

STEWARD PROGRAM MESSAGE TO THE UNITING GENERAL COUNCIL 2010

From June 12-28, 2010, we came together as young people from many different Reformed denominations across the globe to volunteer as Stewards for the Uniting General Council. We have come for many reasons: to represent our churches, to serve, to meet other youth and delegates, and to be mutually encouraged in faith. We have been excited to contribute our gifts through our work in administration, communications, documentation, plenary sessions, stage management and worship. We hope that in our participation in Christ's call for us to serve one another, all council participants will join us in approaching one another with an attitude of humility and respect.

Both the Reformed Ecumenical Council and the World Alliance of Reformed Churches have a long history of youth empowerment and integration through the Steward Program. Many of the delegates at this council began their involvement in one of the two organizations as a Steward. In light of the various challenges¹ that the World Communion of Reformed Churches will continue to face in the future, the Steward Program holds considerable promise as a means for introducing young people into the work of the WCRC.

Vision

We envision the Steward Program as one integral aspect of the WCRC's efforts to empower youth. It has the potential to nurture the voices of young adults and to draw them into the ecumenical work of the Church. Furthermore, the program could bring youth and ecumenical leaders together in order that they may learn from each other. Coming together would enable delegates to consider young people's perspectives when making decisions and would equip Stewards to share a global and ecumenical awareness within their local congregations. Since the body of Stewards is composed of many rising church leaders, we ask that the WCRC provide them with a place to learn from ecumenical leaders and from each other, to foster leadership skills, to serve with their gifts and to share their experiences.

Recommendations

The Stewards Recommend that:

1. The WCRC *incorporate* Stewards into its work by intentionally providing avenues for them to use their gifts and knowledge and by creating resources and networks to encourage Stewards' continual involvement in the future.
2. The WCRC create time and space for Stewards' *mutual edification* and *formation* by providing Stewards with opportunities to discuss issues and share their stories with each

¹ Such as filling nomination, election, and delegation quotas.

other, while also providing opportunities to engage with staff and delegates regarding the various issues being discussed at the council. This way, they may learn more about the struggles faced in each of the represented regions, develop their leadership skills and grow together in faith.

3. The WCRC *clarify* Stewards' role as volunteers in the council by providing straightforward expectations and duties and by designing clear avenues for giving feedback, reporting abuse and expressing concerns.
4. A motion be made by a member of this council to add the Stewards' first three recommendations to the Policy Committee's report under a new heading entitled "Stewards' Report" with numbering consistent with that found in this document. In this way we hope to contribute our voice to the creation of lasting resolutions for the future of the Steward Program within all future councils of the WCRC.