Looking Back

Looking Forward

It is hard to believe that the year 2015 is almost ending. But if there were one word that can describe your ministry for this year, what would that word be? Would it be preachers? Messy Church? Mission? Fun? VBS? Congresses? You would probably need more than one word to describe all that had happened!

As we look back at this year, we will also find it difficult to describe all that had transpired in our ministry in ONE word. But there is one word that pops up in my mind all this time; and that word is LEADERSHIP! Yes, all the things we do and all the programs we organize for children cannot be accomplished without great leadership. It has been a joy working with all of you whom God has gifted you with different talents and strengths. Together as a team, you have done so much to nurture the faith of the children, train other leaders, be advocates for children, and provide valuable resources. I thank God for pulling us together to create this synergy to advance the work of children’s ministry. I look back with praise and gratitude for what God has done through each of you.
COME, YE CHILDREN, HEARKEN UNTO ME: I WILL TEACH YOU THE FEAR OF THE LORD.
(PSALM 34:11 KJV)

As the new year of 2016 is just around the corner, we need to look forward to widening our vision and allowing God and the Holy Spirit to lead us to greater heights of service. We want to Reach every child in the world with the good news of salvation. We want to be actively engaged in Mission to the Cities. We want to be United in Prayer for doors to open to reach children in the 10/40 Window; for miracles to happen in the lives of children. Yes, only though His power!

At this Christmas season of joy and celebration of our Savior’s birth, may God richly bless you as you spend time with families and friends. May you rest well and enjoy your vacation. Let’s ring out the old and ring in the new!

Linda Koh
GC Children’s Ministries

As I have journeyed in my life, the Lord in His eternal wisdom has allowed me to encounter bright and sunny days. At times, He has allowed me to experience gloomy and cloudy days. It was during one of those gloomy days when the Lord gave me the words of the poem below. While I have enjoyed the cloud 9 experiences in my life and I thank God for them, it is the gloomy days which have helped me grow spiritually.

God knows exactly why He sometimes allows dark clouds to cover the skies of our lives. As we bid farewell to 2015 and welcome 2016, remember, without those gloomy experiences, life would not be worth it. They are meant for our Spiritual growth.

Saustin Sampson Mfune
Associate Director

LIFE WOULD NOT BE WORTH IT

Life would not be worth it,
If all our roads were smooth and plain.
We would have no bumps that test,
Our grip if it is not in vain.

Life would not be worth it,
If all our nights were golden days.
We would feel no need to sing,
The hymns of comfort and praise.

Life would not be worth it,
If all our aches were endless joys.
Healing words dialed from above,
Would have no value for our lost souls.

Life would not be worth it,
If all our plans we would achieve.
We would rate ourselves so high,
And walk the road hard to retrieve.
We want to take this opportunity to thank three great children’s leaders who are retiring and are moving on to another milestone in their lives. They have given outstanding services to the Children’s Ministries Department during these past ten years. Their passion for children, their commitment to nurturing their faith and helping them become disciples of Jesus, and the many hours of tireless labor in training leaders and in helping parents and church leaders recognize that children are “our church of today”, resulted in a vibrant children’s ministry in their divisions.

To you Dr. Miriam Andres, Dr. Sally Phoon, and Mrs. Julie Weslake, we say Thank You for all that you have done for children. Thank you for being on our team. We will miss you all, but we know that you will always be a children’s advocate wherever you are. May God bless you as you continue to serve Him.
AROUND THE WORLD

MIDDLE EAST & NORTH AFRICA UNION

Gulf Field – Children’s Leaders Workshop

About 120 Children’s Ministries leaders from local churches gathered at the Gulf Field office building in Ras Al Khaimah to attend a 2-day workshop running from October 30 to 31. Dr. Saustin Sampson Mfune, GC Associate CHM Director conducted the workshop. Nancy Colegado, Gulf Field CHM leader who is gifted at developing resources for children from local materials, should be applauded for a job well done.

The two busy days were filled to the brim with all kinds of activities. One participant in her appreciation said, “We need to learn these things because we don’t have much longer to live in the world. Soon, with our children, we will be going home.” It could not have been said better.

INTER-AMERICAN DIVISION

Guatemala Union – Vacation Bible School

Dinorah Rivera, CHM director of the division reported an amazing Vacation Bible School that reaped kingdom results. After years of not holding VBS in their churches in this union, the Dimension Profetica Church decided to hold the first VBS program during the last week of November, 2015. A total of fifty children, of which fifteen were from non-Adventist families in the community, attended the VBS. At the end of the week, five children gave their hearts to Jesus and were baptized. Parents who attended the VBS together with their children were very happy and satisfied with what they and their children have learned. Praise God for the power of the Holy Spirit who touched the hearts of these children! Do not underestimate the powerful effect of running vacation Bible schools.

NORTH AMERICAN DIVISION

Oregon Conference – Children’s Leaders’ Conference

About 300 children’s leaders, pastors and administrators gathered at Double Tree Hotel in Portland, Oregon from 24th to 27th September for a children’s leaders conference under the theme:- Christ-Led Leaders : Christ-Led Children. Shirley Allen, CHM leader of the Oregon Conference and her team did a superb job in putting together this spirit-filled conference. A typical day started with devotion and then a plenary session. Then people dashed out to one of the 70 break-out groups. Then lunch would follow. Then back to break-out groups and then

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(MATTHEW 18:3 NASB)
supper and evening worship. Dr. Saustin Sampson Mfonu, GC Associate CHM director presented 3 seminars in the break-out groups. When the meetings came to a close on Sunday, many delegates wondered as to why such conferences were not held every year. God bless Shirley and her team.

**SOUTH AMERICAN DIVISION**

**Argentina, Brazil, & Ecuador Unions – “Daughters of the King” Event for Girls**

The directors of the Argentina, Brazil, and Ecuador Unions organized several events for adolescent girls called “Daughters of the King” and others. Its purpose was to nurture young ladies in their physical, emotional and spiritual development as they explore the building of a healthy self-esteem, how to appreciate and enhance their good looks in a Christlike manner, and understanding human sexuality, especially the importance of purity before marriage. It was met with great success! Many adolescent girls attended these events and had thoroughly enjoyed the fellowship and the knowledge they have learned.

**Alberta Conference – Children’s Leaders Seminars**

From October 23-25, twenty leaders from Alberta Conference, Canada met at Foot Hills Camp to be empowered with REACH Children For Jesus seminars. Extremely creative and very resourceful Darlene Reimche, the outgoing Children’s Ministries Director of the Conference, used REACH as an acronym. R – Raising Kids to Know and Love Jesus. E – Educating for tomorrow. A – Actively Working Together. C – Called to Reach Out. And H – Healthy Leadership Inside and Out. Dr. Saustin Sampson Mfonu, GC Associate CHM Director was the featured trainer. The President of the Conference, Pastor Kenneth Wiebe and his wife, attended the meetings right from the first day. He did not come to speak. He came to listen. And his wife played the piano. We praise God for such leaders.
SEE THAT YOU DO NOT DESPISE ONE OF THESE LITTLE ONES. FOR I TELL YOU THAT IN HEAVEN THEIR ANGELS ALWAYS SEE THE FACE OF MY FATHER WHO IS IN HEAVEN. 
(MATTHEW 18:10 ESV)

SOUTHERN AFRICA-INDIAN OCEAN DIVISION

Indian Ocean Union Conference – Festival of Child Preachers

According to Margery Herinina, CHM director of the union, over 10,000 members and 600 child preachers gathered in a stadium in Antananarivo, Madagascar on September 5, 2015 for the Festival of Child Preachers to praise God for the successful, “Evangelistic Caravan” which was conducted by the children for a period of two weeks. Child preachers conducted

Time was given to discussion on local needs and challenges and applying the knowledge to their local churches. It was also a great opportunity to network and build relationships.

Participants from isolated areas received a “SHINE – Family Worship” box. These contained resources to equip families to take worship in their homes. They were donated and packed by children in North New South Wales Conference Australia for their ‘Sister’ Mission.

As a result, many participants now have a clear vision and have strategies for shaping life-long faith - how to help children Encounter God through service, their homes, authentic relationships, intergenerational events, rituals and memory events. Sabbath School, family worship, intergenerational worship and outreach to children are essential.

The training was organised by Master Savenaca from Fiji Mission. Trainers were Mrs Julie Weslake, SPD CHM director, Pr Nasoni Lutunaliwa from TPUM, Mrs Marcia Tokalau and Mrs Miliakere Macdonald.

Similar trainings have also occurred over the last year in Vanuatu, Tonga, PNGUM, Samoa and the Solomon Islands.

SOUTHERN PACIFIC DIVISION

“Every Child a Disciple of Jesus.” This is the vision of children’s ministry. Beginning early in life is an essential element of leading a child to a life’s Journey with the Lord Jesus. Over 130 leaders from 195 churches in Fiji camped at Deuba in August and received a Certificate in Children’s Ministries. The Certificate covered 40 hours (30 workshops and extra reading) to give knowledge, understandings and skills. It included the latest research and resources for practical ministry.

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Upper Myanmar Mission – Child Evangelism Wins Souls


Six child preachers and three child health-talk presenters ran the meetings for ten nights. Children also led in song service and prayer. It was amazing that the church was filled to capacity every night with about five hundred children, teens, youth and some adults in attendance.

It was wonderful that all the leadership courses were translated into the Bahasa Indonesian language by Nelly Sihotang, CHM director of West Indonesia Union. After the seminars, many resources were given away. The leaders were very excited to receive many free resources for their ministry.

SOUTHERN ASIA-PACIFIC DIVISION

East and West Indonesian Unions – Bi-Union CHM Leadership Convention

Over 400 children’s leaders and teachers from the East and West Indonesian Unions gathered in Denpasar, Bali for the Bi-union CHM convention on October 22-25, 2015. Drs. Miriam Andres, recently retired SSD CGM director and Orathai Chureson, newly elected SSD CHM director together with Linda Koh, GC CHM director conducted the Level 5 Leadership Certification course. Topics covered included Evangelizing the 4/14 Window, Parenting and the media challenge, Intergenerational Worship, Teaching Children Sexuality, and others.

The children did the entire program from Sabbath School to the close of the day. It was such a joy to witness the child preachers being awarded with certificates that certify that they took part in the evangelistic caravan.

Can children be used by God in the gospel commission? Oh, Yes! Definitely! God is using children to be his witnesses and preachers here in Myanmar. It was interesting to note that fifteen-year-old Brawn Kyang, a non-Adventist who attends our Adventist school was one of the preachers. He preached a dynamic sermon on Jesus forgiving our sins. He gave his heart to Jesus after participating at the evangelistic meetings. He was baptized on Sabbath Oct 31. His parents were most unhappy with his decision, but he felt convicted to give his life to Jesus.

The highlight of the evangelistic series culminated on Sabbath Oct 31 with 113 being baptized in a make-shift baptismal pool. Of those baptized almost all were children and young people, with just a few adults. It was especially inspiring to see five Burmese being baptized into the church. Most of the
members of the church in Myanmar are either Chin or Karen. It was difficult to win the Burmese who are staunch Buddhists. We praise the Lord for touching the hearts of this sister and her four children.

Yes, the power of the Holy Spirit is at work in equipping and empowering children to witness for Him. Ellen White reminds us that, “In the closing scenes of earth's history, many of these children and youth will astonish people by their witness to the truth, which will be borne in simplicity, yet with spirit and power . . . In the near future, many children will be endued with the Spirit of God, and will do a work in proclaiming the truth to the world, that at that time cannot well be done by the older members of the church.” *Counsels to Teachers and Parents*, pp. 166, 167

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**Upper Myanmar Mission – CHM Leadership Training**

Over forty children's directors, leaders and Sabbath School teachers gathered for the leadership training in Kalay, northern Myanmar on October 28-November 1, 2016. Miriam Andres, SSD CHM director and Linda Koh, GC CHM director conducted the training using the Leadership Certification Level.

The leaders and teachers were eager to learn, especially learning how to teach the Gracelink lessons with active learning. Everyone participated enthusiastically.

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**Vietnam Adventist Mission – Children's Music Festival**

Sim Sew Moi, CHM director of Southeast Asia Union reported that 470 children aged 5-15 from fifteen churches and home groups around Lam Dong province gathered in Dahooa Adventist Church for a one-day Musical Festival on June 1, 2015. Along with them were 40 teachers and CHM leaders who had coached them well in their musical performances and variety shows despite a short 2-month notice given to practise.

The most commendable was the effort put in by every child in singing, performing action songs perfectly, memorising verses, performing skits and dances to praise and glorify the
Vietnam Adventist Mission – Children’s Ministries Leadership Seminar

After the regional meetings in Cambodia, Drs Saustin Sampson Mfune, GC CHM Associate Director and Miriam Andres [who has recently retired] travelled to Vietnam where they conducted a one-day leadership seminar on the 18th of August. The meetings were hosted by the Vietnam Central SDA Church in Ho Chi Minh City. Fifty-seven leaders, mostly youth attended the meetings. It was Mfune’s first time to visit Vietnam. He was extremely impressed by the commitment of the young people in leading God’s work.

Lord. Dr Miriam Andres (SSD CHM), Sim Sew Moi (SAUM), and Phuongmai Tran (VAM) enjoyed the musical festival as they praised God blessing the children with beautiful voices and talents.

For the first time, the 470 children and 40 adults enjoyed lunch together in the old church ground. The least the SAUM and SSD CHM departments could do was to sponsor the delicious lunch feast prepared by the women from Da Hoa Church. The children received gifts of towels and soaps. Praise God for the dedicated CHM leaders and teachers in Lam Done who encouraged the children to use their God-given gifts and talents.

TRANS-EUROPEAN DIVISION
Division-wide Initiative – “Messy Church” News

Clair Sanches, CHM director of Trans-European Division reported that during the weekend of 30th of October to 1st of November two churches were trained for Messy Church in Hungary. What a joy it was to see the enthusiasm which both churches showed. Their desire to connect with the local community and be a light in their neighborhoods was clear. Both churches already had a good connection in the community which will make advertising Messy Church so much easier.

In all the reports we get from the churches being sponsored by Messy Church we have amazing stories to tell. God is richly blessing the efforts throughout our Division. We now have Messy Church in the following unions:

- Adriatic Union – Albania, (Durres), Croatia (Pula) and Slovenia (Maribor)
- Baltic Union – Latvia (Liepaja) and Lithuania (Kaunas)
- British Union – Loughborough and Sutton
- Greek Mission – Katerini
- Hungarian Union – Bekescsaba and Szekesfehervar
- Netherlands Union – Leeuwarden South-East European Union – two churches in Belgrade (old Belgrade and new Belgrade)
- Swedish Union of Churches – Ekebyholm and Boras

Albania, Durres Messy Church
WEST CENTRAL AFRICA DIVISION

Northern Ghana Union – Children’s Evangelistic Meetings

Omobonike Sessou, CHM director of WAD reported that the CHM department of the Northern Ghana Union Mission held an evangelistic effort in Kumasi City in May where the adolescents and teens were the speakers. About 30 adolescents and teens who had been trained, conducted a 10-day evangelistic campaign in 15 different sites where they delivered health messages and prayed with the attendees. By the grace of God, at the end of the meetings, 61 precious souls, both adults and teenagers, including two couples were baptized and joined the church.

Eastern Nigeria Conference – Children’s Ministries Convention

Afikpo Ebonyi State was the home of the third CHM’s Convention for ENUC, from August 4-9. A total of 1,250 children ages 8-15 and their leaders gathered together under the theme ‘Making Jesus my Best Friend’. Seminars, workshops, crafts, games and devotions were all channeled to help Children choose to make Jesus their best friend. Many children accepted Jesus for the first time as their personal Friend and Savior.

WAD CHM Director, Omobonike Adeola Sessou and Dr. Yetunde Alozie, the ENUC CHM Director, were some of the leaders who inspired the children at the meetings. Children audibly expressed their appreciation for the leadership of Dr. Yetunde. To God be the glory.

AND SAID, ‘TRULY I SAY TO YOU, UNLESS YOU ARE CONVERTED AND BECOME LIKE CHILDREN, YOU WILL NOT ENTER THE KINGDOM OF HEAVEN.’

(MATTHEW 18:3 NASB)
O ur trip to the Trinity Baptist Church Children’s Center in San Antonio on July 1 was an unforgettable experience! It is a model for us to strive for to put children as priority. Right at the heart of the church is the most beautiful and kid-friendly place for children. The moment we entered the door of the Children’s Center, we were transported to a world of Bible times. We walked right into Noah’s Ark with hundreds of life-sized animals on the walls, the ceiling, and the stairways. What a sight to behold! Every wall had paintings of Bible characters and Bible stories. Just imagine that every week the children’s mind were lifted up to God to behold the beauty of His Creation. Large-sized Bible stories made the stories come alive. It was simply amazing!

We have much to learn from this center. It is reminding us to put children at the heart of our church and programs. Children are our heritage. Children are our leaders of today. We must invest in children as we nurture them in their faith. For those who couldn’t go with us, here are some pictures to inspire you as you partner with church leaders to create amazing places of worship for our children.
COME, YE CHILDREN, HEARKEN UNTO ME: I WILL TEACH YOU THE FEAR OF THE LORD.

(PSALM 34:11 KJV)
CONFERENCES

Children’s Pastor’s Conference
January 20-23, 2016
Chattanooga, Tennessee
childrenspastorsconference.com

Children’s Spirituality Conference
June 12-14, 2016
Nashville, Tennessee
Register: childrensspirit.com

UPCOMING EVENTS

Children’s Sabbath School Curriculum Council

Children’s Ministries Advisory
February 29 -
March 4, 2016

NEW RESOURCES

A Musical Journey
Pro-Active Kids Adventures at the CELEBRATIONS Castle

CELEBRATIONS!
HEALTHY INSIDE OUT!

A Musical Journey
Music book and CD

My Quiet Time with Jesus
Prayer Calendar and Journal

Creation Case

Healthy Inside Out
Fun Skits for Kids

13