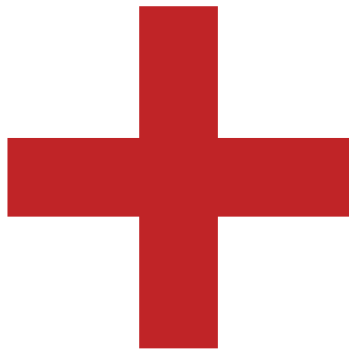


**BEING  
REVIVED**



**BRINGING  
REFORMATION**

HIGHLIGHTS OF THE REPORT OF THE  
PCA STRATEGIC PLANNING COMMITTEE  
TO 2005 GENERAL ASSEMBLY

## INTRODUCTION



At the recommendation of the Coordinators of the General Assembly's Committees and Agencies and the Administrative Committee, the 2000 General Assembly created a Strategic Planning Steering Committee, composed of ten teaching elders, ten ruling elders and four women.

After three years of work, the Steering Committee rendered its report and published a Framework for Planning for the presbyteries and churches of the Presbyterian Church in America, BEING REVIVED + BRINGING REFORMATION (available from the CE&P Bookstore at [www.CEPBookstore.com](http://www.CEPBookstore.com)).

Now, two years later, a reconstituted Strategic Planning Committee, in close collaboration with the Coordinators, reports the Highlights of the Strategic Planning Committee's Report.

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## THE VISION & FOUNDATION



In BEING REVIVED + BRINGING REFORMATION, the Strategic Planning Steering Committee wrote: "Out of its unwavering commitment to the inerrancy of Scripture and the reformed faith, and in obedience to the Great Commission, the PCA will pursue the following four strategic priorities to accomplish its vision:

- Empower church health and growth for new and existing churches local and worldwide
- Develop leadership for the future
- Increase denominational understanding and effectiveness
- Engage the culture—timeless truth for our times"

Since the formation of the newly reconstituted Strategic Planning Committee (SPC) in 2004, participants in this process have sought to answer the question, "What are the signs of a healthy denomination and how can the PCA become more healthy?" Five perspectives have become increasingly apparent as critical to answering these questions:

- the preeminence of Christ
- the importance of the local church
- the importance of cooperative ministry
- the importance of the General Assembly in contributing to the health of the denomination
- the importance of the Committees and Agencies in carrying out the work of the General Assembly.

With these principles in mind, we have submitted our report and recommendations. The full report, along with detailed backup documents, is available on the Strategic Planning web page: [www.pcaac.org/StrategicPlan.htm](http://www.pcaac.org/StrategicPlan.htm). While the report presented to Commissioners to the General Assembly is an executive summary, it is still over 90 pages long. We hope these Highlights will give you an overview and draw you into the full report.

## WHAT WE LEARNED FROM PCA LEADERS



From a professional survey of almost 900 PCA ordained and non-ordained leaders (almost 1/5 female), we learned:

- Assessment of the denomination as a whole
  - There is an overall optimism with the PCA's leadership in terms of attitude toward the church and its work.
  - Progress toward denominational strategic priorities is slow.
  - "Biblical" is the most frequently cited descriptor.
  - The top three negative descriptors used for the PCA include "doctrinal arrogance," "cultural homogeneity" and "rigidity."
- Assessment of local church relationship to the PCA
  - There is strong loyalty to the denomination. Churches do not see denominational involvement at the church level as important, and also do not see denominational support as a high priority.
- View of Committees and Agencies
  - Much of the work of the Committees and Agencies is unfamiliar to a majority of denominational leaders.
  - Leaders do not see much of a connection of Committee and Agency work to their local churches.
- Committee and Agency funding
  - There is a strong consensus (90%) that all churches should be giving something to denominational ministries.
  - There is little understanding of the PCA's "Partnership Shares."
- General Assembly input
  - The "work" aspects of GA clearly get the strongest endorsements as reasons attend. No particular barrier dominated as a reason not to attend. Total cost, weekday meetings and the overall length of GA.

2.3

## WHAT WE LEARNED FROM LEADERS IN OTHER DENOMINATIONS



- Highlights from interviews with leaders of five other denominations
  - Developing a culture of trust is critical to denominational effectiveness, and many denominations struggle in this area.
  - Periodic and systematic self-studies are common and seen as valuable by most denominations.
  - Most solutions to executive authority and denominational accountability balance the tension between central/decentralized authority and the need for local autonomy.
  - The understanding that Scripture does not support ordaining women to eldership is a clear distinctive of the PCA and will help define the PCA's relations with other ecclesiastical groups.
  - Some denominations have developed creative solutions for financial assistance (capital support) for church planting and growth.
  - Several denominations have developed explicit quantifiable systems for tracking/analyzing performance, managing accountability, and broadly communicating results.
  - Most denominations are experiencing erosion in denominational loyalty and giving levels. Most are seeking solutions rooted in a clearer description of mission/purpose, more clearly defining denominational identity, and providing value to member churches.
  - Most denominations have very strong expectations with respect to denominational giving. The PCA is out-of-step in this regard.

## WHAT WE LEARNED FROM STATISTICS REPORTED BY CHURCHES



Currently, 60-65% of churches respond to the Stated Clerk's Annual Survey by reporting their membership and giving information to the denomination. This 2/3 response is actually a very good indicator of the whole. [Note: the following information is based on 2003 figures.]

→ **By 2028, the PCA may be a large denomination (1 million members).**

Membership growth overall is 4.7%, but has slowed to 2.5% over the past ten years.

The number of churches has grown 2.23% since the PCA began.

The number of PCA pastors has been growing at 6.7% annually.

→ **Only 61% of the 3,320 PCA pastors have congregational calls.**

Other large categories are: Out-of-bounds and Chaplains (15%), Retired (9%), Committees and Agencies (8%) and Without Call (7%).

→ **Three geographic areas account for 83.4% of the denomination:**

South Atlantic (41.8%), North East (21.8%) and Mid-south (21.8)

→ **Most churches have less than 200 members (75%) but 75% of the total membership is in churches with more than 200 members.**

→ **Contributions to local churches have grown considerably and are \$2,119 per capita. Benevolences by local churches, currently \$392 per capita, are growing very slowly.**

→ **Current operating expenses account for 69% of church disbursements.** Only 4% of church disbursements go to Assembly ministries (not counting contributions to individual missionaries, campus ministers, etc.)

→ **The support for denominational ministries** is being shared relatively evenly by churches across size categories: 1-200 member churches (25%), 201-400 member churches (26%), 401-1000 members (20%), and 1000+ members (29%).

## HOW THE PCA IS PREPARING THE NEXT GENERATION



### → 2006 RECOMMENDATIONS

- Ruling elder training should not only cover theology and polity but also leadership, discipleship and ministry involvement.
- Pastors and sessions should avail themselves of the resources and material available through Christian Education and Publications (CE&P) and other appropriate sources.
- CE&P should gather material and resources from pastors and sessions that are training elders well in order to expand and make available more resources.
- Presbyteries should consider providing ruling elder continuing education opportunities.
- General Assembly should provide, from time-to-time, continuing education opportunities for ruling elders during pre-Assembly seminars.

Note: For more information on charts on either page, see pages 2244-2253 in the 2005 PCA General Assembly Commissioner Handbook.

## HOW WE ARE ENGAGING RULING ELDERS



### → 2006 RECOMMENDATIONS

- That the GA direct Christian Education and Publications, Covenant College, Covenant Theological Seminary, Reformed University Ministries and Ridge Haven to meet annually to evaluate, plan, and share information on how the PCA can better demonstrate its commitment to disciple the next generation with greater effectiveness.
- That relevant information be shared on a regular basis through various events, websites, and publications with the presbyteries and local churches within the PCA in order to continue to demonstrate a clear and strong denominational emphasis on ministry to the rising generation, as well as a commitment to help local churches in their ministry in that task.

Note: For more information on charts on either page, see pages 2253-2258 in the 2005 PCA General Assembly Commissioner Handbook.

**WHAT WE  
RECOMMEND  
REGARDING  
GENERAL  
ASSEMBLY**



6.7

→ Five desirable outcomes guided the hundreds of hours of work on improving the General Assembly meeting:

- Achieve a general balance between teaching and ruling elder commissioners to General Assembly.
- Make attendance at GA a significantly desirable and edifying experience.
- Do the work of the court effectively and efficiently to allow significant time for events and activities that equip, connect, encourage and inspire the leaders of the Church.
- Make GA a self-supporting event.
- Create an atmosphere/meeting where only issues of significance are approved and debated on the floor of GA.

→ Proposed BCO and “RAO” changes will achieve four major improvements:

- Revised Procedure for GA Floor Debate – helps create “one accord” among the elders of the denomination by securing broad support for actions. Avoids parliamentary complexity, which frustrates participation and deflects consideration of substantial issues.
- Revised Bills and Overtures Committee – Makes provision for full deliberation and full representation in deliberation, otherwise not possible in a large Assembly. Fosters approximate balance of teaching and ruling elders in consideration of most important issues. Allows access to all interested observers. Allows minority reports to be fully presented and debated.
- Revised Committee of Commissioners – Allows the Committees and Agencies appointed by the Assembly to report their work directly to the Assembly while allowing independent review, with the possibility of alternative proposals growing out of that review, as well as full debate concerning such alternatives.

- Revised Review of Presbytery Records — Makes clear the significance of the Committee’s report and the Assembly’s actions in first finding exceptions of substance, and provides due process, and a means for a settled decision for presbyteries alleged to have exceptions of substance.

In these new procedures, the most important aspects of GA will be preserved and streamlined while the right of any minority to have a voice will be protected. A super-majority allows the Assembly to respond to urgent and appropriate new business.

Because the proposed “RAO” changes are quite lengthy and there is a lot of material to comprehend, the SPC is recommending two BCO changes for consideration in 2005. They pertain to BCO 15-4 and BCO 40-5 (see chart on next page). The balance of the material will be put forth for consideration in 2006 after the body has had a year to study it. The “RAO” changes are included in the 2005 report to GA for this purpose, but are not put forth as recommendations. The full set of recommendations is available on the SPC web page ([www.pcaac.org/StrategicPlan.htm](http://www.pcaac.org/StrategicPlan.htm)), but an overview by subject is presented in the table on the next page.

Note: For more information, see pages 2259-2281 in the 2005 PCA General Assembly Commissioner Handbook.

Administrative Committee & hosting of General Assembly	“RAO” 9-7
Bills & Overtures committee	“RAO” 11-4 “RAO” 14 (all proposals)
Closing argument rule	“RAO” 17-4.b
Committee on Constitutional Business (revised with respect to the proposed changes to the Bills & Overtures committee)	“RAO” 7-2 “RAO” 10-5
New Business at General Assembly	“RAO” 10-2 “RAO” 10-9 “RAO” 12-2 “RAO” 12-3
Report of permanent Committees & Agencies and committees of commissioners (Note: Some conforming amendments relevant to the new Bills & Overtures committee are also included here.)	“RAO” 11-1 “RAO” 11-2 “RAO” 11-3 “RAO” 11-5 “RAO” 13 (all proposals)
Review of Presbytery Records and “exceptions”	<i>BCO</i> 15-4 <i>BCO</i> 40-5 “RAO” 14-10.c “RAO” 15-2

### RECOMMENDED COLLABORATION & FUNDING OF GA MINISTRIES



The SPC recommends the formation of the Cooperative Ministries Committee (CMC), composed of the Coordinators and Chairmen of the permanent Committees and Agencies, as well as six current and former moderators as advisors. Its purpose is threefold:

- Continue long-range planning for the PCA as a whole
- Resolve conflicts/issues between denominational ministries
- Improve collaboration between denominational ministries

#### → 2006 RECOMMENDATIONS

The full set of recommendations establishing the CMC as a special committee is available on the SPC web page ([www.pcaac.org/StrategicPlan.htm](http://www.pcaac.org/StrategicPlan.htm)). They pertain to “RAO” 4-4. “RAO” Article VII. Addition of “RAO” 4-19 and 4-20 specifies interagency communication and involvement.

#### → Three funding matters are referred to the Administrative Committee:

- General funding matters outlined in materials proposed, but not adopted, by the SPC are recommended for referral to the proposed CMC, if enacted, for further study, evaluation, and recommendations through the AC by 2007.
- The matters of format to be used for budget preparation and the process for arrival of recommended budgets at General Assembly.
- The matters of the amounts presented in applicable Committee and Agency budgets for Partnership Shares requests and the principles and methodology for determining how undesignated gifts from churches are to be distributed.

Note: For more information, see pages 2282-2291 in the 2005 PCA General Assembly Commissioner Handbook.

**WHO WE WISH  
TO THANK  
FOR SUPPORT**



10.11

**CHURCHES**

Catalina Foothills PCA, TUCSON, AZ  
Cheltenham PCA, CHELTENHAM, PA  
ChristChurch PCA, NORMAL, IL  
Covenant PCA, CHATTANOOGA, TN  
Covenant PCA, LITTLE ROCK, AR  
Covenant PCA, ST. LOUIS, MO  
Covenant Reformed PCA, ASHEVILLE, NC  
Eastern Shore PCA, FAIRHOPE, AL  
Evangel PCA, WICHITA, KS  
Fifth Street PCA, TYLER, TX  
First PCA, CHATTANOOGA, TN  
First PCA, FLORALA, AL  
First PCA, GREENVILLE, AL  
First PCA, JACKSON, MS  
First PCA, MACON, GA  
Good Shepherd PCA, ST. LOUIS, MO  
Grace PCA, DALTON, GA  
Heritage PCA, EDMUND, OK  
Heritage Reformed PCA, EUREKA, MO  
Hunt Valley PCA, HUNT VALLEY, MD  
Kirk of the Hills PCA, ST. LOUIS, MO  
Korean PCA of ST. LOUIS, MO  
Memorial PCA, ST. LOUIS, MO  
Naperville PCA, NAPERVILLE, IL  
New Covenant PCA, ABINGDON, ME  
New Hope PCA, FAIRFAX, VA  
Orangewood PCA, MAITLAND, FL  
Park Cities PCA, DALLAS, TX  
Peace PCA, CARY, NC  
Redeemer PCA, WACO, TX  
Riveroaks PCA, GERMANTOWN, TN  
Seven Rivers PCA, LECANTO, FL  
St. Paul's PCA, ORLANDO, FL  
Trinity PCA, MONTGOMERY, AL  
Trinity PCA, OPELIKA, AL  
Trinity Harbor PCA, ROCKWALL, TX  
Town North PCA, RICHARDSON, TX  
Young Meadows PCA, MONTGOMERY, AL

**PRESBYTERIES**

North Texas Presbytery

**INDIVIDUALS**

Anonymous Donors  
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Joel Belz  
Robert C. (Ric) Cannada, Jr.  
M. C. (Cub) Culbertson  
Samuel J. Duncan  
William F. Farrell  
Ms. Susannah J. Herring  
Ron McNalley  
Kenneth and Virginia Reed  
John M. Weiser  
Robert Wise, Jr.

**FOUNDATIONS**

MacLellan Foundation

**COMMITTEES**

Mission to the World  
Reformed University Ministries

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**VISITS TO  
PRESBYTERIES**



Ascension	David Coffin	New Jersey	David Coffin
Blue Ridge	Jim Bland	New River	David Coffin
Calvary	Rod Mays	New York State	David Coffin
Central Carolina	Joel Belz	North Florida	Bill Lyle
Central Florida	Jim Bland	North Georgia	Bill Kuh
Central Georgia	Roy Taylor	North Texas	Dave Clelland
Chesapeake	David Coffin	Northern California	Sam Duncan
Covenant	Wayne Herring	Northern Illinois	Will Barker
Eastern Canada	Frank Brock	Northern New England	David Coffin
Eastern Carolina	Rod Mays	Ohio Valley	David Coffin
Evangel	Frank Barker	Pacific	Wayne Herring
Fellowship	Mo UpDeGraff	Pacific Northwest	Sam Duncan
Grace	Sam Duncan	Palmetto	Roy Taylor
Great Lakes	Bill Kuh	Philadelphia	Will Barker
Gulf Coast	Bill Kuh	Piedmont Triad	Rod Mays
Heartland	Glenn Fogle	Pittsburgh	Rod Mays
Heritage	David Coffin	Potomac	David Coffin
Houston Metro	Jim Bland	Rocky Mountain	Sam Duncan
Illiana	Bryan Chapell	Savannah River	Bill Lyle
Iowa	Joel Belz	Siouxlands	Will Barker
James River	David Coffin	South Coast	Jim Bland
Korean Capital	Eliot Lee	South Texas	Dave Clelland
Korean Central	Eliot Lee	Southeast Alabama	Jack Williamson
Korean Eastern	Eliot Lee	Southeast Louisiana	Sam Duncan
Korean Northwest	Eliot Lee	Southern Florida	Jim Bland
Korean Southeastern	Eliot Lee	Southern New England	Rod Mays
Korean Southern	Eliot Lee	Southwest Florida	Jack Williamson
Korean Southwest	Eliot Lee	Southwest	Dave Clelland
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Mississippi Valley	Ligon Duncan	Warrior	Paul Kooistra
Missouri	Bryan Chapell	Western Carolina	Joel Belz
Nashville	Wayne Herring	Westminster	Bryan Chapell

## NEXT STEPS



### MAY 2005

The Commissioner Handbook containing the SPC's full report is mailed to registered commissioners to the 2005 General Assembly. The full report is also available on the SPC web page.

### JUNE 15, 2005

At the 8:00 a.m. seminar, SPC's chair, Frank Brock, leads a discussion to inform and answer questions.

At 11:15 a.m., the Committee of Commissioners on Administration presents its recommendations regarding the work of the SPC. The SPC envisions votes on *BCO* changes only, allowing another year to study the more substantive changes to the "RAO".

### JULY 2005—JUNE 2006

Presbyteries will vote on the *BCO* changes. It is hoped a timeslot will be offered for the SPC to also talk about the proposed "RAO" changes. Members of the SPC will attempt to visit every presbytery, to discuss the report and answer questions.

### JUNE 2006

The *Ad Interim* Committee reports to the General Assembly, which votes the second time on the *BCO* changes and the first time on the "RAO" changes, the latter requiring a 2/3 majority for approval.

### JUNE 2007

The Assembly operates under the new rules, if adopted, for the first time.

For more information and periodic updates see:

[WWW.PCAAC.ORG/STRATEGICPLAN.HTM](http://WWW.PCAAC.ORG/STRATEGICPLAN.HTM).