

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
13 678-825-1000 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-
18 year strategic planning process and highlights key information to give perspective for
19 decisions regarding the conclusions and recommendations in this report.

20 The SPC organized itself into task forces in order to accomplish its work plan. Sections
21 IV through X articulate the work and recommendations of each of these task forces.
22 *Section XI 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,
25 the participants in this process have sought to answer the question, "What are the signs of
26 a 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
29 the 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
34 and necessary inference may be deduced therefrom; and to which things He
35 commands that nothing be added, and that from them naught be taken away
36 (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
3 level 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
6 does more than enable cooperative ministry; it demands cooperative ministry. The genius
7 of Presbyterianism is not only its doctrine and polity, but also the emphasis on the
8 presbytery. A denomination exists because churches united in common ministry represent
9 the unity in 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
12 compelled to focus on the General Assembly, asking questions such as Assembly make-
13 up, how issues are dealt with, who attends General Assembly and why. Again, the
14 following excerpts from the *BCO* illustrate why the General Assembly is so vitally
15 important to the health of the 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
23 Church at every court level, and the Assembly is responsible to encourage
24 and promote the 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,
26 being implemented at the General Assembly level through equally
27 essential 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
30 conscience held captive to the Word of God.
- 31 5. It is the responsibility of the General Assembly to evaluate needs and
32 resources, and to act on priorities for the most effective fulfillment of the
33 Great 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
40 General Assembly. (*BCO* 14-1)

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

5 The General Assembly shall have power . . . to institute and
6 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
10 conducted primarily through its Permanent Committees and Agencies
11 (“RAO” 4-1).¹

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

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

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

33 Respectfully submitted in close cooperation with the Coordinators of the Committees and
34 Agencies of the denomination,

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

1	<u>Ruling Elders</u>	<u>Teaching Elders</u>
2	Frank Brock (chair)	Frank Barker
3	Joel Belz	Will Barker
4	Sam Duncan	Dave Clelland
5	Bebo Elkin	Ligon Duncan
6	Glen Fogle	Wayne Herring
7	Harry Hargrave	Bill Lyle
8	Jack Williamson	
9	Mike Wilson	
10	<u>Agency Coordinators</u>	<u>Committee Coordinators</u>
11	Bryan Chapell	Jim Bland
12	Covenant Theological Seminary	Mission to North America
13	Bill Kuh	Charles Dunahoo
14	Retirement & Benefits, Inc.	Christian Education and Publications
15	Niel Nielson	Paul Kooistra
16	Covenant College	Mission to the World
17	Mo UpDeGraff	Rod Mays
18	Ridge Haven Conference Center	Reformed University Ministries
19	Randy Stair	Roy Taylor (Also Advisory Member)
20	PCA Foundation	Administrative Committee
21	<u>Advisory Members (Teaching Elders)</u>	
22	David Coffin	
23	Eliot Lee	
24	<u>Staff Assistant</u>	
25	Diane Hitzfeld	

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

27 In 2000, the nine Coordinators of the Committees and Agencies recognized the need for the
28 denomination, which had grown considerably since its inception almost 30 years earlier, to
29 develop a plan for the future. They forwarded suggestions for developing such a plan to the
30 Administrative Committee, which made specific recommendations to the General Assembly.
31 The 2000 General Assembly elected a 24-person Strategic Planning Steering Committee
32 composed of ten ruling elders, ten teaching elders and four women. The Steering Committee
33 was authorized to raise support.

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

- 4 • Phase I would seek to build consensus on the PCA's identity, mission, values and
5 strategic priorities.
- 6 • Phase II would build on the consensus developed in Phase I and would consider how
7 to implement these strategic priorities within the PCA's structure, resources and
8 leadership.

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

- 12 • It received the draft report summarizing the work to-date, and asked that the report
13 be passed on to the presbyteries for further review and input.
- 14 • It asked presbyteries to report their reactions and findings to the Steering Committee
15 by March of 2003.
- 16 • It authorized the continuing work of the Steering Committee over the next year,
17 anticipating further discussion and possible action in the June 2003 Assembly.

18 Though General Assembly asked all presbyteries and all Committees and Agencies to
19 consider the work of the Committee, only 17 presbyteries actively participated in a planning
20 process. At the 2003 General Assembly, the Strategic Planning Steering Committee,
21 working through the Administrative Committee, presented a booklet, *Being Revived +*
22 *Bringing Reformation* which communicated the mission, vision and strategic priorities
23 developed during the Phase I planning process.

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

30 In 2004, the Committee submitted a framework for Phase II. Among the many possible
31 initiatives, the Committee chose three to begin the implementation process. Following are
32 excerpts from that report to General Assembly (GA) regarding the three initiatives.

- 33 • **Engaging Ruling Elders**
34 Securing the historic blessing and critical contribution of informed and
35 committed ruling elder leadership at all levels of the PCA's governance for the
36 sake of her biblical guidance, continuing vitality and the sustained faithfulness of
37 future generations

1 • **Preparing The Next Generation**

2 Addressing the need for coordination of the work of the Committees and
3 Agencies in supporting presbyteries and churches in their ministry to the needs of
4 youth and in the development of the denomination’s next generation of leaders.

5 • **Organizing Resources To Better Serve Our Corporate Mission**

6 Providing fact-based analysis and proposals regarding ways to fund, organize and
7 evaluate the Agencies and Committees of the denomination so that presbyteries
8 and churches are best served for the fulfillment of our corporate Gospel calling.

9 1. Structural Issues

- 10 a. Relate and collaborate
11 b. Evaluate efficiency, effectiveness
12 c. Governance
13 d. External review
14 e. Budgets and method of funding
15 f. Resources available to presbyteries
16 g. General Assembly
17 h. Presbytery meetings
18 i. Consultants, surveys, etc.

19 2. Resources

- 20 a. Equity
21 b. Proximity
22 c. Proportionality
23 d. Strategic and innovative
24 e. Transparency, accountability, results
25 f. Denominational support
26 g. Research, coordination, strategic thinking

27 Noting that some members of the original 2000 Committee had resigned or failed to
28 participate, the 2004 General Assembly gave the Committee authority to add new members,
29 subject to approval by the Administrative Committee, and authorized the Committee to raise
30 further funds to complete the next phase. The Committee suggested that as much as
31 \$300,000 would be required.

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

38 The following is the final report of the Strategic Planning Committee and its specific
39 recommendations for changes in the *BCO* or “*RAO*.”

- 1 **IV. Survey Task Force**
- 2 **V. External Validation Task Force**
- 3 **VI. Statistical Analysis**
- 4 **VII. Task Force on Engaging Ruling Elders**
- 5 **VIII. Task Force on Preparing the Next Generation**
- 6 **IX. General Assembly Task Force**
- 7 **X. Joint Task Force on Continuing Collaboration and Funding**
- 8 **XI. Recommendations**