

# Anglican Women looking to AWE United Nations

By Michael Griffin

From February 26 to March 9, women from all over the world will be meeting at the United Nations headquarters to discuss something very important: the elimination of all forms of violence and discrimination against the girl child. The delegates are meeting at the United Nations Commission on the Status of Women (UNCSW). A group of Anglican women will be among the attendees under the banner of Anglican Women's Empowerment. The main problem that young girls face is a lack of education, with the UNCSW website stating that 60% of 130 million school-aged girls are not enrolled in classes. Ritual mutilation is another serious problem, with over 120 million girls being forced to undergo it yearly. Trafficking is also a dire problem faced by millions of female children. AIDS and pre-teen marriage are also issues.

Trinity Church, Wall Street will also be hosting an event: "Girls Claiming the Future: Hopes and Chal-

lenges" with Presiding Bishop Katharine Jefferts Schori and the Anglican Observer to the UN, Hellen Wangusa, both speaking on a panel that will be moderated by Carol Jenkins of the Women's Media Center. A group of Anglican girls from around the world will be there and a DVD about them will be shown. Bishop Catherine Roskam, who is very committed to this cause, noted, "The Anglican Delegation to the annual meeting of the UN Commission on the Status of Women is an extraordinary group of women, who while coming from very diverse contexts, are united in their work on behalf of the empowerment of women and girls around the globe. Within the Anglican Communion they have proven over the last three years to be an effective, if often unofficial, instrument of unity--and certainly of compassion."

Karen Sisk, another vocal supporter, said, "I do believe that the United Nations Commission on the Status of Women is a major force for change and its continual challenge to member states to fulfill the Millennium Development Goals, agreed to by 191 nations,

including the United States, is vital. The UNCSW has empowered women and their member states to create initiatives to improve conditions for women and girls worldwide, but the violence against women and girls, the lack of education for girls and the trafficking of girls are still major problems throughout the world. We must continue to press the United States Government to ratify the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women. This Convention has been ratified by 185 nations and although the US has signed it, it has not ratified the treaty, therefore it is not bound to put the provisions of the Convention into practice."

Resources for more information on these issues and how you can help can be found at:

- [http://www.unicef.org/voy/takeaction/takeaction\\_3295.html](http://www.unicef.org/voy/takeaction/takeaction_3295.html)
- <http://www.un.org/womenwatch/asp/user/list.asp?ParentID=3012>
- <http://www.unfpa.org/about/index.htm>

## The YouTube Mission Field

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editing software and lighting from interested viewers, the production quality of "Father Matthew Presents" has been slowly enhanced. Yet, I believe that the video blog's lack of polish adds to its charm, in a context where authenticity and immediacy are paramount. The home-spun character of the series does have its downside. After the scandal of Lonelygirl15 (a popular video blogger that was exposed as an actress presenting a persona), I have had to assure a few viewers that I am indeed a priest! I hope that, over time, YouTube ministry will rise in credibility.

I encourage Episcopalians and those of other faiths to take advantage of this recent shift in the world of high-tech relationships, with YouTube as their tool. I believe that now is the time for the mainline churches to cultivate a presence upon this cheap and accessible terrain, before more extremist voices do. Hard-line voices of faith have dominated the airwaves for decades. But, for now, these voices seem absent in pluralistic realms like YouTube. Perhaps these strident voices will shrink from the intense scrutiny that this new marketplace of ideas invites. YouTube presents a new opportunity for people of faith to dialogue rather than dominate.

Regardless of what develops in the new virtual land of YouTube, one missionary-minded priest intends his church to have a home there.

Here is a list of Episcopalian/Anglican blogs for you to explore. Please e-mail us at [eny@diocesen.org](mailto:eny@diocesen.org) to tell us about blogs you have found especially interesting.

- <http://blog.edow.org/weblog/> - A blog about faith, culture, politics and the Episcopal Church brought to you by the Diocese of Washington
- <http://revmikek.blogspot.com/> - The blog of the Rev. Mike Kinman, Executive Director of Episcopalians for Global Reconciliation
- <http://sistermaryalternative.blogspot.com/> The blog of Jen Goodnow, who wrote the "Nuns in the Blogosphere" story in this issue.
- <http://titusonine.classicalanglican.net/> - A blog by the Canon Kendall Harmon, a priest from South Carolina. Highly-trafficked and is considered required reading by many Episcopal Bloggers.
- [www.thinkinganglicans.org](http://www.thinkinganglicans.org) <<http://www.thinkinganglicans.org/>> - UK blog started by Simon Kershaw, Simon Sarmiento and Peter Owen to provide thoughtful contributions to the proclamation of the gospel message.

## Walking In Love



The Rev. Barrington Bates of Bailey House, Suzanne Culhane of ERA, The Rev. Maria Santiviago of Proyecto Vida and Judith Mason of Upon the Face of the Waters and ERA, after ERA awarded their first grants.

By Michael Griffin

"Walk in love, as Christ loved us and gave himself for us, an offering and sacrifice to God" is both from Ephesians and is also the tagline of the Episcopal Response to AIDS (ERA). ERA, formed in 2001 by a loose coalition of seven parishes, is now a 501(c)3 organization whose mission is to support, foster and financially enable HIV/AIDS ministries affiliated with Episcopal faith communities in the greater New York area. Over the next 3 to 5 years, the Board of Directors envisions building an organization that will raise \$100,000 annually through AIDS walk and other vehicles. The organization will help to provide for the stability of crucial parish-based AIDS ministries often not eligible for secular funding, making grants annually, and will serve as a resource and information clearinghouse for these ministries, offering experience, knowledge and labor whenever possible.

ERA will again be active participants in the AIDS Walk this year, on May 20, where it hopes to have 20 parishes join in. The level of parish participation will be crucial to raising this year's goal of \$70,000. 2006 participating Manhattan parishes were St. Mary the Virgin, St. Luke in the Fields, St. Thomas, St. Clements, Trinity, Christ & St. Stephen's, St. Michael's, St. Bartholomew's, St. John's in the Village, and St. Philip's, as well as St. Stephen's Pearl River.

"Participating in the walk is an opportunity for fellowship and ministry," said Suzanne Culhane, ERA chair. Culhane, who has a background in non-profit development and fundraising helped begin the incorporation process a year and a half ago. The group's 501(c)3 status was granted in June of 2006.

In 2006, ERA awarded over \$15,000 in its first annual grants cycle to Episcopal HIV/AIDS ministries. Proyecto Vida, a program of Mision San Juan Bautista, whose goal is to decrease the impact of HIV/AIDS in the South Bronx, was awarded \$5,000. Upon the Face of the Waters is a monthly retreat program that seeks to promote spiritual, psychological, social and physical well-being of the HIV infected and affected. The program is sponsored jointly by St. James of Jerusalem Church and the Order of St. Helena and was awarded \$5,000. The Church of the Ascension was awarded \$4,860 so that volunteers may purchase, prepare, and serve meals to residents of Bailey House (an HIV/AIDS residence) on the fifth Sunday of the month. In addition, the group made a special memorial gift of \$1,000 to the AIDS Project at St. Luke in the Fields, in memory of Shields Remine, a recently deceased ERA founding Board member.

In 2007 the group's goal is to award many more grants to struggling AIDS Ministries and plans to release its next Request for Proposals in September 2007. For more information, or to participate with ERA in the AIDS Walk on May 20, as an individual or parish, please visit [www.erany.org](http://www.erany.org)