

## ITEM H.200 FOR INFORMATION

### MISSION WORK PLAN RESEARCH RESULTS

As input for the development of the 2017-2018 Mission Work Plan, the Strategy Advisory Group commissioned several forms of research to gather insights from across the church. Research was designed to identify energy around certain ministry functions and then inform the development of the Mission Work Plan.

While it does inform the plan, research alone did not dictate the Mission Work Plan development process. The research provides context upon which the crucial dimensions of discernment and leadership must be added. Research does not eliminate the necessary hard work of these steps. The research can be used to inform the focusing of Mission Agency work, but it does not tell us which ministry functions should, or will, continue.

#### 1. **Prioritization by Commissioners and Advisory Delegates from the 221st General Assembly (2014)**

**Audience:** Individuals elected by their presbyteries to discern for the wider church

**Intent:** Gain insights regarding strategic direction for the Mission Agency from the perspective of presbyteries

**Methodology:** Mission Agency program titles were translated into ministry functions. Survey respondents were then presented with multiple combinations of these functions, four at a time. For each set of four, they were asked to choose which one they believe is the HIGHEST priority within their presbytery, and which is the LOWEST priority. They were also reminded to answer as a representative of their presbytery, not as an individual. Respondents were instructed to consider each function in terms of which should be prioritized specifically at the national level.

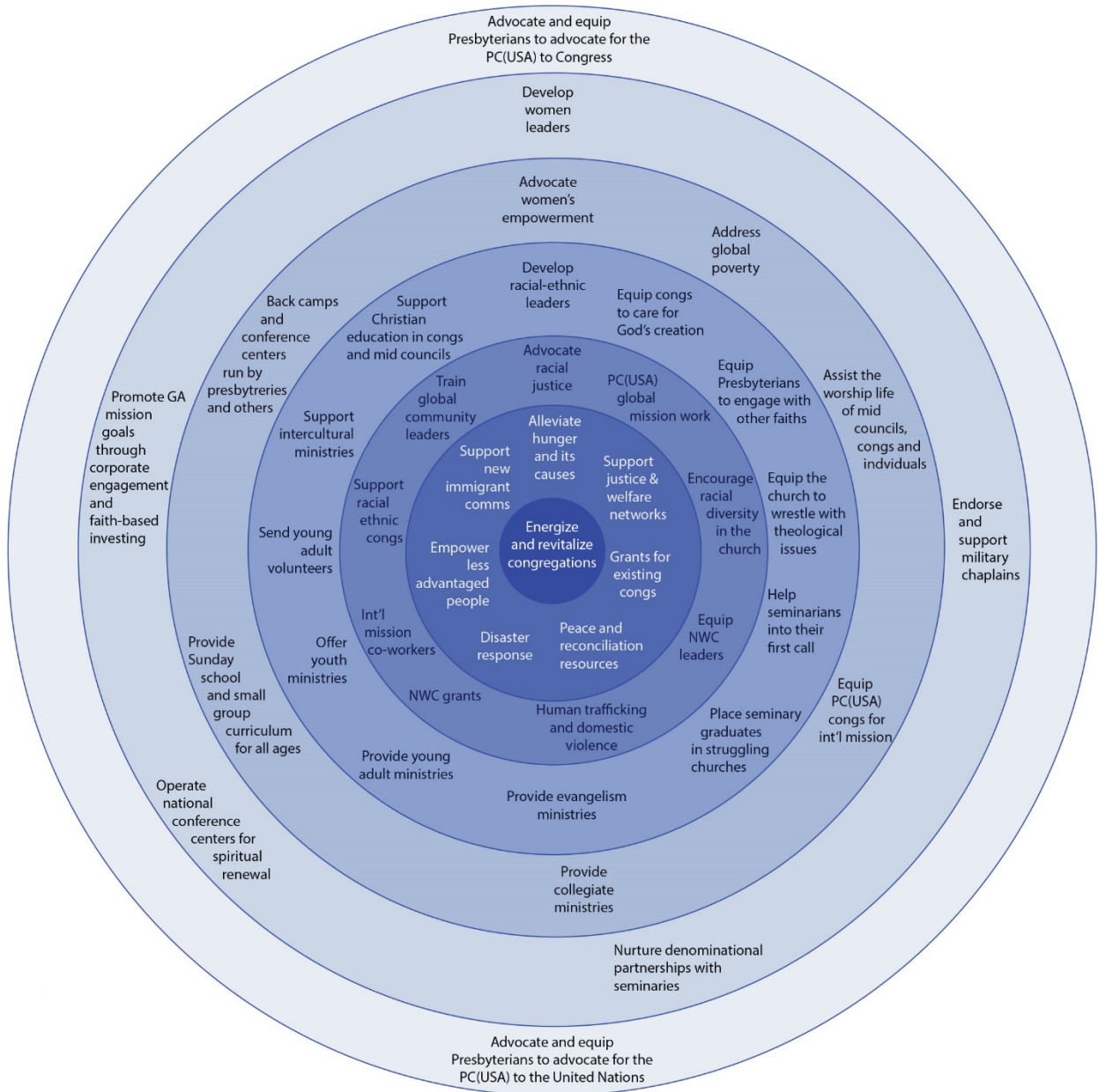
**Results:** Invitations to participate in the research were sent to 727 commissioners and advisory delegates. Responses were received from 222 individuals, indicating a 30% response rate. (See the following blue chart). The center and darker blue on the chart indicates a higher ranking of priority within their presbyteries by commissioners and advisory delegates. Each circle outward indicates less of a priority for presbyteries, based on the survey.

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## **2. Listening Sessions with staff, constituencies, board members and related committees**

**Audience:** Individuals representing staff and key constituencies for the Presbyterian Mission Agency

**Intent:** To learn what these individuals believe to be the role of the Presbyterian Mission Agency, and secondarily to exhibit a listening posture and build trust.

**Methodology:** Participants were gathered for conversation, either face-to-face or by conference call, and asked to respond to four questions:

- The PC(USA) is a connectional church. What does that mean to you?
- For what purpose does the church need national offices?
- What are the crucial issues facing our culture and how has the Mission Agency been helpful to PC(USA) congregations in addressing those issues?
- How does the Mission Agency currently help congregations do ministry that they cannot do themselves?

Each session had a facilitator and a note-taker. The note-taker transcribed responses for Research Services, who then coded them for compilation and comparison purposes.

**Results:** Invitations were sent to 19 groups. Scheduling proved to be a challenge for some of the groups. Where there was difficulty in scheduling, groups were offered the opportunity to submit written responses. Ultimately, members of the following groups participated in the process, but some had low participation:

- 2 groups of Board members
- Ministry Area constituency representatives
- Advocacy/Advisory/Related Committees
- Leaders of New Worshiping Communities
- Representatives of Racial Ethnic Caucuses
- 12 groups representing each staff department within the Mission Agency

In addition, listening sessions were held with two other groups using a different set of questions. Their input was valued and used to develop the eventual list of questions that were discussed, but their results are not reflected in the data below.

- Mid Council Leaders at Big Tent
- National Black Presbyterian Caucus

The items listed in the center and darker green areas were mentioned most often by participants. Each circle outward indicates items mentioned less often in the listening sessions. Each item on the chart was mentioned in at least one listening session.



**3) Prioritization by Board members for existing programs funded primarily or largely by unrestricted gifts**

**Audience:** Presbyterian Mission Agency Board members

**Intent:** To begin a prioritization process with Board members, using programs with discretionary funds

**Methodology:** At the Board's September 2015 meeting, members were given a list of Mission Agency programs which received at least 50% of their funding from unrestricted gifts, as well as other programs that had high dollar amounts of funding from unrestricted gifts. Using this list, members were asked to distribute 100 points, as they saw fit, to represent their prioritization of these efforts.

**Results:** Responses were received from 32 board members, including 2 responses which were blank (except to note that they were unable to complete the exercise). A unanimous top priority would have received 3,000 points. The top actual vote-getter received 357 points.

On the purple chart, responses have been displayed. The center and darker purple indicates higher ranking. Each circle outward received less priority per the feedback. In light of the gap between 3000 points and 357 points, no program is displayed at the core.

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