

ITEM H.207 INFORMATION

Subject: Communications Ministry

It's been one year since the Strategic Communications Plan for the Presbyterian Mission Agency was finalized. The plan was the result of seven months of research during which we reached out to some 400 constituents throughout the church. Below are a few highlights as we work to implement the plan.

➤ **New Presbyterian Mission Agency Website**

Simple and intuitive – that's been the mantra for the new PMA website. With over 100,000 pages to wade through on the current website, it's been a massive project. Individual and group meetings have been held with all of the ministry areas to gain input. A local firm – Digital Business Solutions – is developing the site, with input from our in-house IT team. We are about to enter the design phase, followed by development. The new site will feature a robust search engine, built-in redundancies and “responsive design” that will enable easier viewing on mobile devices. Storytelling is the driving factor for the site, with inspiring stories of mission told on every page using strong photos. Keep in mind that this is an overhaul of the PMA site only. A separate effort is under discussion with regard to the PC(USA) home page.

➤ **Social Media**

Over the last year, we have increased our social media efforts in several ways to spread awareness of the work being done within the Presbyterian Mission Agency and the Church. Our most active social media channels have a combined potential reach of 4.4 million people per month. We are also exploring how to best utilize social channels such as Periscope and Snapchat in order to reach the younger demographic in the Church.

➤ **Communications Workshops**

Did you know we now offer communications workshops at mid council meetings? During the research phase for the PMA Communications plan, we heard repeatedly about the need for help in this area. The workshops cover communications planning, media relations and social media. Workshops have already been held (or are upcoming) in Arizona, Nebraska, Washington DC and Pennsylvania. We are also rebuilding the Presbyterian Communicators Network to open channels to mid councils.

➤ **Internal Communications Campaign**

The PMA Communications Plan calls for changing communications “from the inside out.” The purpose of this approach is to change how we communicate *inside* the Presbyterian Center so that it's reflected in communications *outside* of the building. The campaign uses humor to encourage face-to-face communication with “E-mail-free Fridays,” storytelling and

simpler language with fewer acronyms and less insider lingo.

➤ **Focus on Storytelling**

We're telling more stories of mission impact than ever before. We're on track to post more than 800 stories in 2015, twice the number posted in 2014. Our mission stories are posted via the Presbyterian News Service and then shared across social media channels. Once complete, the new website will be our hub for storytelling. The goal is to write a story once and then utilize it in multiple ways.

➤ **Digital Communication**

As part of the overall Communications plan we conducted an e-newsletter audit. In February 2015 we reduced the number of monthly newsletters from 84 to 26 by combining those that were related. It's been well received by our readers. We started the year with 76,798 newsletter subscribers. Today we have 114,324 subscribers.

➤ **Publications**

Presbyterians Today transitioned this year to a bimonthly publication. By publishing every other month, we free up capacity of writers and editors to work on other key resources such as the Calendar, the Mission Yearbook and our storytelling hub on the new website. The Mission Yearbook will be an online-only free digital resource starting in 2016.