

A still life arrangement of natural objects. In the foreground, a vibrant red bottlebrush flower with numerous stamens is in focus. Behind it, a green candle with a red wick sits on a wooden base. To the right, a coconut is cracked open, revealing its white interior. The background is a textured, light-colored surface, possibly tree bark, with some dried leaves scattered around.

News & Views
Summer Edition 2012

European Baptist Women's Union



Patsy Davis, WD; Eugenia Podoleanu, a new leader;
Olga Mocan, ex-leader; Liviya Godina, Europe president



Moldova National Baptist Women's Conference April 27-28 2012



News & Views

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Moldova Conference



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EDITORIAL



By Margaret Brown

Blessings to each of you!

Our country (Scotland) has had unseasonably wet weather this summer, yet certain areas of England have been suffering drought, and even the north west of Scotland has been very dry and until recently has had scarcely any rain. Rain is needed for a good maintained water supply, for enabling plant growth and for sustaining life, which is in danger when deprived of water.

Across the country and indeed the world it seems there is a spiritual drought – a famine *‘not a famine of food or a thirst for water, but a famine of hearing the words of the Lord’* (Amos 8:11b).

Some people are searching for the truth, yet cannot find it; some give up, some look in the wrong places, listen to false teaching, follow imposters. Some are ignorant of the famine in their lives and are unaware of their need. To-day there is a need for the Word of God to be taught, learned, memorised, proclaimed and expounded. Praise God for His Word! Those of us who know the Lord and His Word must live the truth of that Word in our lives wherever we are. The world needs to be released from famine and drought.

In Psalm 27:13&14 David writes, *‘I am still confident of this: I will see the goodness of the Lord in the land of the living. Wait for the Lord; be strong and take heart and wait for the Lord.’* I wonder if we are as confident as David. Much around us would cause us to despair– laws contrary to God’s laws, crime rates, economic situations, etc.etc. God is planning for His people’s good. Do we have the faith to believe it will be as He has planned?

In this edition of N&V reference is made to the goodness of God, and to that goodness being exhibited in the lives of His disciples. Read about the women who have grasped the opportunities God has presented to them. Read their stories as they reach out to alleviate the famine around them with the goodness of God. Their faith has moved them to act. Paul saw evidence of this in the lives of the Thessalonians when he wrote in his second letter to them *‘we constantly pray for you, that our God may make you worthy of His calling, and that by His power he may bring to fruition your every desire for goodness and your every deed prompted by faith’* (2Thessalonians 1:11).

There is no need for people to be hungry or thirsty. The little boy who gave what he had to Jesus saw 5000 men, plus women and children fed and satisfied with plenty left over. Let's determine to give what we have to Jesus also. Let's see what He can do with what we give Him. Let's allow Him to work His goodness out through our lives, just as some of the women you will read about in this issue. And when the rains come, may they truly be showers of blessing from our Father's hand, flowing out from us to bless others.

'Make every effort to add to your faith goodness' (2Peter 1:5). May the Lord bless you, and keep you busy with doing good to others, so that their need will be met in Him.



"He did good, and gave us rain from heaven, and fruitful seasons, filling our hearts with food and gladness".

Acts 14:17 KJV

PRESIDENTIAL LETTER



By Līvija Godina

Greetings from the Baptist family all around the world !

In the middle of summer in our hemisphere I had to go to the southern hemisphere – to Chile where it was the middle of winter.

Our continents are so different – the sun rises and sets on the other side, we have the longest days of the year now. It's the middle of summer, but there in Chile it was winter. For us – the closer to the north, the colder it becomes, for there it's the opposite – the closer to the south, the colder it gets. Everything was different there. That is in nature. But how is it with human beings? My first culture shock was stopped when I met people who hug and kiss each other when they greet each other. I forgot about winter time and cool weather when I was so warmly welcomed and hugged from the first moment.

In Chile I was attending the BWA Annual meeting from July 2-7 and a week before that gathering was the WD (Women's Department) Annual meeting led by our President Raquel Contreras who is from Chile and other officers – Patsy Davis and Donna Groover; also there participating were the 7 continental presidents. Much of the time in our meeting was taken up with strategic planning for the next 5 years, led by Sylvia DeLoach. Each continent gave their report for the past year. Each continent is different with different cultures and traditions, but we all have one goal – how to serve women and how to reach people around us for Jesus. During the last 5 years there have been many changes in the world, economically, politically and technologically; things have developed at a very fast pace. We have to learn to use these advances in the best possible way.

In the North American continent over the last four years many young women have become interested and have joined to women's ministry using Facebook and Twitter. Linda Weber, president, shared how they have developed a network of Baptist women's ministry leaders working in specific ministries that meet the needs of women and their families in the community. There are women who work with abused women, a group who reach out to victims of sexual exploitation and who work with girls at risk. NABWU Executive Board encourages and organizes training for working with refugees, prison ministry with prisoners and families of prisoners and how to help those who have been released from prison. NABWU in October 3-6, 2012 has their Assembly and have chosen the theme: "Thread". Thread is a symbol of hope. It's very presence indicates possibility – creation – mending - weaving together individuals and resources for the common purpose. The Theme verse, Exodus 39, 3:



“Gold leaf was hammered out and cut into thread to work into blue, purple, and crimson yarns and into the fine twisted linen, in skilled design” encompasses the common purpose, artistry, and strength of thread in the context of building the tabernacle.

From Asia Sook Jae Lee shared that Asia membership is made up of 19 countries and 35 member bodies. In the last five year term they have given more accent to Young Women in Leadership, they have organized several time conferences for young women to get them more involved in their local Women’s Organization. Last year their conference had the theme “Transform a Life, Transform Asia” where there were 560 participants representing 16 different countries.

Motunrayo Adegbilero from Africa told stories – how women testified at their conference of a couple who gave birth to a beautiful baby girl after 17 years of waiting; a lady brought her handsome son to testify to a prayer answered after 25 years of waiting; another brought a set of lovely twin girls to the stage (born 3 week ago) after 14 years of waiting. Women in every Baptist Convention of Africa have been impacting their communities for Christ in various ways: reaching out to street kids, gathering resources for a children’s home, giving assistance to abused women, helping women acquire reading and writing skills. She thanked Baptist sisters in Norway for their support to Sierra Leone in breaking the silence on Female Genital Mutilation and Domestic Violence. Her gratitude also to “Tools for self-Reliance UK” for funding the training of 100 women and youths. Motunrayo told that one of the problems is that many people in Nigeria now are afraid to come to church service on Sunday because of bombing of churches by Islamic fundamentalists. There is a lot of need in Africa. But women are serving and many women are already preparing for the 2015 BWA-WD Leadership Conference in South Africa. She said: We eagerly look forward to receive our sisters from the whole world. May God spare our lives beyond that time in Jesus name!

Our prayer partners, Latin-America, have their theme for five years: “Children, our hope for Latin America”. President Marlene Baltazar reported that every two months, the Calendar of Prayer is prepared and sent to the leadership of all Latin American countries to be distributed among the churches. It is also on the website. They encourage women to pray for Europe. Their emphasis was the preparation of leaders for children. There is a project PEPE which provides care for children between 4 and 6. The Women’s Union holds annually a special campaign to collect gifts and donations to help keep the PEPE program in the country.



In Chile nearby Santiago we visited a home for elderly people which is run by the Baptist women's organization. Women support practically by giving voluntary help, giving money and different kind of products to help this home, where 17 women live and one of them is the Women's Union's leader from years ago.

Julie Belding from South West Pacific mentioned that SWP is part of the Asian Pacific Baptist Federation; therefore they have co-operation and some conferences which she has attended in Asia. To SWP belongs Australia, New Zealand, Fiji, Papua New Guinea and West Papua, but there are absolute differences between them all. In the villages of Papua New Guinea the Women's Union have organized several projects like sewing courses. The goal is to train rural women to be self-reliant and so reduce poverty. During the training courses other topics such as HIV, savings, and protection from domestic violence were also addressed.

The Caribbean Baptist Women's Union is the youngest and is made up of a number of Islands of which approximately 14-16 have membership status and land mass. Due to the worsening economic situation in many islands of the Caribbean, plus the increase in abuse of women and children many women's member bodies are endeavouring to assist women to improve their social and economic status. There are several projects: backyard gardening and pastry making; an agricultural project to help in alleviating the unemployment situation among women. This is an on-going project in which women are given piglets, chickens or goats to rear and when there is an increase, seventy-five % will be returned to the Federation for distribution to others sisters. There was another project to help women who were displaced because of the earthquake in Haiti in 2010, they are unemployed and they receive training. The Women's Union help many in need.

In Europe we have similar needs. Some countries have started recently a project for improving women's ministry in the future. In Moldova they have a discipleship training project that started last year.

And now we have arrived in Europe.

Firstly, I would like to thank each one of you for your faithful ministry in your country each day – both on ordinary days and celebrations. Thank you for your hospitality when I visited your country. It has always been special to me – it's a privilege and also a responsibility. When I get to know your ministry closer and the joys and struggles of it, I keep it in my heart and I keep you in my prayers and all the EBWU Committee pray for you. This spring I had the opportunity to be with brothers and sisters in Amman, Jordan where EBF Executive meeting took place. I met AWT (Arab Women Today) director Ruba Abbassi. It is a special ministry to the Muslim world. She shared many testimonies of how many, especially women, have come to God through their radio programs because that is their opportunity to hear about God. Another very touching place was the baptism place in the Jordan River which

is used by protestant and evangelical churches. Let's pray that God's peace and truth is a light in this difficult part of the world, also pray for Syria that is close by.

This year EBWU Committee met in Moscow, Russia and took part in a conference with sisters from Russia and CIS countries. I was enlightened by the sisters' study and knowledge of the Scriptures. May they transform in everyday life and bring fruit and honor to the Lord. I'm especially happy for the sisters who came to Moscow from Turkmenistan, Uzbekistan, Tajikistan and other countries. Let's pray for sisters in this region who overcome many obstacles – poverty and religious restrictions – to sacrificially serve women and the community. Let's pray for Kyrgyzstan that they could raise funds for enlarging their building and thus enlarge their ministry, also pray for protection of the leaders.

We celebrated the 20th anniversary of Moldovan women's ministry. The women's ministry there has a new leadership. We thank our sister Olga Mocan for 20 years of service and leadership of women's ministry. And we are glad that a younger sister Eugenia Podoleanu is continuing the work. She has understood that it's important to help new leaders grow, therefore discipleship seminars which help current sisters grow helpers and followers actively take place.

I thank God for the opportunity to visit Georgia with secretary Aniko Ujvari and learn about the diversity of their culture and ministry. I thank everyone for their hospitality. I still pray for you that His honour and love would multiply through your different ministries!

We all need spiritual restoration and restoration in women's ministry.

Let's also keep the next five-year conference in Hannover, Germany in our prayers where a five year period will come to an end. Let's pray that God would invite and challenge new EBWU Committee leaders and give sensitivity to the Holy Spirit's guidance in ministry.

When I returned from my long distance travels to Chile where World Baptist leaders met, Europe didn't seem very big at all. We are closer to each other and depend on each other more than we often think we do!

Remaining in prayer for you and wishing you God's blessings this summer, yours –

Livija Godina.

P.S. Thanks to News & Views team – Wies and her husband Jaap, and also Margaret.



MOSCOW CONFERENCE

*EBWU Committee meeting in Russia, Moscow.
Report on our Visit to Moscow - March 2-11th 2012.*



Moscow, the capital city of Russia has 11 million inhabitants.

March 2-11th 2012 saw the EBWU committee members in Moscow, Russia. This visit included our annual meeting for business affairs. And we participated at a Women's conference organised for representatives from 58 regions of Russia. Our stay was in the Moscow Theological Seminary, which was founded in 1993 and now there are 8 learning centres of Russia. Dr. Peter Mitskevich serves as the Moscow Theological Seminary's president, as well as senior pastor of Golgotha Baptist Church, and the voice of Chuck Swindoll's "Insight for Living" radio broadcast in Russia. Since the fall of communism, Peter Mitskevich has been used

by God as one of rebuilders of Christianity in Russia.

Russia has changed a lot since Peter Mitskevich's grandfather, Arthur, established correspondent Bible courses in the Soviet era amidst communist persecution and spent more than 10 years in prison for his Christian faith. Peter's father, Valter, was fired from his job as a dentist after committing his life to the Lord, but he went on to serve as academic dean of a Bible school.

If you are interested to know more about it, go to links:



www.russianleadership.org/assets/1302/petermitskevich_iflarticle.pdf
www.moscowseminary.org/en/

It was snowy, yet the sun shone. Although it was cold outside the fellowship we enjoyed together was warm. The Russian women (and men) made us feel very welcome.



Church service at First Baptist Church.



On Sunday morning we attended the First Baptist Church in Moscow which was quite a journey from the Seminary. Although we were unable to join in the service fully due to language barriers we did experience a sense of fellowship and blessing.

Normally business takes up most of our time, and we spent three days in deliberation. We had reports to hear, finances to approve, meetings to arrange, and decisions to make. As Europe is responsible for the Baptist Women's day of Prayer in 2013 time was also spent on this.

Over two days we had the privilege of joining the Russian women in their Conference which was also held in the seminary.

The theme of the conference was 'Make every effort to add to your faith Goodness' (2 Peter 1:5), and the motto: Goodness –





A Virtuous Woman is a Successful Woman.

Vera Izotova, President of the Department of Women's Ministry chaired and opened the conference. There were women from all various parts of Russia and we were also very happy to meet women from Euro Asiatic countries a representative from Armenia, Belarus, Kazakhstan, Kirgizstan, Mol-

dova, Turkmenistan, Ukraine and Uzbekistan.

Aleksey Smirnov, President of the ECBU gave the opening address - 'How a woman ought to be in church and in the home'.

There were four teaching sessions led by Vera Izotova - 'The Goodness of God' Elena Boretskaya, Executive Committee member - 'Imitation of Christ'



Leah Aliyeva, Executive Committee member - 'Goodness is a Worthy Goal'

Lubov Vlasenko, Executive Committee member - 'The reward of Goodness'.

Members of the EBWU gave a presentation on 'Baptist Women in Europe'

Livija Godina, President of EBWU spoke on 'The Successful Christian Woman' involving three EBWU members.

Leah Aliyeva



Aniko Ujvari, EBWU Secretary led the Bible meditation on the second morning based on 2 Peter 1:3-9.

Throughout the conference at different times we heard testimonies from some of the participants of how they are living out their faith, some under difficult circumstances.

There were also times of worship, praise and prayer. We were also treated to some of the sweetmeats from Russia which was thoroughly enjoyed with our tea/coffee as we shared fellowship together on the Wednesday evening and at the breaks. It was a wonderful experience for all and the Lord blessed so much.

We are very grateful to God for our time spent in Moscow, for the richness of the fellowship with His people, for the new things we saw and heard and for the blessings poured out upon us.

Livija Godina



We had a very full week, but a very enjoyable one. Our experience will remain with us always.

Margaret Brown and Livija Godina.

See for more pictures in full color the inner pages.

TEACHING SESSION

To help you teaching your own group, we publish this Teaching session held at the Baptist Women's Conference Moscow March 2012, which was prepared by Vera Izotova.

The theme of the conference was "Make every effort to add to your faith Goodness" (2 Peter 1:5), and the motto: Goodness – A virtuous woman is a successful woman.



God is Good

Seven Wonders of the World.

Once in school the students had a lesson on the "Seven Wonders of the World." The task was to ensure that each student wrote about their own seven wonders of the world.

When the teacher collected the notebooks, he noticed that one girl had not yet completed the assignment. The teacher asked if she needed help.

The pupil said: "Yes. I have long thought about what to choose. In the world there are so many miracles." Then the teacher suggested that she read aloud what she had chosen to write. The girl hesitated for some time, then decided to read it.

"For me, the seven wonders of the world are the following:

1. To see, 2. To hear, 3. To move, 4. To feel, 5. To experience, 6. To laugh, 7. To love."

The class fell silent. (Source: "the world citations")

Dear sisters! Have we fully realized that the source of all good that we have ever received, seen, felt, heard, smelled, or tasted, is God? The Gospel says that "*Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above, coming down from the Father of lights.*" James 1:17. (Learn this key verse by heart before the end of the conference).

Apart of God there is no Good

When the Bible says that God is good, merciful (Nahum 1:7, Psalm 25:8, 85:5, 118:60), this means that God is the Source of all goodness in the universe. Outside of God there is nothing good. The Psalmist speaks of people living without God, *“there is no one who does good”* (Psalm 14:1-3). Do not be surprised if, in turning away from God and His commandments, a man does not find anything good. Outside of his God is no good there.

God is absolutely Good

Therefore, God cannot do anything that would not be good for you. God can not change, “God is unchangeable”. Therefore, He has never been more or less good to you than He is today. God is now as much loving to you, as at the time when Jesus Christ died for you on the cross to give you eternal life.

God puts into practice / fulfils His good intentions

Since God has all power and understanding, God can always implement His good and wise ideas for us. That is why Scripture says: *“all things God works for the good of those who love Him, who have been called according to His purpose”* (Romans 8:28). Understanding this truth will give us peace of mind and dispel fear.

Think of the goodness of God and look at your life more cheerfully. While it may be, that we do not understand all the ways of God, because our understanding is limited, we do not always understand what is really happening to us, yet we can have complete confidence that everything that God makes happen in our lives serves us benefit. *“The Lord will indeed give what is good”* (Psalm 85:12); *“As for God, His way is perfect”* (Psalm 18:30).

Discovery: The goodness of God manifested in the world

- a. What did God say after He created the world by the power of His Word? (Genesis 1:31)
- b. What truth is revealed in Psalm 33:5, despite the fall of the first people in Genesis 3?
- c. For whom is the goodness of God? (Matthew 5:43-45)
- d. As Christians can we be like God in His goodness? (Matthew 5:43-45)
- e. How can the commandment “Love your enemies” set us free, and benefit us?

Meditate on specific evidence of the goodness of God to all people every day.

- a. Genesis 8:21&22
- b. Psalm 36:7
- c. Psalm 145:9, 15&16
- d. Matthew 6:26-30
- e. Acts 14:17

TESTIMONY

Faithful is our God

'He is the Rock, His works are perfect, and all His ways are just. A faithful God who does no wrong, upright and just is He' (Deuteronomy 32: 4)

Dear sisters, I want to share my testimony about God's grace and constancy. Pro-



Svetlana Koshutina

bably, many of you are praying for your loved ones; I hope this testimony will be an encouragement to you. I got married in 1979, when I did not know God. My husband was a wonderful person, smart, kind, responsible and a lot of good words can be said about him, but he was an unbeliever.

Valerochka allowed me and the children to attend church, he encouraged us, and always lamented that he could not believe in God, he could not accept Jesus Christ as his personal Saviour. He said that he really wanted the Creator Himself to speak to him, and not through the Bible.

I came to accept Jesus as my Lord and Saviour, and as the years passed, I and my family, friends, sisters were all praying for him.

Twenty years passed since the first time I cried for his salvation, but the situation remained the same. Sometimes, I gave up in despair and fear: "When are You going to convert him?", I asked the Lord. I wanted so much for my husband to repent, be baptized and become part of the Church: this would bring joy and happiness into my life. These were my dreams and hopes, but the Lord judged differently.

One Sunday evening, Valerie came up to me and said, "God has revealed Himself to me and told me that I will not live until morning." For me, these words were unusual and surprising. As an unbeliever, being of sound mind and memory, how can he say that? I did not believe him. He went into his office and did not come out for a long time – at 4 AM, very early in the morning. I woke up because I felt his presence next to me. He asked me to pray with him; of course, I could not refuse such a

request. In the office I saw the Bible; it was open at Ecclesiastes – all highlighted with notes. We prayed, and he asked for forgiveness from the Creator, and that's what I prayed for him. Of course, his behaviour changed and I was happy, but I did not pay attention.

At 6:00 in the morning, he poured a cup of tea and told me very calmly and casually, "You think about going to work, but you will have to think about the funeral." At 6.20 AM I left the bedroom and saw him dead, standing next to him a mug with tea, still quite warm. That's how my husband came to know the Lord. I was scared, lonely, sad and happy. This feeling cannot be described – grief joined with pleasure in the knowledge that my husband is saved, that Jesus spoke to him and said, it was because of me my husband was given time for repentance and salvation, yet sad because God chose to take Valerie to Himself.

From this situation, I learned a few lessons:

1. God is faithful and does not leave His children, if we are consistent and constant in prayer. He answers prayers when considered necessary and in such a way that is best suited for a particular situation.
2. God is good; He not only saved my husband, but also gave me the opportunity to learn about it. What an endless horror it would have been to me, if that morning I had woken up and found my husband dead, if I did not know what the Creator had done for him.
3. God speaks to each in the language that is understandable to the particular individual.
4. We do not always get what we expect; yet we must learn to accept the Lord and His will, all with humility and joy.
5. You always have to listen better to people and show more confidence in them, as I believed my husband. I spent a whole night on my knees next to him, not interfering, but just being there and praying.

Matthew 7: 7 + 8 says, *"Ask and it shall be given to you; seek and you will find; knock and the door will be opened to you. For everyone who asks receives; he who seeks finds; and to him who knocks, the door will be opened."*

Dear sisters, do not give up, stand in the gap for your family and loved ones, all those the Lord has given you, those whom He commands us to pray for until the last moment, do not despair, for our Redeemer is faithful.

With love, Svetlana Koshutina, Vologda, Russia.

TRAVELLING



By Wies Dijkstra

I met her in the seminary in Moscow as one of the first ladies who came to attend the Conference in Moscow – **Svetlana from Beslan**.

As many of the attendees she came from far! She travelled 2 days and 2 nights by train, leaving her husband and 5 children at home. The youngest one is 13 years old. Her children often phoned her to be sure their mother was still going in the right direction because she had never travelled on her own before! Just sitting in the train for so many hours? Then you don't know Svetlana! She met a young couple and learned that the father of the girl was going to marry for the 5th !!! time after being divorced 4 times. Svetlana told the young people that the Bible teaches how to have a good relationship in a marriage and offered them her own Bible. They looked at each other and while taking the Book in their hands, the girl said: I promise you, I will give this to my Father. At least he will have something GOOD in his house.....

Svetlana works together with her husband, who is a pastor, in the church of Beslan. She has now been involved in women's ministry for 2 years. Since then, they have organized 13 conferences (150 attended), prayer meetings, and training for 5 months for women of different ages. The women do not come from the big towns, only from small towns.

Svetlana said: "I may not know a lot, but



God is using me among the women. We have 14 groups of women and we receive a lot of blessing from God. He cleans our hearts and He keeps us. We have God's fear in our lives. We need to tell the truth to each other and support each other: we have to obey God. Tradition makes things very strict (forgive me if I offend anyone). When you love, you give all."

And that is what Svetlana and her sisters and brothers in Beslan are doing: Showing the Love of Jesus and praying for everyone in a special way.

A month before a special service in church, they start to pray for the people they want to ask to attend that service. Neighbours, colleagues, friends and acquaintances and others are prayed for. Every day of that month they pray for each person personally. Then, a week before the service, they are telling those persons that they have prayed for them the whole month and invite them to come to the church the following week.

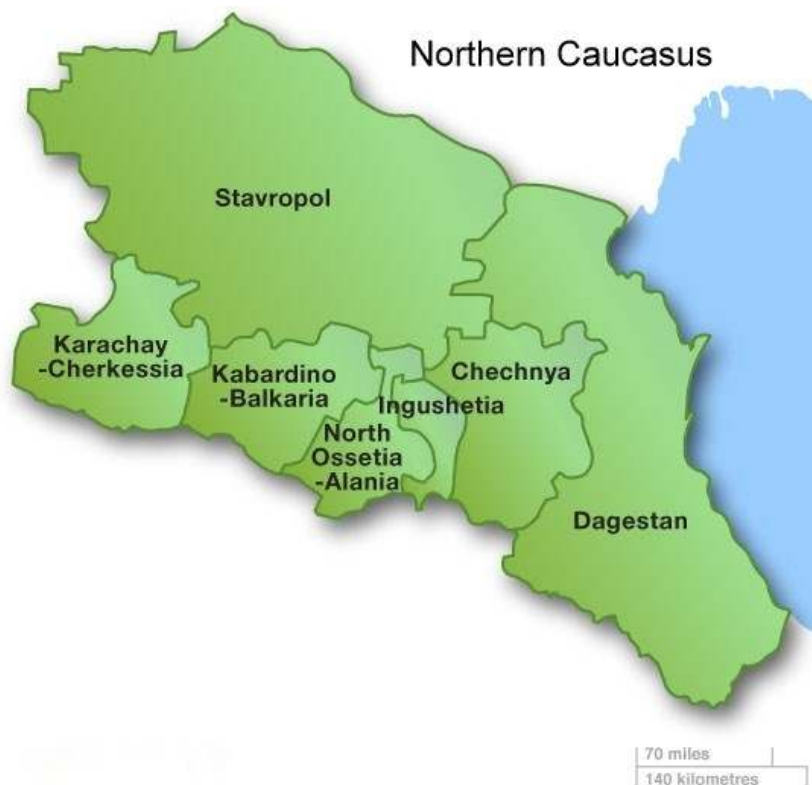
Most of the time people are willing to come, because they think it is extraordinary that people have prayed a whole month for them! The ministry is very blessed by this strategy: in such a service about 60 people give their heart to Jesus!

After the conference we hugged and said farewell and wished each other a safe trip home. Especially she, because although I came from far (the Netherlands) she had to travel far more hours by train than I by plane.

Just sitting there? I am sure she could tell me now another story which she experienced on her way back home. Svetlana from Beslan – what a Witness of the Lord!

Beslan is a city in the Republic of North Ossetia–Alania, Russia, in Northern Caucasus.

Beslan is the third largest town in the republic: Population 36.700.



MOLDOVA CONFERENCE

Moldova National Baptist Women's Conference - 20th anniversary



By Patsy Davis

On April 27-28, 2012 the women's ministry of the Republic of Moldova celebrated its 20th anniversary as the Women's Department of the Baptist Union of Moldova.

They came together under the theme "The King has come to serve! What will you do daughter of the King?"

The day before the conference the Women's Department National Committee met with the leadership of the Baptist Union. The Bishop, Ion Miron and other leaders were present. A year ago Sister Eugenia Podoleanu was elected the new president of the women's ministry, and during that year there were other new members added to the committee. This meeting was a time of unifying the committee, as well as getting to know the invited guests for the conference.

There were 400 women that participated in the two day conference. The conference included inspirational and challenging messages, as well as artistic presentations. There were 140 musicians that participated. There was a choir, orchestra, instrumental groups, and worship groups.



Bishop Ion Miron preached



EBWU Committee in First Baptist Church in Moscow





Moscow Conference - March 2012



Participants Moscow Conference - March 7-8 2012



Representatives from: Moldova, Turkmenistan,
Belarus, Kirgizstan, Armenia, Ukraine, Uzbekistan, Kazakhstan

08/03/2012



Livija Godina and Aniko Ujvari visiting Georgia - May 2012





about the perfect model servant, Jesus Christ. Patsy Davis, Executive Director, BWA Women's Department, spoke about whom did Jesus serve, and challenged the women to use Jesus as an example of servant hood and do likewise. Livija Godina, president of the European Baptist Women's Union, shared how love is the motivation of Jesus Christ and should be the same for everyone.

The Moldovan Baptist women have a special partnership with the Baptist women of Brazil. Sister Eugenia visited Brazil last year, and three sisters from Brazil participated in the conference. The three Baptist women from Brazil were Lucia Margarida Pereira de Brito, Executive Director of the Baptist Women's Missionary Union of Brazil; Elza Sant'Anna do Valle Andrade, National Coordinator of the Brazil Women's Department; and Maria Bernadete da Silva, Executive Director of CI-EM (mission school). Each one shared a different part of what it means to serve and how best to serve.





A highlight was Olga Mocan who shared the 20 year history using a PowerPoint presentation. Sister Olga was the one that God set a part to begin the women's ministry in Moldova 20 years ago. It was a very difficult time in the history of the country, but

Sister Olga followed God's will and began the women's ministry. The Baptist Union of Moldova led by Bishop Ion Miron recognized Sister Olga with a beautiful plaque and other special remembrances for leading the Baptist women of Moldova for 20 years.

Each day of the conference a table was set for tea in the afternoon. Different ones were called to the table for an interview. It was an interesting way to learn more about how we can better serve the Lord.

After the conference there were two regional meetings held in two different villages. The theme for the two meetings was "The Power of Hope". On April 19 in the village of Hancesti 130 women participated in a special worship service led by the





The big Choir

invited guest. On April 30 in the village of Cahul 250 women participated, as well as a choir and orchestra of 140 people. The Lord was honored and praised at both regional meetings.

See for more pictures in full color the Inner Pages!



Women praying in groups



By Aniko Ujvari, EBWU Secretary

NEBWIM

April is a wonderful month. Usually we celebrate Easter in this month, which is the greatest holiday for us Christians! We have a living God!

On the other hand in April we experience the voices, smells, tastes of the renewed nature! But what is more, in this year in April we had a great meeting with women ministering as pastors in Europe.

The network for women in ministry is organized by Lina Andronoviene from Prague at the IBTS. The participants mostly have a theological degree and they are serving in churches, in unions as pastors or social workers. This is a small group, and it was not the first meeting for them, and even the EBWU representation not the first time. They have their meeting every second year. The goal is to encourage each other in ministry, to share and to be searching for new vision in ministry together.

At this meeting the theme was all around “Weaving New Patterns”. In this topic the lecturer was Dr Karen Smith from Great Britain. She explained how the threads of our existence come together: past experiences, present engagements, longings and hopes, culture and community around us, and also relationships. The main question is how do we picture God in the weaving process?

Then we talked about such interesting questions like recycling or making everything new, led by Elisabet Ravelojaona from Sweden, or diversity by Rusudan Gotsiridze



from Georgia. Thinking about the topic symbolism of patterns led by Gyburg Beschnidt from Germany we practiced weaving and embroidering. Then we listened to a lecture about Female Leadership without any pressure of gender by Lone Moller-Hansen, Denmark. Mission Threads by Mary Vahermagi, Estonia; plus we had a time of movement in worship and many, many personal discussions.

The experience as we share and talk is great to learn from one another seeing each



The group of participants in NEBWIM

others' faith and trust in the Lord as we walk in the path of faith and calling.



EBWU Election Conference Hannover - Germany

It is the time to inform you and invite you all for the next big EBWU gathering. In every five year we hold our big conference with the election of the new officers. As many of you may remember, it was last time in the Netherlands. The new officers' election is prepared by the Nomination Committee – the chairperson is Ewa Gutkowska the previous EBWU president .

Please, contact her if you need more information according to

the election or about the nominations (Ewa Gutkowska ewagut2@wp.pl).

Now we would like to share with you the following invitation:

31 May-2, June 2013 – Hannover, Germany.

Please, put these days into your calendar and keep this date free for a very special and blessed meeting with women from all over Europe. So many great meetings, talking, singing, Bible message, new and old friendships are waiting you in this conference.

See you in Hannover! Please, check the web-site for more information. Soon you will find there the needed info.

The registration opens in November 2012.



VISIT TO GEORGIA

The Gift of Hospitality - by Aniko Ujvari

„Practice hospitality” (Rom 12:13) - News about people who are doing so.

It was the beginning of May. The weather was great, warm but not too hot. The president (Livija Godina) and the secretary (Aniko Ujvari) of EBWU arrived in Tbilisi to meet the Baptist Women's group in Georgia. What a wonderful privilege to meet the sisters and to travel for meetings like this one, visits or conferences. It was such a special blessing to come closer in the Spirit and to experience the unity in Christ in spite of our differences in culture, in style of worship, yet still know that the greatest gift in our life is our salvation in Jesus Christ, and the gift He gives as He builds us into one body, in His body, in the Church.

Georgia is a blessed, wonderful country. The nature, the fields, the lands, the gardens, the mountains in the countryside and villages are gorgeous. And above all, the spirit of the people. I may tell generally that the Georgians like to have guests, but what is more, the great hospitality the Baptist sisters and brothers give as they welcome foreigners is something to be experienced. They gave their time, and opened their hearts as they took us to visit churches, congregations mostly in East Georgia at this time. Of course we saw the difficulties in their lives, and we understood much better how to pray for them. They need prayers as they struggle to



reach the people for the Lord in different ways, as they experience the pressure of the main church in their country and the difficulties in the economy.

Please, my dear sisters, come and pray together with us for this wonderful country, for these wonderful sisters and brothers in Christ to be light and salt in Georgia!



Georgia is a sovereign state in the Caucasus region of Eurasia. Located at the cross-roads of Western Asia and Eastern Europe, it is bounded to the west by the Black Sea, to the north by Russia, to the south by Turkey and Armenia, and to the southeast by Azerbaijan. The capital of Georgia is Tbilisi. Georgia covers a territory of 69,700 km² and its population is almost 4.7 million. Georgia is a republic with the government elected through a representative democracy.

A large majority of Georgia's population practices Orthodox Christianity. The Georgian Orthodox Church is one of the world's most ancient Christian Churches, and claims apostolic foundation by Saint Andrew. In the first half of the 4th century Christianity was adopted as the state religion, following the missionary work of Saint Nino of Cappadocia.

Religious minorities of Georgia include Armenian Christians (3.9%), Muslims (9.9%), and Roman Catholics (0.8%).





Window to the World

*Greetings from participants in the Moscow
Conference March 2012*



Svetlana Swischova

Ukraine - Svetlana Swischova

This is a joyful day. We enjoy seeing the faces of each other. Ukraine is celebrating, this year, twenty years of Baptist Women's Ministry. We are created in God's image and He has a goal for each of our lives. The peace He gives us fills our hearts and enables us to continue following Him.

Sometimes we are afraid when we work alongside unbelievers, so we have several groups training people to work with unbelievers. Five people have recently come to faith and have been baptized.

One sister came to study the Bible; and as she studied, she learned. Her husband who was unemployed began to drink heavily. She yelled at him and he yelled

back at her. The situation was not good. Then a neighbour also started drinking, but as she studied the Bible she was able to have victory through Jesus! Psalm 129 was a help to her.

How many blessings God has for those who fear Him! God knows everything and He has prepared everything for us.



Armenia –

Alla Tsarukyan

Greetings in the love of Christ!

I am glad to be here. Together with my husband – who is a pastor, and our children – we serve the Lord. I thank God for them.

My desire is to live and please God.

I serve among the sisters in Yerevan. I am glad it is possible for this ministry to continue, but we need prayer for our ministry: please pray for us. Proverbs 31:10 – we try to be of noble character, serving in the local church among children and teenagers, and in the worship band.

Thanks to the brothers for their support, the ministry in Armenia is going forward step by step.



Right: Alla Tsarukyan from Armenia



There are 10 areas, 7 of which have women's ministry with a planned programme for the year.

We would like to have training for the women.

We have spent 40 days in prayer and I would ask you to ask your women to pray for us.



Turkmenistan –

Ludmilla

The work here started from prayer groups. First we had just one Bible group, but now there are 9 groups and lots of young sisters leading.

We try to combine the older and younger generations together, so that we work together and visit together and are both blessed.

Now we are planning a conference among the sisters on the ‘character of God’.

There is an increasing acceptance of one another without scarves.



Kalmykia –

Tatiana

It is very special for me to be here at this conference.

Kalmykia is a Buddhist republic. The President of Kalmykia is a Buddhist and he persecutes Christians. We work with the Buddhists, by organising camps for children and prayer groups.



Left: Tatiana with Elisabeth Vekas

The church in Volgograd help with the work when they can. In spite of pressure from evil spirits, the ministry is making progress.

When I became a Christian all my relatives thought I would be cursed because I believed in God. I was excluded from family occasions, but I continued to read the Bible and pray and learn.

Then I was invited to the wedding of a nephew. What should I say? God gave me wisdom and I wrote out verses from the Bible and gave them to the couple. My husband was very surprised. One year later the wife of a cousin invited me to another

wedding because of the strong words of blessing I had given to my nephew. I told them the words weren't mine, that it was God's Word that gave the blessing.

There is no pastor in the church where I live and occasionally I preach. Two other older women help me with this. There is a shortage of pastors in my village.



Eugenia Polodeanu



Moldova –

Eugenia Polodeanu

I am glad to be in Moscow; it is a privilege to be here and to be together. Praise God!

Economically our country is the poorest in Europe. We have lots of immigrants. A woman goes to Russia to work, she leaves an eleven year old child alone while she works. This is a sad situation in our country and happens often.

There are 400 Baptist churches with 20,000 members.

Many women fear God.

Olga Mocan is the Director of

Women's Ministry in Moldova, and she has made a path we can follow.

Psalm 16:11 enables us to go forward and apply God's Word in our lives, to train women in practical things in life as well as spiritual things.

There are nine regions with a sister in charge for each one. They help with the spiritual growth of each woman, seeking to spread the good news of God's kingdom.

Peace be with you!



*AWT and Arab Spring**By Ruba Abbassi*

The Arab world is going through a phase of monumental change and transition. Regimes have fallen; longstanding political systems and economic policies are being rethought or discarded. There is a call for democracy as it was fully intended, personal freedom, and social equality. Women have played a prominent and active role in this “Arab revolution” and in many cases were at the forefront of demonstrations and popular protests, even in the more conservative Arab countries.



“I resisted the French occupation. I resisted the dictatorship of Bin Ali. I will remain in the square, for our revolt has not yet achieved its goals.” This was stated by 77 year old Ms. Sadoni, who demonstrated in the cold of the Tunisian streets for two weeks, in front of the home of the Tunisian prime minister. She resisted.

In Tunisia and Egypt, women resist. In Libya and Yemen, women resist.

All over the Arab world women are resisting. They have resisted and protested hoping they would win freedom for themselves and democracy for their country. All of these countries face a long road ahead. Throughout the region, there are opportunities for women to be part of institutions that will shape legal frameworks for decades to come.

This brings us to ask, what are the actual benefits women have attained from these revolutions and from a spring she effectively participated in side by side with men? Is it possible that women’s rights, which are not yet achieved, will decline more during this era of revolution? Will this pull us backward rather than forward? What role is the Arab woman expected to play today and tomorrow? Will she find herself as a role model during the rebuilding of the States and civil society? Will she find reinforcement of citizenship and equal rights? Will the woman keep her pioneering role during post revolution or is she going to loose it because of a new style of leadership and rulers?

In the midst of the unknown future, women of the Arab Spring continue to call for real change and opportunities to shape the future. Throughout the year women’s activists have been voicing concerns about the continued lack of laws and practices to encourage women’s leadership, to address their social and local empowerment, and

to tackle the high rates of gender-based violence in private and public spaces.

As soon as women stop being afraid, they won't stand for their rights being violated and they won't remain silent. As we review the history of the Arab woman and how her simple right has been taken away from her or not even given to her, it gives us an urgency to support her movement towards her basic rights. Such as, her rights against virginity tests before marriage, fighting violence against women and children, freedom of choice, freedom of religion and freedom of speech.

What is the role and view of AWT during the Arab Woman Spring? The opportunity is wide open to reach these women through technology such as radio and internet that break through all borders. We want to communicate to her that she has the right to choose her religion, the right to choose her husband; she has a right to live with full dignity, and the right to be equipped and skilled.



During 2011, AWT followed women in the Arab World who were in the news and noticed that her situation is still under attack particularly with the threat of the Islamist parties to take over the reins of power in these unstable governments. The responsibility is constantly increasing for us to be fully ready and equipped to reach these women.

AWT is looking forward to a promising future and for a real spiritual and social transformation of Arab women. We are taking responsibility to carry the voice of women socially, spiritually and economically. We cannot take one part and neglect the other. It's a long journey for women to be fully empowered and living in full equality inside and outside the church. We believe that the Arab Spring is giving Arab women the chance to start blooming and spreading the aroma of a better future.

The Arab world is not to be confused with the Middle East; Iran and Turkey are not Arab countries. The Arab world consists of 22 Arabic-speaking countries in the Middle East and North Africa whose primary language is Arabic, although not all the people are Semitic Arabs.

In Memoriam: Else M. Øhrn

(1922-2012)

It was with great sadness that we received the message that Else M. Øhrn passed away on April 1. 2012, at the age of 90. Sadness because we miss a devoted worker among the women in Norway and Europe. But we also feel joy because we know that now she is with the Lord.



Else was born and grew up in Bergen. She trained as a children's nurse. Marrying Jacob Øhrn she married into a strong Baptist family. Her father-in-law was Arnold T. Øhrn who served as BWA General Secretary from 1948.

From 1973 she served as Treasurer of the Women's Union of Norway. She travelled a lot in our long country, keeping up the contact with the women, encouraging them to serve the Lord. During this period she also visited Congo, where our Women's Union is very much involved.

1977-1982 she served as President of EBWU. She was devoted in her ministry as President, and she had a heart for the women of Europe.

Else had a genuine interest in other people's lives, and she had the gift of listening to people. Her personality was gentle and inclusive.

May the Lord comfort her husband Jacob and the family. We miss Else, and we give thanks to the Lord for our gifted sister.

Margun Warem

PRAYER REQUESTS



Prayers

Pray for the financial situation of IBTS in Prague. The EBF has to take difficult decisions about moving from Prague.

The Situation in the Middle East is explosive. Please pray for Christians in those countries. Pray

for the team of Jordan Arab Women Today who are reaching many women through the radio; women in the Muslim world for whom it is dangerous to be a Christian. Give thanks that God reveals Himself in different ways: many times through dreams.

Give thanks for the wonderful celebration of the 20th anniversary of Moldova and pray for the hard work the leaders of the Baptist Women are doing there.

Give thanks for the Moscow leaders who organized the Conference in March, giving the EBWU committee the opportunity to take part and attend the Conference.

Pray for all the Russian and CIS countries' women who gave their testimony, experiencing so many difficulties in their lives.

Pray for the Nomination Committee as they are working hard in preparing the election of new officers for the EBWU committee in Hannover 2013.

Personal Prayers

Indranie Premawardhana, (Sri Lanka) has been in hospital with heart problems. felindra@sltnet.lk

Robert Davis, brother of Patsy Davis, who has serious health problems.

Blooming Night (Asia) Returned from peace talks in Myanmar. She shared that our prayers for her is what has sustained her and helped her through some of the more difficult situations.

Pray for all the hard work of Luran Bethell: <http://www.stophetraffik.org/>

Pray for the EBWU Committee members, who are serving the Lord and EBWU.

Pray for the husband and family of Else Øhrn, former President of EBWU 1977-1982, who passed away on April 1. 2012, at the age of 90. Condolences to Jacob R. Øhrn, Gartnerlokka 4, 3913 Porsgrunn, Norway.

Pray for the family of Eunice Henlin (Caribbean) who died in an accident in March

PRAYER REQUESTS

2012, on her way to the the Women's Federation meeting. Condolences to jypitter@hotmail.com

Pray for the family of Veetin Ranasingha. (first testimony in the 2012 DOP program) She did live to see the program, but died on February 20th.

Pray for new leaders of **Kristen och Kvinna** Sweden:

Marie Rosén , president: marie.rosen@hotmail.com

Anna Kettner, general secretary: kettnerskan@gmail.com

Give thanks to the former leader Aina Rasmussen (since 2002) and her team for their hard work facing the changes in the Women's Work and building up a new organization.

Events

Conferences **France 2012** and **Hannover 2013**: Pray for the teams in France and Germany, that all will be well arranged and that enough women will help. Pray also that God's Spirit will be over all activities and that the Kingdom of God will be apparent.

30 August - 2 September 2012 Scandinavian Women's conference in Langesund Bad, Norway.

March 1, 2013 deadline EBF songbook project. We are seeking contributions for a collection of songs and hymns born in different European Baptist communities and are calling for the help of those in our Unions interested in such an exchange of musical gifts. The songs in the collection would appear both in the original language and in English, so that they can be further translated into other languages. To submit or for further guidelines or information please contact:

Liena Androviene lina@ibts.eu

or Tony Peck, IBTS, *Nad Habrovkou 3, 16400 Prague, Czech Republic.*



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DE AMÉRICA LATINA
(UFBAL) www.ufbal.com**



DAY OF PRAYER 2012



Through the Fruit of the Spirit JOY

On November 5, 2012 Baptist women from around the world will come together to study God's word, pray and give so that our world will be impacted for Christ. The focus this year is on the fruit of the Spirit, JOY.

There are many passages in the Bible that give us insight into the word joy. A few will be mentioned. The Magi rejoiced exceedingly with great joy when they saw the star that indicated where Jesus was (Matthew 2:10). We learn in Romans 14:17 that the kingdom of God is righteousness, peace and joy in the Holy Spirit. The second fruit of the Spirit is joy found in Galatians 5:22.

EBWU subjects from the DOP - Prayer Guide:

1. Give thanks to the Lord for His work in Europe in spite of the pressure of the secularization of Christians.
2. Pray for the strength of believers to be encouraged for testifying their faith in the living God.
3. Pray that God will bless the women in Europe to fill their calling for sharing their love in their family, toward their children, and being the "heart" in their homes and society.
4. Pray that we will see clearly what it means to act like the "Good Samaritan", and be the salt and light for the world.
5. Pray for the Christian marriages that the couples may be faithful to one another and to the Lord.
6. Pray for the next generation that they may recognize the true values and joys of life.



JOY... comes from

JESUS
OTHERS
YOURSELF

THE LATEST NEWS

EBWU Regional Conference - Lyon, France

Our next regional Conference is due to take place in Lyon, France from 15-18th November 2012.

This event will take place in
Domaine Lyon Saint Joseph
38 allée Jean Paul II
69 110 Sainte Foy lès Lyon

<http://www.domaine-lyon-saint-joseph.fr>

and is primarily focussing on southern Europe for the neighbouring countries surrounding France, although anyone wishing to join us will be made welcome.

The topic for the Conference is *'Train yourself to be godly'* from 1 Timothy 4:7b.

Included in the programme will be teaching and discussion on the theme, and a short sight-seeing trip with a visit to the local Baptist Church. The opening will be on Thursday evening and will finish following Sunday lunch.

Registration can be done on the EBWU web page from 25th August.

At present the cost has not been fixed but those planning to attend should note that there is **no** scholarship for this Conference.



We have a website!

Welcome to
the homepage

www.ebwu.org



In Step
with the
Spirit



European Baptist Women's Union

Executive Committee Members
and positions



Livija Godina, President
Riga, Latvia
livija.latvia@gmail.com



Margun Warem, Vice President
Algard, Norway
mawar@online.no



Aniko Ujvari, Secretary
Budapest, Hungary
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Elisabeth Vekas, Treasurer
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Wies Dijkstra, member
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Susana Mefford, member
Denia (Alicante), Spain
susimefford@hotmail.com





Jordan - EBF Officers at Baptism Place



Ruba Abbassi (left) with AWT Team



Presentation by Syrian brothers



BWA Women's Department Executive Committee in Chile - July 2012



President Raquel Contreras and director Patsy Davis with Chilean women