2011 WCRC STRATEGIC PLAN

Envisioning the WCRC Rooted in Communion and Justice

1. Introduction

As Reformed Christians, we believe that we have been called by the triune God into a new fellowship, the World Communion of Reformed Churches (WCRC) – for a purpose. God has united us in a global Reformed family to be a living expression of the “unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace” (Eph 4.3) in order to share in God’s mission in the world.

At this time as we reflect on our strategic plan for the World Communion of Reformed Churches for the next six years, we pledge ourselves and our churches to be bonded together in communion and God’s justice in the world, as we covenant together for justice in the economy and the earth. As a family of Reformed Christians we are committed to demonstrate through our life together the unity that God intends for all humankind. We are committed to live out this reality not for ourselves alone, but rather for the whole created order as a united fellowship that exists be a living witness to God’s intention of justice, in all of its dimensions, for our world.

We believe in God, Creator and Sustainer of all life, who calls us as partners in the creation and redemption of the world. The WCRC finds itself in a new/renewed movement, with a rich heritage and facing critical challenges not only financially but also in terms of climate change, global injustices and needing spiritual renewal. The WCRC is called to prepare new wineskins into which the promised new wealth of our communion can expand. The following strategic plan with its emphasis on mission, communion, justice, theology and ecumenical engagement outlines where we are and where we hope to go as a communion.

2. Process

2.1. Following the birth of the WCRC in Grand Rapids, a strategic planning sub-committee of the Executive Committee was set up to discern the mandates of the WCRC from the UGC and to develop the following:

2.1.1. A vision and mission statement together with the core values of the organization.

2.1.2. A Strategic Plan with priorities has been established, among other things, using the following process:

2.1.2.1. A SWOT analysis that enables stakeholders to build on the organization’s strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats.

2.1.2.2. Examining the organization’s nature and self-description, including organizational structure.

2.1.2.3. Looking at the major programme areas, goals, implementation mechanisms, methodologies, and (broad) expected outcomes/impact.

2.1.2.4. Drawing a budget, resourcing requirements and key elements for its fundraising strategy, including existing partners and new strategies.
2.2. The Strategic Planning committee, with the facilitation of Omega Bula, met in Geneva in November 2010 to work together with the responses of member churches, regional councils, strategic partners, executive committee members and staff to questionnaires about the purpose and calling of the WCRC. In addition the committee reflected on the UGC Policy Committee Report, Public Issues Committee Report, the Constitution, and performed a SWOT analysis (Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats) of the WCRC and addressed the identified threats and weaknesses. Staff also contributed their programmatic interpretations of the Grand Rapids Policy Report.

2.3. Below is a statement of: the WCRC’s vision and mission; an affirmation of the values guiding the WCRC’s work; and presents options for the proposed strategy for engaging our mission sustainably and inspiring, towards the next General Council in 2017.

The appendices contain

- a SWOT (Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats) analysis of the WCRC,
- a financial forecast to inform the plan,
- a synthesis of emerging consensus gleaned from the questionnaire responses.

Throughout the report, “the WCRC” refers to the WCRC as a whole, its members, governing body, and staff, i.e. the WCRC in its entirety. Its component parts will be named or described as such, e.g. member churches, Secretariat, regional councils, etc.

3. Vision

To live out the Communion of Reformed Churches, participating in God’s mission, that all may experience the fullness of life in Jesus Christ.

4. Mission

Drawing on the heritage of the Reformed confessions as a gift for the renewal of the whole church, the World Communion of Reformed Churches is committed to communion and justice and, in partnership with other ecumenical bodies and organizations, we participate in God’s mission in the world as we proclaim the saving grace and love of our Triune God by mutually working for: Christian unity and renewal in worship, theology and spirituality; justice; eradication of poverty; building right relations; integrity of creation; interfaith relations; reconciliation, healing, peace and the transformation of both churches and society.

5. Values

In a spirit of openness and transparency, and speaking the truth in love to ourselves and the world, we affirm the values described in Article IV of the WCRC Constitution:

A. The World Communion of Reformed Churches strives to demonstrate and live the oneness in Christ we profess, to carry out its ministry in ways that enable all member churches to share their gifts, and to honour and be committed to God’s saving purposes for the transformation of the world. The World Communion of Reformed Churches serves its members with love and care, encouraging their mutual support and nurture of one another.

B. The World Communion of Reformed Churches in its order and actions is called to respect, defend, and advance the dignity of every person. In Jesus Christ all human differences must lose their power to divide. No one shall be disadvantaged for, among other reasons, race, ethnicity, or gender, and no individual or church may claim or exercise dominance over another.
C. The World Communion of Reformed Churches embraces God’s covenant promises for the redemption, restoration and renewal of the whole creation through Jesus Christ. In doing so, it affirms the biblical calling of the members to recognize the gift of baptism in one another, and the call to be unified in ministry, and together to bear witness to God’s justice and peace and to the integrity of creation.

6. Key directions

6.1. The WCRC aims, by the end of 2017, to be known as a Communion that unites Reformed churches in God’s mission in the world. Our internal relationships will evidence the oneness for which Jesus prayed. The WCRC will have significantly contributed to the world church’s awareness of and ability to address theologically and practically, issues of justice, equality, reconciliation and peace-building. The WCRC will be the place to go for theological and practical resources on these issues. The WCRC will be an interwoven network committed to sharing the gospel of Jesus Christ with the world, and will be widely acknowledged as an effective convener of significant training and resourcing for leaders and future leaders so that they may contribute theologically and practically to the mission of the member churches. The core of the network will be sustainable with core functions funded with revenue from member churches. The WCRC, at every level, embarks on this journey using the following key directions (not in rank order):

6.1.1. Mission

The WCRC is called into God’s holistic mission and commissioned to seek new ways of engaging in mission. As a communion, the WCRC strengthens doing mission in unity and stimulates reflections that make our churches’ mission effective and relevant to the 21st century. The call to proclaim the saving grace and love of the triune God and to be God’s agents of transformation in the world places mission at the heart of everything the WCRC and its member churches do.

6.1.2. Communion

The WCRC is deeply committed to the life of the whole Communion. As a Communion the WCRC is based on the understanding of koinonia. Jesus Christ has revealed that koinonia is the reality of the participation of his sisters and brothers in his body. This reality is clearly visible in our life when we share bread and wine at Christ’s table, when in fact we share the body and blood of Christ, and when through this koinonia “all kinds of injustice, racism, separation and lack of freedom are radically challenged”. Therefore the WCRC affirms that there can be no communion without justice and no justice without communion. Any separation between the call to communion and the commitment to justice would ignore the basis of koinonia. And so we affirm the gifts of unity in Christ through a full communion where all of our churches recognize each other’s baptism, invite one another to the table, and affirm the integrity of one another’s ministry.

6.1.3. Justice

The WCRC will actively engage in biblically and theologically grounded justice and be aware of its implications. This includes building right relations among all people, justice in the economy and the earth, economic justice, eradication of poverty, gender justice, integrity of creation, reconciliation, interfaith engagement, healing, and working towards the transformation of both churches and society. The theological self-understanding of who we are as a Communion

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1 Lima text on Baptism, Eucharist and Ministry
undergirds the commitment to being a prophetic voice for justice on the part of the WCRC and its member churches and regional councils.

6.1.4. Theology

The WCRC envisages bringing together seminaries, theologians, leaders and potential leaders from different contexts, to find, within and beyond the WCRC, fresh understandings of Reformed theology and new expressions of Reformed identity, doing what we can together, and drawing on the resources of theological centres and individuals. The WCRC intends to knead its values and beliefs into the dough of the church, doing contextual theology to reflect current realities.

6.1.5. Ecumenical Engagement

Called to be part of God’s wider family working with others in response to the line in the high priestly prayer “… that they may be one”, the WCRC is committed to working closely with other ecumenical bodies, as well as in commissions and dialogues with other world communions as expressions of this key direction. Our understanding of being in communion is both for the Reformed family and for the whole church. To be Reformed is to be ecumenical; therefore the WCRC will continue to be engaged actively in endeavours that foster Christian unity and ecumenical mission.

7. Our renewed way of working (methodologies)

7.1. In working towards our key directions we will use fresh methodologies to serve the whole communion: regional bodies, national churches, and with a particular eye to relating to local congregations. The aim is to incarnate our beliefs, so that our methodologies are the expressions of our values.

Young people are key in the life of the World Communion of Reformed Churches. The new way of working places youth at the heart of each commitment of the WCRC. This will be particularly visible in the areas of leadership development, capacity building and communications. In all the networking, regional work, consultations, partnership fund and other engagements of the WCRC the question will always be raised in terms of the role of young people and the impact on youth.

The WCRC intends to engage in a new way of working. The WCRC will give a primary emphasis to working closely with regional councils and to networking in order to build capacity in member churches and the whole Communion.

Recognizing the distinctive contribution we bring as the WCRC, we will work, where possible, with our ecumenical partners both in our current programmes and in establishing new ones.

7.1.1. Networking

Networking is vital for effective communication, mutual enrichment, and for equipping and empowering local churches and the regional councils; all of which is required if we are to become a true Communion. Resources of member churches can be made available to the whole. The WCRC secretariat can serve as a clearing house that puts regions and member churches in touch with each other. The staff of the global secretariat should contribute in broad programmatic areas. The WCRC will develop and use the communication and networking capacities of the global secretariat and regional councils to engage in such a way that the WCRC resources go to both member churches and through them to their local congregations.
Networking is necessary with relevant offices of member churches, regional councils, and partners as reflection opportunities, consultations and actions are organized around the various key directions including

a) in consultation with regional councils, engaging them in specific tasks for which they are responsible. This may include both resourcing and implementation.

b) helping to develop dialogue opportunities or multiple discussion partner opportunities for member churches. For example the covenanting for justice community developed between the Uniting Reformed Church of Southern Africa (URCSA) and the Evangelische Reformierte Kirche (ERK) in Germany.

7.1.2. Leadership development

Leadership development is essential for integrating the values, learnings and work of the Communion into the life of the church, and so to build the capacity of the member churches as well as the whole Communion. This is also an important element in sourcing theological, advocacy and other practical resources we need to relate to each other. As a Communion, the WCRC will mature by incarnating the values it espouses.

Developing the leadership of the WCRC includes accompaniment and continued development of existing leaders, developing mentoring and other servant leadership instincts in them, while paying attention to youth empowerment, gender justice, and the inclusion of those with disabilities. Development of leaders involves inspiring leaders with vision to engage with and learn from the broader ecumenical movement, while integrating the mission and values of the WCRC into all that they do.

a) Leadership development and capacity building instruments include: Workshops, internships, scholarships, and participation in programmes such as the Global Institute of Theology (GIT) that build the capacity of young people (age 30 and under).

b) Opportunities for new young leaders for the WCRC and its members to develop global ecumenical perspectives on issues, and to encourage integration of young leaders into member-church decision making structures as well as their nomination to international delegations or elected positions.

c) Developing the capacity of member churches to create and manage life-giving projects, implement, monitor and report them to insure impact. One instrument for this is the Reformed Churches Partnership Fund. Another is the collaboration with the Fonds d’Aide au Protestantisme (FAP) in Geneva. In these projects, young people will have a priority.

7.1.3. Regional engagement and empowerment

"Regional councils should be the locus of much of the WCRC’s work, and thus the Executive Committee and staff should develop methods for empowering regional councils." (Policy Committee Report, p.4) Regional engagement and empowerment is essential to building the theological groundwork and implementing the WCRC vision, mission and actions (that includes reflection and aspirations for action) in order to embed the WCRC experience in the real experience and context of regions. Efforts will be made to ensure regions are adequately funded to participate in the whole. Regions will be encouraged to establish regional councils where they don’t exist. Where possible, this should be done in partnership. There are also particular needs, resources and skills in the regions that can be mutually enriching. We need a process of dialogue among Executive Committee, staff and the regions in living out the communion.

7.1.4. Sharing resources & ensuring adequate funding of the whole
To strengthen our communion, we need to ensure that all are contributing, and that resources are shared equitably and invested well: fruitfully and ethically. This includes financial, human and other resources. While the resources exist for the WCRC to be the Communion God wants us to be, resources need to be identified and accessed for the life and work of the Communion. As a family the WCRC needs to be sharing resources with each other, and to be creating a culture of sharing. "Where our treasure is, our heart will be also", therefore every part of the Communion should be strongly encouraged to contribute financially as well as in other valuable ways.

7.1.5. Communication

The WCRC's ability to live out God's mission, true communion and justice, and to develop leaders, networks, regions and sharing, requires us to develop communication channels and reflexes. These need not all be centralized, and indeed must not be exclusively dependent on the secretariat. The whole Communion in every part of the globe receives its life and energy from God, and so each part has something to offer, something to share with, and something to receive from, the rest of the body. The church has the opportunity to use new and developing technologies to communicate. The WCRC will invest in doing this well, being aware that not all have the same access to these technologies.

Communicating the WCRC’s vision, mission and key directions, and mobilizing involvement in the Communion’s commitments and relationships is important. There is need to use electronically based social media, conventional media, and face-to-face encounters at the regional and global levels to:

1. Make visible the key five directions
2. Make visible the opportunity for youth to be involved at the level of the regions and in member church activities related to the five key directions.
3. Attract the support of new donors and retain the commitment of current donors interested in supporting the vision, mission and key directions of the WCRC.

7.1.6. Partnership

The WCRC will strengthen partnership both as methodology and as engagement in our work. We are not alone. The WCRC values its partnership with church, ecumenical and mission bodies as well as movements with which it shares common aims and commitments. This includes ecumenical and social justice movements working with common values and goals with the WCRC. We understand that we are better together. The WCRC therefore builds effective relationships with our ecumenical and regional partners and institutions. The WCRC also builds working relationships around thematic issues (e.g. mission, church renewal, water, food, trade, justice, communications, and other critical issues facing communities.) In attempting anything new, we will first explore the possibility of partnership.

Partnerships will empower the WCRC member churches and help foster creative ways of sharing resources for mission, and identifying strategic alliances with other agencies, particularly for its programmatic work, that strives to express its identity as a World Communion of Reformed Churches in mission. This includes working with the Ecumenical Disabilities Advocacy Network (EDAN) to ensure that the WCRC and its member churches take into account persons of disability and disability issues in all its endeavours.

8. Programme Priorities

8.1. The challenge of prioritizing
The UGC gave many programme suggestions for the WCRC. We need to focus on what the organization as a whole can do and do well within our resources. The programmatic priorities outlined here are linked with the five strategic directions identified in the Strategic Planning process. This is what gives shape to the priorities identified. The priorities listed here take into account what is possible to be facilitated through the WCRC Secretariat working with the regions given human and financial resources available.

Member churches will be able to pick up some of the programmes not covered here. The WCRC Secretariat will appreciate receiving information from member churches that are engaged in these, and will help disseminate such information. The General Secretary’s office will from time to time review actions mandated by the General Council which are not included in these priorities and where possibilities exist, lift them up for some churches to act on, or bring them to the Executive Committee for further policy decisions.

8.2. The programme priorities

Inspired by this vision and mission, and in tune with the key directions and methodologies outlined here, the WCRC has adopted the programme priorities below. The programme priorities clearly support the manner in which the WCRC and its member churches understand our overall mandate as the shared participation in God’s mission so that all activities and programmes strengthen the mission praxis of its member churches in their own contexts as well as regionally and globally. WCRC members are missional churches responding to the contextual changes and challenges of the world in which we live. Therefore the WCRC as a communion called to justice regards mission as its heart.

The specific programmatic priorities flow from the decisions made in the Uniting General Council in Grand Rapids and the consultations with member churches, regional councils, Executive Committee members and Strategic partners as processed by the Strategic Planning Team. It is this process that led to the Vision and Mission Statements as well as the Key Directions and Methodologies outlined here.

Consolidating the World Communion of Reformed Churches also includes prioritizing resource development. The Vision and Mission of the WCRC inspire the whole Communion to make a difference in the world. Appreciating member churches who through contributions invest in this vision and mission as well as developing new sources of funding are therefore important priorities in the next six years.

Building Communion – the overarching priority

All the priorities are aimed at building the Communion. Therefore each of the priorities have some linkage with our self-understanding as Communion, as well as building the Communion, and will be carried out within that framework. Thus each of the priorities is linked with the Communion key direction.

8.2.1. Mission empowerment

With mission being at the heart of the life and actions of the WCRC, this priority enables us to strengthen the mission of member churches and provide space and facilities for new thinking and responding to contemporary mission issues.

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<tr>
<th>Programme priorities</th>
<th>New ways of working</th>
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1  Strengthening the mission of the WCRC member churches  
   Network with churches, regional councils, theological institutions and a broad-based participation of partners (e.g. Commission on World Mission and Evangelism of the WCC, and the Council for World Mission, Evangelische Missionswerk etc.)  
   Mission  
   Communion

2  Global religious awareness  
   - Interfaith dialogues  
   - Immigrant churches  
   - By and among indigenous churches  
   National processes facilitated by consultants  
   Regional councils will be asked to lead some initiatives  
   Theology  
   Communion  
   Justice  
   Mission  
   Ecumenical engagement

8.2.2. Developing *theological reflections and strategies for church renewal* that build up the Communion and strengthening churches, theological institutions, in this regard, within the Communion.

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| 1  
   *Reformed World* -  
   publishing articles that bring fresh understandings of Reformed theology and new expressions of Reformed identity  
   RW working with a global editorial advisory board drawn from different regions taking turns to be co-responsible for the contents of different RW issues  
   Theology  
   Communion  
   Justice  
   Mission |
| 2  
   *Global Institute of Theology (GIT)* –  
   GIT equips potential leaders with fresh understandings of Reformed theology and new expressions of Reformed identity;  
   A GIT, although global, will each time be done in a different region; the regional council and its member churches will be involved in the process of setting up the GIT; all regional councils will be part of the selection process of students and GIT staff  
   A major means of leadership development for the churches  
   Theology  
   Communion  
   Justice  
   Mission  
   Ecumenical engagement |
| 3  
   *Set up and facilitate the Network of Theologians*  
   Includes reflecting on meaning of Communion and Reformed theology  
   Network composed after consultation with the regions; members come from the different regions and work from their context; the members commit themselves to work out the findings of the network within their own region  
   Some themes will be referred to regions to work on  
   Theology  
   Communion |
8.2.3. Building up the communion through empowerment of churches to act for justice and right relations. The major areas of focus will be Covenanting for Justice in the Economy and the Earth, Gender Justice, and Justice, Peace and Reconciliation.

Covenanting for justice – Living out the Accra Confession

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<tr>
<td>1 Dialogue and joint mission projects on key justice issues – (critical reflection and action)</td>
<td>Developed and implemented jointly by regional councils, member churches and partners organizations. Using tools of education/ conscientization, study, advocacy, campaign and practical projects – all interconnected towards the same goal</td>
<td>Justice Communion Mission Theology</td>
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<tr>
<td>2 Advocate for new financial architecture and strategies to address climate change – through a global (UN) platform</td>
<td>Led by the WCRC secretariat, WCC, specialized core group in consultation with member churches and regional councils Networking with other key stakeholders</td>
<td>Justice Communion</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3 Education and awareness on economic and climate justice</td>
<td>Developed and facilitated through regional councils, member churches and partners, especially with a focus on alternatives; coordinated by core group Using tools of congregational resource and exchange and solidarity initiatives</td>
<td>Justice Communion Theology</td>
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Gender justice

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<tr>
<td>4 Gender, leadership and power</td>
<td>Led by the WCRC secretariat, specialized core group and GJ network Using tools of critical analytical and multidisciplinary study, education/conscientization, support/accompaniment, lobby, advocacy, and campaign</td>
<td>Justice Theology Communion</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5 Ordination of women – Encourage more churches to approve the ordination of women and to include women in leadership positions in the church</td>
<td>Led by the WCRC secretariat, core group and all members of the Executive Committee and regional councils Involves scholarship fund, team visits – accompaniment and support</td>
<td>Communion Theology Justice</td>
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<tr>
<td>6 Address key gender issues – especially men and gender justice,</td>
<td>Developed and implemented jointly by regional councils, network, member churches and partners organizations.</td>
<td>Communion Justice Mission</td>
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<td>7 Indigenous peoples (First Nations/American Indians in North America and Indigenous people all over the world)</td>
<td>In the first instance, North America is tasked with developing this for First Nations/American Indians. Other regions to take the lead in their own indigenous people relations</td>
<td>Justice Communion</td>
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<tr>
<td>8 South Africa – Overcoming the legacies of apartheid</td>
<td>The task force has persons from different regions People in South Africa will be at the forefront</td>
<td>Justice Communion</td>
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<tr>
<td>9 Accompanying churches in difficult circumstances through prophetic solidarity, advocacy, conflict mediation and education.</td>
<td>The difficult situations occur in every region We will network with different ecumenical bodies, civil society and government agencies to address the situations.</td>
<td>Communion Justice</td>
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8.2.4. **Ecumenical engagement (the Communion within the Oikoumene)**
Through dialogues the WCRC shows its commitment to work closely with other ecumenical bodies and shows that indeed, to be Reformed is to be ecumenical. The dialogues focus on a better understanding of communion.

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<tr>
<td>1 Bilateral dialogues and bilateral working groups</td>
<td>Dialogue teams are composed in consultation with the regions; results of the dialogues should be made concrete within their contexts.</td>
<td>Ecumenical engagement Theology Communion Justice</td>
</tr>
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Fundraising Strategies

The fundraising strategies here are aimed at strengthening the resources of the WCRC for the following:

1. Developing resources that fund the WCRC vision and mission. This affects the overall fundraising efforts of the WCRC.
2. Locating resources for the programmes. This is what ensures that the WCRC makes the impact it is poised for. Programme Executive staff.
3. Strengthening resources for the core budget. The member churches provide the bulk of this.
4. Seek life gifts and other long-term gifts for the WCRC and its endowment fund.

The following sets out some of the means of gathering resources for the life and work of the WCRC.

I. Member churches

Given all the information available and based on past history of faithful giving, from 2011, 18 to 25 member churches will contribute about CHF840,000 per year. Another 100 plus member churches are faithful in giving and their contributions will amount to another CHF180,000.

An additional 40 churches have been giving irregularly, and especially do so in a General Council year. About 60 churches have not been contributing. Each of these categories needs to be approached differently.

1. The meaning of being communion needs to be made clearer. If we are communion, then each member faithfully playing its role to keep the whole healthy and effective is not an option or a giving to a body outside itself. The fact of being communion gives members the joy, gift and responsibility of participating in every form of contribution to make the whole healthy.
2. The fair contributions grid will be reworked to show clearly the basis of invoicing.
3. More efficient and timely invoicing, as well as other more efficient collection devices to be developed.
4. Letters will be written to the churches in the three categories as follows:
   a. The 18-25 churches that give substantially will be written to with appreciation. In that letter, some may be approached to consider giving more than they currently do.
   b. The 100 other faithful givers will also receive letters of appreciation and encouragement to consider giving more, in addition to their 2011 invoice.
   c. Those who have not been contributing at all will be written to with an invoice of how much they owe and information on the last time they contributed. They will be informed about the WCRC constitutional provision on non-payment of contribution, and given a date by which to respond on their intention to remain members of the WCRC and pay up or to be suspended by the WCRC Executive Committee. This issue has been referred to the Finance Committee.
5. If 50 out of the non-payers give CHF500 each, this will be an additional income of CH25,000.
6. The requests for increases is aimed at raising the amount expected from member churches to CHF1,200k.

II. Non-member churches

The WCRC is a Communion that values its current members and also looks forward to welcoming other members. Traditionally, it has valued united and uniting churches for the gifts they bring in reminding us of the call for Christian unity. There are a few united churches that have not been able to join. We will value their membership anytime they decide to join, not because of their money,
but because of what united churches represent among us. Meanwhile, two of the united churches in Germany have been faithfully supporting WCRC programmes. Given their faithfulness, we will continue to engage them in discussions on how they can become even closer to the communion. We will explore with them how they can support the vision and mission of the WCRC financially. There is need for further discussions with other united churches. This approach will be made both in writing and through visits.

III. Donations

Over the years, a number of Swiss cantonal churches and other faithful partners have been contributing funds for the WCRC core budget. These average about CHF220,000 per year. This has been very helpful. There will be an effort to increase this by working with the General Treasurer in asking Swiss cantonal churches that do not contribute in this way to consider doing so. Other potential donors will need to be identified in different parts of the world.

IV. Governing body commitments

Officers and Executive Committee members voluntarily bring many gifts to the WCRC which are much appreciated. In addition, they spend much time attending meetings and contributing to decision-making to keep the WCRC effective and operating within sound policies. They do all these as volunteers. An additional contribution which represents the kind of commitment that speaks loudly and clearly to potential donors is the direct financial and/or fundraising contribution. An organization which can demonstrate that its governing body members believe in its vision enough to give time and resources to it has a good ground for attracting donors. Officers and Executive Committee members have a responsibility for the first point below and are being requested to consider doing what is in points two and three below.

1. Each Executive Committee member has a number of churches for which she/he is responsible to make sure they are making their membership contribution regularly. Executive Committee members will be key to ensuring their own churches set the example.
2. Each officer and each Executive Committee member or advisor is being requested to make an annual pledge of whatever they feel able to give. Nothing is too small – nothing too big.
3. Each is also being requested to be at the forefront of fundraising in their own contexts. They can rally around themselves five to ten persons who are willing to contribute annually to their membership of the WCRC governing body. For example, an Executive Committee member in Africa or Latin America with ten friends each willing to give CHF50 per year will be bringing 500 Swiss francs each year for the next six years. An Executive Committee member in an affluent country may be able to do more.

V. New funds development

New fundraising initiatives have begun for different contexts.

1. The WCRC Endowment Fund has been re-established with WCRC-USA as its centre. A Board of Trustees has been created with a President (Stephens Lytch) and co-chairs (Cliff Kirkpatrick and Peter Borgdorff), with all North American Executive Committee members as members of the Board. An annual fundraising campaign will be conducted. The first took place in the last quarter of 2010. This initiative is meant to bring in funds both for undesignated expenditure and for an endowment fund from which WCRC gets only dividends. In the annual campaigns and in other fundraising activities of the fund, attention will be drawn to current needs of the organization – programmes and core. The Annual Reports to be issued every year that will serve as an instrument for this initiative will also draw attention to current needs. Therefore some contributions are expected for the operations and programmes of the WCRC through this initiative. While this may not yield immediate results, it has a potential of yielding at least CHF20,000 per year for operations between 2012 and 2016.
2. For Europe, there is need to develop something that links the key directions of the WCRC with living out the legacies that we are celebrating between 2009 and 2017 (Calvin, Heidelberg, Reformation 500, etc.). These need to be presented in a manner that draws in congregations,
individuals with means and businesses to invest in the vision and mission of the WCRC. In addition, we could also explore possibilities of businesses associated with Reformed families (e.g. approaching Geneva banks or the owners of Peugeot, etc.).

3. Asia is multifaceted. What may work for Northeast Asia may not work for South Asia. Therefore one may need to develop different approaches for different countries or subregions.
   a. In Korea we could explore the concept of ecumenical tithing. Can we find 20 congregations who are willing to contribute CHF1,000 to 10,000 per year?
   b. In other places, can we find a few individuals with means or congregations willing to make an annual donation?
4. Africa, Latin America, Pacific, the Caribbean, and the Middle East can each develop their own fundraising strategies. They may need to be built around building communities of people willing to set aside CHF10 per month or year or asking a few persons with means to make an annual pledge.
5. These new fund development strategies can target CHF200,000 to be generated from 2012 onwards.
6. Reformation Birthday Gift Fund – From 2009 to 2017, the Reformed family is celebrating a number of significant milestones. 2009 was the Calvin 500 Birthday anniversary. 2010 was the birth year of the World Communion of Reformed Churches. These two are in the past. 2013 will be the 400th anniversary of the Heidelberg Catechism. 2017 will be the 500th anniversary of the Reformation. All churches, congregations, and individuals are invited to consider giving a birthday gift connected with any of these events. This will strengthen the ability of the WCRC to live out its vision and mission in the long-term.
7. WCRC Officers, Executive Committee members, staff and friends need to work hard at developing new potential donors for its core funding. This could include congregations and individuals in different parts of the world willing to make commitments for the vision and mission of the WCRC to be carried out.
8. These strategies will be greatly enhanced if the WCRC engages one or two fundraising strategists (part time).

VI. Regional councils

1. The WCRC methodology of working takes account of regional councils in a meaningful way. WCRC programming will be more closely linked with regional councils. Therefore the way of financing will also need to take this into account. Here are a few examples.
   a) When the Caribbean region plans programmes within the WCRC vision and mission and directly linked with the WCRC key directions, CANAAC funding needs to make this a priority.
   b) When AIPRAL or CRCA or the grouping of all churches in Indonesia applies for Partnership Fund support that is linked with a programme that fulfils any of the priority programmes of the WCRC, the Partnership Fund committee will give it a priority.
2. In a critical assessment of how member churches of the five existing regions of the WCRC currently contribute to the WCRC and their regional councils, the following emerged:
   a) WCRC Europe – All European member churches send all their contributions directly to the WCRC; 5% of this is set aside as income for WCRC Europe. This is a good model and can be offered as an example to other regions.
   b) CANAAC – CANAAC region member churches contribute directly to the WCRC. Then they also contribute directly to CANAAC. About six of the 20 CANAAC member churches are generous about how much they give directly to CANAAC. The others do not contribute much. This is also a good model which has been effective for CANAAC.
   c) AIPRAL – All Latin American churches contribute directly to the WCRC. Then they also contribute a small amount towards AIPRAL annually.
   d) NEAAC – The member churches of NEAAC contribute directly to the WCRC. They do not have any member church fees for NEAAC. The member churches cover their own costs when they have meetings and at the meeting make a small contribution each towards overhead.
e) CRCA – All African WCRC member churches contribute directly to the WCRC. Then they are also expected to contribute a small amount towards CRCA annually. However, they have not been able to do this yet.

It is clear that the two areas which handle some substantial resources per year are WCRC Europe and CANAAC. The WCRC will continue to work with CANAAC to make sure that the funds promote the vision and mission of the WCRC. It may be necessary to challenge churches in Africa, Latin America and Asia to increase what they currently give by 10%, and to explore their use of the Europe model – giving 5% back to work in the regions. The WCRC appreciates the example of Europe. It may become necessary to renegotiate with WCRC Europe to bring the amount that is set aside for WCRC Europe down slightly especially in these difficult times.

VII. Discussions with strategic partners

Networking and partnership are critical both to working together on WCRC programmes as well as to funding of programmes. As part of the strategic planning process, the WCRC is currently engaged in intensive discussions with three partners in order to build strategic partnerships.

1. CWM has been a long term partner in the WCRC’s mission and justice work. The mission statement and the theological statement of CWM mirror the WCRC’s commitment to mission and justice. 27 of the 31 member churches of CWM are also members of the WCRC. Therefore partnership can be a win-win situation. Programmes enhanced by this partnership will benefit a wider constituency than what CWM has. The WCRC held good discussions with CWM to this end.

2. EMW has been a long time partner of the WCRC’s mission, theology and gender justice work. In recent months there have been intensive discussions which are leading towards signing a partnership agreement in a few months time.

3. The conversations with EED have led to the granting of 200,000 Euro per year to support the Reformed Churches Partnership Fund. The WCRC through this process is being trained and mentored to be able to receive government funds for development projects in a few years. We are currently exploring the possibility of EED finding a staff person who will be devoted to capacity building in the area of development and justice projects.

In all these, the discussions include partners agreeing to a percentage of the programme funds going to support the core budget of the WCRC. This represents the human resources costs involved in running the programmes.
Appendix 2

SWOT analysis

Strengths

1. The capability to work for the unity and overcoming divisions among Reformed churches.
2. The presence of Reformed churches all over the world and in almost every region.
3. The ecumenical identity of the Reformed tradition.
4. The heritage of Reformed theology, especially of John Calvin, is characteristic for the WCRC in a very specific, biblical, spiritual theology which combines life and work; justification and sanctification; personal faith and collective design in the society and the churches.
5. The excellence of the Reformed theological seminaries and their close relations to the Reformed churches.
6. The WCRC has a special position in the ecumenical world and plays an important role in the dialogues with other ecumenical bodies.
7. Engagement on gender justice issues.
8. Strong commitment to social justice and transformation.
9. The involvement through social issues and a great influence in the network of the ecumenical movement.
10. The WCRC includes a big number of small and vulnerable churches and provides networking and capacity building and helps them in their calling for mission and testimony.
11. The communication between the WCRC secretariat and regional councils and member churches.
12. The work in the regional councils and its relationship with member churches and the WCRC.

Weaknesses

1. The isolation of many Reformed churches and congregations.
2. The lack of balance and interrelationship between communion and social justice issues.
3. Due to the weak awareness of the importance of visible unity, it is difficult to ecumenical bodies such as the WCRC to have credibility to speak in society on behalf of the churches.
4. The tension between “called to communion” and “committed to justice” makes progress difficult.
5. The work in the regional councils is still undeveloped. The communication and joined regional projects are not yet seen as an important aspect of the WCRC ministry.
6. Two thirds of the members live in the Global South, but the languages are European, the office is in Europe and the resources are mainly from the Global North.
7. Organizationally mission work has lost its specific place in the WCRC, which could lead to statements without implementation. The close relationship with the CWM is not yet used for the supporting of the mission work of the WCRC.

Opportunities

1. Communication: internet and modern technology provides a channel to bring the churches and the organization together and mobilize the churches and members.
2. The WCRC plays a role in facilitating networking, sharing and connecting the church members.
3. The WCRC is a new ecumenical body, founded on the tradition and work of the WARC and REC. This combination of old and new gives color to this organization.
4. To take advantage of the fact that “Being Reformed” is becoming very attractive in a lot of countries (especially in Asia), where churches are involved in a movement of growth.
5. To develop closer relationships and partnerships with charismatic and Pentecostal churches as related churches.
Threats

1. Lack of interest of the churches in the work and themes of the WCRC.
2. Staff reduction at the WCRC secretariat.
3. Weak infrastructure of some of the churches.
4. A lack of financial resources is threatening the being and future of the WCRC.
Emerging consensus from questionnaires

Expectations of the WCRC

Member churches expressed a longing for the WCRC to be a communion where Reformed churches meet each other as family, to facilitate reconciliation, koinonia, and unity, sharing gifts and resources, doing theology and spiritual renewal together, and speaking prophetically as the voice of Reformed churches in the world.

Regional councils affirmed their relationship with the WCRC, not calling for independence, but for more focus on regional councils, and deepening fellowship and commitment to justice issues, some calling for enhanced South-South relationships (Africa, Latin America, Asia).

Strategic partners expected that the WCRC would keep its focus on core values such as justice, communion and partnership, “working together in transforming the world”. “The WCRC is a gift for the renewal of the whole church.” Whilst seeing the new body as bold and pioneering, some feared a loss of brand.

Member churches found the WCRC critical to them in the following areas:

Leadership development, including training and scholarships, Reformed theology, unity and diversity, justice (in the economy and the earth, gender, age, disability), peace and reconciliation, sharing, networking, mission, renewal and relevance, ecumenical engagement and interreligious dialogue, communion. There was diversity in emphasis between regions, and an expression of frustration caused by language barriers and inaccessibility.

Being a Communion committed to justice was broadly affirmed by member churches, regional councils and strategic partners, as well as staff, particularly in relation to gender justice, economic justice and justice in all of creation; as well as the establishment of Communion’s theological basis, and the relation of justice to peace.

The identity and purpose of the WCRC as expressed in Articles III and V were affirmed widely, while critiqued as concerning how we hold together as a Communion rather than how we reach the pew, or the world, and that we should express a passion for evangelism. There was room for the role of the regions to be developed. Regional councils highlighted worship renewal, partnership and solidarity with a clear theological identity capable of being a reliable partner in ecumenical engagement and to build strategic alliances. Strategic partners affirmed the WCRC’s ecumenical identity and renewed commitment to Mission.

When asked for one priority for the WCRC, the following emerged: Unity, ecumenical engagement, Reformed theology, Reformed identity and renewal in worship and liturgy, mission, capacity building, and peace, justice and reconciliation (within nations and globally). Regional councils and staff placed high priority on justice, leadership development, particularly in relation to theological identity, developing theological resources (paper and people), and providing training. They also prioritized networking, Christian unity, and mission. Stories of accomplishments past should be told to envision for future investment. Staff drew attention to the potential for 2017 Reformation celebrations as an opportunity for growth. Leadership development, through GIT and scholarships were appreciated, as were resources and training for justice.

Strategic partners and staff highlighted the theological reflection and dialogue on justice and the economy, the WCRC’s partnership role in public witness, and in connecting churches which are not members of WCC to the broader world church. Partners encouraged growing cooperation with the
WCRC, prioritizing partnership and clearly articulated common goals. Financial and communication challenges need to be addressed, in order to continue the commitment to Communion and Covenanting for Justice.

**Expectations of the WCRC secretariat**

*Member churches expect the Geneva office to “implement UGC mandates”. Other expectations: communication, leading in theological education and training, including on equality and justice issues, gender and age; solidarity and programmes on justice; convening and fostering relationships, accompaniment in difficult circumstances, mediation; ecumenical engagement, unity of churches in communion, regional empowerment.*

*Regional councils expect the WCRC secretariat to work with the regions, to convene gatherings to promote partnership, reflection on Reformed theology and symbolic actions expressing fellowship; providing theological and educational resources. They persistently requested more communication and co-ordination to support existing work. On the best ways for the WCRC Secretariat to work with the regions, they suggested better communication, joint meetings and joint staff, closer working relationships, “mandatory meetings”, working together on networking, fundraising and programming. Executive Committee members should have specific involvement within their region.*

There was the suggestion that regions could take a lead on certain issues, that responsibility being devolved from the WCRC secretariat. There were frustrations expressed regarding the General Council, more thought given to its purpose and place and in particular to the agenda.

Strategic partners desire continued partnership, and rely on the WCRC Secretariat to maintain effective communication, to avoid duplication of work, and to address increasingly restricted finances. In particular, the WCRC was seen as strategic in developing theological dialogue with Charismatics and Pentecostals. There was a perception among strategic partners that the WCRC is weak because of its limited staff and its financial constraints. While there was a strong affirmation of our relationship with our strategic partners, the WCRC needs to work on perceptions, to strengthen its commitment to justice, and to bring more churches into the ecumenical arena.
WCRC STRATEGIC PLAN:
FINAL PHASE: 2016-JUNE 2017

Introduction

The 2011 Strategic Plan (SP) was put in place to guide the Communion in carrying out its vision and purpose to be a living and effective expression of “the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace” (Eph 4:3) in order to share in God’s mission in the world.

The plan places a strategic emphasis on five key directions for the work and witness of the WCRC: mission, communion, justice, theology and ecumenical engagement with the overall aim that by the end of 2017 the WCRC will:

be known as a communion that unites Reformed churches in God’s mission in our world. Our internal relationships will evidence the oneness for which Jesus prayed. The WCRC will have significantly contributed to the world Churches’ awareness of and ability to address theologially and practically, issues of justice, equality, reconciliation and peace-building. The WCRC will be the place to go for theological and practical resources on these issues. The WCRC will be an interwoven network committed to sharing the Gospel of Jesus Christ with the world, and will be widely acknowledged as an effective convener of significant training and resourcing for leaders and future leaders so that they may contribute theologially and practically to the mission of the member Churches. The core of the network will be sustainable with revenue from member churches. (WCRC Strategic Plan, adopted May 2011)

This plan is in its last phase with just over one year left before the 2017 General Council (2017GC). The WCRC is not where it needs to be if the high goals and aspirations set out in the plan are to be met even on the basic level. There are important achievements in some of the strategic areas and at the same time the period since 2011 has been marked by very significant challenges in terms of organisational sustainability, leading to the decision to relocate the organisational offices from Geneva, Switzerland, to Hannover, Germany, which at the same time overlapped with a transition period in the general secretariat. The living into the new vision of the WCRC as a united communion, the financial crisis, the move and the extended search for a new general secretary has meant that the WCRC has not been able to apply itself to the major challenges of the SP with the necessary vigour, focus and resources.

Notwithstanding, in this final phase of the SP there is the opportunity to focus on drawing the plan to a close in such a way as to maximize the achievements of the key challenges in 2016-2017 and additionally report our successes, shortcomings and learnings to the 2017GC by preparing for the meeting in such a way as to enter into the council with a focused and understood proposal for the vision of the WCRC for the 2017-2024 period in order to: inspire, mobilize, strengthen and lift up the mission of the member churches and the Communion as a whole on all levels for the renewal of the churches to contribute ecumenically, inter-religiously and with the wider global civil society for the transformation of the world in response to the call of the living God (Rom 12:2, Luke 4, Jer 10:10).

Foci 2016

The strategic focus for 2016 will be identifying a limited number of key outcomes that have to be achieved in 2016 to move the WCRC forward with its stated goals for 2017 as mentioned in the SP while at the same time contributing to and assuring the effective planning and successful meeting of the 2017GC. The council is not an end itself but will, if successful, contribute significantly to carrying out the core vision and mission of the WCRC in both consolidating communion and advancing the
justice God calls for. The following lists the key strategic proposals; it is not a list of all activities or programmes already dealt with in the SP.

Mission

While continuing to work with ecumenical partners like the WCC, CWM and EMW on a variety of mission activities our specific strategic focus will be to implement the postponed Mission on the Frontlines conference in the context of religion, violence and peace-building with special attention to supporting Middle Eastern and African churches. The event will be planned and implemented with a view to deepening the collaboration between and among the offices of theology, mission and communion (TMC), justice and partnership (J&P) and general secretariat (GS) as per the SP. The event will be held in the last quarter of 2016.

Communion

It is widely acknowledged that there needs to be more specific follow up to the 2014 Communion Consultation. The issue of human sexuality now presents itself more that ever before as both a church-dividing and communion-dividing issue. It is proposed that in the second semester of 2016 WCRC convene a consultation on communion and human sexuality to provide an opportunity and the safe space to explore in mutual respect how the WCRC can ensure that we maintain and deepen our unity in the face of our differences while drawing on the gifts and theological and biblical perspectives of our Reformed tradition.

One of the major instruments and working methods in the SP for building communion is regional councils and implementing work regionally. In fact there is considerable concern that regions are not getting the support and clarity need to function well. It is proposed that in the second half of 2016 to hold a consultation with the members of the officers group and the leadership of the regional councils to make specific proposals and take next steps to ensure that regional councils are appropriately empowered.

Justice

In addition to the ongoing work of J&P it is imperative to make a bold move in 2016 to ensure WCRC leadership in the re-launching of the NIFEA initiative and begin to make a global impact on the urgent concerns of economic and ecological injustice. It is planned to have a small and focused meeting in April 2016 to plan and implement next steps. Funds have been secured for the next steps. Collaboration with the WCC is already taking place for two programmes but the strategic focus is to take the NIFEA vision to the next level. In addition there will be a reinvigorating of the justice network to present a vision of WCRC justice work beyond 2017, as well as a consultation about how to strengthen our UN New York office work.

In gender justice the focus will include a very special focus on the full participation of women in the ministry and leadership of the church with a special report from the task group on the ordination of women. This includes with the GS and the executive committee concrete and specific steps to ensure the required equity and balances in the delegates to the 2017 GC and ensuring full and equitable participation by women, youth and men in all WCRC events, activities and publications.

Theology

In addition to the ongoing dialogues and Reformed World, a key priority will be the GiT in 2017. And there will be two specific strategic foci strongly linked to the 2017 GC, with both also following up from previous dialogues and intersecting with ecumenical engagement. A consultation with member churches and decision-making concerning WCRC association with the JDDJ will include articulating the WCRC contribution through a signing statement on Justice and Justification which
has been a focus of the Reformed-Roman Catholic Dialogue. The second special focus is follow up to the Lutheran-Reformed Dialogue aiming to make a significant contribution towards Lutheran-Reformed communion through a joint declaration to be made in the context of the 2017GC called provisionally the “Wittenberg Declaration.” A WCRC drafting group has been convened for the end of June to produce our proposal to the Lutherans for a road map and the content. This involves both the GS and the TMC offices.

Ecumenical Engagement

We are now in a better position to give the kind of leadership ecumenically that the SP imagines. **GS leadership in the WCC Pilgrimage of Justice and Peace (PJP) Reference Group and more emphasis on WCRC participation in the PJP is proposed as a priority, as well as more focus on ecumenical collaboration on key WCRC public witness foci.** In 2016 special attention will be given public witness and advocacy that is important to members of our Communion and in close collaboration with the WCC and the wider ecumenical movement, specifically:

a. **Peace and Reconciliation on the Korean peninsula:** Working with the PCK, PROK, NCCK and WCC, a WCRC-led delegation to North Korea in 2016. WCRC leadership in peace advocacy.

b. **Supporting member churches and regional leadership in the Colombia Peace Process:** advocacy, accompaniment, empowerment and behind-the-scenes international ecumenical diplomacy. Delegations, visits, advocacy campaigns.

c. **Middle East** including Israel-Palestine: support member churches and WCC consensus advocacy.

d. **South Sudan:** with the ACRC plan a pastoral visit in 2016 as part of a wider Africa visit to areas of protracted violence and conflict.

e. **Strengthening direct relations with other communions:** the general secretary will attend the Anglican Consultative Council in Zambia in April. On 10 June, a meeting with Pope Francis and the Pontifical Councils on Christian Unity and Justice and Peace will take place. An initiative to meet with the Mennonites before the 2017GC will be undertaken.

Overarching Strategic Foci

In 2016 special attention and priority must be given to **organisational sustainability.** This includes fundraising and institutional strengthening, and regional empowerment. A meeting for fundraising and fund development strategy is planned before the end of June.

There needs to be overall attention given to regional empowerment and networking in all activities.

The top priority is the effective planning in all dimensions for the 2017GC, and attending to the need to enhance regional / global synergy.