

2024 District Nazarene Mission International President's Report

Nazarene missions began in 1898, as the first missionaries sent by a parent body of the Church of the Nazarene arrived in Bombay, India. Rev. M. D. Wood, his wife Anna, and three others

saw the mission of God around them. With a Bible in their hand and prayers of the church who sent them in their heart, they committed themselves to making Christlike disciples in the nations. Today, we stand on the foundation of that legacy to support the Global Mission of the church through Nazarene Missions International. Local churches engage in missions by focusing on these five key areas; Prayer, Youth & Children Engagement, WEF, Alabaster, Care & Connect.

Prayer:

Church leaders and pastors hold a sacred responsibility to cultivate a culture of fervent prayer within their congregations. Because of **your** prayers, Nazarene missionary Israel Acosta was safely evacuated through a conflict zone of Haiti. As I recently sat across the table from him and heard his story and saw the smile on his face, I was once again thankful for the prayers of the church that hold up our missionaries around the world. Through unified prayer, we align our hearts with God's mission, and God empowers each one with divine strength and guidance to fulfill their calling.

Children & Youth Engagement:

With more than 135 congregations across the Florida District and hundreds of children and youth who are being discipled, we have to ask ourselves which child or teenager in my congregation will be the one who responds to the call of God on their life to serve Jesus as a missionary? Through a refreshed emphasis on engaging children, NMI has launched Kaleidoscope, a monthly addition to NMI Central email in order to awaken and nurture a spirit of missions in everyone. This beautiful resource is available in multiple languages.

This summer, Trevecca Nazarene University and the Southeast Field NYI will be hosting the Becoming Conference for teenagers who are either exploring a call from God to be a missionary or pastor or simply want to actually serve practically throughout Nashville. NMI has committed to providing a few scholarships for students from the Florida district.

We are committed to engage our children in youth in the beauty of God's mission around the world!

Alabaster:

This year, the Alabaster Offering celebrates 75 years! Alabaster lays foundations for people to worship, heal, and learn. This year, we have a goal of 100% involvement from our local churches to participate in giving to the Alabaster Fund. This offering allows the youngest members to the oldest members of our churches to be connected to buildings and congregations around the world, and YOU have made a difference!

World Evangelism Fund:

While Alabaster is vital to the construction of Nazarene buildings around the world, it is the World Evangelism Fund that is the pipeline for funding the full missionary work of the Church of the Nazarene. In 2024, the Florida District along with every district around world put tremendous effort into supporting the World Evangelism Fund – the fuel that drives the missionary work into action. As a district we can give thanks to God for the \$841,474.63 that

was raised to support the World Evangelism Fund. One pioneer missionary said, "You can give without loving, but you cannot love without giving."

Care & Connect:

This year, our churches have connected directly with missionaries from around the world. We have hosted deputation services and heard the stories of God's faithfulness! We have sent cards and letters. We were able to support our Care & Connect missionaries this past year through an Amazon gift list for the college age children of missionaries Scott and Emily Armstrong. We held a virtual baby shower for Ingrid and Terence Lustaña, our Care & Connect missionaries who have been living in the International House, a guest house at Melbourne First Church.

The goal is for each congregation to connect with our Care and Connect missionaries, specifically committing to praying for these missionaries:

- "Rejoice and Henok" – serving in a Creative Access Area
- Terence and Ingrid Lustañas
- Mary Miller (retired)

During our years of missionary service, my family and I experienced the receiving end of the World Evangelism Fund, Alabaster, and Care & Connect. We remember vividly the congregations and the districts who went above and beyond – both in caring and connecting with us. The cards, gifts, phone calls and notes were constant reminders to us that we were sent by a global church!

This year, your Florida District NMI is committed to walking with you as you engage your congregation in this mission. We look at this past year and give thanks:

- We celebrate serving with NDI and NYI at the Florida NYI Convention and teen camp
- We celebrate attending the Global NMI Convention and General Assembly – the Florida District was able to sponsor two delegates to the Global NMI Convention; one of the District Superintendents from Nicaragua and a pastor who also leads a Nazarene Compassionate ministry in Riobamba, Ecuador.
- We celebrate the election of Rev. Christine Mesilus, the first Asian to be elected to Global leadership in Nazarene missions.
- We celebrate the development strategy of changing the name from Work & Witness to "Nazarene Teams."
- We celebrate partnering with the Church of the Nazarene in Nicaragua
- We celebrate the mission trip to Nicaragua, led by our Hispanic churches.
- We celebrate numerous deputation services together, as we heard the stories of God's faithfulness around the world.
- We celebrate with you as you share your stories of your missional engagement!

As we step into this next church year, we remember the words of William Carey, "To know the will of God, we need an open Bible and an open map." Everywhere we look, we can see people in our communities, across the Florida District, in Nicaragua and around the world who are thirsty for Good News of God's love. Let's join God in what He is doing and where He is at work!

Submitted with hope!

Rev. Pam Tooley, NMI President for the Florida District