

New quinquennium new beginnings

In each newsletter we focus on one of our unions. We have asked all union leaders to participate and in this issue we are presenting the Norwegian Union Conference. We hope this will help you with new ideas and motivate you. We look forward to each issue.

Gry Beate has a BA in Theology from Newbold College and a Post Graduate Degree in Counselling from University of East Anglia. She is in the process of studying for an MA in Leadership while working. She has previously worked as a local church pastor, both in England and in Norway.



She has been married to Victor Marley for 21 years. He is the Youth Director in the Norwegian Union.

They have three children; Miriam (17 yrs), Mattias (15 yrs) and Miranda (13 yrs). Gry Beate has been doing children's ministries work for 11 years.



The biggest challenge in her work is lack of time. She has many ideas she would love to do, but she has to restrain herself because there is simply not enough time for everything.

The biggest joy for her is getting to know the children in the Norwegian union and to share Jesus with them. She also loves the ability to be creative in her work. That she has the opportunity to think innovatively and to involve, develop and work with teenagers and young adults. The times she gets to baptise or marry couples also means a lot. The fact that she can be part of individual lives even though she works at union level.

Her favourite Bible verse is from Romans 8:38-39: "For I am convinced that neither death nor life, neither angels nor demons, neither the present nor the future, nor any powers, neither height nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God that is in Christ Jesus our Lord."

TED Children's Ministries News

Training weekend

Creating synergy and teamwork between departments can really strengthen ministry in local churches. So, every second year we run a combined leader training weekend for local leaders who are involved in Children's Sabbath School, Pathfinders, and Youth ministries. We encourage local churches to send a small team from their church so that they during the weekend can meet together and talk about how they can support each other and implement what they learnt when they come back home. There are separate workshops for the different groups and some joint main sessions.

The focus of the weekend is on inspiring volunteer leaders of the local churches, thanking them for the work they do, creating an environment where they learn new things and receive resources that they can use in their ministry. There is, of course, time for worship, reflection, and fellowship through enjoying lovely food and time together.

This year we had Clair Sanches, Karen Holford, Alastair Agbaje and Peter Bo Bohsen come and contribute from the TED as well as Ian Jones from OneWay UK and Japhet De Olivera from USA. We also had several local people contribute and from the feedback we could tell that people left feeling blessed and ready to carry on with their work in the local churches.



TED Children's Ministries News

Training weekend pictures



TED Children's Ministries News

Summer Camp

Imagine a camp of over 700 people, surrounded by beautiful Norwegian mountains and crystal clear water and which was a camp for families, children, teens, young adults and a camp meeting all rolled into one amazing event. Well, that is our Summer Camp.

It was previously known as "Family camp", but the name was changed because as the young people grew up and moved out from their families they still wanted to attend the camp even though they felt they couldn't place themselves in the "family" category yet. The same was the case for several single people in the church, so in order to become more inclusive the name was changed.

The key to the camp's success is that the programmes for children and teens are the priority. It is a basic truth that if the children are happy, the parents are usually happy. Several extremely clever people contribute to the children having an amazing week. In the children's programme there is a person who goes around to the different age groups telling the Bible story, there are engaging musicians going around practicing songs and there is chemistry teachers doing experiments, as well as prayer activities, Bible verse cards and "marked stalls" where the children can choose activities.



TED Children's Ministries News

The majority of the staff in the teen programme are young adults who are brilliant role models for the teenagers. They involved them in activities and time of worship. In addition to the children's groups and teen groups there's also a group for the young adults and the adults.

This focus on the children and teens when planning the programme has resulted in children and teenagers asking their parents to come to camp with them and the size of the camp has grown from around 300 participants to nearly 700. It's a highlight of the year for many and several have started inviting along friends and family for a week together at our Summer Camp.



TED Children's Ministries News

Super Sabbath

A Day of Fellowship should be highlights for everyone, also children. So, we use the opportunities that our 3 days of fellowship present us with, by creating, what we call, a Super Sabbath for the children. They start the day with Sabbath School, move on to have children's church – a combination of singing, stories, illustrations, prayer activities and interactive activities. In the afternoon, the children can look forward to an activity trail, which they go through in teams. Finally, we have a short "Good night programme", which sums up the day and where they each receive a small "souvenir" to take home.



TED Children's Ministries News

This year we travelled in time using a time machine, and the kids got to know different Bible characters through the day. It is a day where the children get to meet others from around the conference and experience a programme that is especially targeted towards them.



TED Children's Ministries News

Messy Church

This autumn is the first time we have tried to run Messy Church in Norway. The church in the town of Lillehammer, had their first Messy Church event in September. They had managed to involve the majority of the church in the endeavour, both young and old contributed. We have a church school in Lillehammer so invitations to the day were handed out to all the students as well as to everybody at church.

On the day there were a few new families from the school who came along, there was also grandparents at the church who were able to bring their grandchildren along for the first time and families who are sporadic in their attendance came along as well. The church was buzzing with activity, laughter and fun. The worship time was just the right length and the closing activity with a prayer activity worked really well. The lovely food at the end was the icing on the cake.

The church as a whole was very happy with the day, and they had another Messy Church again in November, which also went very well. This is now inspiring other churches in Norway to consider starting Messy Church.

