

women's ministries



SEVENTH-DAY ADVENTIST CHURCH
INTER-EUROPEAN DIVISION



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News from Women's Ministries Inter-European Division

DESERT FLOWER CENTER BERLIN



HELP FOR VICTIMS OF FEMALE GENITAL MUTILATION (FGM)

Every 11 seconds a girl is mutilated by the ritual cutting of the female genitals. According to the WHO, more than 200 million girls and women are affected worldwide. Though no religious beliefs prescribe the practice, practitioners often are convinced that it has religious support. Even in Europe, there are mutilated women who suffer from the consequences of FGM.

In cooperation with the Adventist Hospital Waldfriede, the world's first holistic care center for victims of female genital mutilation was opened in Berlin in 2013. Since then, about 200 women have been treated surgically and many more have taken advantage of the offered consultation hours.

The goal of the center is to offer holistic medical care to victims of female genital mutilation. This includes not only operations and reconstructive surgery, but also psychological and physiotherapeutic help. The monthly meeting in the self-help group offers the women a safe and protected framework in which exchange is possible, questions are asked and individual help is offered.

During a training course for doctors and midwives at the end of September, I had the opportunity to gain an insight into this valuable work.

It made me sad as well as angry to see the pain and misery these women have endured throughout their lives and how once more innocent girls and women who are made targets of violence. I was impressed by the way the DFC staff is committed to helping these women and enabling them to lead a dignified life again.

The feedback from the women was interesting and touching. One woman wrote: Now I have the part of my body back that was taken away from me.... The biggest wish of the women is the restoration of their physical integrity.

As a worldwide church, we are called upon to take up the fight against FGM and not to tolerate this appalling practice anywhere.

Link to the homepage of the DFC <https://www.dfc-waldfriede.de>

Reported by Dagmar Dorn, EUD WM Director

Photo: shutterstock_729627163.jpg

WOMEN'S SABBATH MEETING IN THE HANSE CONFERENCE



WOMEN MEET IN LÜBECK, GERMANY

When I joined the women's Sabbath afternoon program on October 10, 2020, Gudrun Gattmann, the speaker, was just about to show a picture presentation with the most diverse and beautiful butterflies that God has created. The meeting took place in the newly renovated fellowship hall of the Adventist Church in Lübeck.

Did we feel that we were as beautiful as the butterflies? Outwardly? In character? As expected, there were of course various self-perceptions and perceptions of others.

In the Bible study we looked at the story of the "little, ugly Zacchaeus", who was "very big" in deceit, but whom Jesus wanted to visit despite all the (outrageous) blemishes. This helped us to look at ourselves more with Jesus' eyes: with our potential! And the change that happened with Zacchaeus came about only through Jesus' love for him and the love this generated in Zacchaeus - not through self-discipline or self-optimization. We are not sinless, no, but through Jesus' death we are "perfect children of God". And completely accepted.

Afterwards - all within the framework of the Corona hygiene concept - there was a selection of homemade, exquisite cakes and tarts that melted in our mouths. There was also plenty of time for exchange and conversation.

Thanks to the organizer, decorator and baker Petra Lolk, who lovingly prepared the room for us with her diligent helpers.

My summary: It was a spiritually encouraging, delicious and blessed afternoon in a beautiful ambience.

We are already looking forward to the next time!

Reported by Maren Schmi

Photo: WM Hanse Conference, Nancy Duske

ROMANIAN WOMEN MEET BY ZOOM

SURPRISED BY GOD'S LOVE



The Women's Ministries Department of the Romanian Union organized an online meeting for singles sisters on October 10, 2020, at 7.p.m., Romanian time. In addition to the singles many other women were also invited and joined in the event. Special guest and speaker was Dagmar Dorn, director of WM Department at Inter-European Division. 93 people, sisters and brothers, heard the message called 'Surprised by God's love', and felt encouraged in times like this. We don't have to impress anyone, we don't have to compare with others or envy others,

because God is enough for us, we are His children, was the message that lifted us up and brought us joy in our hearts.

May God bless us all and help us to live without fears in our hearts!

Reported by Viorica Avrămiea, Single Section coordinator, Romanian Union

INTERNATIONAL GIRLS' DAY



AWARENESS OF GENDER INEQUALITY FACED BY GIRLS WORLDWIDE

October 11 is the day on which the world is called to support girls and increase awareness of gender inequality faced by girls worldwide. In many countries girls do not have equal access to education. Their nutrition, legal rights and medical care leave much to be desired. Girls are also faced with discrimination and gender based violence as well as forced child marriage.

The initiative for International Girls' Day began as a project of Plan International, a non-governmental organization operating worldwide. The idea for an International Day for Girls arose from Plan International's "Because I Am a Girl" campaign, which raises awareness of the importance of promoting girls globally and especially in developing countries. Plan International urged the United Nations to get involved, and so this day was proclaimed by the United Nations and first observed in 2012.

At the same time the global #GirlsTakeover allows hundreds of girls from many countries to step into the roles of media, entertainment, business and politics for a day to demand equal power, freedom and representation for girls and young women.

For instance in Finland Prime Minister Sanna Marin let a 16-year-old girl fill her seat for a day on October 7, just ahead of the UN Day of the Girl. Aava Murto met politicians throughout the day to highlight women's rights in technology.

"It is a pleasure to be speaking here before you today - although, in a way, I wish that I did not have to stand here, that campaigns like the Girls' Takeover were no longer necessary," Aava Murto said in a speech. "However, the truth is that we have not yet achieved gender equality - not anywhere on earth. Although we have accomplished a great lot of good in this area, there is still much work that needs to be done. "

This year's focus is on promoting digital skills and technological opportunities for girls. But women and girls are being harassed on social media, and so they are sending an open letter to the major social media companies, calling for greater action to be taken against online abuse and harassment.

#FreeToBeOnline.

Watch the video: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=DhubOfYVrtI&t=37s>

As more of our lives are moved online due to COVID-19, it is important that this space should be safe for girls.

When we look at this area this year, we do not want to forget how important it is that girls all over the world have access to education that provides a stable basis for their future.

Let us not only remember on International Girls' Day the many girls in the world who are denied this, but let us continually work to make the world a better place for girls and young women!

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NEW BLOG IN GERMAN AND ENGLISH LOOKING AT THE WORLD THROUGH A WOMAN'S EYES



DO NOT LET YOURSELF BE TALKED INTO THINKING THAT WOMEN ARE INFERIOR BEINGS!

What Women Owe to Jesus

Do not let yourself be talked into thinking that women are inferior beings!

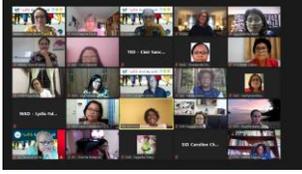
It is a fact that women have long been oppressed and discriminated against. In our age and day many think that it is a thing of the past. There has been progress in gender equality. Many people think women should be content with what has been reached.

As Christian women we know that God created man – both man and women – in His image. Our loving God never wanted women to be treated as they have been treated throughout history. Women owe so much to Jesus and how he treated women. When we read the Gospels, we see that Jesus treated women very differently from what was usual in his culture. He ignored the restrictions that were imposed on women and allowed them to follow him publicly. Women worked with the disciples as his disciples and proclaimed the good news. The women whom the gospels portray were strong women, and Jesus supported them.

Women see the world through feminine eyes and it might be good to share this perspective with others. That is why Hannele Ottschowski has started to write a blog in German and English about topics that are of interest and current events. We invite you to look into her blog site under: frauenblick.blogspot.com. Scroll down to find the English version.

WOMEN'S MINISTRIES ADVISORY 2020

GLOBAL MEETINGS PER ZOOM



Every five years the General Conference Women's Ministries leadership calls all division directors and their assistants together for an advisory. This time the meetings took place via Zoom from September 29-30, because of the restrictions due to Covid-19. The meetings were facilitated by Heather-Dawn Small and Raquel Arrais of the General Conference. Because of the many different time zones the sessions began at 6 a.m. for some, while for others it was late in the night. It is amazing to be connected with each other around the globe

in this way.

It was particularly valuable to share and hear reports of how we as a global family have coped with the Corona pandemic under the exceptional circumstances. All leaders have had recourse to intensive joint prayer sessions either per zoom, phone or other modern media. In general social media were used extensively and in many parts of the world women have discovered them as the most important new medium for meetings and events.

The topics of the advisory were:

- The strategic plan of the General Conference „I will go – reach my world.“ It was noted that many things are already included in our Nurture – Empower – Outreach areas and there are already lots of initiatives.
- Presentation of new resources
- Leadership and social media
- Scholarship program
- Sharing resources among other directors etc.

Dr. Ella Simmons and GC President Ted Wilson also addressed a word to the participants. Even though it was unusual to meet only via our computer screens, it was a blessed time and a real feeling of „Sisterhood“ developed among the Women's Ministry leaders.

Reported by Dagmar Dorn, EUD WM Director

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Homepage Women's Ministries:
www.women.eud.adventist.org

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