

iLIGHT

EUD CHILDREN'S MINISTRIES BULLETIN

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Allow Children to Lead!

Jesus is... the ultimate Leader

It seems like these days what defines a leader is how much money, power, and influence he or she can show to the people around them. What is the mark of a good leader? In God's economy, it's not quite what you'd expect.

Jesus is not a typical leader. He didn't come to earth the first time to rule in might and power, although He could have. No, He first came as a servant, willing to do the Father's work, live a perfect life, and die on a cross to take the punishment He didn't deserve. He was humble, obedient, loving, selfless, and sacrificial. This is not the way the world would describe a leader, but isn't it the kind of person you would want to follow? Jesus didn't come to call the richest, smartest, or prettiest people. He first called fishermen, ordinary people like you and me, to follow Him. There was nothing special about them except the fact that Jesus chose them. He was going to do amazing things through the men that followed Him and He made them fishers of men and still does that today. He is the perfect leader and He will use those who follow Him to do the good works He has planned for us to do.

www.watermark.org/blog/jesus-is-our-guide-and-the-ultimate-leader

The childlike faith is very vivid and lifelike. Children are sure that God loves them. They like to come to the church because they can hear from Jesus and meet friends. In younger years, they do not question yet, but their relationship with God is clear for them! Without great shyness, they talk to their friends about Jesus like a good friend. But this phase does not last forever, because the questioning is part of their natural development of faith. At some point, the influences from outside become stronger and get more weight. In school classes, evolution is taught, other children go swimming on Sabbath morning and the supposed differences are weighted more strongly. It is important that by this moment, the children have already been able to develop a good and stable foundation of faith and, above all, feel involved in a community family. This strengthens them for the next challenging steps in faith and life.

How can we help our children build a Christian identity? Support them so that "God loves you as you are" not only remains a phrase, but is rooted in their hearts? How can we, as parents, church members, and Children's Sabbath school leaders, support and promote them in their faith lives? This article deals with these and other questions, wants to give thoughts and inspire ideas.

An important aspect is that we give to children the opportunity to experience their faith, to develop and to gain experience within the

family, but especially in the community! How often do we think, "He/She is still too young, has too little experience, what do members say when a child performs this activity, what if something goes wrong?" Every failure is also an experience for the future and a next step in development! It is often easier to involve the children in a special worship service (Thanksgiving, children's worship etc.), which already has a program and only the tasks have to be distributed. But what if a child says that he or she would like to do the moderation, for example, what thoughts come to our minds? "What do the other adults think? Is the child already mature enough? How does it affect our guests? What if something goes wrong?" Or if the child wants to hold a sermon? After all, there is no experience and no training at all! So many concerns at the beginning - do our thoughts go a step further? Are we considering the profit that the community - all those involved and those present - could derive from it?

Quite honestly - some things work great within a family, but are not necessarily correct or accepted by all members. Shouldn't new skills be practiced, even if they are accompanied by failures? Will this affect the mutual affection? Do we say in the family: "You're too young, you can't?" Of course, there are activities that we - depending on age and skill - do not let the children do alone, e.g. cutting vegetables with sharp knives, etc. Here I would like to draw attention to the word *alone*! We know our

RELIGIONS OF THE WORLD



OTHER RELIGIONS

Jainism

This religion counts about 4 million believers, mainly in India. They worship the great master Mahavira who lived in India more than 2500 years ago, and believe in *ahimsa*, non-violence. The believers respect every form of life and are vegetarians. Some monks carry a mask over their mouths in order to not to swallow any insect and sweep the ground before them in order to not to crush an animal by accident. There are many temples, and most families have an altar at home.

Baha'i

This religion came up in Iran in the 19th century. Followers of this religion believe in the unity of human race. They believe God has revealed himself to different people in different ways, depending on the epoch. And this happened through prophets and scriptures. Those could be Moses, Jesus, Buddha, Mohammed, or Vishnu. Most believers live in Haifa, Israel.

Rastafarianism

This religion was named after the emperor Ras Tafari (the Lion of Judah). This was the title Haile Selassie, last emperor of Ethiopia had before his coronation in 1930. The Rastafari consider Ethiopia to be the Promised Land, and Haile Selassie a messiah sent by God to show how to live. According to Leviticus, hair should not be cut, so they keep their hair long and plaited (*rasta*).

From: Brown, A. & Langley, A.: *Les Religions du Monde expliquées aux enfants*. Hachette Livre, France, 1999

children and have a feeling for how much trust we can put in them! So we accompany and support them in their first attempts and see their progress! Do you remember the joy that flashes from the eyes of a child when it succeeds in something new? The pride and confidence in the own skills and talents that it receives? Children need the feeling of belonging and then they can develop.

It is important to mention that I do not advocate offering a completely separate program for children every Sabbath – that promotes consumerism in a rather unhealthy way – but to integrate them into the normal divine service process! This may begin with small activities such as collecting gifts, giving programs/books, singing songs, reading/recalling a Bible verse, playing a piece of music for reconciliation, using the technique... The gifts and talents of a child play a major role in the choice of activity! Or maybe they can just discover a talent in this way! Children and adolescents have a different view on many things, for example, life and faith, of which adults can benefit and remain mentally agile!

Jesus said: If you do not become like the children, then you cannot come to the Kingdom of God (Matthew 18, 3). "Like the children" means according to Jesus.ch: "*To become like the children. It's a question of internal attitudes and attitudes that we should be accustomed to once we have forgotten them: an unpretentious thinking; an acceptance of our weakness and need, coupled with the willingness to let ourselves be bestowed by God; a stronger orientation towards our most deeply buried need for love; and finally an unconditional trust in God's promises*".* Jesus has highlighted the importance of children! In addition, children have a different view than adults. Why don't we dare the experiment and pray together? Provide the child with a mentor and let us surprise what the

child has to tell us? We can only win! Either experience or new knowledge! In addition, we support the transition from the consumer to the employee and disciple of Jesus! And what can be better?

It is a great concern to me that the children can find their place in the church family! They should be able to become rooted, to develop, to make mistakes and to learn from them, but also to have success stories! They also look behind the scenes and can better understand and accept some of the processes.

Allowing children to lead needs prayer, courage, understanding and patience, but if the result contributes to the encouragement and edification of all, we should dare! We also support their career from the consumer to the employee, and what keeps their faith and their relationship with God more alive than when they can be active, can live their faith freely and concretely?

Today in many churches, responsible positions can't be filled, or only a few persons are willing to take all the responsibilities. Why don't we motivate children and young people to contribute more? To shape the church and to leave a memorable footprint?

If we, as their family, live up to them with faith and they have been accepted and involved in the church, it is probably the best way to support their spiritual development, to strengthen their faith and equip them for life! Here they can recharge themselves in a benevolent environment and gain experience of God, which they can then pass on to their friends! ♦

* https://www.jesus.ch/themen/glaube/glaube/102743-werdet_wie_die_kinder.html

Simone Studer

Swiss German Conference (DSV)
CHM Director



JESUS

wants all of me

Pray Earnestly

Elijah was a brave prophet. He approached King Ahab and warned him that it wouldn't rain anymore until Elijah said it would. What courage! God is the one who sends the rain on earth. How could Elijah have known if it would rain or not? It's possible that Elijah knew

something very special about God; Elijah knew that God is happy to answer the prayers of people who serve Him and worship Him with all their heart. Elijah loved God above anything else, and that made a difference when he earnestly asked God for something in prayer..

"Elijah was human as we are, and yet when he prayed earnestly that no rain would fall, none fell for three and a half years!"

James 5:17

From: Ferreira de Oliveira, S.: *Talking with God*. Editorial Safeliz, Madrid, Spain, 2015

PRAYER OF **ANDREW**

Dear Jesus,
For us children the mass is a little boring. Why don't you just add some cartoons?

From: "Caro Gesù, potresti cambiare il sapore agli asparagi? 100 nuove letterine dei bambini a Gesù". Sonzogno Editore, Milano, 2007

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IN SYNERGY

Children's and Women's Ministries Retreat

I dreamed that I was at the women's weekend and that my three children were there with me..."

With these words, pronounced with great emotion and tears, a young woman, very touched by the circumstances of her life, expressed her thanks for the collaboration between Children's and Women's Ministries.

She needed to participate in this meeting!

She needed to fortify herself, to exchange, to pray, to feel belonging to a spiritual family.

However, for a period of four days, there are too many things to plan for and with the children: either they stay at home or they come along.

So she lived a few days between uncertainty and desire, even the need, to participate in a long weekend without knowing exactly how it would have been feasible.

She did not know that indeed, everything was already prepared!

I had previously given my colleague my availability to support her during her meetings, with a program specially designed for children who were eventually accompanying their moms.

And it all coincided!

The desire of moms, the needs of children, and my desire to be at the service of children.

Another mother also took advantage



of this synergy, and we have lived unforgettable days! Each one on their side...

A small experience that has allowed us to tighten the bonds, to help each other, to live and to share spiritual moments, community, friendship, games. All this in a beautiful setting of nature awakening in spring and making us burst with joy by looking at it.

We have experienced the simple synergy of one department in the service of another, both closely linked: Children's and Women's Ministries. This was a

premiere, but our wish goes far beyond... Other meetings with "Mom" women who can enjoy these beautiful spiritual moments with their children... Other weekends to recharge knowing that there is a place also for children!

Elena Melzi Zagara
French Swiss Conference (FSRT)
CHM Director



Using music: musical word islands

Supplies:

- large pieces of wallpaper
- scissors
- thick markers
- masking tape
- background music and CD player

Instructions:

1. Write each word of the verse on the wrong side of a piece of wallpaper. Make the piece big enough for the whole group to stand on if possible.
2. Tape each piece of wallpaper to the floor so it will not slip and children will not trip on the edges.
3. Help the children learn the verse so they know in which order the words will come.
4. Explain the rules of the game: The children will walk in a circle around the edge of the room as the music plays. Whenever the music stops, all the children have to walk as quickly as they can and stand on the piece of paper that contains the first word in the verse. The next time the music stops the children have to go to the second word, and so on until the verse is complete. No one is disqualified from the game for arriving at a word island last or for getting a word wrong.
5. Keep all the children in the game till the end because the goal of the game is to learn the words, not win the game.



From: Holford K. *100 creative ways 2 learn memory verses*. With permission from GC CHM

**Disability categories:
Developmental**



Children can have intellectual disabilities as a result of disorders such as Down syndrome, fetal alcohol syndrome, Childhood Disintegrative Disorder (CDD), or Fragile X syndrome. These kids have the ability to grow and learn and can make a positive impact on their world.

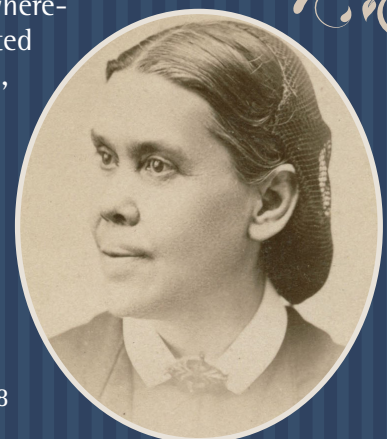
They can know who God is and Jesus is. Many of these kids can become familiar with the heroes of

the Bible, understand Bible events, appreciate Christian music, and participate in prayer. They can have relationships with peers and with Jesus.

The goal is to help our volunteers understand that children with intellectual disabilities can indeed learn. They don't need babysitters; they need teachers who will find ways to share God's story and model in love.

From: Verbal, P. *Special Needs Ministry for Children*. Group Publishing, Loveland, USA, 2012

Why do not the overseers of the church have councils to devise ways whereby young men and women may be trained to put to use their intrusted talents? Why do not the older members of the church seek to do good, earnest, compassionate work for the children and youth? Many have embraced the truth, and yet they have not been educated as to how they may serve the cause of God, and thereby grow in spiritual muscle and sinew. By employing the faculties of the mind and body of our youth in the service of God, a door is closed against the temptations of the enemy, and Satan has not as favorable an opportunity for training the children and youth for his service



Pastoral Ministry, p. 278

A Treasure Called You



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Incredi-Biblical

"Every good and perfect gift is from above, coming down from the Father."

James 1:17

Each of the kids in the Gonzalez family was different: Kelli was the smart one, Eddie was the athletic one, and Tina was, well, just *Tina*. "I wish I were good at something," Tina told her mom one day while they were folding laundry together.

"What do you mean?" Mom asked.

"Well, I feel as though I'm the only one who doesn't have a special talent. I have a smart sister and an athletic brother, and I'm just the boring one." Tina shrugged her shoulders and tried to keep from letting Mom see her start to cry.

"Tina," Mom said, putting down the T-shirt she was folding and taking Tina by the shoulders. "Look at me, honey. I could list a thousand things that are wonderful about you. You're great with animals. You have a soft heart. You have an amazing imagination."

"Thanks, Mom, but you're sort of obligated to say nice things. I just wish that I had a really special talent that would set me apart from everyone else."

Tina's Mom smiled at her. "I see," she said. "Tina, don't worry. God *has* put special talents in you. You've only had 11 years to unpack them. Keep exploring the things you love, ask God to show you, and see what happens."

Tina picked up a pair of jeans to fold. Maybe her mom was right. Maybe someday she'd discover a treasure chest—inside herself.

Info Splat

A caterpillar grows to about 27,000 times the size it was when it first emerged from its egg.

React now!

What special gifts do you have? What is the purpose of the gifts God has given us? (See 1 Corinthians 12:7 for a hint.)

From: Bockmann, M. et al.: *Elasti-Brain. 365 Devotions to Stretch your Mind and Shape your Faith*. Review and Herald Publishing Ass., Hagerstown, MD, USA, 2008

SECRETS FROM THE TREASURE CHEST



Why are people in the church so critical?

– Student, 15

Because they don't have Jesus in their hearts. Critical people need our love and prayers because they're holding on to a character flaw that will keep them out of heaven.

Through the years, I've had to deal with many critical people. What I found was that most had perfectly valid concerns and ideas, but didn't know how to express themselves properly. Perhaps no one had ever listened to them or taken them seriously before. So they began loading their words with anger.

More important than why the church contains critical people is what you and I are going to do about it. Solomon has some great suggestions. He says, "A

soft answer turneth away wrath: but grievous words stir up anger" (Proverbs 15:1). Whenever you give your opinion about something, use soft words, not angry ones. That's the correct way to respond to criticism, too.

Solomon also states, "*Pleasant words are as an honeycomb, sweet to the soul, and health to the bones*" (Proverbs 16:24). When someone is critical of him or her. Go to that person and ask for advice. This does two things: It snuffs out their anger like water on a fire, and also gives you an opportunity to learn something. Remember, critical people aren't stupid. They're just not very good communicators.

Solomon says, "*The words of a man's mouth are as deep waters*" (Proverbs 18:4). Critical people may want to drown you. But now you know how to swim!



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From: Mills, C.: *Secrets from the Treasure Chest. Questions Kids ask about Life*. Review and Herald Publishing Ass., Hagerstown, MD, USA, 1996



ACTIVITY REPORT



News from the Swiss Union

Aventure Bonheur



Aventure Bonheur (Adventure Happiness) - Activities, workshops and games for children and parents

A Project with the objective of stimulating interest, bringing children together with their parents, informing, talking, making decisions and sharing with friends!

For a dynamic development of physical health, for a progressive awareness of harmful substances; to recognize one's value in the eyes of God; to discover the assurance of being supported.

The foundation

The basis of the project is the Biblical text of Matthew 22:36-40

Master, what is the greatest commandment in the Law? Jesus answered him, "You will love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul and with all your mind. This is the greatest and most important commandment. And there is a second one like it: You will love your neighbor as yourself.

According to this biblical text, and many others, we have carried out an activity project for children and parents, on the theme of physical, mental and spiritual health, in order to allow and foster interest, provide reflection, encourage family sharing and, why not, get to a decision.

Discoveries

The heart

Our will, our intentions, our objectives, our desires, our expectations, our aspirations, our perception, our emotions.

The soul

The totality, the whole body and mind, our life, our personality, character, potential, talents, cultural differences, age differences, in short - everything we are!

The thought

The ability to understand, decode, reflect,

grasp, realize, proceed, accomplish, make decisions, make choices, develop self-control and morality.

Adventure Happiness for...

- being in good physical health
- knowing how to make choices
- having support

The steps

- **Health**—knowing our bodies, brains, emotions
- **Diet**—understanding the function of the digestive system and the impact of food on the body
- **Addictions**—know and recognize harmful substances
- **Self-control**—encouraging good choices
- **Support**—belonging to a group where members help each other
- **Value**—feeling your value in the eyes of God

Here are some other Bible texts we used as support:

1 Corinthians 3:16-17:

Don't you know that you yourselves are God's temple and that God's Spirit dwells in your midst? If anyone destroys God's temple, God will destroy that person, for God's temple is sacred, and you together are that temple.

1 Corinthians 6:19-20:

Do you not know that your bodies are temples of the Holy Spirit, who is in you, whom you have received from God? You are not your own; you were bought at a price. Therefore honor God with your bodies.

Proverbs 4:20-23:

My son, pay attention to what I say; turn your ear to my words. Do not let them out of your sight, keep them within your heart; for they are life to those who find them and health to one's whole body. Above all else, guard your heart, for everything you do flows from it.

1 Thessalonians 5:23:

May God himself, the God of peace, sanctify you through and through. May your whole spirit, soul and body be kept blameless at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ

Proverbs 2:10-12:

For wisdom will enter your heart and knowledge will be pleasant to your soul. Discretion will protect you, and understanding will guard you. Wisdom will save you from the ways of wicked men, from men whose words are perverse.

Elena Melzi Zagara
CHM Director FSRT

Workshop Fruit in Art & Tasting Nutella without Sugar



The Chewing





ACTIVITY REPORT



News from the Swiss Union

Teeth's Dance



Cinema Workshop



Do-It-Yourself Workshop



The Swallowing



Discovering the taste



Inside the stomach...



The Adventure Happiness Teams



Adventure Happiness for Teens



The intestines - the battle of bacteria



The main team



Making right choices



French-speaking Church of Geneva on May 5



Lusophone Church of Geneva on September 16





ACTIVITY REPORT



News from the Swiss Union

"Violence en-jeu"

(play on words in French; can be translated as "Violence at stake" or "Consequences of Violence" - Ed.)

In November 2017, we had a training on Benevolence & Positive Discipline with the Franco-Belgian Union. We proposed and organized a follow-up in February 2018, focused on the aspects of violence with children; that is, aggressiveness of children, but also the desire to amuse oneself with the different "forms" of violence.

Our speakers took us on a path of reflection, which was deliberately oriented on two aspects: one more theoretical and Biblical, the other more practical and based on everyday life.

With Marcel Ladislas, professor of Old Testament and Hebrew at University of Collonges, we discovered the real consequences of violence in the Bible.

It was necessary to recognize and rediscover that basically, God is love, and that only through this point of view, with a lot of investigation, one can develop a less anxious view on the "difficult" events of the Bible.

Knowing that God is both a God of Love and of Justice, the explanations of Prof Marcel Ladislas helped us grasp the sense of some Bible texts, thanks to a deeper study of them in their original language.

Considering carefully the biblical context, the historical situation and cultural aspects will help us avoid mistakes in interpretation and/or application. Too often, when trying to establish a connection between biblical narratives and daily life, we forget to understand fully what the author wants to convey to us. The life stories of the various characters are given to us to know God more and to understand that He works in our lives.



Telling Bible stories should enable listeners of all ages to know God with the awareness that Bible teaching has an impact on our lives, that God reveals Himself to us and that He wants to enter into a relationship with us. However, there is a natural progression related to the age of the children which makes some passages of the Bible less accessible and which are to be postponed to an age more beneficial for understanding.

Two literature resources that can help us to deepen the subject have been proposed to us:

1. "God of Mercy" Alain Marchadour
2. "Teaching Bible stories to children" John H Walton & Kim E Walton.

The workshops of Paul de Montmollin were very practical and lively. Because of his profession of educator, counselor, and trainer, and his deep knowledge in dealing with difficulties in social and behavioral areas of both children and teens, we were very interested and got involved.

First of all, we observed that it is mainly the role of parents to encourage the transformation of the "natural" aggressiveness of the child into a positive attitude, that when the child (or adolescent) uses violence, it is in most cases an expression of suffering and a disturbance of family order, that it is important not to trivialize aggressive behavior of a child, and that violence is an alarm signal and should be taken seriously when it becomes the only way of communication.

The essential role of the family and its stability have repercussions on the child's attitude, and, in general, one has to interact with the parents: one more challenge for the Sabbath School teachers!

The practical workshop on communication was very interesting! We took part in several activities, experiences, role-playing and games. With chopsticks held on our fingertips, for example, we practiced a form of non-verbal communication that looked to be not easy at first, but very effective afterwards. Undoubtedly, with this experience, we have understood that there are behaviors and attitudes in adults that can trigger off violence in children and, obviously, we must work on ourselves to eliminate certain toxic "legacies" that affect our communication.

Another very strong and enriching ex-



perience was the game of "musical chairs". Certainly, everyone knows this game: chairs placed in circles, but there is one less than the number of participants. As soon as the music begins, we turn around the chairs, ready to take over a "seat" when the music stops. All of us have played at least once at this game. We think we are doing right, having fun, laughing, but that's not what it's all about: we transmit competition that is superfluous and, more seriously, harmful to the child's harmonious development. Then, with Paul De Montmollin, we played in a "collaborative" and "inclusive" way. The music starts, people walk around the chairs, and when the music stops, we all have to find a place. At the beginning it's easy but then, in the progression of the game, when you take off more and more chairs and you have to keep the same goal, a place for everyone, it becomes more... interesting! The only additional rule is that you should not touch the ground with your feet if you are not sitting in a chair. We had a lot of fun with this new way of playing and we understood the importance of offering our children more situations, reflections and collaborative approaches.

It is extremely important to establish a correct relationship of trust to permit a Sabbath School teacher to feel at ease with his or her group of children, to cooperate and facilitate the harmonious development of the children entrusted to us.

Time was very short; we would have loved to stay longer to share other moments of fellowship, knowledge, prayer, and sharing. It is our wish for the next time!

This training showed us that there are still many challenges left, but now we know better where to concentrate our efforts.

Elena Melzi Zagara
CHM Director FSRT



ACTIVITY REPORT



News from the Swiss Union

Where teachers become students...

Interested Children's Sabbath School (KISA) teachers and pastors meet on two weekends a year under the wings of RPI (Religious Education Institute) to expand their knowledge, meet other KISA employees, exchange ideas, and to get and receive practical tips. These inputs should also be, among other things, a support for the promotion of one's own relationship with God. This broadens one's own horizons and creates a good basis for working with children and adolescents. In the middle of the well-planned program, there is plenty of time to recharge in a beautiful environment and with good food!

This November we met again in Oberägeri. On Friday evening, we explored the topic "How does God speak?" and we realized that where God speaks, there needs to be a listener! Those of us who work with the children and young people take the part of making the word of God tangible to the children! There were three important questions for us for the preparation of, for example, a Children's Sabbath School lesson:

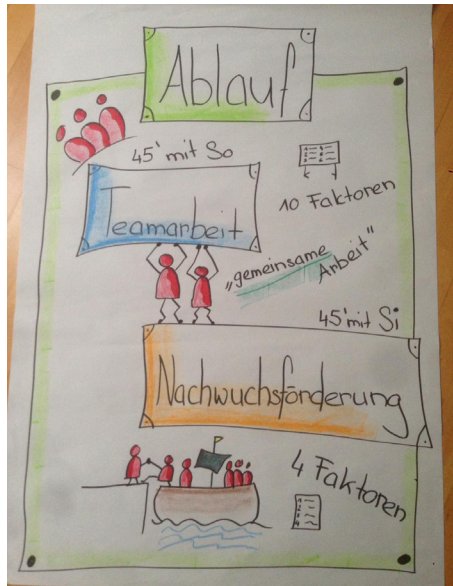
1. What does the text say in general?
2. What does the text tell me?
3. What does the text tell you?

We (automatically) teach to the children and young people entrusted to us how we hear God's Word. Nevertheless, it seems important to be open to other ways and to teach these possibilities to the children as well!

Sabbath morning was all about Biblical narrative texts. In the Bible, there are many stories, parables, with which Jesus picks up people in their world and thus creates understanding! It's not just kids who love stories! The congregation is also a narrative community!

That morning, we came to the special pleasure of a narrative sermon on Acts 14, 8 - 20. Normally, a sermon is delivered over a text, here the sermon was lived! The preacher slipped into the role of the paralyzed man and told his emotional story - or more accurately, he lived it! Rarely did a sermon touch me like that! As listeners, we were in the middle of the event, could see the scene in front of our inner eye and shared the emotions of the paralyzed man! That was a holistic message!

Another special event shaped this weekend: A baptism! A good friend was baptized at over 40 years of age, and his testimony not only moved him very much! Family and friends filled our meeting room and we



could feel God's blessing! A real celebration!

The two lovely speakers of the (Sabbath) evening put their topics together spontaneously and introduced us to various methods of unpacking the Bible and making it understandable and tangible for the children and adolescents, for example, Bibliodrama, Bibliolog, and Bible karaoke. The center of all this is the holistic communication "teachings with head, heart and hand"!

Sunday's focus is on practice! But first we dealt with the question: "How does the Bible fit into the faith of children?". Important points seemed to us: "faith develops and changes during the whole life!", "Everything we teach children, they can no longer discover for themselves!", "Children are in love with details, adults rather overlook details", "Questions make the Bible exciting, not Answers". It is much more exciting to discover the Bible together with the children and young people instead of just filling them with knowledge!

After a short break, Sonja and I could spring into action for the first time on the topics of teamwork and young talent. To be able to work as a team requires a vision! Without a common vision, alignment is lacking! The promotion of young talent is particularly important to me, because it can also help children and young people to feel accepted and integrated in the church!

Tired, but full of inspirations and good thoughts, we went home again after a rich lunch! A huge thank you goes to all the organizers and speakers for their inspiring commitment!

Simone Studer

Christmas Worship Service

In my church, the departments alternate in the organization of the Christmas Worship service. In 2017, it was the Children's Sabbath School's turn, and I wanted to try to put the service in children's hands! Some time before, three older girls (today 11 and 12 years old) had asked if they could even hold a sermon! The Christmas Worship seemed to be an ideal time. Every child was allowed to participate in the part they wanted: Shadow Theatre actor/speaker, moderation, music, etc. I was enormously touched by the motivation and joy the children (6 - 13 years) experienced! A teenager assisted me, so I was the only adult. The service was very rewarding for all those present!

Sometime after this service, the children were asked in which way they would like to participate in the service and I was very positively surprised that the quieter children also actively reported! I have the impression that the Christmas service under children's direction also motivated and inspired them!

It is a great concern to me that the children can find their place in the church family! They should be able to become rooted, to develop, to make mistakes and to learn from them, but also to have success stories! They also look behind the scenes and can better understand and accept some of the processes.

Simone Studer
CHM Director DSV



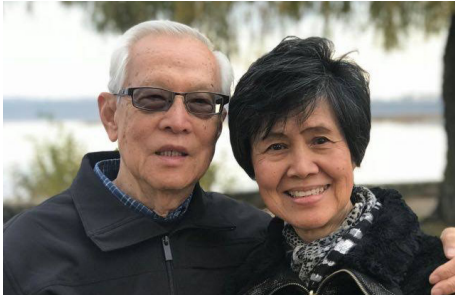


ACTIVITY REPORT



News from the EUD

Linda Koh's visit to EUD



In November, we had the privilege to have Linda Koh visiting some Unions in EUD. This time, Linda's husband Oliver came along with her, so we had the opportunity to enjoy his presence, too.

The first place we went to was Sofia, Bulgaria.

In addition to being an interesting country to visit and to enjoy exploring, the Bulgarian Union has also a greatly creative and talented CHM team. Every year this team prepares, with the support of several other departments, a special family day to involve families and children in a specific "adventure" together.

During our visit, we had the privilege to be part of such an event and we could testify how children and their parents were involved in a special City Tour for that day: **"The City of God Promises"**. They enjoyed participating in different activities presented all along the different steps of their journey.

Hundreds of children and parents, well guided and organized, participated in this event and for several of them it was not their first experience. In fact, this special activity is planned to take place at least twice a year.

Well done Emi Staneva, Varta Panayatova, Iskra Tomanova and all other members of CHM team in Bulgaria! Your involvement and thoughtfulness for children and their families are amazing! May God bless all of you abundantly.

Leaving Bulgaria, we traveled to Switzerland. On Thursday evening, we had the opportunity to visit the church of Gland to share a Training evening meeting with CHM and ChSS leaders of some churches of the French and Italian Swiss Conference. The topic was of great interest and well appreciated by all participants: **Raising Spiritual Giants**. With the involvement of Elena Zagara, CHM director in that Conference, and the strong support of Sergi Tejel, pastor of the church, Patricio Berna, CHM leader of the church, and

some members of the church of Gland we felt warmly welcomed. Thank you for supporting and being so well involved in advocating for children in FSRT!

As a conclusion of this tour in EUD, we flew to Lisbon, Portugal, the extreme west of EUD territory. Once more, it was to enjoy and take part of some special programs and activities for and with children.

On Friday evening, after sharing the several and inspiring CHM activities developed around the world, Linda Koh was asked to present a crucial topic for modern parents: **Spiritual Parenting**. As parents, we have a wonderful commission that God entrusted us and nobody else can do it better than us: spiritually mentor our children. Let's continue being effective parents and spiritual guides for them.

On Sabbath morning, the worship time was organized by CHM with the contribution of several children from churches in the surroundings of Lisbon. The central topic was: **"I wanna go - Little disciples in action"**. It was touching to see how children can share important stories from the Bible with great power and conviction.

The entire program was well arranged and overviewed by Paula Amorim, CHM director in Portugal, and her team.

Sabbath evening was again a great appointment with and for children. A special concert with several children performing and singing. What a blessing to see so many talents in action! Hearing children's voices amalgamated in different choirs was touching and impacting.

The "highlight" of the concert has been the huge children choir that put together about 60 children, almost all children participating, and kindly and smoothly directed by Joaldi Dias. We realized that children can give a strong testimony using their beautiful and

angelic voices that reveal their innocence and naivety but also how important is for us to respect them as precious children of God.

Thank you to all who gave their contribution to make this event a success that praised God!

The opportunity to meet all the pastors of the Portuguese Union in their annual pastoral meeting was a great opportunity to focus once more on the potential of children to be disciples and the accountability of parents, church members and pastors in their spiritual growth. Children are willing and ready to be part of God's Salvation plan. Are we supporting and training them accordingly?

Many thanks to all Unions, Conferences and Churches that, in some way, contributed to the success of the visit of Linda Koh in EUD territories. Europe is a region of challenges, struggles but also of great opportunities for children, youth and adults.

May God continue to bless all of us as we continue to serve Him and His children in our midst.

Elsa Cozzi
EUD CHM Director



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Very important event for all people involved in CHM / FM / WM – and others. Write it already on your agenda for 2019!



Ten ways to involve the children's artistic gifts in your church

1. Invite the children of your church to take it in turns to design the cover of your bulletin. If you photocopy in black and white ask them to do a simple pen and ink style design. If you have color bulletin covers for special occasions, then the children can draw, paint and create collages that can be scanned into your computer. When visitors see that you welcome and value the children they will know that they are more likely to be welcomed and valued too.
2. Encourage your children's leaders, and any graphic designers or artists you have in your congregation, to work with the children to create seasonal collages and thought-provoking posters for your church's external notice-board.
3. Let the children design envelopes for special offerings, especially offerings that will be used to help children. They can draw their designs on ordinary white envelopes.
4. Ask the children to design welcome postcards for your church, or cards to be sent to people who haven't been able to come to church for a while, or those who are ill. Give them plain white postcards and ask them to draw something on the blank side. You can ask them to write an appropriate Bible verse on the card, too.
5. If the Scripture reading has been chosen several weeks ahead of time, an artistic child or teenager can be asked to create a picture that illustrates the reading. This can be scanned into the computer and made into an illustrative PowerPoint slide which can be shown when the scripture is read.
6. Invite someone who is good at sewing and design to help the children create a banner to be used in church on a weekly basis, or for special occasions. There are several books of banners you can use as inspiration.
7. Children can boost your church building fund by designing a calendar that can be sold. There are computer programs and printing companies that can incorporate 12 of your children's scanned pictures into a calendar format.
8. Children often listen better to a sermon when they have something to do. Ask them to draw a picture that illustrates one of the messages in the sermon. At the end of the service let the children place their drawings on a bulletin board where others can see their work.
9. If your church has a website, include some of the children's drawings in a gallery on the site. This will encourage the children, their family members and friends to visit your site.
10. Nominate a gifted adult to mentor the creative and artistic talents of the children and youth in your church. Encourage them to look for ways in which children can use art to deepen their spiritual understanding and experience, and to develop workshops where children can design Scripture bookmarks, witnessing T-shirts, greeting cards, etc.

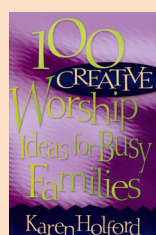
From: Holford, K.: *Altogether Wonderful. Exploring Intergenerational Worship*. With permission from GC CHM

RECOMMENDED RESOURCES



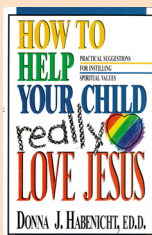
52 WAYS TO PARENT HAPPY CHILDREN Karen Holford

In this book, the author discusses a series of practical ways through which parents can enhance the lives of their children. Typical of her approach, this book is very practical and filled with interesting and fun-filled ways to implement her suggestions. Irrespective of the age of your child, or the level of your parenting experience, this book will surprise you with new ideas on how to make your efforts more effective.



100 CREATIVE WORSHIP IDEAS FOR BUSY FAMILIES Karen Holford

The most important gift we can give our children is the desire to love God and to follow and serve Him. The challenge facing parents today—as never before—is carving out time for daily family worship. This book is the answer to that challenge! Worship ideas for kids are grouped thematically and include worships that lead your child to Jesus, worships about the Ten Commandments, character-building, and family-building worships, and worships about God.



HOW TO HELP YOUR CHILD REALLY LOVE JESUS Habenicht, Donna J., Ed.D.

Based on her insights from the fields of child development and religious education, the author explains how children develop spiritually and offers practical suggestions on how you can help your child establish a lasting friendship with God. She shows how to teach children to love, trust, and obey, to forgive and ask for forgiveness, and to respect God's Word. You'll learn how to lead your children to Jesus and help them connect with God through prayer.



RAISING UP SPIRITUAL CHAMPIONS Gospel Light

Now you can help your kids answer the big questions about what it means to think and act like Jesus every day of their lives! This eight-session discipleship program provides the tools you'll need—from meaningful discussion questions to creative activities, from student pages to parent pages—to nurture lifelong spiritual growth in your students. Because most children's spiritual beliefs are in place by age nine, it's crucial that they acquire a biblical foundation for how they view themselves and the world. This program will help you teach God's truth during these all-important preteen years!



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