

## **A Letter From the Board of Trustees Chair, 2022 ABC**

Dear fellow adult child,

For the third straight year, ACA is holding its Annual Business Conference virtually. In January, we had to cancel a planned in-person meeting in San Francisco, when yet another COVID-19 surge threatened our ability to host a safe and welcoming event.

While I am disappointed that we cannot meet in one place, ACA has in many ways grown stronger in the COVID era. In particular, the Annual Business Conference (ABC) and Annual World Convention (AWC) have become truly global events. This year, we anticipate attendees from Europe, Africa, Asia, Australia/New Zealand, and Central and South America, as well as from the United States and Canada.

In 2022, the ACA World Service Organization is embracing our international identity more than ever. Issues at the ABC will be discussed in a group conscience style, with a minimum of formal discussion rules. Just as significantly, most major issues will be decided through worldwide online voting. After a day of discussion, all registered delegates will have a 10-12 hour period in which to cast their votes.

Why is this significant? For the first time, delegates in Japan, Australia, and India, just to name a few countries where ACA is growing, can vote during daylight hours, instead of having to remain awake all night to participate in a meeting timed to serve North American ACA members. A web page will provide background and audio clips from ABC discussions, so that delegates who could not attend a session scheduled for 9 a.m-5 p.m. eastern U.S. can cast informed votes.

All of this will be new, and there may be glitches. We ask your patience and support.

Once again, the 12 months since our last ABC have provided exciting opportunities and major challenges. As noted above, we had to cancel our third consecutive in-person meeting because of COVID. Three of this year's ballot proposals concern the future of either the ABC or the AWC. This is a welcome and timely discussion, and the views of ABC delegates will guide us going forward.

Economic disruptions have affected the business operations of ACA World Service. The price of printing literature has risen sharply, and because of paper shortages in the U.S., the Big Red Book is currently being printed in India. For the first time, we are considering an increase in literature prices to adjust for higher costs and falling revenue margins. A process is being established to ensure that fellowships that can't afford higher prices will receive support. A briefing on this situation will be presented by ACA's treasurer, and again, we welcome the input and feedback you can provide as delegates.

Finally, exciting changes have occurred in literature and publishing.

In the summer of 2021, the Loving Parent Guidebook was published and has become an important new tool of ACA recovery. In the next year, two new publications, Getting Started and Ready Set Go!!, are on course to explain recovery in a more accessible way, especially for newcomers. A booklet will explore the critical topic of support relationships, in which newer ACA members seek help from those with more experience. And an ACA Bill of Rights was recently approved for fellowship review and input.

Equally exciting, international delivery of ACA literature is exploding. In the spring of 2021, ACA World Service established a new Publishing Committee, and it has worked heroically to ensure that books will be printed and sold at an affordable price to fellowships in all continents. ACA book printing now occurs in Europe, the UK, South Africa, and India, and more global printing locations are being identified. This is greatly reducing the cost and delivery time for adult children in Europe, Asia, and Africa.

New translations of ACA literature also are surging. In 2021, we added one new translated publication. This raised our total from 20 to 21, and the number of languages stayed at nine, including English. In the first half of 2022 alone, we will grow to 27 publications, and adult children will read ACA's message in 13 languages. This is an extraordinary achievement by translation committees around the world, supported by ACA World Service volunteers and publishing professionals.

Because of the growth and complexity of the fellowship's service needs, ACA World Service has made a conscious effort in the last year to bring greater professionalism to our business operations. We have upgraded our top staff position to General Manager. The Board has tasked that individual with greater executive authority over paid staff and instructed him to take the initiative in assessing numerous strategic needs. Other paid staff have strengthened our management of publishing, fellowship communications, and administration.

All of this is improving our ability to serve a fellowship that continues to grow rapidly. Many additional details about the work of ACA World Service are contained in our Treasurer and committee reports.

This is my last annual letter to the ABC. I am stepping down as Board Chair on June 30, after more than three years. I am honored to have served at a critical time in ACA's history. The chance to meet and serve adult children from around the world has been one of the great privileges of my life. ACA has grown, and I have grown with it. I cannot thank you enough for the trust that you and other delegates have extended to me and my fellow board members.

I would like to close with a personal note of thanks, and to put your service as an ABC delegate into context. First, why is your participation in the ABC so important?

The needs of recovering adult children are immense. It is literally impossible for a relatively small Board of Trustees (currently 10 members, most of us from North America) to truly know the needs and thinking of the global fellowship. Without your input, ACA cannot fulfill its world

service mission. The discussions at this year's ABC will be invaluable in keeping ACA World Service aligned with the fellowship.

Also, few delegates recognize this when they attend their first ABC meeting, but you are the future of ACA World Service. Just by deciding to attend this year's ABC, you made an important commitment to serve others in recovery. Almost every current board member, and most of our committee chairs, first encountered world service by attending an Annual Business Conference. We were inspired by the work being done, but we also saw more help was needed. So we volunteered for ACA World Service committees.

I want to invite you to recognize how important you are to ACA's continued growth. When this year's ABC closes, please look for opportunities to help others know the joy of healing and recovery. This can be at the local or world service level, and WSO can help you find a service mentor to make world service less mysterious.

Please know that all of ACA will be much richer if you stay involved in service after this ABC ends. And if my experience is any indication, you will be rewarded, and your personal recovery will benefit immeasurably, from the support you provide to others in ACA.

Thank you again for your caring and service. I look forward to meeting you at this year's ABC.

Charlie H., Virginia

WSO Board of Trustees chair, on behalf of the WSO Board.