

# the Informer newsletter

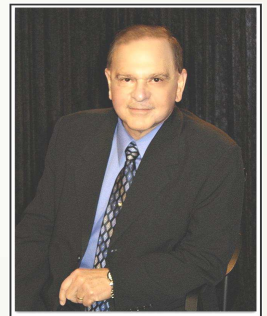


MONTHLY NEWSLETTER | PARAGON CHRISTIAN ALLIANCE INT'L  
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## PAINT YOUR VISION

***“REPUBLISHED BY PUBLIC REQUEST...”***

*By Dr. Henry Harbuck, PCAI General Overseer*



Terry Hopwood Jackson is an artist from the UK who continues to create art in spite of being completely blind. If an artist suddenly becomes blind, from an accident for example, he or she can still use the “mind’s eye” to create art. Blindness is debilitating; however, even this does not make it impossible to create beautiful works of art. What a great spiritual lesson can be learned here.

Through the years I have written many articles concerning “vision,” and no doubt thousands of messages have been preached on the subject. Why? Because it is important and is not impossible to achieve. Even though we are blind (spiritually) we now can see! It is imperative that we never forget the purpose of understanding the vision God has put in our lives and ministry.

The first thing we must understand is: “To have a Godly vision, God must be the goal setter for each of us.” There is a risk factor that follows the receiving of a vision from God. Noah had to give up his day job to build the ark, Abraham started a family in his 90’s, Moses had to go back to Egypt, David had to face the giant Goliath ... and the list goes on.

It has been said that stepping out in faith is like parachuting. Nobody “sort of” parachutes — you either do or don’t! You will never know the thrill of walking on water until you get out of the boat. If there is no risk, it is probably not a God thing! When you are sure that your vision and direction are from God, then align everything you do to that vision.

When God gives us the promise (vision), He continues to work with us to accomplish the goal He has in store for us. Yet in spite of this, we often try to escape from the Artist’s brush in an effort to paint our own portrait.

Every God-given vision will become real when we patiently persevere and let the Master Artist (God) work. Just think of the awesome amount of power and creativity He has! It may seem to us that He never hurries, that the strokes of His brush are slow, and the colors seem dull. However, it is during those times when we must trust that HE sees the picture clearly. In fact, we come to learn that what we considered dull and uneventful was actually the foundation paints selected by the Divine Artist. They form the base upon which all the other bright and exciting colors rest. Upon that realization God knows He can trust the vision to us.

**In conclusion, let’s strive to see through our spiritual eyes and let Almighty God “paint our vision.” In due season it shall come to pass. A little nugget I have learned through the years is that the vision God has given me is continually expanding. I believe it’s because He knows I would have been too overwhelmed to view the glory of a “whole portrait” at one time. ♥**

# WILL I FIND FAITH ON THE EARTH WHEN I RETURN

By Rev. Mike Taylor, Raphah Ministries Director

Then the Lord said, "Hear what the unjust judge said. And shall God not avenge His own elect who cry out day and night to Him, though He bears long with them? I tell you that He will avenge them speedily. Nevertheless, when the Son of Man comes, will He really find faith on the earth?" (Luke 18: 6-8) NKJV

Two things to consider when looking at the above scripture. First, is we know God will avenge us when we cry out to Him day and night. The second is will we faint before the answers come? Will our faith give out in the wait? Will anyone be left on the earth with faith when Christ returns? I think many of us are being tested to the max.

God gave me several things to pray and focus on for the New Year. He said we are in the final checklist as it relates to us personally. That is dealing with our flesh. Getting the focus off self. Fighting our inner demons. Making sure we are right with God and man.

I also felt the Lord said He is setting us up for the full release to the new in our life. He said do not look at the natural. This will only bring fear and doubt. He said this time now will be uncomfortable but stay in faith. Do not lose hope. Stay in the word. Do not receive the lies of the enemy.

The Lord told me back in the Fall of 2022 that by Spring of 2023 we would be close to a full breakthrough into the new. He said the enemy would continue to lose his grip. By Spring of this year we would be in a full turnaround for the good. I am holding on to the promise.

We are in the last trimester, continue to pray, cry out and seek His face. Spring is very close now. I am believing that many answers to prayer will come by this Spring. It's harvest time. If you have been sowing good seed expect a good harvest very soon. ♥



*Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation; old things have passed away; behold, all things have become new.  
2 Corinthians 5:17*

## GOD'S PRESENCE IN YOUR CRISES

By Dr. Daniel O.C. Agomoh

When you pass through the waters, Adonai Elohim will be with you, and through the rivers, they will not overwhelm you. When you walk through the fire, you will not be burned or scorched, nor will the flame kindle upon you in Jesus' mighty name, Amen!

When storms come your way, remember you know the Master of the wind, **Adonai Yeshua**. When sickness finds you, remember you know the Great Physician, **Jehovah Rapha**. When your heart gets broken, just remember the **Potter, Adonai Elohim**. It does not matter what we go through, **JESUS is the Way, the Truth and the Life**. Remember if you don't **heal** what hurt you, you'll bleed on **people** who didn't cut you.

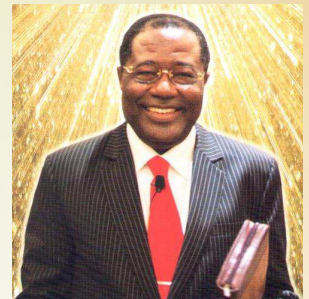
When God wanted to create fish, He spoke to the sea. When God wanted to create trees, He spoke to the earth. But when God wanted to create man, He turned to **Himself**. Then God said, "Let US make man in Our image and in Our likeness." If you take a fish out of water, it will die; and when you remove a tree from soil, it will also die. Likewise, when a man is disconnected from God, he dies.

God is our natural environment. We were created to live in **HIS presence**. We have to be connected to God because it is only in **HIM** that life exists. Let us stay connected to God. We recall that water without fish is still water, but fish without water is nothing.

The soil with a tree is still soil, but the tree without soil is nothing.

Therefore, God without man is still God, but man without God is nothing. Let everything that has breath praise the Lord God Almighty in Jesus' mighty name, Amen!

**Shout a resounding, 'PRAISE THE LORD', somebody! ♥**



When thou passest through the waters, I will be with thee; and through the rivers, they shall not overflow thee: when thou walkest through the fire, thou shalt not be burned; neither shall the flame kindle upon thee.  
Isaiah 43:2

# RECORDS RETENTION MINISTRIES

*Excerpt from Church Tax & Law Publication*

## Know what to keep; for how long

Most of us are working with paper and electronic files that are too large to easily find specific information when we need it. What should we keep? What should we discard?

Churches and ministries are really not much different from other organizations when it comes to the need for proper recordkeeping. You may not have to retain every record that crosses your desk, but before you decide to toss anything, determine what you need to keep and why. Then create an orderly way to file and maintain the records you keep so they're easy to find when you need them.

The reasons for retaining records within a ministry organization are similar to other organizations. A good record-retention systems allows you to:

- Respond to current questions based on past decisions (such as the process for electing new leadership team members).
- Document past transactions (such as which suppliers were paid in a certain month).

Document past events (such as who was supervising a teen trip last fall, or details regarding an employee disciplinary action).

## Documents to Keep

To fulfill these needs, consider retaining the following categories of records. Refer to the **records checklist** below for a more specific records you should consider retaining.

**Organizational Documents** like Articles of Incorporation, By laws, and meeting minutes should be retained both for their historical value and for their legal value in officially describing the organization's identity, processes, and core functions.

**Financial Records** should be retained for their tax purposes as well as for legal documentation related to proper handling of organizational resources.

**Employment Records** should be retained to demonstrate compliance with employment laws as well as to demonstrate reasonable employment practices.

**Ministry Operations Records** may also need to be kept for a period of time. Documentation of worker screening procedures will be critical in the defense of the church if a child or youth volunteer is accused of sexual misconduct, or a security team member is accused of excessive force. Incident and accident reports capture factual details that may prove important in later claims settlements or a lawsuit against the ministry. Retaining signed copies of activity participation agreements or special medical needs documentation will help to show what the church actually knew and what risks the individual agreed to accept at the time of an injury or medical incident. Records of facility maintenance help demonstrate reasonable care of the facilities.

## Hard Copy vs. Electronic Retention

It's not necessary to dedicate large amounts of storage space to stacks of paper. Digital storage is now the preferred method of record retention, particularly because digital records are much more likely to survive a disaster. In addition, you will generally take less time to search electronic records than paper files, and sending digital records is quicker and less expensive than copying and mailing hard copy records. Typically, courts also now allow digital images to be submitted as evidence in legal proceedings, thus eliminating the need for hard copy documents in court.

Digital storage provides a variety of options for retaining important records. Paper records can be scanned into digital images for storage before being destroyed. Digital computer files can be transferred into digital documents for storage purposes. Such records can be stored on a computer hard drive, a CD storage disk, or on a network server either at your location or through the Internet.

Choosing the storage option that makes the most sense to your organization will depend on your ministry's needs. Consult with a vendor who's familiar with document imaging and storage technology and discuss the best way to index records for search and retrieval. Also, keep records security in mind—data loss can be devastating. Finally, ask your ministry's attorney for guidance on creating an electronic record retention program that complies with local legal requirements.

## How Long Should Records Be Kept?

Once a records-retention process is put in place, how long should you retain these records? This is a simple question without a simple answer.

**Historically Significant Records** should be kept indefinitely. All versions of the Articles of Incorporation, bylaws, and key meeting minutes should be preserved to maintain the organization's history. Copies of expired insurance policies are also good to have in a permanent file in order to preserve the record regarding what coverages were provided by which carriers at any given point in time.

**Financial Records** are traditionally kept for seven years. This relates to the laws of tax audits and the number of years back the IRS is allowed to look when determining an organization's tax liability. Most organizations simply make the seven-year-rule standard for all records containing financial information since any financial document may potentially be required during a tax audit.

**Employment Records** should be kept while the employee remains employed and for seven years after the individual leaves employment. Employee benefit records may require an even longer retention period. This is necessary for documentation purposes in case the employee has questions about his or her status, benefits, compensation, etc., or an employment-related claim is made against the ministry.

For **Operational Records**, the desired period of retention will depend on the statute of limitations for any legal action that might be related to the records in question. For churches and other organizations that minister to youth, this becomes more complicated because the statute of limitations applies differently to minors than it does to adults. This means that a state's four-year limitation period may not begin to count down until the minor's 18th birthday. In sexual misconduct cases, some state legislatures have passed special laws allowing allegations dating back 30 years or more regardless of the statute of limitations. For this reason, it's important to involve an attorney in setting record retention periods for operational records.

If approved by your attorney, one approach to consider that's uniform and easy to administer would be to implement a standard 10-year records retention policy that uses digital records storage. This 10-year retention period would be for all records other than historically significant records such as deeds, bylaws, insurance policies (which should be retained indefinitely), and employee records (which should be kept until seven years after the employee leaves).

*Continued on page 4*

**Records Retention... Continued from page 3**

Ministries that choose to keep paper records on hand after they're imaged can keep these hard copy records for one or two years after imaging and then shred them. Organizations should also carefully consider maintaining back-up systems or off-site digital storage to prevent the total loss of important records in case of a catastrophe.

**Records Checklist**

Consider the following list of records as you determine what you will need to retain to maintain effective ministry documentation. Consult with an attorney in your area for advice about the records state and local laws and regulators require.

**Organizational Records**

- Articles of Incorporation
- Bylaws
- Board Meeting Minutes
- Congregation Meeting Minutes
- Budgets
- Insurance Policies
- Contracts

**Employment Records**

- Completed Employee Applications
- Record of Reference Checks Performed
- Criminal Background Check Results
- Notes from Employee Interview
- Completed Performance Appraisals
- Compensation Documentation
- Exit Interview Documentation

**Financial Records**

- Bank Statements
- Tax Documents
- Expense Records
- Payroll Records

**Operational Records**

- Evidence of Worker Screening Procedures:
  1. Completed Worker Application
  2. Annual Renewal Applications
  3. Record of Reference Checks Performed
  4. Criminal Background Check Results
  5. Notes from Worker Interview
- Volunteer Rosters
- Incident/Accident Reports
- Signed Activity Participation Agreements
- Special Medical Needs Forms
- Facility Maintenance Records

# Announcements

## 2023 Charter Renewal DEADLINE: MARCH 28TH



**ATTENTION!**

**501(c)(3) Chartered Ministries & Churches under PCAI Group Exemption** will receive their **Charter Renewal Yearly Report Packet this month.**

OR, Forms are also available in our website: <https://www.paragonchristianalliance.org> under "Resources" tab in a PDF file.

**It is important that your report be received in our office no later than March 28th.**

These renewals are **necessary to remain in compliance** with the IRS code and maintain your charter's tax-exempt status under the PCAI Group Exemption.

**PLEASE REVIEW:** This is a good time to review your monthly giving obligation to ensure you are up-to-date on your ministerial and charter giving. These must be current in order for your 501(c)(3) to be renewed in 2023.

**IMPORTANT LEGAL INFO**

### ANNUAL CHARTER RENEWAL

**Have you renewed your state incorporation and have confirmation that it is active? Without a current state incorporation your federal incorporation (501c3) becomes void. You may not receive notice from your Secretary of State that it is due since it is your responsibility.**

Check with your Secretary of State office to verify that your state incorporation is current and active. Some states vary from needing renewal every year or like Texas every four (4) years. Without valid state incorporation your federal incorporation (501 c 3) becomes invalid. You may not receive notice from your Secretary of State that it is due as it is your responsibility to handle this.

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**PCAI Ministries Fellowship extends the warmest welcome to the newly added Ministers, Churches and Ministries worldwide since last month. Thank you for partnering with us in expanding God's kingdom. We love you all!!!**

A Warm Welcome

**"We are (PCAI) PARAGON CHRISTIAN ALLIANCE INTERNATIONAL, INC. - PCAI is officially and legally recognized by the IRS as a 501(c)(3) and holds a "Group Status" in which it has been given the authority by the IRS to issue the 501(c)(3) to qualified religious organizations referred to as "subordinates." Each ministry (subordinate) is autonomous and sovereign operated by its' own governing board."**

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