



2018 YOUTH MINISTRY PLAN

Mission Statement:

The Mission of the Youth Ministry division of the Pan-African Orthodox Christian Church is to establish a foundation for building Christian character, morals, values and behaviors in young people as outlined in the Alkebulan program philosophy and tradition by utilizing creative and innovative methods to inspire, capture and to bring out their God given talents, abilities and gifts as they grow to become their best selves.

Vision Statement:

Our vision is to respond to the spiritual and social needs of the youth within the church and the community at large, by providing programs, activities and events that allow them to build a strong foundation of faith that will enable them to express and share their faith through their own words, actions and deeds, and to encourage them to use their talents and gifts in programs and ministries that interest them in order to nurture their growth as people of faith.

Commitments to Youth Ministry

- We treat children with love and respect
- We take time to listen to them without judgment or dismissing their feelings
- We maintain a safe, clean learning environment for the children
- We refrain from gossiping, discussing children/parents, or make speculations or assumptions in the presence of children or the public.
- We keep an open and friendly relationship with parents. It is important to communicate regularly with parents; not just when problems arise. Do not take issues personally when talking to parents.
- We commit to modeling Christian character, morals, values and behaviors.

Major Areas of Focus for 2018:

- I. **Parental Involvement**
- II. **Mentorship Program**
- III. **Community Service & Volunteerism**
- IV. **Group Life**
- V. **Spirituality**
- VI. **Ministry Engagement**

I. Parental involvement

Weekly email blasts, which help increase the flow of information to parents by:

- Creating a “Parental Group Me” (overseen by Mw. Bakeeba and Zalika)
- Use of the Church website and WOA to share information with the larger church community.
- Use of a Monthly Calendar with dates, times and locations of classes, programs, events, program focus and values pertaining to the youth.
- Quarterly parent workshops/luncheons/meetings to address topics related to child rearing and development.
- Parents must support the program and foster a sense of belonging to the larger church community.
- To organize a parent group (like a PTA or PTO) that would be responsible for supporting youth initiatives (snacks, food, outings etc.)

II. Mentorship Program

The mentorship program will be contracted out through W.O.W (GIG) and MAC. The program focus will be to prepare both brothers and sisters for manhood and womanhood (rites of passage) and to cover relevant topics related to coming of age.

- Resume writing
- Job skills
- Life style changes
- Volunteerism
- Health and Wellness
- Bullying
- ACT, SAT prep
- Character Development
- Education Development (MAP scores, Report Cards, Milestone scores)
- Focus on topics that are relevant and of value.

III. Community Service and Volunteerism

“Give, and it will be given to you. A good measure, pressed down, shaken together, running over, will be put into your lap; for the measure you give will be the measure you get back” Luke 6:38

We stated that the present involvement with the Nicholas House needs to continue; but focus on groups rather than all children at once and make it a bi-monthly activity.

There was a discussion to include Feed my Sheep and the Food bank of Atlanta as other efforts for the youth to be engaged. The MLK Jr. center was suggested as well as onsite service (KAZI) assignment that the youth would be responsible for each week.

IV. Group Life

‘When we consider changing individuals as we do in KUA, we are concerned with changing people (children) from Individualism to Communalism. Basically, we are dealing with the problem of socialization...the individual is taught to conform to the behavioral norms of a group. We must learn to belong! This is the group experience! The group tears down the walls of individualism! Socialization is necessary before the individual can seek the Experience of God! The group then is basic to the Practice of KUA.’ (Jaramogi Abebe Agyeman, 1987)

Group life is the basis for church participation and involvement. This MUST be priority for the youth as well. Groups MUST meet at least once per month and adult facilitators should be present to allow the meetings to take place. A leadership group will be formed as they train to take charge of their groups once they complete the training. The group Structure is as follows;

- AA MOJA - Ages 5-7yrs (K – 2nd grade) – Mo. Raheeda/Tendai?
- AA MBILI - Ages 8-10 yrs. (3rd – 5th grade) – Sis. Najinga/ _____?
- AA TATU – Ages 11-14yrs (6th – 8th grade) - Bro. Agyei and Sis. Afiya
- Youth Fellowship – Ages 15 – 18yrs (9th – 12 grade) – Bakeeba/Lerato

Goals for groups

- Establish group structure, identity and norms
- Assign appropriate responsibilities to members
- Youth assignments will be resolved through the group structure.

Sis Lerato suggested the following (after the meeting) I’ve included it into the minutes as a means to get our teenagers involved and to bridge the gap between the young adults and the teenagers.

Critical Conversations

Critical Conversations is a conversation circle that happens once a quarter between the Young Adults Fellowship and our Youth who are 15 years of age and up. Critical Conversations is a 2 hour facilitated session, where the group discusses relevant social events, with the ultimate goal being the group deciding whether they want to respond to the issue. (For example, in the session on homelessness the group may decide that their response is to volunteer at an organization that addresses homelessness)

Proposed conversation topics:

- police brutality
- immigration
- homelessness (particularly in ATL)
- the 45th presidency
- protesting in the 21st century: a look at Colin Kaepernick, Black Lives Matter & ourselves

The above topics were/are major social events that took place in 2016/2017. The topics for the sessions may change based on social events that take place in 2018. The topics chosen are topics that impact & affect the 15-year-old/young adult group.

Rationale:

The idea behind having this group meet is to facilitate conversation and relationship building between our teenagers who will be going off to college, those in college and the young adults who form part of the Young Adults Fellowship. We spoke about the Young Adults maybe being mentors to the teenagers, but before we can get to mentorship, we need a space where they can all get to know each other and form relationships. But more importantly a space where they can be heard and a space where they can use their creative intelligence to think about their community and how they can make an impact on the communities they live in.

The reason behind having the sessions once a quarter is to accommodate members who go to college out of town, also a lot of Young Adults work full time, so you do not want to have too many events that they would not be able to attend.

V. Spirituality

"Ritual, community, and healing — these three are so intertwined in the indigenous world that to speak of one of them is to speak of them all. Ritual, communally designed, helps the individual remember his or her purpose, and such remembering brings healing both to the individual and the community. The community exists, in part, to safeguard the purpose of each person within it and to awaken the memory of that purpose by recognizing the unique gifts each individual brings to this world. Healing comes when the individual remembers his or her identity — the purpose chosen in the world of ancestral wisdom — and reconnects with that world of Spirit. Human beings long for connection, and our sense of usefulness derives from the feeling of connectedness. When we are connected — to our own purpose, to the community around us, and to our spiritual wisdom — we are able to live and act with authentic effectiveness."

— *The Healing Wisdom of Africa: Finding Life Purpose through Nature, Ritual, and Community*

The goal for this area is to simply increase the children's understanding and relationship to GOD and how this relationship relates directly to their purpose and to community. This is to be achieved by two methods.

Once a month to engage the youth in KUA workshop that would focus on meditation, movements and a discourse that discusses how practicing can help to improve their understanding of GOD in their daily walk.

African Spirituality and the ancestral communication component. This will allow the youth to begin to remember their purpose and the importance of the ancestors and their role in our lives and how we can access them to help us with daily living.

VI. Ministry Engagement

"Train up a child in the way that he/she may go and when they become old; they will never depart from it" Proverbs 22:6

Giving youth the opportunity to be in service to GOD through the church ministries. Each child will have an opportunity to be in service through the following ministries;

- Choir
- Usher
- Graphics
- Acolytes
- Pastor Aides (To be developed)
- Dance
- Jr. Maccabees (To be developed)

In addition to the ministry engagement, the youth will participate in Sunday school (Bible Class) Children's church and scheduled youth Sunday's as scheduled by Pastor and Youth Minister.

Sunday school – *Is Christian education generally for youth that teaches them systematic Bible Study and allows them to learn the seasons of Faith in the Pan-African Orthodox Christian Church.*

Children's Church – *Is Church Service put on by the youth. They will sing, usher, officiate and deliver the message. This is training ground for Youth Sunday in the Regular Service .*