

I Will Go Reach My World



NURTURE



EMPOWER



OUTREACH

"We have different gifts according to the grace given us..." —ROMANS 12:6, NIV

A MINISTRY FOR EVERY WOMAN



2022.09. April 29, 2022

News from Women's Ministries Inter-European Division

New Women's Ministries Director for Austria



VACANCY FINALLY FILLED

We are very happy to announce that after almost two years the vacancy in the leadership of the Women's Ministries Department has finally been filled again. Elida Oncea has been appointed as the new WM leader for the Austrian Union.

Elida has lived in Vienna for two years with her family. She is originally from Romania and has lots of experience with Women's Ministries. For some time she worked as the Women's Ministries Director in one of the Conferences of the Romanian Union.

Elida has studied theology and education at the Adventist University in Cernica, and she is the author of several books as well as an international speaker. Elida will be one of the speakers at the upcoming Women's Ministries Congress of the German-speaking countries in September.

She loves to follow where God is leading and is an enthusiastic advocate for women. Elida is married to Daniel (pastor in Vienna) and the mother of two boys.

We wish her much joy, wisdom, and God's blessing for this new task.

News from Bulgaria



HOW TO ACT IN A "PERFECT STORM" CONDITION?

As a history teacher I teach my students important events from the past, most of which are wars. The face of the war looks rather theoretical from the distance of time and space – we can calmly describe and analyze them. My generation has grown up during the Cold War, with military

conflicts in different areas of the globe. The last wars, engaging the bigger part of the world, concluded in the first half of the 20th century. From February 24th however we live a different reality, the biggest war in the last 70 years has broken out. This war enacts before our own eyes and its "face" differs from this in the student books. We can feel it through the uncertainty for the future, the danger of mass destruction by nuclear weapons, the horrific media reports of destroyed cities and human lives. Bulgaria is one of the countries with tens of thousands of refugees, most of whom have witnessed violence and death. These are mostly young mothers with small children who have escaped from hell.

As believers our first and foremost priority during these difficult times is to help the needy however we can. Our church participates in all ADRA humanitarian aid campaigns – fundraising, transportation of refugees to different cities in the country and so on. The adolescents from Pathfinder Bulgaria prepared boxes with food supplies for children, victims of the war.

On the other hand, we restarted a project, interrupted previously due to COVID restrictions, and repurposed it to activities for socialization and support of refugees from Ukraine in Sofia.

We gather in a wonderful café in the city center, consigned at our disposal free of charge from two sisters from the local church, which gives us the opportunity to organize events, to build trust and to attract people – a wonderful center of influence for

purposeful activities for the local community. The cafe is open daily and in the organization of the events are included the young adults from the local church, the pastor and other church leaders.

Reported by the Bulgarian Union

News from Romania



ROMANIAN ADVENTIST WOMEN INVOLVED IN HELPING REFUGEES

Since the beginning of the war in Ukraine, Romania reached out to people in need, to those who fled from the fierce war in their country. ADRA took the lead in dealing with this crisis, helping the people and responding promptly with a lot of help for the many needs encountered.

In this context, over 675 women responded to the cry for help and served together with ADRA by getting involved in different activities and projects. The women were involved in the preparation of humanitarian convoys, purchasing, sorting, and transporting materials and food; they have been part of teams serving at border crossings; they are involved in hosting refugees. The Adventist schools received Ukrainian children to help in this transition to normalcy and stabilize the situation and also organized humanitarian fairs and concerts to raise funds to support refugee families. Women are involved in meal preparation, shopping, Sabbath, and weekday activities for refugees staying at the rest homes and they have also been involved in aid drives.

And the ministry continues. „And let us not grow weary while doing good...” (Galatians 6:9)

Reported by Liliana Radu, WM Director, Romanian Union

Ukrainian Refugees in Germany



HOPE FOR REFUGEES

When the first refugees from Ukraine showed up at the Adventist church in Tübingen we quickly realized that we had to welcome them in our midst and open our house for them, provide food and offer them a meeting place.

For a long time, we have wanted to start a Hope Center as a center of influence in our city. We had been looking for premises to start an active meeting center, but then Covid-19 came, and with the ensuing lockdown and restrictions our plans were postponed. Then in the summer of 2021, we decided to transform the lower rooms of the church to create an attractive meeting space on a modest scale. We didn't know when we would be able to offer events there, but we took advantage of the period of restrictions to be ready when it became possible again. And yet the prospect was still bleak. We had a whole list of ideas but they were still only on paper.

When the first refugees from Ukraine arrived in our area, we felt challenged to respond, not only with words as usual but with action. It was as if God was pushing us, saying, “Now get going!” We felt challenged to put into practice Jesus' words, “Whatever you did for one of the least of these brothers and sisters of mine, you did for me!” (Mat 25:40 NIV). We spontaneously sat down to consider what could be done and decided to start right away.

The arrival of refugees from Ukraine has now impacted us as a church and Hope Center and Women's Ministries teams in that we have started our activities concentrating on women and children. Due to Covid-19, the fellowship in the church had suffered for two years, as we had not been able to stay for Sabbath potlucks. Now, after the Covid regulations were lifted, we were able to eat together again on the Sabbath. The great willingness to help ensured that enough food was brought for twice as many people as usual and we were able to invite all refugees. We certainly still need to organize things better, but we trust in the lasting commitment of our church members.

Ukrainian Meetup

Word spread quickly that lunch and open house for refugees were offered in the Tübingen Adventist church on Saturdays from 12:30 - 16:00. Ukrainian refugees came from the surrounding churches so we were able to count 30 people with a Ukrainian background on the second Sabbath. We were happy that Pastor Slavici Zgherea, who is responsible for the Advent-Wohlfahrtswerk (AWW – Adventist Welfare Services) in Baden-Württemberg, was able to be there and help us with the contact with the refugees. The AWW has already helped many to find accommodation and is available to help us with advice and support.

The city and many volunteer organizations have shown much solidarity with the refugees. Since the initial reception facility of the city is situated near our church building, we prepared notices in Russian and Ukrainian to be posted there with information about our activities for refugees. This information was also posted on our websites and Facebook so that refugees can find us. Some women also came in by chance because of our notice board on the street and were happy about the friendly welcome. However, there is a lot of fluctuation among the refugees in the initial reception center because they are forwarded to other

arrival centers where they can stay for a longer period. Thus, some of the women and children who came to us at the beginning are no longer here.

Sisters' Care Group

Already during the wave of refugees in 2016, a Sisters' Care Group was established in our community, where some women from our church, with the support of the AWW, made the church kitchen available to the refugee women from Africa and Syria. They were able to prepare dishes from their homeland there and spend time together. Now we would also like to offer the Ukrainian refugees of the initial reception facility this opportunity once a week and revive the Sisters' Care Group. At the moment, however, there are some problems with getting the word out and with the enrollment.

Samovar Night

We are also curious to see how our women's meeting in the form of a Samovar Night especially for Ukrainian refugee women will take off. We are using the DVDs *Mit den Augen einer Frau* (Through the Eyes of a Woman) by Hannele Ottschofski with programs that she recorded in Ukraine and for which there is a Ukrainian and Russian soundtrack. Each topic comes with a set of conversation starter questions. We are happy that we have some women who speak Ukrainian or Russian who are prepared to help with a discussion of the topics in one of these languages. We have started these programs, offering tea from the samovar and some munchies twice a month on Tuesday evenings starting at 19:00. Our experience so far is that we tend to reach Adventist women who also attend our church services.

Dinner4all

Beginning in May, a group from the church is going to offer a free meal Dinner4all once a month on the third Wednesday of the month starting at 5:00 pm for people in need. This outreach is planned by the Hope Center in cooperation with AWW.

We have acted spontaneously and some activities still need to be better transmitted to our community members, like the donations for articles of hygiene and body care, from which people can help themselves to what they need. Perhaps there are other ideas that we should implement. We need to remain flexible. One of our problems is the language barrier. We are glad that we have some people who can help with their language skills. Often the barrier is only in our minds in the form of our insecurity. We must learn to reach out not only with practical help but also by creating relationships even if communication is not perfect.

Longing for Peace

The women from Ukraine long for peace in their homeland. To the question, "What does being happy mean to you?" one woman answered, "Mir - peace." The women I have met here are strong. They worry about their husbands, their families, and their children, but they are strong. They are learning German and want to find work. They are ready to build a new life. But in fact they want to go back to their homeland. We cannot imagine what traumatic experiences are hidden in their memories. Their whole existence was turned upside down overnight. How can something like this happen in the 21st century?

We don't know how long the war in Ukraine will last, but as a church with all our activities, we pray that it will stop soon. We also pray that God will help us and give us the strength to provide this help for as long as it is needed.

Reported by Hannele Ottschofski for the Adventist Church in Tübingen, Germany

Special Meeting for Women in the Muntenia Conference, Romania



WOMEN OF EXCELLENCE

On Monday, March 7, at 6 p.m., at the Seventh-day Adventist Church in Ploiesti, a meeting designed especially for women was held, with the title *A thought, a Smile, a Song* in an evening for "Women of Excellence". The special guests of the evening were Ms. Gianina Floricel, book editor at the publishing house "Viață și Sănătate" and Lucian Floricel, pastor and sociologist. The seminar they presented was called "Secrets of Excellence" and was followed by practical activities to stimulate thinking and creativity, in which the participants were made aware of the fact that our mindset may be complicated despite life possibly being simple because our expectations are different.

The event was attended by 60 people. Parents were treated to musical surprises by the students of the local school. It was an evening of great fellowship and an excellent meal prepared by the school's staff, ending with cake tasting. The participants of the event received books on health, family, and education. Natural, hand-made soaps, made especially for the evening's guests by Ms. Gianina Floricel, from organic, vegan ingredients, drew the visitors' attention to the skincare products we use in general because the skin is our largest organ and through it, we absorb most poisons.

With "Helt for Refugees," another important project was introduced, supported by the "Life and Health" publishing house. On this occasion "Women's Journals" were sold and the money raised from this book sale, together with other donations, went to Ukraine. The organizers also allowed those present to take photos in a spring setting, which they then took home.

Reported by Mihaela Koos, the program coordinator. Photos: WM RO



News from the Oltenia Conference, Romania



BALSAM FOR THE SOUL OF A WOMAN

Spring started in Râmnicu Vâlcea with the event created especially for women "Balsam for women's soul", 9th edition. The joy of a new beginning brought almost 200 participants to the "Anton Pann" Theatre on March 20, 2022, at 17.00. The event was organized by the Adventist Church Râmnicu Vâlcea I and had as special guests Prof. Dumitru Borțun and his wife, Prof. Corina Matei. The theme of the presentation was: "Do we communicate or just talk?" "How to communicate at home." Cristina Soare, leader of the Women's Ministries Department, gave a presentation entitled: "Aroma and Flavour". At the end of the meeting, a tasty snack was offered: vegan drob (a Romanian Easter specialty) and tapioca. Uplifting music by Anelisse and Beatrice Crăciun, the vocal group Procreativ and soloist Alina Popa touched hearts. The presenter of the meeting, Violeta Aldescu, enchanted hearts with her pleasant presence and inspired the room with her winning style. On this occasion, each woman in the room received a book: "Steps towards healthy eating" and a tulip.



Reported by Violeta Aldescu, programme coordinator

The meeting can be watched by visiting the link: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=7QOfSnP1u_I

Women's Ministries Convention in Beliu, Romania



SPECIALISTS PRESENT INFORMATION ON HEALTH

On 2 April, the Convention of the Women's Ministries Department of the Arad II area was held in the Beliu Church. The Women's Ministries leaders of the local churches and sisters from their churches attended and brought friends.

The three special guests at the convention were Dr. Ana-Maria Sucitu, a specialist in obstetrics and gynecology, Dr. Simona Mercea, a specialist in cardiology and Adina Tomoiagă, a senior assistant on the UPU and SMURD helicopter services at Arad County Hospital. The first guest presented a seminar on the role of hormones in the body and the diseases that are caused by hormonal disorders, the second guest talked about the presence of cardiovascular diseases, and the third guest demonstrated practically what we can do with people who faint, showing two positions in which we can place them to help them until the ambulance arrives.

At the end of the presentations, there was a special question and answer time with the audience.

200 people attended.

The meeting continued with surprises from the organizers. Each participant was given a Women's Agenda and non-Adventist visitors also received a Bible Journal and health books. The joy of this event was crowned by a potluck where the hosts served vegan sausages, cake, apples, and bananas. And because this occasion was very useful and practical, the next meeting is eagerly awaited!

Reported by Mariana Toma, Director of the Women's Ministries Department, Banat Conference

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