

1 **2005 REPORT OF THE STRATEGIC PLANNING COMMITTEE**
2 **TO THE ADMINISTRATIVE COMMITTEE**
3 **AND 2005 PCA GENERAL ASSEMBLY**

4 **I. Overview**

5 The task given to the Strategic Planning Committee (SPC) was overwhelmingly large.
6 Obviously, if every thought developed, every word spoken and every action taken were
7 documented in this report, it would be too much to publish or digest. Therefore, those
8 detailed documents have been abridged and streamlined to give Commissioners to General
9 Assembly a clear but brief conceptual overview of the reasoning and intention behind
10 recommendations made. The detailed documents are available for download from the
11 Strategic Planning website (<http://www.pcaac.org/StrategicPlan.htm>). Interested parties,
12 who do not have access to the Internet, may contact the PCA Stated Clerk's Office at 678-
13 825-1000 for assistance.

14 In putting its work plan together for the 2004-2005 year, the SPC needed to focus on a
15 limited number of important but accomplishable tasks. The Five Perspectives in Section II
16 introduce the Committee's reasoning behind its choice of work toward implementing the
17 four strategic priorities outlined in previous years' work. Section III describes the five-year
18 strategic planning process and highlights key information to give perspective for decisions
19 regarding the conclusions and recommendations in this report.

20 The SPC organized itself into task forces in order to accomplish its work plan. Sections IV
21 through X articulate the work and recommendations of each of these task forces. ***Section XI***
22 ***consolidates all recommendations into one focal point for Assembly action.***

23 **II. Five Perspectives**

24 Since the inception of this process in 2000, driven by the love of Christ for His Church, the
25 participants in this process have sought to answer the question, "What are the signs of a
26 healthy denomination and how can the PCA become more healthy?" As the General
27 Assembly debates the specific conclusions and recommendations resulting from this
28 process, the reader needs to know five things that have become increasingly apparent to the
29 Committee over the last five years.

30 First is the preeminence of Christ, as well expressed in the preface to the *BCO*.

31 Christ, as King, has given to His church officers, oracles and ordinances; and
32 especially has He ordained therein His system of doctrine, government, discipline
33 and worship, all of which are either expressly set down in Scripture, or by good and
34 necessary inference may be deduced therefrom; and to which things He commands
35 that nothing be added, and that from them naught be taken away (Preface, *BCO*).

1 Second is the importance of the local church. The denomination is most healthy when it is
2 composed of an increasing number of healthy churches. Ministry at the denominational level
3 is no substitute for local ministry and worship.

4 Third is the importance of the Presbytery to cooperative ministry. Our commitment to the
5 inerrant Word, the lordship of Christ, the *Westminster Standards*, and Presbyterian polity do
6 more than enable cooperative ministry; they demand cooperative ministry. The genius of
7 Presbyterianism is not only its doctrine and polity, but also the emphasis on the Presbytery.
8 A denomination exists because churches united in common ministry represent the unity in
9 God's kingdom.

10 Fourth is the importance of the General Assembly in contributing to the health of the
11 denomination. The participants in the strategic planning process were inevitably compelled
12 to focus on the General Assembly, asking questions such as Assembly make-up, how issues
13 are dealt with, who attends General Assembly and why. Again, the following excerpts from
14 the *BCO* illustrate why the General Assembly is so vitally important to the health of the
15 denomination:

16 The General Assembly is the highest court of this Church, and represents in one
17 body all the churches thereof. It bears the title of The General Assembly of the
18 Presbyterian Church in America, and constitutes the bond of union, peace and
19 correspondence among all its congregations and courts.

20 Principles for the Organization of the Assembly:

- 21 1. The Church is responsible for carrying out the Great Commission.
- 22 2. The initiative for carrying out the Great Commission belongs to the Church at
23 every court level, and the Assembly is responsible to encourage and promote the
24 fulfillment of this ministry by the various courts.
- 25 3. The work of the Church as set forth in the Great Commission is one work, being
26 implemented at the General Assembly level through equally essential
27 committees.
- 28 4. It is the responsibility of every member and every member congregation to
29 support the whole work of the denomination as they be led in their conscience
30 held captive to the Word of God.
- 31 5. It is the responsibility of the General Assembly to evaluate needs and resources,
32 and to act on priorities for the most effective fulfillment of the Great
33 Commission.
- 34 6. The Church recognizes the right of individuals and congregations to labor
35 through other [non-PCA] agencies in fulfilling the Great Commission.
- 36 7. The Assembly's committees are to serve and not to direct any Church
37 judicatories. They are not to establish policy, but rather execute policy
38 established by the General Assembly.
- 39 8. The committees serve the Church through the duties assigned by the General
40 Assembly. (*BCO* 14-1)

1 Fifth is the role and importance of the Committees and Agencies in carrying out the work of
2 the General Assembly in training, equipping, mobilizing, and providing resources to assist in
3 the ministries of the churches. The following excerpts delineate the role of the Committees
4 and Agencies:

5 The General Assembly shall have power: ...

6 f. To institute and superintend the agencies necessary in the general work of
7 evangelization; to appoint ministers of such labors as fall under its
8 jurisdiction (*BCO* 14-6)

9 The affairs and programs of the General Assembly shall be conducted
10 primarily through its Permanent Committees and Agencies (“RAO” 4-1).¹

11 The Administrative Committee shall function as a service committee to the
12 General Assembly and the denomination. The Committees on Christian
13 Education, Mission to North America, Mission to the World, and Reformed
14 University Ministries shall be known as Program Committees. (“RAO” 4-2).

15 The budget for each permanent committee and agency shall be submitted to
16 the Administrative Committee of General Assembly which shall
17 independently evaluate the proposed budget of each permanent committee
18 and agency and report to the Assembly its considered opinion on the
19 adoption. (“RAO” 4-11).

20 The strategic planning process has made the importance of membership awareness apparent.
21 Awareness must begin with a commitment of teaching elders and ruling elders to the mission,
22 identity, values and strategic priorities of the denomination and to communicating these in
23 such a way that local churches can be part of a dynamic movement. In 30 years, the
24 denomination has grown rapidly – the Lord has greatly blessed the PCA! If the denomination
25 grows at the same rate over the next thirty years, it is entirely possible that the denomination could
26 encompass more than one million members. It is the fervent prayer of the participants in the
27 strategic planning process that the changes recommended would facilitate such growth. However,
28 the participants are fully cognizant that only by the grace of God and the power of His Spirit can
29 the PCA be the denomination for which we pray.

30 Respectfully submitted in close cooperation with the Coordinators of the Committees and
31 Agencies of the denomination.

32 Ruling Elders

33 Frank Brock (chair)

34 Joel Belz

35 Sam Duncan

36 Bebo Elkin

37 Glen Fogle

38 Harry Hargrave

Teaching Elders

Frank Barker

Will Barker

Dave Clelland

Ligon Duncan

Wayne Herring

Bill Lyle

¹ *RAO* is the acronym for *Rules of Assembly Operations*.

1	Jack Williamson	Roy Taylor (Advisory)
2	Mike Wilson	
3	<u>Agency Heads</u>	<u>Committee Heads</u>
4	Bryan Chapell	Jim Bland
5	Covenant Theological Seminary	Mission to North America
6	Bill Kuh	Charles Dunahoo
7	Retirement & Benefits, Inc.	Christian Education and Publications
8	Niel Nielson	Paul Kooistra
9	Covenant College	Mission to the World
10	Mo Up De Graff	Rod Mays
11	Ridge Haven Conference Center	Reformed University Ministries
12	Randy Stair	Roy Taylor
13	PCA Foundation	Administrative Committee
14	<u>Advisory Members (Teaching Elders)</u>	
15	David Coffin	
16	Eliot Lee	
17	Roy Taylor	
18	<u>Staff Assistant</u>	
19	Diane Hitzfeld	

20 **III. The Development of the Plan**

21 In 2000, the nine heads of the Committees and Agencies recognized the need for the
 22 denomination, which had grown considerably since its inception almost 30 years earlier, to
 23 develop a plan for the future. They forwarded suggestions for developing such a plan to the
 24 Administrative Committee, which made specific recommendations to the General Assembly.
 25 The 2000 General Assembly elected a 24-person Strategic Planning Steering Committee
 26 composed of 10 ruling elders, 10 teaching elders and 4 women. The Steering Committee
 27 was authorized to raise support.

28 The Committee began to meet, raised about \$65,000, gathered information and discussed
 29 possible ways of performing strategic planning. The planning process was divided into two
 30 phases:

31 Phase I would seek to build consensus on the PCA's identity, mission, values and
 32 strategic priorities.

33 Phase II would build on the consensus developed in Phase I and would consider how to
 34 implement these strategic priorities within the PCA's structure, resources and
 35 leadership.

1 For the next two years, the Steering Committee worked on Phase I. At the 30th General
 2 Assembly in Birmingham in 2002, the Steering Committee presented its report and the
 3 Assembly took three actions:

- 4 - It received the draft report summarizing the work to-date, and asked that the report
 5 be passed on to the presbyteries for further review and input.
- 6 - It asked presbyteries to report their reactions and findings to the Steering Committee
 7 by March of 2003.
- 8 - It authorized the continuing work of the Steering Committee over the next year,
 9 anticipating further discussion and possible action in the June 2003 Assembly.

10 Though General Assembly asked all Presbyteries and all Committees and Agencies to
 11 consider the work of the committee, only 17 Presbyteries actively participated in a planning
 12 process. At the 2003 General Assembly, the Strategic Planning Steering Committee,
 13 working through the Administrative Committee, presented a booklet, *Being Revived +*
 14 *Bringing Reformation*. Following are excerpts from that booklet.

15 **Excerpts from *Being Revived + Bringing Reformation***

- 16 • **PCA Identity**
 17 Biblical inerrancy and authority Mutual accountability
 18 A reformed-covenantal theology Cooperative ministry
- 19 • **PCA Mission**
 20 The mission of the Presbyterian Church in America is to glorify and enjoy God by
 21 equipping and enabling the churches of the PCA to work together to fulfill the
 22 Great Commission by making disciples of all nations, so that people will mature as
 23 servants of the triune God, will worship God in spirit and truth, and will have a
 24 reforming impact on culture.
- 25 • **PCA Values**
 26 Accountability Love
 27 Cooperation Obedience
 28 Faithfulness Prayer
 29 Fidelity Worship
- 30 • **PCA Vision**
 31 The PCA, through the General Assembly, its Committees, Agencies and
 32 Presbyteries, should guide, connect and support local churches and presbyteries
 33 so that they work together to fulfill our mission statement. In short: *Being*
 34 *Revived and Bringing Reformation*.
- 35 • **PCA Strategic Priorities**
 36 1. Empower church health and growth for new and existing churches local and
 37 worldwide
 38 2. Develop leadership for the future
 39 3. Increase denominational understanding and effectiveness
 40 4. Engage the culture – timeless truth for our times

- 1 • **Most Ideas Generated for Change Fall Into These General Categories**
2 A feeling of disenfranchisement (by both small churches and some large churches)
3 Cultural non-awareness
4 Leadership training
5 Alternate credentialing and growth of ethnically targeted churches
6 Church meeting designs/processes
7 Women's issues

8 Following the 2003 General Assembly, the Strategic Planning Committee began Phase II of
9 the Planning Process to consider what changes would be needed in the PCA's structure,
10 resources and leadership to implement the Strategic Priorities identified in *Being Revived +*
11 *Bringing Reformation*. A subcommittee diligently worked to identify a few realizable and
12 worthwhile goals among the many possibilities that had been suggested by those
13 participating in the process.

14 In 2004, the Committee submitted a framework for Phase II. Among the many possible
15 initiatives, the Committee chose three to begin the implementation process. Following are
16 excerpts from that report to GA regarding the three initiatives.

- 17 • **Engaging Ruling Elders**
18 Securing the historic blessing and critical contribution of informed and
19 committed ruling elder leadership at all levels of the PCA's governance for the
20 sake of her biblical guidance, continuing vitality and the sustained faithfulness of
21 future generations

- 22 • **Preparing The Next Generation**
23 Addressing the need for coordination of the work of the committees and agencies
24 in supporting presbyteries and churches in their ministry to the needs of youth
25 and in the development of the denomination's next generation of leaders.

- 26 • **Organizing Resources To Better Serve Our Corporate Mission**
27 Providing fact-based analysis and proposals regarding ways to fund, organize and
28 evaluate the agencies and committees of the denomination so that presbyteries
29 and churches are best served for the fulfillment of our corporate Gospel calling.

- 30 1. Structural Issues
31 a. Relate and collaborate
32 b. Evaluate efficiency, effectiveness
33 c. Governance
34 d. External review
35 e. Budgets and method of funding
36 f. Resources available to presbyteries
37 g. General Assembly
38 h. Presbytery meetings
39 i. Consultants, surveys, etc.

- 1 2. Resources
- 2 a. Equity
- 3 b. Proximity
- 4 c. Proportionality
- 5 d. Strategic and innovative
- 6 e. Transparency, accountability, results
- 7 f. Denominational support
- 8 g. Research, coordination, strategic thinking

9 Noting that some members of the original 2000 Committee had resigned or failed to
10 participate, the 2004 General Assembly gave the Committee authority to add new members,
11 subject to approval by the Administrative Committee, and authorized the Committee to raise
12 further funds to complete the next phase. The Committee suggested that as much as
13 \$300,000 would be required.

14 Immediately following General Assembly, the Steering Committee newly constituted itself
15 as the Strategic Planning Committee (SPC), accepted resignations and added 3 new
16 members. To begin its work, pledges amounting to \$185,000 were secured. The Committee
17 planned a total of 7 two-day face-to-face meetings in Atlanta. It interviewed prospective
18 consultants to aid in the process and selected one. The Committee divided its work and
19 assigned task forces to address particular issues.

20 The following is the final report of the Strategic Planning Committee and its specific
21 recommendations for changes in the *BCO* or “RAO”:

- 22 **IV. Survey Task Force**
- 23 **V. External Validation Task Force**
- 24 **VI. Statistical Analysis**
- 25 **VII. Task Force on Engaging Ruling Elders**
- 26 **VIII. Task Force on Preparing the Next Generation**
- 27 **IX. General Assembly Task Force**
- 28 **X. Joint Task Force on Continuing Collaboration and Funding**
- 29 **XI. Recommendations**