

24 October 2009

Dear brothers and sisters,

Greetings in the name of the risen Lord!

We thank you for your continued interest and prayerful support as we work through the issues of restructuring our denomination.

Synod 2009 agreed to

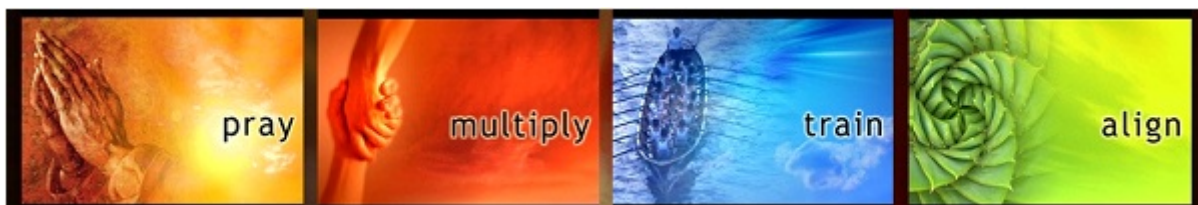
To encourage Sessions and Classes to review Synod's decisions and to liaise with the Ministry Formation Workgroup during the implementation of the new structure during the next triennium. [Day 5, Art 41.4]

We especially thank all those who communicated with us since the last Synod, sending feedback about Synod's decisions. We were so encouraged to see the level of engagement that came from classes, individuals and churches. Your responses have been a great blessing to us!

At the outset we want to say very clearly that

1. The Fourfold Task is not descriptive of everything the church is called to do and to be. The Fourfold Task is not itself 'the main thing'. The Fourfold Task is really a number of values, the key points that churches should keep in mind as they serve God's mission in the world;
2. We retain and affirm our enduring commitment to our confessional heritage. We retain a high view of preaching, teaching, and commitment to pastoral care. That these are not specifically mentioned in the Fourfold Task does not mean they are devalued or moved away from the central position they rightly have. Our commitment to these central realities is a given; and
3. We are not seeking a "Fourfold Structure" – we are not seeking to impose the Fourfold Task on the church either denominationally or locally. We recognise that this impression may have been created, and we are sorry if this has been confusing. The Fourfold Task are guiding values as we pursue our mission and calling.

The main thing we need to focus on, denominationally and locally, is to be healthy churches serving God's mission (see diagram below). We are here to do all that God has called us to do until the time of our Saviour's return. He promises to be with us as we follow his call to make disciples of all nations, baptising them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything he has commanded us (see Matt 28:19-20)



We have noted the feedback re: the 'Align' workgroup. Instead of one large workgroup we have simplified things so we now have three main 'resourcing and support' workgroups, enabling current committees to work closely together and draw themselves around the CRCA's mission. The three workgroups are

- Finance (Board of Management, MAMA, Superannuation)
- Communications (Publishing, Internet, Yearbook, Word of Salvation)
- Governance (SIC, Ecumenical Relations, Safe Church)

In doing this, we recognise that in time these will need further definition and development. For now, these groups can begin to work together, and the Ministry Formation Workgroup will encourage them in their collaboration.

Synod 2009 did establish the two primary workgroups of "Multiply" and "Train". These are core areas of focus for our churches, and with a few minor changes, we believe these groups are ready to commence their work, and that the churches are keen to see this happen. The attached document outlines the composition of the workgroups and their mandates. We would take this opportunity to remind all committees and workgroups that their mandates need to work toward the missional goals outlined by Synod. We take great comfort from the reality that as we equip all God's people for their works of service He will continue to lead us toward maturity and the whole measure of the fullness of Christ (Eph 4:12-13).

The Ministry Formation Workgroup is your servant. We simply seek to do what we can to assist local churches and denominational structures to continuously evaluate their effectiveness, and how we can do what we do even better (Acts 20:17-18). Our prayer in all of this is that together we might increasingly be healthy churches serving God's mission.

We are committed to assisting local churches in their calling, and so we are eager to hear from you as to how we may assist your church or committee as we continually reform in order to bring others to Christ.

Serving together under Christ,

Ministry Formation Workgroup

Ministry Formation Diagram

The diagram gives the best overall perspective of the work of ministry formation as it embraces the Fourfold Task, and the restructure alignment requires.



Please note the following:

- The ongoing work of ministry formation is a channelling and focussing process
- Its single purpose is to serve local churches in their embrace of God's mission
- The dynamic is directional and purposeful: our aim is greater effectiveness for local churches in God's mission
- All denominational effort finds its rallying point in moving local churches becoming healthy and deeper into God's mission

“Multiply” Workgroup

Guiding Principle:

The Multiply Workgroup will work alongside those subgroups identified as multiplication subgroups with a view to empowering them to be effective in their respective areas of multiplication.

Chart:



Mandate:

1. To be made up of representatives from each of the four subgroups plus a chairperson.
2. To coordinate all activities within this “platform” to ensure alignment with the denominational multiplication vision.
3. To provide a stimulus to prayer for each multiply subgroup as to the unique work of each group as well as the multiplication task of all the multiply subgroups.
4. To assist and support each multiply subgroup in understanding its role within the fourfold task.
5. To stimulate each multiply subgroup as to how the 2nd Task can be implemented in their specific area of responsibility.
6. To assist multiply subgroups to develop where possible aligned strategies to help integrate and coordinate their work with other subgroups.
7. To provide an environment in which each subgroup can test their vision, goals and strategies so as to ensure their direction remains aligned with the multiply goals and the other subgroups.
8. To help multiply subgroups identify areas of overlap so where desired there can be cooperation in the work, and also to avoid duplication.

Church Planting Taskforce

Mandate:

1. To research different church planting movements.
2. To promote missions with a particular focus on church planting throughout our denomination as suggested by the Ministry Formation Workgroup:
 - i. to facilitate an advisory service to help congregations meet the opportunities for mission and provide them with support and resources to undertake church planting;
 - ii. to undertake research on:
 - a. the effectiveness of multiplying congregations;
 - b. models of church reinvigoration and church planting;
 - c. the financial development of congregations;
 - d. the base numbers (where we start) and goal numbers (what we're aiming for) of the mission;
 - e. the areas (geographical and sociological) where we are not reaching the community;
 - f. where we have the most effective outreach;
 - iii. to suggest strategies for obtaining access to property for use for church planting and for church planters, in particular the strategy of leasing buildings in shopping centres for ministry;
 - iv. to facilitate communications systems to allow mission material (particularly church planting material) to be shared easily;
 - v. to prepare materials and strategies to assist individuals and congregations as they reach out to the unchurched, particularly in the workplace;
 - vi. to promote an increase in the level of sacrificial giving to pay for increased mission activity at the local church level, and to contribute more to world mission.
3. To review the current mandate in light of the new structure.

Solomon Islands

Synod 1997 adopted the following resolutions for the Solomon Islands:

1. To endorse provisionally the Solomon Islands as a ministry opportunity for the CRCA.
2. To endorse the establishment of the SIW.
3. To establish a suitable structure for support, accountability, and dispute settling in the Solomon Islands.
4. To encourage ongoing support for short term SWIM mission teams, also to the Solomon Islands.

Mandate:

To develop a mandate for the Solomon Islands Workgroup ensuring alignment with the vision and theological direction of the CRCA.

World Development & Relief**Mandate:**

1. To receive and administer the offerings and contributions donated by local churches, individual members of the CRCA and church related organisations and others for the relief and rehabilitation of those in need, nationally or internationally. This relief is to be, where possible, accompanied by the ministry of the Word.
2. To make emergency appeals to the churches and other contributors when circumstances call for this action.
3. To collect, store and forward items that may be used for relief purposes, such as clothing, tools, building materials, food, medical supplies, etc.
4. To supervise and control such permanent and rehabilitation projects as are approved by successive synods.
5. To appoint and supervise sub-committees for specialised relief projects, such as refugee resettlement.
7. To review the current mandate in light of the revised structure.

G.O.S.P.E.L.**Mandate:**

To develop a mandate for G.O.S.P.E.L., ensuring alignment with the vision and theological direction of the CRCA.

“Train” Workgroup

Guiding Principles:

1. A clearly defined discipleship / training pathway for every local church.
2. A common discipleship and training curriculum with ability to indigenise to local congregations.

Chart:



Mandate:

1. To be made up of representatives from each of the four sub-groups plus a chairperson.
2. To coordinate all activities within this “platform” to ensure alignment with the denominational training and discipleship vision.
3. To encourage and empower whole of life discipleship and life long learning for training and discipleship within the denomination.
4. To encourage and empower a more unified approach to discipleship and training for the local church, classis and denomination.
5. To seek out the best training and discipleship resources from a reformational perspective.

Children & Youth

Current Committee: Reformed Churches Youth Committee (RCYC):

Mandate:

To help churches nurture and train children, youth and their leaders to be disciples of Christ who are actively involved in his mission:

1. To develop a learning for life curriculum / model that is integrated through 4-25 year olds;
2. To model, teach, mentor and empower children and youth in prayer, Bible reading and relationship with God.
3. To work with families to model church as a family of families in discipling children and youth.
4. To identify gifted leaders and see them engaged in a discipleship/training process.

5. To assess and align committee mandate (Decision Book, Appendix “Youth Working Manual”).
6. Re Children’s Worker (ages 0-12): To assess Children’s Worker mandate with Interim Worker, ChildSafe, Families, Creche, Gems, Cadets, Junior Youth.
7. Re Youth Worker (ages 12-25): To assess and realign mandate, AGs, SGs, Mentoring, Families, Church Education, Youth Connection, Convention, Target 21, You Turn, Young Adults, Gap Year, Internships, MTS, CBTE levels 1-2.

Leadership Development

New Initiative: To encourage the implementation of a discipleship / training pathway for leaders in the local church for them to engage in Christ’s mission.

Mandate:

1. To provide resources, networks, environments and accountability for training leaders
2. To provide assessment methods and criteria for effective leadership training
3. To provide mentoring and guidance of local church members towards engagement in mission and ministry:
 - a. Leaders: e.g., Elders, Deacons, Pastoral workers, Evangelists, Administrators, etc, – focus on training leaders of leaders.
 - b. Environments: e.g., Classis training, leadership conference, session training, in service.
 - c. Networks: e.g., MF website / blog, Classis, CBTE training.
 - d. Resources: e.g., RTC Preaching Workshop, Distance Learning, CBTE oversight and delivery, Fan the Flame.
 - e. Accountabilities: e.g., Church Council / Session, Church Visitation Questions, MTC.

Pastor Church Relations

Current Committee: Pastor Church Relations

Mandate:

(Cf: Decision Book Appendix *Guidelines for the Pastor Church Relations Committee* as adopted by Synod 1988, Art 39.2.3)

1. To offer advice and information in the due processes of calling.
2. To serve as liaison body when difficulties arise and when a change of minister is sought and is desirable.
3. To facilitate the denomination’s Pastoral Care Programme.

Candidacy

Current Committees: Vicariate, RTC Deputies

To identify, train and mentor people for ordained ministry serving in the mission of Christ in the CRCA.

Mandate:

1. To give oversight of quality and qualifications for ordained ministry in CRCA.
2. To give oversight and encouragement of all potential candidates in CRCA.
3. Deputies:
 - a. To be involved in monitoring and oversight of the quality of pathways into candidacy:
 - i. to meet with RTC faculty;
 - ii. to assess CBTE material with faculty;
 - iii. to assess other courses with faculty.
 - b. To be involved in the setting of entrance standards for candidacy in the CRCA.
 - c. To review the old mandate in light of the new structure (Decision Book, "Appendix RTC").
4. Candidacy:
 - a. To monitor and encourage potential candidates:
 - b. having a rep from each classis/state;
 - c. meet once per year;
 - d. networking ASAP.
 - e. To review the old mandate in light of the new structure.