



News & Resources

Vision 2020 Team Report

Friends,

Two years and a few weeks ago, General Synod approved the formation of a Vision 2020 Team.

Don Poest, who was interim general secretary at the time and would soon hand over the reins to Eddy Alemán, spoke honestly about the deep divisions he saw within the RCA, including, but not limited to, views of sexuality. Don called for the team, and synod agreed. (Rereading [Don's report](#) is a good way to prepare yourself for the Vision 2020 report: lots of context, and some helpful reminders.)

The team initially looked into three “future scenarios” for the RCA: staying together, radical restructure, and grace-filled separation. After thousands of hours of research, discernment, and feedback, they arrived at a combo of the three.

Along with its report, the Vision 2020 Team released a brief discussion guide, which includes this note:

Grace and peace to you in Jesus. We, as the Vision 2020 Team, recognize that with this report our work is largely over for now and your work is just beginning. We know that everyone has deep and valid feelings about the future of the RCA, and about the work we have done—we have those feelings ourselves. We are asking for you to take our work and use it in your own reflection and discernment as you prepare for General Synod 2021. We hope you are able both to make space for personal reflection, and to create discussion forums with your congregations, leadership teams, and colleagues.

Would you please consider a few suggestions for interacting with this report?

1. We hand this over to you now with a mixture of gratitude, love, hope, fatigue and concern. Please remember that we are human beings who have done our best, and we are committed to praying for you and for the RCA as we all take on this next phase of the work together.

2. Please accept our work as the result of a genuine process of discernment. We didn't get everything right but we did sense the presence of God in our work and we worked hard to listen to God's guidance.

3. We know that we couldn't say everything. If you notice something is missing, please consider that we probably thought about it but it didn't make the final edit for a number of reasons (length being the biggest factor). We conducted interviews with dozens of people and spent hundreds of hours discussing the issues that they presented to us. Something may have been discussed at length and may have deeply influenced us and still not be explicitly named in the report.

4. We are acutely aware that not everybody will be happy or comfortable with everything that is being proposed. Even our own group did not always agree. Please understand that as a group we tried to discern God's best for all involved and with an eye on the future of the RCA and God's Church, over our own individual preferences.

5. We have a strong value around the discernment of God's will taking place within the faith community. Although the recommendations have now been made, please still consider yourselves to be part of that discernment, as we all reflect and offer feedback throughout the coming year. We value your opinions and look forward to a year of community prayer, listening, asking questions, considering new ideas, speaking the truth in love, and ultimately planning together for the future of the RCA.

[Read their report.](#)

What's next? This report was scheduled to be considered and voted on at General Synod 2020, which was postponed due to COVID-19. A special session of General Synod was set for the fall, but that has also been called off because of the pandemic. Instead, the team's final report will come to General Synod 2021 next June for consideration.

In the meantime, pray. Talk to your friends in the denomination, including people who share your perspective and people who see things differently. Spend some time with the [discussion questions from the Vision 2020 Team](#). Over the coming year there will be opportunities for discussing the report with others in your region. These gatherings will be held from October to May, organized and led by Vision 2020 Team members, General Synod officers, and the RCA's Executive Leadership Team. Depending on pandemic conditions, these events may be held in person with an online option, or exclusively online.

Also in the meantime, a subcommittee of the Vision 2020 Team will work with the Commission on Church Order on the proposed changes to the *Book of Church Order* referenced in the Vision 2020 Team's report.