

New quinquennium new beginnings

We are starting a new series in which each newsletter we will focus on one of our unions. We have asked all of you to participate and in this issue we are presenting the Hungarian Union Conference. We hope this will help you with new ideas and motivate you. We look forward to each issue.

Dóra Mihalec has graduated from college as a primary school teacher and has served as a Sabbath school teacher in the church for years.

She has been married to Dr. Gábor Mihalec for 21 years. Gábor, besides being the pastor of two churches, is also the director of the Hungarian Union's Family ministries department.

Dóra has always regarded working with children her greatest passion, and two years ago she was asked to be the director of Children's ministries of the Hungarian Union.

They have two children. Their son, Viktor is 19, and has finished high school this spring. He is currently studying English at Newbold College. He would like to continue his studies in Hungary from next year as a programmer at the University of Szeged.

Their daughter, Boglárka has just turned 14. She is in the last year of primary school. She is going to apply for high school in January and she wants to be a nursery school teacher. Boglárka loves horses.

Dóra loves working with children, serving them she can relive here childhood a bit every time.

There are 104 churches and 1328 children altogether in the Hungarian Union.

Her favourite Bible verse is from Isaiah 40,31

"Those who hope in the Lord will renew their strength. They will soar on wings like eagles; they will run and not grow weary, they will walk and not be faint."



Summer Bible Camp 2016

There are several decades of tradition behind the national Summer Bible Camp in Hungary. Students have a two and a half month summer vacation in our country, and the camp is organised for the children between 6 and 14 years during this period in Balatonlelle, on the shore of lake Balaton.

This year the camp's gates were open between the end of June and the beginning of July. This time we have put Bible stories in a frame featuring a native Indian tribe. Each morning the teachers played a scene in which the "Indians" — and of course the children — could learn important Bible messages. The main topic of the week was: Jesus has died for you on the cross, accept his sacrifice he made for you.



Summer Bible Camp 2016

After the scenes, we have separated the children into groups of the same age and have talked over what we have seen and heard, and tried to deepen their understanding with games and handicraft activities. The afternoon was a time of swimming and games. We have prepared bows, there was a native Indian test of strength and the 100 children of the camp could prove their knowledge in following traces. We have made the week unforgettable with a living board game, tours and a boat trip for the children. The specialty of the Sabbath day was that the sermon was completely held by the children. They were singing, reciting poems, playing on different musical instruments and also they were the ones giving the sermon. Prior to the Sabbath we have held groups for the self-appointed preachers on how to write and give a sermon.



Training for children Sabbath school teachers and parents

We are putting lots of emphasis on training our churches' children Sabbath school teachers and parents to broaden their knowledge during single, or several days long training programmes, thus contributing in making the children's service of even higher standard.

On our latest single day training in February we have learned about tale-therapy and what tales and fables have to do in preventing different harmful passions, such as drugs, alcohol and smoking. The staff of the police department was our guest this time. About 40 Sabbath school teachers and parents took part in the training.

In July we have had Linda Mei Koh, the director of the General Conference Children's Ministries and Clair Sanches-Schutte from the Division. The some 40 listeners (teachers and parents) have participated in superb and practical lectures on what a child-friendly church is like. During the three days of the training we have had topics like: How to involve our children in church service? How to keep our children in the church? How to transfer out spiritual values to our children?



Training for children Sabbath school teachers and parents

We have given the opportunity to the participants to demonstrate the work currently going on in their churches, thus giving further ideas to the others, while they have had the room to tell their hardships and struggles as well.

Some of the testimonies the participants gave: "I have received so much strength and motivation that I can transfer to others so great changes can come to us as well." "I am thankful to God that I could be present at this training where we have heard from great people about the loads of possibilities for our children's spiritual growth and development."





Messy Churches

In Hungary, two of the churches - Békéscsaba and Székesfehérvár - have started the Messy Church programme with the help of the Division. The brothers and sisters are working enthusiastically and with great creativity on the occasions. Last time for example the church in Békéscsaba was handing out invitation cards for the Messy Church day which the children could exchange for ice cream at the registration.

During the summer, two more churches — Budapest-Terézváros and Gyula — have also had training to start the programme. Despite that the training was in the summer and most of the church members are usually away from home at that time, and it was on a weekday, there were a decent amount of people present the whole programme.



Kid-Gödöllő

KID is an acronym. It means Kid's in discipleship. Our first session began in October 2013. We wanted to help our children to become disciples of Christ, so that they would choose him despite the temptations of the world. We think God chose the parents for this task, so we began our sessions with them. After that we focused on our teenagers. We had wonderful experiences in our church.

It was wonderful to see the youth reading from the Bible, families praying, and that we could show God's love to our children through creative tasks. It was good to experience this with our families and brothers in faith. We were happy to share our faith with our children.

Our church was persistent in these sessions for three years, which is a good example for our children. Our community grew stronger in these years and our youth became more involved in worship, and discovered that they are capable of much more than they were aware of. Families and children came closer to God.

The goal of these sessions was not to baptise our children as soon as possible. We believe that they can be disciples without this, by showing their devotion to God in their families, church and school. Despite this, three of our children wish to be baptised in our church.

All three of them are part of the „open window” age group (12-14). This window is the most accessible at the age of 13.

We hope that more of our youth will follow their example, because the KID programme is not a goal, but a tool through which we can help our children become disciples in Christ.



Mosoly - "Smile"

Our children's magazine, "Mosoly" is also maturing, it has served the children of our church for more than twenty years now. We try to edit the magazine in a 21st century fashion, dealing with topics and questions that interest children while keeping a Christian foundation. We know that children today are not really fond of reading, so we are showing them the Christian values through attractive, popular topics — such as Star Wars, the war between good and evil. We are making the articles and the writings more interesting with tasks, crosswords and colouring pictures. We are writing about the created world of God, the animals, we are presenting experiments and are not forgetting about the health message either.

