

# **FLAG PRESENTATION**

*Celebrating God's Work in His World  
through the Christian Reformed Church*

## **INTRODUCTION: CANADA AND THE UNITED STATES**

The Christian Reformed Church in North America consists of nearly 1000 congregations. These congregations, in response to the Great Commission, are being used by God to transform lives and communities throughout North America and around the world.

In North America outreach is accomplished through Home Missions, Back to God Ministries International, CRWRC, classes and congregations. Faith Alive Christian Resources provides excellent materials for use in North America and around the world.

Home Missions aids churches and members in evangelism. New churches are supported. Campus ministries are encouraged. And leadership training is offered across the continent. Currently, Home Missions supports more than 20 ministries on university campuses and is giving grant support to over 75 new church plants across North America. Training in small group ministries helps hundreds of churches to grow in evangelism.

The church's overseas missions work is carried out at the denominational level primarily through three agencies.

- Back to God Ministries International specializes in spreading God's Word worldwide through broadcast media, including radio, television, the Internet, telecommunications, and printed literature.
- Christian Reformed World Missions specializes in church planting and leadership development with the goal of growing God's Kingdom.
- The Christian Reformed World Relief Committee (CRWRC) specializes in strengthening churches and communities so that they can overcome poverty, disaster, and injustice.

Through these agencies of the Christian Reformed Church, the Gospel of Jesus is touching the lives of people in more than 170 countries around the world.

God has given His Church the command to make disciples of all nations (Matt. 28:19). In obedience to that command, the Christian Reformed Church has provided hundreds of mission workers. They are at work in Canada, the United States and abroad, bringing the Gospel message of light and hope using personal evangelism, leadership development, community development, relief work, and media communications. In addition, the CRCNA works with numerous partner churches and organizations around the world to transform lives and communities and to advance the mission of God in the world.

Today we view flags of nations that represent some of the countries where the Christian Reformed Church is lifting up the banner of Jesus Christ.

1. **BANGLADESH** – Bangladesh is one of the most densely populated and poorest countries in the world. World Missions and CRWRC work with Christian partner agencies in the country to promote holistic ministries among the poor. CRWM personnel also serve as faculty members at the College of Christian Theology of Bangladesh in Dhaka, assisting the institution in its training of church leaders.
2. **BRAZIL** – Nearly 190 million people live in Brazil, a country of economic contrasts. The Back to God Ministries International Portuguese language ministry began in 1969 and has since expanded to reach people even in remote areas of South America and Africa through nationally broadcast TV programs, two websites, a telephone ministry and extensive print and follow-up ministries.
3. **CHINA** – The People's Republic of China is an immense land with a population of more than 1.3 billion people—one-fifth of the world's population. Although the government prohibits open mission work, it has opened its borders to Christian teachers. Each day these teachers meet the leaders of tomorrow and have opportunities to share a living witness. At the same time, the Internet and radio airwaves carrying Back to God Ministries International messages overcome physical barriers and touch the lives of people every day.
4. **COSTA RICA** – Costa Rica has the most stable democracy in Central America. World Missions' work there focuses on UNELA, the Evangelical University of the Americas. It provides higher education to Christians preparing for leadership positions in many countries in the region. Back to God Ministries International's Spanish-language ministry reaches into the major urban and rural communities of Costa Rica and throughout Latin America through radio, television and the Internet.
5. **CYPRUS** – Approximately 340 million Arabic-speaking people live in the Middle East, where it can be dangerous to be a Christian. However, there are an estimated 6 million Christians who adhere to the Reformed faith. Through radio, television, the Internet, cell phones and printed literature, Back to God Ministries International is reaching people for Christ and encouraging Christians who often feel isolated. Listeners can write to follow-up centers in Cyprus, Egypt, and Lebanon, or contact volunteers in Jordan, Sudan, Kuwait, Bahrain, Iraq, Palestine, and Yemen to receive literature and spiritual guidance.
6. **DOMINICAN REPUBLIC** – The Dominican Republic occupies the eastern part of the Caribbean island shared with Haiti. Mission work began here as a result of responses to Back to God Ministries International broadcasts. Today, more than 10 radio stations reach almost all areas of the DR. There are more than 10,000 people worshipping in 200 Christian Reformed churches and over 4000 students in 21 COCREP Christian schools. CRWRC is also working in the DR to help improve the well-being of Haitian immigrants and of farming families living in the mountain regions.
7. **GUINEA** – In the early 1980s World Missions looked for the most unreached people groups in the world. We found some in Guinea. Outreach is underway among the Fulbe (Full'-bay) people in the province of Labe (Lah-bay') which has a population of almost one million. Nearly all are Muslims. Today, a small group of believers can be found among the Fulbe.

8. **HAITI** – Haiti and the Dominican Republic have a common border on the Caribbean island of Hispaniola. The first contacts World Missions had in Haiti came through relatives and friends of Haitians who are affiliated with the Christian Reformed Church of the Dominican Republic. Today, World Missions works with the Christian Reformed Church of Haiti to train leaders and develop churches. The Christian Reformed World Relief Committee helps train deacons and community and church groups in agriculture, health, literacy, income earning, civic education, and leadership. The people of Haiti can receive Gospel messages through Back to God Ministries International's French language radio and Internet ministries.
9. **HONDURAS** – Two ordained missionaries began a church development ministry in Honduras in 1972 through contacts established by Back to God Ministries International. Now there are more than 6,000 worshipers in 87 worshipping groups, 50 of which are organized churches and make up the Synod of the Christian Reformed Church of Honduras. Through CRWRC, this church is transforming local communities and helping them overcome poverty. CRC missionaries also continue to work with the developing churches and communities in nearby Guatemala, Ecuador, El Salvador, and Nicaragua.
10. **HUNGARY** – Following the collapse of communism, many eastern European countries are rediscovering their Christian roots. World Missions works primarily with the Reformed Church of Hungary providing instructors at the seminary and secondary school levels. Our church is also working in the Ukraine and Romania. CRWRC's work in the region is focused on Romania.
11. **INDONESIA** – Indonesia, the most populous Muslim country in the world, is home to more than 100 million young people who are constantly under the influence of Islam. But as Indonesian people saw how Christian organizations like CRWRC responded following recent disasters, young people have especially opened their eyes and hearts to "something new." In addition to tsunami-response programs, CRWRC also has ongoing community programs that strengthen people's ability to overcome poverty and demonstrate Christ's love to those in need. The Back to God Ministries International Indonesian ministry broadcasts the truth of Jesus Christ through radio and television programs, devotional booklets and other print media, and a website and cell phone ministry.
12. **JAPAN** – Shintoism and Buddhism are the major religions of Japan, combining nature and ancestor worship. Approximately one percent of the Japanese people are Christians. Our missionaries work alongside the Reformed Church of Japan, which is also involved in doing follow-up on the programs broadcast by Back to God Ministries International. Because of cultural pressures against Christianity, radio, cell phone and Internet broadcasts are an effective way to disciple and encourage Japanese Christians.
13. **MALI** – CRWRC and World Missions began work in Mali in 1984. Approximately 1 million Fulani live in central and northern Mali along the Niger River. One by one new believers are being added to God's family. Through God's grace and the power of the Holy Spirit, a church is being born in this predominantly Muslim country and communities are working together to overcome poverty. Back to God Ministries International's French language broadcasts are translated into local dialects in Mali, where the requests for follow up Bible Study Correspondence materials are multiplying.
14. **MEXICO** – The outreach in Mexico began as a follow-up to migrant workers who returned to Mexico after working in the United States. The endeavor in Mexico has expanded greatly, involving church development, education and literature distribution. Because of the rapid growth of the evangelical churches there, the focus of World Missions' work is in leadership training. CRWRC, too, taps in to local churches and organizations to carry out programs in agriculture and diaconal development. Back to God Ministries International programming reaches nearly all of Mexico, as well as Cuba, through short-wave radio. Follow-up work is managed from a volunteer-run office in Mexico City.
15. **NIGERIA** – Nigeria is a very influential nation in Africa and the most heavily populated. In addition to partnering with three well-established churches, we work among unreached people groups. Using a holistic approach, World Missions and CRWRC work with partners in programs from drilling wells and providing agricultural assistance, to planting churches and starting Christian schools. Beacon of Hope educates church leaders and members about HIV/AIDS. The cooperative work of Back to God Ministries International and World Missions has resulted in new congregations added to the CRC of Nigeria. Back to God Ministries International broadcasts can be heard over twenty local radio stations. Response to Back to God Ministries International's English language programming is exploding. Every other month more than 40,000 copies of the *TODAY* devotional are printed in Nigeria and distributed to eager readers, including Muslims.
16. **THE PHILIPPINES** – The Philippines is made up of more than 7,000 islands lying in the South China Sea, extending more than 1,000 miles from north to south and 600 miles from east to west. The main facets of World Missions' work have included evangelism, church development, and theological training. The CRC of The Philippines has more than 45 organized congregations and 65 emerging churches. The Christian Reformed World Relief Committee is actively involved with this church and other partners in community development and diaconal ministry. CRWRC has similar programs in India. Back to God Ministries International broadcasts can be heard over 5 radio stations in the Philippines.
17. **RUSSIA** – Around 143 million people live in Russia, a country that covers approximately 7 million square miles in area. Because Christianity and Bible knowledge were suppressed during the communist regime, less than 1% of today's Russian citizens grew up in the church. Back to God Ministries International broadcasts biblical teaching throughout Russia and Eastern Europe on local and shortwave stations. Working with World Missions, they provide follow-up materials and training through evangelistic libraries.
18. **UGANDA** – In Uganda, nearly everyone is impacted by the growing crisis of AIDS. CRWRC is working through area churches to minimize the spread of AIDS, care for orphans and widows, teach Biblical values, and help families care for those infected. These efforts are integrated into existing agriculture, literacy, and health programs so that entire communities can improve their lives overall while they also overcome AIDS. CRWRC has similar community AIDS programs in Kenya, Malawi, Mozambique, Tanzania, South Africa, and Zambia. World Missions provides funding to send missionaries to provide leadership training at a Bible college in Uganda.

***God is using the prayers, personnel, and financial resources of the  
Christian Reformed Church to do a mighty work in the world.  
May His Kingdom come and all nations serve Him!***