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spent discussing and negotiating, the overall atmosphere was one of spiritual enrichment and challenge... Read more

Study Committee Votes Consensus Statement on 'Theology of Ordination'

23 July 2013 Linthicum Heights, Maryland, United States [Mark A. Kellner, Adventist Review] By a vote of 86 to 8 – a ratio of almost 11 to 1 – delegates at the Seventh-day Adventist® Church’s Theology of Ordination Study Committee (TOSC) agreed yesterday to approve a consensus statement on an Adventist theology of ordination... Read more

Is Failure an essential ingredient of success?

You are a failure! These are words we fear to hear. Failure is a subject we do not like to talk about. It is the elephant in the room that no one mentions, yet it is always there, because failure is a part of life. Consider how many successes do you forget? How many failures do you forget? How many times did things not work out as you planned? To put it bluntly, how many times have you failed? What is the ratio of success to failure? Is it true that behind our success is a series of failures?... Read more

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In Egypt, mob burns Adventist Church in Assiut

15 August 2013 Cairo, Egypt [ANN] The burning of a Seventh-day Adventist Church in the city of Assiut during rioting last night was not part of a wider, organized political movement, local church officials said.

The Assiut Adventist Church, located approximately 220 miles south of Cairo, was attacked by a mob and heavily damaged after it was set on fire. The pastor and his wife hid in their upstairs apartment and were not found by the attackers, who set the building on fire. The pastor and his wife were rescued from the burning building by Muslim neighbors.
“This was a small group of people bent on doing harm. This event was not representative of Egypt or the people of Egypt,” said Llewellyn R. Edwards, president the Adventist Church’s Egypt-Sudan Field, based in Heliopolis.

“As Adventists we want our relationships to be strong with Egyptians of all faiths in the country,” Edwards said.
Muslim neighbors rescuing the Adventist couple shows “the true picture of most people in Egypt,” Edwards said.

Edwards said the government has announced it will pay for the rebuilding of all churches destroyed last night during rioting in several cities.

Several other Christian churches were also attacked in Assuit, as well as the shop of the Egypt Bible Society, Edwards said.

The Adventist Church operates two schools in Egypt – Nile Union Academy northeast of Cairo, and Zeitoun Adventist School. Both institutions have positive relationships with their communities, Edwards said. [tedNEWS]
David Asscherick: 'The best thing to keep the youth focused...'

ted-adventist.org/news/david-asscherick-the-best-thing-to-keep-the-youth-focused

5 August 2013 Novi Sad, Serbia [Agnieszka Kluska, tedNEWS] David Asscherick is co-director of Light Bearers and co-founder of ARISE. A former extreme sports enthusiast and punk rocker, David turned his life over to the God of the Bible at the age of 23. He has spent the last 15 years travelling the globe preaching and teaching the gospel of Jesus Christ. He is the author of God In Pain: Another Look at Evil, Suffering, and the Cross, his first book. He and Violeta, his wife of 13 years, are the happy parents of two boys, Landon and Jabel. They enjoy backpacking, climbing, running, fly fishing, and reading.

ted/MEDIA: How are you enjoying the Congress and what were your expectations before you came?
David Asscherick: To be honest my expectations were that I would have a lot more free time because when I looked at the schedule I was thinking, oh you know I’m only teaching on Wednesday and Thursday so I’ll have all day Friday and Sabbath. But there have been so many wonderful young people here that I’ve just been literally uninterrupted non-stop talking to people and I love that.

I had high expectations before I came and those expectations have almost entirely been met.

ted/MEDIA: Have you met many new people or are these old friends that you’re meeting?

David Asscherick: I have met a tone of new friends here and I’ve connected with some old friends as well. There’s several ARISE students here. One of my favourite things in life is to meet new people, just to get to know them, sit down, hang out, and I’ve met just a lot of new people.

ted/MEDIA: Your message on Thursday was powerful. And the energy was just infectious. Where do you get it from? Everyone is asking about that!

David Asscherick: A lot of people are asking me about that! I think it’s from striving to live a healthy life. I just turned 40 this year and I feel great. I feel as good as I’ve ever felt. I love to run, in fact I just went for a run a couple of days ago here in Novi Sad. I eat well, I try to get to bed at a reasonable time and I love running, climbing, surfing; I’ve always been very active. I just love it.

ted/MEDIA: Do you tailor your style of preaching to the audience? Is it different when you speak to adults?

David Asscherick: No, this is how I preach. This is who I am. In fact, when I’m at home playing with the kids or just acting crazy, my wife will say: "If people only knew what you’re really like." And then she’ll say: "Wait a minute, they do!" This is who I am. When I stand up there I just know the major points that I want to say, and to be honest, even many of the things, like getting down on my four legs and acting like a dog, I didn’t plan that beforehand. I was just going to talk about the stability of the tripod and then it dawned on me, I could talk about the difference between a two-legged animal, namely a human being, and a four-legged animal, so I just said: "I’ll get down on my hands and knees".

So a lot of that stuff just comes, in fact, most of it. Not the theological content, which I have really thought through, but the delivery is almost entirely spontaneous.

ted/MEDIA: You’ve travelled the world and you’ve done all kinds of things like workshops, seminars, Bible boot camps and conferences. What do you think works best for the youth to keep them focused and inspired, not just for a short while?

David Asscherick: For me 100% the thing that works both short term and long term is getting young people two things: in the Word and really connected to Christ and ministry. That’s it. Don’t get me wrong. I love good production and I think they’ve done a fantastic job but what if you had all of this beautiful production without substance? The production can’t sustain an ongoing enthusiasm. You have to
connect people to the Word, to Christ and to ministry. And when that happens, young people, like anybody, whether you’re 20, 30, 40, 50, 60; people turn on, the switch is flipped. So ‘yes’ to good music, ‘yes’ to good drama, ‘yes’ to good production, but if you don’t have good substantive teaching and preaching and workshops, you can’t generate enough power or enthusiasm in those things to sustain. Here’s what I tell people: “Content and charisma together are great. But if you have to choose one, choose content.” What they have been able to pull off here very nicely is an excellent mixture of both content and charisma. But if all we have is charisma in terms of our presentation, it’s not enough to really keep people. It’s like eating dessert; it can give you energy for a short time, but if you didn’t eat the meal, you don’t have ongoing sustenance.

ted/MEDIA: You are a role model for young people. Lots of them follow you on Facebook or Twitter. Is there anyone that you look up to?

David Asscherick: Yes, absolutely. Some of them are here. The people that I really listen to in the church are people like Matt Parra, Nathan Renner, James Rafferty, Ty Gibson, Jeffrey Rosario and many others. In fact many of my best ideas in sermons or workshops or other things come straight from them. I consider myself, and I am, a very collaborative person. Many people might not know that. They might think, David is kind of a loner by himself, but it’s quite the opposite. I have never not worked with a team. I love collaboration, I love synergy, I love connecting with other people so there’s tones of people both in the Adventist church and outside of the Adventist church that I look up to very much.

ted/MEDIA: You did a seminar on the prophetic identity of the Seventh-day Adventist Church. Do you think there is a need to rebuild the identity among the youth. If so, in what way?

David Asscherick: We don’t need the identity rebuilt but we need it understood. Maybe reimagine in some senses. For example, we hear a lot about the remnant church and I support that emphasis but we need to hear even more about the remnant message. I think young people are not exactly sure what to do with that idea of the remnant church. Does that mean we’re the only church, does that mean my friends who are Baptists or Anglicans or Catholics are not real Christians? No. The real emphasis in the Bible in terms of the remnant is on the message of the remnant; the truth of the remnant. The remnant as an institution is important, but our identity is not in a cultural, ecclesiastical institution; it’s in Christ and in the message that we preach. So does it need to be rebuilt? No. Does it need to be believed and understood? Yes. Does it need to be re-envisioned a little bit? Yes, probably. Because many people perceive it incorrectly and unbiblically and we should think of it in terms of the message content rather than, now you’re a member of this institutional ecclesiastical body, now you’re in. No. It’s about being connected to Christ and to His word.

ted/MEDIA: Friday was all about making a difference in Novi Sad. Did you join the Impact Day?

David Asscherick: Yes, my participation was fairly modest because I’m a photographer and I wanted to go out and get pictures of the city and pictures of some of the young people interacting. We were right downtown here with a group that was giving out water bottles. It was a fairly modest outreach effort, not unimportant, but I was able to get some pictures that I was happy with. Frankly, at the site that I was at, they had way more people helping than they had need of, so I was a bit of a fifth wheel, as we say in the States. If I hadn’t gone downtown to the group that interested me the most, I would have wanted to go along the Danube river and pick up things. I’m very passionate about biblical ecology and I just recently spent some time in another eastern European country and I was really discouraged with how much trash there was everywhere. It’s very different where I’m from in the United States. You just wouldn’t see that what we call litter and so that’s the thing that would have really interested me.

ted/MEDIA: How do you find the balance between reaching out to those who have never met Christ and catering for the needs of the church family? What’s your main focus?

David Asscherick: That’s a great question. It depends year to year. Sometimes I find myself speaking more in house to the Seventh-day Adventist congregations and gatherings and other times my meetings are almost exclusively to the public. To be honest if I had to choose between one or the other, I would choose to preach to the public. Just like Paul said, I’d rather go built where there’s no foundation, where the name of Christ is not named, than build on somebody else’s foundation. I like a good mix. If I could choose a ratio of 2:1; two public meetings to one Adventist meeting, that would be ideal for me. Whether I’m preaching to so called Adventists who already know the Lord; many of whom don’t, many of whom do, or people who don’t know the Lord at all, I just love to preach Christ and whoever is willing to listen, I am willing to speak.

ted/MEDIA: What should be the focus of the Adventist youth?

David Asscherick: I think that the number one thing that Adventist young people need to concentrate on is being really connected with Scripture and really connected with the ministry of Christ. Being involved, not just in the wordy way but in an actual, physical, relationally
significant way. Bring the ministry of Christ into the university, into the workplace, into their family. This is the only thing that has the ability to sustain us; the Word and ministry. Apart from that, religion is largely just a club, it’s a social gathering, it’s a show. But with those things, if that can become an emphasis and a priority, then the sky is the limit.

**tedMEDIA:** You are a frequent visitor to Europe. What is the biggest challenge in your opinion that we are facing as youth here on this continent? Is there anything that puts us in a better position or worse position as compared to youth on other continents?

**David Asscherick:** I think there are several struggles in Europe but the two I will speak about here is - number one: many of the countries here are very secular - but I think even worse than that is that the church in the past had a kind of resignation to the fact. “Oh I live in a secular country, oh it’s so hard here”. But don’t you serve an infinitely powerful God, don’t you serve the Lord of glory? So is there a problem with secularity and getting access to people? Yes. Has the church exacerbated the problem sometimes and just spent so much time talking about it and worrying about it and discussing it? I think that has been at least as much of the problem. Let’s just say everywhere is hard. We live in a world that is hostile to the gospel. Let’s get to work. We don’t find Paul in the New Testament saying „man, Corinth is tough. And Galtia, oh really...” No! Let’s do what we can and make a difference.

**tedMEDIA:** Is there any country that you’d still like to visit or is there any region that God put on your heart?

**David Asscherick:** Yes, of course, every country! I want to go to every country I’ve not been to, every single one. Some people when they go to a restaurant and they get a good meal, they always order the same thing. I’m a little bit that way. I went to New Zealand and I was like, this is the best country on Earth! And then I went back five years in a row. And I’ve been to Australia like five years in a row and I’ve been to Sweden numerous times, to Norway numerous times. I’m torn because when I go to a place and have a really good experience, I just want to go back. So I want depth, but I also want to go to new places as well, so I want breadth. Is there an area that I really am passionate about? Yes, to be honest right now it’s the Mediterranean. I’d love to spend time in Italy, Macedonia, Greece. The Middle East is really intriguing. I was just in Turkey for the first time a couple of weeks ago. You pretty much couldn’t name a place on the Earth that I would not be passionate about going. At least for a short time.

**tedMEDIA:** When do we see you next in Europe?

**David Asscherick:** I’ve got a lot of invitations to come back next year but right now, to be honest, my family and I are contemplating taking a call to pastor a church in Australia and we’re kind of looking at settling down because our boys are just coming into their teen years and we really want them to have a good, stable, local church situation for next 5-7 years. So if I take that call, I will probably be travelling only two or three months out of the year, as opposed to six. So I would say there’s a 100% chance I’ll be back in Europe next year, but where exactly remains to be seen. [tedNEWS]
Seventh-day Adventists in Sweden elect new Union President

25 July 2013 Stockholm, Sweden [Rainer Refsbäck, tedNEWS] The Swedish Union Session, took place at Ekebyholmsgskolan on 2-6 July 2013. Although much time was spent discussing and negotiating, the overall atmosphere was one of spiritual enrichment and challenge.

During the first Thursday morning session, Göran Hansen was elected Union President for the Swedish Union of Churches Conference.

"I feel a lot of gratitude for the trust," said Hansen in his brief acceptance speech. "I will work wholeheartedly to develop our churches and support their growth."

Hansen also expressed his understanding that some felt hesitant about his suitability for the role of Union President but hopes that everyone will get to know him better in the months and years that lie ahead.

Hansen returned to Sweden in 2012 after many years serving as ADRA country director abroad, among other roles. For most of the past year he has been assistant pastor in the Stockholm Adventist Church, with responsibility for its ‘Center of Influence’ evangelism project. In his youth, he studied theology at Newbold College and then attended the seminary at Ekebyholmsgskolan. However, for most of his life he has worked as a teacher and held administrative positions inside and outside the Church. Hansen was ordained and welcomed among the pastors during the Sabbath afternoon Mission programme.

Göran Hansen succeeds Pastor Robert 'Bobby' Sjölander who has requested an alternative assignment. Bobby Sjölander was elected as leader of the Evangelism Department later that day.

Daniel Hailemariam, who since 2010 has served as Executive Secretary, received renewed confidence as he was re-elected by an overwhelming majority.
Ronny Hermansson was also re-elected as Union Treasurer by a large majority.

Willy Aronsen was elected Deputy Youth Leader until a long-term leader can be found. Assistant Karolina Poland was re-elected as Assistant Youth Leader.
The Swedish Union Session began with a series of evening worships on Tuesday night, July 2. Pastor Derek Morris, editor of the Ministry Magazine, was invited to speak during morning and evening worships about life as a radical disciple of Jesus Christ. The theme of the Union Session was ‘In the Master’s Footsteps’ and summarised the strategic goals of the Union for the coming period: ‘Walk in Worship’, ‘Walk in Service’ and ‘Walk in Fellowship’.

In the Swedish Union, many proposals are prepared months before the Session takes place. Among the proposals winning favor with the delegates were more education for lay preachers, a new strategy and vision document, more churches encouraged to become Churches of Refuge, the Union paper Missionären to be sent to all Church members without cost, the work environment of pastors to be analyzed and attended to an the necessity of a three-party dialogue when pastors are asked to move to another church.

Other proposals greeted with favour included the idea that an interest group should take responsibility for the going interest in health ministers in local churches and the creation of the full-time post for a children’s, family and youth ministry director to expand the work in this important area.

One proposal that was sure to be divisive was that of 'Men and Women Ministers in the Swedish Union'. In December 2012, the Union Board issued a statement regarding the attitude of equality which is currently held within the Union concerning its male and female pastors. It stated that the Union regards women and men as equals in ministry as far as General Conference of the Seventh-day Adventist Church and the Trans-European Division policy permits (at present, the only office a female pastor may not hold is that of Union President). Moreover, the statement mandated the Union leadership to promote its view among the decision-making bodies of the worldwide Seventh-day Adventist Church. This statement was presented as a motion at the Session but, after a lengthy and lively debate, it was voted that the Union should not take a stand regarding this issue until it is resolved by the General Conference in 2015.

After three days of deliberations the Session ended with a Sabbath filled with opportunities for spiritual renewal, beginning with a much appreciated 'Shabbat Shalom' Vespers and Communion Service on Friday night. On the following sunny Sabbath morning, 500-600 members from all over Sweden gathered for Bible Study in small groups all over the Ekebyholmskolan Campus, a worship service filled with song and music, a Mission programme in the afternoon and a musical programme in the evening.

Post-Session Discussions

The newly elected Union Board gathered for its first meeting as soon as the Union Session ended and decided to clarify the nature of both its statement and the decision made at the Union Session.

In essence the Union Board pointed out that the December statement is not 'a final standpoint on the issue of women’s ordination', but rather an expression of support for the ongoing study of ordination theology and a message to the Division and the General Conference (GC) explaining the current stance of the Union.

The Board also wants to point out that the Session’s decision is in no way a stance against the ordination of women pastors, but a request to await the decisions of the GC in 2015.

The Board confirmed that male and female pastors will continue to have the same benefits and responsibilities and that the Union Session’s decision in no way changes the status of female pastors in the Swedish Union. "We will continue to support our women pastors and to encourage more women to serve the Lord and our churches as pastors," the clarifying statement reads. [tedNEWS]
Is Failure an essential ingredient of success?

You are a failure! These are words we fear to hear. Failure is a subject we do not like to talk about. It is the elephant in the room that no one mentions, yet it is always there, because failure is a part of life. Consider how many successes do you forget? How many failures do you forget? How many times did things not work out as you planned? To put it bluntly, how many times have you failed? What is the ratio of success to failure? Is it true that behind our success is a series of failures?

Thomas Edison, inventor of the electric light bulb and phonograph, at one time held the world record for the number of patents owned by one person, a staggering 1093, confessed: “I have not failed. I've just found 10,000 ways that won't work.”

Benjamin Franklin, one of the Founding Fathers of America, expressed a similar sentiment: “I didn't fail the test; I just found 100 ways to do it wrong.”

There are countless leadership books and articles on the “How To” of success. There are few dealing with failure. Yet failure is often the essential part of success.

In a spiritual context we learn how failure focuses our minds on the relationship between victory and failure. This is positive and necessary. Listen to the Apostle Paul in Rom 7:19 when he says: “For I do not do the good I want to do, but the evil I do not want to do – this I keep on doing.” His failure became the ground of his success and victory, but if he had never failed he would never have known success.

Hebrews 11 is a catalogue of faith – those who are held up as examples for us to follow. A quick survey shows that even these giants experienced failure.

Abraham is called by God to leave Haran and go to the Promised Land. He goes without questioning. He is overly generous towards Lot. He pleads for the people in Sodom. He is even willing to sacrifice his own son Isaac. Yet he tells a half-truth to Pharaoh that Sarah is his sister rather than his wife. Impatient for God to fulfil his promise of a son, or perhaps, doubting that God could fulfil the promise, due to Sarah’s age, Abraham fathers a child by this wife’s maid Hagar. Then he sends Hagar and the child away. Yet he is known as the friend of God, and father of the faithful.

Isaac repeats his father’s mistake and lies to Abimelech’s men, telling them that Rebekah is his sister rather than his wife, yet he is the model of the born again believer.

In Jacob we see another flawed character. He manipulates his brother to sell him his birthright for a meal, then deceives his father Isaac into giving him the blessing by deceit. As a result he has to run away from his home, never to see the mother he loves again. When he is at his lowest God give him the marvellous dream at Bethel, of a ladder reaching from heaven to earth and Jacob promises to follow God. However the intrigue and deceit did not stop. He was cheated by his father-in-law. In turn when Jacob decided to return to his homeland he runs away. In the end his life becomes a story of victory and success. He becomes the father of all the twelve tribes of Israel.

Moses successfully led the children of Israel to the boarders of the Promised Land, yet his failures were spectacular. He was a murderer. As a result of losing his temper, he was not able to go into the Promised Land instead he went to heaven.

These heroes of faith were definitely not saints who never put a foot wrong.

The writer of Hebrews mentions others like Able, Samuel and the prophets.

We know very little about Able except that he was the first victim of violent crime. Even though he did what was right, things didn’t work out well for him.

Samuel from a child was in the temple and did God’s work. He judged Israel, yet under his leadership the Israelites chose to move away from God and have their own king, Samuel felt a failure, but he was the last of the Judges and the first of the Prophets.

Of all the prophets, Daniel, is a classic success story. Yet at times it looked as if he were a failure, not least when he was thrown into the den of lions.

What all these people learned was that there are two perspectives in life: short term human perspective and God’s long term eternal perspective.
We all make mistakes. As leaders our mistakes are often more public than most. We all fail, but failure can be the price of success. Failure is not the problem. The issue is: how we handle failure? Failure is cumulative: the older you get the more failures you become aware of. Failure can either weigh us down or shape us up.

Compare Judas and Peter’s response to failure. Both failed to grasp the true nature of Jesus’ mission. Judas betrayed Jesus. Peter denied Jesus. When Judas understood the enormity of what he had done, he felt there was no way back. The only solution was to give up; he went out and hanged himself.

Despite having been warned in advance, Peter denied Jesus in style, with cursing and swearing. When the cock crowed and Jesus looked at him, the enormity of what he had done engulfed him. He ran out into the night buried in an avalanche of guilt and remorse. Thankfully he didn’t hang himself. He reflected, and repented. He learned the lesson, there is forgiveness and freedom from failure. On the Day of Pentecost it was Peter who unashamedly stood up and preached salvation. Failure is not necessarily a disaster.

At the 1992 Barcelona Olympics, Derek Redmond was strongly tipped to win the 400 meters. He exploded out of the blocks and it looked as if he would win. In a painful, humiliating moment his hamstring snapped and he collapsed on the track. His race was over. Then he did the unexpected. He got up and began to hop down the track. A man pushed his way past the security guards and ran onto the track. It was his father, who told him he did not need to do this. Derek replied “I do”. Supported by his father, sobbing with pain, Derek crossed the finishing line. He received the longest standing ovation of the games as 65,000 people cheered him home. Derek finished the race!

Whether you are struggling in your leadership or everything is going well, sooner or later you are going hit a bump. You are going to make a mistake or fail. It is inevitable, unavoidable. You know it, because you have had the experience of failure, but you are still alive, the world didn’t end. Failure need never be an end except we choose it. It can and should be a learning experience.

Fight on my men said Sir Andrew Barton, I’m hurt but I am not slain I’ll lay me down and bleed a while Then I’ll rise and fight again.

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By Audrey Andersson, Executive Secretary, Trans-European Division of the Seventh-day Adventist Church

Used with permission from Leadership Development Journal - June 2013
4 August 2013 Novi Sad, Serbia [Yvonne Bauwens, tedNEWS] Soon the arena will be silent and only the echoes of 4,000 young people’s laughter will ring down the corridors. Voices fade, tears are wiped dry and the vivacious participants of this incredible, thought-provoking and inspiring Pan-European Youth Congress here in Novi Sad are beginning their journeys home. Our closing thoughts came from the mouth of Pastor Gilbert Cangy, Adventist World Youth Director. Through a touching account of the passing of his father, Pastor Gilbert emphasised just how important last words can be. Pastor Gilbert wanted to know if his father thought of his son in the old man’s last moments, but he could never find out.

As a missionary volunteer to India in 2012, I hoped my words shared with my students would have inspired and had a lasting impression on them. The truth is, I might never know what impression I had, and although I hoped I could inspire them, my actions probably had more of an influence.
Jesus however, as He walked to the Cross, had you and me on His mind. John 17:20 captures Christ’s final prayer that we might exhibit the Power of One in the world, that we might be brought to complete unity. If there is no Power of One amongst God’s people, the world will have no witness for the Power of His Gospel. On the day of Pentecost, we read about the first of many examples of this prayer coming true. All through the centuries, we are fulfilling this prophecy and it doesn't end here.

Entering the arena for the last time, the young people were given a glow stick and asked to save its glow for a special part of the service. Our voices once again uplifted the name of Jesus in song. Correction: in complete and absolute celebration, we praised God! Although the intense heat in the room soared, hairs on the back of my neck still stood on end as I joined the mass choir singing for the last time the theme song written by talented musicians, Serbian Tihomir Lazić and Estonian Kärt Vahtramäe. We stood united. We stood as one, praising the power of the only one God we worship!

Having been brought up in the Seventh-day Adventist church, I often wonder what such events must look like to a non-Christian, but yesterday’s services included an extra 1,000 day visitors, as well as over 1,500 live online viewers and when standing as one in the choir with friends from all over this world, I was proud to be a member of an amazing family!

Our youth leaders from each Union took to the stage, snapping their red glow sticks and the nations from each Union’s yellow sticks then glowed and were waved as a response to continue shining our lights for Christ, to continue making Christ’s final prayer a reality in our lives. ‘Don’t lose the dream! God puts a fire in your heart. Don’t let anyone put your fire out!’ encouraged Pastor Gilbert.

His closing words of challenge were for our young people to stay close to Jesus, taking the words of Luke 6:12 as their motto. Start your day with Jesus. Take time for Jesus. Pray.
One of my favourite quotes is: ‘A whole lot of kneeling keeps you in good standing.’

In an interview with Pastors Paul Tompkins and Stephan Sigg, Youth Directors of the Trans-European and Inter-European Divisions respectively, who were the organisers of this Congress, they shared their closing remarks with me for our young people to take back to the many countries they represented here in Novi Sad:

Stefan, referring to a sermon from this fantastic week: ‘The Christian walk is to be understood as a walk.’ He encourages our young people to continue that walk with Jesus, to be motivated to share this good news of Jesus with others in the many various ways and talents we have been blessed with! ‘If this Congress has been the motivation for the participants to either find Christ or to continue in this mission, I think it has achieved its main goal.’

Paul concluded: I think the Congress has been very intentional in the way it has developed. The theme of ‘The Power of One’ has been to encourage everyone in their various stages of faith. Each day has been built on an element of this theme, and each day has flowed from the previous.

The circular centre stage represents the cross being at the centre of our lives as we stand united. The power of the theme song has been a particular highlight for Paul: ‘The words are strong and the music brings you to a crescendo. I think that will live with young people. I see happy young people. The baptism, impact day - a whole day of reaching out to the community – are just a few examples of how this Congress will leave a profound lasting impression on the lives of our young people as they return to their home churches and continue shining their lights for Christ.’

May God bless you and keep you strong. We stand united in His love. Looking forward to seeing you at the next Congress in 2017, in the beautiful land of Spain!

Adventist Youth Congress 2013 may have finished, but it still has a lot offer. Please visit our website to see videos, photos and the other
material from the Congress. [tedNEWS]

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4 August 2013 Novi Sad, Serbia [Agnieszka Kluska, *tedNEWS*] Music has always been a vital part of the worship, but it does not happen very often that it is so exceptionally good. 7 musicians and 7 singers have joined their talents together for the Pan-European Adventist Youth Congress to lift up Jesus and lead the youth in praise.

'I'm enjoying it immensely' says Kart Vahtramae, one of the singers from Estonia. 'The feedback from the people has been very positive.'

'The theme song is absolutely amazing. It’s rare to have a situation where the music and the lyrics are so excellent and so totally representative of what the Congress is about.' Remarks David Asscherick, pastor from the USA. 'I think the musicians have done a fantastic job. I’ll say another thing. The trumpet is awesome. It adds so much. And the drummer is very clever too. I can tell he’s playing not in the beat but slightly around the beat. I just loved it. It’s been good stuff.'
Matthew Gamble, one of the main speakers for the Congress, is very enthusiastic too. 'God is my witness, the music is one of the best I’ve ever heard. The sound is very crisp and clear and clean and it’s simply powerful to have the vocalists all up on a round stage. The music and the song selections that they have, it’s truly inspiring. Thank God for their talent, their gifts and I’ve been deeply blessed.

The theme song, 'The Power of One', composed for the Congress, has been highly praised by all. 'It’s just a very powerful song. I actually think it should be on a soundtrack for a movie,' adds Gamble.

No doubt the expectations for the next Congress have been set high. The worship band this year have been a blessing. [tedNEWS]
'Gifted hands' start a new chapter during the Power of One book crossing!
4 August 2013 Novi Sad, Serbia [Tabitha Krznar, *tedNEWS*] Hearts were warmed and the pages of 6,000 Christian books were turned as the eager Power of One participants distributed them across Novi Sad during today's *Book Crossing* outreach activity.


Rebeca Oana from Australia was deeply impacted by this activity, she says: ‘Book crossing teaches us that we don't need words or physical proximity to connect with others around the world. Sometimes the deepest connections are formed in silence. We can leave God's footprints wherever we go in many different ways.’
Novi Sad received a literary facelift locations all over the city from; SPENS centre, Dunavski park, benches, cafes, ATM cash machines, statues and most importantly, local people carrying their new introduction to the Gospel Book Crossing gift.

When people could not be found to give books to, Ivaylo Hristiv from Bulgaria tried another approach. ‘We were about to leave a book in front of a shop that was closed. A woman passed by, saw us and asked what the book was all about, we told her that it was a Christian book and asked her to take one, she did and she also chose another one about living for God. She was so happy, she promised to register the books on her online book register blog. I'm definitely going to try Book Crossing back home!’

The power of God, the power of His young people has blessed, inspired and convicted the participants of the Power of One congress. Translator and Pastor Božidar Lazić from Serbia agrees, ‘I am amazed by God’s guidance and the talents He has given to the young people of AYC. During this congress He has clearly shown us that young people already possess all the quantities for evangelism - go forth, young people, and finish God’s great work!’ [tedNEWS]
You are free to re-print any portion of the bulletin without need for special permission. However, we kindly request that you identify *tedNEWS* whenever you publish these materials.
4 August 2013 Novi Sad, Serbia [Agnieszka Kluska, ted/NEWS] About 4,000 thousand people gathered in Novi Sad for the morning worship. Many local visitors have come to join young people at the Pan-European Adventist Youth Congress.

This year marks 150th anniversary of the Seventh-day Adventist Church. 'As we move and grow as a church, we are challenged,' said Stephan Sigg, one of the Congress leaders, inviting the audience to pray for pastor Monteiro imprisoned in Togo and for a young man imprisoned in Pakistan.

Abundance of music and art performances set the tone for the Sabbath worship. Jesus was lifted up in unity and with enthusiasm of diverse youth.

'God is willing to give you the gift. The Spirit of the Lord will come upon you in power. It will make you strong,' encourages Gilbert Cangy, General Conference Youth Director. 'On God’s team there is no one in reserve. Everyone has a right to play in the Kingdom of God,' he continued.
The powerful message was sealed with a special prayer. All Congress participants put their hands on the shoulder of the person in front of them and so a chain was formed connecting God’s family. ‘Jesus, come to make us strong. Come to transform our lives. Come to equip us. Come to live with us,’ prayed Gilbert Cangy.

The worship culminated in the joyful praise. ‘Blessed assurance, Jesus is mine,’ sounded loud in the main hall of SPENS as God has been pouring out his Spirit on us here in Novi Sad today.

Even though the European Adventist Youth Congress, please do visit our video archive as well as Facebook and Twitter to see more photos and videos from the Congress. [tedNEWS]

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Matthew Gamble: 'I long for...'

Matthew Gamble was born and raised Catholic, but became an atheist at the age of 14. Increasingly fascinated by the Rastafarian religion, Matthew found himself on the island of Jamaica at the age of 19, and soon began smuggling marijuana into Miami, Florida. Shortly after that time, God led him to a Christian pastor who listened to his story and handed him a Bible. As he began exploring the teachings of Jesus, his life began to be transformed from the inside out. Since that time, he has received undergraduate and postgraduate degrees from Andrews University and in 2008, he completed a Doctorate in Ministry specifically looking at trends of effective Gospel communicators in a postmodern culture. He is presently serving full time as the Senior Pastor of the Elmshaven Seventh-day Adventist Church in St. Helena, California, the USA. Matthew has a passion for preaching from God's word. He is living in Angwin, California, where he is ecstatically married to his wife Susan, his college sweetheart. They love sharing life with their daughter Julia Marie. Matthew's first book, Reboot Your Spiritual Life, was published in 2010 by AdventSource.
tedNEWS: How do you like the congress? What did you like best so far?

Matthew Gamble: What immediately jumps into my mind is the baptism! Seeing 12 people baptized with some 3,000 people in attendance was amazing. There was something about the atmosphere seeing the body of Christ come together to support those who were surrendering their lives fully to Jesus.

Additionally the music (especially the theme song) was on a different level! The talent level of the musicians and singers brought us all into the throne room of grace! Quite frankly, I thought that all of our main gatherings were brilliantly produced to the glory of God.

tedNEWS: Is the European Adventist youth culture much different from the American youth in the church?

Matthew Gamble: Not from my perspective. As a matter-a-fact, during my lecture about how to be a revolutionary for Jesus, I started the workshop by opening the floor where I could hear from the young people what their observations were about their local church. Many of the comments would be representative of what the youth of America are saying. As a denomination, we need to be reminded that young people are the ones God chose to launch this worldwide movement that we know as the Seventh-day Adventist Church. Ellen White was a teenager when she received her first vision. The young people are ripping, roaring and ready to go! We need to empower them and get out of the way!

tedNEWS: You met Christ at a certain point in your life. You don't have a Christian past. Some of us grew up in Adventism and there are no thrilling stories to tell. Would you trade your non-Christian past for the Adventist background or do you perceive it rather as a burden in many ways?

Matthew Gamble: There's no question that if I could have been born and raised in a Seventh-day Adventist home, I would have loved that... so long as my family was centered around Jesus and His grace! Many people who were headed in the direction that I was don't make it to Christ. I’m grateful for the fact that Jesus got a hold of me when He did!

tedNEWS: Is there anything from your past that is still a thorn in the present?

Matthew Gamble: Wow! That’s a personal question... The Bible places our sins into three categories... the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes and the pride of life (1 John 2:16-17). So the answer is yes... I find that there are issues in my life that persist in all of those categories.

tedNEWS: What kind of church or fellowship do you long for? What changes are essential to achieve it?
Matthew Gamble: I long for a church that is so full of Jesus and His Holy Spirit that a continuous flow of people is finding salvation and freedom in Him. I long for a church that is so radically relevant and appealing to people far from God, that our churches are forced to have multiple services to accommodate all the people. I long for the day where our church facilities aren’t just used on Sabbath mornings, rather that every hour is seen as divine resulting in our facilities being used as community centers where people are growing mentally, physically and spiritually. I long for the day where we resist the Devil and stop finding ourselves spending fruitless hours debating music theories, dress codes and other man made gospels and traditions (see Galatians and Colossians).

The bottom line is that I long for the Holy Spirit to pour out in extra measure, uniting us as one.

May we continuously recognize that Jesus is our Senior Pastor and we are all part of His body!

tedNEWS: Matthew, we have really been blessed by your preaching. When do we see you again in Europe?

Matthew Gamble: When you invite me! [tedNEWS]
Where’s 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 can 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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2 August 2013 Novi Sad, Serbia [Tabitha Krznar, tedNEWS] There was a marked decrease in the cigarette smoking of the Novi Sad residents occupying ‘Mercator 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 too 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.

[tedNEWS]

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you identify *ted*NEWS whenever you publish these materials.
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.
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.
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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Take a Gamble

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. [tedNEWS]
31 July, 2013 Novi Sad, Serbia [Tabitha Krznar, ted/MEDIA] 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 Kärt Vahtramäe, the leader of the worship team.

[tedNEWS]

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A Free Refill at the European Youth Congress in Novi Sad

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!

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First Impressions from AYC 2013

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]