

**Policy and Guidelines
Mobilizing for Mission
March, 2008**

The Mobilizing for Mission fund exists for the purpose of preparing and provisioning the people and churches of the Regional Synod of Canada for mission. It supports our Mobilizing for Mission Vision (see page 5). Monies for these grants are funded by donations of the churches and individuals of the Regional Synod of Canada. See our website for making donations. (www.reformed-church.com)

It supports initiatives related to leadership, discipleship, mission, congregational revitalization, and church planting with the following guidelines. All monies received will only be used for these purposes and must be disbursed in accordance with the classification and will follow general guidelines. .

1. Donations may be allocated to a specific area of mobilizing for mission and will only be used in the area to which it was designated.
2. Funding requests will only be approved subject to the actual monies available.
3. Requests will only be considered upon completion of the appropriate application forms and required attachments. Budgets for the projects must be included, as well as financial statements for the church.

All applications for funds, whether from individuals or churches, must have written approval from a local consistory (unless it is a classis or synod initiative), a classis, and the Regional Synod Church Planting and Development Commission and the Regional Synod Executive Committee.

Grants will support initiatives which will also be funded in part by the parties requesting the grants.

Funding for periods of more than one year require submission of an annual report on the progress of the project or ministry. Failure to provide a report will result in a freeze on further distribution of monies, regardless of previous approval.

Any changes to the funding classifications and amounts as listed below must be approved by the Regional Synod Church Planting and Development Commission (CPD) and the Regional Synod Executive Committee.

Note: Mobilizing for mission replaces the Canadian Church Growth Fund in 2008, but all monies contributed to the CCGF in the past will be distributed only within CCGF guidelines. All monies donated to the Canadian Church Growth Fund will be considered as Mobilizing for Mission contributions.

The following projects and proposals will be considered. Each grant classification has a specific application form which can be downloaded from the RSC website.

Leadership Development

Pastor Sabbatical Grants (PSG)

To encourage and assist the pastoral and congregational revitalization, the Regional Synod of Canada (RSC), the RSC has established Pastor Sabbatical. These grants will be awarded up to a maximum of \$10,000. Applications must demonstrate clearly how the Sabbatical is expected to lead to renewal for the pastor and the congregation.

Sabbaticals should be for a period of 2 to 4 months. Applications will be made by the pastor and the consistory on the prescribed forms. Classis approval will also be required. We will consider only grant requests for which no funding has been provided by another body or funding source.

Grants will only be considered when the Pastor has served in his/her current church for at least five years and any previous grants have not been funded in the past five years.

Leadership and Discipleship Initiative Grants (LDIG)

The purpose of these grants is to encourage churches to provide a process by which the laity, including the leadership, is able to grow in faith and to be empowered for serving in the kingdom of God.

While the current focus is on vantagepoint3 materials, presented as Servants for the Harvest in the RSC, other materials and processes will be considered if requested. Approval of such materials will be made by the CPD commission, in consultation with our classes discipleship committees and leaders.

Applications must indicate the number of participants committed to the process. Grants over a three-year period of time will not exceed \$7,000 per church and they will not exceed more than 70% of the total cost.

The first year of the process focuses on a person's understanding of God themselves and what God wants them to do for him in their lives. The following years focus more on leadership development. The overall focus is on character development skill enhancement and leadership development.

Discipleship

Laity Coached Revitalizing Network Grants (LCRNG)

These grants are to support Coached Revitalizing Networks for laity affinity groups, based on shared interests – ministries such as youth ministry leadership, or other areas of affinity. The focus on these groups is on transformational learning, character development and personal spiritual growth. Since these groups are not eligible for a Lily Foundation funding they are eligible for funding by the Regional Synod. Grants are given to cover costs and each grant will not exceed \$4,000. Other criteria for these grants are found in the specific guideline section. Note: Networks for clergy are eligible for Lily Funding, as outlined in the RCA website. (www.rca.org)

Small Group Ministry Grants

Grants of up to \$500 will be awarded to local churches for the promotion, development and resourcing of small group ministries. The focus of the small groups is to focus on spiritual development, mutual accountability, and outreach. Grants will also be awarded up to \$1,000 to individual classis for the purpose of promoting and educating churches and leaders about small-group ministries.

Mission

Synod-wide Mission Initiative Grants (SWMIG)

These grants are for a major mission initiative proposed by a local church or a classis, and are awarded for a total of \$100,000 to be disbursed over a period of five years. Only one of these grants will be active at any one time, unless special funding sources are given for other initiatives.

These grants are to support ministry of an outreach nature which includes a spiritual and other support. Applications must indicate clearly how they will extend the kingdom of God.

Short Term Mission Grants (STMG)

Grants up to \$1,000 will be awarded to individuals to support their involvement in short term mission projects. The projects should include RCA individuals as a group, whether from a church, a classis, or on a Synod wide basis. Individuals will be required to raise at least 50% of their total financial need.

Local Congregation Outreach Initiative Grants (OIG)

Grants up to \$5,000 will be given to local churches to develop local outreach initiatives. The focus of these initiatives is to involve the local church constituency in actual outreach, hands-on mission work. These initiatives are to be undertaken by a church as

an outreach ministry in its local setting, in which the members of the church work together as a group.

Revitalization

Strategic Planning and Visioning Grants (SPVG)

Grants up to \$2,000 per church will be awarded to churches which undertake an intentional vision casting process either through Outreach Canada or coaching by either our Executive Secretary or other RCA trained coaches. Other proposals will be considered. Planning must result in actual action steps and goals, and reporting of the implementation of these steps and goals will be reported for a period of three years after completion of the strategic planning.

Ministry Mobilization Grants (MMG)

These grants are awarded to congregations seeking to revitalize their Ministry by developing new ministry areas to replace or add to its current Ministry efforts. These grants are awarded for a three year period, the total not to exceed \$40,000 over the three years. These ministry areas are to be of a significant nature which either expands or redirects the specific Ministry of local church.

Multiplication (New Church Development or NCD)

These grants are to be used for the starting of an RSC Ministry where no Ministry currently exists this may be defined by location or by the unique nature of the work to be done. Grants are initially for a three year period with the option of two additional one-year extensions. Total amount awarded will be \$90,000 as follows - \$30,000 in Year 1, \$24,000 in Year 2 and \$18,000 in Year 3, with the potential of \$12,000 in the Year 4 and \$6,000 in the Year 5.

Application forms and additional Criteria for each of the above grants are found in the pages below.

Mobilizing for **MISSION** Reformed Church in Canada

The Regional Synod of Canada is called by God to mobilize the classes, churches, pastoral leadership, and laity into mission.

Mobilizing for Mission will help transform God's call and our dreams into reality. We mobilize the church by preparing the church and providing resources for mission. Mission is responding to Christ's call to "Go and make disciples."

It includes:

- Deepening our own faith and commitment.
- Sharing the message of God in word and deed.
- Reaching out in love both locally and abroad.

Mobilizing for Mission will take many forms:

- Introducing a new discipleship process.
- Beginning a new church ministry.
- Planting a new church.
- Developing and sending out leaders.
- Providing people with opportunities to engage in mission.

Mission does not begin with what we do. Mission begins with changed hearts, and with people who want to serve God, glorify His name, and build His kingdom. Only then can we hear God's call as we cast vision and discern how and where we will do mission

Pastor Sabbatical Grants (PSG)

A Sabbatical for the Pastor

(rca.org)

To be successful, renewal and revitalization require congregation-wide initiatives led by consistories and other leadership groups within the church. But renewal rarely begins that way; renewal of a congregation most often blossoms from the renewal of a single person—the pastor. And many times, that personal renewal is fostered by a sabbatical.

What is a sabbatical? A sabbatical is a time to focus in-depth on things that are important to a person's work and life with the church. Sabbaticals for pastors are highly recommended in order to renew the calling and creativity of our spiritual leaders. Such sabbaticals should include intentional times for reflection, rekindling the spirit, and deepening spiritual life and family relationships.

Why should we give our pastor a sabbatical? A congregation should arrange for a pastor's sabbatical because it's biblical, and because both the pastor and the church need it. The sabbatical year practiced by the Hebrew people was the final year in a cycle of seven years (Leviticus 25:3-4). It was also a time when the Hebrew people had the opportunity to renew their trust in God as the provider of all of their needs, even during the time when they did not labor.

After a pastor has served a congregation for five years or more, they have a tendency to take God and one another for granted, often falling into frustrating patterns rather than finding a faithful and creative future. A sabbatical for the pastor can provide time to focus on reading, writing, preaching, and prayer, and forces members to exercise their ministries for the good of one another and the gospel.

How does the congregation benefit? Roy Oswald says, "Granting a sabbatical leave to a pastor becomes a great way for congregants to once again claim certain roles within a congregation that correspond with the gifts they have been given by God."

RSC Grants

To encourage and assist the pastoral and congregational revitalization, the Regional Synod of Canada (RSC), has established Pastor Sabbatical Grants to be funded by Mobilizing for Mission (MFM). These grants will be awarded up to a maximum of \$10,000. Applications must demonstrate clearly how the Sabbatical is expected to lead to renewal for the pastor and the congregation.

Sabbaticals should be for a period of 2 to 4 months. Applications will be made by the pastor and the consistory on the prescribed forms. Classis approval will also be required. We will consider only grant requests for which no other grants have been received.

Grants will only be considered when the Pastor has served in his/her current church for at least five years and previous grants have not been funded in the past five years. Both the church and the pastor agree that they intend to continue their relationship for two years following the Sabbatical. If both parties agree to end the relationship earlier, approval from the Classis and Regional Synod will be required.