

Starpoint

I trust in you

Reformed Youth Festival

Tata 21th-25th July 2015

Synod

21, Abonyi Street

Budapest

1146

Hungary

Subject: Report on the preparation of the Starpoint Reformed Youth Festival in 2015 and suggestion of organizing the National Family Festival.

We present this report with due respect, in reference to the organization of the seventh Starpoint Reformed Youth Festival.

1. The venue:

In order to find the most suitable venue, we visited nine locations (Szolnok, Debrecen, Kecskemét, Zánka, Tokaj, Eger, Gödöllő, Miskolc, Tata), and after considering the needs and the financial resources, we were bargaining with two locations, with the University of Miskolc and the Olympic Centre in Tata. We negotiated with the management several times personally, so that we could agree on acceptable conditions for both parties. Having considered the financial and logistic conditions, the Presidency Council accepted our proposition of organizing the next Starpoint Festival in the **Olympic Centre in Tata**. The 25 hectare territory was built before the 1948 London Olympics for the Hungarian athletes, its facilities and landscaped areas are perfectly suitable for organizing a high-quality festival. The other advantage of the location is that the Starpoint Festival was organized here in 2011, and so a part of the staff already familiar with the venue. We also have a lot of information and many personal contacts that will make the arrangement much easier.

2. The main theme

The theme of the next Starpoint is going to be "**Trust**". In a workshop consisting of pastors and religion teachers, we have been working on the detailed preparation of the spiritual message of the assembly since spring. As a result, we wish to focus on the following questions:

- What is trust?
- Why is it hard to trust? (disappointments, risks)
- How can we trust? (choices, experiences)
- Finally, thinking about the miracle of having trust despite all the hardships that we might face, which can be better understood by the story of the Prophet Daniel:
"...our God whom we serve is able to deliver us from the burning fiery furnace, and he will deliver us out of thine hand, O king. But if not, be it known unto thee, O king, that we will not serve thy gods..." (Daniel 3:17-18)

On the spiritual occasions, Reverends Márió Dányi – Nagy (Kiskunhalas), Koppány Szabolcs Hajdú (Lovasberény), Boldizsár Mikló (Hodos, Királyhágómellék), Sándor Molnár (Budapest – Külső-Kelenföld), Szabolcs Szikszai (Kecskemét) are going to serve.

3. Image, website

The motto of the Starpoint: *“I trust in you. – In what do you trust?”* The completed poster is based on the theme and a new website that was launched (csillag.reformatus.hu). It is one of our important goals to inform people about the Festival as early as 2014, therefore we have posted a brochure and two posters to 2000 addresses (primarily to Reformed Congregations and secondary schools) by the beginning of October. We want more young people to think about “Who and in what do I trust?”, they can therefore read thought-provoking articles on the topic. During the winter, young people will already read about the organization, the application and the programmes.

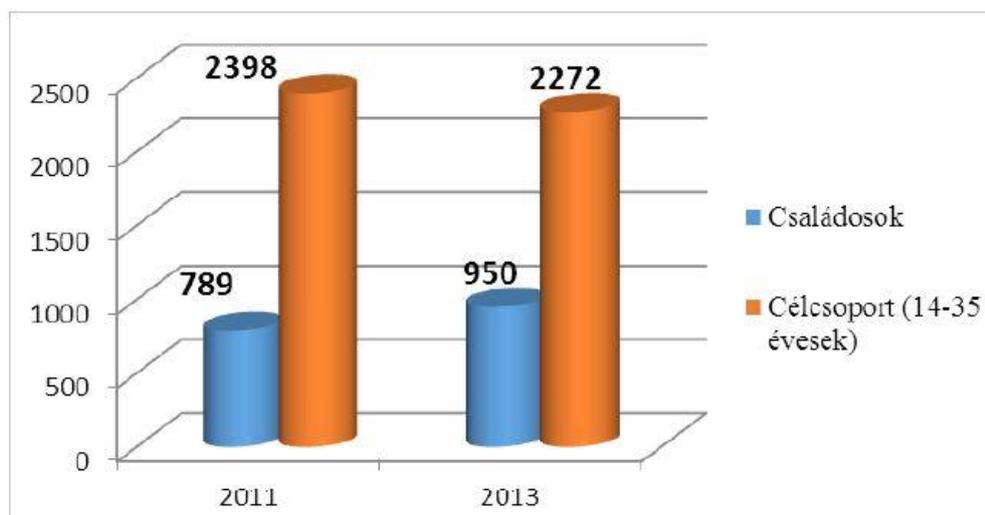
4. Youth Festival or multigenerational camp?

A. Precedents

Starpoint is a **youth festival** and it concentrates on the **16-35 age group** to achieve the goals of missions and community building. However, over the years, the people under the age of 16 and over the age of 30 (and even 50) have shown a growing interest in the festival. One of the reasons is in regards to the size, the infrastructural background and the wide range of the programmes offered at Starpoint, it is unique in our church (the Transdanubian RCFT (Reformed Church Festival Transdanubia) and the North-Eastern Reformed Festival organize similar programmes, though in a different form). However, there is no separate event, organized for the Reformed Families, offering boarding and lodging as well.

It is positive feedback for the organizers that more and more people would like to participate every year, however, we realise that our strategic goals is being jeopardized by the growing numbers of people who are not part of the target audience.

It can be seen from the following diagram, that in 2013 we registered 950 participants who were not part of the target audience.



The distribution of participants in between the targeted age group (14-35 years) and the families (and the people who are not part of the target audience) in 2011 and 2013.

B. Infrastructural difficulties

Beside the content, the extra work in connection with the infrastructure and the organization caused by the different needs of the two different age groups may be even more problematic. The staff is being overwhelmed by the unrealistic expectations made by the people who are not part of the target audience. Participants arriving with elderly or with small children, take sheltered housing for granted, whilst the festival was originally a tent camp, and because of the growing number of participants, placement in tents seems to be the most suitable solution.

Families demand more comfortable environment, higher quality housing and assured catering – this can only be carried out in a multigenerational camp, specifically organized for families.

C. Dangers in the goals of the missions

Because of the growing number of people outside of the target group, “Approaching young people in an open-minded and dynamic way” and “Showing the youthful image of the church” become endangered. Children and elderly people, as participants, demand different content and they shape the atmosphere of the event. While the relatively small number of people coming from other age groups makes the festival more diverse and colourful, the number of people attending the event, oppress the needs of the target group. The young people do not feel comfortable if they experience that the festival is becoming more of a family event.

D. Submission

Regarding the above mentioned and the strategic goals, we cannot present a solution for both groups. Therefore we recommend the creation of a festival for the families, which is similar to the Starpoint Youth Festival, but in regard to its programmes and infrastructure, on that fits the needs of families. The realization of this could be a **Multigenerational National Reformed Family Festival**. For the first time, we are planning a 4-day, 3-night event for approximately 1000 participants, which could be organized at the end of June or the beginning of July, 2015. Our recommendation was supported by the Presidency Council in October's session. A paid co-worker and a significant budget is needed for organization and planning, therefore **we ask the Synod to support the creation of a National Family Festival and inform the Synod Council about the necessity of financial support.**

We wish God's blessings for the members of the consultation and the Synod!

Budapest, 29th October 2014

Szabolcs Szontágh

Head of the Synod Youth Office

Margit Tímea Kiss

Starpoint-coordinator