FEATURES

From Women's Ministries to You

General Conference Women's Ministries shares a message for the new quinquennium

Heather-Dawn Small, re-

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Dear Sisters,

Joyful greetings to each of you. It is a privilege and blessing to continue leading our sisters in Women’s Ministries for the next five years. We stand on the edge of a new quinquennium, and as we look across the border of the next five years, we know there will be challenges, but also times of joy. We look forward with hope and courage knowing that God is already in our tomorrows directing our paths.

Yes, sometimes, we do fear for what the future may bring. At those times remember the children of Israel standing at the edge of the Jordan River ready to cross over to the Promised Land. They had no idea what they would meet and they were fearful. Then Joshua said to them, “By this you will know that the Living God is among you” (Joshua 3:7). He said God, the El Chay (Hebrew) – the Living God – was with them and would drive out their enemies. These words of assurance are for God’s children then and now.

Our focus on Nurture, Empower, and Outreach will continue in this quinquennium as we work with our sisters in our churches and communities. We stand on the border of the next five years, but we do not fear for the future. God has given His daughters a task to do for Him, and He enables us through the power of the Holy Spirit. Remember, we have El Chay, the Living God, on our side! When we face the challenges the enemy will bring our way, we will call on the name of the Living God who will drive out the enemies.

Joyfully,

Heather-Dawn Small, Women’s Ministries director

If there were twenty women where now there is one, who would make this holy mission their cherished work, we should see many more converted to the truth,” (Ellen G. White, Christian Service, p. 28).

2016 Women's Devotional

Royalties from sales of Living His Love, the 2016 women’s devotional book, help fund the GCWM Scholarship program. In the past 20 years, GCWM has awarded one million scholarship dollars to 2,164 women in 124 countries.

Donate online
Order book online, Adventist Book Center.
Dear Sisters,

I truly believe we are living in a significant time in history for women. Time when God is calling us to increase our vision, to expand our impact, and to touch our homes, churches, and communities with the touch of Jesus. Though at times you may find it hard to believe, His plans for you are greater than you think.

The Bible says that we are the light of the world. As followers of Christ, we are also called to share His light where there is darkness. How? Loving the unlovable, giving to the needy, forgiving the unforgivable, being honest, and striving to be like Jesus by loving Him, copying Him, and depending only upon Him through prayer and Bible study.

If in this journey you become discouraged, remember, “He is able to do immeasurably more than all we ask or imagine, according to His power that is at work within us” (Eph. 3:20). As we begin a new quinquennium together, do not let the magnitude of your vision, ideas, creativity, and gifts hold you back; God wants to give you more places to shine and BE the light. Dare to believe Him today for MORE than you can ask or imagine.

Grace and peace,

Raquel Arrais, Women’s Ministries associate director

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Raquel Arrais, re-elected as GC Women’s Ministries associate director

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2015 General Conference Session Report

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Book of 2015

Health & Wellness: Secrets That Will Change Your Life, Mark A. Finley and Peter N. Landless, editors.

Order book online, Adventist Book Center

Tips for Leaders

Avoid negative thinking
Feed your mind with what is true
Have a plan
Persevere
Be determined

Healthful Living

Take 10,000 steps a day
Avoid sugar
Take a nap
GC Session women's meetings are held by Shepherdess International and Women's Ministries [San Antonio, Texas] Janet Page, associate ministerial secretary, and Heather-Dawn Small, director of Women's Ministries, co-producers of the women's meetings held July 6-9, 2015, introduced and thanked their respective division leaders during the first morning meeting. In addition, Women’s Ministries celebrated 20 years as a department of the Seventh-day Adventist Church with an anniversary cake.

Calendar

**August**
9 – International Day of the World's Indigenous People
22 – end it now Emphasis Day

**September**
8 - International Literacy Day

Prayer Corner

end it now Emphasis Day, August 22
New WM leaders around the world

Prayer 777
The theme of the women's meetings, "Arise! Shine! Jesus is Coming!" was also the theme of the 60th General Conference Session of 2015. Sandra Entermann, recording artist from Australia, opened each meeting with a praise service and led the audience in singing the theme song written and composed by Ullanda Alexander, “Arise! Shine! Jesus is Coming!” The theme song became a popular feature of the meetings. Download sheet music

Spiritual meetings in the morning featured a sermon presentation. Seminars in the afternoons were chosen for personal development and outreach.

Read more

Exhibit backdrop doubles as a photo wall for GC Women's Ministries

[San Antonio, Texas] The display backdrop in the General Conference Women’s Ministries (GCWM) exhibit, emphasizing Nurture, Empower, and Outreach along with the WM theme – A Ministry for Every Woman, Touch a Heart, Tell the World – easily transitioned to a colorful and convenient photo booth.

Women's Ministries leaders in particular found the familiar images attractive and wanted to take pictures at the exhibit wall. Pictured here (left to right): Raquel Arrais, GCWM associate director, Heather-Dawn Small, GCWM director, Sim Sew Moi, Southeast Asia Union Mission WM director.

New resources available at the booth included the seminar curriculum for women’s mental health, Thinking Well, Living Well, the WM 20th anniversary brochure, “The Early Days,” and “Love Shouldn’t Hurt,” a pastor’s resource for abuse, the third in a series of enditnow brochures.
Women are honored during women's meetings

[San Antonio, Texas] Shepherdess International and Women's Ministries leaders honored several women for their exemplary work with women and for being vessels God can use.

Honorees included: Nichole Birsée, an evangelist in Inter-American Division; Sharon Cress, past coordinator for Shepherdess International; Dr. Ella Simmons, general vice president of the General Conference; Adly Campos, evangelist; Ruthie Jacobsen, prayer ministries leader in North American Division; Ardis Stenbakken, past director of GC Women's Ministries; Nancy Wilson, sponsor of Shepherdess International.

Birsée (center) receives a tribute

(left to right) Sutton and Stenbakken, co-editors of 2016 women's devotional book, accept recognition

Stenbakken was also recognized for her 17-year tenure as women's devotional book editor. She co-edited the 2016 devotional Living His Love with Carolyn Sutton, incoming editor.

Additional reports

News from Inter-European Division, 2015.04 E newsletter, by Denise Hochstrasser, division director for Women’s Ministries, Newsletter here

“Women Find a Message All Their Own,” by Adventist Review assistant editor Wilona Karimabadi, Adventist Review/ANN, Story here
Women's Ministries Around the World

Nurture.

Women's Ministries spiritual retreats refill women across Europe

Inter-European Division (EUD)

[Austria] The weekend of April 24-26, 2015 will long be remembered by the 45 women gathered in Mondsee, Austria. When a participant described the spiritual retreat as **Auftankwochenende** (spiritual refill), the phrase caught on and her comment is being used to describe future retreats. Speaker Denise Hochstrasser, EUDWM director, encouraged women to break with prejudice, to leave behind disagreements, and to look forward, acting now, not waiting so long that the proverbially “beautiful silk dress” no longer fits.

*Contributed by Gerd-Laila Walter, WM director, Austrian Union*

[Belgium] The 43 women attending the first Brussels International Church WM retreat, June 5-7, 2015, were filled with delicious meals cooked for them by two men. They were also filled with spiritual experiences of singing, praising God, and contemplating the messages by Hannele Ottschofski of Germany which examined “The Hole in Our Hearts,” and “The Need to See with New Eyes.” The theme, “Living as a Christian Today,” encouraged women to go into the surrounding villages of their retreat location in Macon, Belgium.

Women consider what it means to live as a Christian today in Belgium.
Belgium and distribute health literature and flyers for Bible correspondence studies.

Contributed by Denise Hochstrasser, EUDWM director

[Switzerland] An evening session of united prayer that had to be continued the following morning became the highlight of a retreat attended by French-speaking women of the Swiss Union. One participant described it as a modern-day Pentecost.

This experience came while studying the PALS program – Prayer and Love Saves – produced by Women’s Ministries. Led by Gerd-Laila Walter, Austrian Union WM director, the weekend of May 22-25, 2015 in les Diablerets, Switzerland was filled with spiritual renewal and prayer for family members who no longer seem interested in faith.

Contributed by Denise Hochstrasser, EUDWM director

Trans-European Division (TED)

[Scotland] “I’ve learned more in this series than in all the other years of my womanhood,” exclaims Mama Joyce Chengeta when describing her in-depth study of the Women of Virtue manual produced by British Union Conference Women’s Ministries with Sharon Platt-McDonald, WM director.

Chengeta was not simply one of the attendees at the Faifley Community Church WM retreat held in...
picturesque Sorn, July 10-12, 2015; she was the speaker presenting *Women of Virtue* insights gleaned from the woman of Proverbs 31 to participants who responded with equal enthusiasm.

*Contributed by Yvonne Blake, Scottish Mission*

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**Empower.**

**Women are eager for more leadership training in Germany**

*Inter-European Division (EUD)*

[Germany] When German-speaking unions in Inter-European Division (EUD) realized graduates of Levels 1-3 want more WM Leadership Certification, they got busy and created LevelPLUS with seminar topics based on WM evangelism manual, *Outreach is for Everyone*, and a seminar on public speaking.

Beate Quaas, a graduate of Level 3 in North Germany, explains, “We are able to share our experiences and to try out new ideas. We are looking forward to the next level.”

This expectation is a typical response says Denise Hochstrasser, EUDWM director. “In countries where leadership training is offered, we experience a tremendous change in the way women start to engage in all areas of Church life. They find out about their gifts and are motivated to use them for ministry.”

In April and May of this year, Leadership Certification
Level 2 training was held in Italy, and Level 3 was held in Germany and Switzerland.

*Contributed by Denise Hochstrasser, EUDWM director*

**Women are equipped for service in Italy**

*Inter-European Division (EUD)*

[Italy] After Ophelia Obeng Dedaa Nyarko participated in a leadership program in 2013 and attended the division congress in 2014, she dreamed of sharing what she learned with her Ghanian community in Italy.

With the support of Pastor Frank and guidance of guest speaker Denise Hochstrasser, EUDWM director, the dream became reality, May 1-3, 2015, when 150 women of African and Caribbean origin met in congress under the theme, "Equipping women for service." Program highlights placed emphasis on mentoring others and young ladies' ministry.

*Contributed by Denise Hochstrasser, EUDWM director*

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**Outreach.**

**Women on Palau donate pillows to hospital patients**

*North American Division (NAD)*
The women on Palau donated pillows with pillow cases to local hospitals and later met the President of Palau (and also sang to him) when Carla Baker, NADWM director, recently visited Guam Mission. Baker was joined by Carmen Kasperbauer, Guam Mission WM director, and Bilung Gloria Salii of Palau for a personal interview with the President of Palau.

Contributed by Carla Baker, NADWM director

Training in Okinawa encourages outreach plans

Northern Asia-Pacific Division (NSD)

“What is it that I can do?” was the question asked by every woman who attended the WM congress, May 23-24, 2015, in Okinawa, Japan. Plans were made for outreach and several have already been implemented.

After the congress a professional instructor in Swedish massage held a seminar for 70 women who plan to use this special form of ministry particularly for patients in hospice care. Bible studies are being given individually to truth seekers. In some areas, children are left alone after school in the evening while parents work and being given a simple meal in cooperation with other women from the local community.

Other activities which invite a broader range of interaction
with the community include holding bazaars, teaching vegetarian cuisine classes, and developing a food bank for poor children.

*Contributed by Shizuko Ikemasu, Okinawa Mission Conference WM director*

**Local church launches a center for health, hope and healing**

*Trans-European Division (TED)*

Women who teach Healthy Plate cooking classes in England also whip up healthy smoothies

[England] Women of the Gloucester Seventh-day Adventist Church have been involved for 20 years in outreach programs, such as providing meals twice a week to 50-70 people in the Soup Kitchen and teaching Healthy Plate cooking classes. Active participation from all church members in various programs involving spiritual and healthful living resulted in establishing a facility able to accommodate plans for impacting their town. The church congregation officially opened the Centre of Hope, Health and Healing, Sabbath, July 18, 2015.

*Contributed by Vareta Bryan, British Union Conference*
Dinorah Rivera, new division director

**(Inter-American Division (IAD))**

[Miami] Inter-American Division announces election of Dinorah Rivera to lead the Women's Ministries department, in addition to her current position as Children's Ministries director.

We send our farewell wishes to Cecilia de Iglesias, IADWM director of the past five years, who was elected to lead Shepherdess International along with her current position as Family Ministries associate director.

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**2016 Women's Devotional**


**Adventist Women's Bible**

With this video clip peek inside the first Adventist Women's
Bible, co-produced by Safeliz Publishing (of Spain) and GC Women's Ministries. Click here and scroll down to Women’s Bible.

August 22, 2015
enditnow Emphasis Day

Love at Home, the sermon packet for 2015 enditnow Emphasis Day, was written by Dr. Julian Melgosa. Download here

Pastor's Resource for domestic violence

enditnow™

“Love Shouldn't Hurt,” a resource for pastors about abuse, was redesigned for the series of enditnow brochures published by GC Women’s Ministries. The brochure was distributed at the Women's Ministries exhibit at General Conference Session in San Antonio, Texas. Carla Baker, NADWM director, also distributed the brochure at the Called convention for pastors in Austin, Texas.
Portugal breaks the silence about abuse

Inter-European Division (EUD)

[Portugal] Community activities that bring awareness to domestic violence and other forms of abuse often bring together several ministries of the Church.

Women's Ministries leaders worked with the Youth Ministries and Pathfinder leaders to organize a seaside 10km walk for enditnow, June 6, 2015, in Espinho, Portugal. Abuse awareness is designated by the color orange in Europe, so participants carried orange balloons, and some draped orange scarves around their necks.

Other activities of the June 5-7 weekend included churches in the region coming together for discussion and training based on the Women's Ministries initiative Break the Silence about Abuse.

Adventists participate in the German Prevention Day
Women's Ministries and ADRA personnel set up an enditnow exhibit for Prevention Day in Germany.

**MINISTERING TO WOMEN**

**Women Who Pray**

In her book *What Happens When Women Pray*, Evelyn Carol Christenson writes, "When people start praying together in one accord to our Father in heaven in the name of Jesus and practice praying together, things begin to change... changes take place not when we study about prayer, not when we talk about it, not even when we memorize beautiful Scripture verses on prayer. It is when we actually pray that things begin to happen."

The power of prayer is multiplied when you offer prayer requests in group prayer. That’s why many people want to
know, “How do I start a prayer group?” Starting an intercessory prayer group is actually much easier than you might think.

"Keep your wants, your joys, your sorrows, your cares, and your fears before God. You cannot burden Him; you cannot weary Him. He who numbers the hairs of your head is not indifferent to the wants of His children. 'The Lord is very pitiful, and of tender mercy,' James 5:11,” (Ellen G. White, Steps to Christ, p. 101).

This Intercessory Prayer Ministry card is one of ten ministry cards created by GC Women's Ministries to help you begin a ministry. Download here

The packet is available for purchase through GC Women's Ministries for $10 each. For more information, call 1 (301) 680-6636 or email, womensministres@gc.adventist.org.

ISSUES

Women's Illiteracy

"Once you learn to read, you will be forever free." — Frederick Douglass

Some 776 million adults lack minimum literacy skills; one in five adults is still not literate and two-thirds of them are women; 75 million children are out-of-school and many more attend irregularly or drop out. [When a nation adopts September 8 to observe,] International Literacy Day signifies the recognition of the country to strive towards total and complete literacy for the nation. From www.cute-calendar.com
Literacy Benefits to Women

Some of the benefits to women from a literacy program include:

- lower birthrates (smaller families)
- with lower birthrates, the parents are better able to provide Christian education
- the children have improved educational abilities
- decrease in maternal mortality
- later marriages
- overall improvement in family health
- decrease in infant mortality
- a greater sense of personal self-worth
- an ability to read Scripture
- an ability to assume responsibility for personal spiritual choices
- an expanded influence in teaching children spiritual values
- an ability to become involved in the church’s mission
- a greater possibility of becoming financially stable
- increased employment choices and productivity
- the ability to provide financial support to the church
- more involvement in community development

The mother’s ability to read often determines the literacy level for the entire family. A study conducted in the U.S. found that 65% of the children whose mothers participated in adult education programs demonstrated improvement in school. Furthermore, what a mother learns in an adult literacy program regarding child rearing and health can have an immediate effect on the family.

Literate women also understand more of what they hear in regards to health and family planning and are able to communicate with health professionals better than women who are illiterate.

Source: Women’s Ministries Leadership Certification
training, Level 2 — Seminar: OP 804 Literacy Training

Resources available: Brochure listing all seminars available in Leadership Certification Levels 1-4, Download here. Level 1 is available free, Download here. Individual seminar packets and one CD containing all four levels of Leadership Certification training are available from AdventSource.org, Purchase here.

See also: So You Want to Start a Literacy Program, a WM manual by Ardis Stenbakken, 2003 revision.

General Conference
Women's Ministries
Scholarship Program

GCWM scholarship program has supported higher education for Adventist women globally since 1991, and more than one million dollars has been awarded to 2,164 recipients in 124 countries. More information | online donations