

MUSINGS about the future of the ACPE, INC.

November 19, 2015

Reverend Jasper N. Keith, Jr., ThD

Firstly, about the Southeast Region

Across the decades this region has been most supportive financially and otherwise to the REM Invitational. We have been generous in our support of ACPE Conferences held within this region. We've supported four SES consortiums and an annual Invitational for Supervisors of SES Programs. I am proud of those facts! All of this financial support has come out of income from our Endowment Fund (the value of which has been reduced in the present market). In years to come, the M & D Committee will have harder choices to make about how to distribute the income from our Endowment (hopefully, it will be some \$15,000 annually).

Many years ago we decided to be more inclusive...gender, racial, faith groups. Our present membership and leadership is illustrative of those endeavors. Perhaps, because of the geographical region in which we live, we do not have many representatives of a variety of faith groups. Nevertheless, we do have a multi-cultural representation of SESs being supported by four consortiums in our region.

Going forward, for the next three years, we have contracts with hotels rather than retreat centers for our annual members' meeting in the fall. We've offered the C.E. event, a banquet and a luncheon for \$150 for many years, but that fee has to be increased. My concern is: if we increase the registration fee (that once upon a time was paid by centers, but no longer is), will an increased registration fee reduce the number of participants (especially those who are involved in the certification process)? It feels like a "catch 22!" Our Administrative Board has some tough issues to face. Hopefully, our members can adopt and support a budget for the common good. Perhaps some centers can support the attendance of SESs.

Secondly, about the ACPE, Inc.

We were engaged in a most productive process at the recent ACPE Leadership Meeting. Others will be reporting the actions of the ACPE Board of Directors, the actions of the Accreditation and Certification Commissions, and the process of the numerous task forces of the Board. Check the ACPE website.

The present leadership is clear and in consensus agreement about at least this much: ACPE. Inc. is

- a legal entity (presently incorporated by the State of Georgia),
- a unified financial entity (a tax exempt 502C-3 professional educational organization),
- a professional educational accrediting agency (recognized by the U. S. Department of Education as an accrediting agency for programs of specialized clinical pastoral education).

Because we are a legal and a unified financial entity, all persons receiving wages/benefits in excess of \$600 annually for services rendered are employees of the ACPE, Inc.; and henceforth, will be paid by the ACPE, Inc.

Going forward, we have to define who we are and why we exist and what we will do (and be held accountable for) in the immediate future. Then, we have to determine the best way we can order our life together, address our purpose(s), and responsibly complete our mission.

In the coming months and after our convention in Denver in May of 2016, an organizational structure will be proposed to the ACPE Board of Directors. That group will have the awesome responsibility of forging how we will do our “business” and with what structures we will order our life and work.

Your perspectives are solicited. Your participation in the conversations in Denver is essential. Please, come to Denver, and give your voice and your creative imagination to the dialogue. We need, solicit, and beg your participation so that we can be “All In in 2017!”

Thirdly, a Strategy for Transition

No one knows how the ACPE, Inc. will be organized after 2016, but some changes in how we organize our work are forthcoming.

I want my colleagues in the Southeast to be leaders and shapers of those changes. And I want to do all I can to make the transitions as smooth as possible for each and all of us. After 31 Dec 2017 I will not be in a position to lead, care for and provide oversight of my beloved Southeast Region.

Anticipating changes in how the membership will be more fiscally accountable as the ACPE, Inc., I have recommended, and the Administrative Board of the SE Region has approved, that the Office of the ACPE, Inc. will serve as the “**bookkeeper/accountant**” of our regional operating budget for 2016.

Implicit in this action is the acknowledgement that the RD is an employee of the ACPE, Inc. who serves at the pleasure of the SE Region Administrative Board and with the confirmation of the regional membership, and who is compensated according the budget adopted by the regional membership.

After 1 Jan 2016 all **revenue from the members** of the Southeast (e.g., Annual Center Fees, Student Unit Registration Fees, Registration Fees for Continuing Education/Conferences, and Accreditation and Certification Fees) will be paid to the ACPE, Inc. **All salaries, honorariums, contracts and reimbursement of expenses to members** of the SE Region will be paid by the ACPE, Inc. Monthly, I will review our account with the ACPE Office, and provide the monthly financial statement

for our website. Additionally, I will assist the ACPE Office in ensuring proper credit is assigned to centers and members of this region.

By the end of 2016 we should have a clearer understanding of the organizational design adopted by the ACPE Board of Directors. And by then, we will have worked out the kinks in a trial run of this new bookkeeping/accounting system. If everyone is well served by the procedures implemented, we (the membership residing in the Southeast) will be ahead of at least one portion of the changes that now seem inevitable.

Blessings, peace and joy to each and all.....Jap