



News & Views 2018

European Baptist Women's Union



EBWU Committe Meeting in Aalborg, Denmark





EBWU Committee Meeting
in Aalborg, Denmark



Beautiful Denmark March 2018





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My dear Sisters, as my term is coming to the end, let me give you a big 'thank-you' for your wonderful spirit, for your commitment,

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Report of the Middle East Conference Cyprus

The theme of the conference was 'Lift up Your Eyes' taken mainly

from Psalm 121, the key verse being 1, 'I lift up my eyes to the hills – where does my help come from? My help comes from the Lord, the maker of heaven and earth.'

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Contact with Spain

In May 2018 my husband Jaap and I,

Wies Dijkstra, visited our son, Bart, who works and lives now in Valencia, Spain. While there we went to church and were so heartily welcomed by the congregation. I gave greetings from all of you, European sisters, as I always do when I am somewhere in the Baptist world. After our visit I received this article, written by a very wise and highly respected man in Spain.

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The Past and the Future

After Prague, where our EBWU archive was stored in an interesting historical cellar, it must have been moved by the EBF workers. In the end we found it in another historical cellar: In the beautiful city of Oxford

in England! In April 2017 Margaret Brown from Scotland and Wies Dijkstra, living in The Netherlands but temporarily in London at that time, found the historical building and descended to the lower regions of it. ***By Wies Dijkstra - Page 38***



Devotional: Love ... a Fairytale?

In one word a fairy tale! I cannot think of another description for the house that I saw during summer

holidays in 1993 in Denmark. It was exceptionally well maintained and so beautifully finished! And I have not even discussed yet the interior of the house!

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Welcome to our 2018 Edition of News and Views!

We have a saying here ‘all good things must come to an end’. For me, serving as co-editor of News & Views has been a good thing.

Wies Dijkstra and I have enjoyed working together reading the articles sent in. I have met quite a number of you, our readers, and have shared fellowship with you. It has been an honour to serve and I thank you for this privilege.

This ‘good thing’ for me is coming to an end and this is the final editorial I’ll be writing for N&V. I guess you could say it is my swan song. However, the saying is not quite true. I’m sure you’ve heard of another saying in use at times ‘the best is yet to be’ and for us as Christian believers that is very true. When the Lord Jesus returns from heaven that will be the best time of all, being with Him and all fellow believers for eternity in perfect peace and harmony. It is difficult for our minds to grasp the prospect of this reality, but we believe it and long for that great Day. Meantime we hold fast to the promise of the Lord’s return; we prepare ourselves to be ready when the Lord comes, and part of that preparation is living in obedience to Him and sharing the gospel in love.

Our theme for our September Conference is ‘Love One Another’. This is not an option for us; it is a command. Honestly, we do not always find it easy to love each other, but as the Father loves us, so we are commanded to love each other.

Daily we need to rely on the Holy Spirit to enable us to love as we ought, then we will be prompted to reach out with love to others, to our family and friends, to those in our church fellowship, to our neighbours and work colleagues, and to all who come across our path.

The world is crying out for redemption (Romans 8: 18-26). Nearly every other day we hear of atrocities and calamities of one sort or another, wars,

persecution, family breakdown, addiction, natural disasters and much more. Lives are being ruined and lost. The good news of the gospel has been entrusted to us. Are we keeping it to ourselves or are we sharing it? Are we praying for our needy collapsing world? Are we strong enough and humble enough to reach out where God has placed us with love, offering practical as well as spiritual comfort and hope?

Time is short. The Lord is coming soon. Let us do what we can while we still have opportunity. *“This is love: that we walk in obedience to His commands.”* (2 John 4). There are articles in this edition which clearly show that across Europe women are being obedient, reaching out with love in the name of Jesus. May the Lord encourage all of us and bless our efforts. Let us be faithful in our praying too as we wait for the best time of all, for it is coming.

Although it will be a new team which will be responsible for the next N&V, please continue to send in articles to the new editor(s). Stories of how you are sharing love, reports of special meetings, items of interest, intimations of forthcoming events – all are welcome.

What, then, shall we say in response to these things? If God is for us, who can be against us? He who did not spare his own Son, but gave Him up for us all - how will He not also, along with Him, graciously give us all things? Who will bring any charge against those whom God has chosen?

Wies and I commend the new committee and the new editor(s) to you. Please support them as you have supported us and pray for them as they take on this new role.

Margaret Brown

Romans 8 : 31-33

PRESIDENTIAL LETTER



Farewell

Love one another - yes! This message for us as Christian women is very well known. One morning as I read the Bible I found this verse which touched my heart:

“I know your deeds, your love and faith, your service and perseverance, and that you are now doing more than you did at first” (Rev 2,19)

For me the point is: deeds, love, faith, service and perseverance. And surely these words one by one are very important to me, and - I am sure - to each of us, as Christian women.

Our love for our Savior, our faith, our trust in the Father give us courage to serve, to act by faith and love, help us to keep on, never to give up. So we can live in perseverance.

Because of it I dare to share with you that wherever I visited our lovely sisters all around Europe, Central Asia, Middle East - I found very committed, very active Christian women. When I listened to you, my dear Sisters, your stories, your experiences, your challenges called me to prayer. First in thanksgiving, then to ask blessings upon you, to ask for strength, forgiveness, and support from our Lord, to stay faithful servants as women in Europe for His glory.

I never forget how encouraging it was for me to see the readiness, the love and forgiveness in the eyes of our sisters coming from the Middle East, as they supported the women in crises, as they helped the refugees. But the testimonies of our sisters and brothers - coming from the countries where they are persecuted - had deep influence in my heart. And through my daily journey, when someone is complaining about things, I tell him or her, be aware, look up and see the blessings.

Never forget even among the loss, that you have a Heavenly Father who loves you, and in His love we may love one another.

My dear Sisters, as my term is coming to the end, let me give you a big ‘thank-you’ for your wonderful spirit, for your commitment, hospitality and your love which you were ready to share with me. My goal was to tell you, that you are not alone not just in Europe, but all around the world you have sisters and brothers. We can share not only our burdens, and our pain, but also our hopes and joys as well. Why should we not continue? Let us hold each other’s hand and go on together.

Maybe people change in the office, and we hand over the tasks but we still stay connected as parts of the same body. In the body of Christ everyone is very important.

Be aware not to get into the trap of failing because of fear and loneliness.

You are not alone, the Holy Spirit guides us, He is our Comforter and through Him we know the Lord is with us. And if He is with us, who can be against us!? His love is a strong shield around us.

It is God who justifies. Who then is the one who condemns? No one. Christ Jesus who died - more than that, who was raised to life - is at the right hand of God and is also interceding for us. Who shall separate us from the love of Christ?

So, we may be brave to step forward and follow Him on the path that He leads us through.

Yours in Christ,

Aniko Ujvari,

EBWU president (2013-2018)

Romans 8 : 34-35

COMMITTEE MEETING



EBWU Committee Meeting in Aalborg, Denmark, 7-11th March 2018

Report by Margaret Brown

This year members of the EBWU Committee held their annual business meetings in Aalborg, Denmark where they were the guests of the Baptist Danish Women's Board.

Susanne Andersen, the President for the northern part of Denmark, welcomed us to her home, a pig farm near Frederikshavn, in the heart of the



countryside in such beautiful surroundings. It was a lovely wintry scene with snow all around and often in the distance we could see deer.

When the sun shone the snow sparkled and the birds sang causing us to thank our God for the wonders of His crea-

tion. Susanne was a super host and has, it must be said, a great talent for cooking and looked after us very well. She and the Danish women welcomed us with such warmth and made us feel so much at home with them.

Our business was conducted and completed in two days, which was amazing as we had a very full agenda, but we managed and were so grateful to have it all done.

Three of the Danish ladies came on the Friday evening and had dinner with us – Anne Marie Møller, Lise Willer, the National President and Karin Christiansen former President. It was a pleasure to have them with us and to relax together afterwards in the evening, enjoying food, fun and fellowship.



Breakfast in Bethel church, Aalborg

On Saturday morning we went to Bethel Baptist Church in Aalborg where we had breakfast with around fifty ladies of the area. The breakfast was prepared and served by the men of the church who did

all the catering for the day. Following breakfast, we attended the meeting arranged for us to share with the Danish women.

Following the singing of a hymn one of the ladies shared a short devotional from 2 Chronicles 9 of the Queen of Sheba's visit to King Solomon. She heard about him, his wealth and his wisdom but that was not enough, she had to go and see it all for herself. She saw it with her own eyes. Sometimes we hear gossip, but we need to check it out – go and see for ourselves; see with our own eyes, hear with our own ears. We have heard about God. We need to see Him for ourselves. We can experience Him in our own lives if we are really set on knowing Him.



Lise Willer, National President

COMMITTEE MEETING IN AALBORG, DENMARK

Synnøve Angen gave a power point presentation of the past ten years of EBWU's ministry. Wies Dijkstra also had a power point as she spoke about the News & Views magazine and the importance of writing down stories and sending them in for the magazine. Fabienne Seguin spoke a little of the finances and the importance of the Day of Prayer offerings. Margaret Brown spoke briefly of communication and keeping in touch. Didi Oprenova spoke of her role within the Baptist World Alliance as one of their Vice-Presidents.

Aniko Ujvari spoke of the freedom we have in Jesus, about the special bond we have as sisters and the desire to widen the fellowship. She gave a personal testimony of what her visit to Syria meant to her, and what she learned from that visit. Following a few questions there was a short break for some fruit and water, very welcome after the talking!



Aalborg, Bethel Church

The Danish Business Meeting ensued with elections and several other pertinent items. After lunch, Lise Willer took Aniko, Fabienne, Wies, Synnøve and Didi on a walking tour of Aalborg, which she had prepared for us to see a number of places of interest around the town. As there was also a very interesting speaker for the afternoon meeting, I chose to stay and hear what she had to say. Ruth Brik Christensen had worked in Iraq and in Afghanistan as a 'mother' for the Danish soldiers serving there. She had very interesting stories to tell of life there with the soldiers, and of encouraging them, and sharing the love of Jesus with them as the opportunities came.

In the evening together with the Danish ladies we had a lovely meal in a local fish restaurant which served all kinds of seafood in buffet style. It was a relaxing time, having conversation with each other as we ate.



Karmel church, EBWU committee attending service



On Sunday morning we again went to Aalborg to worship with the congregation of Karmel Baptist Church. Didi Oprenova was the preacher there, speaking of God as the Rock from Deuteronomy 32:1-4. The ladies provided lunch for us there at the church. Then we visited Lindholm Hoje, a Viking museum near to the airport before leaving for home.

*May the Lord
continue to make His
face shine upon you
and be gracious to
you as you continue
to serve Him by
reaching out to
others in His name.
To Him be the praise
and glory!*

On behalf of EBWU I want to acknowledge the efforts of all the Danish women who prepared for our visit and who worked for us while we were there, not least to Susanne who graciously and generously opened her home to us and catered for us so well. I want to say a big 'THANK-YOU' to all involved. It was a joy and a privilege to be amongst you all in Denmark.

Margaret Brown

TESTIMONY FROM TARANA

Tarana is serving the Lord in Azerbaijan. She has a ministry among women, seeking to help those in need; also she is engaged in trying to rescue trafficked women.

My name is Tarana. I was born in a Muslim family. My childhood time I spent with my grandmother. She was a local mullah and for me it was very interesting being with her because she read the Koran and talked about Allah. I was afraid of death and the grave. I listened to my grandmother and she taught me verses from the Koran and told about tortures occurring after death.

I love God very much and have always tried to find Him. I prayed by the Muslim way and tried to understand God and get to know Him. I thought that is the way to heaven, but I felt something was wrong in my life and I could not understand why. *But I didn't know that God was close to me and heard my prayers.*

I was young when I married with my husband. But our family- life was not successful. He drank alcohol, committed adultery and very often hit me. The family situation was very bad and I thought about divorce. All my friends asked me: why do you live with this terrible man? He beats you and does not care about his family. After some time our daughter was born. I thought maybe our child will change him. But no change resulted. Some time later, our son was born but again, no change in his behavior.

My husband continued in his bad way of life. I cried and asked God to help me day and night. One night I had a dream. I saw one man in the sky and he asked me: 'What do you want?' I answered: 'God please help me, I cannot live like this anymore. And after this night I had comfort in my heart. Everyone who saw me asked: 'What happened with you? You look very different.' I answered *'I don't know. I just had a dream and now I have comfort in my heart.'*

My husband likes to read books. One day one man gave him a New Testament to read. My husband read this book and asked him where he was worshipping God. This man invited my husband to the Baptist Church and my husband repented there and accepted Jesus Christ as Savior and came back to our city. After these days our problems started in the city.

Our neighbors persecuted us because my husband shared about Jesus with them and they didn't like it. They said that we are traitors because we changed our religion. Local children threw stones at our home. Our children were afraid to go on the street and my husband went to the city in the night time. We sold our home and moved to another town.

Every day my husband tried to show me the Love of Jesus and His Salvation. But I said: 'Please stop it. I'm Muslim and I do not accept it'. He tried to explain to me, and he prayed to God the Father, but I thought he was crazy.

During that time my father was diagnosed with cancer and had only a short time to live. We went to visit him. My husband talked with him about Jesus and Salvation and my father accepted Jesus as Savior and died one hour later. My husband told me that my father was now with Jesus in heaven, but, again, I did not accept that. One day I said to my husband: *'If my father is in heaven with the Lord, let him come and tell me about this in a dream and I will repent and accept Jesus'*.

After 40 days of my father's death, early one morning between 4-5:00 AM I saw my father in my dream. He was young and healthy and told me: *'My daughter, I'm now in a very beautiful place. Here the streets are from gold and there are gates made of pearls.'* Revelation 21:19-21, which I had never read.

I had never read any of the Bible, I never touched this book because I thought this was a sin. But my father told me about this in my dream. It was a miracle in my life. I repented and accepted Jesus as Savior in 1994 and was baptized in 1996. Now I know following Jesus is hard but it is an honour to know Him and to serve Him as my husband does too.

I consider that our present sufferings are not worth comparing with the glory that will be revealed in us.

Romans 8 : 18

INSPIRATION FROM ISRAEL

Our sister from Israël, Daad Odeh, is a social worker and coordinator of women's ministries at ABC – Baptist Convention Israël. She shares with us the project she is working on, which is very inspiring for all of us. A Family – project to love one another and understand one another better.

Project Overview

As both Christians and Arabs, the family unit is core to our understanding of who God created us to be and how we live out our faith in our daily lives.

Parents implant values and model spiritual practices for children and spouses to one another. Not only do children benefit from their parents' belief in and service of God, churches and neighborhoods are likewise strengthened by the Christian values of reconciliation and grace put into action among believers.



To this end, ABC – Baptist Convention Israël has developed a course of practical, faith-based training sessions for women in the areas of parenting and marriage. Our goal is to empower and encourage Christian mothers and wives to grow in their leadership, being a model, communication, and nurturing skills. Trainings provide opportunities to practice and hone the skills necessary for healthy marriages, families, churches, and communities.

Project Details

Each course takes place in a local congregation and consists of 7 weekly, 90-minute workshops. Weekly topics include New Creation through God, spiritual motherhood, the importance of home life, Christian marriage, spending time as a family, the authority of parents, and finally, an evaluation session.

Each session is facilitated by a specialist in his or her area of expertise. The group of specialists includes pastors, pastors' wives, Bible teachers, psychologists, counselors, social workers, and others.

The project is coordinated by Sister Daad Odeh, social worker and coordinator of women's ministries at ABC – Baptist Convention Israel.



At the end of the course, participants and their families are invited to a one-day conference.

This event includes separate sessions for fathers/husbands and for mothers/wives, as well as joint sessions

and a special program for children. The day concludes with a shared meal and time of fellowship.

Phase two of this project (2017-2019) will focus on developing new content and inviting churches from the wider Evangelical community to participate with the goal of training six churches each year.

Feedback from participants of “Empowering Christian Mothers” in 2014-2016

- I feel I have answers to a lot of problems in my life
- I became more tolerant and forgiving



- I believe that what I learned will result positively in my relationship with my husband
- I feel I changed in how I treat my children
- I am encouraged to see my children looking positively at the relationship between their parents
- I became calmer in how I deal with things
- When I understood myself, it became easier to deal with others
- I understood the Biblical way to turn my weakness to strength
- In Jesus, I can resist every weakness and have victory
- It helped me accept the people around me, do better evaluation for their point of view and encourage them to improve.
- It enriched me dealing with home matters and widened my horizons to better interact with my husband.
- I could understand my husband's need even if he does not always say it clearly.
- We have more communication and interaction at home.
- I learned how I can have the people of my household see Jesus in me.
- Most of the women who participated asked for more teachings like this and to include their husbands too.
- *Questions? Ask Daad Odeh, daad-odeh@hotmail.com for more information.*

MIDDLE EAST CONFERENCE



Report of The Middle East Conference, Larnaca, Cyprus

5-8th October 2017

Report by Margaret Brown

In warm and sunny Larnaca, Cyprus, twenty-four ladies, plus one man (a pastor), mostly from the Middle East, gathered in the Middle East Reformed Fellowship, John Calvin Centre, from 5th – 8th October. The conference was arranged by the EBWU, particularly for the women of that region, for teaching, encouragement and fellowship, and to learn from each other in times of sharing.

The theme of the conference was ***‘Lift up Your Eyes’*** taken mainly from Psalm 121, the key verse being 1, *‘I lift up my eyes to the hills – where does my help come from? My help comes from the Lord, the maker of heaven and earth.’* It was a joy to welcome the ladies who were able to come and also to have a Pastor with us.

On Thursday evening Aniko Ujvari, EBWU President, welcomed everyone.

Following the reading of Psalm 121, she took us on a walk up several Scriptural mountains and spoke of their significance – Sinai, Gerazim, Ebal, Nebo, Carmel, Mount of the Beatitudes, Tabor, Olives, Golgotha. She reminded us of the garden tomb and the words spoken by the angel, ‘He is Risen!’ Lift up your eyes; don’t be afraid to climb the mountains, remembering our help comes from the Lord.



Wies Dijkstra, EBWU Vice-President, led in a fun time of getting to know one another where each participant had to draw their own faces and say what feature they liked about themselves. The pictures were then strung up on the wall.



On Friday morning Margaret Brown, EBWU Secretary, led in a reflective reading of Psalm 121 followed by a time of corporate prayer, setting the scene for the day.



Fabienne Seguin, EBWU Treasurer, spoke from Luke 18:35-42 about a blind man who had to lift up his eyes to Jesus from Whom his help came, namely he received his sight from Jesus. There were no medical surgeries for healing this man's sight – only a miracle was needed. The man realised that this was his time and so he stopped begging and called out loudly to Jesus. It seemed strange that the crowd wanted him to stop as they all knew Jesus was famous for His miracles. Sometimes help doesn't come from those who ought to be supporting us.

It seemed they didn't want healing for this man. These people could see, but really they were spiritually blind; just like us sometimes. Are we ready to share the gospel with everyone? To Jesus' question, 'What do you want me to do for you?' his reply is obvious. He asked for the impossible. He didn't ask for money, or food, or even someone to look after him. He asked confidently. He asked for the impossible. Jesus didn't ask his name, He saw the man's heart and his face and saw all He needed, and gave what was asked of Him. Jesus knows our needs and is well able to meet them. He sees and hears our cries whether loud or silent. Lift up your eyes – our help comes from the Lord.

Didi Oprenova, EBWU Committee Member, then led in small group discussion and feedback from what Fabienne shared.



The afternoon was taken up with sharing and testimonies. Some shared about the work they were involved in in their own churches and fellowships, others of the work they were doing among refugees, displaced people, trafficked women, offering practical help such as food, clothing, shelter, dental and medical help, education and play for children, vocational training, literacy classes, craft-work, and community centres. Spiritual help is also offered, Bibles are given and discipleship programmes with many coming to faith in the Lord Jesus Christ. Some are seeing God performing miracles. We

heard of programmes being run by some of the women – Cup of Cold Water project working with refugees, Muslims, women, children, offering practical and spiritual help. Heart to Handle is another programme training women to work as health aides in their community.

Some are involved in family ministry where teaching and workshops are given on marriage relationships and family relationships to enable family life to be strong. Some shared personal testimony of what God has done and is doing for them.



Many stories were shared of how God is at work in very difficult situations where war is constantly part of life and one never knows when shooting may start. There is much hardship and sorrow but there is much more love and

positivity amongst those who belong to Christ. It was a humbling time. God continues to build His Church and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it. The present crisis has presented a marvellous opportunity for churches to open their doors and reach out in the name of Jesus with the love of Jesus in so many various ways. Prayer was offered for each of the countries represented in the sharing time.



An EBWU presentation was given in the evening with the committee members sharing; Aniko gave a power-point presentation; Fabienne spoke of the Day of Prayer; Wies of the News & Views magazine; Didi on being

a Vice-President of the BWA, and Synnøve shared about our One Woman, One Euro project. An offering was given for the One Euro project.

The Lords supper was observed after the presentation. This was a special time. We all sat in a circle and served one another. The presence of the Lord was truly among us.

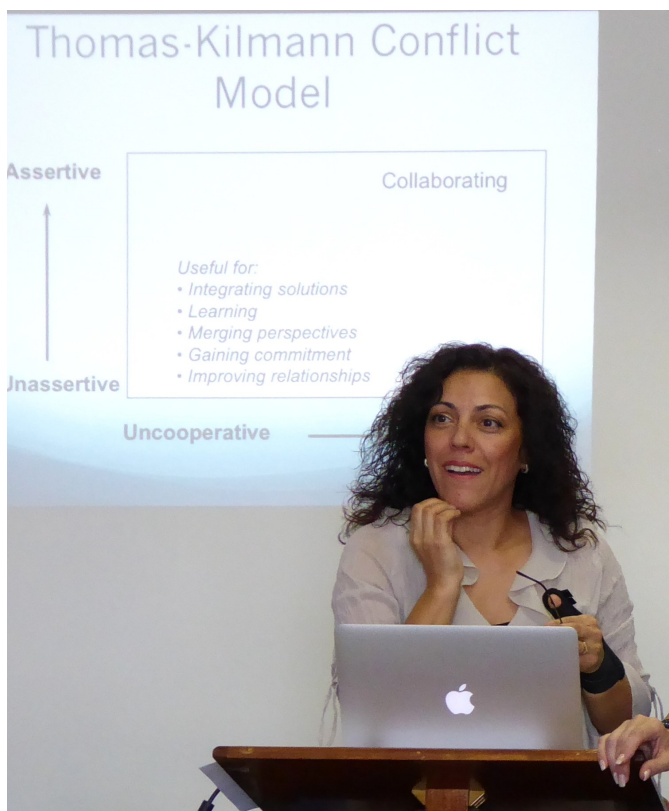


Synnøve G Angen, EBWU Committee Member, took the devotions on Saturday morning. She read Psalm 121, saying that is a song the pilgrims sang as they made their way up to Jerusalem to the temple. It is the song of a festival journey specially when climbing. Synnøve told of a time when she was young; she was a long-awaited child, much younger than

her two elder brothers so her time was mostly spent with her mother. When her mother experienced something which gave her joy she would say, ‘O, Synnøve , we are on a real festival journey.’

Although her Mum had lived a life of real hardship her eyes were always lifted up to the Lord. Both Synnøve ’s mother and grandmother had made the songs of the Psalms their own. The themes of security, safety, refuge and salvation were all very precious to them. Although they suffered loss they did not continue in grief and mourning for they knew that the Lord would take care of them. The sun and moon give light, and light casts a shadow. The shadow follows us; it is not always seen, sometimes it’s small, sometimes large. The shadow is the Lord, always there protecting, helping. Both these women were great examples for Synnøve to follow as they always lived in God’s presence, no matter how difficult the circumstances. Our lives are not just a festive journey. For most of us there are difficult days but we know our help comes from the Lord. He guards

our coming and going, and at the end we come to heaven. Let us be mothers and grandmothers for those who come after us; good examples of our trust in the Lord Who is our Help.



Didi conducted a session about Playing in a Team. We are called to be peacemakers. Many of those present live in conflict areas. Didi was brought up in the Balkans and knows something of conflict. She did say that this session was more about personal conflict rather than national, small conflicts which nevertheless affect us greatly, rather than large scale conflict. The better we know ourselves, the better we can handle the situations around us. Whenever there is conflict with someone, there is one factor that can make the difference between damaging

or deepening the relationship, and that factor is attitude. We ought to learn to work together as a team in order to resolve conflict which can be part of life to a lesser or greater degree.

Each person was given sheets of paper on which two questions were written in pairs; one had to be chosen and then marked on another paper under the headings, Competing; Collaborating; Compromising; Avoiding; Accommodating. Once analysed the answers revealed what kind of person each one was in relation to how they handled conflict, likening each heading to a particular animal, a shark; owl; fox; turtle; teddy bear. This was the fun part, yet it contained the truth about how each of us handles conflict and how we ought to work together to manage conflict.

In the late afternoon we enjoyed a sail on the sea around Larnaca. It was refreshing and relaxing on this sunset cruise, very much enjoyed.



Our time together ended with Wies sharing a very personal testimony / devotional of what happened in their family earlier this year when their son Bart's fiancé, Karla, was killed in a very bad road traffic accident in London, UK. This had a profound effect on all the family. Wies then told of how this sudden, terrible death of Karla affected her personally regarding to Psalm 121: "I lift up my eyes to the mountains – where does my help comes from? My help comes from the Lord, the maker of heaven and earth." But in that same Psalm is written in verse 7: "The Lord will keep you from harm and will watch over your life and 8 "The Lord will watch over your coming and going, both now and for evermore." (NIV)



Wies told us of how she coped initially comforting her son and then being with Karla's parents for the funeral in Brazil (Karla's home) and later at a memorial service of 100 people in April in London, personally led by her amazing brave son himself! But afterwards, for months she could not sleep, she became depressed and could not focus on anything.

Because of the words from verse 7 and 8 in Psalm 121. What about the Lord will watch over your life?! Karla was dead! Till.... She discovered that the Lord means that He will watch over your soul – like it is said in the original text and in the King James translation !! And then she could see to the mountains again and was able to see the help of the Lord in the past months like Psalm 125 :1,2 says: ‘Those who trust in the Lord are like Mount Zion, which cannot be shaken but endures forever.

As the mountains surround Jerusalem, so the Lord surrounds His people both now and for evermore.’ Wies discovered what the Lord had done during that sad time: that all the time people had prayed for her son and her family. Finally she could lift her eyes again to the mountains! This was an emotional moment for all of us at the conference, as many of us had had their own experiences in this matter, but it was proof that the Lord indeed watches over His people and surrounds them like mountains, although sometimes we are not aware of it!

Aniko brought the conference to a close, having us all stand in a circle with a few of the ladies offering prayer for EBWU, and then Aniko closing in prayer. Our worship times were led by ladies from Lebanon and it was a joy to sing God’s praise with them.

We also had times of chat and fellowship in the lounge during coffee breaks and before retiring for the night, when we enjoyed Lebanese coffee and sweet treats, getting to know each other in a more personal way. Although the conference finished on the Saturday evening, no-one was leaving for home until Sunday, so Sunday morning saw several of us joining the church service in the Centre where we were warmly welcomed. It was a pleasure to share with the local congregation.

We did lift our eyes to the Lord. We experienced His help. We were encouraged to move on and continue the work he has given us to do. To His name be praise and glory!

This conference made a deep impression on every woman who was present. It was very special!

CONTACT WITH SPAIN

Contact with Spain

In May 2018 my husband Jaap and I, Wies Dijkstra, visited our son, Bart, who works and lives now in Valencia, Spain. While there we went to church and were so heartily welcomed by the congregation. I gave greetings from all of you, European sisters, as I always do when I am somewhere in the Baptist world. After our visit I received this article, written by a very wise and highly respected man in Spain, Samuel Escobar, who also attended the lunch Maria and Jaime Company prepared for us. It was published in the magazine of Spain and it contains some very wise sayings coming from men about women.....

“They are the first”



Valencia, Spain.

In May 2018 a couple from Holland visited the church on Quart Street in Valencia and the congregation greeted them with enthusiasm: the spouses Jaap and Wies Dijkstra. Wies is the Vice President of the Union of Baptist Women of Europe. (EBWU)

The next day they were invited to lunch by Jaime and Maria Company and I was also invited as well as Ester Aguilarte. Jaime and Maria prac-

tice the virtue that has been key in the history of the expansion of the Christian Church: hospitality. Among the many things that Maria does for the cause of the Lord, she and Ester are the editors of the magazine “Nuestra Labor”, the national Spanish magazine of the Union of Baptist Missionary Women of Spain (UMMBE).



And what happened had to happen, our meal came to be a meeting of European Baptist women! Our conversation went through moments from English to French, but we managed to understand each other and enjoyed Christian communion. It was stimulating for Maria and Ester to see the interest that Sister Wies showed for what the Baptist women did in Spain. As a professor and scholar of Christian mission, I do not forget the word ‘missionary’ in the name of our feminine organization, which refers to a distinctive note of Baptist women. In the evangelical missionary advance of the twentieth century, Baptist women played a great role as promoters, diffusers, missionaries and founders of missions in faraway lands.

When browsing the magazine “Nuestra Labor”, Sister Wies expressed her admiration for all the things that the Baptist women of Spain do and for the literary and graphic quality of their magazine.

Without going any further, the number of Our Work of January-March 2018 shows the Baptist female participation in the integral Christian mission. Some samples: on the one hand with creative reflections and great relevance Raquel Molina, Noa Alarcon and Pilar Garcia explore in the Word of God aspects related to Christian character.



One note gives an account of the activities of the UMMBE in Bilbao and another describes a project of evangelization and public information in Valencia. On another page Daniel Banyuls, the Secretary of the UEBE succeeds eloquently when from his pastoral and missional experience he writes:

“From a strictly human perspective I am convinced that without women it would be difficult to sustain the church ... they are the first to accept Jesus, and then they are the first to bring the good news to their husbands and children, the first to come to pray, the first to offer, the first to promote missions, the first to help the disadvantaged, the first to teach the faith, the first to naturally show their weaknesses and fragility.....”

At that meal the men listened with interest and admiration to the dialogue of our sisters, recognizing that women like this are a gift from the Lord to their church, so that we all participate in the fulfilment of the mission.

Samuel Escobar

LOVE ... a Fairytale?

By Wies Dijkstra

John 15: 9 -13

As the Father has loved me, so have I loved you. Now remain in my love. If you keep my commands, you will remain in my love, just as I have kept my Father's commands and remain in his love. I have told you this so that my joy may be in you and that your joy may be complete. My command is this: Love one another as I have loved you. Greater love has no one than this: to lay down one's life for one's friends.

In one word a fairy tale! I cannot think of another description for the house that I saw during summer holidays in 1993 in Denmark. It was exceptionally well maintained and so beautifully finished! And I have not even discussed yet the interior of the house! Everything fitted perfectly together. If something looked like gold, then it was gold and if something looked like silver then it was pure silver.

You could see that there was no cut-back on anything and that it was intended for high-ranking people. The price I also found out: It had cost half a million!

And that's a lot for a ... dolls house!

It was made in 1907 for a little girl in England. For years her father - with the help of a staff of skilled craftsmen - worked on the house itself and the interior. (Meanwhile the girl must have been grown up by the time it was finished in 1922.)





You will understand that I – a fanatically collector of doll's house stuff – could not stop looking at something so beautiful!

But what struck me the most was the fact that the girl had determined that only fairy-tale characters could live in that house, only those who were bearing the title of ... Knight of the Order of Love!

This is the highest award that exists in Fairyland.

Knight in the Order of Love ... You do not just get that title! You certainly must have done something special to earn that distinction.

This beautiful doll house made me think of another house.

A house that I have never seen before, but according to a promise in the Bible, it must be so wonderful that all other houses cannot be as beautiful as this one. (After all, if the streets are already made of gold, how should the house look?)

In that house, only high-ranking people can live: People who bear the sign of the Order of the Love of Jesus Christ! ...

And the amazing point is: you hardly have to do anything to receive that distinction.

You only have to say: 'Lord, here I am and I love You'.

Because most of all the honour has already been won by Someone else. And there was absolutely no cutback: Jesus Christ has paid the highest possible price to allow us to live in the house of His Father!

However: there is one thing:

You must wear every day, clearly visible the signs that accompany the distinction.

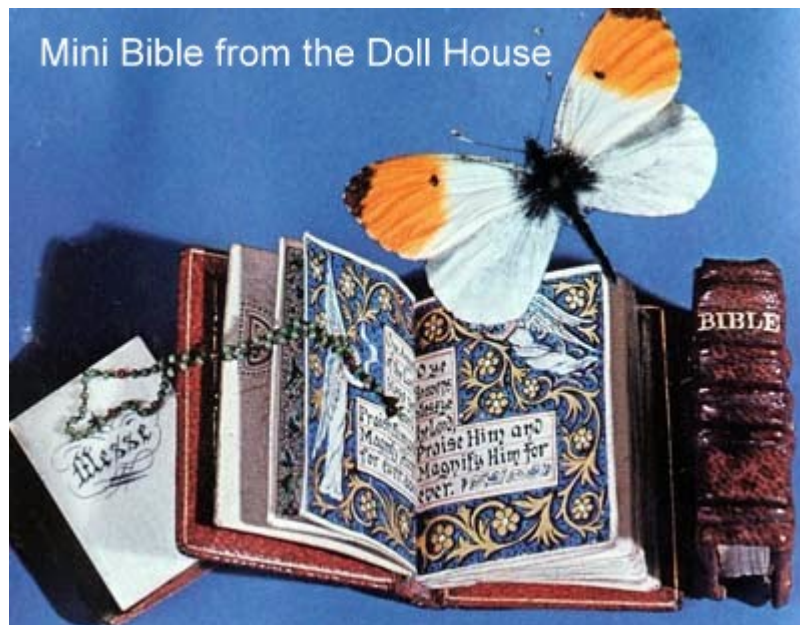
Those are: love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness and self-control.

It is important that you don't wear them only on special occasions ! You have to wear them every day in your family, at your job, in church, on holiday. To let God's Love shine through you to other people. Take care of people. Love one another. Then you will always have access to that awesome heavenly home.

Is this all a fairy tale?

No, it is Reality in the year 2018 until eternity!

Wies Dijkstra



*I have told you this so
that my joy may be in
you and that your joy
may be complete.
My command is this:
Love one another as I
have loved you.*

John 13:34-35

LETTER FROM LAURAN



“WE WANT TO BE INVITED FOR DINNER!”

Dear Sisters,

Yes, you read that right! Your EBF Anti-Trafficking Working Group would LOVE it if you would invite us for dinner and more! We would LOVE it if you would invite one (or more!) of us to your Women’s Union conferences, regional conferences - ANY gathering - large or small - where you’d like us to 1) help you understand the issues of human trafficking and 2) help you to know what to DO about human trafficking in your context. We can provide experienced speakers and workshop leaders. We’d also like for you to help US to know what YOU’RE doing about human trafficking - We ALSO want to learn from YOU!

We want you go get to know us! Most of us are practitioners with many years of experience working with human trafficking issues and people in prostitution:



Lauran Bethell: Ministry with victims of trafficking/prostitution for 30+ years, based in The Netherlands.

Cristina Bucur: Ministry with people in prostitution in Romania.

Katia and Vicente Medeiros: Founded “Project Rescue”, helping victims of trafficking in Switzerland and helping them return home.

Terry Myers: One of the Founders of “Daughter of Bulgaria”, doing outreach and holistic care for victims of trafficking/prostitution.

Tash Schoultz: Ministry with people in prostitution/victims of trafficking in the Czech Republic, and developing and leading training programs for outreach workers.

Tiffne Whitley: One of the Founders of an outreach project to victims of trafficking/prostitution in Strasbourg, France.

Helle Liht is the Assistant General Secretary of the EBF.

We recently met in Bucharest, Romania, where we participated in seminars with pastors, professors and social workers, visited safe houses and also spent time in prayer and planning. We learned SO much, made great contacts, and came away more determined than ever to help the churches in the EBF to more significantly participate in the Anti-Trafficking movement.

We will be in Lviv, Ukraine, attending the EBWU Conference and the EBF Council meetings and will present during the Plenaries and in workshops at both meetings. We are hoping to meet many of YOU!

*For I was hungry
and you gave me
something to eat, I was
thirsty and you gave
me something to drink,
I was a stranger and
you invited me in, I
needed clothes and
you clothed me, I was
sick and you looked
after me, I was in
prison and you came to
visit me.*

If you'd like to “invite us for dinner and more!”, please e-mail: ebf.atwg@gmail.com

We look forward to seeing you soon - and together, learning how we can participate in fighting the evil of human trafficking!

With Love to All,
Lauran Bethell

(for your EBF Anti-Trafficking Working Group!)

Matthew 25:35-36

THE PAST AND THE FUTURE

What would my mother have done? Women always wonder in a certain situation how their mother or grandmother would have acted. Because women know that from history you can learn! With our EBWU women it's the same: We can learn a lot from the former EBWU - "mothers"! From our own mothers mostly, we only have in mind their example, but from the EBWU mothers we have a written history!



Emily Burgoyne

Even the last EBWU committees have written "their" history, but where was the archive to put it into? After Prague, where our EBWU archive was stored in an interesting historical cellar, it must have been moved by the EBF workers. In the end we found it in another historical cellar: In the beautiful city of Oxford in England!

In April 2017 *Margaret Brown* from Scotland and *Wies Dijkstra*, living in The Netherlands but temporarily in London at that time, found the historical building and descended to the lower regions of it where they were very welcomed by Emma Walsh

and Emily Burgoyne, who are reigning over all the General European Baptist History. They confronted us with a few large boxes and then we dived into the archive! What a history we found! It was a feast to see all the pictures and documents. With many thanks to the sisters of several committees who have taken care of this archive during their service. To see how our ancestors have worked so hard in a primitive way with limited communication options. To compare it with our blazing fast emails, apps, sms, etc. one can hardly believe that they have achieved so much



in the past. But the goal that one had in mind was very important: reconciliation after the wars in Europe in the first half of the 20th century.

It wasn't easy: round the time of the founding of the EBWU the women in Europe were deeply and painfully aware that many of their countries had been at war just a little while ago. Tension and bitterness still exercised a malignant force, despite the desire of many women to reach out to their neighbours. The turning point, experienced in the meeting in Copenhagen, Denmark, when the Holy Spirit took control, came as it was written later:



“Like a dark cloud there lay a nightmare over the meeting. Then the Lord gave an inner direction to the presiding Mrs. Martin. She asked the meeting, combined of many nations, races and colours, to rise from their seats and speak very loudly, slowly and meditatively the verse John 3: 16. Like a personal confession of guilt our lips spoke: “For God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish but have everlasting life.” Under the impression of this word the tension loosened, and everyone was willing to forgive. Each sister had spoken the text in her own mother tongue.”

In the next year in August 1948 women met again in London and it was Mrs Alice Moore, an SBC missionary in Italy who later on had a great part in organizing several first Continental conferences, who put a formal proposal before the meeting of nineteen women, European and American: “That a European Baptist Women’s Union should be formed for the purpose of stimulating closer fellowship, greater co-operation, deeper sympathy for and understanding of mutual problems.”

And so EBWU was born, with the desire to establish a Day of Prayer and a news bulletin. Thanks also to Mrs Alice Moore’s creativity we still have access to a scrapbook with pictures from the very beginning of EBWU. Pictures of the American sisters Mrs. Martin, Mrs. Bates - Canada, Mrs Brown - England and many other sisters, who have worked so hard to get it possible to form an European Women’s Union.

There are pictures of the first members of the EBWU committees and pictures of the first European Continental Conferences. Those ordinary boxes are hiding a treasure. Because the most important is the written history of what had be done already till nowadays. Loads of minutes, typed on fragile ancient paper and News magazines are telling our story. A story which has been published in 1998 already for a very big part in the booklet “Our Story” by Yona Pusey.



*Delegates to the European Baptist Women's Union met in Rome, Italy last fall.
Notice the women wearing the native costume of the country they represent.*

“We Believe in the Future”

EBWU Conference, Rome, 1953

A story worth to read and to admire! A story to learn from and to continue! Especially in this first half of the 21th century with all the evil wars and difficult events Europe is facing today. More and more the situation is looking like the past.

And if we read our story, then we know what to do: We have to **unite** all the Baptist women of Europe *to stimulate closer fellowship, for greater co-operation, deeper sympathy for and understanding of mutual problems.*

It has never been so easy to communicate! The younger generation are always talking about networking. Well, if they dive into our women's or-

ganisation they would be surprised how modern we are because of our enormous network from the jungle in Papua New Guinea to the very North of Russia near the border of Alaska.

It is this network that makes it possible to cooperate. To take care of people and pray for them. And then we come to the most important connecting event of the EBWU and all the other Baptist continental Unions: **The Day of Prayer**. Established 70 years ago and still active.

The following statement, issued by the women who met in London in 1948, and quoted from The Tie That Binds (name of the news bulletin), clearly shows that fellowship with the Heavenly Father is 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.” (Blanche Sydnor White)



Auguste Meister Marie Nørgaard Gina Bassi
[Vice-President] [President] [Secretary]

Therefore: Let us learn from the story of our EBWU mothers and... Let us pass on OUR own history which we are making today for the future:

Arise and Shine!

Wies Dijkstra – Spoelstra, The Netherlands

OBITUARY



In memoriam:

Helen Ramirez

Jesus said to her, "I am the resurrection and the life. The one who believes in me will live, even though they die; and whoever lives by believing in me will never die. Do you

believe this?" "Yes, Lord," she replied, "I believe that you are the Messiah, the Son of God, who is to come into the world." John 11:25-27

Our dear sister Helen lived her earthly life with this certainty. She will live in the memory of all of us as the one who always responded: "Yes, I believe that Jesus is the Christ." The light of Christ illuminated her way and the way of the persons who knew her. Her perseverance in faith and joy of service made her a precious, faithful and tireless sister besides being an authentic example of testimony.

The Italian Baptist Women's Movement (MFEB) reminds the President Helen Ramirez, as a woman of great virtue who, always smiling, dedicated her time, energy and competence to spread the "Word of God" and encouraged the Baptist Women to walk on the way of the mission all around the world as "servants and disciples" of the Lord God of life, peace and love.

She served together within the Board of the European Baptist Women's Union (EBWU) www.ebwu.org for two terms as treasurer. Her kind and supportive spirit meant a lot to each of the European women, who know her personally. Let be glory to God, who gifted us with her.

I remember our last meeting, on March 25, 2017 - during the visit of the EBWU Committee at Rocca di Papa when, together with the European Baptist sisters, blessed and exhorted us to continue our mission and to give priority to solidarity and the women's work which is often silent and little appreciated but essential for the growth of churches.

Her departure leaves in our hearts a great emptiness. Confident that we will see her again in the promised Kingdom of God we praise and glorify God for having given to us this great woman and dear sister in Christ.

May the Holy Spirit support and comfort her family and community.

Thank you Helen, we greet you with love. Good bye, dear sister!



Lucia Tubito – MFEB President
Gravina, Italy, 4 September 2017

THE LATEST NEWS

This is the last edition of News & Views. Margaret Brown and I, Wies Dijkstra took on, at the very first meeting in 2008 of that new formed EBWU committee, the task of taking care of News & Views.

With absolutely no articles in store and no idea how to fill a whole magazine, we learned step by step how to do so. In the following years you would see us most of the time at conferences with a notepad and pen and a camera. Our magazine characteristically gave reports of conferences which were very inspiring and gave a good image throughout the years what was happening in EBWU circles. Great testimonies were given, and we honoured the committee sisters who went to be with the Lord and had worked so hard for our organisation in a Memoriam. For specific problems like Anti Trafficking we were updated every time by Rev. Lauran



Bethell who is working as Global Consultant and very much involved in this matter. The Day of Prayer is the most important day in our worldwide network of Baptist sisters and is connecting us very much. Therefore, we always had a page for Prayers and Giving Thanks. And many other articles. Throughout the years we managed to get more colour into the magazine, which made it also more expensive. But it was the rising price of the postage costs and it must be said, the lack of sub-

scription costs from the receivers.... which caused the decision to go back to 1 edition per year instead of 2 editions.

In between there was news on our website www.ebwu.org and on <https://www.facebook.com/europeanbaptistwomen>

Also, we organised Union circles by email to keep in touch. But the most beneficial way of having contact was face to face: at our Regional and 5 Annual Conferences, and every year at Committee meeting related conferences in different countries, from which a report was of course made for News & Views.

Ten years Margaret and I have been from time to time pregnant with our "babies", as we called the editions of News & Views. Behind the scenes

the emails flew back and forth between Holland and Scotland, very often till very late at night to meet the time of “delivery.”

In the first place we give Thanks to our Lord, that He enabled us to do this work during those 10 years. And we want to say, besides our writers for the copy they have sent us so loyally, a very big THANK YOU to Jaap Dijkstra. My husband was in fact editor number 3. Because he did the lay-out himself, looked through thousands of pictures to get the right ones with the articles and finally he spent 1 and a half days per edition helping at the printing machine! Thank you for all you have done “sister” Jaap, as he is called by the EBWU Committee because he has done many more things for us behind the scenes and several times in the front of being the photographer at the conferences.

Once the magazine is printed it’s not ready yet: all the copies must be sent to addresses. That takes about half a week. Can you imagine how glad I was that the last box full of envelopes got into the post office? Sometimes you have found a muddy print of a cat’s paw: then I could not stop our cat Bobo from jumping on the table to “help” me! Sorry for that.



This latest news is as Margaret had said in her editorial our last involvement as editors for News & Views. We hope we have served you well. We hope that the new editor(s) will feel the same joy to serve you as we did.

Maybe in a completely other way, but hopefully with the same intention as we did like it is written in Acts 13:32

“We tell you the Good News: What God promised our ancestors.”

God bless you all!

Wies Dijkstra – Spoelstra, The Netherlands

European Baptist Women's Union

Executive Committee Members
2013 - 2018



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*You also,
like living stones,
are being built into a
spiritual house to be
a holy priesthood,
offering
spiritual sacrifices
acceptable to God
through
Jesus Christ.*

1 Peter 2:5



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Middle East Conference, Larnaca, Cyprus 5-8th October 2017



Participants Middle East Conference,
Larnaca, Cyprus - October 2017

