

General Synod reviews Church-ministries-policy

Utrecht, March 31 2009 – At the assembly of the general synod of the Protestant Church in the Netherlands in April the policy for the Church-ministries is reviewed and established. In this policy are the topics of the work that Church- ministries wants to accomplish for the Protestant Church and her congregations. Guiding for that is the vision-document 'Learning to live out of wonder'.

Strategic choices

In de concept-policy the following strategic choices are made:

Missionary work

Many congregations want to invest in increasing their missionary recruiting-force in the years to come. In the service to the congregation is proposed to make more manpower and means available. Additionally the church-ministries will approach the congregations actively with new missionary concepts.

Youth and young people

Many congregations want to invest in coming years in the (re-) involvement of youth and young people with the congregation. The youth work of the Protestant Church (JOP, HGJB) provides an offer for this. It is the intention to expand this offer in the coming years, amongst others by directing it to the personal life sphere of young people and their personal needs to help shape society as Christians.

Volunteer policy

Because the number of available professionals is decreasing in many congregations, more tasks have to be performed by volunteers. Because at the same time the number of volunteers and their availability is decreasing the pressure on these volunteers, also for the execution of above local work is getting larger all the time. Therefore the accent in the services will be more on the recruiting and training of volunteers. For that a coordinator volunteer policy will be available.

Support of vicars and religious workers

Both in service to and communication with the congregations the church ministries will direct itself more at those professionals.

Communication

The church ministries will start with the execution of the communication strategy 'Faith, Hope, Love' in 2009. Its purpose is to increase the visibility of the church in society and to improve the relationship with the congregations.

Kerk in Actie (Church in Action)

Kerk in Actie applies itself to reinforcement in the coming years; reinforcement of the religious profiling, of the partnership with the partner-churches and –organizations and of the support of the congregations. Remarkable is that Kerk in Actie in the programme Mission wants to increase the number of missionary workers with a percentage of 25.

Kerk in Actie will also be involved with a new development in the coming years. For the execution of the World diaconate (including Emergency Relief) Kerk in Actie is part of the so called ICCO-Alliance, a cooperative of amongst others ICCO, Kerk in Actie, Prisma and Oikocredit. The policy 2007-2011 of this Alliance provides a new working method with partners in the South. Central is putting more responsibility with these partners for their own projects. Part of this new working method is that part of the supervision of projects which now takes place in the Netherlands, will be transferred in the coming years to region offices in the South.

This change will be effectuated in the coming years. For Kerk in Actie it is important to choose a position in these developments which does justice to the direct relation between the work of the partners and the congregations of the church. The intended decentralization is topic of a discussion in the assembly of the general synod of November 2009 in the evaluation of the cooperation between Kerk in Actie and ICCO.

Means

The development of the receivings which are available to the church is insecure. The economical crisis possibly leads to loss of income. The concept policy points out on the one hand that there will be reflection on a 'fall-back-scenario' if the income of the church should decline dramatically. On the other hand is also indicated that the number of staff will decline (till 324 in 2012) and that the development will be critically followed in view of accommodation.

Note for the editors not meant for publication:

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