

# Bulletin



SU Europe Region News and Prayer Bulletin  
January – March 2012

## Editorial

What is the core message of the bible? Careful! The correct answer to this question – and internalizing this answer – could not only change your Bible reading but also your whole spiritual life!

Of course, the statement following the initial question makes you suspect I am boasting. Extreme statements can challenge us or attract our attention and as you are now reading these words, I have got your attention, at least. But besides attracting attention I still feel there is a lot of truth in it – I really believe it beyond all boasting! And this is why: Lately, I had the pleasure of reading the book on Bible reading by Pauline Hoggarth, formerly with SU International. I was intrigued by her statement on understanding the core message of the Bible. She writes basically what I stated in the beginning, only in much better words and maybe less provocative. For me, the truth of this is crystal clear: If you believe the core message of the Bible is how to get to heaven or how to live a godly life, you will mainly perceive the Bible as book of rules and advice that should be followed. You will try to apply these rules and you will sometimes be happy and sometimes disappointed, depending on your level of success.



To be sure: I enjoy having people around me who try to live a godly life because the chances are much higher that they will forgive me all my failures and support me in my shortcomings. But: If they only see the rules and advice in the Bible they might miss the greatest thing our universe can offer: A living, steadily deepening relationship with the creator of this universe. For Pauline, this prospect is the core message of the Bible and everything else is only a by-product, a logical consequence or a side issue. Sometimes I have the impression that I myself, behave very often as if the deep relationship with the heavenly father was only an unavoidable side effect of being a Christian – whatever this means. If you consequently follow Pauline's thought you might understand that for many believers a revolution of bible reading habits and of their spiritual life is in reach of their hands. However, the crucial point, I guess, is not to know the correct answer, but to believe it, to internalize it, to live it and to pass it on. Years of traditions and thinking habits may have formed our and other people's minds and make a fresh approach cumbersome.

But let's face it: Have we ever given up something extremely important only because it was cumbersome? Not in Scripture Union!

God bless  
Christian Hellwig  
European Council Chairperson

Profile on new SU European Director  
Monika Kuszmierz



**Tell us something about yourself:**

I feel very privileged to have been brought up in a family in which the Christian faith played an important role. Both parents were believing Christians and prayed and read Bible stories to me and my two younger siblings. I was also greatly influenced by the children's camps which I was able to attend from an early age. I was always very proud of the fact that in my first camp, although only 6 years old, I didn't feel the tiniest bit homesick!!

**Where did you grow up?**

I grew up in a small town right next to the River Rhine on the border to the Netherlands. Once a week we rode our bicycles over the border to Holland to do our shopping at the market.

Last summer, my husband and I celebrated our Silver Wedding Anniversary. We got married whilst we were both studying Theology. We have a son who is now 22 and studying Business Administration in Bayern.

**How did you become a Christian?**

I am a classical example of a growing childhood faith with several "conversion" experiences! I remember well when I was only 5 wanting to be friends with Jesus. Then again at about 10 years of age I was totally out of my depth with a situation in which I realised there were many smaller and larger things in my life which were not in order. My conscience was burdened by sin in my life and I gave my life afresh to Jesus. Then again when I was 13 I

realised for the first time that my parents' faith was not my own faith and that it was my own responsibility. And so I decided a third time to commit my life to Jesus.

Today, I know that these three conversion experiences correspond exactly with psychological development phases I was going through at the time. As my thinking capacity changed, so did the scope of my belief. But in each phase my relationship to Jesus was authentic and honest.

**Are there any burning issues that you feel passionate about?**

There were not so many believing Christians in the town I grew up in. In this respect I always found it particularly encouraging to spend time with other believers, no matter what denominational background that came from. The main thing was that we agreed on the core issues. This has developed into a passion – encouraging and living out fellowship with Christians from different backgrounds.

**Professional background:**

**What did you train as initially?**

Both my husband and I studied theology. A few years ago I wanted to do some further training and studied Educational Science part-time. I am more or less finished with this and only need to finish my thesis.

**What did you do before you came to SU?**

I have worked many years for SU Germany in various capacities, for example as an editor and on the Board. Alongside this I also lectured in a Bible School and conducted seminars and training sessions in churches.

**Your favourite hobbies or pastimes**

What do you do to relax and encourage a life work balance?

Reading has always been my great hobby. I used to read absolutely everywhere, e.g. whilst pushing the pram or cooking. It is not quite so extreme nowadays. I also like listening to music, particularly jazz and classical. My husband and I love exploring new towns, walking and visiting museums from time to time.

**What was your first experience of SU?**

I first came into contact with Scripture Union as a child. I used to read the children's Bible reading notes "Guter Start". Later, when I was

involved in youth work, I used Scripture Union material.

### **What are your immediate goals for the Region?**

I think I can only effectively fulfil my role in SU by getting to know the people who are behind the name of each movement. This involves being able to understand their challenges and problems but also to be able to appreciate the successful moments in the work. It is my goal to visit the National leaders and their Boards of all European Movements in my first two years of office.

Do have long-term visions?

My long term goal is to further develop collaboration between individual movements. It's my dream that great ideas from one country will be carried over to other countries so that we can set up joint projects and learn from each other. And I want to be able to help every movement, whether young or more established, to reach its full potential.



Three generations of European Directors met together recently in Germany. From left: Karl Schafer, Monika Kuszmierz, Peter Hoppler

Have you got a specific prayer request?

Right now, in this initial phase, I don't feel as if I have an overview of all my tasks and responsibilities. Nevertheless, already a few important tracks for the future have been established. I need the wisdom and the ability to set right priorities and for that I am really grateful for the prayers of the SU family. But come to think about it, I believe this is the prayer that we all need. Another reason to use the Bulletin in our prayers!☺

Monika Kuszmierz  
SU European Director

## **SU Latvia investing in the lives of those entrusted to them**

Our deepest desire in SU Latvia is to fulfil God's plan so we try to listen to his voice, and let him lead us into the ministry he has planned for us. We are learning that people are more important than programmes and numbers and God is proving himself trustworthy again and again.

One of the things our eyes have been opened to is gaining an understanding of what to do



*Anita with some of her faithful volunteers*

and what not to do. We praise God for revealing himself to us each day. In the last year we realised that God wanted us to grow in discipleship and help others to grow. He has continually led us to see that he likes deep and lasting relationships with people so he has challenged us to take care of our own people; both volunteers and campers. We have come to a knowledge that we can only see fruit if we are patient and ready to work hard. In order to effectively follow up and disciple our contacts we have been challenged to go the extra mile. Here are some examples:

### How important are participation fees?

It started 3 years ago when we organized a *Holiday club* expecting around 30 children but only 10 turned up. Staff member, Evija, was reminded of the parable of the invited guests and invited children from orphanages to come; they didn't have money to pay fees, but they were willing to participate. We invited the same children to the next club and also to the camp in the summer. In developing this strategy we made a list of children from poor families who

we had helped before and invited them again and again. God blessed our long-term commitment to these children, providing enough finances for them and we hope this also shows God's eternal commitment to them. Of course, there are some changes in the list, but most remain. In the last three years we have found money to support more than 30 children each summer.

#### Small beginnings of Schools' work

We also realised that some campers who were once very passionate about the message of Jesus had cooled off when we met them again at camp a year later. This is mainly because they don't belong to a church and that makes it hard to remain faithful. Our vision was to do something to help them. We prayed and met with people from other organizations who work with young people. We believe that our new project could become something very important because it challenges young people to read the Bible, pray, meditate, and meet with God on a daily basis. So in October we started to move. Our staff worker Evija met two girls from the same school, and they had so many questions that the first meeting lasted for 5 hours. We believe this very small beginning has great potential. It is confirmation of the eagerness of some young people to speak with an older Christian. Young people are more vulnerable and their faith is so fragile; we have to do what we can to help them grow. Our next step will be at winter camp where we will encourage our leaders to form meaningful relationships with campers and then we invite them to meet during the months between camps.

#### The harvest is plentiful but the workers are few

Another prayer which God has answered and encouraged us in his work is volunteers. This summer we had only 7 leaders for the youth camp, which was hardly enough. God showed the main leaders his compassion for people through the passage: "Then he said to his disciples, "The harvest is plentiful but the workers are few. Ask the Lord of the harvest, therefore, to send out workers into his harvest field." (Mt. 9: 37-38) They prayed this prayer during the camp and we also took this on board in our office. Just beside the campsite there was a field in harvest and the leaders took a photo of it to remind us of the prayer. Now we are starting to see God answering this prayer; for the winter camp He has sent 18 leaders!

#### Former campers – new camp leaders

We did some statistics and it turned out that 11 out of 38 leaders this year were volunteers who were previously campers. We are very pleased and thankful about that. We are organizing training for them so they can better understand what it means to lead others as Jesus did.

#### Making headway with "Godly Play"

We used this method last summer and saw that children responded well to this creative way of learning Bible stories with toys and other materials. It reveals to children that they are special to God and that there is a place where they can be children; where they can play, be together, do some crafts, and simply relax. We will continue to use *Godly Play* beyond the scope of camps. We have started to meet with a small group of children twice a month to listen to God's story and be together in a welcoming atmosphere with no pressure.



We also want to introduce this method to other workers in Latvia, so we are praying for God's leading in that. He has already opened wonderful doors of opportunity. We were invited to lead *Godly Play* lessons at several events and Sunday school groups. We are praying for wisdom to see how to make *Godly Play* better known in Latvia.

Anita Kazaka  
National Leader  
SU Latvia

**SU Slovakia hosts the European TeenGames 2011 and celebrates 10 years of English speaking Bible Camps**

### **TeenGames 2011**

Already two years ago it was decided that SU Slovakia would host the European TeenGames 2011 – a project that has become established each year in Slovakia, Bulgaria or Serbia since the first one in Athens in 2008. Hosting the event is a great challenge but on the other hand it is an amazing opportunity to get involved more, invite more children and spread the word about the event.



Although we started the preparation more than a year ago, some things are just not possible to be done in advance. That's why the two months previous to TeenGames were really intense and busy, full of making sure everything would work out as it should. Nonetheless, we could not help being nervous, coordinating 150 people from 4 different countries, most of them being teenagers where you can expect the unexpected to happen.

The first day of Teen Games was unusually quiet and calm as the group of 30 Slovak teenagers and 20 Slovak leaders waited for the delegates from Bulgaria, Serbia and Poland to arrive. By the next morning, the grounds at Tesáre were swarming with teenagers and everything was ready to set off. From that moment on the programme just kept on unfolding and there was nothing else to do but to enjoy it and make the most of it all.

The TeenGames programme has two key elements – sports and Bible teaching. We were concerned that the venue of this year's worship and Bible teaching was in quite a small hall but

we needn't have worried. This time was considered by many to be the highlight of the event with an international worship band.

Throughout the day various tournaments took place in football, volleyball, street ball, table tennis and chess, and on the last day we had an athletics championship. Those teens who were not playing in a match were usually cheering their team on, resting or enjoying their free time in the pool. The teenagers particularly appreciated not having too crammed a programme with enough time to get to know each other and experience the different cultures and backgrounds. Being Slavic countries, we were diverse but there were similar aspects as well.

Despite being a bit nervous at first about organizing a big TeenGames event, everything went really well and the teens left the campsite satisfied with some sport highs and lows, hopefully inspired by the talks they heard or had with each other, with a bunch of new friendships and their universal parting sentence: "We'll see each other in London next year!"

### **English Bible Camp 2011**

SU Slovakia has been organising English Bible camps for children for more than ten years. Although it is something we do every year, it is always a new experience and there is always something new we can learn or try out. The team is always slightly different but because of all-year-long teambuilding activities we work together really well. The big change this year was that Natalia, who used to be the camp leader, was this time more of an observer and supervisor as Miriam took over the role of leading. Natalia sat with her coffee watching the work being done, her dream had finally come true!

Even though the different elements of our regular daily programme were the same as usual, often other elements were implemented. The training during the year was focused mainly on developing our storytelling skills. The results of Natalia and Miriam's training were particularly seen in the morning meetings when groups of three leaders presented the Bible story of the day. The Bible stories were creative and different every day, involving kids and getting their attention through different senses. The greatest realisation was that this is only a beginning. There are hundreds of stories in the Bible ready to be told and retold in various ways.



## New Staff get an inkling of the Big Scripture Union Picture at the Training in Marienheide from 21-25 November

In mid November this year I was fortunate to be able to join with Scripture Union colleagues from across Europe for three days of new staff orientation at the SU centre at Marienheide in Germany. Unfortunately, due to a series of bad connections with flights that left me waiting in airport departure lounges for many hours, I was the last to arrive but was warmly welcomed by all the other delegates; SU staff and volunteers from France, Germany, Sweden, Switzerland (French and German speaking), Latvia, Kosovo and Romania.

With new people being responsible, crafts, sports and English lessons were transformed as well. Having two young guys being responsible for all the crafts for the week may seem to be taking a risk but they did an excellent job and the kids also enjoyed the fact they always had three different things to choose from.

Sonya Holloway, who has enthusiastically taught English in Slovakia for a long time, supervised the English Games which were great fun. To increase the fun factor this year we lived through one of days of the week upside down. We started the day off with reading of the bedtime story and ate dinner for breakfast. Spaghetti at 8am!

Being in a creative team bringing God's love into the lives of the kids is a great responsibility but it is a privilege as well.

*Lea Laurovičová*  
 Staff Worker  
 SU Slovakia



On the first evening we were all given an opportunity to introduce ourselves and say a little about where we came from. We were then welcomed by the new European Regional Director, Monika Kuschmierz and introduced to the course facilitators, Emlyn Williams who oversees the work in Britain and Ireland, Clayton Fergie part of SU International and Michel Siegrist who heads the work in French speaking Switzerland. After trying to learn to pronounce many new names one of the most interesting things was also to realise how different our various roles were.

Our different jobs included producing various bible resources, leading camps and working with groups of young people in many parts of Europe. Some staff had already been in their post for almost two years and were well settled, others had joined much more recently and were still new to their role and to the organisation. Characterising the real nature of



an organisation that depends so much on volunteers it was also great to see that a number of those that had joined us were performing important roles in their country in a volunteer capacity.

Each day of the new staff course started with a bible reflection taken from Matthew 21 led by one of the course facilitators. The highlights of this for me were; from v 12 -17 being reminded again of how Jesus is passionately opposed to things that get in the way of people accessing God; from verses 18-22 the prophetic nature of the words of Jesus as he cursed the fig tree emphasising his desire for fruitfulness; and a special highlight (explained by Michel Siegrist) from v 23-27 was being told of how Jesus agenda was always growth and bringing people in to relationship with the father – which stood against the Pharisee’s agenda

which was only to control people for their own ends.

Helping us understand who Scripture Union is as movement, Emlyn Williams took us through a fascinating history of SU through telling the stories of key individuals. One thing that stood out here – which seemed particularly relevant considering the meeting we were in -- was the numbers of countries that came into the story of SU in just the first few years.

Other helpful sessions took us through the aims, beliefs and working principles of the organisation and as well as core topics of bible engagement; working with volunteers; and having a focus on children, young people and their families – all giving us a better understanding of, not just what types of ministry SU focuses on, but also something more about the ethos that underpins SU’s work.

A range of seminars covering topics that included; Editing Bible notes, SU around the world, Organising a camp, Newsletters and IT, Coping with disappointment, Being effective, Work-life Balance and My place in the team, gave each of us the opportunity to learn new things that could help us in our various roles.

The conference was not all talking and attending meetings. We also enjoyed fellowshiping with each other in the beautiful



countryside around Marienheide, playing lots of pool and table tennis, a fantastic outing to the beautiful city of Cologne and a really great final meal together on the Thursday evening served by the staff at the SU centre at Marienheide.

Anything that could be done differently? – We had some great times of worshipping together – but maybe next time we could have enjoyed learning some songs in few different languages rather than depending on English.

John Nonhebel  
Urban Ministries Leader  
Scripture Union Scotland

***PS: This popular new staff training is held biennially. The date for the next training has already been fixed for 25-29 November 2013 in Marienheide – an important date for national leaders to put into their forward planning diaries!***  
***Monika Kuschmierz***

## Goodbye and thank you, Sheila!

I remember very well when I was appointed Regional Director of SU Europe Region at the European Council meeting in 1997, taking over from Karl Schäfer on 1 September 1998. The big challenge then was to find a Regional Assistant. Because of the regional financial struggles it was decided to reduce the regional appointments. Therefore my assistant could only be appointed for two days a week (40 % employment).



I made known this job wherever I could. Somebody hearing this asked me if Sheila Zehnder, the wife of Christian who was employed by the German-speaking Swiss SU movement, could be somebody for this important task. And: To my joy we could quite quickly agree to start working together in September 1998.

All in the Europe Region and Internationally who have been in contact with Sheila and/or met her know in what a wonderful way she fulfilled her role. Her employment and her salary was for 2 days, and she sometimes winked saying that since SU largely relies on volunteer involvement, there was also some time given to Europe Region as a volunteer too!

No question that Sheila and I complemented each other in a wonderful way. Sheila was the person more in the background, keeping the Region going during my many travels. She always had an open door when people had questions or needed help. We all appreciated her serving attitude, her communicating skills, her warm pastoral personality, her great ability and flexibility, her deep spirituality and praying heart. What an amazing woman and also woman of God.

A big sacrifice of Sheila was what she knew that her employment would come to an end with my retirement, and that it would not be easy to find another job at this moment. It is my hope and prayer that the Lord will open a door for Sheila in good time.

A number of times I was told that Sheila and I were a dream team. This is absolutely true. In fact, we were a team of three in that I also had the privileged support of two women: Christine, my wife, and Sheila, my assistant 😊

With all my heart I want to thank Sheila for all she has been and done for me, for the Region and for SU International, and wish her every blessing from the Lord!!!

Good to know that our friendship can continue on a private basis since Christine and I appreciate friendship with Sheila and her husband, Christian.

Peter Hoppler

## Week beginning 1 January

### Focus on other Regions B&I with FSR & Israel

**January 3-6:** The Novosibirsk team (Siberia, Russia) is running a camp this week. Other Former Soviet Republics teams also have camps and holiday clubs during the Christmas-New Year holidays. Please pray for the planning of these activities which also include a holiday club in Shakhtyor (Novosibirsk team and local volunteers – January 8-9), youth and children's camps in Moscow and St Petersburg and holiday clubs in Kiev, Torez, Simferopol and elsewhere in Ukraine.

**January 6-8:** the Northern Ireland Camps and Mission Leaders event takes place this weekend, a time for refreshing, equipping and inspiring. Pray too for similar events in Scotland (January 13-15) and England (January 13-14, January 20-21 and February 24-26).

**Scotland:** Give thanks for the appointment of John Nonhebel as Urban Ministries leader and pray for him as he seeks to grow SU's ministry among disadvantaged and vulnerable young people. There are two key training events related to this work happening in February – pray for those leading and those attending.

SU Scotland's strategy puts renewed emphasis on working with the church. Please pray that our links with churches will grow and develop and that partnerships will develop which will make for even more effective Missions and Holidays.

### Europe Region

#### Germany

**Spoil-yourself-days-away:** We thank God for the good atmosphere on both our Ladies Days on 3 and 4 October on the topic "Helplessly out of your Depth?" We had a total of 180 ladies from whom we have received much positive feedback. Thank God too for their openness to speak about their personal hardships.

**Faith on Monday:** We are taking part in this new initiative which begins on 2 January in various churches and Christian organisations. This initiative seeks to encourage people to live out their faith in their daily routine throughout the whole year – authentic, naturally, credibly. Please pray that many Christians will rise to the challenge and use our new tools for "Faith on Monday".

**Field staff retreat:** On 19 March staff "Working with Children" and "Working with Youth" will meet at our camps centre in Marienheide. Please pray that the Holy Spirit will lead those responsible (especially Claudia Diestelhorst and Thorsten Schmidt) in all their considerations and decisions.

#### Latvia

We will hold our winter camp at the beginning of January. Please pray for a good team and good activities, but most of all – that God will open the participants' hearts to hear his message. Please pray for God's guidance through every day in camp.

Please pray for our annual business meeting in February – that there will be enough time to prepare all the reports including the financial report. Please pray for our committee – for wisdom and energy to lead our SU movement.

We pray too for our senior camps leaders – that God will encourage them as they plan to lead summer camps. Since our youth camp leader has left SU, we need clear vision of how to go about our camps next summer – whether to ask somebody from our present leaders to be the new youth camp leader or to look for somebody else who is not in SU now. We should like to have peace and to remain dependent on God's guidance.

The financial situation in our country and in SU is still very fragile, please pray that we will be wise as we approach local businessman and that God will encourage them to donate money to support SU work.

## Week beginning 8 January

### Focus on other Regions East & West Asia Region

**Region:** Please pray that our new structure will be launched into orbit as soon as possible! It consists of Tadashi Oyamada, new CEO, and eight EXCO and four Team members. Please also continue to pray for the health of our accountant, Mr. Chan Wah See. He has not been well, and is weak with very poor appetite. Pray for the Lord's healing

**Peninsular Malaysia:** Christopher Cheah has been the new General Secretary since January 2011. Please pray for him as he bears the heavy responsibilities of leading SU Peninsular Malaysia. Many young people have been involved in camps during the long school holidays in November and December. Pray that the seed sown in their lives will continue to grow.

**Thailand:** Severe floods affected Thailand including the capital Bangkok from last July onwards and hundreds of people lost their lives. Pray that there will be a good recovery. SU Thailand was planning to celebrate its 40<sup>th</sup> anniversary in October but has postponed it until January. Please pray that this celebration will also lead to progress in the development of the ministry.

### Europe Region

#### Czech Republic



We are grateful for growing Ministry in Prague-West where we have started with Craft and Sports Clubs and also events in a number of schools and now we have opportunity to run regular activities with the help of evangelists from International Mission Board. The new name we gave to this Ministry

is: "Prague-West Revival" (PoWeR). Please pray for all of our events: PoWeR Children – weekly crafts and sports club for children with English teaching, PoWeR English – one English teaching for teenagers and a second for their parents, PoWeR Journey – monthly discussion club with Bible teaching, PoWeR Ladies – club for all ladies who can bring their children as during this time we provide another children's club, PoWeR Events – sports and crafts activities, concerts, competitions... Please pray that God will, through this Ministry, truly bring the REVIVAL to this area.

During this period we will again run our three regular ski camps for high schoolers. Two ski camps will be held in the Czech Republic and the third will take place in the Austrian Alps. Please pray that God will draw more youth group leaders to come with their young people and friends and that He will prepare their hearts and that we as leaders will be faithful in communicating the Gospel.

#### Serbia

We are thankful for all our volunteers who faithfully serve the Lord through SU in our country. We are holding more and more activities and the organization is developing. Pray for the fourth city, Zrenjanin, where we developing SU activities.

From January 9-13, we are holding a Winter camp for teenagers aged 12-15. Pray that leaders and volunteers would be spiritually prepared for their role at the camp, that the programme would meet the needs of teenagers

From March 24-25., we are staging a Teen conference. Many teenagers are eager for this conference in the Spring. They have the possibility to renew friendships and to plan their long Serbian School Holidays times. Pray that this conference would strengthen fellowship and unity among those involved in the ministry among children and teenagers.

## Week beginning 15 January

### Focus on other Regions Africa Region

**South Africa:** Pray for SU South Coast as they go about forming new partnerships with churches in the region. Pray also for many more volunteers to offer their time for the ministry.

**Swaziland:** Pray for improvement on the country's economy and for more financial support towards the children's camps and office running costs. Pray too for the success of the ministry.

**Uganda:** Scripture Union of Uganda is in partnership with the Bible Society of Uganda in promoting the ministry to the people with visual impairment in schools, churches and in the communities. This sensitization was done in the districts of Mbarara and Kabale. Thank God for this partnership and pray for its value and a lasting impact.

**Kenya:** We continue thank God for His love, mercies and provisions for our ministry. Please pray for the on-going programs for children & youth and families across the nation. Pray too for more open doors to reach out the unreached.

### Europe Region

#### Greece

The Economic Crisis in Greece is out of control and there are dramatic effects in the everyday lives of thousands of people. The Church needs your prayers in order to stand near the families and the people that are affected from the crisis

We continue running the project for homeless and poor people in the city centre of Athens. Every week, in our premises we prepare 120 meals that are distributed to the poor people. During the meal, our volunteers present a spiritual programme with worship and Bible Study for the people. Please pray for this project as more and more people need our practical and spiritual help every day.

Please pray for our Christian Children's Choir that continues with rehearsals for various Concerts to be given during 2012. Pray the children will be a blessing for everyone that will attend the concerts.

#### Finland

"The Bible" will be a special theme in Finnish Evangelical Lutheran Church and in Free Churches in 2012. We pray that both members and staff in all churches would understand better the meaning and strength of God's word in their lives.

We are happy and thankful for the Bible Marathon, which was released at the end of October. The cooperation during preparations was encouraging. We pray that the Bible Marathon would be an efficient tool for families with small children so that they would be inspired to read the Bible together regularly. We also pray that the notes would help people of all ages to read the Bible every day.

We are thankful for our children and youth project which is advancing well. We are thankful for our generous donors which allow us a healthy economical situation at present. We pray for God to guide our plans to expand our work.

Some experienced board members finished their service in SU Finland at the end of 2011. We are thankful for their input and ask wisdom for nominating new board members in their place. We pray that all the board members, old and new, would work in joy and zeal and share the same vision of SU work.

## Week beginning 22 January

### Focus on other Regions Americas Region

**Canada:** SU Canada's vision for 2012 is to: strengthen the SU leadership training and sports ministry apprenticeship for University students, to develop and initiate a Leader in Training program for High School students, to increase the number of partnering churches that host summer sports camps, to expand the publication and distribution of Bible engagement resources and to increase the ministry reach with a special focus on the poor and marginalised. Please pray for these initiatives.

**Costa Rica:** The children's feeding programme continues to grow. Please pray about the need for a new and larger facility to run the programme. Please pray for Carolina and Arturo as they make plans for these coming months and for the volunteers sharing the Bible stories with the children and their mothers. Please also pray that the Lord will provide a new couple to lead the campsite on the Damas Island.

**Ecuador:** There are growing pressures from the government to prohibit any sort of Christian education in the country, and also the work of volunteers. As more and more public schools are requesting the values-based programme run by SU, Tim Pawson and the volunteers serving in schools need to find new strategies to accomplish the mission of sharing the Good News. They are planning to start camping ministry during 2012, so please pray for volunteers and leaders and for the children who will attend.

### Europe Region

#### Bulgaria

In the last months we have had problems starting our new Educational Project for children in special needs, together with our friends from IFES. We rely on your prayers for this matter.

We are continuing our meetings for youths (two Fridays in the month), and for teenagers – every Wednesday) and for children. These meetings are in the Scripture Union office in the centre of Sofia and we are very grateful for these opportunities, because more and more children from non-believing families are coming! But we have some teenagers and youths that are in our hearts, and the pain is that they have become distant from God. We pray for them and for wisdom on how to approach them. Please, don't stop praying for these meetings, where we read the Bible, have discussions, watch movies, play games and talk to each other!



We are preparing intensively for our second Bible Knowledge Competition for teenagers from 14-18 years old! We have some financial problems, but

we know that God is faithful and He will answer all our prayers. We are very excited about this competition, many teenagers keep asking us about it and it is truly an inspiration to see how young people desire to read and explore the Holy Bible! Pray that we can manage with God's wisdom and that He will take care of our needs for this activity for His glory!

We also organize "Scripture Fest" with the purpose to gather musicians, bands and artists who are in some way connected with our activities. We have a concert and invite many people – this way we are trying to popularize SU in Bulgaria and also gather some finances. We are praying that many people will come and because we have so many gifted volunteers we are trying to use all of their potential for good! Pray for that and we hope this event will be frequently happening.

## Week beginning 29 January

### Focus on other Regions South Asia Region

**Pakistan:** Thank God for the success of the visit of the Regional Director to Pakistan in November last year. Pray for security and courage for SU Pakistan as they carry out their field ministries. Pray too for SU promotional visits to churches in the first quarter of the year and for National Director Danishmand as he visits SU offices in Karachi, Rawalpindi and Peshawar.

**Sri Lanka:** Pray for the new staff who have taken responsibilities since the resignation of National Director Julia Kassimatis at the end of October 2011. Pray for Russel, Manori and Imanka.

**Nepal:** Pray for National Director Dhruva and his new staff member Arjun as they minister to children in Kathmandu. Pray for the proposed visit of the Regional Director and SU International Staff Clayton Fergie in the first week of February.

**India:** General Secretary Pankaj Sahu retires this year. Pray for him as he adjusts to this new life and also for the new General Secretary who will assume duties in April this year.

### Europe Region

#### Sweden

In Sweden we are in the final steps of releasing an all new Bible Guide material for groups and individuals. It's written by young writers (under 35 years) and will be published twice a year. One New Testament book in every guide with commentaries. A new generation wants to say that they believe in the Bible as God's word and that is has a lot to tell us in our lives today!

We continue the work with the new Sunday school material and hopefully we will release it in autumn 2012.

We ask for your prayers for our economy. For the last couple of years we have had a constant number of subscribers but this year we have lost about 300 and that will be a problem in 2012 for our finances. Pray that we will find good advertising methods and Gods guidance in what we should do to get the number of subscribers to point in the right direction again.

#### Poland

Our most pressing need at present is to have enough resources to continue with our activities. Pray for materials and volunteers to continue with TeenGames and KidsGames throughout 2012. The KidsGames programme continues to be popular and is spreading to new places.

Please continue to pray for the future of SU in Poland. Since Chris Chmielarczyk stepped down as National leader he has continued with activities on a volunteer basis. However, at present he is temporarily working in the UK and his SU work is suffering as a result.

## Week beginning 5 February

### Focus on other Regions Pacific Region

**Australia:** In November the final pieces in the restructure of SU Australia were put in place. The National Director role has now been replaced by an Executive Officer to oversee the administration tasks that remain. After a period of transition through to March, Lloyd Carter will step down and concentrate on his role as Regional Director. Please pray that the transition goes smoothly and with great wisdom.

**Queensland:** The first ever Father/Son GENTS camp is happening January 6-10. Please pray for these fathers and young men to be impacted by the gospel message over the weekend. There will be awesome bonding activities such as quad biking, billy cart building, beach trips, theme park visits, sports galore, etc plus looking at the big questions about God and the universe.

**Pacific Executive:** Will meet February 8-10 in Brisbane. Pray for the Chair, Wayne Fraser, Regional Director, Lloyd Carter, and Pacific Islands Coordinator, Sam Emery in all elements of this meeting. Pray for great outcomes that will benefit SU in the whole region.

**Western Australia:** January is the busiest month. Hundreds of volunteers will be running camps and missions with 1000's of young people. Pray that many lives will be transformed by the Holy Spirit.

### Europe Region

#### Denmark

We are happy that Carsten Riis Jensen has taken over as chairperson of our council. He is already involved in SU-Denmark in various ways. So we are thankful that he agreed to take this challenge. Pray for Carsten, his leadership and for all the other projects he is doing for SU-Denmark such as new material for candidates for confirmation, mobile app for BRN for adults.

Pray that we will find a new chairperson for the board. In March 2012 Henning Lysholm will step down, and it is very important that we find a successor. Pray for wisdom and guidance.

Pray for a good recovery for Michael Linde, our sales person. He had an operation on his back because of a slipped disc. He will be on leave for a couple of months. Pray that this time of rest with God's help will bring him full recovery.

#### Spain

##### Godly Play:

Thank God for the national Godly Play conference held last autumn. A new association, *Godly Play España*, has been set up to support those involved in using this method in their work with children and to raise its profile across Spain.



*Delegates at the Godly Play conference*

**National Council:** We pray for positive outcomes from our meeting with Monika Kuschmierz last November in the strengthening of our national Council and the revitalization of the work of Unión Bíblica. Pray for new incorporations to our Council & national Committee – committed members, representing different Christian denominations and geographical regions.

## Week beginning 12 February

### Focus on other Regions SU International

**February 20–23:** Living Hope is an international initiative that includes a gathering of SU leaders in Malaysia in November 2012. Ruth Pinkerton, the chair of the planning group will be visiting Malaysia this week with Remo Paul, SU International Executive Member, Janet Morgan, SU International Director, and Jenny Stewart, SU International Business & Development Manager. Please pray for them and for SU Peninsular Malaysia as they work through the practical arrangements for the gathering.

**March 11–15:** Last year, a small international group met to begin to consider how SU Movements around the world might collaborate in their fundraising efforts. This week the group will meet again to work further on plans. Please pray for this group as they seek to address issues related to funding SU work and managing SU's God given resources.

**A1Admin:** Please pray for Sue Stott and Ruth McIntosh as they support the extensive preparations for Living Hope, especially as they attend to the production, translation and distribution of monthly communications to the movements.

**Clayton Fergie:** Pray for Clayton as he focuses on a range of details related to Living Hope communications, the development of the E100 resource for youth, an International Forum of Bible Agencies workshop and Shaping for Service course in North America.

### Europe Region

#### Hungary

In the previous bulletin we asked prayer for the youth version of *Christianity Explored* for young teens. After much prayer and consideration we decided to publish the version for the 15+ age-group, too, with the accompanying DVD. By the time you read this, they should be ready and available. This has been a big undertaking, but we believe it is worth it. Our aim is to present the Gospel in the clearest and most comprehensible way, and the DVD enhances the content greatly. Please, pray with us that we would not run out of steam as we get to the ever so important stage of distribution. We really would like this excellent material to be used by churches as widely as possible, and ultimately that many young people decide to follow Christ through this course.

It is very much on our heart to keep in touch with and encourage the children who attended our holiday clubs last summer. Please pray that we would be find effective ways to do that.

An opportunity has arisen for us at a secondary school for children with learning difficulties and from crime-related background to organize a regular Bible based programme. As you can imagine, this is not easy and we are still praying and searching for ways how to reach out to them in ways that grab their interest. They all have much shorter concentration span than the average, so we really need all the creativity we can muster! Please pray with us for these youngsters, who often come from desperate home situations and for us as we try to minister to them.

## Week beginning 19 February

### Focus on other Regions B&I with FSR & Israel

**England and Wales:** Following the positive response in churches to last year's Bible initiatives including Essential 100, we have a New Year marketing campaign encouraging people to take up a good habit in the New Year - to read the Bible on a regular basis. This includes promoting the new look Closer to God Bible guide for adults and Snapshots through the Year for children. Pray too for our leadership team and board as they finalise the strategic plan for the next few years.

**Northern Ireland:** We are really encouraged by the growth and development of the staff team, including new E3 local schools workers. Please pray in particular for the new staff as they establish their work.

**Republic of Ireland:** SU staff worker Jonny Somerville has started a very exciting new outreach using the Youth Alpha course in secondary schools. Already there are eight Secondary schools committed to running this 10 week Youth Alpha course in their schools. Please pray for Jonny in this new and exciting role.

### Europe Region

#### Slovakia



**Toddlers** are in the heart of our ministry this year, as we are running three groups with three different churches. With an age span from 1 to 5 years, this ministry offers new challenges and opportunities to share Good news not only with small children, but, in the first place, with their mums. We also published resource material for toddlers' groups and we hope to have wide distribution around the country.

A key area for training Sunday school teachers and children's workers is improving the art of **storytelling** and helping people to telling Big Bible stories through their own lives.

We need a gifted volunteer to help us re-create our **web** page so that we can start to use it as a tool of our ministry as well.

#### Austria

SU Austria looks after over 30 school prayer groups. The pupils meet in their schools for prayer under the supervision of Stefan Hüttenmeyer. Please pray that this work will grow and that even more pupils will be encouraged to pray for their schools. Pray for church fellowships and youth leaders that they will also carry the burden of this work.

The Bibel Mobil has its winter break during this quarter. It is important that this time can be used to work out new ideas and concepts for the beginning of the new season. Please pray for Andreas Trinker who is responsible for this work, that he will be creatively inspired and that the coordination of the Bibel Mobil outreach will run smoothly. Pray that the doors to many schools will be open to him and that many school kids will come into contact with the Bible.

Pray for our Board who will be coming together in this quarter to consider plans for the development of SU Austria. Pray for wisdom for the right priorities and the courage to put their trust in the Lord Jesus. Pray too for a good and refreshing fellowship amongst our staff members

## Week beginning 26 February

### Focus on other Regions East & West Asia

**Hong Kong:** Praise God for the Bible Reading Campaign which started in October and runs for a year. Already it is affecting many churches and Christian organisations. The next Regional Council meeting will take place in Hong Kong in April. SU Hong Kong will celebrate their 50th anniversary during it. Congratulations and Praise the Lord!

**Indonesia:** Last November there was a training course for pastors on using SU Bible reading methods. Please pray that this will have a significant impact on the churches through their ministry. Pray too for the impact of SMART, Gen-M, Superkidz and Specialkidz. These are Bible notes for students in secondary and primary schools.

**Finance:** There are huge needs and opportunities in this region. Please continue to pray that the Lord will bless us with more financial donations so that we can meet all our commitments for the year 2012. Our need is getting bigger and bigger!!

**Development:** Let's pray for the salvation of the people in China, North Korea, Timor Leste, Brunei and West Asia, that the Lord will open wide door to do SU ministry in these countries. Tadashi is planning to visit Brunei sometime next year.

### Europe Region

#### SU Estonia

In 2012 SU Estonia will celebrate its 20th anniversary - and we want to do it through different events which will raise God's Word in the centre. With very limited funding it will be a challenge to find resources and we need wisdom from above to make good decisions. Please pray that God would lead this process - especially the launch of E100 children version (hopefully together with the adult version).

Please pray for the preparations of camps. The young team and leaders long to hear from the Lord, to be obedient and receiving -as the programmes and ideas are shaped in different meetings and prayer nights. There will be several younger newcomers in the team and many older ones are not sure how much of their time they can give. Please pray for a mature and well equipped team, for sponsors, sites, personnel. Pray that the fire in young people's hearts would not cease.

Pray for the campsite development - we are looking for a new, dedicated and skilful project leader. Pray wisdom for the board.

We thank Lord for SEOS (Our AIDS awareness programme in schools) and for Anthony and his team; for blessed work during the autumn in different towns and for new members in teams. As it is in the middle of their busiest season - please pray that there would be enough facilitators to cover the schools; that God would touch young people's hearts, and for a miracle in finding sufficient donors locally and abroad.

## Week beginning 4 March

### Focus on other Regions Africa Region

**Zambia:** We have been praying to God for provision of adequate transport for our operations which was very critical. We thank God that He has come through in answer to prayer. A couple gave to Scripture Union Zambia a good second hand mini-bus with a capacity of 18 seats.

**Regional Office:** Mike Smallbones, Ministry Training Consultant, will retire in March 2012. Thank God for his faithful and fruitful ministry for many years and pray for his replacement.

**Regional Office:** The Regional Council has made changes in matters relating to the coordination of the core ministries. Pray for the team tasked with the implementation of the changes and for the needed resources.

### Europe Region

#### German speaking Switzerland

In February we will be holding 3 snowboard and ski camps. Please pray for the Lord's blessing and protection.

From 9-11 March staff will meet together for our annual staff retreat, followed by the Annual General Meeting of the council on 26 March. New projects will be presented and the planning for



2012 developed. Please pray for wisdom that the right decisions will be made.

**LEGO® City weekend**  
From 16-18 March children and their parents will have the opportunity to build a 13 metre long LEGO city.

Through inputs out of the Bible and a closing church service participants will learn of greater building site of our lives. This is a fantastic opportunity for all members of the family to work together to build "their" house.

#### Croatia

Winter English camp for pre teens. The camp takes place during the winter school holidays and there will be native English speakers from USA as well as some missionaries who live here. Pray for open hearts of campers, registration, leaders and the programme. As some of the leaders are coming from far away, please pray for protection on the way to Croatia.

A new opportunity for school in nature has been open for some private schools in Croatia. School in nature is part of the school curriculum in most of the school and we are offering outdoor education, teambuilding, sport, history and English programmes together with teaching kids and youths Christian values. Please pray for open doors and opportunities to spread our ministry and promote our work among teachers and parents.

## Week beginning 11 March

### Focus on other Regions Americas Region

**Bolivia:** God has blessed the school ministry this year in the city of La Paz. We are now working on a new opportunity to extend the ministry to the rural area in cooperation with the Methodist Church and with a Swiss mission. Join us in prayer of gratitude and praise to the Lord and for wisdom as we prepare resources and train workers.

**United States:** Last September, we implemented the "E100 Every Pastor Project". A packet of information about the E100 Challenge was mailed to 150,000 pastors, followed by a second mailing to 50,000 of the original group. Now, we are processing and following up on the responses. Please pray for efficient and effective follow-up, that pastors will continue to respond, that many new churches will take "the Challenge" and that God will use it to spark a Bible reading revival across the entire country.

**Honduras:** Honduras has more violent deaths than any other country in the world. The world death rate is 8.2 per 100,000 persons, Latin America's average is 15 and Honduras' is 82. Family disintegration and unemployment produce socially excluded young people who join gangs, the drug cartels' main allies. Please pray for our workers and volunteers developing the values-based programmes in Public Schools. Also pray for the finances needed to keep this programme alive and responding to the growing demand.

### Europe Region

#### France

##### La Ligue without a Director

As you may know, La Ligue in France has not had a Director General since the end of August 2011. The Governing Board has decided not to recruit a new Director straightaway, but want to allow themselves time to reflect on the possible evolution of this role and to ensure that the right person is selected. Everyone has taken on more responsibility in their particular domain: the Governing Board on the one hand provides support for different aspects of La Ligue's ministry, and the team members also have had to take direct charge over certain matters. Please pray for each person involved in this transitional phase.

##### Abide in my Word

Rooting ourselves in the word of God every day gives stability to our lives and helps us to progress. That's why we publish our Bible guides which are intended to be used as a Bible reading aide. This year, we are putting in place a special promotional campaign encouraging people to read the Bible and we really hope that our posters will be inspirational. As we revamp/redesign these guides, please pray that more people would be (re)motivated to read the Bible in France.

##### ZeBible: The young people's Bible

La Ligue works in particular with youth and as such, has been heavily involved in the publication of ZeBible. This complete edition of the Bible aimed at young people offers an innovative and original approach. It is suitable for both the well versed and novices, believers or otherwise, and there are plenty of avenues to choose in travelling through the Bible, according to personal questions and areas of interest. ZeBible has sold well, which is good news on the financial side, but above all we rejoice that young people are taking an interest in the Word of God. We already need to print further editions, and we have plans for development of this resource on the internet. Please pray for a huge distribution and for all the youth who are discovering God through this publication.

## Week beginning 18 March

### Focus on other Regions Pacific Region

**Solomon Islands:** Sam Emery has recently returned from a visit. A new Operational Team has been put in place and staff has been challenged to build on the great work done by Wendy Rayner in translating Sunday School curricula into Pijin from Bislama (Vanuatu). The hundreds of different islands and the difficulties with travel make this a challenge. Pray for wide distribution and effective training.

**Victoria:** Biblical Turning Points Program DVD is now in production. Pray that this 8 session Bible Overview project will go national, in partnership with the Bible Society, and will encourage many groups to engage with the themes and stories of the Old and New Testaments.

**E100 Challenge:** The E100 Challenge continues to roll out across Australia with the focus at this time being on Queensland and New South Wales. Pray for Dan Hardy as he works with local people and assists churches to commence the Challenge. Also for the roll out of the E100 Big Bible Challenge for children and the iPhone App.

### Europe Region

#### Norway

Pray for our Annual meeting (19. March), for the election of board and council members; that they will all take on these duties with a brave heart and with God's strength and guidance.

Over the last years we have noticed a decrease of income from subscriptions while non-dated material seems to become more attractive. Pray for a wide spread of the E100 cards/small group material, that this can generate a greater need for people to read their Bible on a daily basis.

Pray for *Karin Holt* and *Jorunn Elise Djupvik* as they facilitate seminars for parents / youth leaders /church staff on creative bible engagement.

Since our business manager *Dag Pagander* left (summer 2011) the workload has increased for *Ellen Ruud* and *Jorunn Sjaastad*. Pray that they get health, strength and wisdom for their many challenges.

#### Romania

Please pray for the volunteer team of SU Romania without which we could not do our activities. Pray for wisdom, guidance, financial and social problems,

In December we had another large scale outreach bringing practical relief to a very poor area in the south of Romania. Please pray for ongoing contacts and that we will be able to effectively follow up this project.

Please pray we will be able to encourage people who contact us about Bible reading and study.

## Week beginning 25 March

### Focus on other Regions South Asia Region

**Bangladesh:** Please pray for the writers workshop planned for early February in Dhaka leading to the writing of Bangala Daily Bread Notes. Thank God for the successful visit of the Regional Director in Dhaka to initiate children and youth ministries. Pray for the Youth Leaders and Youth leadership programmes planned for early February in Dhaka.

**Region:** Thank and praise God for the successful completion of the Shaping for Service (SfS) training course held for the South Asia Region in India last November. Pray for Ravi Navaratnam, Regional Director as he travels to the different movements to give them help and support.

**India:** Every day, 330 children come to five Suhasya ('joyful laughter') centres run by SU's Ministry to Children in Crisis department. They receive educational help and participate in various spiritual programmes and community development initiatives. Pray for the long term impact of this ministry on these children's lives

### Europe Region

#### Belgium

We are preparing a musical camp for November 2012. Pray for the casting of the children, the team of responsible persons and of course for the necessary budget. All songs will be original ones and the subject is The Travels of St. Paul.

The bilingual camp in summer 2011 was a great success and we are already preparing the next one. We hope to have about 20 children more in 2012. It will take place in the same location as this year.

The lord is faithful and we praise him for the great things he has done ...using poor servants as we are.

#### Lithuania

Although SU Lithuania has no staff we are very privileged to have a group of faithful volunteers who run the summer camps. Please pray for their continued enthusiasm and that the Lord will lift them up and be the source of their creativity.

We are also very privileged to have a Board and Council that wants to continue the work of SU in Lithuania. Please pray for unity and a shared vision.

We have a need of a new financial administrator. Please pray we will find the right person for this responsibility.