

# WOMEN'S MINISTRIES



NEWSLETTER

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# Women's Ministry is Alive & Well!

## Ohrid Church, Macedonia

The Covid-19 pandemic has not stopped Women's Ministries in Macedonia from staying connected despite the crisis and lockdown being experienced here and worldwide. We have depended more on our Mobiles, Viber, WhatsApp, Messenger, Telegram, SMS messages, E-mails, YouTube, and Zoom to give encouragement, support and help during these uncertain times.

Local Women Ministries across Macedonia responded to the crisis by collecting, packing, and distributing food parcels for the senior church members and neighbours. In addition they started purchasing and delivering medicines and everyday necessities for individuals over 65.

Online meetings, conferences, prayer meetings have been initiated with a special digital gathering in April where the Women's Ministries Director was a guest speaker at the prayer meeting for the entire Macedonian congregation.

Thinking ahead the SEEUC Woman's department has been proactive in preparing resources for during and post Covid-19

- Resources such as Girls for Christ manual 1 was prepared and put on the Union website in the Woman's Ministries department file.

- Women in the Bible 2 colouring book was made ready for publishing and printing is in the process.
- Women of Virtue manual from the British Union Conference translation is near completion.

The first summer retreat 'Girls for Christ' is scheduled for July 20-26 2020 in Ohrid, Macedonia.

Unfortunately Woman's Ministries 'Woman After God's Heart' retreat was scheduled for May 1-3, 2020 in Ohrid, Macedonia but is now cancelled along with those planned for May 22-24, 2020 in Wiena, Austria, for the Yugoslavian diaspora Woman's ministries.

All Trans European Division articles, encouraging words, Power Points and love notes have all been translated and regularly sent to all Woman's Ministries leaders and pastoral wives to further share with the women in the church and local communities.



# Retreat at Home

BY CLAIR SANCHES-SCHUTTE

Usually we go away for a spiritual retreat. We get together with a group of women and we have a weekend of encouragement, rest, and meeting God. We go home rejuvenated and ready for what the world may throw at us. But what do you do when going outside is no longer possible? When the country you live in is on lock down. The very time you need to connect with others and especially with God you cannot go anywhere. Well do not despair. You can have a retreat without leaving your front door.

What a spiritual retreat does is gives us a place without distraction and a place where we can be spiritually refreshed. It helps us to enter God's presence and that my friends can be done from your own home. Now I hear a lot of you saying but where can I be alone with God in my house? A place where I will not be interrupted.

After having seen the movie War Room I decided that this was not a problem anymore. In the movie a lady had a room for praying and that room was her closet. The only place she could get peace and quiet and spend time with God. It is not about the space it is about connecting with God and letting him connect with you. Taking time, listening, reading, discovering the wonderful promises God has for us.

Here are some things you need to think about and prepare. A good plan is very important because without it, it will not happen.

1. Find a time and place to hold your retreat. How long do you want your retreat to be? Where does this retreat fit into your daily schedule? For a lot of us when we went on a retreat it could be a full day or a weekend. But being at home means you can fit it into your schedule. It is not about the number of hours, it is about quality time with God. Try to find a space where you will not be interrupted all the time.

2. Getting ready for your retreat. One of the things that is so much fun at a retreat that is organised is you come into the space and there are all sorts of goodies and the room usually looks very inviting. You can still do this at home as well. Just a few candles can make the space feel inviting. Having a vase of flowers, perhaps picked from your own garden, can really set a scene. Have drinks, snacks, and anything else you might need at hand, so you do not need to keep leaving your space. Have a notebook, pen, and paper handy for those moments when you feel God speaking to you and want to jot something down. My advice to you is have everything you need in a basket or bag ready to go. Then there will be no need to look everywhere for supplies. Also having two different translations of the Bible is also advisable. Another thing which can help set the mood is music. If you love music in the background or you like to listen to the words of a song have that ready to go as well.

3. Remember to plan well and think about why you need this retreat. This could be different things for each of us. Are you struggling with anything in your life right now? Are you hurt? Discouraged? Need a boost? Do some research into what you need. There is so much out there on the web. Maybe as part of your retreat you will take time to watch a sermon online or any other device you may have. For some of us it might be doing something creative. Painting! Crafting!

Remember it is your retreat. Only you know what you need and how you best connect with God. One thing to remember is that you need to minimize distraction. This means turning your phone off. Turn your computer off. If you have kids at home let them know this is your time with God. Have some special activities ready for them to do. Believe me kids will understand and respect this time with God. You are setting a wonderful example for them. When you spend time with God it is not lost time. Believe me friends this time is time well spent. I pray that each of you will find time to connect with God and that his Holy Spirit will nourish and fulfil you. On Pinterest recently I saw this quote: "Come apart, before you Come apart". It is a play on words but it is oh so true.

Blessings to each of you. May God's presence fill your life.



"He makes me lie down in green pastures, he leads me beside quiet waters, he restores my soul."

Psalm 23:2-3

# CHOOSE JOY!

Poem by DOZIE WOGU

I have Joy  
Joy in pain  
Joy in Sadness  
Joy in discouragement

I have Joy  
The Joy that comes from within  
Inmate with that of Christ  
Which eludes Him  
When he finds a lost soul

I have Joy  
An aftermath of obedience  
Which is seen in salvation  
Joy in Gods law

I have Joy  
Joy in tribulations  
Joy through tough times  
Joy in various trials

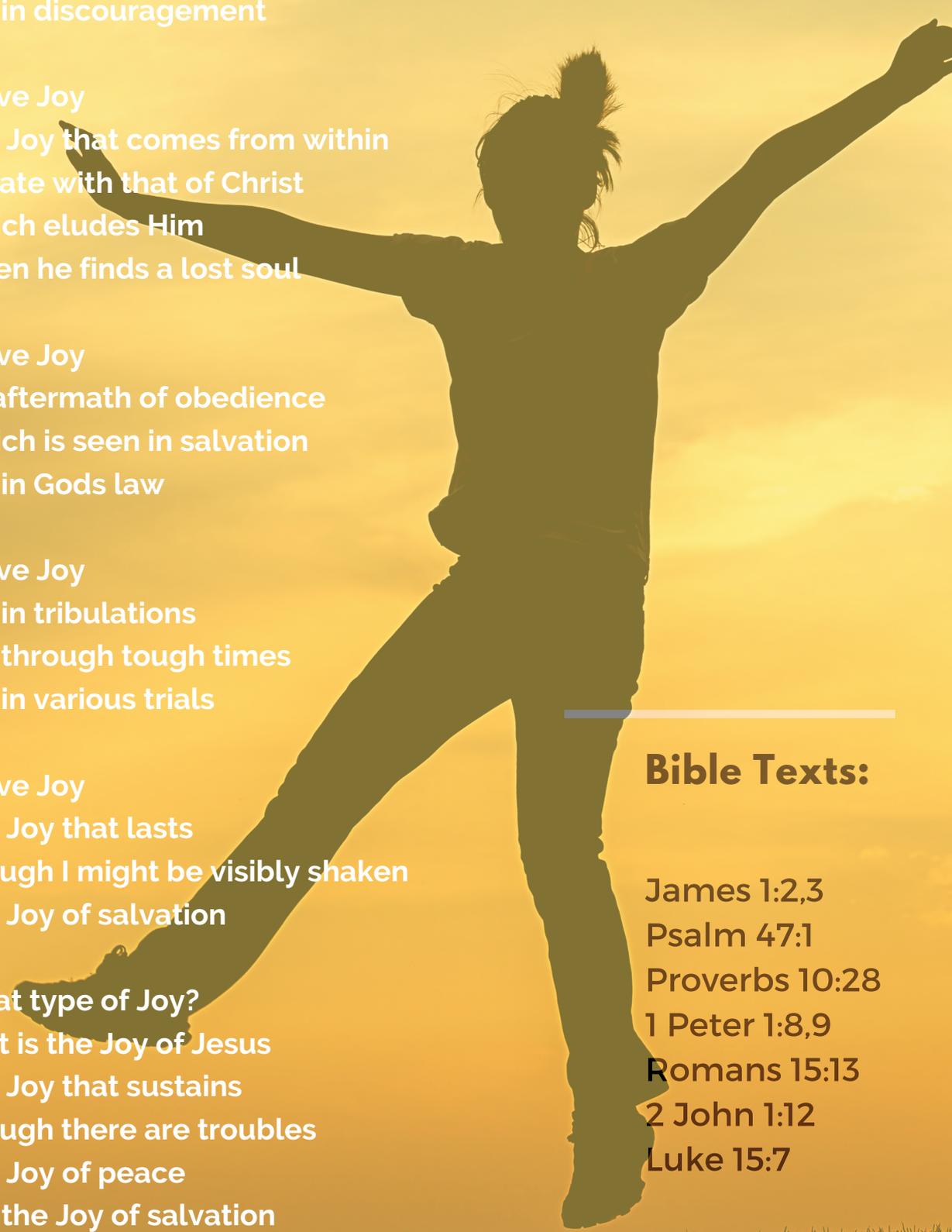
I have Joy  
The Joy that lasts  
Though I might be visibly shaken  
The Joy of salvation

What type of Joy?  
That is the Joy of Jesus  
The Joy that sustains  
Though there are troubles  
The Joy of peace  
It is the Joy of salvation

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## Bible Texts:

James 1:2,3  
Psalm 47:1  
Proverbs 10:28  
1 Peter 1:8,9  
Romans 15:13  
2 John 1:12  
Luke 15:7



# SUPPORTING WOMEN IN ISOLATION

ARTICLE BY CLAIR SANCHES - SCHUTTE - WOMAN'S MINISTRIES DIRECTOR, TED



It is hard to believe how in such a short time life has changed. Perhaps forever! We have all had to adapt. Social distancing, words we did not hear much before, have now become a part of everyday language. Only a few weeks ago we were still going to church, still socialising with our friends, still, well just going about our business. But now my weeks are filled with zoom meetings, writing articles, sending out information and generally being behind my computer a lot.

My trips have been cancelled and I have had to see my work differently for now. I miss physical and social contact. I know many do. I have heard that depression is on the rise and abuse is on the rise. This week on the news I saw a young man who said, I have a drinking problem and am a member of AA. I cannot go to meetings and I am really struggling. Things we perhaps did not think of before the COVID-19 pandemic broke out.

## LIFE HAS CHANGED

So, we can either throw our hands up in the air in frustration or we can see this as an opportunity to think differently. Share differently. Connect differently. God is giving us an opportunity to support our women in a different way. So, I wanted to give you a few ideas of what that might look like.

## CONNECT THROUGH THE GOOD OLD-FASHIONED MAIL

A lot of our members are older. This is a particularly lonely time. They can feel cut off. Why not send handwritten notes or cards to those who are homebound. (We have attached a few cards to colour and fill in a Bible Text or promise from the Bible in your own language). Write a card to those who are in nursing homes. Now with lock down a lot of older people are not even receiving visits from family members. It is the same for your elderly neighbours or all your neighbours for that matter who might appreciate a little card with words of encouragement.

## WHAT DO YOUR WOMEN NEED?

We sometimes think we have all the answers but just like the young man and his AA appointment, there may be things we have not thought about. It is a good idea to ask. We can help each other and give suggestions. Maybe someone is struggling to get out of the house for the weekly shopping. Perhaps sharing recipes. Maybe in an app group you could send a daily encouragement. It all starts with asking "what is it you need"?

## WHEN A FEW WEEKS TURN INTO A LOT OF WEEKS

Especially for those of you who have children at home because they are not allowed to go to school. It can be fun in the beginning, but I am hearing more and more that kids really want to go back to school. They miss their friends and the social interaction. Kids love to try something new and sharing books, puzzles, movies, or games can be a fun way of having something different every week. Do not forget to sanitize all items. Leave them at the door in a box.



this will also give kids something to look forward to each week. And they can make a box for their friends too.

On Pinterest I found this website (see below). It takes kids on a virtual trip to nature in many different settings. Make a day of it. Make it fun. Have a picnic and say we are going on a virtual trip. Without leaving the house.

<https://freedomhomeschooling.com/virtual-field-trips/>

#### ANOTHER WAY OF HELPING OUT

Last week I received a What's App from one of the WM directors about how they are making Face Masks for people in their neighbourhood. If you are a sewer perhaps this is something you could do.

As it says in Mark 12:30,31  
 "Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind and with all your strength. The second is this: 'Love your neighbour as yourself'. There is no commandment greater than these."

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Mark 12:30,31

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## VÅLD I NÄRA RELATIONER

Hur kan vi förebygga, upptäcka och agera?



4-6 september  
Adventkyrkan i Göteborg  
Huvudtalare:  
Sarah K. McDugal

För mer info: [adventist.se](http://adventist.se)



**Women's Ministries Director: Clair Sanches-Schutte**  
**Editor: Caroline Fuller, Women's Ministries, PA**

**Trans - European Division**  
**119 St Peter's Street, St Albans, AL1 3EY, England**

If you would like to add an article or advertise a ministry in our monthly Newsletter please email [cfuller@ted.adventist.org](mailto:cfuller@ted.adventist.org)