

Edwin Mulder, Reformed church leader, dies at age 89

As general secretary of the Reformed Church in America, he led his denomination in standing against apartheid.

by [Christian Century staff](#) in the [June 20, 2018](#) issue



Edwin Mulder. Photo courtesy of the [Reformed Church in America](#).

Edwin Mulder, a Reformed church leader, died on May 1 at age 89, in Holland, Michigan.

He was general secretary of the Reformed Church in America from 1983 to 1994. Before working for one denomination, he served as a pastor at Marble Collegiate Church in New York City, among others.

“Ed Mulder led the Reformed Church in America with pastoral wisdom, evangelical warmth, ecumenical vision, and prophetic clarity,” said Wes Granberg-Michaelson, who succeeded Mulder as general secretary, in a tribute on the RCA website. “Ed laid the groundwork for the Formula of Agreement, committed to healing the centuries-old division between Reformed and Lutheran traditions.”

He led his denomination in standing against apartheid, divesting funds from South Africa and breaking off relations with the white church there, according to the RCA tribute.

His obituary notes that “he never sought conflict and was revered for looking at the situation through the other person’s eyes.” But when something mattered to him deeply—such as women’s ordination in the RCA or, most recently, LGBTQ inclusion in the church—“he would hold nothing back.”

A version of this article appears in the print edition under the title “People: Edwin Mulder.”