



You are invited to be



November 4, 2013

Baptist Women's World Day of Prayer

The Women's Department of the Baptist World Alliance (BWA) is composed of 7 Continental Unions representing 235 national Baptist women's organizations from 136 countries. The 2013 program has been prepared by the European Baptist Women's Union (EBWU).



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In Step with the Spirit... Through the Fruit of the Spirit LOVE

On behalf of European Sisters in Christ
Livija Godina – EBWU President 2008-2013

Jesus said: Love one another. You must love one another, just as I have loved you. If you love one another, everyone will know you are my disciples. John 13:34-35

From Little to Great

This year we celebrate 65 years since the beginning of Prayer Day or as we now call it – Prayer Movement. Europe was laying in ruins after the World War II, it was divided, wounded and hurting. When BWA Congress took place in Sweden in 1947, there also was a women's rally. The atmosphere was overwhelming. The leader, Mrs. Martin, invited the gathered women from different nations, races and colors to raise up and quote John 3:16 loudly, slowly and meaningfully – each in her mother tongue. It changed the atmosphere! Both the defeated and the other countries wanted to forgive each other – the healing process began – and it was a starting point of EBWU. In 1948 in London, England was preparing for and planning EBWU, and EBWU was founded.



The following statement, issued by women who met in London in 1948, shows that fellowship with the Heavenly Father was the prerequisite for fellowship and service among His followers:

Facing the world...today, with its desperate need of faith, of hope and of love, we turn to our Heavenly Father for purification, for guidance and for strength. He has great blessings in store for us, which He is longing to give to us, but which can only be given to us in answer to our prayers...

Let us, as European Baptist women, dedicate the first week in November as a week of prayer when we unitedly pray for each other and for all the world. Never is the fellowship deeper, richer and stronger than when we as one heart and soul are praying together ("EBWU our story" by Yona Pusey).

May this insight in our history motivate and inspire us for prayers for each other. There are 50 countries and Baptist unions in EBF. EBWU is a part of a large European Baptist family. European Baptist geography is larger – it also includes Eurasia, a part of Asia in other words, former Soviet Union countries and the Middle East. A series of differences – languages, cultures, traditions, living conditions, geographical situations, unrest, wars, economical struggles, migration, earthquakes, and floods. There is a lot of pain and ruined lives behind all that – also

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homelessness, where especially children and women suffer. How can we help and encourage in midst of all these needs? How can we help suffering children? Women from different unions organize and participate in different mission projects. Often, through practical help, God opens doors for missions and the Good News – God is Love! In all hardships only faith, hope, and love help us to live! Therefore live a meaningful life!

Dear sisters in Christ across the world! We, European sisters, would like to ask you and ourselves in this special time: let's pray for each other! We can do this only when God's love is in our hearts. May the Holy Spirit restore us so that God's love

can flow through us into the hurting world. Love heals! Let's open our hearts and purses and give our contribution to our mutual ministry that will be a blessing and restoration for many! As a president I meet women in different countries and I'm delighted and surprised by selfless service, even sacrifice, of Christian women who are passionate with God's love. Dears, let's continue to love and serve!

Mother Therese has said:

"The less we have, the more we can give.
The more we have, the less we can give."

The fruit of prayer is love. The fruit of love is service. The fruit of service is peace.



Through the Fruit of the Spirit LOVE

The word "step" in this title suggests words like rhythm, tread, beat, and pulse. The pictures that come to mind are the noise of feet carrying their owners to a worship service; the rhythmic tread of dancers putting their worship to music; the exhilarating pounding of the steps of the Resurrection Dance (YouTube 2010, Hungary); the measured steps of people campaigning for a fairer world; or the deliberate walk of pilgrims intent on a distant goal.

In a Christian context all these are pictures of people "In Step with the Spirit". But there is another set of pictures of the individuals who step out to comfort others, to offer food, to give practical help, to visit, to teach and to heal. Their steps, too, are in tune with the Spirit of God whose name, the Bible tells us, is Love.

This is the pulse that beats in the footsteps of millions of believers. This is the impulse that drives us to put our own comfort second to the needs of others.

In Galatians 5 very familiar words tell us that Love is the first of a great list of fruits of the Spirit which is the evidence of a life that is spirit-controlled and lived to the glory of God. But how do you describe the meaning of the word? There are many sermons preached, and many books written about it. What is this thing called love? One could add their own halting explanation, and increase the amount of words written about love. But perhaps the

word pictures with which the article began will serve to illustrate an understanding of this immeasurably great word.

Jesus gave us 2 commandments: Love God and love your neighbour as yourself. This love – three-way between God, me and my neighbour – is the reason for us to worship, to pray, to witness. It is the reason behind the countless acts of service offered every day. It knows little about feelings and emotions. It is a force strong enough to cause the creation of the universe; to drive the Son of God from His rightful heavenly home to the cross of a criminal; to restore His life and His divine position, and to give us – me – the right to be a child of God, a daughter of the King.

Let us then meditate on "How great the Father's love is to us." Let us ponder our own love offerings, and let us pray to be so Spirit-filled that the fruit of the Spirit will shine through every part of our being and enable us to be good witnesses to our heavenly Father, whose new, best name is ... Love.



Yona Pusey, EBWU President – 1998-2003

Greetings from the President

My dear sisters:

Here we are again preparing ourselves to celebrate our Baptist Women's World Day of Prayer. It is with great joy that I greet you. Last year we all felt how we were together on this day, with our friends from around the world praying and giving to the cause of missions. This year promises to be even better than last year.



*Raquel Contreras, President
BWA Women's Department*

This year as we go on "In Step with the Spirit: through the fruit of the Spirit LOVE", immediately comes to my mind the beautiful song that we learned growing up. I imagine that you, just like me, learned this song in church when we were little children:

<i>Jesus loves me this I know, For the Bible tells me so, Little ones to Him belong, They are weak, but He is strong!</i>	<i>Yes, Jesus loves me! Yes, Jesus loves me! Yes, Jesus Loves me! The Bible tells me so.</i>
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This song that has stayed in our minds even through adulthood helps us to find peace and security in Jesus. There are several truths that we can find in this song that helps us see God's love for us.

- When I know that I am loved by Jesus, my life has real meaning.
- When the conviction that He loves me is based on the Bible and not on my own feelings, I will be able to experience His love just because he loves me, and not because of my circumstances.
- When I understand that I belong to Jesus because He created me and redeemed me, I am free to serve Him in response to this love.
- When I remember that I am weak and helpless to do anything, I can really rest in His strength for my purpose in life.
- When I remember that He is my faithful friend, that He is always with me, not because of what I do to deserve His love but just because He loves me, I can realize that I can go on in life showing others His love.

At the end we have to remember that the very nature of God is love. 1 John 4:8 says "Whoever does not love does not know God, because God is love". "God is love" is the truth that has to sustain our lives and ministries. Because of God's love we get together with our sisters all over the world today to pray, learn and give.

It is my prayer that you will feel God's love and our love to you every day, but at the same time you will be able to share that love with everybody that comes in contact with you.

*Raquel Contreras, President
BWA Women's Department*

Plan Your Day of Prayer

1. Preparation

- ✦ It is very important for the planning team to come together early to pray and plan a program that will bring a better understanding of what Baptist women are doing to impact the world for Christ through LOVE.
- ✦ The planning team needs to decide what format would be best for the Baptist women they serve. Monday, November 4 has been set aside, but it is also possible to have the program as a prayer retreat on another day or weekend in November, or on a Sunday, in order to include the entire church. The important thing is to plan a program that will fit the needs of your Baptist women.

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EBWU prepared the 2013 DOP program



E quipping new leaders for national and international leadership

B uilding a Europe-wide fellowship of women through their leaders

W orking with individual and community needs

U niting women in mission and ministry


“Love Your Neighbor as Yourself”

Matthew 22:39 the second and greatest commandment.

Women have multiple roles. At any given time they can be mothers, leaders, students, decision-makers, farmers, workers, Baptist women, and much more. In each of these roles, the ability to be educated and healthy, to have voice and influence, and to enjoy opportunities and choices are critical to everyday life.



The woman in the picture is holding up the 8 Millennium Development Goals (MDGs):

1.  Eradicate extreme poverty and hunger.
2.  Achieve universal primary education.
3.  Promote gender equality and empower women.
4.  Reduce child mortality.
5.  Improve maternal health.
6.  Combat HIV/AIDS, Malaria and other diseases.
7.  Ensure environmental sustainability.
8.  Develop a global partnership for development.

Detail information about the 8 MDGs may be found on the Women’s Department website at www.bwawd.org. Along with this information you will find a Bible study related to each goal prepared by a woman from each of the 7 Continental Unions and Women’s Department officers. These Bible studies will help you know your neighbor and the situations they might face in order for you to be able to love them as God loves you.

Patsy Davis, Executive Director, BWA Women’s Department

Plan Your Day of Prayer

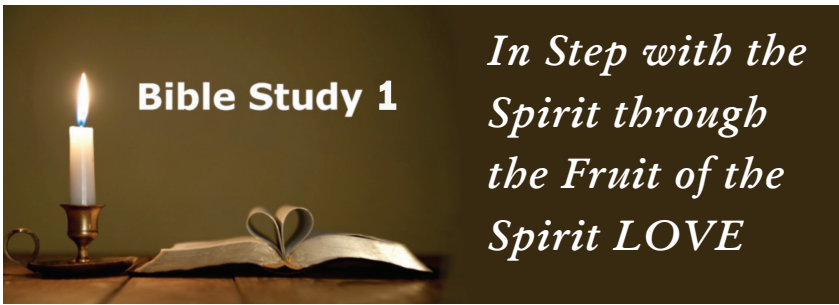
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Preparation (continued)

- * Make invitation cards/greeting cards using the love design with the word love in the different European languages to invite Baptist women from the local church, association, regional organization or other to participate in the Baptist Women’s World Day of Prayer.
- * Publicize the event using the LOVE poster or make one of your own. Make sure it is placed in strategic areas where all Baptist women will have the opportunity to be included. The words on the poster are the word LOVE in Arabic, Bulgarian, Croatian, Dutch, German, Latvian and other languages from Europe.
- * Prepare offering envelopes with LOVE written on them in the different languages to be used at the time of the offering. As people arrive, make sure everyone receives an envelope.

2. Center Piece Suggestions

- * Enlarge the LOVE picture to use as the center piece. Have a globe or world map to one side of the LOVE picture. From the world have 7 different color ribbons/ color paper representing the 7 continental unions flowing from it. The colors are Africa – purple; Asia – light blue; Caribbean – green; Europe – dark blue; Latin America – yellow; North America – orange; and South West Pacific – red. On the end of the ribbons/ color paper place a red heart with a tea candle/light on top of the heart.
- * Have the “In Step with the Spirit” logo in a prominent place.



Bible Study – 1 John 4:7-21

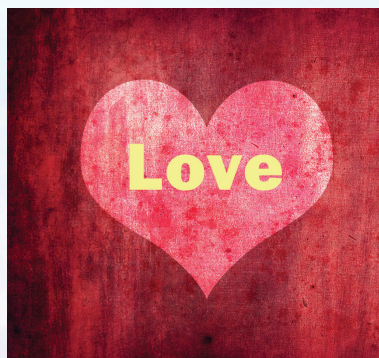
What is love? It is much more than an emotion. It is a strength which motivates action (1 John 3:16-18). For the purpose of our study, love is one aspect of the fruit of the Spirit (Galatians 5:22) and it is listed first. Love must be obvious in each child of God. If there is no evidence of love then our allegiance to God can be called into question.

God's Love

Love originates with God. God is Love (1 John 4:8;16). God's love is part of who He is, His personality, His nature; in all His actions God is Love. Love is personified in the Person of Jesus Christ, God's Son. Jesus is God's love in action, and He is God's self-revelation to the world. In Jesus' numerous acts of compassion, healing, caring, and teaching shows His acceptance of sinners (Luke 9:34), and by His grief at disobedience (Matthew 23:23-39) we see Love in action. Ultimately and supremely God's love is seen in the death of Jesus Christ, dying on the Cross bringing us forgiveness, salvation and peace with God (1 John 4:9-10). On the Cross Jesus surrendered His life in self-sacrifice as a substitute for the sins of all mankind.

God's love for us is not because we are worthy and deserve it – oh no, definitely not. His love for us, His children, does not depend on who or what we are, but on who He is. He loves us because it is His nature to love. The real meaning of love is seen in the Cross. To appreciate what love means we need to see ourselves as sinners condemned in God's sight, worthy only of the wrath of God. People are so loved by God that Jesus died for us so we could experience the love God has for us. It is God's love for us that turns His anger away from us. This is real love, and the kind of love the world needs, the kind of love every man, woman and child needs. This hymn by William Rees sums it up:

*Here is love vast as the ocean,
Loving kindness as the flood,
When the prince of Life, our ransom,
Shed for us His precious blood.
Who His love will not remember:
Who can cease to sing His praise?
He can never be forgotten
Throughout heaven's eternal days.*



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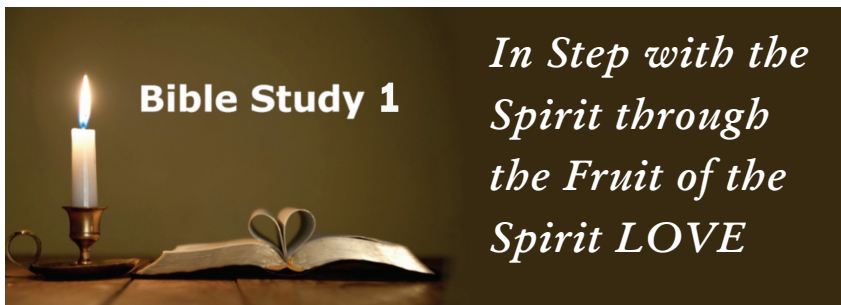
Plan Your Day of Prayer (continued)

3. Presentation

- ✳ **BWA Women's Department President Greetings** – Have someone come into the room singing "Jesus Loves Me". Then explain the meaning as found in the greeting from Raquel Contreras, president of the BWA Women's Department. It could also be done as a monologue.
- ✳ **Bible Study** – Ask someone to prepare the Bible Study in advance. Two Bible studies have been prepared. One Bible study is printed in the program and the other one may be found on the Women's Department website at www.bwawd.org. You may choose to do one or both Bible studies.

4. Highlight the Offering

- ✳ The offerings on this day support the continental and worldwide ministries of the BWA Women's Department. Indeed, the Department depends on this one-day offering as its main source of income.
- ✳ Encourage the women to give double the amount given last year. Be sure those attending know that the offering they give will join together with Baptist women's offerings from the other continental unions in order to impact our world for Christ.
- ✳ For detail information about how the offering is used go to www.bwawd.org, click on Development of Resources, and then Distribution of Day of Prayer offering.



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Bible Study – 1 John 4:7-21

*On the mount of crucifixion
Fountains opened deep and wide;
Through the floodgates of
God's mercy
Flowed a vast and gracious tide.
Grace and love, like mighty rivers
Poured incessant from above;
And heaven's peace and
perfect justice
Kissed a guilty world in love.*

How deep and strong is God's love for us?

Our Love for God

We are exhorted to "Love the Lord (our) God with all (our) heart and with all (our) soul and with all (our) mind" (Matthew 22:37). Jesus said this is the first and greatest commandment.

We can only know love through God and we can only love because God first loved us (1 John 4:19). God demands total, whole-hearted devotion from us, His children (Deuteronomy 30:6). Love for God is a joyful experience and comes from our communion with Him, of being aware of His presence in our lives constantly. This is shown in our obedience to His commandments (Joshua 22:5; John 14:21). God has given us His Spirit (1 John 4:13) who works in our hearts and minds and souls, making us more like our



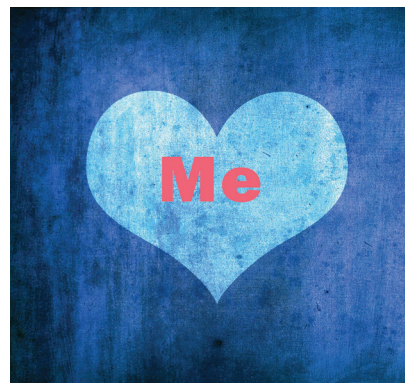
Saviour (1 Corinthians 3:18). The Spirit enables us to love God and to please Him. As already stated, love is an aspect of the Spirit's fruit and if love is exhibited in our lives, it is a sure sign that God is living in us and we are living in Him and loving as He intended.

By comparison with God's love for us, our love for Him is so often weak, but God delights in us and in our love for Him even though it might be weak. It will grow as we learn to trust more. Love for God is evidenced by our faith in God and our desire to please Him in all things. Our love for God is always a response to His love for us (1 John 4:19). As we continue to live in God's presence so our love for God grows, deepens and strengthens. Oh, for grace to love Him more.

Our Love for Others

The first verse of our reading says, "Dear friends, let us love one another, for love comes from God" (1 John 4:7). We can only love because God loves us (1 John 4:19). Again, from the lips of Jesus, "Love your neighbour as yourself" – the second greatest commandment (Matthew 22:39). Is

it easier to love our fellow Christians or our neighbours? What do you think? Actually we are called to love all. God's desire is for love to be the normal relationship between human beings which is a mutual love for one another, seeking the best for each other. We are to love our brothers and sisters in Christ. We are also to love all mankind, all those people God brings across our path. Jesus even ordered us

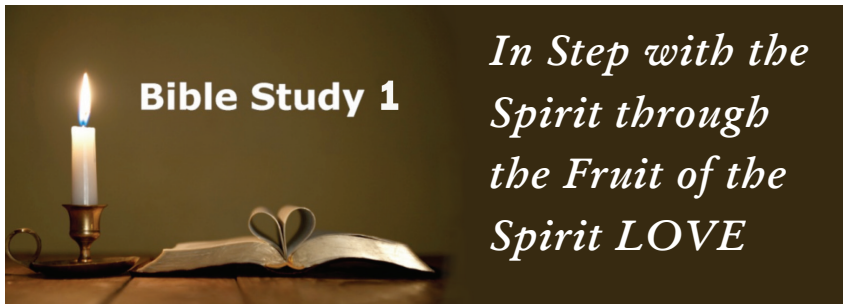


to love our enemies and persecutors (Matthew 5:44). A lot of grace is required for this. We need the Spirit to give us this kind of

love. We are asked to love as God loves (1 John 4:11). Just as Jesus showed us the father's love, we are to love like Him. This is proof that Christ, by His Spirit, lives in us. John tells us that our love's origin is in God's love and that His love is complete or made perfect in us, as it reaches its goal and is fulfilled in us (1 John 4:12;17). How amazing is that? Another amazing thing is that it is this love for each other and not our love for God which reveals that God lives in us (1 John 4:12). Loving others doesn't always come naturally to us, but when love is present in our lives it shows that God is present too (1 John 4:16).

All of us who love as God loves us have no need to fear. Fear and love according to 1 John 4:18 are incompatible and therefore have no place together. Fear has to do with punishment whereas love has to do with acceptance. We fear when we know we deserve punishment, but Christ Jesus has taken our punishment upon Himself, and because God's perfect love has provided salvation for us in Jesus,

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Bible Study – 1 John 4:7-21

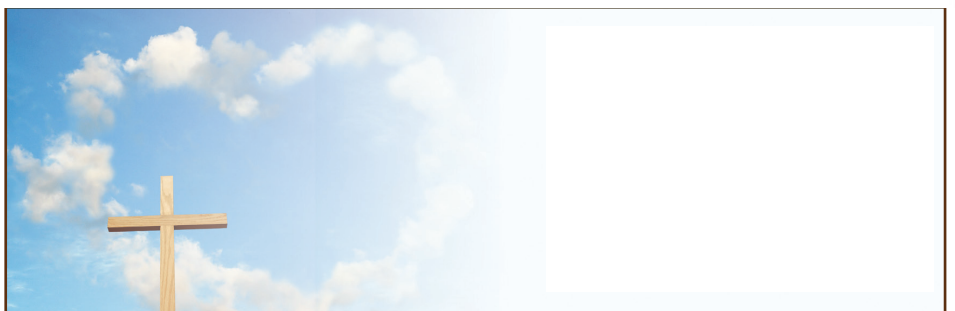
we are now accepted by God through Him. Fear has been overcome by love. That is the Gospel which is the message we take to the world. Love is constantly needed in daily life where so many people know nothing of real love. They search for it but look in the wrong places with drastic results at times. As God's people we must share God's love with them. This love is not sentimental but practical; not superficial but real; not self-gratifying but self-sacrificing. We have been entrusted with love to live it out in our lives and to share it with others. God places trust in us to carry out His love.



We are to imitate God's love (1 John 4:11; Ephesians 5:12). We ought to see in other people for whom Christ died, and we are to see in others Christ Himself (Matthew 25:40). Our love for others is to be genuine, and not *"with words or tongue but with actions and in truth"* (1 John 3:18). Giving help is a practical way of sharing our love. To close our hearts to the needs of others is to be lacking in God's love. To withhold love from others is to deny God's presence in our lives (1 John 4:19-21). John makes it plain that we cannot love God if we do not love our brothers and sisters. Our fellow humans are made in the image of God just as we are, and have to be loved by us. We make ourselves out

to be liars if we profess love for God yet show no love to others (1 John 4:19-21). If we love God, we surely can love others.

The final verse of our study is a command, *"whoever loves God must also love his brother"* (1 John 4:21). To love God is to obey His commands. Love is not an option – it is a direct order, and we do well to heed it. The existence of such love flowing from the unity of God's people (Philippians 2:1-4; Ephesians 4:2-5) is the sign to the outside world of the reality of our faith. I think it was the early Christian theologian, Tertullian to whom the phrase *'see how these Christians love one another'* was attributed. The world is watching us.



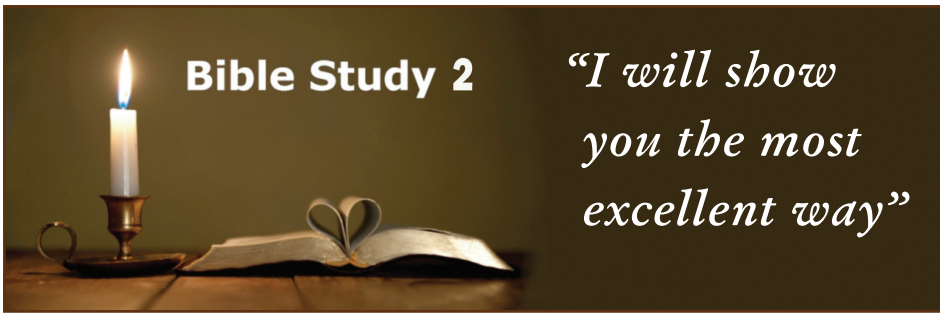
Does it see the evidence of our faith in unity and in love?

The great chapter on love, as you know, is 1 Corinthians 13. Verse 13 of that chapter states, *"now these three remain: faith, hope and love. But the greatest of these is love"*. A friend once light-heartedly said, 'why is love the greatest?' No one answered so she said that the reason for love being the greatest is that in heaven our faith will have been rewarded and our hope realized and therefore won't be required, but love will be there in abundance as strong as it has ever been. You may agree or disagree. Yet that does not take away from the truth of God's Word to love as God loves.

Let us endeavour to be women of God, In Step with the Spirit through Love. May this love of God flow out from our lives to the needy, hurting world in which we live for the honour and glory of the One Who is Love.



Margaret Brown, Scotland



We read “if I have not love, I gain nothing” (verse 3).

Love lays the foundation of life. Love initiates the offspring. It is the root, which gives the hope of growth. It makes the music of the heart clear, like the voice of angels.

Bible Study – 1 Corinthians 13

What is LOVE?

Let us try to find the answer:

- Is it how Adam saw the woman in the Garden of Eden getting the suitable helper formed from his own body? *Genesis 2:23*
- Is it how Eve liked the taste of the fruit seeing how pleasing it was to the eye? *Genesis 3:6*
- Is it how Isaac and Rebekah brought up their children? *Genesis 25:28*
- Is it the act of Joseph saving his people at the time of famine? *Genesis 45:9-11*
- What about Elkanah’s love toward Hannah? *1 Samuel 1:5*
- Is it love as the friendship strengthened between David and Jonathan? *1 Samuel 20:17*
- And what about the feeling of David watching Bathseba? Is it love? *2 Samuel 11:2*

We may continue bringing back to our memory the long list of examples not just from the Old Testament, but also from the New Testament explaining the feeling for which we use the word “love”.

The question is still a question: what is love?

Is it a feeling, attitude, relationship between people, between nations,

family members, man and woman, parents and children, brothers and sisters? Yes, all these are included in this very short word.

Why is this important for the people? Can we live without love, without any kind of feelings? No, not just mankind, but even other creatures cannot live without it. Why? God created the world in His love, with His love! Everything was done in love. The fact is: “God is love.” *1 John 4:16b*

What can we do with this love? We can respond to His love. We may accept him as our Creator, our Heavenly Father, our Lord, like Samuel did, who answered the calling “Speak, for your servant is listening.” *1 Samuel 3:10*

The Corinthians had an excellent way. Can it be our gift, too?



What do we need to know about love?

“Resounding gong or a clanging cymbal, and speaking with the tongues of angels” is found in 1 Corinthians 13:1. Can you imagine the beauty of the angels’ speech? Does it sound as a sharp noise? Is knowledge in vain, and faith is it just nothing? How can it be? Is goodness doing the best for your neighbours? Am I nothing?

How can a person demonstrate love?

How can a Christian show love?

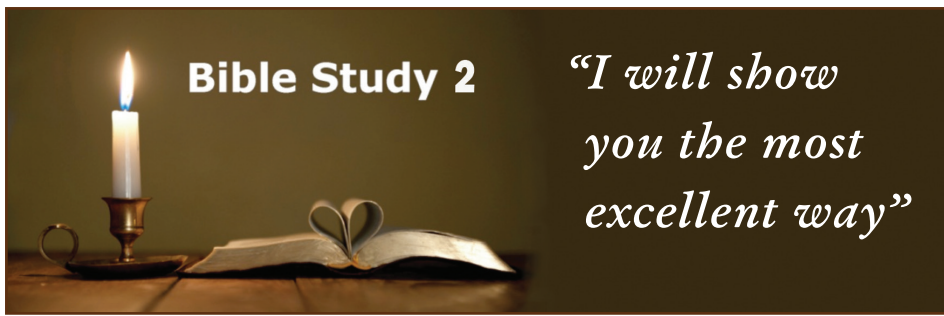
We usually like to teach in a positive way not to show the bad things, but to share the good ones, which can be used as an encouraging example. Read the rest of 1 Corinthians 13 and think about some biblical examples. Some of the verses use a negative word to help the believer know what not to do which helps everyone to understand the word love in a better way.



Love is:

- Patient – “A man’s wisdom gives him patience...” *Proverbs 19:11*. “The fruit of spirit is love, joy, peace, patience” *Galatians 5:22*.
- Kind – “If you have judged me to be faithful to the Lord, come to my house and stay. And she prevailed upon us” *Acts 16:15 (the story of the first European Christian woman, Lydia)*.
- Not envious – Sarai and Hagar’s story *Genesis 16*.
- Not proud – “Two men went up to the temple...” *Luke 18:10–14*.
- Not rude – “When Abigail saw David, she quickly got off her donkey and bowed down before David...” *1 Samuel 25:23 (Read the story)*.

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Bible Study 2

*“I will show
you the most
excellent way”*



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Bible Study – 1 Corinthians 13

- Not self-seeking – “Many of the Samaritans from that town believed in him because of the woman’s testimony” *John 4:39* (Read the whole story seeing this woman’s life to change).
- Not easily angered – “David and his man were far back in the cave. Then man said this is the day the Lord spoke of when he said to you I will give your enemies into your hand to deal with as you wish. David crept up unnoticed and cut off a corner of Saul’s robe” *1 Sam 24:4*.
- Love doesn’t delight in evil – The story of Esther, who was safe at the courtyard of the king, but her nation was in trouble. “There is a certain people scattered abroad and dispersed among the peoples in all the provinces...let it be decreed that they be destroyed,” *Esther 3:8-9*.
- Rejoices with the truth – “You pity the plant, for which you did not labour, nor did you make it grow...and should not I pity the Nineveh, the great city...” *Jonah 4:9-10*.
- Never fails – “that man was blameless and upright, one who feared God and turned away from evil” *Job 1:1*.

Reading the passage of 1 Corinthians 13:8-9 we see a comparison of how shocking it is for us to face the fact that everything is in vain, and all things will be broken and will disappear. Whatever it is, like prophesy, like knowledge, it will pass away.

What is the process?

A person develops as one grows up. How? Like a child is brought up, learning the needs of life in a society and becomes an adult. He/she leaves the thinking of the childish way, finding the responsibility in his/her life, making valuable decisions. That is what makes a child or a young person a grown up. Seeing clearly all the challenges, duties, all the situation where he/she needs to act as an adult, knowing the difference between bad and good. Like the great example from the Bible, Solomon “Give your servant therefore an understanding mind... that I may discern between good and evil” *1 King 3:9*.



The time comes when each of us have to see clearly what the acts of love are? How can we change our foolish self-centred life? One day we will see our reflection in a clear mirror, and may it be our desire to see it as the Lord looks at us.

Usually in our everyday life we wish to gain perfection, to create the higher standard of qualities. This is why we are working so hard in our inner life and out in society. To get higher respect, to be the first in a competition, to be the nicest, the most beautiful, the best housewife,

the best student, the best mother, the best sister...but at the end we are not satisfied with the results at all.

Going through many hard fights, wasting our time on hard work we see like Ecclesiastes tells “All is vanity” *Ecclesiastes 1:2*. The bitterness devastates our hearts. In these everyday fights we loose all our hope, faith and love through these spiritual struggles. Through the hardships the heart will be hardened, and it takes away the sensitivity, the emotions. At the end the world is suffering, because it loses faith, hope and love.

Who will bring it back?

Let us do so! Come and join us in prayer to the Lord asking Him to help us find faith, hope and the most important, love. Help us to bring them back to the Earth by living a life which can fulfill His calling! Let the love of God be present on Earth through his people!



Aniko Ujvari
EBWU secretary from Hungary

Norway Margun Warem – EBWU Vice President

My name is Margun and I grew up in Norway, one of the richest countries in the world. I have never experienced political unrest. Since WWII we have enjoyed peace and wealth, living in a country where politicians care for everybody. This doesn't mean that everything is perfect, but our problems are small compared to many other countries.

On July 22, 2012 a huge bomb exploded in front of our government building in Oslo, leaving the high rise building like a shell. On TV

everything was about this terrorist attack.

Everybody was asking: Who did this? Are they Muslim terrorists?

We were told that our Prime Minister was safe. At the same time we heard alarming news that there was shooting at Utøya, a small island in a lake ca. one hour away from Oslo. The youth organization of the Labour Party had their annual summer camp there.

The next morning we heard that 78 people had been killed, 7 at the government building and 71 young people on the island. The terrorist was a 31-year-old Norwegian with sympathies to the political far right. And why did he do this? He wanted to strike at the biggest political party in Norway, the Labour Party, for letting so many Muslim refugees into the country.

Saturday morning, July 23rd, the whole nation was left in a total shock. Then messages spread on Facebook and by SMS that churches all over the country were open. The people's first need was to come together in the churches.

My local Baptist Church also opened, and many people went there. We cried together, prayed, sang, talked, lit candles, and we just sat together. This happened all over the country. On this day of fear and need people sought God.

Our Prime Minister was on TV over and over again. His clear message was love, care and more openness and democracy, not hatred and revenge. Our nation had never been united in such a way since WWII. It also included our new

countrymen, the immigrants. This was opposite of what the terrorist wanted.

On the following day a Mass of Sorrow and Hope was held in the

Cathedral of Oslo. It made a deep impression seeing on TV the King and the Queen, the Prime Minister and many prominent persons crying. The Bishop of Oslo greeted the nation with John 14, 27: *Peace I leave with you, my peace I give you. I do not give to you as the world gives. Do not let your hearts be troubled and do not be afraid.*

The same afternoon the message spread by Facebook and SMS to meet and bring roses for a peaceful march. In a few hours hundreds of thousands of people all over the country came together, marching in silence and carrying roses. The Royal Family, politicians, mayors, pastors and ministers were out addressing the people, repeating over and over again the message of love, care and more democracy and openness.

Our nation is still in a state of trauma, and soon the trial will start. But we pray that the message



from Jesus about love and care will sustain.

Finally I will share with you what a teenage girl wrote on Facebook: **If one man can show so much hate, think of how much love we all can show.**

Margun Warem
Norway



Love...but how? Elisabeth Vekas, Romania

Elisabeth Vekas grew up in a small village in the center of Romania. Her family was Baptist. She experienced many times that God takes our prayers seriously. She asked Him several times at a young age; "Lord, help me to love my fellow people." God taught her to love her fellow people in a totally different way than she expected. This learning process was long and often painful, but God does not hurry, and is still helping her to love.

Over the years He has helped her in three different areas. When she was 18, she went to study in a big city. She only went home for holidays.

There was a school for the deaf in the same city where she studied, and often she travelled together with some parents who brought their deaf mute children home from the special school. She did not really care about the children because they were different from her and her parents. The children communicated with signs, and she avoided them whenever possible.



Some years passed and her first child was born. She and her husband learned that their first child, a girl, was hearing impaired. After four years of going to different hospitals and praying, it turned out that they needed to take their little girl to the same city where she had studied. Their child had to study in the same school that she avoided when she was 18.

This was God's pedagogy ... her view of the hearing impaired changed totally. Her daughter is an adult now, and she turned to the Lord and is God's child.

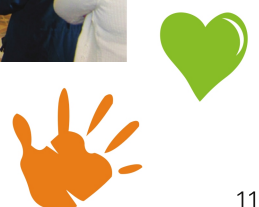
Elisabeth did not really care about disabled people either. She admitted it was a nice ministry to help them, but let others do it. Then God changed her life, and He did it in a very hard way. Their son was born slightly handicapped. In his first 6-7 years she spent more time with him in rehabilitation centers than at home. She met many disabled children and their mothers. She had several occasions to share her faith, and encourage saddened mothers. Her son has grown up in the meantime, and he came to living faith. The situation of their children often brought her to her knees. God humbled her and taught her things that she could not have learned in any other way. In this struggle and school of prayer her dear husband was a great help for her. He went to be with the Lord in 2010.

There was another challenge twenty years ago, when - after 15 years of ministry among the Hungarians - the Lord opened the gate for her husband to preach the gospel among the Gypsies as well. Years before, when they had got married she had promised to her husband with Ruth's words: "Your people will be my people and your God my God." Now the test of her promise came. She did not love Gypsies. She knew from her childhood that they were beggars and dirty. God asked me; "Why are you partial? Don't you love my creatures?" She had to humble herself before God, and admit He was not partial. A miracle happened, and God changed her heart. She grew to love Gypsies. She received many blessings from them and through them ever since.



Elisabeth with her daughter.

She learned that hearing impaired, disabled and Gypsy people are all people with a sensitive heart, and are God's creatures. They make our world, society and churches more colorful, and we need them. They teach without words, that material welfare and health are not self evident. Elisabeth understood that she does not deserve God's love more than the others. "Dear children, let us not love with words or tongue but with actions and in truth." 1 John 3:18



Everyone is Important and Valuable

Ewa & Ryszard Gutkowski, Poland

The Christian Education Centre "Diamond" for 15 years of its ministry has been taking care of more than one thousand children, dysfunctional youth from poor, pathological families fighting the problem of alcoholism, drugs, and unemployment. In this group are children from three orphanages.

These children and young people need support. They need warmth, acceptance, a good word and advice. Their parents very often are not able or do not want to take care of their own children. That is why the children count at the Diamond Centre.

The Diamond Centre leaders were encouraged by the example of our Lord, Jesus Christ who went and helped in practical ways. The leaders are willing to fulfill God's words: *"...let us not love in word neither in tongue; but in deed and in truth."* (1 John 3:18)

The Centre believes that every child is valuable, no matter what kind of family the child comes from.

Every one of them is like a diamond, which after some cutting and polishing can become a precious stone. Therefore, in the Centre there are the following rules:

- everyone is important and valuable, no matter of the background, social and material status or religious denomination,
- everyone is worth the Centre's interest,
- everyone's needs are important,
- everyone's talents are important,
- everyone's opinions are important,
- everyone's questions are important,
- everyone's answers are important.



The work consists not only of organizing the various activities, discovering talents and preparing meals, but the Centre also takes part in the lives and experiences of the children which are sometimes painful. They also help in finding answers to difficult questions. These children have a great need for warm feelings that the Centre tries to show them, leading them to a source of LOVE.

One of the children that was in the care of the Centre is Paulina (pictured at right). She is now 26 years old. She participated in "Diamond's" Children Club in Warsaw from the beginning of the Club in 1998. She was 12 years at that time. Her mother was raising her alone, and she had a problem with alcohol. The mother married and moved to another city, and Paulina's grandma took care of Paulina after the mother left.

The club was her second home. Paulina stayed at the club from the beginning to the end of the day. Paulina was an intelligent and capable girl.

She said she wanted to become a teacher. It didn't take long before she became a big help for the teachers at the club. She became a volunteer, at the age 16, and was actively and creatively involved in club activities. After graduating from high school she started a college education.

One year ago she received Christ and decided to join one of the Baptist Churches in Warsaw. She wrote the following letter to the "Diamond" leaders:



Paulina – a "Diamond" child – is now 26 years old and a volunteer at the Diamond Centre.

"I want to thank you for coming up with the idea of the Club where I could meet you. You had a very positive influence on me and I am who I am now thanks to the "Diamond" Centre. I think that I'm not the only one who would like to say thank you. Honestly there are no words to express what I feel. I will simply write – THANKS. I am grateful with all my heart to God that inspired you to do this ministry."

There were a lot of volunteers that worked with the children and young people. Many of them were Baptist, as well as some who were seeking God. It is believed that the atmosphere of this special ministry, to help children in difficult circumstances, is full of God's presence. Therefore the Centre gives testimony by means of

continued on page 13

Testimony: Everyone is Important and Valuable

continued from page 12

the daily attitude not only to the children, but also to volunteers, and co-workers.

One of the volunteers was Anna. She worked at the "Diamond's" Children Club in Warsaw, as well as at the summer camps for children from orphanages and dysfunctional families. Today Anna is 31, and recently she sent her personal testimony:

"Dear beloved,
I have incredible news! I decided to entrust my life to Christ. He answered my prayer and sent me the gift of the Holy Spirit. I asked him once and He answered. It's amazing. I was confused, and I pushed God away to the background for many years. I cheated myself by believing that I was a good person, but in no way did I do His will. In my heart there was nothing and no one could fill it. At that point I started

talking with a colleague at work. She was a newborn Christian and began telling me how God has changed her life. I approached this with skepticism, but it was a small seed that sprouted in my heart. Again many doubts and questions appeared. Does God really exist? What's next with my life, but each day drew me to Him. I also felt that Satan was trying to put in me the fear of God. Evil thoughts were entering my mind, and I asked God for protection and He comforted me. I then had to ask Jesus about the Holy Spirit, and He responded to my request. My life has been changed forever. Jesus is my Lord and every day my heart rejoices. Now I understand the goal of my life – I live for Him."

Anna joined a Baptist church, and she has a lot of questions as a new born believer. The Centre has regular contact with Anne by e-mail. In one of the letters she wrote: "I



realized that the volunteer work at "Diamond" was very important for me in searching for God. You have played a big part in my new life".

The leaders are grateful to God for His work in the hearts of many children and adults involved in the ministry of "Diamond". This work can be continued through prayer and financial support of our many friends like EBWU. EBWU is grateful to the committee for the financial contribution. This is valuable help for "Diamond" and is a very important part in bringing the message of God's love to children and young people from families having difficulties in life, in Poland. Together we can do more!



Suggestions on how to use the poster to publicize the Day of Prayer and as a Center Piece are on page 3. Go online to download the poster: www.bwawd.org

Leading the Way to the LOVE of Jesus by Using the Christian Fish Symbol



The fish was an early European symbol of Christian faith that endures today on bumper car stickers and businesses as a sign of Christian faith. The fish was chosen by the early Christians for several reasons:

◆ the Greek word for fish (**ICHTUS**), works nicely as an acrostic for:

- Iesous=Jesus
- **CH**ristos=Christ
- Theou=God
- Uiou=Son
- Soter=Savior



"Jesus Christ, God's Son, Savior"

- ◆ the fish was not an obvious Christian symbol to persecutors
- ◆ Jesus' ministry is associated with fish as he chose several fishermen to be his disciples and declared he would make them "fishers of men."

It is said that during the persecution of the early church, a Christian meeting someone new would draw a single arc in the sand. If the other person was a Christian, he or she would complete the drawing of a fish with a second arc. If the second person was not a Christian the ambiguity of the half symbol would not reveal the first person as a Christian.

During the persecution of Christians in the Roman Empire, the fish symbol was also used to mark secret gathering places, especially within the catacombs. On the walls people put in relief the fish mark with the head pointing to the exit of the catacombs. Even in the dark, one could then find the way out or the way in to flee from the Roman soldiers. In this way the Fish mark had the function to lead the way out of the darkness of the catacombs into the light of daily life and became a symbol of Christianity.

This fish symbol is the Ichthys fish, with the Greek word for fish written out to emphasize the symbolic acrostic described above.

Although the word looks like IXOYE, the letters are from the Greek alphabet, so the "I" is actually an iota, the "X" is actually a chi, the "O" is actually a theta, the "Y" is an upsilon, and the "E" or "C" at the end is a sigma. Taking the first sound from each of these Greek letter names, we get the transliteration into our alphabet of **ICHTHUS**.

The fish is also a symbol of baptism, since a fish is at home in the water.

Mark 1:16-17 "Come, follow me," Jesus said, "and I will make you fishers of men." As modern Baptist women we can use this ancient European symbol to lead the way for people to the LOVE of Jesus.

As modern Baptist women we can use this ancient European symbol to lead the way for people to the LOVE of Jesus by making Ichthys fish symbols. For creative ideas on how to make Ichthys fish symbols go to www.bwawd.org and click on the 2013 Day of Prayer program link.

*Wies Dijkstra
The Netherlands
EBWU Officer*



In Step with the Spirit through Prayer Creative Ways to Present the Program

- The last two pages of the program booklet have been prepared for use as a Prayer Guide pamphlet. Tear or cut off the last two pages carefully. Print both sides, fold the pages, and put them together using a stapler or inserting one page into the other. Make enough copies for each person in attendance.
- Ask 7 women to come prepared to lead 7 groups in prayer. The 7 groups are Africa, Asia, the Caribbean, Europe, Latin America, North America, and the South West Pacific.
- Make hearts using the colors for the 7 continental unions (see center piece suggestions on page 3 for colors). As people arrive have them take one of the colored hearts.



continued on pg. 15

2013 Day of Prayer Projects

1. Name of Project: Women's Research Center

Country: Azerbaijan

Person Responsible: Director of the Center

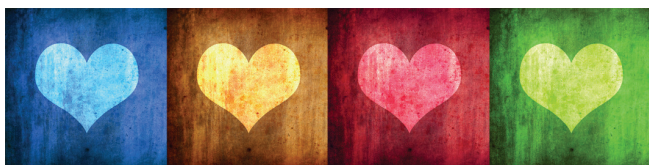
Description of Project: This center shelters women who have been persecuted for their belief in Jesus; victims of human trafficking; women who are drug and alcohol addicts; and women who have been beaten and raped by their husbands. They help these women spiritually, morally and do Bible studies with them. They share the love of Jesus with these women.

2. Name of Project: Regional Seminar for Young Women Leaders

Country: Moldova

Person Responsible: Eugenia Podoleanu

Description of Project: This project will prepare a generation of young women leaders equipped and willing to serve the Lord. There will be four seminars in different regions of Moldova. They are planning on inviting 80 young women to each seminar. Sisters responsible for women ministry in each church and their disciples will be invited to attend the seminar. The seminars will be carried out both in Romanian and Russian languages, depending on the region.



3. Name of Project: Spiritual and Mental Support for Women in Abusive Relationships

Country: Poland

Person Responsible: Klaudia Wiazowska

Description of Project: The aim of the project is to provide an evangelistic encounter with the Bible, and give spiritual and mental support to women who are in

relationships with people addicted to alcohol. They have two target groups of 30 women in each coming from different towns and social backgrounds. The project will minister to human needs.

4. Name of Project: Teach Them, Feed Them and Win Them to Christ

Country: Hungary

Person Responsible: Marika Szabó

Description of Project: To help people come to Christ instead of making palinka (strong alcoholic drink) they would learn how to dry fruit and/or make jam from the fruit. They will teach the

women how to have a better garden, as well as how to preserve food. This is done to help them develop economically and have a healthy life. They will have Bible studies with the women so that they can have joy.



5. Name of Project: CU Special Project Fund

Countries: 7 Continental Unions

Group Responsible: BWA Women's Department Administrative Committee

Description of Project: This fund may be used to assist any Continental Union in a special project or event on the Continental Union level, as well as a special Women's Department event.

In Step with the Spirit through Prayer

Creative Ways to Present the Program (continued from pg. 14)

- Make 7 large hearts, using the colors of the 7 continental unions, with the name of each continental union on it. The program leader says to each leader of the 7 different prayer groups (one at a time) –
 - ❖ I give you the heart of the continent of (name of continent) and I ask you to pray with LOVE for all the women in this continent. ❖ Please light the candle of this continent (center piece tea candle). This will be repeated until all 7 candles are lit. ❖ The group leaders will now go to their designated place to pray for their continental union, and all those who have a heart the same color as the leader will follow her. ❖ Use the prayer pamphlet as your guide for prayer.
- The closing prayer will be for the officers of the BWA Women's Department and Baptist World Alliance.





Send Offering Receipts to the Appropriate Continental Union

North American Baptist Women's Union

North American Baptist Women's Union
P.O. Box 282
Bordentown, NJ 08505-0282

Asian Baptist Women's Union

Account Name: ASIAN BAPTIST WOMENS UNION INC.
Account Number: 159-2-15903048-7
Account Type: Savings, USD Bank Name: METROBANK (Metropolitan Bank & Trust Company)
Bank Address:
ADB Branch
6 ADB Avenue,
Mandaluyong City
Metro Manila, Philippines
Zip Code: 1550
Bank Phone: (632) 632-4141
SWIFT BIC: MBTCPHMM

Caribbean Baptist Women's Union

Dr. Clover Jarrett, Treasurer
CBWU
6 Mercury Blvd. Mercury Gardens
P.O. Box 777
Spanish Town
St. Catherine, Jamaica



European Baptist Women's Union

Account Number: 272728
Bank Name:
Spar-und Kreditbank
Evangelisch-Freikirchlicher
Gemeinden eG
BIC: GENODE51BH2
Postgach 1262
61282 Bad Homburg
Tel: 06172/9806-0

Baptist Women's Union of Africa

Email BWUA Treasurer Sipiwe Mlambo at: rumbidzaimla@gmail.com or womenbwa@bwawd.org for information on how and where to wire your offering.

Baptist Women's Union of Latin America

Email UFBAL Treasurer Ofelia Rendon de Tapuy at: luz_ofely@yahoo.es for information on how and where to wire to wire your offering or email: womenbwa@bwanet.org for the information.

Baptist Women's Union of the South West Pacific

Judith Searle
P.O. Box 189R
Redlynch QLD 4870
Australia
Ph: 61 7 4033 0586
VOIP: 61 7 4015 2789
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Email: judith@searleconsulting.net

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Secretary/Treasurer:

Donna Groover
Email: TreasurerWD@bwawd.org

Executive Director:

Patsy Davis
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Email: marlenebaltazar@uol.com.br

North America: Moreen Sharp
Email: president@nabwu.org

South West Pacific: Julie Belding
Email: julie@belding.co.nz



Baptist Women's Union of the South West Pacific (BWUSWP)



because of their protests against the current political regime.

5. Pray for Christian parents in New Zealand as they seek to raise their children in an increasingly secular, anti-Christian environment in which traditional family values are no longer seen as relevant.

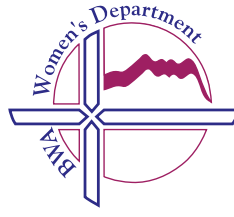


1. Pray for the leaders of the Australian Baptist Women, that they would know the Holy Spirit's leading and guidance as they exhort the women of Australia to find Jesus, follow him and be passionate for his people.
2. Pray that Christian women in West Papua might freely come to Papua New Guinea to do and receive ministry.
3. Pray that Baptist Women in Papua New Guinea might find a place to set up a conference center, and pray that they may also be able to raise the funding for this project
4. Pray for solidarity and unity among Christian groups in Fiji, some of which have suffered repression



... through Prayer

2013 Prayer Guide



*The Baptist Women's
Day of Prayer Program
is Published by:*

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Fax: +1 (703) 903-9544
E-mail: womenbwa@bwawd.org
Web: www.bwawd.org

Baptist Women's Union of Africa (BWUA)



1. Pray that as economic meltdown continues to rise in most countries, God would encourage Baptist women in Africa to engage in prayer and fasting as a vehicle for bringing about change starting at the local level using meetings, rallies and prayer partners both at individual and group levels.
2. Pray for effective partnership among BWUA regions.
3. Pray for BWUA leadership to positively identify and address critical areas of training needs among women [e.g. computer literacy], to be treated at regional conferences. This will help build productive and effective human resources.

4. Pray for women in Africa to engage in specific projects that address spiritual, physical, economic and social needs.

Pray that women would strive to give and provide more than they receive.

5. Pray for the BWUA Executives as they reach out to both active and non-participating Baptist women in different sub-regions to encourage togetherness in both BWUA and BWA WD activities. Pray that God will raise effective resource persons during the outreach program.

6. Pray for generous financial contributions towards the World Day of Prayer and Africa Day of Prayer. Pray for effective translation of both programs into local languages to boost active participation.



North American Baptist Women's Union (NABWU)



3. Pray that we would all be good stewards of our physical, emotional and spiritual resources and that regardless of our situations, barriers would be broken and God's love would prevail. May we always be willing and ready to share with our sisters and demonstrate the fruit of the Spirit within our lives.

4. Pray for the NABWU mission projects that will receive grants from the 2013 Day of Prayer offerings. These projects reach out and minister to a diversity of women and children throughout North America.

5. Pray that God will open the hearts of younger and older women so that they will seek to develop mentoring relationships with one another that help to bridge the generation gap.

6. Pray that the Holy Spirit will prompt us to set aside our own agendas and remind us to uphold our Baptist sisters across the world in prayer not only today, the Day of Prayer, but each and every day of the year.



1. Pray for mission volunteers as they return, that their eyes will be opened to the ripe fields in their local areas and that they may become willing and diligent workers of the Lord's harvest within their own communities.

2. Pray that the Holy Spirit would take the worship, fellowship and discipleship received by the North American youth at the BWA Youth Conference, and use it to strengthen, encourage and empower them to be growing, effective disciples of Christ and God glorifying world changes in the days and years to come.

Baptist Women's Union of Latin America (UFBAL)



1. Pray for unity amongst the leadership in each country in Latin America so that they will honor and glorify the Lord's name.
2. Pray for the new UFBAL (Baptist Women's Union of Latin America) Executive Committee that will be elected during UFBAL's continental meeting November 13-17, 2013.
3. Pray that the vision to minister to children in Latin America will continue to be maintained through the work of Baptist women in each country.
4. Pray for the young women in Latin America – that they will become more involved in the work of Baptist women locally and nationally, as well as at the continental union level.

5. Pray for the Christian families so that they will be light in their homes and neighborhoods.
6. Pray for UFBAL so that it will not lose its purpose and vision in the work of the Lord.



BWA Women's Department Executive Board

1. Pray for Raquel R. Contreras, BWA WD President.
2. Pray for Donna Groover, BWA WD Secretary/Treasurer.
3. Pray for Patsy Davis, BWA WD Executive Director.
4. Pray for the following Vice Presidents:
Africa: Joina Dhlula
Asia: Sook Jae Lee
Caribbean: Yvonne Pitter
Europe: Livija Lame
Latin America: Marlene Baltazar
North America: Moreen Sharp
South West Pacific: Julie Belding

Asian Baptist Women's Union (ABWU)



1. Pray for continuous sharing of the Gospel and His love among the women and children in Asia, so that those who are living in poverty, violence, discrimination, illiteracy, child abuse and trafficking will have better lives.
2. Pray for the missionaries serving in Asia, especially for their spiritual, physical, and emotional health, their safety, their language ability and their relationships with the nationals and other missionaries. Pray also for their children as well as their families back home. Pray that their outreach is productive and that God continues to send missionaries to those who are yet unreached.
3. Pray for the protection of the people living in Asia from natural disasters which cause huge loss of life and property every year. Pray for families who have already been affected by earthquakes and tsunamis – that they will find stability.
4. Pray that the restrictions imposed on Christians in various countries throughout Asia would be lifted so the Gospel can penetrate and expand (e.g. North Korea, China, Myanmar, and Pakistan). Please also pray for peace amidst the ongoing tension and conflict between East Asian countries.
5. Pray for an effective cooperation between the government and churches throughout Asia so that there may be healing among many individuals and family members that have been hurt from various social issues (i.e. divorce, homosexuality, alcohol and smoking, drug abuse, idolatry, and sexual immorality).
6. Pray for the newly elected ABWU officers at the 12th ABWU Assembly to be strong spiritually and physically. Pray for their wisdom and dedication so that they can serve and carry out their ministries faithfully.



Caribbean Baptist Women's Union (CBWU)



1. Pray for unity among the churches in Barbados and for women who go through daily family struggles.
2. Pray for effective leadership of the women's ministry in Antigua, and that the young women will be interested in the women's ministry and that men in the churches will be more effective in the home and community.
3. Pray that the women in Dominica be sensitized to be part of the local and national body and be more committed to the work for the Lord.
4. Pray for the new government in the Bahamas, and pray that the unemployment situation will be improved shortly.

5. Pray for spiritual empowerment and child-rearing skills among mothers which will impact the future of the Caribbean.
6. Pray that more women will find gainful employment in Jamaica and other islands throughout the Caribbean.



General Prayer Requests



T. J. Wheeler, Patsy Davis, Raquel Contreras, and Donna Groover – BWA Women's Department officers and staff

Baptist World Alliance Leaders

1. Pray for John Upton, BWA President.
2. Pray for Neville Callam, BWA General Secretary.

For more detailed information go to:

www.bwand.org

European Baptist Women's Union (EBWU)



1. Pray that the European women would recapture the first love that they had for God, and that it would take first place in their busy lives.
2. Pray that Christian thinking be not only a philosophy or smart way of living, but because of the love of God in our lives, it is life, love and sensitivity towards others, as we take care of each other in sisterhood.
3. Pray that the people of Europe would recognize the true value of life, and be drawn to Christ, as they see how much the Christians love one another.

4. Pray that Christian marriages would be blessed and protected by God and be strong, healthy and fulfilled, a true example of God's plan for marriage; that children would be loved, cared for and encouraged in a loving, home atmosphere.
5. Pray that the younger generations of Christian women would use every means available to them to grow and be strong in their faith, to be godly, to be salt and light in their environment and in each circumstance.
6. Pray that those who are older and wiser would not become complacent, but be open to share their knowledge and experiences of a loving God, to be open to change, as the Holy Spirit moves, in order to encourage those coming after us in the faith; that the love, joy, and peace of God in our lives would draw people to the Lord.

