

TO: Regional Members of AAPC
FROM: AAPC Leadership Team (Joretta Marshall, Doug Thorpe, and Doug Ronsheim)
DATE: Fall 2009

RE: Updates and Visions

During the last year or more, many persons have been involved in shaping the present and future vision of AAPC: The Racial Justice and Multicultural Competency Task Forces, the Vision and Mission Task Force, and a governance task force that has looked at the Articles of Incorporation, the Bylaws, and Policies and Procedures. Each task force is making a significant difference to the way in which AAPC understands itself, connects to the world beyond, and nurtures the profession of pastoral counseling. We owe a deep debt of gratitude to the chairs and members of each of these groups, including staff members from the Association office, who have given their time and energy to these initiatives.

Reports related to the work of the Racial Justice and Multicultural Competency Task Forces will be available as we move toward the spring meeting in Indianapolis. Their work is helping AAPC examine and work toward change in significant aspects of our life together, particularly as we combat racism and enhance multicultural competency among our membership.

This report for the fall regional meeting is intended to give you an update on two other aspects of the Association's work: the development of the vision, mission, and strategic plan for the next five years and the ongoing work to revise our Articles of Incorporation and Bylaws. AAPC Vice President, Doug Thorpe, chaired the strategic plan, "Mission and Vision 2010-2014." Attached to this memo, you will find his summary of the statement along with an invitation to engage the leadership team about the strategic plan.

What follows is a summary by Joretta Marshall, President of AAPC, concerning the ongoing work related to governance.

Articles of Incorporation and Bylaws

Over the last few years, it became increasingly clear that it was time to re-visit our Articles of Incorporation and our Bylaws. As you may know, the American Association of Pastoral Counselors was incorporated in the state of Missouri in September of 1964. Soon you will be able to go to our website and find the original document, complete with the names of those who first signed the Articles of Incorporation. We have not revised the Articles since then and we felt it important to do so. Articles of Incorporation are designed to be general and broad in order to meet the changing needs of any organization. They remain the fundamental guide for the direction and mission of our organization.

A Task Force was established by the Board of Directors and included Fred Schramm from the Board of Directors, John Sandel who is currently the chair of our Judicial Ethics Panel, Joretta Marshall, Ann Martin from the Association office, and Doug Ronsheim as the Executive Director. Our work on the Articles was completed and forwarded to the Board. The Board forwarded them for review by our Legal Counsel for compliance with the state of Missouri. The revised Articles do not change the general intent, direction, or purpose for the Association, but they do update language that is important. You can view both the old Articles and the proposed "Restatement of the Articles" on the website. We ask you to send us any feedback or concerns you might have. You will hear more about the next steps, or any revisions to this document, before our meeting in Indianapolis.

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Once the Articles of Incorporation seemed clear, we moved to updating the Bylaws. As I noted in my *Currents* article recently, our bylaws have operated not only as a document that outlines our governing process, but also contained many policies and procedures that make it difficult for the organization to move in dynamic ways. The Task Force consulted with various Standing Committees, the Association Action Council, and others within the organization to arrive at some proposed changes. Again, on the website, you will find our current Bylaws, along with proposed changes.

Some of the changes include:

- Separating bylaws from policies and moving the policies into *Handbooks* for membership and organizational leadership;
- The majority of the material related to membership categories would move to a *Handbook*; Not wanting to make it too easy to change categories and their basic descriptions, we will provide a provision in the bylaws for any changes to the *Handbook*;
- Instead of articulating the specific number of regions and their designated states, we have opted to make a broader and more general statement both about the design of the regions and the way in which they function; We hope to free regions to adopt leadership structures that make sense for them rather than having a parallel structure to the Association

Next steps:

- 1) Please go to the website and review the proposed changes; in some cases there are a couple of options and we are interested in hearing from you about your preferences;
- 2) E-mail concerns, questions, suggestions to me (j.marshall@tcu.edu) before January 15;
- 3) Our legal counsel will review the proposed changes to make sure they are in compliance with Missouri state law;
- 4) The Board will send their final recommendations for the bylaw changes to the membership no later than March 1 so that we may discuss these at our meeting in Indianapolis in April;
- 5) The Judicial Ethics Panel is in the process of revising the Code of Ethics;
- 6) The Association staff and various committees will participate in developing the *Handbooks* and policy manuals that will be necessary in order to continue strong governance and leadership in the Association.

In reviewing the Mission and Vision statement, you will note that there will also be a task force on governance appointed in the coming months to continue the work of refining our mission, structures, and processes. If you would like input into that process or if you would like to serve on that task force, please let me know as soon as possible.

Thanks for your participation and support of AAPC and its mission!