Instructions for Consistories
2019 Year-End Consistorial Report Form

The Consistorial Report Form (CRF) system will be open on January 1, 2020. The following instructions, as well as an instructional video that walks you through the submission process, are posted at **crf.rca.org**. These written instructions are also available in Spanish, Korean, and Mandarin. The video is recorded in English and offers Spanish, Korean, and Mandarin subtitles.

Questions about how to interpret the form or about your congregation's statistics should be directed to your classis stated clerk. Your clerk's contact information is found at the top of the page once you have logged into the system. Questions about technical difficulties experienced while completing the CRF should be emailed to **crfhelp@rca.org**. The helpdesk will need your congregation's name, username, and classis in order to respond to your request.

Your stated clerk will provide you with your classis's deadline for completing the CRF. This is the final date on which CRF submissions will be accepted and the final date on which you may make corrections to your congregation's CRF. If your congregation's CRF is not submitted by this date, data from the previous year, including membership and financial statistics, will be used for the year ending December 31, 2019. Please note that with the adoption by General Synod 2019 of the covenant shares method of funding denominational work (www.rca.org/covenantshares, pending final adoption by General Synod 2020), covenant shares for organized churches will be based on total contributions as reported on line 21 of the CRF. If an organized congregation did not submit Part 1B of the CRF in 2018 and does not submit Part 1B in 2019, covenant shares for 2021 will be calculated by adding lines 18b (special offerings) and 18e (general offerings) from the last year Part 1B was completed, plus 5 percent.

Logging in: You can access the electronic form at **crf.rca.org**. You will need to enter your congregation's username in the "Username" field. (Your classis stated clerk should have supplied your church's username, which will be the letter A followed by numbers). The universal password is Crf2019! This password is case sensitive.

Completing the form: The screen you see once you are logged in is called your CRF dashboard. You will see that the online CRF is divided into six separate sections. Each section corresponds to one section of the printed CRF. Dividing the form into sections enables you to fill out the sections individually as you have the information available.

If you would like a printed copy of the CRF form to use as a worksheet, you can download a blank CRF from the CRF dashboard. Click the gray "Download a sample CRF" button found in the upper right-hand corner. If you click the arrow on the right side of the button, you will get a drop-down menu that will allow you to choose which translation of the form you would like to download.

There are two columns of buttons aligned with the CRF section titles. The middle "Status" column lets you know whether each section of your CRF is complete or incomplete. In the right-hand "Action" column, you will click on the blue "Start" button of each individual section to fill it out. When you are finished entering that section's information, click the green "Save" button at the bottom of the form to save your responses. You will be returned to CRF dashboard, where

you can click the blue "Start" button for the next form you'd like to fill out. Your CRF is considered fully submitted only when you have completed and submitted all six sections.

The system is not able to save a partially-completed section. If you have left any required fields (marked with an asterisk [*]) blank, the system will not allow you to save that portion of the form. If you close out of a section before completing it and clicking the green "Save" button, or if you click the "Cancel" button at the bottom of the screen, your answers will **not** be saved.

When you have finished and submitted a section, the blue button will change from "Start" to "Edit." Clicking "Edit" will enable you to make corrections to a previously-submitted section. (For the "Elders and Deacons" section and the Retirement Security Form, the blue button changes to "Start Another" rather than "Edit.")

In Part 1A, you will see your congregation's responses from 2018 to the right of each answer field for reference.

Part 1B, the financial stewardship section, was reviewed and updated in 2018 in order to make this portion of the form easier for consistories to complete.

Special note for union and federated congregations regarding Part 1B: Union and federated churches should report only the RCA portion of their financial statistics, in the same proportion as they report membership statistics. A church that does not keep separate membership rolls should divide its full financial numbers by the number of denominations in the union or federation (for example, a church that is a union church of the RCA and one other denomination should report half of its full financial numbers). A church that keeps separate membership rolls should multiply its full financial numbers by the percentage of its membership that is RCA (for example, a federated church whose membership is 64 percent RCA should multiply its full financial numbers by 0.64).

In Part 2A, the open-ended questions, a box with the complete question text will appear to the left when you click on the answer field.

In the "Elders and Deacons" section, enter information **only for elders and deacons elected during 2019**. Click the green "Add New Elder/Deacon" button. A form will appear. Fill out the requested information, then click the green "Create Elder/Deacon" button. Repeat this process for each new elder and deacon. When you have added all new elders and deacons elected in 2019, click the green "Save" button at the bottom of the screen.

Printing a copy: Once all sections of your CRF are completed and submitted, you can use the dark blue "Download Completed CRF" button in the upper right-hand corner of the CRF dashboard screen to download, save, and print a PDF copy of your CRF.

Corrections after submission of your CRF: You can make corrections to data you have submitted until the deadline your classis clerk has given you. Simply click the blue "Edit" button in the "Action" column for the section of the form you'd like to edit. Make your change and click the green "Save" button at the bottom of the form. Be sure to print an updated copy using the "Download Completed CRF" button once you return to the CRF dashboard. If you need to correct data after the submission deadline has passed, you must contact your classis stated clerk to see if it is still possible to make your correction.

Retirement Security Form: This form is not part of the CRF; however, in order to comply with U.S. federal regulations, all organized congregations in the U.S. must complete this form for each minister and lay employee who is enrolled in the 403(b) retirement plan. Congregations that are vacant or who do not have a minister or any lay employees enrolled in the 403(b) retirement plan do not need to fill out the Retirement Security Form. The information is submitted directly to RCA Benefits Services and is confidential. You will not be able to edit these forms after submission. If you wish to make a change, you must contact **retirement@rca.org**.

Historical data: If you scroll down on your congregation's CRF dashboard, you will see a section entitled "History." Here you can view and compare historical data for your congregation from 2012 to the present. Once you've submitted a 2019 form, those responses will appear in the historical tables. You can also download a PDF of a previous year's CRF by clicking the green arrows next to the data.

Statistical analysis: In the summer of 2020, the 2019 statistics will be added to the statistical analysis page at **crf.rca.org/public**.