

Dear Friends,

Most children are eagerly awaited by their parents. Most parents rejoice at the birth of their little miracles. No sacrifice is too great and no pain too severe. Parents can't wait for their little one to arrive. So, it is shocking to us when we read stories like this one!

"A new born girl who was wrapped in a paper bag and dumped in a garbage can is under close observation at a hospital. The child is doing well. 'She's a really beautiful, healthy baby,' a hospital spokesman said Wednesday. Police said the infant was discovered after trash men emptied the garbage can into the back end of their dump truck and saw something move in the debris. Authorities are looking for the mother."

We have a duty as Christians and it is a privilege and opportunity to welcome all children into our churches, homes and lives. Jesus cared for them a great deal. In fact, in a time when children were not thought of much he actually made a point of talking about them, to them and even blessing them.

So when we read stories from Sweden we rejoice with God about all that is happening to involve children, love children and show children we care.

Blessings,

Clair



TEC Children's Ministries News

NEWS FROM THE SWEDISH UNION OF CHURCHES CONFERENCE

Karolina Poland, Pathfinders, Children's, Family and Youth Ministries associate director

UNION MEETINGS

During the summer of 2017 there was a union meeting in Sweden. The Youth department has gone from four people working 325% to two people working 175%. We are praying that God will find at least one more person to join our team. Please join us in prayer. Anna Tegebo is the new Youth

Director and Karolina Poland was once again chosen as Children's and Family Ministry leader. This is

Karolina's 6th year in the department, which she really enjoys.



FAMILY CAMP

This is the highlight of the year for many families. A camp that quickly fills up. This year Karen Holford was the speaker here in Sweden. We had Crossfit as theme. Do you fit with the cross? The focus was on training and this is a theme that was greatly enjoyed. Every morning we started out with different exercises and in the afternoons the families were active.

HALLOW-TWEEN

During fall break children between 8-12 years-old meet at a church to enjoy time together. They prepare a sermon that they then preach on Sabbath. Sabbath afternoon there is no trick or treating, just treating. We walk around and "do good" to others, just like Jesus did. This year the children went to a playground and shared "fika", cinnamon rolls and hot chocolate.



MEDIEVAL TIMES CHILDREN'S CAMP

For the children this year the camp was set in Medieval times. The children came ready to be Knights, Princesses/Princes, Servants, Craftsmen and Outlaws. The morning meetings we tried to figure out if Robin Hood was anything like Jesus. It was wonderful to see the Tween children lead in praise songs and drama.

ROBIN HOOD PATHFINDER CAMP

What a wonderful camp! Based on the game Sheriff of Nottingham we got to follow Robin Hood.

Thankfully Brother Tuck was there to explain the great story and help the children understand why it is good to be a Christian.



TEC Children's Ministries News

MATERIAL

-In Sweden Advent Calendars are very popular. This year the Swedish Union produced an Advent Calendar for the families. It was the little angel, Ängla, who wanted to save the world. We followed God's great plan through the Old Testament. A teenage girl drew the pictures (which were colouring pages) and every day the family could open a calendar on the net, thanks to the media department.

-The Nordic Countries have been working on a discipleship path, and in that path we would like some new material. The first one produced is the Smart Journal. This is a prayer journal the size of a smartphone, where you can write likes, snap chats and do blog entries.

-Cut and Play with the Bible Stories. This is a book without words. It has different settings like the desert, a lake and the palace. There are people to cut out to help you tell the story. This can be used in Sabbath school or at home.

-Creative Family Worship. Once again the families could subscribe to family worships. Four times a year the department sends out 5 worships with craft material to every family who wants to subscribe.

-This year the Swedish Union really did something extraordinary. All the pastors went to Israel to spend 9 days following in Jesus steps. Bääärnard the sheep (some pastors think he is a goat) followed along. At every stop pastor David Cederström filmed short films with Bääärnard where he told the story of what happened at that particular place. He even had a story about the dead sea. Since all the pastors were there Bääärnard also took the opportunity to ask different pastors about the Adventist believes. The pastors did a wonderful job and I believe that the children will enjoy the short films when they will be aired.



CHILDREN'S MINISTRIES LEADERS TRAINING

The Children Ministry leaders in the protestant churches are working together to reach the Swedish children with the message of Jesus. Karolina is a part of this leadership team. This year they held their third big leadership conference in Stockholm. The key note speaker was Keith White. There were over 1200 children's leaders present and about 10 Adventist.

FAMILY SABBATH

This is a Sabbath for the whole family. The Sabbath school is very hands on. Then there is an all age service. After a tasty meal we go out and do things for others in the neighbourhood. Blowing bubbles is very popular. We end the day with family worship and supper. The first Family Sabbath was held in the spring of 2017 and it was so popular that we held a second one in another church in the fall of 2017.



TED Children's Ministries News

CLAIR'S VISIT IN ESTONIA

On 17 June 2017, the active members of Tartu Adventist church (Estonia) came together to learn about Messy Church. The concept of Messy Church was actually born in Church of England, when a group at St. Wilfrid's in Cowplain were frustrated because they did not seem to reach children with God's story (<https://www.messychurch.org.uk/story-so-far>). So, they tried to create something interesting and appealing to all ages, and as the results showed, they succeeded. The idea spread quickly across the denominational borders. Now, many Seventh-day Adventist churches have embraced the idea of Messy Church and organise it successfully in many countries. In the Baltic Union, there are Messy Churches already in Latvia and Lithuania. The special worship events are done mostly once a month. All church members can be included in preparations, during the event, and after, helping to put things back in order. It is something that church can do for the community. Clair Sanches (Children's and Women's Ministries' Director for the TED), who conducted the Messy Church training in Tartu, talked about how people had accepted Jesus thanks to Messy Church, how they had discovered the place and faith community they wanted to belong, and how their lives had changed for the better as a result.

The training was very much liked by Tartu church members. Pastor Hele Kulp believes that Messy Church is a good possibility to improve the outreach of the church. At the same time, she sees it as an opportunity for church members to experience what it really means to communicate with people from outside, what means to follow the instruction of Jesus to go and make disciples. She recognises that a lot of prayers are needed, as well as careful planning, and responsible and dedicated work. But she is hopeful about the future, and believes that God can and will help. The Children's Ministries' leader of the church Annika Kaljuve wants to start serious planning already in September. Young church member Theodora Nõmmik expresses her willingness to help and believes that if we make it interesting for our own children, they will invite also their friends.

-Alla Nõmmik, Children's, Women's and Health Ministries director, Baltic Union Conference

