

ACN Announces Children & Youth Initiative

The Anglican Communion Network (ACN) is pleased to announce a new initiative focused on evangelizing and discipling children and youth in North America through orthodox Anglican churches. “Reaching children and youth of the 21st century is a top priority for the Network,” said the Rev. Canon Daryl Fenton, Chief Operating Officer for the ACN. “We have a biblical mandate to find relevant, meaningful ways of presenting the Gospel message to every generation, and I believe that as a Church we have failed to do this effectively over the past few decades.”

To begin to address these concerns, the Network will host its second Youth Ministry Summit on May 24-25 at Trinity School for Ministry in Ambridge, Pennsylvania. The theme for the gathering is “Biblical Literacy and Holistic Discipleship among Adolescents.” Diocesan youth coordinators and heads of Anglican youth ministry organizations are invited to attend the event which is focused on networking.

“This initiative is not designed to be top-down,” said the Rev. Jack Gabig, the ACN Coordinator for the Children and Youth Initiative. “We will be asking questions like ‘What do you need to make your youth ministry effective in fulfilling the Great Commission?’ and ‘What resources, training, and expertise do you have that you can share with the larger body?’ We want this to truly be a networking movement.”

The Rev. Jack Gabig has 21 years of experience in youth ministry and is completing his Ph.D at Kings College in London this summer. He served as acting chaplain at New College, Oxford, England, while working on his doctorate, served two parishes in the Diocese of Pittsburgh as Director of Student Ministries, and is a 1995 graduate of Trinity School for Ministry.

The Network’s Children and Youth Initiative currently has a four-phase strategy of implementation. The first phase which includes the gathering of existing Anglican youth ministry leaders was launched at the first youth ministry summit entitled “What is Anglican Youth Ministry?” hosted by the Diocese of Central Florida in December 2005. Plans are underway for similar gatherings of children’s workers. In addition, phase one also includes the development of a dedicated website that will serve as a clearinghouse of ideas, people and material resources and ongoing conversation about what works in reaching the youth and children of the present generation.

Phases two through four encompass hosting a national youth and children’s training event, offering a certification program for children and youth workers through orthodox seminaries, deployment assistance through the ACN, and the gathering together of key theologians to develop a visual and interactive standardized curriculum for Anglican parishes to use for discipleship of their youngest members.

For more information about the Anglican Communion Network’s Children and Youth Initiative’s upcoming events and plans, email jgabig@acn-us.org.