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# Newsletter



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## God's Names: Lamb of God, Saviour

He was just a baby - a little boy born to Mary. What should Mary and Joseph name Him? That was easy because an angel had already told them (see Mat. 1:21). His name was easy. What was hard was His job "he will save his people from their sins".

For hundreds and hundreds of years, God's people made animal sacrifices to pay for their sins. Thousands and thousands of animals were killed - bulls, sheep, goats, doves, and pigeons.

What could this little baby do?

A Saviour is one who comes to "save" God's people from their sins. Was baby Jesus the Saviour? Jesus grew up and became a man. Was He the Saviour? John the Baptist said: "Behold, the Lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the world." (John 1:29)

The lamb of God? Jesus is even more than that.

He was not only the baby of Mary — He is also the Son of God, and His names are like God names! Because Jesus is God.



I have learned over the years that the best moments with your children are those when you open your ears and really listen to what they say. This was one of those days. I was home helping my daughters, Astrid and Edera, with their schoolwork, when we began talking about their day at school. One of my daughters started to talk about a girl that they both knew at school, who is from a non-Adventist family. My heart cried out in joy as one of my daughters said, "Every time I have an opportunity, I talk to her about Jesus." She said this to me like meaning that there is only one important thing to do when you meet other people... and it's to share what you have in your heart... Jesus.

One of the biggest problems we face today as society is "distractions". Our kids, our young people... even the adults are distracted with many things. We have smart phones, we have tablets, we have computers, we can spend hours just looking at what others write on Facebook, or Instagram, or Snapchat. Every day you can find a new game, you can spend hours and

hours doing absolutely nothing... distraction.

I still remember that when I was my daughter's age, my mind was occupied with playing with friends, going to school, or watching my favorite TV shows. Even with fewer distractions as kids have today, I wasn't concerned, as my daughters are, with talking to others about Jesus. Or at least I don't remember a specific time when I made the decision to share the Good News. But there in our dining room, in that moment, my daughter taught me an enormous lesson—a lesson that I have learned, but with the busyness and responsibilities of life, often forget. That the most important thing in our lives is to share the love of Jesus with others. For my daughters, at their young age, and even with their busy school schedules, the most important thing for them is to talk to that girl about Jesus.

We are about to start a new year, 2018, and we all have lists of the things we want to do in the new year, and it seems most

*Continue reading on page 2*



### CHM in the Inter-American Division

**How many children are listed in your Division?**

Approximately 700,000

**Which countries belong to your division?**

24 Unions, 32 countries

**Which activities are you doing for/with children?**

Vacation Bible Schools, Friends club for after VBS, Week of prayer, Baptismal classes, Stewardship week, Children and adolescents Sabbath, Princess of God certification (for girls), Knights of God certification program (for boys), Evangelism week by them, Children and adolescents festivals, Bible challenges, 28 Fundamental beliefs challenge, Leadership certification, Children and risk program, School for parents as part of the certification program

**What are your challenges?**

Appropriate budgets at the local level  
Inclusion of children in church programs at some local levels  
Bringing the teachers at an "upgrade" level of understanding the times the children and adolescents live in and their needs

**Which dreams and plans do you have?**

Children and adolescents with a healthier knowledge of Jesus  
Children with a sound mental health  
More involvement in the church commission and life

**Which programs do you have for 2018?**

We have voted 2018 as the year of the child and adolescent in our Division. For that, we have designed a missionary program called "The talking backpack" for which we have designed pins and a lot of other materials to go in their backpacks to help them witness. This is our main focus for 2018. The program is designed to meet with the children and adolescents once a month to reinforce Christian values and keep them involved in witnessing. We even have an app for this. We will be launching this program and will be on line, Sabbath, December 9, 2017 at 3:30 pm, Miami time.

*Melba Dinorah Rivera, born in Santo Domingo, Dominican Republic, is married to Edwin C. Rivera. She is mother of four adult children and grandmother of five. She enjoys writing, a beautiful sunset, nature, people (children included), honesty, different cultures, a full moon, the splendor of the sea and time alone with God.*

years pass and we never complete our "to do" lists. This year, my "to do" list is a short one—only two things to do every day—fill my heart with Jesus, and tell others about Him.

Every morning, when you wake up, the first thing you have to do is to fill up your heart with Jesus, begin your day with Him. Invite Him into your life and let Him transform you completely. Then, Go and Tell the World. That should be our focus. There should be nothing more important in the Christian's life than telling the world about Jesus.

"For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ, for it is the power of God to salvation for everyone who believes, for the Jew first and also for the Greek.." Rom. 1:16. NKJV



Jonatan Tejel  
EUD Youth Ministries Director

Jesus wants  
all of me



### Tell them

People all over the world need to hear about Jesus. And God wants me to tell them. But first He must be alive inside of my heart. When I grow up, God may send me across the world — or across the street! I will let Him decide. God is not my servant. I am His.

*"All authority has been given to Me in heaven and on earth. Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations."*

Matthew 28:18-19



Out of the mouths of babes...



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The vicar and his wife had left for a conference-abroad, forgetting to give instructions for the banner which was to decorate the hall at the Christmas Carol Concert, the following weekend. The secretary of the Mothers' Union was astonished to receive a telegram from France which read simply:

"Unto us a Son is born.  
Nine feet long and three feet wide.  
Rev. and Mrs. Johnson"

Taken from Watts M., "Children on the Loose", Mill Hill, London, 2001

## In Synergy Christmas Wishes from the EUD CHM



*God, 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?*

*Romans 8:32*

"In giving His Son to die for the sins of the world, the Lord God made manifest what was the estimate He placed upon men; for in giving Jesus to the world, He gave heaven's best gift. [...] Whatever may be the nation, kindred, or tongue, whether a man is white or black, he still bears the image of God."

*Ellen White, Lift Him Up*

May we, who received this most precious gift, be generous and loving to the people around us, no matter their religion, colour, language...

Let's start with those who, in God's sight, are the most precious ones: Children.

How often do we consider them too young, immature, or not ready to receive Jesus? And yet Jesus places children and their faith as example for us. So let us take every opportunity and effort to help children understand God's love for them and receive the best gift ever: Jesus.

Stay blessed throughout 2018, and be a blessing to others —  
especially children!

### It's time for our annual Christmas pageant, and I'm not too enthusiastic. Do kids really benefit from these?

It depends. Why are you doing these pageants? What do the kids understand to be the reasons for the pageants? Are they fun for the kids, or is a lot of emphasis put on a perfect performance? The answers to these questions will help to determine whether or not these pageants are beneficial to your kids.

- **Pageants help kids develop skills.** If handled properly, these programs can be a good opportunity for kids to develop faith-sharing skills, poise, and self-esteem. These skills are best developed if the director cares more about the kids than a perfect program. Also, kids should be allowed to be involved in more than just the performance. Involve kids in set building. Involve kids in the orchestral music, if appropriate. Let it be the kids' pageant, not an adult program that happens to involve some children.
- **Pageants spotlight the children's ministry.** Pageants provide good publicity and visibility for the children's ministry. Adults enjoy seeing children perform; often children's pageants are well-attended even by adults who don't have children in the program. Pageants and programs are a great way to make the rest of your church aware of the children's ministry at your church.
- **Pageants are also subtle outreach events.** Many unchurched family members will refuse to come to a worship service, but they will come to see

a granddaughter or a nephew in a Christmas pageant. Take advantage of the outreach potential inherent in these programs.

If directing a pageant is outside your area of expertise and talent, delegate it to someone who is comfortable with it. Or put together a pageant-ministry team in which each team member is responsible for a different part of the program. Some publishers offer "instant pageants" that require very little preparation but are fun and entertaining for both kids and adults. Check with your local Christian bookstore for these resources.



Taken and adapted from Beckwith L., *Quick Relief for Children's Ministry Leaders*. Group Publishing Inc., Loveland, Colorado, USA, 1998

*Shall We Have a Christmas Tree?"—God would be well pleased if on Christmas each church would have a Christmas tree on which shall be hung offerings, great and small, for these houses of worship. [...] You can make it like the world if you have a disposition to do so, or you can make it as unlike the world as possible. There is no particular sin in selecting a fragrant evergreen and placing it in our churches, but the sin lies in the motive which prompts to action and the use which is made of the gifts placed upon the tree.*





## Stranger at the Town Well

Talk about radical! Jesus not only visited people the Jews *hated*, He made friends with the most unpopular person in town! Read John 4:5-26, 39-42

life. Then think of the “living water” Jesus gives you and thank Him for it. Ask God to help you share your faith with others.

### Think About It

- Jesus shared the Good News with unpopular people. Who might He want you to talk with about Him?
- Think of what Jesus means to you and what He has done for you. How can you put that into a message for others?

### Go deeper

Read Luke 9:51-56; 10:30-37; 17:11-19; John 1:40-51; Acts 1:7-8; 1 Peter 3:15.

### Prayer Starter

Pour a glass of water. Think how important it is for your



### Facts and Fun

Jews and Samaritans were related, but they sure didn't get along. Jews traveling between Judea and Galilee tried to never go through Samaria. They would cross the Jordan, head north, then cross back above Samaria — even if it meant an extra day's journey.

Taken from: Dall, J. et al.: *My Time with God*. Tyndale House Publishers, Wheaton, Illinois, USA, 2000

## CHILDREN'S QUESTIONS + ANSWERS

**Question:** Did the people in the Bible celebrate Christmas?

**Answer:** During Christmas we celebrate Jesus' birth. The Christians decided to celebrate Jesus' birth many years after he was born. They chose December 24/25 to celebrate his birth. This date is probably not the exact one when Jesus was born, but that is not important. What matters is to remember and celebrate, not the gifts and candies, but the birth of Jesus, our Saviour.

### Key Text

“After Jesus was born in Bethlehem in Judea, during the time of King Herod, wise men from the east came to Jerusalem.”  
Matthew 2:1

### Additional Texts

Isaiah 9:6-7; 16:5; Micah 5:2; Matthew 1:18-2:11; Luke 2:1-20

### Additional Question

When was Christmas established? Was Jesus really born on Christmas day? Why is Father Christmas not in the Bible?

### Note for parents

If your child asks you about Father Christmas, explain him or her that he was a very useful person to help people celebrate Christmas. Long time ago, the real “Saint Nicholas” took care of poor children during Christmas time and gave them presents. Since then, the story took on such proportions that today, we speak about Father Christmas with his “little red-nosed reindeer” distributing gifts to all the children in the world. Father Christmas is an invention. Jesus, however, is a real being.



DRogatnev/Shutterstock.com

Taken from: Veerman, D. et al.: *102 Questions que les enfants se posent au sujet de la Bible*. Éditions Bérékia, Montréal, Canada, 1999



## December 15-17, Stara Zagora, Bulgaria

The story of Jesus' birth became alive at Galery Mall in the city of Stara Zagora. Enthusiastic members of the church, as well as volunteers outside of the church, organized a special Christmas experience for the children of the city between 5 and 11 years of age, during three days (15-17 of December). With the very first step the participants crossed from modern Stara Zagora to the ancient town of Bethlehem. At the entrance they were welcomed by a native "Bethlehemmer" who ushered them in the atmosphere. The first place the guests were visiting was the exchange office where, under the watchful eye of two legionnaires, they received a purse with Roman dinars. After that they had to present themselves before the Roman administrator who ordered them to fulfill the command of Ceasar Augustus - to register themselves at the census lists, and to pay their taxes. Here every child received a paper assuring the authorities that they had payed their taxes, with their names on it written in Hebrew.

The next stop was the fields of Bethlehem where the local shepherds heard the song of the angels, and the news of the newborn King at the stable. Then they visited a small fragrance shop where to see, touch and smell the gifts of baby Jesus.

While looking for the Son of God, they passed also through a carpenter shop where every child became an apprentice for a while, and worked out a little manger with their own hands.

The next to last stop was the inn. Bethlehem was full of guests because of the census, and there was no place for them to overnight, but the innkeeper treated them well,

and told them about the family sleeping in his stable. The woman was pregnant, and he felt sorry for them.

At last, the visitors were welcomed at the stable where they met Joseph, Mary and Baby Jesus. The excited parents told them that they had been visited by angels who revealed before them that their Son would be the Saviour of the world. At the exit, just before to leave Bethlehem, all participants were invited to take part in a charity initiative organized along with the Municipality of the city, called "Children give to children".

The event was visited by 110 children and their parents. 75 boxes were collected for the charity initiative, and will be given to children in need.

Hristo Stanev

Emi Staneva

CHM Director, Bulgarian Union



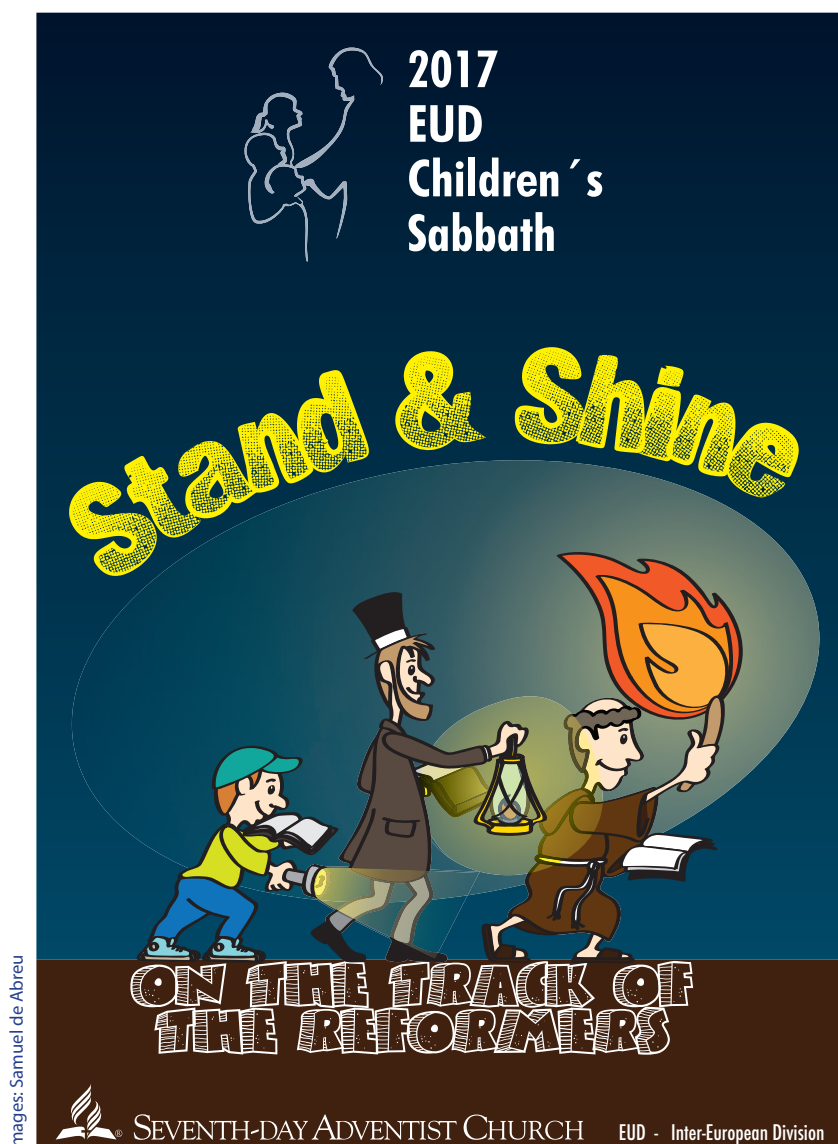




## Children's Sabbath: Stand & Shine

**2017 - Year of Reformation (500 years)**

Special Material for Children's Sabbath has been prepared and translated into some languages of EUD territory. According to the feedback from several churches children, like all other participants, really enjoyed the opportunity to discover the importance of Reformation then and today.



Images: Samuel de Abreu

## Object Talk: Wrapping paper

**Theme:** The best gift ever

**Object:** rock in a box, beautifully packed; baby doll

**Text:** *"For to us a child is born, to us a son is given, and the government will be on his shoulders. And he will be called Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace."*

Isaiah 9:6



## Application

Before the object lesson, wrap up an empty box with a rock inside it with festive wrapping paper, a tag and some bows. Make it as pretty and inviting as you can. Wrap a baby doll in a blanket and hide it nearby. Place the gift on a table where it can be seen.

Say, "I love Christmas gifts! They look so wonderful under the tree and you never know what you will get—until you open them. Let me see... I wonder what this gift is?" Pick up the box and shake it. Invite a few children to shake it and guess what it is. Build up the excitement about the gift.

"You know, no matter what is in this box, nothing is better than the gift God gave us. Can anyone guess what that is?" Allow kids to guess then bring out the baby doll. Hold it like it was a real baby, rocking it and keeping it wrapped in a blanket. "That's right, baby Jesus was the gift God sent us. Just imagine, the baby of God, came to earth to walk with us and teach us about God. And then, he gave up his life to forgive us of our sins." Allow kids to hold and rock the baby one at a time.

Ask a volunteer to hold the "baby" while you open the gift. Show kids what was inside of it—just a rock. Say, "Christmas gifts aren't bad but they can't compare to the precious gift of God, Jesus Christ." That's the best gift ever!

## Prayer

Lord, help us to appreciate and accept the unique and best gift of all time: Jesus. Thank you for your love. Amen.

Taken from: <https://ministry-to-children.com/christmas-object-lesson-the-wrapping-paper/>

## Upcoming Events

**2017 - Year of Reformation (500 years)**

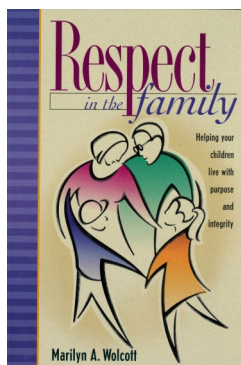
**Special Material for Children's Sabbath is ready and we are waiting to receive your translation**

**2018 is expected to be another busy year for Children's Ministries. We look forward to see great things that God is preparing for us and the children in our Division.**

**2019**

**September 18-22**

Convention in cooperation with Children's, Family, Shepherdess and Women's Ministries

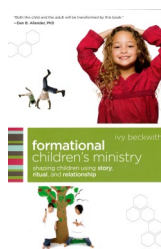


**Wolcott, M.: Respect in the Family**

Here's practical, Christ-centered advice for developing solid family relationships through respect and honor. Written with the eternal perspective of "being united with your children at the feet of Jesus", this book enables you to help them live with purpose

and integrity, and maintain a positive connection with you as they grow.

## Last but not least: books worth reading



**Beckwith, I.: Formational Children's Ministry. Shaping children using story, ritual, and relationship**

We want to raise faithful children. But are churches today helping to fulfill that mission? Or do our children's ministries look more like entertaining babysitting services than places where true spiritual formation happens?

In this book, the author helps ministers and parents create ministries that capture children's imaginations, not just to keep them occupied, but to live as citizens of the kingdom of God. She asks big questions such as:

What if we taught children how the stories of God, church history, the local community, and the child intersect and speak to one another?

In addition to providing theological reasons for formational children's ministry, the book offers practical examples of how practitioners are implementing a formational model.



**Dr. Kimmel, T.: Connecting Church & Home**

We are faced with a culture of busy churches and overwhelmed families that need a clear plan to pass a spiritual legacy to the hearts of their kids. The author shows how churches and parents can work together in a grace-based partnership to make each other's efforts more impactful.

