

# Health Ministries News



Youth attending the Youth Alive program in Serbia on ice.

## Youth Alive Expand Reach Among Youth in Serbia

Adriatic Union | Trans-European Division (TED)

Young people in Serbia spent the new year feeling ALIVE. From December 29th, 2019 to January 02, 2020 dozens of youth teams came to the Zlatibor mountain, in Serbia, and were introduced to the Youth Alive program. They met new friends, shared their experiences and listened to useful presentations about how to be resilient against at-risk behaviors like addictions, as well as how to grow their relationship with God. Aleksandra Novakovic, co-organizer along with Pastor Ivan Novakovic youth director, spoke on topics such as human sexuality, relationships, and pornography addiction. Participants also learned about the hidden messages in music, video games and heard live experiences and personal stories, through creative workshops. In addition, they engaged in fun physical activity such as a skiing school and skating. Five friendship groups were developed as they worked together singing, worshipping, learning, playing, serving and socializing. They welcomed the New Year with incredible fireworks and expressed being grateful for the new friend and adult members they met. As 2020 arrived, they looked forward to expand Youth Alive friendship groups and inviting others in their community to participate.



Participants of the SSD Mental Health Summit

## Mental Health is the focus at the Health Summit in the Philippines

Cavite, Philippines | Southern Asia-Pacific Division (SSD)

The Southern Asia-Pacific Division hosted its first ever Mental Health Summit. More than 400 delegates coming from the three Philippine unions participated in the summit on February 21-23, 2021. The Mental Health Summit investigated the inseparable relationship between the mind, the body, and the spirit, with the hallmark Adventist view of education: restoring the image of God in man. "The future is bright for the Adventist Mental Health Care system in the Philippines. This gathering of medical practitioners and Bible workers opens opportunities for integration to deliver effective ways and strategies that address numerous issues in mental health here in the Philippines," noted SSD health ministries director, Dr. Lalaine Alfonso. Into the future, the organizers aim to host yearly mental health summits for the Division, and to establish more mental health care groups assigned to Adventist hospitals to assist in patients having signs of mental health issues. This leads to a bigger goal of having an Adventist facility dedicated to addressing mental disorders in the Philippines.



Attendees enjoying an inspiring conference in Punta Cana.

## Mental Health Summit comes to Inter-America

Punta Cana, Dominican Republic | Inter-American Division (IAD)

Nearly 200 administrators and leaders from dozens of IAD countries and islands met in Punta Cana, Dominican Republic, January 22-25, 2020, for several days of lectures, workshops, and opportunities for networking among the core group. Themed "Your Brain, Your Body, Your Heart," the four-day event reinforced the need for the physical, mental, and spiritual health necessary for a fruitful health ministry throughout the division territory and beyond. "As leaders, we are committed to educating, serving, and evangelizing," said Belkis Archbold, health ministries director for IAD and event organizer. According to the official program, the health summit featured the topics of rest and its benefits; curing high blood pressure in four weeks; diabetes and its risks; depression, mental health and the minister; the Adventist philosophy of diet, nutrition, cancer prevention, and more. The GC Health Ministries team along with other experts presented on the mental health impact for whole person health. Dr. Landless, GC health ministries director, stated "As leaders of the church, we have to lead from the front and share the 'light' we have been shown." The participants left motivated to share the light of hope in their communities.



Conference participants at the Desna better living center in Ukraine.

## First Ukraine-Belarus Lifestyle Center Summit takes Place

Chernigov, Ukraine | Euro-Asia Division (ESD)

March 9-12, 2020 marked a special event – the first of its kind. Directors of denominational Wellness Centers as well as those of supporting ministries met with union and conference HM directors and administrators of their respective territories. In all, 14 wellness centers were represented at this ESD Health Ministries mission-driven initiative. Dr. Peter Landless opened the Summit by live link and Dr. Zeno lead out in the daily workshops and many of the plenary discussions. The objectives of the encounter: support and inspire lay members' ministry, build collaborative relationships and collegial cooperation among wellness centers, create and strengthen mutual understanding with the denominational leaders at all church administrative levels, and engage in open discussion of "sticky issues" concerning health information, philosophy and practice that are becoming prevalent in our territories. Praise God for the warm and friendly atmosphere, inspirational talks and the fact-based history of our denomination's health heritage that we had. There was a new spirit among all going forward. We had a blessed outcome and there are plans to continue dialogue and meetings in three months. The plan is to replicate this with the other 19 organizations soon (God and COVID-19 permitting!)



# THE HEALTH CONNECTION

Every church a center of hope and health.

REACH UP

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## Focus on a Spirit Led Revival



## 100 Days of Prayer

This quarter we are focusing on 100 Days of Prayer (March 27 - July 4, 2020). With the COVID-19 pandemic sweeping our world, and with many unsettling events now taking place, what better time to be pressing together as a Church in prayer as we seek strength in time of crisis, as well as Holy Spirit power for the mission before us. Find resources in English and Spanish at [www.revivalandreformation.org/100days](http://www.revivalandreformation.org/100days)



## Believe His Prophets

**Believe His Prophets**, the sequel to *Revived by His Word*, is a five-year program reading through the Bible and selected Ellen White writings, including *Steps to Christ*, *Christ's Object Lessons*, *Patriarchs and Prophets*, *Prophets and Kings*, *The Desire of Ages*, *The Acts of the Apostles*, and *The Great Controversy*. You can receive daily Bible readings, participate in interactive blogs and read select inspirational writings. Sign up at [www.revivalandreformation.org/signup](http://www.revivalandreformation.org/signup)

## Books

**Celebrations: Living Life to the Fullest** by GC Health Ministries is a proven formula for healthier and happier living. No tricks, no gimmicks—just good sense and good counsel from the Bible and science. Use the straightforward advice to live the abundant life that God wishes for you. [www.bit.ly/3blgqXf](http://www.bit.ly/3blgqXf)



## Agents of Healing: Light in a Dark World



We all have witnessed the rapid contagion of the novel coronavirus around the world, causing the World Health Organization (WHO) to call it a pandemic on March 11. Amidst the almost unreal impact on the lives of most people around the world, health professionals have received our utmost attention and respect. We have seen their faces marked with the indentation of the facemasks and goggles they wore for hours on end. Those marks express their tireless efforts to save lives and to bring healing and light at a time of crisis and uncertainty.

Among the many health professionals at the forefront of the COVID-19 response we have nurses. Nurses providing high quality, respectful treatment and care, addressing fears and questions through community and one-on-one dialogue, collecting data for clinical studies, advocating for policy change and educating people on how to protect their families and their communities. Quite simply, without nurses, there would be no response. Why are we highlighting nurses? Simple: 2020 is the year of the nurse and the midwife.

Beyond this pandemic, nurses and midwives play a vital role in providing health services to people around the world. They devote their lives to caring for mothers and children; giving lifesaving immunizations, health advice and meeting everyday essential health needs. They are often the first and only point of care in their communities. WHO states the world needs 9 million more nurses and midwives. That's why the World Health Assembly has designated 2020 the International Year of the Nurse and the Midwife.

As Adventists, we join this year-long effort to celebrate the work of nurses and midwives,

highlighting the challenging conditions they often face and the opportunities they have to provide hope and whole person care, including spiritually, to all they serve. For over a century, Adventist nurses have been instrumental leaders in providing healing in a wholistic way. In 1883, the first school of nursing was established in Battle Creek Sanitarium, Michigan, with that goal. As the health ministry of the church reached around the globe, mission minded nurses had a vital role. They assisted in the development of clinics, hospitals, and schools of nursing as early as 1898 in Australia, in South Africa (1900), Argentina (1908), China (1921), and India (1925). Today, nursing schools continue to expand rapidly, totaling more than 75 around the world. Thousands of nurses serve in hospitals spread in every continent.

On April 7, 2020 (World Health Day) let us join the WHO in celebrating the work of nurses and highlighting the need for more of them. The global shortage ensures a demand for Adventist nurses who will extend Jesus ministry by sharing health, healing, hope and wholeness, serving all who may need. We praise God for all nurses: angels of light in a dark world pointing to Christ the Healer and light Source.



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## Health Ministries Resources

• **WHO Campaign to Combat the Coronavirus.** In March 2020, the World Health Organization (WHO) launched a campaign entitled “Connecting the World to Combat the Coronavirus” to unite the world in the fight against coronavirus, bringing together a wide array of partners on a series of engaging initiatives to motivate and mobilize people to be ready to beat COVID-19, and to support the COVID-19 Solidarity Response Fund. The WHO is providing accurate country specific reports, advice for the public, media resources, technical guidance and travel advice. To access these go to the website listed below: <https://bit.ly/2w0HLoj>

• **World Health Day (April 7).** On World Health Day, the WHO is calling the world to celebrate the work of nurses and midwives that touch the lives of millions each day around the world. On April 7, they will launch of the first ever State of the World’s Nursing Report 2020. The report will provide a global picture of the nursing workforce and support evidence-based planning to optimize the contributions of this workforce to improve health and wellbeing for all. The report will set the agenda for data collection, policy dialogue, research and advocacy, and investment in the health workforce for generations to come. More information on: <https://bit.ly/2w42EPs>

• **Adventist Health Ministries Coronavirus Resource Page.** The coronavirus pandemic brings the opportunity to educate church members and community friends on effective prevention strategies using evidence-based and biblically sound information. There are so many sources of

misinformation and fake messaging that can be dangerous and even harmful. It is critical to evaluate every information we share. The General Conference has developed a COVID-19 page, which contains credible information that is catered for use in faith communities. You will find information on the pandemic, prevention strategies, and recommendations through articles, videos, and fact-sheets developed by the Adventist church, as well as key credible websites from other institutions. <http://healthministries.com/coronavirus>

• **World No Tobacco Day (May 31).** In response to the tobacco and related industries’ systematic, aggressive and sustained tactics to attract a new generation of tobacco users, **World No Tobacco Day 2020** will provide a counter-marketing campaign and empower young people to engage in the fight against Big Tobacco. The campaign will: Debunk myths, particularly marketing tactics targeted at youth, including through the introduction of new and novel products, flavors and other attractive features; Equip young people with knowledge about the tobacco and related industries’ intentions and tactics to hook current and future generations on tobacco and nicotine products; and Empower influencers (on social media, in the home, or in the classroom) to protect and defend youth and catalyze change by engaging them in the fight against Big Tobacco. It may be a perfect opportunity to host a <https://www.breathefree2.com> stop smoking program or start a <https://youthaliveportal.org/en> in your church or school. <https://bit.ly/3azbbsA>

## Dates to Remember

### 2020

(if travel permitted)

#### May 8-10

Portuguese Union  
ARMin Global Training  
Lisbon, Portugal

#### May 22-24

WAD ARMin Global Training  
Abidjan, Cote d'Ivoire

#### August 10-18

Youth Alive Training and Conference  
Middle-East North-Africa Union  
Cairo, Egypt

#### August 24-30

Youth Alive Training and Conference  
Franco-Belgium Union  
Collonges Sous Salève, France

#### September 20-30

Enliven Lifestyle Training and Retreat  
Islamabad, Pakistan

#### October 8-9

LEAD Conference  
Silver Spring, Maryland, USA

#### October 10-14

Annual Council  
Silver Spring, Maryland, USA

### 2021

#### May 20-25, 2021

GC Session  
Indianapolis, Indiana, USA

## RESEARCH UPDATES

# Share Facts with Hope and Positive Choices



• **Smoking linked to severe coronavirus infection.** Smoking or vaping could make you more vulnerable to a severe infection with the novel coronavirus. Though few studies have investigated the connection specifically, cigarette smoke and vaping aerosol are linked to lung inflammation and lowered immune function. A small study (<https://bit.ly/2WU18ub>) in China found that men were more likely than women to be hospitalized for coronavirus infections, and scientists say this observation could be related to the fact that in the country, vastly more men than women smoke. Another study published in the Chinese Medical Journal, involved 78 patients with COVID-19 and found that those with a history of smoking had a 14 percent higher risk of developing pneumonia. Want to reduce your chances of lung complications or severe COVID-19? Choose to stay free from tobacco or vaping. <https://factswithhope.org/> (video 8).

• **Prayer and meditation may help your mental health during a pandemic.** Millions of adults in around the world have various forms of mental illness, from anxiety to obsessive compulsive disorder. In the United States, one study showed that individuals for whom religion serves as the defining and organizing purpose of their lives—recovered more quickly from bouts of depression. And for those with serious mental illness, religious and spiritual activities are the most often cited in strategies that are beneficial to their state of mind. Paul writes, “And the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus.” (Phil. 4:7 NKJV). This is good recipe against fear and the uncertainty of a global pandemic. Keep your mind in God’s promises. <https://factswithhope.org/> (video 29).

• **Relationships can boost your immunity.** During this time of social distancing, many can feel isolated and lonely. These feelings may be hurt one’s health. In a famous experiment researchers exposed hundreds of healthy volunteers to the common cold virus, then quarantined them for several days. The socially isolated participants were more likely to develop a cold than the participants with more social connections. Spending time with friends through virtual means like skype, facetime or text, may be one of the easiest health strategies for boosting immune function during this global pandemic. Start adding into your schedule more opportunities to interact socially while you are home. It's inexpensive, it requires no special equipment, and we can engage in it in many ways. Expand your social networks and send the cold or coronavirus away. <https://factswithhope.org/> (video 42).

• **Helping others can improve your mental health.** Each year, thousands of people globally suffer heart attacks, stroke, chronic pain, and depression. Helping others through volunteering lessens the impact of depression on those who have suffered from heart attacks and reduces disability and depression for those who suffer from chronic pain. For a group of stroke survivors, serving as peer supporters for other stroke victims increased their feelings of usefulness and well-being and helped them reintegrate into the community following their illness. There is evidence that while we help others we can have more appreciation for what we do have. Consider some ways you can help others in need during this difficult global COVID-19 pandemic. Your help is a gift you can give not only for others in need, but also to yourself. <https://factswithhope.org/> (video 43).

## WHO and UN Health Calendar Emphasis



### April-June

**7 April**  
World Health Day

**Last week of April**  
World Immunization Week

**25 April**  
World Malaria Day

**31 May**  
World No Tobacco Day

**14 June**  
World Blood Donor Day