**From:** Tony De La Rosa [<mailto:Tony.DeLaRosa@PCUSA.ORG>]   
**Sent:** Friday, April 29, 2016 02:52 PM  
**Subject:** [ALLMGBS] PMA Budget Impact

Dear Sisters and Brothers in Christ,

It is out of our great respect for you that we have been deliberate in promptly communicating news from the Presbyterian Mission Agency before it is shared broadly with the church. In that same spirit, we share news with you today regarding the outcome of the Presbyterian Mission Agency Board meeting that concluded its work in Louisville today.

Our board has approved the 2017–2018 budget, with revenues and expenditures balanced at approximately $63.5 million for both years. For the first time in its history, the Mission Agency took a dramatically different approach to the budget process, crafting a unique, zero-based budget that does not use any prior year’s unrestricted funds receipts to balance.

I know you are aware of concerns over shrinking reserves for the PMA, and there has been a strong emphasis from the board to “right-size” the PMA budget—and expectations of what the PMA can do—to reflect the current levels of giving from the Church. [You can read details about the budget here](http://www.pcusa.org/news/2016/4/29/presbyterian-mission-agency-board-enacts-work-rest/).

Many of you have told us that you are facing similar financial circumstances, prompting you to change the way you do mission based on perceived needs and available resources. We at the PMA are doing the same thing. The budget approved by our board reflects our effort to live within our means. In building this budget, we prioritized the programs that most closely match the goals of the Mission Work Plan, concerns expressed by church leaders this past year, and those services which PMA is in a position to do. We believe that mission happens everywhere Presbyterians are gathered, and we play only one part in that larger mission.

The budget also reflects our new reserve fund policy, setting aside a total of three months’ contingency funds for both restricted and unrestricted budgets.

With the General Assembly expected to discern the future structure of the church, our Mission Work Plan was purposely designed as a two-year bridge plan for a time of transition. This budget reflects an agency-wide work restructuring that will enhance organizational effectiveness, efficiency and unique resourcing.

Eight staff positions and five programmatic offices were eliminated today as a result of the new budget. While even one staff departure is painful, layoffs were fewer than originally anticipated due to the fact that most of our vacant positions were not filled during the past year. In total, we have had approximately 80 vacant positions, among them the vacancies created when 26 employees accepted voluntary separation packages earlier this year.

Living within our means will not allow us to fund the following programmatic work offices:

1) New Beginnings; 2) Small Church Residency Program; 3) Special Offerings Ambassador Program; 4) Korean English Ministry; 5) the publication *Unbound.*

We understand that discontinuing some of these programs may be of concern to you. Here are some details:

* New Beginnings has been a very effective support for congregational revitalization. The program was developed by and continues to be resourced by the Disciples of Christ, and we will be discussing the potential for referring future congregations directly to Disciples assessors and coaches. There will be a Congregational Vitality office which will draw from multiple available resources for continuing church support.

* The Small Church Residency Program for new pastors (once known as “For Such a Time as This”) was discontinued because of limited availability of candidates for the participating churches. We are aware of other similar programs addressing these needs, and hope that they can grow and continue.

* Because so many of you stepped up and encouraged your congregations to do so, World Mission exceeded its funding goal in 2015. If revenue goals are met, we do not expect to recall any mission co-workers as a result of the 2017–2018 budget.

* The new two-year budget will impact several areas within the Compassion, Peace and Justice ministry, including a reduction in one staff person at the Presbyterian Ministry at the United Nations, a change in staffing with PHEWA, and the conclusion of *Unbound: An Interactive Journal of Christian Social Justice.*Staffing for the Office of Public Witness in Washington, D.C., will continue, even if J. Herbert Nelson is elected Stated Clerk.

* Compassion, Peace & Justice has created a new position in leader development, racial justice and networking in partnership with Racial Ethnic & Women’s Ministries and the Presbyterian Mission Agency’s Human Resources Department, to develop new leaders in advocacy, anti-racism training and education, and this position will connect with constituent social justice networks across the PC(USA), including PHEWA.

* Within Racial Ethnic & Women’s Ministries, a deployed field staff position for Korean English Ministry, which has been vacant since 2015, was removed from the 2017–2018 budget, as this work is now being done by a Korean English ministry network. A Korean teaching elder in Seattle is currently heading this network, which will continue to relate to the Office of Korean Emerging Ministries.

Our agency-wide work restructuring will also result in 35 job openings planned for later this year or early 2017. Employees whose positions were eliminated are eligible to apply for these positions.

As you can imagine, and as you may have experienced in your own context, budget and staffing cutbacks are extremely painful. I am grateful for my colleagues in PMA leadership for making these difficult decisions together, and I want to express my appreciation for the excellent work that has been done by the programs that are being cut. In many cases, the decision to eliminate these services was based on the potential for similar work being done by ministry partners, and in no case were these cutbacks based on poor performance by the staff involved.

Over these three days of our board meeting, there has been much conversation about our interrelatedness as a denomination. To cite 1 Corinthians 12:12: “For just as the body is one and has many members, and all the members of the body, though many, are one body, so it is with Christ.” Because you are critical to the mission of our body, we hold you in prayer—and in close communication—even as we know you do for us.

Tony