

Appendix H

Office of Social Justice and Hunger Action Revised Mission and Mandate Statement

I. Mission statement

The Office of Social Justice and Hunger Action (OSJ) exists to lead and equip the CRC in carrying out its transforming mission to “pursue God's justice and peace,” as stated in its “Denominational Mission/Vision Statement.”

II. Mandate

The OSJ is mandated to encourage and assist the CRCNA—its leaders, agencies, institutions, and members—to better “live justly, love mercy, and walk humbly with God” (Mic. 6:8).

It focuses primarily on the systemic causes of poverty, hunger, and powerlessness, as well as those social injustices to which synod or the Board of Trustees (BOT) has directed it.

Its leadership and equipping consists primarily of

--raising awareness and educating members and leaders about issues of justice that relate to root causes of poverty, hunger, powerlessness, and those social justice issues that synod or the BOT have identified as priorities.

--identifying, creating, and encouraging the use of methods of worship and modes of living out our faith that express justice as a core personal and corporate value for Reformed Christians.

--raising the voice of the CRCNA in advocacy for and with those who suffer injustice, through action alerts to our members, participation in advocacy coalitions, and public statements when appropriate.

III. Scope and accountability

It is a CRC denominational ministry accountable to the Board of Trustees through the director of denominational ministries and the executive director of the CRCNA.

It collaborates closely with the CRC's Centre for Public Dialogue in Canada in awareness-raising, education, and advocacy, as well as with other coalitions for public action in Canada, the United States, and around the world.

IV. Selecting justice issues

No single office can adequately raise awareness, do education, and promote advocacy for the entire range of social justice issues. Consequently, in selecting a limited number of social justice issues to address, we consider the following primary criteria:

- a. Is this an issue or action that is important to the integrity, faith, and life of our church and our society?
- b. Does this issue arise from a biblical theme?

- c. Is this issue consistent with the OSJ's mandate?
 - d. Does it strengthen or support existing ministry at any of the following levels?
 - denominational
 - CRC Centre for Public Dialogue
 - congregational and/or regional
 - individual daily work ministry
 - e. Is it aligned with CRC goals, values, and ministry priorities?
- Additional criteria:
- f. Is this a binational issue (i.e., Canada and U.S.)?
 - g. Does it respond to a specific confessional or synodical declaration or statement?
 - h. Is it part of a larger Christian movement, or can we forge significant cooperation with other followers of Christ and people of faith?
 - i. Do we have grassroots expertise and input from those affected by the situation?
 - j. How likely is it that we can forge a broad-based agreement to deal with this issue?
 - k. Does the CRCNA have a current or historical connection or relationship with those affected by the issue being proposed?

Note: A *core issue* would normally meet all five of the primary criteria—and possibly one or more of the additional criteria. These criteria, however, are not all of equal weight and are to be used more as guidelines in the decision-making process rather than as rigid mechanical screens.