terms
10. Besides such business that may be appropriate for a synod meeting in annual session, the synod assembly shall
 - a. Be responsible to see that the Mission of the Synod is carried out, to establish policy to realize the Vision of the Synod, and to continually evaluate the progress towards realizing the Vision of the Synod.
 - b. Be responsible for long-range plans and goals of the Regional Synod.
11. The president, vice president, and immediate past president are members/delegates of the Synod Assembly – the stated clerk, treasurer, and Visionary Leader are ex officio but without vote members/delegates of the Synod Assembly.
12. The number of members/delegates from each classis will be determined by Executive Team prior to each session but in no event will be less than one minister and one elder

Leadership Assembly Gathering

1. Allowed by bylaws but not mandated by bylaws
2. Flexible in structure to allow adaptation to current reality
3. Specific invitations given to classis leaders plus open invitations for the classis to send persons they believe would benefit and/or should be there
4. Purpose would be to
 - a. Resource each other – network
 - b. Give input to the Synod Assembly and the Executive Team
 - c. Receive resource information
 - d. Act as a type of peer review – each can see what the others are doing
 - e. Catch the synod vision and share the visions of the other classes
 - f. Sharing concerns
 - g. Cross-fertilization of classis leadership
 - h. Classes are reporting to the synod and each other versus the synod reporting regarding the classes
5. Two meetings a year – one where the Synod Assembly attends and meets as the annual session following the Leadership Assembly gathering – second one the Synod Assembly attends and/or would receive a report after the gathering

Resourcing Event

1. Continue to do such an event on an as-needed basis.
2. No longer tied to the annual session
3. Regionalize it and tie the substance to the region if/when appropriate
4. Still get partnerships with classes

Recommendations to the Synod to Put New Structure into Effect

Recommendation EX-1: To approve the substance and intent of the changes as outlined in this document.

→ VOTED to approve EX-1

Recommendation EX-2: To approve in principle the bylaws changes as shown that will allow the substance and intent of recommendation EX-1 to go forward. See Appendix Exec-D

→ VOTED to approve EX-2

Recommendation EX-3: To suspend until the next annual stated session the portion of the current bylaws necessary to allow the operation of the synod under the substance and intent of recommendation EX-1, and further, to use provisionally the bylaws approved in principle at this session as those of the synod, with the following conditions:

1. New bylaws will be presented to the next annual session of the regional synod that will be as presented at this session but with modifications as discovered over the next year to allow the form to read as intended. Those bylaws will be reviewed by the synod's OJB committee for its recommendation as is required.
2. If currently unknown issues arise out of the use of the provisional bylaws, the current bylaws will take precedence.

→ VOTED to approve EX-3 - unanimously

The following are other actions, deliberations, and recommendations from the Executive Council from the past year:

1. The Council received regular reports from the synod staff concerning their activities and work on behalf of synod. Also regular reports were received from Manitoqua Ministries, the contract ministries, and the synod's representative on the General Synod Council.
2. The Council received reports from the Personnel Committee who reviewed synod staff performance. The synod staff compensation for 2011 remains the same as 2010. Bonuses were approved for the end of the year 2010.
3. Last year's annual session of the regional synod was the third time the format consisted of holding the annual session in conjunction with a synod-wide event for the whole synod. The 2010 event was held in partnership with Chicago Classis with the continued idea to rotate the event with other classes of the synod if it is determined to continue with this method of resourcing. The council decision for the resourcing event is included in the restructure recommendations. At the time of this writing there is not yet an event planned for 2011.
4. An earlier annual session was approved, March 5, 2011. After it was determined that there was not sufficient time to put together a quality Leadership Assembly, that was put off till the fall and it was decided to hold the March 5 meeting by way of teleconferencing utilizing similar special rules-of-order as were in place for the special session of the regional synod.
5. The Council made an appointment to the synod's Minister Salary Committee to fill an open position from the Classis of Illiana. There will be several open positions next year. Suggestions of appropriate laypersons to fill these openings are welcome.
6. The Council approved continuing participation in and funding of a Mobilizing Leaders program (Ridder Leadership Initiative). This is a leadership initiative to equip congregation leaders (both pastors and lay leaders). Five congregations from our synod are in the first stage with a number of new congregations participating in phase 2.
7. Shannon Parrish was appointed as the regional synod's delegate to the 2011 General Synod.
8. Urban ministry funding assistance for 2011 was determined. The Urban Ministry Fund asking remains to provide opportunity for the congregations of the synod to share in urban ministry efforts. Urban ministry funding for 2011 is as follows:

**Ministry Funding - 2011
Urban Ministries**

Ministry	Amount
La Capilla del Barrio	5,000
North Dade Comm, Miami	15,000
Iglesia Trinidad	10,000
Hope, Sheboygan, Kids Hope	6,000
Hope, Sheboygan, Meals progrm	
Faith, Dyer, Hammond plant	15,000
Total	51,000

9. Certain General Synod commissions have specific official regional synod nominees as regional synod representatives. An RCA commission that has this requirement is the Commission on Nominations. The council recommends:
Recommendation EX-4: That the Synod of Mid-America nominates Sharon Schramel as our representative to the RCA Commission on Nominations.

→ **VOTED to approve EX-4.**

10. Finances:

- a. The Council received regular financial reports including a budget status reports. The Council revised the budget as necessary. The president and vice president receive monthly financial reports in addition to the reports given to the full council.
- b. The Financial Report for 2010 was reviewed. The report and supporting documents are being reviewed by a CPA (approved by the Executive Council) who will give a written report to the Executive Team. **See the Financial Report for 2010 as shown as Appendix Exec-A**
- c. The 2011 budget that is currently being used is presented to this Synod for information. **See the 2011 Budget as shown as Appendix Exec-B**
- d. A budget for 2012 was approved for recommendation by the Council from input given by synod staff; it appears in this agenda as Appendix Exec-C. The budget as proposed does not reflect any significant changes in operation from what was approved for 2011 with the exception of what has already been reported above – primarily with the Council/annual session structure changes. Total expenditures are \$5450 higher. The proposed per member assessment rate remains at \$14.50 per member. As has been the case in the last few years it continues to reflect as a deficit budget. It should be noted that the Synod can only operate with a deficit budget for a limited time before something must be changed.

Recommendation EX-5: The Council recommends that the Synod approves the Budget for 2012 as proposed and shown as Appendix Exec-C

→ **VOTED to approve EX-5**

11. Minister's Salary Committee: The Synod has a Minister's Salary Committee that is charged with the task of reviewing the Minister's Salary Schedule, Rules, and Guidelines for the coming year and to recommend it for recommendation to the classes of the Synod. Because of the earlier meeting date for the annual session of the Synod of Mid-America that report is not available for this session. The Executive Council took action to authorize the Executive Team to approve it for recommendation to the classes of the synod. It is possible that a verbal report can be given at the annual session for information of what will be presented to the Executive Team and ultimately recommended to the classes. The classes of the Synod have the authority to adopt and implement how they see fit.

I would like to thank the members of the Executive Council for its work throughout the past year. The current members are: Chad Schuitema, Jimmie Stevenson, Elmer VanDrunen, Randy Kooy, Pedro Windsor, Don Coutts, Rich Schuler, Tom Slager, Arlan TenClay, Drew Poppleton, Don MacDonald, Dave Weemhoff, Phil Doeschot, Shannon Parrish, Bob Wierenga, Bill TeWinkle, Luke Schouten, and Cary Winn. I would especially like to thank the officers for their leadership, work, time, and efforts for the synod. And a special "thank you" to Don Coutts who completed his terms at the end of 2010.

Additionally I would like to thank Laura Vroom who represents Manitoqua Ministries and Christopher Poest who is our General Synod Council Representative. These two persons are ex officio members of the council; they give valuable input both in their areas and more.

Please pray for the synod staff and for the Executive Council as they lead our synod in the coming year and beyond.

Randy Kooy, Synod Coordinator, Administrator, Stated Clerk, Treasurer

SYNOD of Mid AMERICA - FINANCIAL REPORT

January 1, 2010 to December 31, 2010

GENERAL FUND 2010

<u>Opening Balance 1/1/2010</u>			239,498.05
	<u>Budget</u>	<u>Actual</u>	
<u>INCOME</u>			
Assessments	310,982	310,981.52	
Interest income	5,000	6,730.53	
NCD income		150.00	
Miscellaneous income		3,357.49 *	
TOTAL INCOME	315,982		321,219.54
<u>DISBURSEMENTS</u>			
Visionary Leader:			
Services	100,800	102,091.04	
Continuing Education	980	753.23	
Travel	17,000	18,735.43	
Coordinator/Administrator:			
Services	87,700	88,474.48	
Continuing Education	900		
Travel incl. Cont Ed.	5,500	6,188.08	
Meetings:			
Executive Council	5,000	5,354.74	
OJB Committee	500	-	
Minister's Salary Committee	100	28.81	
Annual Session	6,000	8,839.80 **	
Office Expenses:			
Insurance	3,500	2,330.00	
Financial review	1,000	850.00	
Telephone	5,000	5,145.13	
Rent	500	200.00	
Office expnse: supply, postage,etc	4,000	4,170.66	
Equipment/repairs	2,500	2,320.63	
Program expense	500	376.65	
Directory - minutes	500	-	
Miscellaneous	2,000	769.30	
Manitoqua:			
Contribution	50,000	50,786.06	
Youth Ministry	4,000	4,000.00	
Winterfest:			
Contribution	4,000	-	
Contract leader	8,000	-	
Living Fire Leadership Ministries			
Expenses	3,000	-	
Contract leader	3,000	3,000.00	
Leader expenses	500	-	
New church planter expenses	1,000	750.00	
Mobilization Leaders	3,750	3,750.00	
Specialized Interim Ministers	3,000	1,963.78	
Miscellaneous Ministry	5,000	4,468.20	
Church plant assistance	10,000	5,000.00	
NCD expense		250.00	
Ritter Leadership - Phase 2		5,000.00	
TOTAL DISBURSEMENTS	339,230		325,596.02
<u>INCOME/DISBURSEMENTS</u>	<u>(23,248)</u>		<u>(4,376.48)</u>
<u>Closing balance 12/31/2010</u>			<u>235,121.57</u>

* This amount includes income from annual session

** Net annual session expense with event was \$5,732.31

URBAN MINISTRIES FUND 2010

<u>Opening Balance 1/1/2010</u>			83,319.98
	<u>Budget</u>	<u>Actual</u>	
<u>INCOME</u>			
Asking	45,000	31,393.29	
Sunday School asking	2,000	2,248.00	
		<hr/>	
TOTAL INCOME	47,000		33,641.29 *
<u>DISBURSEMENTS</u>			
Support/program aid	47,500	47,500.00	
		<hr/>	
TOTAL DISBURSEMENTS	47,500		<u>47,500.00</u>
<u>INCOME/DISBURSEMENTS</u>	(500)		<u>(13,858.71)</u>
<u>Closing balance 12/31/2010</u>			<u><u>69,461.27</u></u>

* Two late contributions not included here; with those, total income is \$34,965.78

SUMMARY - ALL RSMA FUNDS

<u>Opening balance 1/1/2010</u>			
General Fund	239,498.05		
Urban Ministries Fund	<u>83,319.98</u>		
TOTAL opening balance			322,818.03
<u>INCOME</u>			
General Fund		321,219.54	
Urban Ministries Fund		<u>33,641.29</u>	
TOTAL income			354,860.83
<u>DISBURSEMENTS</u>			
General Fund		325,596.02	
Urban Ministries Fund		<u>47,500.00</u>	
TOTAL disbursements			<u>373,096.02</u>
<u>INCOME/DISBURSEMENTS</u>			<u>(18,235.19)</u>
<u>Closing balance 12/31/2010</u>			
General Fund	235,121.57		
Urban Ministries Fund	<u>69,461.27</u>		
TOTAL closing balance			<u><u>304,582.84</u></u>

BANK ACCOUNTS 2010Providence Bank CHECKING

Balance 1/1/2010	119,761.26
Income	354,860.83
Disbursements	<u>(373,096.02)</u>
Balance 12/31/2010	101,526.07

RCA Cash Fund - 002183-R

Balance 1/1/2010	203,056.77
Income (pd by check to checking)	-
Disbursements	-
Balance 12/31/2010	<u>203,056.77</u>

ASSETS & LIABILITIES 2010ASSETSCash assets

Providence Bank checking account	101,526.07	
RCA Cash Fund - 002183-R	203,056.77	
TOTAL cash		304,582.84

Estimated other assets

Furniture/fixtures/equipment (est)	8,000.00	
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TOTAL other assets		<u>8,000.00</u>
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TOTAL ASSETS - 12/31/2010		<u><u>312,582.84</u></u>
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LIABILITIES

TOTAL LIABILITIES - 12/31/2010		<u><u>0.00</u></u>
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2011 Budget - Regional Synod of Mid-America
Approved by synod 4/30/2010 - w/ newest membership numbers

RECEIPTS			
	General Fund	Urban Ministry	Total
General Fund Assessment @ \$14.50	305,182		305,182
Urban Min. Asking @ \$4.00		35,000	35,000
Sunday School Asking @ \$2.00		2,000	2,000
Miscellaneous and Int. Income	5,000		5,000
TOTAL RECEIPTS	310,182	37,000	347,182
TOTAL DISBURSEMENTS	328,030	51,000	379,030
SURPLUS (DEFICIT)	(17,849)	(14,000)	(31,849)
Projected Opening Balance 1/1/2011	235,122	69,461	304,583
Projected Closing Balance 12/31/2011	217,274	55,461	272,735
DISBURSEMENTS			
PERSONNEL SERVICES			
Visionary Leader:			
Salary, services, benefits & SSallow	101,800		
Continuing Education	980		
Travel expense	17,000		
Coordinator/Administrator:			
Salary, services, benefits & SStx	88,500		
Continuing Education	900		
Travel expense	5,500		
Total	214,680		
ADMINISTRATION EXPENSE			
Committee expense:			
Executive Council	5,000		
OBJ Committee	500		
Minister's Salary Committee	100		
Annual Session	6,000		
Office Expenses:			
Insurance	3,000		
Financial review	1,000		
Telephone	5,000		
Rent and/or mtg room expense	500		
Office expnse: supply, postage, etc	4,000		
Equipment/repairs	2,500		
Program expense	500		
Miscellaneous	2,000		
Total	30,100		

Appendix Exec-B continued

	General Fund	Urban Ministry	Total
MINISTRY EXPENSE			
Manitoqua:			
Contribution	50,000		
Partnership (LOH)	4,000		
Living Fire Leadership Ministries			
Expenses	3,000		
Contract leader	3,000		
Leader expenses	500		
New church planter expenses	1,000		
Mobilization Leaders (Revitalization)	3,750		
Specialized Interim Ministers	3,000		
Miscellaneous Ministry	5,000		
Church plant assistance	10,000		
Urban assistance (actual TBD)		51,000	
Totals	83,250	51,000	
SUMMARY			
Personnel Services	214,680	-	214,680
Administration Expense	30,100	-	30,100
Ministry Expense	83,250	51,000	134,250
Totals	328,030	51,000	379,030

2012 Budget - Regional Synod of Mid-America
Proposed 3/5/2011 - Changes from 2011 in blue print.

RECEIPTS			
	General Fund	Urban Ministry	Total
General Fund Assessment @ \$14.50	305,182		305,182
Urban Min. Asking @ \$4.00		35,000	35,000
Sunday School Asking @ \$2.00		2,000	2,000
Miscellaneous and Int. Income	5,000		5,000
TOTAL RECEIPTS	310,182	37,000	347,182
TOTAL DISBURSEMENTS	333,480	35,000	368,480
SURPLUS (DEFICIT)	(23,299)	2,000	(21,299)
Projected Opening Balance 1/1/2012	217,274	55,461	272,735
Projected Closing Balance 12/31/2012	193,976	57,461	251,437
DISBURSEMENTS			
PERSONNEL SERVICES			
Visionary Leader:			
Salary, services, benefits & SSallow	101,800		
Continuing Education	980		
Travel expense	17,000		
Coordinator/Administrator:			
Salary, services, benefits & SStx	88,500		
Continuing Education	900		
Travel expense	5,500		
Total	214,680		
ADMINISTRATION EXPENSE			
Committee expense:			
Executive Team	2,000		
OBJ Committee	500		
Minister's Salary Committee	100		
Synod Assembly session	3,000		
Leadership assemblies (2)	9,000		
Equipping Event w/ a classis	2,500		
Office Expenses:			
Insurance	3,000		
Financial review	1,000		
Telephone	5,000		
Rent and/or mtg room expense	500		
Office expnse: supply, postage,etc	4,000		
Equipment/repairs	2,500		
Program expense	500		
Miscellaneous	2,000		
Total	35,600		

	General Fund	Urban Ministry	Total
MINISTRY EXPENSE			
Manitoqua:			
Contribution	50,000		
Partnership (Youth contract)	4,000		
Living Fire Leadership Ministries			
Expenses	1,000		
Contract leader	3,000		
Leader expenses	200		
New church planter expenses	1,000		
Mobilization Leaders (Revitalization)	6,000		
Specialized Interim Ministers	3,000		
Miscellaneous Ministry	5,000		
Church plant assistance	10,000		
Urban assistance (actual TBD)		35,000	
Totals	83,200	35,000	
SUMMARY			
Personnel Services	214,680	-	214,680
Administration Expense	35,600	-	35,600
Ministry Expense	83,200	35,000	118,200
Totals	333,480	35,000	368,480

REGIONAL SYNOD OF MID-AMERICA
BYLAWS

Preamble

The Regional Synod of Mid-America, a constituent part of the Reformed Church in America, will be governed by these Bylaws and the Book of Church Order (BCO) of the Reformed Church in America.

Responsibilities of the Regional Synod per the BCO:

1. The regional synod shall exercise a general superintendence over the interests and concerns of the classes within its bounds.
2. The regional synod shall exercise an appellate supervisory power over the acts, proceedings, and decisions of its several classes.
3. The regional synod shall form, combine, and disband classes, and may transfer churches from one classis to another within its bounds.
4. The regional synod shall create whatever organization it desires for the furtherance of the work of the gospel within its bounds, provided such organization does not infringe upon the prerogatives of the several classes or churches.

The Regional Synod is a permanent continuing body which functions between Stated Session through committees. (BOOK OF CHURCH ORDER, Chap. 1, Part III, Art. 1, Sec. 3 and Chap. 1, Part III, Art. 2)

ARTICLE I - MEMBERSHIP

Sec. A - The Regional Synod will consist of the appointed minister and elder delegates, known as the Synod Assembly, from each of the classes within the bounds determined for it by the General Synod.

Sec. B – The delegates of the Synod Assembly will be:

- ~~1. The delegates from the classes of the Synod to the Executive Council as defined later in these bylaws. If an Executive Council delegate is unable to attend the annual session of the synod, the classis of which the Executive Council delegate is a member may appoint an alternate of the same office to be a delegate to the annual session. However, that alternate will be a delegate only for the session of appointment with the regular Executive Council delegate reassuming delegate status at the end of the session.~~
- ~~2. Additional delegates from each classis so that the total composition of each classis delegation will be equal to two minister delegates and two elder delegates from each classis having less than 4,000 communicant members plus one additional minister and elder delegate for each additional 2,000 communicants, or fraction thereof, for any classis in excess of 4000 communicant member; the total not to exceed five ministers and five elder delegates per classis.~~
- ~~3. The president and vice president, elected at a previous annual meeting, will be delegates of Regional Synod during their terms of office.~~
 1. They will be ministers and elders appointed by the classes of the Synod after considering those persons recommended by the Synod.
 2. The number of ministers and elders from each classis will be set by the synod's Executive Team in proportion to the size of the classis. Each classis will have at least one minister and one elder delegate. Effort will be made to have a balance of minister and elder delegates.
 3. The term of each delegate will be for three years without a limit on the number of terms. The classis may make delegate changes with appropriate notice to the synod.
 4. The serving president, vice president, and immediate past president will be delegates to the Synod Assembly during their terms of office.

Sec. C - ~~The past president, the stated clerk, the treasurer, and the Visionary Leader chairperson of the Overtures and Judicial Business Committee~~ will serve as ex-officio members of Regional Synod without vote and attend Synod Assembly meetings. The chairperson of the Overtures and Judicial Business (OJB) Committee, the regional synod representative to the General Synod Council, and the Executive Director of Manitoqua Ministries will be ex officio members of the regional synod without vote.

Sec D – Manitoqua Ministries is a partner in ministry with the Synod of Mid-America, both working together in mission to further the kingdom of God.

ARTICLE II - MEETINGS

Sec. A - Annual Sessions of Regional Synod will:

1. Convene annually in the month of March or April at the time and place determined by the Executive Team Council.
2. Have specific agendas, formats, and timetables that are determined by the Executive Team Council.
3. Include reports from the Executive Team and from other synod teams or committees if appropriate. each synod committee with policy changes, new programs, or other business presented as recommendations. The synod has ultimate authority over the actions of its teams and committees.
4. Spend significant time with the following duties of the Synod Assembly:
 - a. Be responsible to see that the Mission of the Synod is carried out, to establish policy to realize the Vision of the Synod, and to continually evaluate the progress towards realizing the Vision of the Synod.
 - b. Be responsible for long-range plans and goals of the Regional Synod.
5. Begin with devotions including prayer and end Close with prayer.

Sec. B - Special Sessions of Regional Synod will:

1. Be called in accordance with the Book of Church Order, Chapter 1, Part III, Art. 4, Sec. 2.
2. Be held at the time and place determined by the Executive Team Council.

Sec. C - Quorums will at all sessions consist of a majority of the minister delegates and majority of the elder delegates ~~representing all classes within the bounds of Regional Synod.~~ (BCO, 1, III, 4. 3.)

Sec. D - All sessions will be conducted in accordance with the Book of Church Order, the Bylaws of Regional Synod and also the Robert's Rules of Order. If there are any conflicts the Book of Church Order takes precedence over the Bylaws of the Regional Synod and Robert's Rules of Order; and the Bylaws of the Regional Synod takes precedence over Robert's Rules of Order.

Sec. E – Agenda

The business of Regional Synod will include the following elements:

1. Devotional service
2. Roll call and seating of guests
3. Approval of minutes of last session
4. State of Religion Report
5. Report of Executive Council and consideration of its actions
6. Staff reports
7. Election of officers
8. Special committee reports and consideration of their actions
9. Overtures and Judicial Business report
10. Other business
11. Roll call and reading of the journal
12. Seating of the new officers
13. Adjournment
14. Closing prayer

Sec. F - Reports

1. All items for consideration by the Regional Synod must be in the office of the Stated Clerk by March 1 of each year.
2. Written reports with recommendations from the Executive Council, synod staff, and the synod's committees including special committees will be sent by the Stated Clerk to each delegate ten days prior to the annual meeting. The Overtures and Judicial Business Committee may delay its report until the annual meeting, if necessary.

Sec. G – Overtures

The Regional Synod may receive overtures from a classis. It shall not receive overtures which deal with matters under adjudication or which make either direct or implied charges against persons. Overtures shall be submitted to the Regional Synod office at least ten days prior to the published date of the annual session to be considered at that session. ~~or postmarked not later than March 31.~~

Sec. H – Methods to Hold Sessions

Synod Assembly sessions will usually be held in person. Upon the decision of the Executive Team a Synod Assembly session may meet through the use of a conference telephone or interactive technology, including but not limited to electronic transmission, Internet usage, or remote communication, by means of which all persons participating in the meeting can communicate with each other. Participation in such meeting shall constitute attendance and presence in person at the meeting of the person or persons so participating.

ARTICLE III - OFFICERS AND PERSONNEL OF REGIONAL SYNOD

Sec. A - Officers of Regional Synod will be president, vice president, immediate past president, stated clerk, and treasurer.

Sec. B – Election

1. An election for president and/or vice president will be held whenever there will be a vacancy in that office at the time of the close of a stated session.
2. The president will be elected as follows:
 - a. The current vice-president shall be the sole nominee on the first electing ballot. If the vote is affirmative, the current vice-president shall be declared elected.
 - b. If the vote is not affirmative, the election for president shall follow the process prescribed for election of vice-president, electing the president from the slate for vice-president as presented by the Nominating Committee.
 - c. If the office of vice-president is vacant, the election for president shall follow the process prescribed for election of vice-president with the exception that the Nominating Committee will form a slate consisting of at least three persons who are delegates to the Synod Assembly annual session. The nominees who remain after the election of president shall constitute the slate for vice-president.
3. The vice president will be elected from the regular delegates to the annual Synod Assembly Stated Session.
 - a. The Executive Team Committee will act as a Nominating Committee.
 - b. Prior to the annual session the Nominating Committee will form a slate consisting of at least two persons who are delegates to the Synod Assembly annual session.
 - c. The Nominating Committee will endeavor to notify the delegates to the regional synod of the slate prior to the annual session.
 - d. The slate will be presented to the synod for election at the annual session. The synod will be permitted to make additional nominations from the floor.
 - e. A simple majority for a single candidate on the electing ballot will constitute an election. If no nominee receives a majority on the first electing ballot, the regional synod shall proceed to a second electing ballot limited to the two persons receiving the largest number of votes on the first electing ballot. The person receiving the most votes on this ballot shall be elected.
4. The stated clerk will be elected by the Executive Team Council, meeting in executive session without the stated clerk or treasurer, at its first meeting following the Synod's annual session. Election will occur in odd numbered years, except in case of vacancy where election will occur as soon as possible.
5. The treasurer will be elected by the Executive Team Council, meeting in executive session without the treasurer or stated clerk, at its first meeting following the Synod's annual session. Election will occur in odd numbered years, except in case of vacancy where election will occur as soon as possible.
6. In case of mid-year vacancy in the office of president, the vice president shall automatically assume the position of president and be eligible for reelection at the next Synod Assembly session to a full term.

7. In case of mid-year vacancy in the office of vice-president, the Executive Team Council shall endeavor to make an ad interim appointment to fill the office from the ~~regular delegates of the Synod Assembly who were in attendance at the previous annual Synod session.~~

Sec. C - Terms of Office

1. The president will serve for two years and will assume that office at the close of the Synod Assembly Stated session at which he or she was elected and serve to the close of the second annual Synod Assembly Stated session after he or she was elected.
2. The vice president will serve for two years or until elected to the office of president, whichever occurs first, and will assume that office at the close of the Synod Assembly Stated session at which he or she was elected and serve to the close of the second annual Synod Assembly Stated session after he or she was elected.
3. The stated clerk will serve a two year term and will be eligible for reelection.
4. The treasurer will serve a two year term and will be eligible for reelection.
5. The term of the immediate past president will begin upon the completion of his or her term as president and will continue until there is a new immediate past president.

Sec. D - Duties

1. The president will:
 - a. Begin each session at the appointed time and place with prayer.
 - b. Clearly state and explain, if necessary, the business to be transacted.
 - c. Enforce the Bylaws of Regional Synod.
 - d. Maintain the decorum and dignity becoming a judicatory of the church of Christ.
 - e. Present at the annual Synod Assembly Stated session the State of Religion Report.
 - f. Appoint subsequent to consultation with the stated clerk, temporary clerks and tellers for each annual Synod Assembly Stated session.
 - g. Be a member of and preside at all meetings of the Executive Team Council.
 - h. Personally meet not less than twice with the Visionary Leader and the Coordinator/Administrator to inquire about his or her work in the terms of joys, frustrations, needs, and progress toward the achievement of goals. These meetings will take place seasonally, and are in addition to the official annual review of his or her work by the Personnel Committee of Regional Synod.
 - i. Meet with other synod staff as necessary or when requested.
 - j. Be a member of the personnel committee who will review the work and progress of Regional Synod staff.
 - k. Have a desire to fulfill this office to the best of his/her ability and will provide leadership to the Regional Synod.
2. The vice president will:
 - a. Be a member of the Executive Team.
 - b. Assume the duties of the presiding officer at the request of, or in the absence of, the president.
 - c. Assume the responsibilities of the president upon the leaving of the incumbent president.
 - d. Be a member of the Personnel Committee and will meet with the Visionary Leader, the Coordinator/Administrator, and other synod staff as necessary or when requested.
 - e. Have a desire to fulfill this office to the best of his/her ability and will provide leadership to the Regional Synod.
3. The immediate past president will:
 - a. Be a member of the Executive Team.
 - b. Remain a member of the ~~Executive Council~~ and Personnel Committee.
 - c. Meet with the Visionary Leader, the Coordinator/Administrator, and other synod staff as necessary or when requested.
4. The stated clerk will:
 - a. Be a member of the Executive Team.
 - b. Notify each classis of place and date of the meeting for the Synod Assembly annual Stated session ~~by October 1 of the previous year.~~
 - c. Notify all Synod Assembly delegates, 21 days prior to Regional Synod meeting, of the time, place and purpose of each Stated Session and Special Session.
 - d. Maintain an accurate record of all acts and proceedings of Synod.
 - 1) In the order of the prescribed Order of Business.

- 2) Signed by the officers of Regional Synod.
 - d. Preserve, together with original papers.
 - 1) All Minutes of Regional Synod.
 - 2) All Actions of the Executive Team Council.
 - e. Prepare and distribute copies of the Minutes of Regional Synod as directed by the Executive Team Council.
 - f. Forward one copy of the Minutes of Regional Synod to:
 - 1) The General Secretary of the General Synod.
 - 2) Other persons or organizations when requested.
 - g. Notify all members of the Executive Team Council, at least ten days prior to the meeting, of the time, place and purpose of the meeting.
 - h. Forward to the respective committees of Regional Synod all pertinent documents and such materials which may pertain to their respective duties.
 - i. Have available at all sessions on the president's table ample copies of the Bylaws and one copy of the Roberts Rules of Order.
5. The treasurer, either personally or through a designated person, will:
- a. Be a member of the Executive Team.
 - b. Receive and disburse all moneys from the several funds of Regional Synod.
 - c. Pay salaries and all proper claims for expenses incurred in the performance of Regional Synod business.
 - d. Be authorized, in consultation with the Executive Team Council, to manage and invest Synodical funds.
 - e. Arrange for accurate record keeping of all accounts and their transactions.
 - f. Prepare a monthly financial report and distribute this monthly report to the Executive Team Committee and to the Coordinator/Administrator.
 - ~~g. Distribute an up to date financial report to the Executive Council at each regularly scheduled meeting or at least quarterly.~~
 - h. Prepare an annual report of all accounts of Regional Synod and present this report to the annual Synod Assembly stated session.

Sec. E - Additional Personnel (non-officers of Regional Synod)

1. Temporary clerks will:
 - a. Serve under the direction of the officers of Regional Synod.
 - b. Maintain an accurate journal of all Regional Synod acts and proceedings.
2. Tellers, will:
 - a. Serve the officers and delegates of Regional Synod in the distribution of materials.
 - b. Be responsible for all tabulation of votes and ballots.

Sec. F - Synod Staff

1. A Visionary Leader will be retained through its Executive Team Council which will be responsible for his or her job descriptions and supervision. Executive Team Council business involving the Visionary Leader will be done in executive session without the presence of any synod staff who may also be members of the Executive Team Council.
2. A Coordinator/Administrator will be retained through its Executive Team Council which will be responsible for his or her job descriptions and supervision. Executive Team Council business involving the Coordinator/Administrator will be done in executive session without the presence of any synod staff who may also be members of the Executive Council.
3. Other synod staff including part-time contract positions and partnerships with other organizations will be retained through its Executive Team Council in consultation with the Visionary Leader and the Coordinator/Administrator. The Executive Council will be responsible for the job descriptions. The Coordinator/Administrator will be responsible for supervision in consultation with the Executive Team Council unless other provision or agreement is made.
4. Synod support personnel will be retained by the Coordinator/Administrator as authorized by the Executive Team Council. The Coordinator/Administrator will be responsible for the job description and supervision.
5. The Visionary Leader and Coordinator/Administrator will have authority in their respective areas of responsibilities as defined by their position descriptions. In undefined areas the Visionary Leader will have responsibility and authority with the final authority resting in the Executive Team Council.

6. The Executive Director(s) of Manitoqua Ministries will be selected by the Manitoqua Ministries Board. One voting member of the search committee for an Executive Director will be appointed by the Regional Synod Executive Team Council.

ARTICLE IV - EXECUTIVE TEAM COUNCIL

~~Sec. A - The Executive Council will have its Executive Committee composed of the following: president, vice president, stated clerk and treasurer.~~

Sec. B - Membership will consist of-

1. The president, vice president, stated clerk, treasurer, immediate past president, and Visionary Leader. ~~Executive Committee and the immediate past president.~~
2. ~~Two delegates who are ministers or elders from each of the classes of Synod with an effort to maintain parity between ministers and elders.~~
3. ~~Additionally each classis may have an additional delegate if its membership is greater than 4000 plus one delegate for each subsequent 4000 members or portion thereof.~~
4. ~~Classes will appoint its own delegates.~~
5. ~~Delegates from the classes to the Council will also serve as regular classis delegates to the Synod during his or her term.~~
6. The chairperson of the Overtures and Judicial Business Committee, the regional synod representative to the General Synod Council, and the Executive Director of Manitoqua Ministries will not be members but periodically will be invited to attend and participate in specific meetings of the Executive Team as determined by the team ~~serve as ex-officio members without vote.~~

Sec. C - Terms of office

1. Terms of office ~~of the officers on the Council~~ will be determined by the term of the respective office or position.
2. ~~Terms of office of the classis delegates will be for three years. Classis delegates may be reappointed to subsequent terms as determined by the appointing classis.~~

Sec. D - Meetings

1. Will be held at least monthly, semiannually ~~at the time and place designated by the Executive Committee. Additionally the Council will meet with the annual session of the Synod as delegates to the annual session as defined in these bylaws.~~
2. The method, time, and place of the meetings will be determined by the president, or in the absence of the president, the vice president. Provided there is full communication and no objection by any member of the Executive Team, meetings may be adjourned without meeting by the president, or in the absence of the president, the vice president.
3. Upon the decision of the president, or in the absence of the president, the vice president, meetings may be held utilizing conference telephone or interactive technology, including but not limited to electronic transmission, Internet usage, or remote communication, by means of which all persons participating in the meeting can communicate with each other. Participation in such meeting shall constitute attendance and presence in person at the meeting of the person or persons so participating.
4. Discussion and decision on specific issues may be held by utilizing technology, including but not limited to email, provided that no objection is made by any member of the Executive Team. Upon such objection, regular methods of meeting shall be employed.
5. Any two ~~four~~ or more members may request a special meeting upon written request to the president allowing five ~~ten~~ days for the call of any special meeting.
6. A quorum is defined as at least three members, a majority of the total of the Synod officers plus the appointed delegates. ~~Vacancies in classis appointed delegates will not count when figuring the number needed for a quorum.~~

Sec. E - Duties

1. The Executive Team Council will:
 - d. Be responsible to carry out the will of the Synod Assembly. Mission of the Synod, to establish policy to realize the Vision of the Synod, and to continually evaluate the progress towards realizing the Vision of the Synod.
 - e. Act for Regional Synod between sessions, and on all matters referred to it by Regional Synod.
 - f. Report annually to Regional Synod Assembly concerning its actions and deliberations.

- g. Make recommendations to Regional Synod Assembly on all matters that are not provided for elsewhere.
- h. Act as trustee of synod funds, with authority to manage all synod finances including acceptance, investment, transfer, mortgaging, and disbursement of money, real estate, personal property, both tangible and intangible, and devises and bequests. It may borrow money, make loans, and hold title to real estate.
- i. Make interim appointments for vacancies in synod positions.
- j. Serve as program committee for each session of Regional Synod Assembly as appropriate.
- ~~k. Be responsible for long-range plans and goals of the Regional Synod.~~
- l. Approve the president's appointments for special committees.
- m. Appoint a temporary chairperson of Regional Synod Assembly meeting in case of vacancies in offices of Regional Synod.
- n. Retain adequate staff, including contract positions, to carry out the mission and vision of the Synod and the will of the Synod Assembly.
- o. Establish and maintain a relationship with Manitouqua Ministries.
- p. Receive and review annually recommendations from the personnel committee regarding the synod staff.
- q. Appoint annually the Regional Synod delegate to General Synod. The delegate will be from the membership of the Synod Assembly ~~Executive Council~~. The Council should maintain a balance between appointing ministers and lay persons.
- r. Approve and appoint all nominees for committee member replacements, with an effort to receive input from the classes and to maintain a balance of classes representatives on all permanent committees of Regional Synod.
- s. Administer budgeted funds for congregational aid, e.g., Urban Ministries.
- t. Present nominations to the Regional Synod for approval, for official Regional Synod nominations to General Synod commissions and agencies as necessary.
- u. Receive and study the treasurer's monthly ~~quarterly~~ report.
- v. Review personally or through its representative all travel and expense vouchers relating to Regional Synod and her committees and make recommendations to Regional Synod.
- w. Review and approve the Ministers Salary Committee report and make recommendations of it to the classes of the Regional Synod.
- x. Review personally or through its representative the minutes of classes within Regional Synod bounds and take action as might be necessary ~~make recommendations to Regional Synod~~.
- y. Review all requests for leaves of absence from Regional Synod Assembly meetings and take action as might be necessary. ~~make recommendations to Regional Synod~~.
- z. Be responsible for the Synod's annual budgets. It will present the full annual budget to the Regional Synod ~~for approval~~.
- aa. Arrange for an annual review of the synod's prior year financial records to be completed by May 1, prior to the annual session. The results of the review will be reported to the Executive Team and made available upon request. ~~included in the committee's report to the synod~~.
- bb. Will act as a Nominating Committee for the purpose of presenting nominees to the synod for the office of vice-president and for president when necessary.
- cc. Will have the authority to approve the minutes of the annual and special sessions of the Synod of Mid-America.

~~Sec. F – Executive Committee~~

- ~~1. The Executive Committee of the Executive Council has authority to make decisions on behalf of the Council in the case of decisions that have time constraints, provided that substantial efforts were made to contact a quorum of the Executive Council. Written notification will be provided to the Council within five days of the action.~~
- ~~2. The Executive Committee of the Executive Council shall act as the advisory board to the synod staff.~~
- ~~3. The Executive Committee of the Executive Council will act as a Nominating Committee for the purpose of presenting nominees to the synod for the office of vice-president and for president when necessary.~~

Sec. G – Personnel Committee

- 1. Members are the president, vice president, and immediate past president.
- 2. The purpose of the Personnel Committee of the Executive Team ~~Council~~ is to:
 - a. Facilitate communication between the synod staff and the Executive Team ~~Council~~.

- b. Review synod staff unless other provision or agreement is made.
 - c. Receive personnel reports on contract staff and support staff from the Coordinator/Administrator and make appropriate recommendations.
 - d. Review overall synod direction as it relates to staff, making appropriate recommendations.
3. The Personnel Committee will:
- a. Meet individually and/or as a committee with the synod staff.
 - b. Give an annual review of the work of the synod staff to the Executive Team Council at its last regular meeting of the calendar year.
 - c. Make recommendations to the Executive Team Council concerning the synod staff's compensation, benefits, job description, performance, goals and direction of synod, etc.
 - d. Consult with the Coordinator/Administrator about contract staff and support staff concerning their performance, compensation, job description, etc.
 - e. Meet with contract and/or support staff at the discretion of the Personnel Committee or at the request of the contract/support staff person or the Coordinator/Administrator and annually give recommendations to the Executive Team Council when appropriate.

ARTICLE V - PERMANENT COMMITTEES

Sec. A – Permanent Regular Committees of Regional Synod will be:

- 1. Overtures and Judicial Business
- 2. Minister's Salary

Sec. B - Membership

- 1. The Overtures and Judicial Business Committee will consist of three ministers and two elders. Skills, especially in law, and interest will be considered.
- 2. The Minister's Salary Committee will consist of two laypersons from each classis.

Sec. C - Terms of Office

- 1. Terms of office will be three years.
- 2. Members are eligible for election to a second three-year term.
- 3. Initially terms will be staggered by lot.
- 4. Terms will begin when the member is appointed and will end after the last day of the Synod Assembly annual session of the Regional Synod in the last year of the member's term.

Sec. E - Specific Duties

- 1. The Overtures and Judicial Business Committee will:
 - a. Have a ~~Elect its own~~ chairperson as well as other officers if necessary that are appointed by the Executive Team.
 - b. Be present at each annual Regional Synod Stated Session as determined by the committee or if requested by the Executive Team Committee.
 - c. Receive, consider and make recommendations on all referrals, appeals, complaints and overtures as referred by the stated clerk.
 - d. May initiate overtures for Regional Synod's consideration.
 - e. Upon recommendation of the Executive Team Council, formulate overtures for Regional Synod's consideration.
 - f. Consider all proposed amendments in the Regional Synod's Bylaws and make recommendations to Regional Synod.

- 2. The Minister Salary Committee will:
 - a. Study the salaries and perquisites of the ministers serving in Regional Synod.
 - b. Report annually by way of the Executive Team Council such recommendations it considers necessary.
 - c. Assist each classis in its responsibility for implementing Regional Synod's action on the recommendations in accordance with the BOOK OF CHURCH ORDER, Chapter 1, Part II, Art. 7, Sec. 1g.

ARTICLE VI - AMENDMENTS AND SUSPENSIONS

Sec. A - These Bylaws may be amended as follows:

1. When the proposed amendment originates with and is recommended by the Executive Team Council,
 - a. The proposed amendment must be included in the notice of meeting to all delegates,
 - b. The Overtures and Judicial Business Committee will give its recommendation to the synod, and
 - c. Adoption must be ratified by a two-thirds vote of Regional Synod.
2. When the proposed amendment originates from the floor of an annual Stated Session,
 - a. The proposed amendment must first be approved in principle by a majority vote of Regional Synod and then be referred to the Executive Team Council for the specific incorporation into the Bylaws.
 - b. The Overtures and Judicial Business Committee will give its recommendation to the synod, and
 - c. At the next annual Stated Session the proposed amendment is presented for adoption by a two-thirds vote of Regional Synod.

Sec. B – These Bylaws may be suspended in whole or in part, for a whole session, ~~or~~ part of a session or for another period of time not to exceed until the next annual session, by two-thirds vote of Regional Synod.

VI. Election of officers

The president and vice president are elected for two-year terms. There is not an election this year.

VII. Staff Reports

A. Wayne Van Regenmorter – Visionary Leader

**Report to the Synod of Mid-America
Visionary Leader
Wayne Van Regenmorter
March 2011**

John Armstrong writes: "Mission is proclaiming God's kingship over all of human history, indeed over the entire cosmos (Col. 1:15-20). The concern of mission is universal (Rev. 5:9-10). Christ's mission aims at nothing less than completing what God began to do in creation and now extends to all peoples through the incarnation, life, death and resurrection of Jesus. Thus mission is the presence of God in the kingship of Jesus, who is Lord over all creation and culture."

There is a third aspect to mission that must never be overlooked. Mission is *not* the sole property of the church; mission is never the church putting forth its own power and authority. Leslie Newbigin is right when he says in his book, "The Open Secret": "To accept [such a] picture would be to sanction an appalling distortion of mission. On the contrary, the active agent of mission is a power that rules, guides and goes before the church; the free, sovereign, living power of the Spirit of God. Mission is not just something that the church does; it is something that is done by the Spirit, who is Himself the witness, who changes both the world and the church, who always goes before the church in its missionary journey."

The disciples were in danger of missing the central role of the Holy Spirit in Acts 1 when they asked the question in verse 6 about the time for restoring the kingdom. The answer given (verse 8) is important to grasp. The kingdom would not come in its entirety, in its final fullness, at least not in the age that followed Christ's ascension. What would be given was a gift, a foretaste, a pledge, a guarantee. That gift is the Holy Spirit. The disciples are not promised the full victory but a powerful advance installment of the reality of what has been promised in the final day. This promise comes on Pentecost. From this the church is launched on its mission. That mission remains to this day the mission of the Spirit.

As congregations and classes in the Synod of Mid-America, I believe the church is truly faithful to her witness when she obediently listens to the Spirit and follows wherever the Spirit leads. 2010 has been a year of surprises and changes, and the mission we are called to looks differently. As we continue to follow the leadings of the Holy Spirit we move forward on our missional journey.

The Journey of Combining Classes--Florida and Illiana

In April 2010, the Florida Administrative Council invited regional synod representatives to meet with them to discuss some classis issues which involved a fatigue factor of leadership, insufficient people to carry on classis' tasks and financial issues. The Administrative Council requested that a task team be formed to brainstorm possible plans and/or pathways to these identified issues. In late July 2010, the task team met to work out a short term financial plan and began to look at some long term issues. Soon after the July meeting the short term financial plan fell apart because of the discovery of about \$50,000 of unpaid commitments.

As a result another meeting took place in August where the Florida Administrative Council stated that the classis had not been functional for some time and therefore the task team was asked to meet again and come up with "the best option to reach the Florida territory for Christ," while submitting to the administration of the Synod of Mid-America. After a second task team meeting a proposal was presented to the Florida Administrative council and then to the Synod Executive Council on September 28, 2010.

The question asked was this: "Working from the agreed reality that the classis is not functional, the first question asked is, can we accomplish functionally within the classis with the Florida Classis continuing to exist in some form?" The conclusion was "no" for several reasons. That report was shared with the Synod Executive Council.

Many different meetings and communications took place over the next few months with leaders and personnel from the Florida Classis, the Chicago Classis and the Illiana Classis. The task team worked with the value to honor the financial commitment to the church planting effort within Florida as well as the minimum provisions of the agreement with the Florida Apostolic Leader, Arlan Ten Clay. Through these conversations it was discovered that the healthiest arrangement would be to combine the churches, and ministers of Florida into only one classis--the Classis of Illiana. On December 16, 2010, a special session of the Synod of Mid-America was held in which two recommendations were approved: 1) That the Synod of Mid-America combines the Classis of Florida and the Classis of Illiana per authority given to it in BCO Chapter 1, Part III, Article 2, Section 3, to be effective December 31, 2010; 2) That the following be the terms of the combined classes:

- a. The combined classis will use the structure of the Illiana Classis
- b. The officers, teams, and committees of the combined classis will be that of the Illiana Classis
- c. The name of the combined classis will be the Classis of Illiana; however, the synod recommends and urges that the classis consider making a name change that no longer indicates its limited geography
- d. All of the assets and liabilities of the separate classes now become that of the combined classis except for sufficient funds that are necessary to honor the minimum requirements of the agreement between Arlan Ten Clay and the Florida Classis; those funds will be transferred to the Synod of Mid-America who will arrange for appropriate compensation for Arlan Ten Clay; the synod will honor the minimum agreement between Arlan and Florida by maintaining employment with him; the ending date of that minimum agreement will be July 31, 2011 with appropriate notice given by January 31, 2011; any other employment or contract receipts that are arranged by Arlan will be deducted from this agreement; any agreement made between Arlan and Illiana Classis will end this minimum arrangement with the remaining funds given to Illiana Classis.

The work of combining the two classes continues to face ongoing challenges and opportunities as we move forward in mission together. Without a doubt the combining of the two classes has created much anxiety and vibration in the system. Questions are being raised about budgets; use of Florida assets; basic operational issues--staff, office expenses, insurance, etc.; logistics on classis meetings; assessments; team integration, supervision issues; realignment issues and relational unity. These issues are being constantly worked on by classis and synod leaders and I believe the solutions will reveal new ways of working together in positive ways to reach the territories of Florida and Illiana for the King, Jesus Christ. Already the Florida Operations Team (FOT) is working on relationship building and trust through cluster meetings which are essential for a healthy combined classis and for healthy leaders and congregations. We are moving forward in faith, with integrity in relationships, as we seek to be empowered by the Holy Spirit to expand and honor God's mission in the territory of Florida and the Illiana Classis.

The Journey of Planting New Churches

The church multiplication movement continued to gain momentum in 2010 both within the RCA, the synod and classes, which is a testimony to the power of the Holy Spirit. Just as a status check for the end of 2010 in the RCA: 272 worshipping congregations have started since 2003, reaching the lost by the thousands and growing disciples of Jesus Christ, transforming generations and communities. Since 2003, the Synod of Mid-America celebrates 16 new congregations who are worshipping weekly. 3 new congregations were launched in 2010. Stories and testimonies abound how people's lives are being changed by the love and grace of Jesus Christ. Here is a list of the new congregations since 2003:

- o Good News Christian Fellowship, New Port Richey, Florida, Pastor Jerry Hekhuis
- o Living Stones, New Tampa, Florida, Pastors Steve and Hope Germoso
- o West Coast Church of the Cross, Sarasota, Florida, Pastor Kevin O'Hara
- o Well of Hope, Orlando, Florida, Pastor DaRon Dixon
- o Chicago Grace Church, Chicago, Illinois, Pastor Bob Reid
- o Jericho Road, Wheaton, Illinois, Pastor Jeff Klein, Pastor Kevin Engel
- o CrossRoads Community Church, Chicago, Il, Aaron Helland

- o Missio Dei, Mokena, Illinois, Paul Vroom
- o Faith Church/Dyer, IN multi-site in Cedar Lake, Indiana, Dave and Carla Weemhoff
- o Faith Church/Dyer, IN multi-site in Valparaiso, Indiana, Jason De Vries
- o Faith Church/Dyer, IN multi-site in Hammond, Indiana, Ron Citlau (Launch in April 2011)
- o Faith West/Sheridan, IL, Greg Firrantello
- o The Bridge, St. Charles, Missouri, Pastor Stephanie Doeschot
- o River Rock Community Church, Sheboygan, WI, Pastor Jon Nienhuis
- o Remedy/Sheboygan, WI multi-site, Pastor Bob Abel
- o The Cornerstone Church, Bourbonnais campus (Start in Fall 2011)

I believe parenting churches will lead the way in the future capacity to produce new churches. Certainly others factors are also involved in the production capacity such as the functionality of classes' church multiplication teams, finances and demographic opportunities, but churches reproducing themselves after their own kind is the most sustainable church planting model. We have a few churches leading the way: Christ's Family in Davenport, IA; Bethany Reformed in Sheboygan, WI; Faith Church in Dyer, IN; and Cornerstone Church in Bourbonnais, IN.

In most of the classes an "additional" model to church planting is still being used. What we have learned is that this model will not be sufficient to create a sustainable church planting movement. As a result of using the "additional" model and other factors such as inadequate coaching, networking, accountability, and functional structures, 4 new congregations have been closed since 2003.

God-sized vision for planting: The Illiana Church Multiplication Team (ICMT) of the "old" Illiana Classis, under the leadership of Bob Grysen is on schedule to plant 20 new churches by 2020. The planting, training, and assessing strategies are in place along with the funding tools to make this happen. In addition, in partnership with the New Wave Network and the "new" combined Illiana Classis, there comes another vision to plant 20 churches by 2020. This vision involves the New Wave Network working with the ICMT in providing training and equipping for the ongoing oversight of the multiplication movement in Florida. It involves training through coaching and mentoring of classis leaders and new church planters in the systems and specifics of catalyzing, developing, resourcing, and sustaining a church multiplication movement. Arlan Ten Clay has been hired by Illiana Classis under a part time contract to help carry out this vision. The desired result is that a vision, empowered by the Holy Spirit, will be birthed in the territory of Florida, with leadership in Florida, in order to impact the state of Florida for Jesus Christ.

- The vision in the next decade includes:
 - WAVE ONE, 9 CHURCHES, 2011-2013
 - 5 plant cluster, I-75 on the West Coast of Florida by early spring, 2012 – identified sites are south Riverview, Fishhawk Ranch, Lakewood Ranch, Corkscrew Road Estero, Immokalee Road Naples. Each church would commit to starting 1 to 2 additional churches in the 10 years following their launch.
 - Pine Hills, African American, 2011
 - Urban Miami, 2011
 - Hispanic / Asian plants, 2011-2013 as external funding sources are realized
 - WAVE TWO, 7 - 2nd GENERATION CHURCHES, 2014-2017
 - 3 second generation along I-75 corridor west coast
 - Second generation along 17/92 corridor, African American
 - Second generation Urban Miami
 - WAVE THREE, 5 - 2ND / 3RD GENERATION CHURCHES, 2018-2020
 - 3 racial/ ethnic/ multi-racial
 - Urban Tampa
 - I-75 corridor

• Estimated Costs:	
TOTAL CLASSIS	\$765,000
TOTAL RCA CMT	\$154,000
TOTAL FROM PLANTERS	\$195,000
TOTAL PARENTS (New Wave & City Church)	\$400,000
TOTAL FROM HARVEST	\$1,952,000
TOTAL ALL STREAMS	\$3,466,000

Making vision become a reality is never easy. Sometimes we have to look back to see how far forward we have come. Here are the facts: the RCA has moved from planting one new congregation every 45 days (8 per year) prior to 2004 to one new church every 10 days (36 per year in 2010). In celebration we could very likely see 4 classes (Illiana-Florida, South Grand Rapids, Central California, and California) turn in 23 of the 43 New Congregation Plans for 2011, leaving 20 more to plant by the remaining 40 classes in the RCA. In addition, the RCA recently received a \$2 million dollar grant from the De Vos Foundation. The plan is to distribute those funds in a collaborative planting effort with the CRC/RCA in four Kingdom Enterprise Zones. Florida has been declared one of those zones to receive \$500,000. God has blessed our Classes and Synod in opportunities for mission in the world. I praise God for all that He is doing.

The Journey of Congregational Revitalization

The Ridder Leadership Initiative (RLI) continues to built momentum for change as congregations embarking on the journey are showing signs of becoming more outwardly focused and more missional. The main emphasis of the RLI focuses on momentum and leadership needed for sustainable change. Personal transformation and passionate spirituality for pastors and lay leaders leads to corporate transformation within congregations. In May 2010, five congregations in the synod completed Phase I of the RLI, along with five congregations in the Synod of the Great Lakes and three CRC congregations. From the feedback and comments from a pastor's event in May, it was decided to continue to use the RLI as a tool for church health for 2010 to 2012. The momentum for the RLI continues to grow within the synod as 12 pastors, representing 12 congregations gathered in Cypress, TX in October to begin Phase II with Jim Herrington and Trisha Taylor facilitating a Faith Walking Event. At the next Ridder Leadership Initiative Event it is estimated that over 225 people will participate in the process. A Sustainability Team has been developed to help grow the RLI to be used in other regions of the RCA and Canada. A website is being built to house usable resources, DVD's of the content being presented and reflection tools. Nate Pyle, a pastor at Christ's Community Church in Fishers, Indiana, testifies that the RLI has been formative for him and for congregants. He says, *"It has propelled me forward in my ministry journey. There are situations that naturally cause an inexperienced pastor anxiety. Through Ridder, I have learned to check myself at the door and seek out opportunities for growth. I am able to view situations with greater levity and maturity."* The RLI has helped Christ's Community Church think about discipleship in new ways which is having an impact on the congregation. Pyle says, *"We have conducted surveys, rewritten our mission statement, and changed our focus from congregational health to being more centered on participating on kingdom advancement. Our new core values are truth, authentic community, Christian spirituality and missional living."*

Classes and congregations are using a variety of methods and tools to engage in revitalization. Christian Park Reformed Church in Indianapolis, Indiana, has contracted with Paul Borden to help them clarify their missional capacity. Faith Reformed Church in Cedar Grove, Wisconsin is working with Pinnacle Ministries, an organization committed to the vision of: "Healthy Pastors, Healthy Leaders, Leading Healthy Churches." Many other churches are working to get clarity on their mission mandate, mission motives, mission marks, and mission strategy using the resources of Church Unique.

Several years ago the Chicago Classis challenged their congregations to quit doing business as usual and to make the changes necessary for revitalization. An assessment was completed for each congregation in the classis. Some challenging and difficult decisions were made. In the "President's Update on the State of the Classis", Rev. Dave Van Kley writes: *"Today I am pleased to say that we chose to make those hard decisions. We went down the road of doing the hard work of assessing the health of our congregations and hearing recommendations based on those assessments. I'm even more please to say that we've begun making some of the difficult changes and hard choices based on those recommendations. That we've chosen, in a number of different situations, to not do the comfortable thing by continuing to do business as usual. Instead we've move in directions that have had and will have a positive effect on the future of the ministries of the churches in the Classis of Chicago. The result of some of those hard and painful decisions are before us today. The fact that we are meeting here at CrossRoads Community Church is a wonderful testimony to the courage that was needed to make a very hard decision, and to the hard and diligent work that took place following that decision. It is also a testimony to a positive, cooperate ministry spirit that continues to develop in our classis."* Churches in Chicago are finding creative ways to revitalize and impact their communities by: starting a Caring Community Kitchen; a Circle Ministry for meals, activities, and learning; adopting a school to help with

needs; reaching the community with innovative recovery ministry. It is exciting to see God at work in numerous ways, opening doors to share the Gospel in amazing ways.

There are about 17 Coached Revitalizing Networks meeting regularly in the synod. New Ridder Leadership Networks have been formed as well. Some new church planter networks are also meeting. Over 80 pastors and lay leaders have been trained in the Foundational Coaching process. Stories continue to emerge from networks as pastors are discovering that their lives and ministries are being changed.

The Journey of Missional Effectiveness and Fruitfulness

To be more effective in being missional and Reformed in extending the love and grace of Jesus Christ, classes have restructured into basically four different teams or commissions: Church Multiplication, Congregational Revitalization, Leadership Development and Relationship Development. The Wisconsin Classis has added a Prayer Commission. Classes are now working diligently to recruit leadership positions in these new structures as well as inviting others to help carry out specific tasks needed to function more effectively and fruitfully. In many cases this has been a difficult task because of "busy" pastors and lay leaders are feeling the stress, fatigue and exhaustion involved in their current ministry. The process continues to find pastors and church leaders who are willing to give of their time and energy to accomplish the vision of each classis.

Because the classes now have similar structures it makes sense to meet in Leadership Assemblies "to encourage and equip classes so they may faithfully follow Christ in ministry and mission." The proposal before the annual session is to make Leadership Assemblies a reality. It is to meet twice a year as a gathering of classis leadership for the following purpose:

- a. Resource each other – network
- b. Give input to the Synod – to Council that meets with the assemblies
- c. Receive resource information
- d. Act as a type of peer review – each can see what the others are doing
- e. Catch the synod vision and share the visions of the other classes
- f. Sharing concerns
- g. Cross-fertilization of classis leadership
- h. Classes are reporting to the synod and each other versus the synod reporting regarding the classes

The Classis of Wisconsin has hired Pastor Lyle Zumdahl to be the new classis leader for the Classis of Wisconsin. He has specific responsibilities: to the core values of the vision of the classis in the areas of revitalization, multiplication, leadership, and relationships; to lead the classis to realize its vision; to provide leadership, care, and encouragement to pastors, specialized ministers and lay leadership of the Wisconsin Classis (Emphasis will be placed on leadership and mission as existing congregations seek renewal and new church starts are formed.); to come alongside of, enable, and empower the commissions, congregations, pastors and leaders of the classis to carry out the mission of the classis; to work *with*, not do the work *of*, the commissions and congregations of the classis.

The Journey of Fresh Starts

Fresh Start training events are still being held throughout the RCA. Rich Schuler has been a vital part of this training experience. The mission of Fresh Start is to come alongside congregations, classis leaders, and regional leaders to equip them through assessment, training, and coaching the development of fresh starts all over the Reformed Church in America in the service of the kingdom of God. This resource is available to all of the classes in the synod.

The Journey of Discovering God's Direction

For over 380 years the Reformed church in America has been actively involved in bringing the grace, mercy, and truth of the Gospel in living out our faith with boldness and faithfulness. Since 2003, the RCA has been serving God faithfully with a focus on *Our Call*, a ten year commitment to church multiplication and church revitalization, developed on the foundation of leadership, discipleship, mission, and a multiracial future free from racism. As we move toward the culmination and conclusion of this

chapter, the ability to discover and discern God's leading requires further submission, reflection, prayer, and conversation in seeking God's direction for the future.

With a directive from the General Synod Council and the General Secretary, a discernment process planning team gathered to help facilitate such a process: *"To develop a plan that engages the assemblies of the church (consistories, classes, regional synods, and the General synod) in a process of discernment of the RCA's continuing call to mission and ministry."* To help gather stories of God's grace at work in our midst, Barnabas Partners have been trained in conducting Discovery Workshops. So far four people in the Synod of Mid-America have been trained as Barnabas Partners. My hope is that we would have one trained person in each congregation in the synod who would help lead a Discovery Workshop in the local congregation. My goal would be that each classis would host a Discovery Workshop. Let's gather the stories of God's grace at work in our midst so that we might celebrate God's work and be encouraged in its participation in the gospel. And may the wider church be able to discern, adjust to, and align with God's movement within, through, and ahead of His people. For more information on the Discovery and Discernment process go to: www.rca.org/discernment

The Journey of Being Missional and Reformed

As we partnership together in congregations, classes and the synod I find encouragement that pastors and lay leaders are openly listening to the voice of the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit dwells with us. He walks along side of us as we pursue the missional journey God lays out ahead of us. We celebrate the stories of God's love and grace and what He is doing within us, through us and ahead of us. We are learning how to live being missional and Reformed. *"Now to Him who is able to do immeasurably more than all we ask or imagine, according to His power that is at work within us, to him be glory in the church and in Christ Jesus throughout all generations, forever and ever! Amen."* Ephesians 3:20-21

Together in His Purposes,
Wayne Van Regenmorter

B. Manitoqua Ministries Report

TO: SYNOD OF MID-AMERICA – ANNUAL SESSION
FROM: LAURA VROOM
SUBJECT: MANITOQUA MINISTRIES
DATE: MARCH 5, 2011

Manitoqua Ministries continues to serve the children, youth, and adults of the Regional Synod in a variety of ways. Through the work of the Holy Spirit we will continue to do so.

Program Report

Summer Staffing

This summer we received the most applications than we have ever received for summer camp counselors. We are always looking for volunteers to help serve in the summer. If you or any member of your church is interested, we would love to have you.

Summer Camp Registration

We are accepting summer camp registrations and are excited about new programs that we are offering. Every church should have a packet as well as you can get any information you want on our website.

www.manitoqua.org

Retreats

In the last year we served 10,871 people from churches, schools, and not-for-profit organizations. The majority of our guest groups are repeat business and they continue to appreciate our beautiful setting and the excellent service they receive. It is very exciting to see people come and feel the presence of the Spirit of God here at Camp Manitoqua & Retreat Center.

Outdoor Education

One area of camp ministry that continues to grow is our Adventure Zone. The Outdoor Education program equips people to be a part of effective teams using experiential learning. We are excited to see how God continues to bless this ministry.

Volunteers

We have had the privilege of watching many people serve God here at Camp Manitoqua.

Our annual work day is April 16, 2011 at Camp Manitoqua and The Kings Camp. It is one of our priorities to take care of all the facilities that God has given us. We are blessed by many volunteer groups who are helping us do that. We would like to thank all the people who help and the churches that take special offerings to support these projects. **We are always in need of volunteers who have a heart for helping Manitoqua reach its full potential.**

Kings Camp

In Chana, Illinois, our campground managers, Ed & Ginny, are excited about another year of ministry and are encouraged by the number of RCA members who are using this facility. We also are excited by the number of churches that are doing church campouts. It is a great way to grow community.

Board Members

Camp Manitoqua has 4 new board members: Dave Grigoletti (IL classis), Susan Lange (Illiana Classis), Amy Parrish (Chic Classis), & Health Zeller (at large member)

Recommendation: That the Synod of Mid-America approves the board members as listed.

➔ **VOTED to approve the recommendation of the board members as listed.**

Plea for Help and Support

Manitoqua Ministries has continued to reach out to many people in the last 54 years. We, the staff and Board of Directors, would like to see it continue to be a place where "God's Spirit Changes Lives". We covet prayers and financial support from churches and individuals to continue this ministry. Manitoqua has felt the struggles in our economy like many others, and we are in some struggling times for this ministry and we need your help. At this time, camp has a 2.8 million dollar loan. So please pray for the sale of land or for some generous people that feel called to help reduce or eliminate the loan.

Thank you

The staff finds it a privilege to serve the Synod. We really want to take this time to say thank you to all the Classis for their support. We appreciate the Synod's support of this ministry and encourage the members of the Synod to return to their congregations and promote Manitoqua to their members.

Respectfully submitted,

Laura Vroom
Executive Director

C. Youth Ministry Report

Youth Ministry Report

Prepared by Nathan Phillips Program Director Camp Manitoqua & Retreat Center

Discipleship Youth Team:

We have successfully run Youth Lync in which I am in the process of following up with various youth pastors that were in attendance. The hope is that they now start youth networks in their areas and act as contact people for other youth workers. This is a very positive direction and I am very happy with how it is going. We are scheduled to meet again as the DYT in May to further discuss the Youth Lync event, check in on follow up, and plan the next step.

I am planning on contacting a couple of youth pastors in the Illiana Classis who are part of the youth and education team to discuss Leaders On The Horizon with them and the potential benefit it could have for them and other youth pastors in the classis.

I am also in a constant process of listening to youth pastors when I can to hear their needs and wants as for youth events, support, and/or training. I believe that as we encourage and support the youth workers and youth of our churches we will see amazing things happen for God's glory!

Please continue to be in prayer for our youth workers, youth and ministries geared toward helping to raise up this next generation.

If you have any questions please do not hesitate to contact me at anytime.

In Christ,
Nathan Phillips
Nathan@manitoqua.org

D. General Synod Council Report

Report from GENERAL SYNOD COUNCIL

In recent years, the Regional Synod annual session has taken place after the March G.S.C. meeting, so I have been able to give a timely update on our work. That is not true this year! I can tell you that, at our March 22-24 meeting, we will receive reports on our efforts in the 6 "Our Call" areas of: Leadership, Discipleship, Mission, Multiplication, Revitalization, and A Multi-Racial Future Freed from Racism.

We also anticipate receiving and meeting with a final candidate for General Secretary, as presented by the search committee. The search committee met January 24, received numerous applications and narrowed the field to five (5), whom they interviewed on February 7 and 8. At that time, the committee narrowed the field to two (2); second interviews will be conducted in late February.

There will certainly be other reports received, and conversations had, that will be of interest to the broader church. I simply don't know what they are as of yet.

Finally, please keep your eyes and ears open for information on the denomination-wide discernment process that is beginning this year. It is our hope and prayer that this process will help local congregations get a better sense of how God is at work among and within them, and that it will help us discern the next season of our life together as a denomination beyond "Our Call." Your involvement will be crucial to that process.

It continues to be an honor to serve the broader church through the G.S.C. If you have any questions throughout the year, please feel free to contact me.

Rev. Christopher Poest
Faith Community Reformed Church, 6825 West 40th St., Stickney, Illinois 60402
708-484-4268 • poestopher@gmail.com

VIII. Adjournment

The Synod session ended with prayer offered by vice president, Jimmie Stevenson.

The 2012 annual session will utilize the new structure approved at this session.

Chad Schuitema
President

Randy Kooy
Stated Clerk