News from Women’s Ministries Inter-European Division

WM Meeting in the Belgian-Luxemburg Conference, September 19, 2015

The first conference-wide WM meeting for Belgium and Luxemburg was organized on September 19 in the church of Woluwe-Saint-Lambert.

On this occasion the world-wide concept of Women’s Ministries was presented but the ladies were also reminded of the spiritual strength God has given to women (and men) for the present time. This topic was presented by Karine Eloïdin, pastoral intern in Paris. The WM leaders of the conference also spoke. After a sumptuous meal the participants of the afternoon program gathered to pray and praise God and meditate on two topics touching women of all ages: ‘Woman, mother, spouse: illusion or possibility?’ and ‘Living as a single today, what does it mean?’ It was a meeting full of companionship and encouragement.

Enditnow Flash Mob in Italy

On 4 July the WM of the church of Caravaggio (Northern Italy) organized an enditnow flashmob in the center of the city of Treviglio (near Bergamo). Many people, including teenagers, came to see what the event was about. At the booth they received information on violence against women and the enditnow leaflet.

WM Weekend Retreat in Bremen, Germany, November 6-8, 2015

34 women from the Lower-Saxony-Bremen Conference came together in Hatten Sandkrug where Gerd-Laila Walter, Director of WM in Austria was our speaker as a substitute for Angelika Pfaller who was unable to come due to health problems. We considered the topics “Grace and forgiveness,” “Letting go and letting down” as well as “My feelings and practical experience of prayer”. We were individually touched by the messages and strengthened in our wish to lay our daily lives consciously in God’s hands and live each day with Him. Gerd-Laila’s refreshing and joyful nature was a source of a lot of fun. Touched by her personal and true-to-life stories we shared our experiences and took advantage of intercessory prayer in our big circle on Friday night. This moving and blessed atmosphere continued throughout the whole weekend and even afterwards. According to a report by Cornelia Warning, WM Leader
Leadership Certification in Romania, November 6-8, 2015

110 Women's Ministries Directors, one Union level, 6 on Conference level and the others on church level finished Leadership Program Level 2 in Porumbacu des Sus, Transylvania, Romania.

Why would so many women come to an intensive leadership training seminar? To remind ourselves to be light in this world, because Jesus return is long awaited. In a wonderful natural setting in the mountains, 110 women from all over Romania had the great joy of actively participating in this Convention, animated by the motto: "Be a light! Jesus is coming".

We were all blessed and grateful to meet our special guest, Denise Hochstrasser (the director of the Women's Ministries Department at EUD), who made sure we would not forget what Women's Ministries means and what our role in our churches as well as in our world is. We studied some of the women of the Old Testament and working together in small groups we tried to find out what we could learn from them. The 12 groups each prepared one woman from the OT, and presented them as a play: “I am...” It was so much fun, the Romanian women were extremely creative in presenting these women. We learned a lot from their experience.

Along with many other interesting and useful seminars that were presented (such as "Small group outreach", "How to plan an evangelistic program", "How to efficiently present a seminar", "Making of an info bulletin", "The principles of home visitation" etc.) we had a good share of smiles, uplifting music, heartwarming fellowship, testimonies, new insights on different topics, rambles in the colorful forest, even good laughs, and last, but not least: healthy and very delicious meals. I believe we all left that blessed place with a strong determination to let God shine through us, by letting God use us and our gifts even more to bring joy, peace, comfort, encouragement and healing to our world.

Reported by Leadore Bursuc

WM Weekend Retreat in the Mid-Rhine Conference, Germany, November 13-15, 2015

36 women from Hesse, Rhineland-Palatinate, Luxemburg and North-Rhine-Westphalia gathered at the comfortable youth hostel in Neustadt/Weinstraße for the annual WM retreat of the Mid-Rhine Conference. Some were there for the first time and others were excited to see friends again. The speaker was Heidi Albisser, WM leader in the Swiss-German Conference. Her topic was ‘Heilsame Grenzen – Nein sagen ohne Schuldgefühle’ (Healthy boundaries – how to say “no” without feeling bad).

Many people have difficulties in saying ‘no’ and their daily duties and volunteer work overwhelm them. Helping others does not mean that we should let others take advantage of us. We need to recognize what we need and wish for. The second step is to express this in words and with body language and voice in a friendly manner. Because we do not like to disappoint people it is not easy to do and so practical training was very much appreciated. The spiritual input came from Psalm 139 and from the story of Elijah. Many other devotional messages were a part of the interesting program.

In spite of rain and storm in the night the Sabbath afternoon was sunny and enabled the women to participate in a walk in the town. The retreat was over all too soon and the women are looking forward to the next retreat.

According to a report by Bigitte Grohrock, WM leader for the Mid-Rhine Conference

Training Session for Women in Italian Part of Switzerland with Lucio Altin, district pastor on November 15, 2015

Lucio Altin, pastor in the Italian part of Switzerland with Lucio Altin, has offered several training sessions for women. This meeting with the women of the region was the last in his series. Margrit Giger also reported about her 13 years of leadership in Women's Ministries and the Women's suppers she organized during these years. Ildiko Jennah, the WM conference leader and David Jennah, the President of the Swiss Union participated and were surprised to meet this joyful women's team and encouraged them to continue this important ministry and to be a blessing for the church in their region. It's so good to have brothers who are a support and an encouragement!

Reported by Bernadette Fogliano, WM leader Ticino.
LevelPlus Seminar in Schwäbisch Gmünd, Germany, November 19-21, 2015

When the first women had completed all three levels of leadership training they came with the question: “And now what? Will there be more occasions to come together and learn?” In response to this desire the leaders of the DACH-countries (German speaking Unions) developed a seminar called LevelPlus for women who have completed the three levels and want to experience once more the blessed atmosphere of these seminars. 30 women gathered in Haus Schönblick, venue of the WM congress in 2014, to learn more about outreach and speaking in public. Christian Fischer was invited to teach rhetoric and the other topics were covered by the DACH leaders. Time for reflection about the practical implications of the training and the experiences of the women was provided. It was a blessed weekend of motivation and encouragement. Reflecting on what impact the training has made in their lives the women spoke about how their lives and ministry have changed during this time. Some have started new initiatives, others have been elected as leaders in their local WM groups and churches. All women considered the training sessions as oases of spiritual growth and inspiration although the programs have often been demanding.

One more Cake!

The ladies of the LevelPlus seminar had the privilege of eating a delicious WM 20th anniversary celebration cake sponsored by an anonymous brother who wanted to show his appreciation for WM with this kind gesture. In a similar way the anniversary cake at the German-speaking leadership congress also had a male sponsor, Bernd Quoss of Waldfriede Hospital. The church ministries director of the Baden-Württemberg Conference Hartmut Wischnat, paid a surprise visit to the seminar and expressed his sincere thanks for all the work women are doing in the church and its mission. He very much appreciated the quality of the training and how the women were on fire for the Lord.

New WM Booklet for the German-speaking Countries

Still fresh from the printing press the new Women’s Ministries Brochure for the German-speaking countries was presented to the women of the LevelPlus seminar in Germany. The brochure was developed in the style of the brochures of WM GC, explaining what Women’s Ministries is about. Included in the brochure is information about the Girls4Christ initiative and resources and witnessing material in the German language. This brochure is intended to be used as an information tool in local churches and WM events during the next few years. Special thanks to go Lars Uhlmann of Dresden for his excellent layout and design.

UN International Day to end gender-based Violence

November 25 is the International Day to End Violence against Women, kicking off the 16 Days of Activism against Gender-Based Violence until Human Rights Day on December 10. This year, the United Nations commemoration, led by the Secretary-General’s UNiTE campaign, is putting the focus on violence prevention. Through specialized programs and comprehensive policy, we can put an end to violence against women and girls – but not without a mobilized global movement united under the color orange, which symbolizes a brighter future without violence. We want to know what you are doing to prevent violence in your community.

He named me Malala

The newly released documentary movie about Malala Yousafzai tells the story of the youngest ever Nobel Peace Prize winner and her fight for education for all children in the world. Her words at the UN Summit “One child, one teacher, one book and one pen can change the world” have inspired many to make education available to all children and especially also for girls.

One of the participants of the leadership training LevelPLUS in Schwäbisch Gmünd last weekend just wrote that the story about her ‘conversion in the bath tub’ she wrote at the meeting when we spoke about ‘telling our story’ had become longer and she felt encouraged to make it into a sermon which she has now been asked to preach in her Church this coming weekend. Otherwise the Church would have had to listen to a video instead.

This shows, that with the Women’s Ministries training seminars we are a blessing. One leader writes: ‘I am so glad. I have the impression that many women, after these training sessions, go home and put what they have learnt into practice right away.’

In 2015 Women’s Ministries training seminars took place in Romania, Italy, Germany, Switzerland, Austria. Portugal and France are preparing to start in 2016. The Training Seminars are offered in 4 Levels. For each level the participants can receive 10 credit points from Andrews University.

Wherever the seminars take place, women get very active and engage in all areas of Church life. It is a blessing to see the women get so excited to use their gifts for the Glory of the Lord.

There is a time to work and a time to rest.
A time to preach and a time to think about what you want to say.
There is a time for every purpose under heaven.

Take your time for a good rest today!

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Further Links:
Events: Calendar Women’s Ministries EUD
http://women.euroafrica.org/calendar

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

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