

Health Ministries News



Participants at the Youth Alive in Turkey.

Youth Alive Comes to Turkey

West-Asia Field | Middle-East North Africa Union

From August 28-September 3, 2024, young people from West-Asia Field (WAF) in Turkey joined youth leaders and adult mentors to participate in the Youth Alive program. A key goal was to invite community friends from various cities in Turkey to join other youth and young adults for a weekend of inspiration, learning, playing, serving, and also making new friends. The week started with the training of Youth Alive adult and youth facilitators, equipping them to lead the Youth Alive Friendship groups (small groups of 8-10) and make connections with the visiting youth. That training was followed by the Youth Alive Conference, where dozens of young people from various faith backgrounds gathered to learn about addictions, relationships, and mental health, and also encourage them in their spiritual journey, exploring God's purpose for them. They attended workshops, sang together, and listened to engaging devotional sessions. They played games and laughed together. They served the local community and developed deep connections, making new friends in their friendship groups. "It was amazing to see how much the youth who had never been to a church enjoyed the Youth Alive conference," reported Cindy Porto, WAF Health Ministry director. "The youth left eager to continue meeting regularly and learning more about God's purpose for them to live a full and abundant life," she added. WAF plans to continue hosting several friendship groups throughout Turkey and convene them annually for a Youth Alive conference.



Medical doctors recommit to work in God's service across church health institutions.

Medical Congress and Health Advisory

São Paulo, Brazil | South American Division

The South American Division (SAD) hosted a Health Ministries (HM) advisory and a Medical Congress in São Paulo, Brazil, on September 5-10, 2023. The HM advisory convened health directors from all of the SAD unions with the purpose of making plans, facilitating access to resources, and inspiring the HM directors to embrace comprehensive health ministry with the purpose of advancing God's mission. Included in the SAD agenda was the discussion of integrating all Adventist hospitals in Brazil into one system. The proposed plan was embraced by the Union and Hospital administrators, projecting that this plan would enhance the sustainability and future of these institutions. The SAD plans to start in Brazil, and then perhaps unify all SDA hospitals in the division into the same system. The week ended with a Medical Congress, where the doctors employed by the church were celebrated and recognized for their unselfish, dedicated service. These medical missionaries left inspired to continue committing their lives to the service of God, bringing healing and salvation to the many lives they touch daily.



Nurses during their dedication ceremony.

Adventist Health System Launches Faith Community Nursing

Bali, Indonesia | Southern Asia Pacific Division

The Adventist Health System (AHS) of the Southern Asia Pacific Division (SSD) convened nursing leaders from hospitals and educational institutions to attend the Faith Community Nursing (FCN) Foundations training held in Bali, Indonesia, from September 24-30, 2023. Faith community nursing is a specialty of nursing where licensed registered nurses promote whole-person health for self, individuals, and the community using nursing knowledge combined with spiritual care. FCNs function in paid and unpaid positions as members of the pastoral team in various congregations, cultures, and countries. They prioritize the intentional care of the spirit, assisting the members of congregations and/or faith-based organizations to maintain and/or regain wholeness of body, mind, and spirit. At the Bali FCN training, the nurses attended an intense 40-hour course where they learned ways to provide spiritual care and minister not only to people's physical health problems but also to their mental, emotional, and spiritual needs. "We wish to take this training to as many nurses in our hospitals," explained JoAnn Amparo, director for the Adventist Health System in SSD. "This is much-needed training to enhance the whole person care we provide not only in our churches but also in our health institutions."



Participants of the Adventist Recovery Ministries Training in Caracas, Venezuela.

Addiction Recovery Training Reaches Venezuela

Eastern Venezuela Union | Inter-American Division

Dedicated health professionals, pastors, lay leaders, and health ministry directors from Conferences and churches in the West Venezuela Union gathered to attend the 12-STEP Journey to Wholeness training from Adventist Recovery Ministries Global co-sponsored by the East Venezuela Union, Inter-American Division, and the General Conference. The event took place in Caracas, Venezuela, on September 15-17, 2023, with 120 people in attendance eager to learn how to make a difference in their communities. "Addictions are a major issue affecting the community, and we need to offer people care and hope," said Dr. Darlis Elvimar, Union Health Ministries director. The participants received access to resources and facilitator training, equipping them to lead 12-step groups in the churches and communities. The West Venezuela Union was also represented by a team of health professionals who were committed to bringing the ministry to the health institutions and churches in the East of the country. The pastors and Union administrators pray this will enhance the ministry they are already doing reaching people with a message of hope and wholeness.



THE HEALTH CONNECTION

Every church a center of hope and health.

REACH UP

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Focus on a Spirit Led Revival



United in Prayer

Are you hungry to have brothers and sisters to pray with? Are you feeling distressed about the conflicts and wars raging globally? Are you longing for fellowship and spiritual support? We invite you to join 24/7 United Prayer, a revival movement where you can unite daily with brothers and sisters around the world in prayer. bit.ly/3RNKfOp

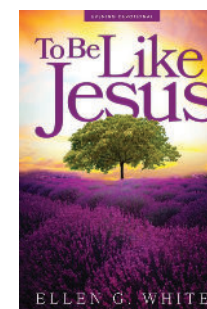


Believe His Prophets

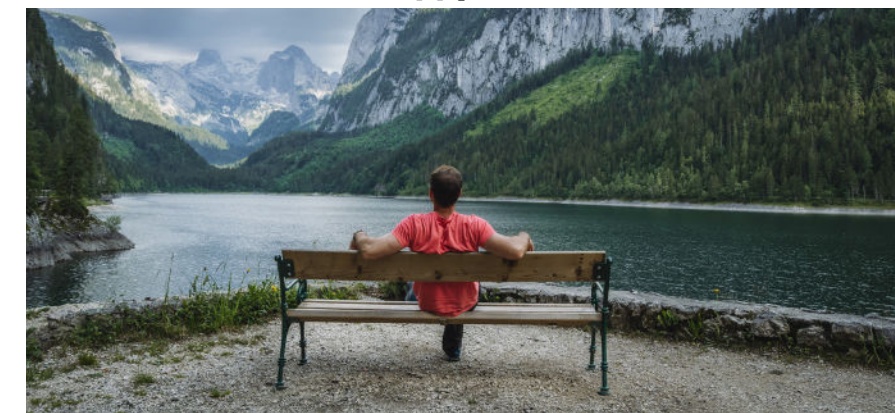
Believe His Prophets, the sequel to Revived by His Word, is a five-year program of reading through the Bible and selected Ellen White writings, including Steps to Christ, Christ's Object Lessons, Patriarchs and Prophets, Prophets and Kings, The Desire of Ages, The Acts of the Apostles, and The Great Controversy. You can receive daily Bible readings, participate in interactive blogs, and read select inspirational writings. Sign up at bit.ly/46CqcGR.

Books

To Be Like Jesus, by Ellen G. White, is a fresh compilation of inspiring messages calling us into a deeper fellowship with God in our daily journey, seeking His power to transform us into His likeness. <https://bit.ly/3ND9zU9>



How to Make 2024 a Happy New Year



For me, the end of a year is a time to make a personal inventory:

How am I living my life? Where am I at? How am I caring for my physical, mental, social, and spiritual needs?

Looking back at 2023, we may have many questions about what is ahead. Questions related to our personal lives, our professional lives, our church, our countries, and the world community. On these various levels of my reality, I'm optimistic about some things but also worried and deeply concerned about others.

It's especially painful to watch the instability, unrest, tensions, conflicts, and wars playing out around the world. In this turmoil, where do we find God's love and goodness?

Rest: Often, we rest to recover rather than rest to be ready. We minimize rest and maximize activity. In God's created order, night precedes day. Rest comes first, and then our activities may be fruitful. Nightly rest and weekly Sabbath rest are God's gifts to us. Rest is good.

Relationships: God gave us His created world—a world of nature, animals, people, and ultimately Himself. Life is about

relationships. Even more important than what we do, is who we do it with and for. We need daily and weekly quality time in nature, in fellowship with and service for others, and in God's loving arms. Loving relationships are good.

Creativeness: On the foundation of rest and relationships, we are called to be co-creators with God. When God creates, what He creates is good. When He destroys, what He destroys is evil. Likewise, we should seek through his guidance and power to co-create good things in this world and stand up against its evils. Our world needs more goodness. Let's be part of God's creative goodness and share it liberally wherever we are.

May God empower and bless your rest, relationships, and creativeness in 2024.



Torben Bergland
MD
Associate Director
GC Health Ministries

Health Ministries Resources



• **Introducing ReMinded.** ReMinded is a comprehensive, holistic, mental health resource produced by Adventist Health Ministries for the world church and the communities it serves. The program was launched in October 2023 as a valuable tool for people who struggle with mental illness but also for anyone wanting to improve their mental well-being. Through this evidence-based mental health program, you will find informational and educational videos and articles to learn more about mental health and be better equipped to support others in their mental and emotional struggles. For each topic, there is a short film with a dramatized story based on real facts and feelings people may have when experiencing depression, anxiety, and trauma. In addition, the 2-4 minute animation videos briefly, yet comprehensively, convey an understanding of aspects such as causes, self-care, and treatment. You can learn more and access this resource <https://reminded.org>.

• **Faith Community Nursing Course.** Faith Community nursing is a growing specialty practice of professional nursing recognized as a ministry that fosters whole-person health. The Foundations of Faith Community Nursing course was developed by the Westberg Institute to prepare registered nurses for Faith Community Nursing practice according to the Scope and Standards of Faith Community Nursing. This intense training prepares nurses to practice in their local church as faith

community nurses, but nurses can also use it to strengthen their health and healing ministry in a faith setting. The General Conference Health Ministry Department offers the Faith Community Nursing Foundations Course by request of Adventist Institutions globally. For further questions and resources, check this out at <https://bit.ly/3TxObne>.

• **Female Genital Mutilation (February 6).** Since 2012, the UN General Assembly has designated February 6th as the International Day of Zero Tolerance for Female Genital Mutilation to amplify and direct the efforts to eliminate this practice by 2030. Abuse comes in many forms, and female genital mutilation is one of them. The Seventh-day Adventist Church has spoken against all forms of abuse through its ENDITNOW initiative for over two decades. Because female genital mutilation threatens physical, emotional, and relational health, Adventists are opposed to this practice. The church has created a statement about female genital mutilation and recommends that its departments share it widely. Access the statement at <https://bit.ly/3Rv9Cme>. Learn more at <https://bit.ly/3Ty2XtW>.

• **“Ask the Doctor” Resource.** Do you have health related questions that you wish you could ask your doctor about but have not had the chance to? Check the “Ask the Doctor” list of topics that can bring clarity to some of your questions. Through this “Ask the Doctors” resource, you can find answers to various health questions, from Alzheimer’s disease to bariatric surgery and more. Every answer is based on scientific evidence and in line with Biblical principles. Check it out at <https://bit.ly/3NxLYUU>



HM CALENDAR

2024

January 7-10
Launch of Centennial Celebration
Penang Adventist Hospital
Malaysia

January 10-15
Pan African Dental Conference
Kenya

February 2-9
IAD Coaching Training
Panama

February 23-26
Swedish Union Lifestyle
Coaching Training
Sweden

March 4-6
SUD Health Ministries Advisory
India

March 24-30
Faith Community Nursing
Foundations Course
Argentina

April 12-16
AAIM Advisory
Kigali, Rwanda

April 15-20
EZUC Youth Alive
Training/Conference
Harare, Zimbabwe

April 20-28
MENA Health Summit
Lebanon

May 3-5
ARMin Facilitator Training
Colombia

May 8-10
FAGU Lifestyle Coaching Training
Guadalupe

May 17-19
ARMin Facilitator Training
Brazil

Global Health Calendar Emphasis 2024



January-March

February 4
World Cancer Day

February 6
International Day of Zero Tolerance
for Female Genital Mutilation

March 10
World Kidney Day

March 24
World TB Day

RESEARCH UPDATES

Share Facts with Hope in many languages



• **Sweet drinks and your health.** Sugar-sweetened beverages have been identified as the primary source of added sugars for many people, contributing to the pandemic of obesity in many countries. These sugar-sweetened drinks are also linked to insulin resistance, impaired B-cell function, and belly fat—precursors to metabolic syndrome and type 2 diabetes. In addition, recent studies have found that these beverages increase inflammation, which contributes to arteriosclerosis, plaque stability, thrombosis, and risk for heart attack and stroke. But there is hope! God gave us a perfect beverage that does not promote weight gain or chronic disease. Water. It has no calories or additives and is widely available, inexpensive, and generally safe. So do your health a favor. Go pour yourself a tall glass of God’s perfect beverage! <https://bit.ly/48rsiKw> [video 7]

• **Sleep deprived?** A study by the National Sleep Foundation found that playing video games, checking e-mails and text messages, or watching television at night may be depriving us of getting enough sleep. Nearly 95% of people questioned in the study said they used some electronics in the hour before going to bed, and about two-thirds admitted they do not get enough sleep during the week. Exposure to artificial light before going to bed can increase alertness and suppress the release of melatonin, a sleep-promoting hormone. But there’s hope. You can make a big positive impact on sleep, mood, health, relationships, stress management, work productivity, and academic performance by making a small change in electronic use before bed. So, switch your device for a book at least a few evenings a week and have a better night’s sleep. <https://bit.ly/48rsiKw> [video 10]

• **Anxiety can shorten your life.** Researchers examined data on more than 60,000 people from 10 large cohort studies in England and found that even very mild depression or anxiety raised the risk of death from heart disease by 29% and all-cause death by 20%. But there’s hope! Psalm 55:22 tells us to cast our cares on the LORD, and He will sustain us; He will never let the righteous fall (NIV). A randomized controlled trial investigated the effect of prayer on

depression, anxiety, positive emotions, and salivary cortisol levels. Participants receiving the prayer intervention showed significant improvement in depression and anxiety, as well as increases in daily spiritual experiences and optimism compared to controls! <https://bit.ly/48rsiKw> [video 13]



• **In 2024, invest in prevention.** Chronic diseases – such as heart disease, cancer, stroke, and diabetes – are responsible for 7 of 10 deaths among many people each year and account for 75% of health spending in the US. Although sometimes related to economic, social, and physical factors, more often, it is behaviors such as tobacco use, poor diet, physical inactivity, and alcohol abuse that lead to poor health and contribute to chronic disease. But there’s hope! A focus on prevention in our families, churches, schools, and communities will not only improve the health of individuals but also save money. A report from Trust for America’s Health concluded that investing \$10 per person per year in proven community-based programs that promote a healthier lifestyle could save the country more than \$16 billion annually within 5 years. So, let’s invest to live a longer and healthier life while saving some cash. <https://bit.ly/48rsiKw> [video 11]

EDITORIAL
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