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Where’s the water?

ted-adventist.org/news/wheres-the-water
2 August 2013 Novi Sad, Serbia [Yvonne Bauwens, tedNEWS] Voting. I am sure many of you have voted in your life. Pastor Patrick Johnson tells Friday evening’s participants about three possible options for electing a new world leader, and their vote decides the fate. Ha! No pressure! The first two of our candidates have questionable lifestyles including heavy drinking, chain smoking; cheating on their wives, and one is an opium user. Candidate No.3 has many medals from the war, does not smoke and has never cheated on his wife. So whom would you choose? Like me, does your conscience scream candidate No.3? If yes, Adolf Hitler is our new leader!

It is so easy to judge a book by its cover. I am guilty of it! Recently, I caught myself being exasperated by a car abandoned in the middle of the road. In actual fact, the force from another car smashing into it had pushed it half way across the road! With this vital piece of information, my guilt of judging him certainly had an impact on me! In the same way, Pastor Johnson’s sobering message using the story of the Samaritan woman at the well (John 4.3-42) and how Jesus made a difference in her life, left an impression on everyone, especially the eleven candidates for baptism. The Samaritan woman, after hearing about Jesus’ offer of living water, leaves her jar at the well, a sign that she will return.
Regardless of the labels in this life, Jesus looks past the outward appearance and sees the inner qualities and the true state of our heart.

Starting with one little phone, torches beamed brightly around the arena while a choir sang ‘This Little Light of Mine’. The light of Christ’s love in our hearts was carried out to the open-air baptistery pool. There, an original eleven young people from different countries became twelve and publically said ‘YES’ to Jesus! They cast their vote for the Lord Jesus while the enthusiastic band led 3000 witnesses in song, and joined the millions of heavenly hosts’ celebration!

Only one God knows whenever you cry
Only one God can lift your spirits high
Only one God can put a twinkle in your eye
Only one God, for you would even die

Only one

Only one God can hear your desperate call
Only one God catches you when you fall
Only one God will help you stand up tall
Only one God is healer to all

Only one

Only one God created you with care
Only one God can wash away your tear
Only one God can wipe out all fear
Only one God can make peace everywhere

You choose…

Vote for Jesus …………………..X

Only one cross for all.
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Power of One youth leave a smoking Impact on Novi Sad

2 August 2013 Novi Sad, Serbia [Tabitha Krznar, tedNEWS] There was a marked decrease in the cigarette smoking of the Novi Sad residents occupying ‘Mercartor Centar’ today. Brave Power of One (Adventist Youth Congress, AYC) team troops made their mark by asking bystanders to swap their cigarettes in exchange for fresh fruit as a part of one of the six outreach activities undertaken greatly anticipated Impact day.

Benjamin Zihlman and Reimo Butscher from Switzerland were surprised that ‘most of them were willing to swap their entire packet of cigarettes, we threw out about 5 packets.’ ‘The highlight for us was a talk with a girl who swapped her smokes for fruit and then said she and her boyfriend wanted to try stop smoking; we exchanged details and will continue to encourage her in her decision over Facebook.

The Novi Sad centre square was also bustling with AYC-er activity as youth surprised the public by giving complimentary Exit Christian magazines and bottled water to anyone who accepted the gifts.
'When we gave out all our magazines, we decided to ask people if they wanted to pray with us, says Jasmin Wimmer-Cuport from Austria. ‘My friend and I had the opportunity to pray with a man and ask God to help him realise how much he was loved by Jesus, the man’s eyes filled with tears and he appeared touched by our prayers.’

‘Amazing grace’ had the ‘soldiers in the (AYC) army’, singing a medley of spiritual songs which filled Dunavski Park, while heartfelt silent prayers went up to heaven for the precious souls of the Serbian community. Meanwhile back at the SPENS centre prayer warriors fervently petitioned for the blessing and power of God on AYC-Impact day.
The AYC Impacters were more than happy to stop and chat, take photos and share with the grateful recipients of the refreshing snack ‘Lubenica’. ‘When we offered people free watermelon they were shocked that young people were handing out things for free, not everyone accepted the gift we offered, but the ones who did were all to happy to receive it,’ says Madli from Estonia.

The AYC army marched forth and rolled up their sleeves getting messy by ministering through acts of service such as cleaning the banks of the Danube river and cleaning and painting fences and benches in local the schools.

An extraordinary donation had a very special group of AYC participants who also rolled up their sleeves, in the most sacrificial sense, to donate their own blood.

‘We are proud and blessed to see that Impact day appears to have had a real impact on both the community and AYC delegates, we hope and pray that it is long lasting and furthers the gospel and strengthens the churches of Europe. It is a privilege to watch our delegates take the Power of One to the people through practical Christianity and sharing the gospel,’ says Janos Kovacs-Biro, Director for Evangelism at the Trans-European Division of Seventh-day Adventist.

Please remember that you can watch the morning and evening worship programmes by clicking here. For more photos, please click here.
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2 August 2013 Novi Sad, Serbia [Agnieszka Kluska, ted/NEWS] It’s all about making a difference in Novi Sad today. Friday is the Impact Day that many have been waiting for and Patrick Johnson, the speaker for the morning worship, emphasized it using the story of a possessed man from Mark 5.

Having cast out the evil spirits from the man, Jesus put the robe of his righteousness around him and asked „Go back to your family and tell them what I’ve done to you“. „Most people are scared of God. They’re scared that if they get close it will cause all kinds of problems in their life. So what the people need is YOU to tell them your story of how good God has been to you“ appealed Patrick Johnson.
“Can you imagine the impact of 2000 people on Novi Sad? This town will see the difference of the power of One. All you need to do is tell your story” he concluded.

The theme song sounded loud and powerful and worship was sealed with prayers and touching testimony from the the worship band singer. Encouraged, confident in the power of One and filled with His love, the youth left the main hall to minister on the streets of Novi Sad.

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Mirror, mirror on the wall, who’s the tallest...

1 August 3013 Novi Sad, Serbia [Yvonne Bauwens, tedNEWS] David and ‘Goliath’ take to the stage for round two of an encapsulating message from the vibrant Pastor David Asscherick who, on Thursday morning encouraged our young people not to take giant sized steps to Christ, but ‘David’ sized attempts as we learn to walk with God.

With the help of his trusty mirror, Pastor Asscherick analysed in the evening, the fact that from a fair distance, he thinks he looks rather handsome. Astonished by his own good looks, he draws closer to the mirror, and realises that his bowtie is in fact squint, and with every step, he seems to become uglier!

A funny example it may be to illustrate his theme for this evening: the closer we come to Jesus, the more faulty we seem in our own eyes, Pastor Asscherick proceeds to prove his theory with the help of Božidar Lazić, his Serbian translator who towers head and shoulders over him!

The paradox of growth is that in our Christian walk; as we grow nearer and nearer to our Saviour and Lord, we never have the sense of arrival, and sometimes we even perceive ourselves as actually being further away, the solution is found in Paul’s book of Colossians. Diving into chapter 3 verses 1-5, Pastor David takes these few verses to answer this difficult dilemma.

‘Set your mind not on the things of earth, but on the things of heaven.’ (Col 3.2)

Pulling parallels from the symbol of baptism, Pastor Asscherick explains how God is not someone to hide from, but to hide in. Moving closer to Christ, we may discover more blemishes in the ‘mirror’, but God wants us to be cleansed by Him, not to run away in fear. And
here is the best bit: when Christ appears, you will appear with Him in glory. Not maybe, not with the condition that you are flawless, but because you accepted that gift of life through the death of Christ! You may fall and fall and keep falling, but as Pastor Asscherick encourages, stand up and keep standing up. Why? Look at the cross. Your past is taken care of. Your present is secure in Jesus Christ, and your future is guaranteed.

Fact.

While words fell from the lips of our speaker, paint sprayed freely from the cans of a group of artists at the side of the arena. The blessing of this massive Christian event is that not only can we experience God’s message through words, but in the actions of many talented individuals who have made themselves available. God does not ask for abilities, but for availability. Stencils and layers of colour depict the journey that many take as we grow in grace.

We grow not in order to be saved, but we grow because we have been saved. You are free to be the human God made you to be.

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AYC Congress Packs a Punch!

[ted-adventist.org/news/ayc-congress-packs-a-punch]

1 August, 2013, Novi Sad, Serbia [Tabitha Krznar, tedNEWS] A pinch and punch for the first day of the month kicks off day two of the AYC Congress in Novi Sad. Participants powered on full steam ahead immersing themselves in the congress activities. The AYC social scene delivered unique stations continuing with workshops, art, craft and both spiritual and physical food. Today’s highlights include the Market of Nations and the Health Expo as well as just plain "hanging out." New friendships continue to be formed and bridges built between Adventist youth and the European nations they belong to.
Next stop had the hungry (not Hungary) AYC youth filled with a different kind of food. If you cannot quench your hunger for purpose in this life then workshop by Pastor Ansku Jaakola from Finland had a satisfying solution. "Let God feed you with His spiritual food. Christianity is like stale bread when you aren't communicating with God. There are many ways to connect with Him; bible reading, outreach, writing, silent prayer, singing, and listening to Him, so eat up!"

The fine dinning continued as an array of colour, costumes and cultural cuisine entertained and tantalised the taste buds of curious AYC attendees at the Market of Nations.

Jared Heidenblut from Germany spoke highly of his adventure by saying: "My youth group encouraged me to come to Power of One Congress, and I'm glad I did, otherwise I would have missed out on the great atmosphere where each country's feeding me their yummy food, although I can't understand the different languages I still love the English shortbread and the red Ajvar stuff."

Located near the Market is the ADRA booth fund-raising for a cause with a very different type of food, Emergency food for the underprivileged. AYC encourages participants to enjoy the congress experience, but also to remember those who are less fortunate.
An impact on health was felt at the Health Expo held in the Table Tennis Hall. Health enthusiasts had their blood sugar, weight and blood pressure checked at the Serbian, Zivot i Zdravlje booths, followed by a relaxing massage from Estonian, Dmitri Einman. Health advisor, Rajna Stamenov-Radosavljevic, shared practical health tips such as eating plenty of vegetables and whole grains, drinking water especially upon getting up, regular stretching and oddly enough, a stern warning NOT to switch on the light when you use the toilet at night (it destroys melatonin levels).
While the AYC congress is developing quite a fan base, not everyone proclaims to be fond of having fans. Pastor Dejan Stojkovic's workshop taught Violetta Martsynkevych from Ukraine about being authentic, "If you want to be a real follower of Christ, don't worship Him as a celebrity, but ignore the popular culture and what people think of you because it's all about knowing God, loving Him and saying, I'm proud to be an Adventist Christian!"

Power of One youth are all aboard and ready to chug into tonight's evening programme. Don't forget to swing by the Facebook, Twitter and website pages that will keep you in the know. The friendly AYC staff are waiting for your tweets, experiences, insight, photos or suggestions!

That's all for now folks, but remember, power up and power on with the POWER of ONE! [tedNEWS]

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1 August 2013 Novi Sad, Serbia [Agnieszka Kluska, tedNEWS] Bustling streets of Novi Sad and bright sunshine welcomed young Adventists making their way into SPENS, European Adventist Youth Congress site, this morning.

Aleksandra and Enoch opened the morning programme by introducing two visitors from Papua New Guinea who travelled for 87 hours and passed through 7 countries on the way. Nothing is impossible if the goal is worth the effort and the Pan-European Adventist Youth Congress many a time exceeds the expectations. This morning has proved it also, leaving many inspired and hungry for more.

Joyful worship and insightful drama set the stage for Pastor David Asscherick who used it fully to capture the audience’s attention and share his thoughts on the theme of „The Power of Jesus to make me GROW“. 
The speaker pointed out that transition from the old to the new is compared to a walk in the Scriptures. "It’s a walk, not a leap. It takes time". The inward man is being renewed from faith to faith, from grace to grace, day by day, continued Asscherick.

"When you’re learning to walk, falling becomes a very real possibility" remarked the speaker referring to Proverbs 24:16. "So many of us have been told that struggle is wrong". "If you struggle in your Christian experience, if you’re finding it hard to learn how to walk again when you walk with Christ, that means you’re swimming against the whole river of your inclinations and the inclinations of the world."

"The struggle itself is a proof that you are alive!"
David Asscherick concluded „The secret to Christian growth is to keep getting up“. The audience was encouraged to join in the prayer and pledge to keep rising from their falls while trusting solely in the grace of Christ.

Asscherick illustrated his message with lots of movement, infectious energy and humour. „Today I’ve heard the message I was waiting for“ said Tomek from Poland. „I loved this energy“ added Katia from Denmark.

Intercessory prayers and music closed the morning worship and youth proceeded to seminars and workshops of their choice.

To watch the morning and evening sessions, please click here. For more photos and videos, please click here. [tedNEWS]

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31 July 2013 Novi Sad, Serbia [Yvonne Bauwens, tedNEWS] The burning lights of the Crucifix as it rose up above the stage glowed warmly and we got the show on the road for the second evening meeting here at AYCongress in Novi Sad. The exceptionally high standard from the daily drama team, musicians and singers beats any X-Factor performance as they lead the 3,000 participants in song and uplifting worship! The praise stayed not only in the main hall but overflowed like the love in Pastor Dejan’s cup as several hundred joined in hand and heart to raise the roof of the Afterglow session.

'Side By Side We Stood, In song at Afterglow Praising our Awesome God Gathered round the guitar and our drummer-bro!
Lord, We Come To You To Lift Your Name On High! Celebrate Jesus, Celebrate! Remembering the cross on which You died.
The Power Of One, Each singing their part You are Mighty To Save! So please, Lord, Open The Eyes Of Our Heart!
You Are My Desire, On the new earth we shall meet Soon and Very Soon, We will see the Prince of Peace!
Kumbaya My Lord, Hear our harmonious prayer Countries sing together For tonight’s Afterglow, will YOU be there?'
Wednesday evening’s message was brought to us by the enthusiastic Pastor Matthew Gamble who, encouraged our young people to dig deeper into the book of Ephesians. With reference to chapter 1 verse 13, which says: ‘Christ also brought you the truth, which is the good news about how YOU can be saved! With your faith strong and with the Holy Spirit’s signature seal, there’s no doubting that YOU are a child of God!’

Will you take the Gamble, the leap of faith and believe that before you were even born, God had an amazing plan for your life?

Will you take a Gamble on giving your all to the One who loves you? Religion teaches you that you have to earn salvation; the Bible shows us that we have to accept it. Will you take a Gamble and accept Jesus, today?

Please join us live for the morning and evening worship sessions: www.ted-adventist.org.
31 July, 2013 Novi Sad, Serbia [Tabitha Krznar, tedMEDIA] The rising temperatures and heat of the Novi Sad sun have only increased the energy of the Power of One congress delegates who attended the first of the Adventist Youth Congress (AYC) Workshops, social activities and Art Exhibition from 11:00-18:30 today.

17 different workshops and speakers shared personal experiences and spiritual insight with AYC delegates. The largely attended workshop presented by Pastor David Asscherick inspired us to live the "The Mission Lifestyle," by outlining the important biblical principles of the nurture of both spiritual and physical health while taking up the call to walk a Christ-centered and mission-focused life. "This was a life changing message for me," says Elycia Martins from Australia.
Saralie Bognandi and Maren Maanja from Sweden were encouraged and confronted in Dr Matthew Gamble’s workshop "The Porn Epidemic." "We weren't sure what to expect with this workshop, but we discovered that Pornography is probably as big an issue as alcoholism and we don't talk about it enough at church if at all." "Dr Gambel encouraged us by saying that starting to study the Bible for just 15 minutes a day can give us victory from such addictions."
After the consumption of workshop information it was time for AYC delegates to consume physical food. The SPENS centre make-shift food court (ice rink) was full of excitement as the lively multilingual chatter rivaled that of The Tower of Babel. Food proved a great vehicle for networking according to Mariam Castillo Joya, Spain, who said, "It's not everyday you get to meet new people from all different countries and eat a delicious nutritious iceless lunch in an ice rink!"

An important part of physical health at this Power of One Congress is to increase and maintain hydration, "drink water, and lots of it, stay out of the sun, eat healthy and dress in light clothing," suggested a Power of One congress first aider. Please note that the medical team is diligently working to keep you healthy and safe, so please seek medical attention from our diligent medical team if you are unwell.

The networking and fun continued with Martin Skarka from the Czech Republic testing his coordination in the social activity time by playing "Labyrinth." This was a game invented by Romanian Ionel Indricau who used the steel from his own truck to create a yellow "golf ball in the hole-coordinated maze for the Romanian Pathfinder camp." "The game was much harder than it looked, but worth trying because I got to make some new friends out of it," says Martin.
The real talent was showcased by a vast array of AYC delegates at the official Power of One Art Exhibition in the Small Hall commencing at 17:00 this afternoon. The countries represented there were: Belgium, Bulgaria, France, Germany, Italy, Serbia, Scotland and the United Kingdom. Each country’s finest gave performances in various art forms such as music, visual art, interpretive movement, and drama.

Klara Njagach from Croatia said "I was blessed by all the items at Art Exhibition, each person was from a different country and had different talents to share, it was a wonderful spiritual experience which brought me closer to God."

Throughout the performances we watched the development of an evolving artwork, which later revealed the powerful image of the cross of Christ symbolising the stages of our personal spiritual walk and development as Christians.
The Art Exhibition proved a highlight for many, such as Leah Tobler from Switzerland who said, "The artistic painting and the step-by-step development of The Cross by Krystal was so interesting to watch, the musical items and drama were equally amazing, the Art Exhibition was definitely a highlight for me!"

AYC Delegates were able to beat the heat and deliver nothing but positive feedback for today's Power of One congress action packed activities. The powerful words of Art Exhibition co-host Sarah's musical item continue to inspire and motivate us as we anticipate the evening programme, "Our God is greater; our God is stronger; God, you are higher than any other!" [tedNEWS]

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31 July 2013 Novi Sad, [Agnieszka Kluska, ted/NEWS] A large glowing red cross was lifted up off the stage and so the morning worship began. Short video segments, warm welcome from the hosts and inspiring music followed, all under the theme for today: 'The Power of Jesus to make us NEW'.

Before Matthew Gamble walked onto the stage to preach, a short drama piece preceded. "My child you are beautiful", the words of acceptance culminated a lively performance seasoned with a pinch of humour.

Matthew Gamble, the main speaker for today who is a pastor at Elmshaven Seventh-day Adventist Church, is known for his passion for Christ and love for the youth and there is no doubt the message did appeal to young people. "Some people believe they need to get over sin to be accepted by Christ. This is not the gospel! The gospel of Jesus Christ is this:
You’re going to heaven because of what Christ has done, what he is still doing and what he will continue to do. But what you need is Christ in you."

The speaker emphasized the importance of being filled with the Holy Spirit. He also encouraged the audience to focus more on Jesus and less on one’s sinful self. The power of One is available to live a victorious life in Jesus Christ. „As we continue through this incredible Congress, may God breathe His Holy Spirit onto you“ he concluded.

The time of reflection and worship was sealed with the intercessory prayer led by Kār Vahtramāne, the leader of the worship team. 
[tedNEWS]
31 July 2013 Novi Sad, Serbia [Yvonne Bauwens, tedNEWS] Welcome, Greece! Welcome, Hungary! Welcome, Estonia! Welcome, Norway! These are just a few out of the 45 countries represented here making total of around 3,000 guests. Each cheers at the calling of their name, while waving flags and standing tall for their nation, as an exceptional array of coloured clothing takes to the stage and we are treated to some traditional Serbian dancing – The Kolo! There is no denying that although many countries are present in the massive arena at SPENS Sports Centre, we are indeed in Serbia! For what reason? The Seventh-Day Adventist Youth Congress, 2013! As the sun beats down on the city of Novi Sad we gather together for this long-awaited event. We join together to celebrate, to be re-vitalised and to unite with fellow believers. That is the Power of One, the power of Jesus Christ in our lives.
Excitement and anticipation fill the room as the band take to the stage. Side by side we are ready to face the mighty tempests of life, our theme song reminds us: ‘hold tightly to the Hand of God, we will be strong! Voices are lifted and hearts rejoice; we are united!’

Proclaiming the glory of God by hearing the inspiring messages from the lips of our speakers, it does not end as we walk out the door. Take these words with you wherever you go, and may our lives be Bibles for others to read.

Good physical food, our minds indulged in the spiritual vegetables we craved as Pastor Dejan Stojkovic encouraged you and I to connect and re-connect with our personal Saviour.
Talking of food, Dejan, do you need any help in devouring all that popcorn?! It was free?? Surely not! But there is no such thing as a ‘free lunch’. sceptical of the freebies in this life, convinced we have misread the small print, we often find ourselves not believing the gift of something free! So often there is a catch, a hidden term of condition and we leave disappointed. During the first of what I know will be a week of inspiring and thought-provoking messages; Pastor Dejan encourages the young people to accept Jesus’ free refill. Free for us to accept, all you have to do is believe and say ‘YES!’ Coca-Cola may satisfy your need for a quick sugar fix and Ice-Tea is refreshing on a hot day, but tonight Pastor Dejan invited us to drink from a cup that will eternally quench your thirst.

Isaiah 55 verse 1-2 says: ‘If you are thirsty, come and drink water! If you don’t have any money, come, eat what you want! Drink wine and milk without paying a dinar. Why waste money on something that really isn’t food? Why work hard for something that doesn’t satisfy? Listen carefully to me, and you will enjoy the very best of foods!’

Shooting those ‘evil’ chickens with stones may not be high on your priority list, but here at the European Adventist Youth Congress, may you be inspired to connect with Jesus and make Him your No.1 priority in life!
31 July 2013 Novi Sad, Serbia [Agnieszka Kluska, ted/NEWS] Some have been travelling 14 hours by bus, some have been travelling 8 hours by car, but for some it has been only a 2-hour flight. Young Adventists from all around Europe have been flooding to Novi Sad, the third largest city in Serbia, to take part in Pan-European Youth Congress, under the theme ‘The Power of One’.

The Congress has been organised by the Trans-European and Inter-European Divisions, but there are guests coming from all around the world. There are 19 people from Euro-Asia Division, 15 people from Australia, 8 from Canada, 2 from Chile and 2 have just arrived from Papua New Guinea” says Judy McKie, Congress Assistant. ‘We’re expecting around 3,000 people with the climax of 4,000 people on Saturday’.
Everyone comes to the Congress with different expectations, however, there are some goals shared by all; meeting new friends and hearing good preaching is the key focus of youth coming to Novi Sad. ‘We’d like to meet new people and have a chance to meet Jesus’ say Anja, Stephanie and Valeria from Germany. ‘I’m expecting things I have not done or seen before. Maybe some new ideas for outreach and church work,’ adds Paulina from Poland. ‘We want to have fun!’ laughs Daniel from Italy.

The preachers are keen to work with the youth and share their message. ‘I would like to see young people inspired and coming back again to the core of adventism. I’d like to see them interested in God, the story of God and the Bible. On Friday all young people will be taken onto the streets of Novi Sad. I’m expecting to see a lot of these young people ministering,’ says pastor Janos Kovacs-Biro.

Some newcomers are surprised by the heats, but the majority are enjoying the sun and are taking a chance to do some sightseeing before the programme officially starts. Novi Sad, a city situated on the banks of the Danube, is a major cultural centre in Serbia and it has a lot to offer. ‘We went for a walk around the city and it’s lovely. There are lots of nice cafes,’ Ola and Sara from Poland are very enthusiastic about their experience. ‘We feel at home here,’ say young people from Croatia.

All the time new people arrive to the Congress site. The hall is crowded and full of laughter and excitement. If you’re not able to join us in person, click here for the live coverage from Novi Sad. [tedNEWS]
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tedNEWS is an information bulletin issued by the communication department of the Seventh-day Adventist Church in the Trans-European Division.
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