

## **ITEM H.203** **FOR INFORMATION**

### **Process for developing the 2013-2016 Mission Work Plan**

**Timeline:**

- June 2011: Consultant engaged and process began
- Fall – Winter 2011/2012: Iterative drafts and feedback on strategic statements (vision, mission, directional goals and core values)
- May 2012: Plan along with budgets for 2013 and 2014 approved by Board, then by General Assembly in July 2012

We engaged Rick Augsberger of the Konterra Group to guide us in the Mission Work Plan development, beginning in June 2011.

**Two teams were formed:**

- **Staff Strategy Working Group**, to serve as the staff focal point for the strategic planning process. This group met one/two times a month from July 2011 until the plan was approved at the May 2012 board meeting. Meetings were generally for a full day. It was composed of the senior leadership team, ministry directors (Charles Wiley and Clare Lewis for TWE during the leadership transition), Denise Hampton, and Rob Bullock for communications.
- **Strategy Advisory Group**, of seven board members, to serve as the key stakeholder reference point for the planning process. This group reviewed draft documents, provided reflection, and feedback on draft strategic statements. This group was appointed in March 2011 and met beginning September 2011 by GoToMeeting from July 2011 to spring of 2012, for an hour and a half each time, about five times.

Objectives for the strategy process were to develop a Mission Work Plan for 2013-2016 and budget for 2013-14 in support of the plan which:

- Strategically aligns ministries to support common mission, vision and directional goals
- Provides clear direction, a guide for decision making and allocation of resources
- Focuses on those things that the Agency can do best and that are of most value to the church
- Attracts engagement and support
- Is financially sustainable, and
- Provides for periodic evaluation, continuous strategic thinking and innovation to enable the agency to anticipate and adapt to change in the world and the church.

**Process and Inputs:**

In 2009, we conducted extensive research in the church to try to identify priorities. The Mission Agency seeks to ‘do what it does best that the church most needs’, and to determine what that is, we conducted research. Jack Marcum, then the head of Research Services, summarized the results of the survey research in a May 2010 and September 2010 *Presbyterians Today* articles. “The major finding is the *lack of consensus* on the most important mission activities. . . these results provide limited guidance.” However, “nearly all of the activities were viewed as important.” Focus groups of pastors, mid council executives and other church leaders yielded a similar result. What did come through was a general consensus that the role of the Mission Agency is to inspire, equip and connect the church for mission and to tell stories.

The 2013-2016 plan built on the previous plan, with more focus. To begin, appreciative inquiry interviews of the board Executive Committee and Strategy Working Group were done in the summer of

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2011. A first draft by the Strategy Working Group of strategic statements (vision, mission and directional goals) was developed and shared with the board in September 2011.

After that, a series of focus groups was held with church leaders, including pastors, mid council and caucus leaders, seminary presidents and others in fall 2011. These provided helpful guidance and feedback that affirmed and influenced our directions. In addition, we received an advice and counsel memorandum from the Advisory Committee on Social Witness Policy (ACSWP) that prompted us to add a directional goal for our role of resourcing and responding to General Assembly, a very helpful addition.

At several points, the draft strategic statements were shared for input by the whole staff of the Mission Agency. All in all, about eight versions were shared with various groups for input before a final version was presented to the Board in May.

The plan was adopted by the Agency board in May 2012, and approved by the General Assembly in July 2012. It has served us well to align our work around needs and concerns of the church to which the Mission Agency can best contribute.