March 9, 2024

Synod Home Missions Manual

of the

Reformed Church in the United States

And Jesus came and spoke to them, saying, "All authority has been given to Me in heaven and on earth. Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all things that I have commanded you; and lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the age." Amen.

Matthew 28:18-20

I. INTRODUCTION

Prior to His ascension to the throne of glory from which our Lord Jesus Christ exercises all authority and dominion, our Lord charged His church to go and make disciples of all the nations. The act of making disciples is found in two parts: 1. Making people of indiscriminate social, racial and ethnic backgrounds into members of the church through baptism in the name of the Holy Trinity, and 2. The lifelong teaching of church members unto obedience of the Word of God.

While lifelong teaching is at the very core of sanctification and most certainly includes the encouragement to share the Gospel of Jesus Christ, this manual speaks more so to the process of reaching out with the Gospel message and bringing people into the church.

The Synod Home Missions Manual (SHMM) is thus intended to describe the RCUS approach toward adding to the church with the understanding that while members, officers and pastors of the church actively cultivate and plant the seeds, it is Christ as our sovereign Lord who gives the increase. Actively cultivating and planting takes place on four levels: 1. Individual members; 2. Local churches; 3. Classes; and 4. Synod; each of which sets the framework for this manual.

II. INDIVIDUAL MEMBERS

While mission work is often seen as a highly organized effort involving key leaders that takes place elsewhere, the most effective means of conducting missions are those that are carried out day in and day out by members of the church as follows:

1. Reaching people, whether in a small rural community or in a major metropolitan area or somewhere in between, begins with individual heartfelt prayer. *The effective, fervent prayer of a righteous man avails much* (James 5:16b). Specifically, make it a daily habit to pray for:
    a. Those you know who are not in the church.
    b. Opportunities to talk about matters of faith with others (1 Peter 3:15).
    c. Opportunities to invite others to church services.
    d. Your pastor in ministering the Word of God.
    e. More laborers to teach and preach the Word of God (Matthew 9:38).
    f. The exercise of mission works under the leadership of the local Consistory and Spiritual Council; delegates and officers of Classis; and Synodical delegates and officers.
2. Tell others about Christ. Like the Samaritan woman (John 4:28-30), the demon-possessed man (Luke 8:39), and faithful believers (Acts 2:47), as recipients of God's grace through Christ we desire to tell others.
3. Invite people to church services. This is truly the front line of mission work, for, ...*faith comes by hearing, and hearing by the word of God* (Romans 10:17).
4. Practice hospitality. Open your home following worship service and at other times for those who visit the church (Romans 12:13b).
5. Live as a disciple of Jesus Christ in thankfulness so that others would see your good works and glorify our Heavenly Father (Matthew 5:16).
6. Use your gifts *readily and cheerfully for the advantage and welfare of other members* (Heidelberg Catechism Q&A 55).

III. LOCAL CHURCHES

While individual members are the most effective means for reaching those in the local community, it is the local church that teaches and equips individual members through the ministry of the Word; and provides local organization for prayer, financial support, and engaging mission works and/or missionaries.

1. The ministry of the Word is central to equipping individual members, young and old, in assuming personal responsibility in reliance upon God's Word and Holy Spirit toward the Great Commission as stated in Section II of the SHMM.
2. The local Consistory and Spiritual Council should each pray monthly for reaching people in the local community, for RCUS mission works and for opportunities to engage on some level in mission works or with a missionary.
3. The congregational prayer during each worship service should include prayer for local and RCUS-wide mission efforts.
4. Regardless of the size of the church, the local Consistory and Spiritual Council should purposely adopt each year an action statement toward engaging in local mission efforts and/or coordinating with Classis for Classical mission efforts.
5. Local mission efforts may include, but not be limited to,
    a. Training members in exercising the Great Commission per Section II of the SHMM.
    b. Engaging the local community through special events.

c. Enacting a comprehensive promotional plan.
d. Holding a Mission Festival that increases awareness of RCUS mission efforts.
e. Participating in the Annual Day of Prayer for the purpose of calling God's people to prayer and concern for missions.

6. The local church may seek to coordinate mission efforts with Classis by:
   a. Directly sponsoring or offering to provide oversight of a missionary.
   b. Offering to serve as oversight for a mission work on behalf of Classis.
   c. Offering to build a relationship with an existing church body that was first identified by the Synod Welcoming Committee.
   d. Initiating a mission work in another community.

IV. CLASSIS

Each Classis serves as the primary organizational body that coordinates mission works, missionaries and Reformed Group Network relationships within Classis boundaries. This coordination is designed to ensure that mission efforts are conducted with clearly established purpose and goals so that people, financial resources and ancillary resources are wisely managed.

A. Classis Responsibilities
   1. Each Classis shall establish a permanent Home Missions Committee for planning, implementing, overseeing and evaluating mission efforts within the Classis boundaries.
   2. The Home Missions Committee for each Classis shall recommend an annual plan for promoting, developing, implementing and evaluating mission works to the respective Classis at the spring meeting of Classis.
   3. The annual plan adopted by Classis may include, but not be limited to:
      a. Encourage local Consistories to teach and equip individual members through the ministry of the Word to carry out day-to-day missions with prayer, inviting others, hospitality, good works and exercising gifts as described in Section II of the SHMM.
      b. Encourage local Consistories to systematically pray for RCUS mission efforts and provide local leadership and/or support for mission works and/or missionaries as described in Section III of the SHMM.
      c. Establish and support a missionary for the purpose of sharing the Gospel of Christ through starting, facilitating and/or identifying core groups of people in Bible studies within Classis boundaries.
      d. Identify core groups within Classis boundaries in coordination with a missionary and/or the permanent Synod Welcoming Committee and connect each core group with the Consistory of a local congregation for the purpose of building a relationship toward the possibility of organizing as a mission work.
      e. Provide oversight of existing mission work(s) through documented monthly reports and site visits. In reporting statistics to Classis, the statistics of every mission work shall be reported as an individual congregation.

B. Core Groups

1. Mission works or what is often called church plants are nearly always begun with core groups, which are either pre-existing or are organized through missionary efforts. The goal of a core group in becoming a mission work is to become a congregation of the RCUS.
2. Core groups may include:
    a. A Bible study that either pre-exists or was organized through a missionary.
    b. A group that is informally organized as a church.
    c. An independent church.
    d. A church that is disenfranchised with their denomination.
    e. A group of congregants in an RCUS church that are identified by the Consistory as a possible mission work.
3. Core groups either contact the RCUS expressing interest in the RCUS, are developed through missionary efforts, are discovered through common acquaintances, are found through the efforts of the Synod Welcoming Committee or are initiated by a local Consistory from within the congregation.
4. For core groups contacting the RCUS, the contact is to be forwarded to the Classis Home Missions Committee (CHMC) in which the group resides. The CHMC then determines the level of organization and scope of the core group in order to choose the path by which the group should initially engage with the RCUS.
5. There are 3 paths in which core groups initially engage with the RCUS, depending upon the CHMC determination:
    a. As a member of the Reformed Group Network (RGN).
        - Only those groups that are identified by the Synod Welcoming Committee as being confessionally Reformed are forwarded to the CHMC, which then connects the core group with the Consistory of a local congregation for the purpose of building a relationship toward the possibility of organizing as a mission work.
    b. As an applicant to become a mission work.
        - See Section IV.D for applying to become a mission work.
    c. As an applicant to become a congregation of the RCUS.
        - See RCUS Constitution Section 2, Articles 8-10 for becoming a congregation of the RCUS.

C. Missionary
1. A missionary may be appointed by Classis or by a local Consistory. In the event such appointment includes a request for Classical and/or Synodical funding, the missionary must be approved by Classis and under the oversight of a local Consistory.
2. The selection of a missionary may consider those qualifications as found in Appendix I. An analysis tool found in Appendix J may also be useful.
3. A local Consistory seeking Classical and/or Synodical funding to appoint a missionary must first present a completed Missionary Request Form (Appendix B) to the Classis Home Missions Committee and obtain approval from Classis.
4. A local Consistory seeking Classical and/or Synodical funding to continue the appointment of a missionary beyond the first year must submit a completed

Missionary Continuance Request Form (Appendix C) to CHMC for each subsequent year to obtain Classis approval.

5. A CHMC seeking to appoint a missionary must submit a completed Missionary Request Form (Appendix B) to Classis for approval. Second-year and beyond requests must submit a completed Missionary Continuance Request Form (Appendix C) to Classis for approval. Regardless of new or continuing missionary work, the request must also include the local Consistory providing oversight.
6. Missionaries must submit monthly reports to the Consistory providing oversight using the Missionary Report Form (Appendix D). The local Consistory providing oversight must forward the monthly report along with any additional comments to the CHMC.
7. The CHMC is to review monthly report forms received from the overseeing Consistory to help gauge missionary progress and provide counsel to the overseeing Consistory and Missionary through quarterly meetings.

D. Mission Works
   1. A core group seeking to become a mission work of the RCUS must make such request to the CHMC within which the core group resides.
   2. The CHMC shall appoint a Committee on Assessment for the evaluation of each proposed new home mission work. This committee may not include anyone among those who are part of the group making the request.
   3. The Committee on Assessment shall meet with core group members to answer at minimum the questions found in Appendix E.
   4. The Committee on Assessment shall submit a report of its findings with recommendation(s) to the CHMC. The Classis Home Committee shall consider if the core group is ready to submit an application to become a mission work.
   5. Should the CHMC determine that the core group is ready to make an application to become a mission work, the CHMC shall send the application form found in Appendix F to the core group for their completion and subsequent submission to the CHMC.
   6. The CHMC shall appoint members from the Committee on Assessment to serve as points of contact and aid the core group in completing the application form.
   7. The CHMC will review the completed form and submit to Classis with recommendation(s) for consideration of approval.
   8. In the event Synodical funding is requested, Classis shall submit the completed forms and recommendation(s) of each mission work to the Synod Home Missions Committee (SHMC) within one week following completion of the Classis spring meeting.
   9. In the event Synodical funding is requested, the SHMC will review the completed form and submit to Synod with recommendation(s) for consideration of approval.

E. Mission Work Oversight
   1. Once a mission work has been approved by Classis and Synod, the mission work shall be placed by the CHMC under the oversight of the Consistory and Spiritual Council of a congregation within Classis boundaries and at the consent of such Consistory.

2. The overseeing Consistory of a mission work is to provide leadership as an ordinary Consistory assuming duties as prescribed in Section 2 of the RCUS Constitution, including making provision for pulpit supply, supply pastor or an organizing pastor. The supply pastor or organizing pastor shall participate in Consistory meetings in person or by other means of communication.
3. The overseeing Spiritual Council likewise provides leadership for the mission work per Section 3 of the RCUS Constitution.
4. A monthly report of activities and stewardship must be submitted to the CHMC by the mission work in coordination with the overseeing Consistory using the Mission Work Monthly Report Form found in Appendix G.
5. Re-application as a mission work shall be submitted each subsequent year using the Mission Work Continuance Form found in Appendix H to the CHMC at least six (6) weeks prior to the spring meeting of Classis.
6. Each mission work may re-apply as a mission work for a maximum of five (5) subsequent years. An extension of two (2) additional years may be granted under extenuating circumstances.
7. The CHMC shall review the completed forms and submit to Classis with recommendation(s) for consideration of approval.
8. In the event Synodical funding is requested, Classis shall submit the completed forms and recommendation(s) of each mission work to the Synod Home Missions Committee within one week following completion of the Classis spring meeting.
9. In the event Synodical funding is requested, the SHMC will review the completed form and submit to Synod with recommendation(s) for consideration of approval according to specified deadlines as stated in the standing rules of Synod.

F. Organizing Pastor
1. The overseeing Consistory may seek an organizing pastor to serve the mission work.
2. The Organizing Pastor not only carries out the normal duties of a pastor in ministering the Word, but also helps facilitate the mission work toward the goal of organizing as an RCUS congregation. This includes the myriad of details involved in a mission work, such as finding a location, organizing events and coordinating promotional efforts (i.e. website, social media, advertising). Plus, the Organizing Pastor actively discovers who among the core group may be qualified as elders or deacons.
3. To call an organizing pastor, the overseeing Consistory is to appoint a steering committee from among the core group members of the mission work. The purpose of the steering committee is to identify, with the advice of the overseeing Consistory and the Classis Home Missions, qualified minister(s) to be considered for the Organizing Pastor
4. Qualifications for such Organizing Pastor candidates are the same as those of a missionary (Appendix I). An analysis tool found in Appendix J may also be useful.
5. The steering committee shall submit to the overseeing Consistory qualified minister(s) to be considered for the Organizing Pastor.
6. The overseeing Consistory shall select a candidate from among those presented by the steering committee for consideration. If no candidate among those presented by

the steering committee is selected by the overseeing Consistory, the steering committee shall begin anew the process of seeking an organizing pastor.

7. The overseeing Consistory shall recommend to the overseeing congregation the select candidate for consideration as the Organizing Pastor.
8. With approval from the overseeing congregation per RCUS Constitution, Article 68, the Consistory shall issue a call to the organizing pastor.

G. Mission Work that Does Not Become a Congregation of the RCUS
   1. A mission work that does not become a congregation of the RCUS either by not meeting the specified period defined in Section IV.E.6 or by denial of re-application is no longer identified as a mission work.
   2. Although such mission work that does not become a congregation of the RCUS is no longer recognized as a mission work, the CHMC may elect to recognize the former mission work as a core group and give full access to the RGN.
   3. Regardless if the former mission work continues as a core group in the RGN or not, an evaluation using the form in Appendix K is to be conducted by the CHMC within one year of discontinuance for the purpose of learning from the process and apply such learning to future mission works.

V. Synod

Synod gives attention to the cause of missions (Article 101, RCUS Constitution) and does so primarily through permanent Synodical committees on Home Missions, Communications, Welcoming and Finance. Through these committees Synod provides the organizational framework of missions, facilitates the promotion of missions, solicits a network of potential new congregations and develops and manages resources for mission works.

A. Synod Home Missions Committee (SHMC)
   1. The SHMC sets the organizational framework for missions through annual review and recommended updates of the SHMM to Synod.
   2. The SHMC promotes RCUS home missions through thoughtful and direct communication toward elevating the importance of home missions and eliciting response to a call to action. This includes:
      a. A call for an Annual Day of Prayer for missions to be held the second Sunday of September.
      b. An encouragement to RCUS congregations to pray for mission works on a regular basis.
      c. Promoting special prayer meetings across the RCUS for the work of the church, including home missions.
   3. Assigns each mission work to give at least two brief reports and prayer requests to the *Reformed Herald* each year.
   4. Publishes an annual prayer request package in August of each year to be sent to all the churches.
   5. Facilitates requests for Synodical funding in coordination with Classis funding for proposed or current home missions works in such a way that both enhances early viability and leads to long-term financial self-sufficiency.

6. The SHMC considers requests for approval by mission works to solicit funds among congregations and individuals beyond Classical boundaries, such as for the purpose of purchasing church property.

B. Synod Communications Committee (SCC)
   1. The SCC develops and disseminates materials in coordination with other committees that may be used by local congregations to promote the work of RCUS missions.
   2. The SCC develops, manages, publishes and monitors the RCUS website, social media and other emerging platforms as deemed appropriate to inform and promote the work of the RCUS.

C. Synod Welcoming Committee (SWC)
   1. The SWC promotes and facilitates initial inquiries toward interest in the RCUS.
   2. The SWC actively seeks, researches and engages existing core groups across the nation that may have an interest in the RCUS. These existing core groups may include independent churches, organized Bible studies or churches that are disenfranchised with their denomination.
   3. The SWC connects core groups that are confessionally Reformed to the CHMC in which the core group resides for further assessment and determination of the appropriate initial level of engagement with the RCUS.
   4. The SWC promotes and provides oversight of the Reformed Group Network (RGN), which gives access to RCUS preaching and teaching resources particularly for core groups that are not yet ready to pursue mission work or congregational status in the RCUS.

D. Synod Finance Committee (SFC)
   1. Provide stewardship of monies entrusted into the RCUS care, including that which is used for missions.
   2. Promote giving to the RCUS Endowment Fund, of which there is a Home Missions Named Fund for long-term support of missions.

VI. Conclusion

The Great Commission (Matthew 28:18-20) charges the church to work at making people of indiscriminate social, racial and ethnic backgrounds into members of the church through baptism in the name of the Holy Trinity and conduct lifelong teaching of church members unto obedience of the Word of God. The SHMM describes the RCUS approach toward adding members to the church. In summary, this is done through individual members of the church, church officers, each Classis and Synod work together to cultivate and plant seeds with the understanding that it is Christ as our sovereign Lord who gives the increase. Thus, our earnest desire is to faithful to our Holy Triune God out of thankfulness for His everlasting mercy and grace and that His Name would be honored and glorified.

APPENDIX A

DEFINITIONS

Core Group:

A group of believers either formally or informally organized actively pursuing study and/or worship and may include a Bible study group or a group operating on some level as a church.

Missionary:

A missionary, as used in this manual, is a man appointed by either a Classis or a local congregation to generate interest in the Reformed Church and to work with individuals and potential core groups in a particular area, with the purpose of passing any core groups on to an organizing pastor at the point where that core group becomes mature and cohesive enough to warrant the next step of development. In addition to identifying core groups, the missionary is expected to organize, lead and generate interest in attending Bible studies, Biblical presentations or other events designed to share the Gospel of Christ with an emphasis on reaching unchurched people.

Mission Works:

A core group that has come under the care of a Classis with oversight provided by a Consistory from an RCUS congregation while in pursuit of becoming a congregation of the RCUS.

Organizing Pastor:

A pastor called by a congregation of the RCUS to serve a mission work as pastor ministering the Word of God and as facilitator toward the goal of organizing the mission work as an RCUS congregation.

Reformed Group Network (RGN):

A collection of core groups that are deemed by their own choice or by the recommendation of the Synod Welcoming Committee as not yet ready to pursue status as either a mission work or as an RCUS congregation. RGN members are given access to RCUS preaching and teaching resources primarily through the RCUS web site.

Supply Pastor:

A pastor serving as temporary supply for a mission work prior to the mission work gaining an organizing pastor.

APPENDIX B

MISSIONARY REQUEST FORM

1. Applicant Status (Please check one): Classis _____ Classis Name:
   Consistory _____ Church Name:

2. Primary Contact Information:

   a. Name:

   b. Email:

   c. Phone (xxx-xxx-xxxx):

3. Person Completing Missionary Request Form and contact email and phone (if different from Primary Contact):

   a. Name:

   b. Email:

   c. Phone (xxx-xxx-xxxx):

4. Proposed Missionary name and contact email and phone:

   a. Name:

   b. Email:

   c. Phone (xxx-xxx-xxxx):

5. Educational background and experience of the proposed missionary (Please attach additional sheets if necessary):

6. Please also attach at least three documented references.
7. What will be the specific duties of the proposed missionary (Please attach additional sheets, if necessary)?

8. What is the promotional plan? Please include specific promotional strategies along with the type of medium used and the frequency of each strategy (Please attach additional sheets, if necessary)?

9. What are the target metrics in the first year?

	Within the First Year
# of Bible Study groups to be established	
# of Core Groups to be identified	
Personal Contacts Made	
Other:	
Other:	

10. What is the first-year budget?

TOTAL SUPPORT		$ -
1.	Giving	$ -
2.	Requested Classis Support	$ -
3.	Requested Synod Support	$ -
4.	Congregational Support	$ -
5.	Other: _____	$ -
TOTAL MISSIONARY EXPENSES		$ -
6.	Salary	$ -
7.	Housing & Utilities	$ -
8.	Medical Insurance	$ -
9.	Retirement	$ -
10.	Term Life Insurance	$ -
11.	Long-Term Disability	$ -
12.	Continuing Education	$ -
T0TAL FACILITY EXPENSES		$ -
13.	Rent/Mortgage	$ -
14.	Maintenance	$ -
15.	Utilities	$ -
16.	Technology	$ -
17.	Insurance	$ -
TOTAL OPERATION & PROMOTION		$ -
18.	Books & Instruction	$ -
19.	Travel & Mileage	$ -
20.	General Supplies	$ -
21.	Website/Social Media	$ -
22.	Advertising	$ -
23.	Swag	$ -
24.	Printing	$ -
25.	_____	$
	Total Expenses	$ -
	Total Net	$ -

SHMC Use Only Date Received:	Date Reviewed by Classis: Date Reviewed by SHMC:

APPENDIX C

MISSIONARY CONTINUANCE REQUEST FORM

1. Applicant Status (Please check one): Classis _____ Classis Name:
   Consistory _____ Church Name:

2. Primary Contact Information:

   a. Name:

   b. Email:

   c. Phone (xxx-xxx-xxxx):

3. Person Completing MISSIONARY CONTINUANCE REQUEST FORM and contact email and phone (if different from Primary Contact):

   a. Name:

   b. Email:

   c. Phone (xxx-xxx-xxxx):

4. Proposed Missionary name and contact email and phone:

   a. Name:

   b. Email:

   c. Phone (xxx-xxx-xxxx):

5. Educational background and experience of the proposed missionary (Please attach additional sheets if necessary): *Note: do not complete #'s 15-16 if continuing with the same missionary*.

6. Please also attach at least three documented references.
7. What changes, if any, will be made with the specific duties of the (Please attach additional sheets, if necessary)?

8. What was done for promotion this past year; how does that compare with what was planned; and what is the promotional plan for the upcoming year? Please include specific promotional strategies along with the type of medium used and the frequency of each strategy (Please attach additional sheets, if necessary)?

9. What were the statistics for the past year; what were the target metrics for this past year; and what are the target metrics for the upcoming year? Please attach on a separate sheet an explanation for each variance between the statistics from this past year and the target metrics. Also include what changes will be made due to these variances.

	Past Year	Past Year Target Metrics	Variance	Upcoming Year Target Metrics
# of Bible Study groups operating				
# of Core Groups identified				
Personal contacts made				
Total Bible Study Attendance				
Average Bible Study Attendance per study				
Other:				

10. What is the stewardship report and plan for next year? Please include an explanation on a separate sheet for every variance of 10% or more from previous year actual to previous year budget.

		Previous Year Actual	Previous Year Budget	Variance	Next Year Budget
TOTAL SUPPORT		$ -			
1.	Giving	$ -			
	Requested Classis				
2.	Support	$ -			
	Requested Synod				
3.	Support	$ -			
4.	Congregational Support	$ -			
5.	Other: _____	$ -			
TOTAL MISSIONARY EXPENSES		$ -			
6.	Salary	$ -			
7.	Housing & Utilities	$ -			
8.	Medical Insurance	$ -			
9.	Retirement	$ -			
10.	Term Life Insurance	$ -			
11.	Long-Term Disability	$ -			
12.	Continuing Education	$ -			
T0TAL FACILITY EXPENSES		$ -			
13.	Rent/Mortgage	$ -			
14.	Maintenance	$ -			
15.	Utilities	$ -			
16.	Technology	$ -			
17.	Insurance	$ -			
TOTAL OTHER EXPENSES		$ -			
18.	Books & Instruction	$ -			
19.	Travel & Mileage	$ -			
20.	General Supplies	$ -			
21.	Website/Social Media	$ -			
22.	Advertising	$ -			
23.	Swag	$ -			
24.	Printing	$			
25.	_____	$			
	Total Expenses	$ -			
	Total Net	$ -			

SHMC Use Only	Date Reviewed by Classis:
Date Received:	Date Reviewed by SHMC:

APPENDIX D

MISSIONARY MONTHLY REPORT FORM

1. Missionary:

2. Person completing MISSIONARY MONTHLY REPORT FORM and contact email and phone (if different from Primary Contact):

    a. Name:

    b. Email:

    c. Phone (xxx-xxx-xxxx):

3. Month/Year:

4. Statistics:

	Month
# of Bible Study groups operating	
# of Core Groups identified	
Personal contacts made	
Total Bible Study Attendance	
Average Bible Study Attendance per study	
Other:	

5. What were the highlights from this past month (Please attach additional sheet, if necessary)?

6. What were the challenges from this past month (Please attach additional sheet, if necessary)?

7. What changes, if any, were made this past month (Please attach additional sheet, if necessary)?

8. What changes do you plan on making next month (Please attach additional sheet, if necessary)?

9. Stewardship

		Previous Month Actual	This Year Budget
TOTAL SUPPORT		$ -	
1.	Giving	$ -	
2.	Requested Classis Support	$ -	
3.	Requested Synod Support	$ -	
4.	Congregational Support	$ -	
5.	Other: _____	$ -	
TOTAL MISSIONARY EXPENSES		$ -	
6.	Salary	$ -	
7.	Housing & Utilities	$ -	
8.	Medical Insurance	$ -	
9.	Retirement	$ -	
10.	Term Life Insurance	$ -	
11.	Long-Term Disability	$ -	
12.	Continuing Education	$ -	
T0TAL FACILITY EXPENSES		$ -	
13.	Rent/Mortgage	$ -	
14.	Maintenance	$ -	
15.	Utilities	$ -	
16.	Technology	$ -	
17.	Insurance	$ -	
TOTAL OTHER EXPENSES		$ -	
18.	Books & Instruction	$ -	
19.	Travel & Mileage	$ -	
20.	General Supplies	$ -	
21.	Website/Social Media	$ -	
22.	Advertising	$ -	
23.	Swag	$ -	
24.	Printing	$	
25.	_____	$	
	Total Expenses	$ -	
	Total Net	$ -	

SHMC Use Only Date Received:	Date Reviewed by Classis: Date Reviewed by SHMC:

APPENDIX E

SUGGESTED QUESTIONS FOR CORE GROUPS SEEKING TO BECOME AN RCUS MISSION WORK

The following questions are suggested to be asked by the Classis Committee on Assessment to aid in determining the viability of such a group becoming an RCUS Mission Work. Answers to these questions are to be included in the written report from the Classis Committee on Assessment to the Classis Home Missions Committee.

1. What is the number of "seed" families in the core group?
2. What is the spiritual progress of the group?
    a. What is the extent of their knowledge of the RCUS Creeds and Confessions?
    b. What is the extent to which they agree with RCUS Creeds and Confessions?
    c. Are they willing to subscribe to RCUS Creeds and Confessions?
    d. Have they read the RCUS Constitution?
    e. What is the extent to which they agree with the RCUS Constitution?
    f. Are they willing to subscribe to the RCUS Constitution?
3. Why does the group seek to become an RCUS Mission Work?
4. If the members were part of another church, what were the reasons for leaving that church?
5. How long has the group been together?
6. Is there harmony within the group?
7. Is the request a group effort or is this primarily led by one or more dominant personalities?
8. Have they investigated other Reformed bodies?
9. Are there any theological aberrations in the group?
10. What evangelistic efforts have they undertaken?
11. Does this group come with its own pastor?
12. What are the area demographics?
13. Are there any men who are qualified to serve in office?
14. What is the financial viability of the group? Please use the Budget Form found in Appendix E to help answer this question. If Classis and/or Synod financial support is requested, include those amounts in the budget form.
15. Questions to be asked during individual family visitation:
    a. What does each family know about specific matters of belief and practice of the RCUS (e.g., instruction, confirmation, participation at the Lord's Table, women in office, RCUS Constitution Articles 179-180
    b. Does each family have an evident desire for the salvation of the lost, and a desire to be used to proclaim the gospel?
    c. Does each family have a definite conviction that a mission church should exist, and that they should be a part of it?

APPENDIX F

MISSION WORK APPLICATION

1. Name of core group seeking mission work status:

2. Primary Contact Information:

    a. Name:

    b. Email:

    c. Phone (xxx-xxx-xxxx):

3. Person Completing Mission Work Application and contact email and phone (if different from Primary Contact):

    a. Name:

    b. Email:

    c. Phone (xxx-xxx-xxxx):

4. Is there existing pastoral leadership with this group?

5. If so, what is the name and contact information?

    d. Name:

    e. Email:

    f. Phone (xxx-xxx-xxxx):

6. Educational background and experience of the existing pastoral leadership (Please attach additional sheets if necessary):

7. Is there an interest in the existing pastoral leadership to seek licensing and/or ordination in the RCUS?

8. Please describe how this group was formed, what are the doctrinal distinctives of this group and why this group is interested in pursuing mission work status with the RCUS (Please attach additional sheets).

9. How many members are in this group?
   Adults Children Families

10. Where do you currently meet?

11. Does the group own a building?

12. What is your action plan? Please answer for each topic below (Please attach additional sheet if needed).

a. Preaching (Pulpit supply, summary preaching texts/topics)

b. Teaching (Sunday School Description, Confirmation, Bible Studies)

c. Outreach & Communication (Evangelizing and Promotion Strategies)

d. Hospitality (Promoting and Facilitating Welcoming & Fellowship)

13. What is the first-year proposed budget?

TOTAL SUPPORT		$	-
1.	Core Group Member Giving	$	-
2.	Requested Classis Support	$	-
3.	Requested Synod Support	$	-
4.	Other: _____	$	-
TOTAL PULPIT SUPPLY EXPENSES		$	-
5.	Pulpit Supply	$	-
6.	Organizing Pastor		
7.	Housing & Utilities	$	-
8.	Medical Insurance	$	-
9.	Retirement	$	-
10.	Term Life Insurance	$	-
11.	Long-Term Disability	$	-
12.	Continuing Education	$	-
T0TAL FACILITY EXPENSES		$	-
13.	Rent/Mortgage	$	-
14.	Maintenance	$	-
15.	Utilities	$	-
16.	Technology	$	-
17.	Insurance	$	-
TOTAL GUIDELINES			
18.	Classis Guidelines		
19.	Synod Guidelines		
TOTAL OPERATION & PROMOTION		$	-
18.	Books & Instruction	$	-
19.	Travel & Mileage		
20.	General Supplies	$	-
21.	Website/Social Media	$	-
22.	Advertising	$	-
23.	Swag	$	-
24.	Printing	$	-
25.	Diaconal	$	
26.	Reserve Fund	$	
27.	_____	$	-
	Total Expenses	$	-
	Total Net	$	-

14. What is the requested amount of Classis support for the first year?

15. What is the requested amount of Synod support for the first year?

16. How many years is it anticipated as a mission work before becoming a congregation of the RCUS? *Note: Each mission work may re-apply as a mission work for a maximum of five (5) subsequent years. An extension of two (2) additional years may be granted under extenuating circumstances.*

SHMC Use Only Date Received:	Date Reviewed by Classis: Date Reviewed by SHMC:

APPENDIX G

MISSION WORK MONTHLY REPORT FORM

1. Month/Year of Report:

2. Mission Work Name:

3. Mission Work Location (City, State):

4. Primary Contact Information:

    d. Name:

    e. Email:

    f. Phone (xxx-xxx-xxxx)

5. Person Completing Report Form and contact email and phone (if different from Primary Contact):

6. Statistics

	Previous Month
Average Weekly Worship Attendance	
Average Weekly Worship Visitors	
Average Weekly Giving	
Total Personal Contacts Made	
Total Bible Study Attendance	

	Current
Communicant Members	
Baptized Non-Communicant Members	
Family Units	

7. Please give any observations regarding the reported statistics.

8. Please share 1-3 key highlights of this mission work from this previous month:

9. Please share any challenges faced this previous month:

10. Please summarize the mission work's Action Plan items looking back this past month:

    a. Preaching (Pulpit supply, summary preaching texts/topics)

    b. Teaching (Sunday School Description, Confirmation, Bible Studies)

    c. Outreach & Communication (Evangelizing and Promotion Strategies)

    d. Hospitality (Promoting and Facilitating Welcoming & Fellowship)

SHMC Use Only Date Received:	Date Reviewed by Classis: Date Reviewed by SHMC:

APPENDIX H

MISSION WORK CONTINUANCE REQUEST FORM

1. Mission Work Name:

2. Mission Work Location (City, State):

3. Primary Contact Information:

    a. Name:

    b. Email:

    c. Phone (xxx-xxx-xxxx)

4. Person completing MISSION WORK CONTINUANCE REQUEST FORM and contact email and phone (if different from Primary Contact):

5. What are the statistics from the last 12 months?

	Previous 12 months	Statistic Given in Previous Report (N/A if First Year Report)	Difference
Average Weekly Worship Attendance			
Average Weekly Worship Visitors			
Average Weekly Giving			
Total Personal Contacts Made			
Total Bible Study Attendance			

	12 Months Ago	Current	Difference
Communicant Members			
Baptized Non-Communicant Members			
Family Units			

6. Please give reasons you believe for all statistical differences of 10% or more, both positive and negative:

7. Please share 1-3 key highlights of this mission work over the last 12 months.

8. Please summarize the mission work's Action Plan looking back and looking forward for each of the following (Attach additional sheet if needed):

    a. Preaching (Pulpit supply, summary preaching texts/topics)
    Looking Back Over the Last 12 Months (N/A for first year mission works):

    Looking Ahead to the Next 12 Months:

b. Teaching (Sunday School Description, Confirmation, Bible Studies)
Looking Back Over the Last 12 Months (N/A for first year mission works):

Looking Ahead to the Next 12 Months:

c. Outreach & Communication (Evangelizing and Promotion Strategies)
Looking Back Over the Last 12 Months (N/A for first year mission works):

Looking Ahead to the Next 12 Months:

d. Hospitality (Promoting and Facilitating Welcoming & Fellowship)
Looking Back Over the Last 12 Months (N/A for first year mission works):

Looking Ahead to the Next 12 Months:

9. Stewardship Report

	Previous Year Actual	Current Year Forecast	Variance	Following Year Budget
TOTAL SUPPORT	$ -			
1. Core Group Member Giving	$ -			
2. Requested Classis Support	$ -			
3. Requested Synod Support	$ -			
4. Other: _____	$ -			
TOTAL PULPIT SUPPLY EXPENSES	$ -			
5. Pulpit Supply	$ -			
6. Organizing Pastor				
7. Housing & Utilities	$ -			
8. Medical Insurance	$ -			
9. Retirement	$ -			
10. Term Life Insurance	$ -			
11. Long-Term Disability	$ -			
12. Continuing Education	$ -			
T0TAL FACILITY EXPENSES	$ -			
13. Rent/Mortgage	$ -			
14. Maintenance	$ -			
15. Utilities	$ -			
16. Technology	$ -			
17. Insurance	$ -			
TOTAL GUIDELINES				
18. Classis Guidelines				
19. Synod Guidelines				
TOTAL OPERATION & PROMOTION	$ -			
18. Books & Instruction	$ -			
19. Travel & Mileage				
20. General Supplies	$ -			
21. Website/Social Media	$ -			
22. Advertising	$ -			
23. Swag	$ -			
24. Printing	$ -			
25. Diaconal	$			
26. Reserve Fund	$			
27. _____	$			
Total Expenses	$ -			
Total Net	$ -			

1. What is the requested amount of Classis support for the upcoming year?

2. What is the requested amount of Synod support for the upcoming year?

Date Reviewed by SHMC: *SHMC Use Only* Date Received:	Date Reviewed by Classis: Date Reviewed by SHMC:

APPENDIX I

SUGGESTED ORGANIZING PASTOR/MISSIONARY QUALIFICATIONS

What are the characteristics that Consistories ought to look for in an organizing pastor or missionary? While serving in these roles is certainly the work of ministry, there are some unique characteristics that a successful organizing pastor or missionary will need. The following is adapted from the work of the URCNA.

1. A Passion for the gospel

Every minister should of course have a passion for the gospel, but this feature should especially characterize the preaching and teaching of an organizing pastor or missionary. He should have a deep conviction that the message of Christ's life, death, and resurrection is not only for the conversion of the sinner but also for the sanctification of the saint.

2. Firmly committed to the Three Forms of Unity

An organizing pastor or missionary in the RCUS should have a thorough knowledge and passion for the Three Forms, and who has ability in teaching them to others. Knowledge and commitment to the Three Forms is vital to connect new members to the theological foundation of the RCUS.

3. A Passion for Mission Work

The organizing pastor or missionary must be a man who is not put off by "the day of small things." He must have a missionary mindset and enjoy the challenge of laboring for the establishment of a new church. He should be a man who understands deeply that mission work is spiritual work from beginning to end (1 Cor. 3.6-7).

4. Strong Leadership Skills

The ordinary challenges of an established church are usually intensified in the mission field. The mission work is small, fragile, and underdeveloped. It requires, therefore, a strong leader. The organizing pastor or missionary must be a good communicator and able to work with a wide variety of people. He should be able to handle stress and disappointment.

5. A Vigorous Work Ethic

Although the organizing pastor or missionary may receive proper oversight and plenty of help from his Consistory and mother church, he will inevitably serve in many different roles. The mission work does not yet have the luxury of its own elders, deacons, committees, or secretary. The mission field inevitably requires a lot of hours and thought. It

is imperative, then, that the organizing pastor or missionary be an energetic, self-motivated man who is able to manage his time well.

6. Exceptional Gifts for Teaching and Preaching

The Consistory must be honest and loving in their observation of possible candidates for the work. They should find a man who is, among other things, a strong and gifted preacher and teacher. He must be able to make complicated doctrines clear and easy to grasp. He must also be able to answer with patience and skill the many theological questions people raise. He must be able to help the core group understand why we believe and confess the Word of God as summarized in the Three Form of Unity, why we regulate worship according to Scripture, and why we follow Reformed principles of piety and practice.

7. A Genuine Love for People and a Servant's Heart

Does he initiate conversations and enjoy speaking with people? Does he remember their names and life circumstances? Does he spend time with his congregants? Does he interact well with the youth? These are important observations to make, for the organizing pastor or missionary must genuinely love people and serve those in come in a manner which displays that love.

8. A Man of Prayer

Is this man notably committed to the practice of “continuing in prayer”? An organizing pastor or missionary must view and practice prayer as a means of grace, so that he will not expect God to bless his labors apart from continually asking God for the grace of the Holy Spirit (Heidelberg Catechism, Q&A 116; Luke 11:5-13)

APPENDIX J

SUGGESTED ORGANIZING PASTOR OR MISSIONARY ANALYSIS TOOL

Given the subjective nature of assessing performance factors of individuals for any position or office, the following ratings are for guideline use only and are not to be construed as a conclusive determination of such factors:

1-Does not appear to be capable of meeting performance standards.

2-Appears to be capable of meeting performance standards with additional training.

3-Appears to be capable of meeting performance standards.

4-Appears to be capable of exceeding performance standards.

Candidate: _____

Passion for the Gospel Rating: _____

1. Listen to 1-3 sermons previously delivered by the candidate. Is the Gospel clearly communicated? Is there an evident passion for the Gospel?
2. Examine 1-3 published articles and/or social media posts. Do these convey a clear understanding and passion for the Gospel?

Firmly committed to the Three Forms of Unity Rating: _____

1. In listening to sermons or examining articles/posts, is there a clear commitment to orthodoxy and is consistent with the Three Forms of Unity?
2. Does he clearly convey a thorough knowledge, understanding and commitment to the Three Forms of Unity?

A Passion for Church Planting Rating: _____

1. What is the candidate's vision for the church plant?
2. How will he seek to fulfill that vision and what does he believe is his specific role in doing so?

Strong Leadership Skills Rating: _____

1. How does the candidate describe Biblical leadership related to a church plant?
2. What is his self-assessment of these skills? How do those with whom he has worked assess his performance of these skills?

3. start a new program in a fiscally responsible manner. What would be your key points?

Vigorous Work Ethic Rating: _____

1. What are those tasks that the candidate enjoys? What are those tasks that the candidate dislikes?

2. Have the candidate describe what a typical day would look like as a church planter.
3. How would he overcome the non-enjoyable tasks and ensure completion?

Exceptional Gifts for Teaching and Preaching Rating: _____

1. In listening to sermons and examining articles/posts, does the candidate convey exceptional gifts for teaching and preaching?
2. How would those who have sat under his teaching and preaching describe his teaching and preaching?

Genuine Love for People and a Servant's Heart Rating: _____

1. Have the candidate tell 2-3 stories of his previous ministry. Do these stories exhibit love? Is there humility?
2. How would those who have sat under the candidate's ministry describe his love and servanthood?

Summary

Based on the examination of previous sermons, articles/posts, visits with those who have worked with and under the candidate's ministry and responses to direct questions, how would you define the candidates readiness for becoming a missionary?

The candidate appears to excel in these areas:

_____

_____

The candidate appears to be capable in these areas:

_____

_____

The candidate needs additional training in these areas:

_____

_____

The candidate appears to lack these necessary attributes:

_____

_____

APPENDIX K

POST DISCONTINUANCE OF A MISSION WORK EVALUATION

1. Name of Discontinued Mission Work:

2. Discontinued Mission Work Location (City, State):

3. Person Completing Evaluation:

    a. Name:

    b. Email:

    c. Phone (xxx-xxx-xxxx)

4. What went well with the process of transitioning from a core group into a mission work?

5. What went well during the period in which the core group was identified as a mission work?

6. According to members of the discontinued mission work, what are the reasons that the mission work did not attain recognition as a congregation of the RCUS?

7. According to the overseeing Consistory, what are the reasons that the mission work did not attain recognition as a congregation of the RCUS?

8. According to the CHMC, what are the reasons that the mission work did not attain recognition as a congregation of the RCUS?

9. Based on the answers in #'s 4-8, what advice would the CHMC give to future mission works?

10. Other comments or observations: