



Nazarene Missions International

Embrace Your Purpose Planner

Living Mission 2016-2017

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Let's Get Started

Welcome to the streamlined 2016-2017 *Living Mission*. You will notice some changes, but one item of which you can be sure is current missions content that should appeal to all ages in your congregation.

What Is Different?

If you have used *Living Mission* in the past, you may be wondering where the DVD and Resource CD are. They are built into this guide. We have provided handouts for many (not all) of the lessons, located at the ends of the lessons of which they are a part. There is a Resource section in each lesson that lists links to websites, videos, and additional articles that are appropriate to the topic.

You may be looking for the CAUSES; with each lesson is a section called Act On It. These provide topic-specific opportunities for individuals and your group to respond immediately.

The Basics

- Review the whole *Living Mission* guide so you know upcoming topics, and plan for the lessons within your church calendar.
- While these lessons are planned for approximately an hour, you can also choose items for shorter “missions moments” in worship services, Sunday School classes, small groups, and fellowship times.
- Consider your group. If they like to discuss, plan such times in the sessions. Some people learn while “doing.” Provide topic-sensitive activities, and your group will remember the information better.
- If you use a video during the lessons, plan for any technical equipment you will need.

The Lessons

Most lessons follow the same format. This summary will help you become familiar with lesson components and their purposes.

- **Fast Facts:** These statistics about the lesson topic are, at times, worked into the presentation of the lesson. For those times when they are not, you can use them to enrich the learning experience.
- **Scripture:** The verses coordinate with the topic. These are sometimes used within the presentation. If not, please tell your people what they are. This helps your group associate scripture with missions.
- **Lesson Purpose:** Sharing missions stories is good; but they are more memorable if the listeners understand their importance. The purpose doesn't need to be stated, but consider it in your planning.
- **Lesson Information:** This may include an introduction that will be used in the presentation and one or more missions stories. You may use as many of the stories as time allows.
- **Resources:** This section lists links to websites, videos, and additional articles on the lesson topic.
- **Presentation Ideas:** There are generally three options to present the missions stories. You can add others, as you wish.
 - Option 1 is for groups that, due to space or lifestyle, prefer to stay seated during the session.
 - Option 2 is for groups that prefer moving around the room as they learn.
 - Option 3 is for groups that prefer in-depth discussion. You may add additional questions. Just be sure the group stays on the topic.
- **ACT ON IT:** These practical ideas for personal involvement pertain to the lesson topic. They are varied and can include prayer, giving to World Evangelism Fund, or participating in local or global projects that may turn into long-term ministries.

Additional Ideas to Enrich the Presentation

- In most options, we suggest that others assist you in the presentation. By being involved, even in a small way, people are more invested and will remember more once they leave your session.
- Check these websites throughout the year for additional information about the lesson topics: *Living Mission* (www.livingmission.com) or Nazarene Missions International (www.nazarenemissions.org).
- If Wi-Fi is available in your meeting room, have a laptop set up so attendees can access the online resources immediately. For those who might want to explore more thoroughly, have copies of the Resource links beside the laptop or send them to your group via e-mail.
- “Take-aways” make an impression that: (1) says the presenter was prepared; (2) allows for further thought by group members, allowing God speak to them. Visit the “Additional Resources” page of the *Living Mission* website (www.livingmission.com) to download Missionary Profiles for many of the people mentioned in these lessons. The items on that page may be downloaded free of charge.
- Many people may be unfamiliar with the locations mentioned in this guide. You can help them by having a world map or a globe available, so they can look at the world areas in comparison to where you live. There are maps to assist you on the “Additional Resources” page of the *Living Mission* website (www.livingmission.com). The items on that page may be downloaded free of charge.

Lesson 1

Missions—It's Scriptural

FAST FACTS

Between 1900 and 2015:

- Global population increased 356 percent (1900–1.6 billion; 2015–7.3 billion)
- Number of Christians increased 330 percent (1900–558 million; 2015–2.4 billion)
- The ratio of Christians in the world dropped 1.1 percentage points (1900–34.5 percent; 2015–33.4 percent), which is actually a 3.2 percent loss.
- The ratio of urban population in the world increased 40.2 percentage points (1900–14.4 percent; 2015–54.6 percent), which is actually a 279 percent gain.

[Source: "Christianity 2015: Religious Diversity and Personal Contact", *International Bulletin of Missionary Research*, Vol. 39, No. 1]

SCRIPTURE: "Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age." (Matthew 28:19-20)

LESSON PURPOSE

To learn that God loves all peoples of the world and teaches us in Scripture that we should witness to them.

LESSON INFORMATION

Introduction

There has often been a tension between people who believe we should witness to people globally and those who want to focus their ministry nearby.

It is not uncommon to learn that a pastor wants his or her church's efforts and finances to be directed toward the neighborhood. The rationale is often, "I have been tasked with the spiritual lives of the people surrounding my church. However, there are people in my congregation who insist on giving their financial resources only to global missions. How can I help them get 'on board' with what I see as God's vision for our church?"

At the same time, you hear of another pastor across town who says, "I have preached numerous sermons about the necessity of winning the world for Christ, yet my people keep developing ministries for our neighborhood. They ask why we should focus across the ocean, when there are people across the street who need to know of God's love, Christ's salvation, and the Holy Spirit's comfort."

It begs the question: who is correct? Each has a portion of the answer, but not the complete solution. The best place to go for an answer to this challenge to the churches is to Scripture. Many people cite the "Great Commission" (Matthew 28:19–20) as a rationale for global mission; however, there are plenty of scriptures in the Old and New Testaments that show God's love for the people of the earth, no matter how far away they may live.

Delving into the Scripture

A handout at the end of the lesson shows several passages in the Old and New Testaments. Review the passages and think about what God wants you to learn from them.

For additional study, there are links to two webpages listing scriptures in the Old and New Testaments that pertain to witnessing to people both nearby and far away.

PRESENTATION IDEAS

Option 1—Think About It

Prepare

- Make copies of the handout (located at the end of this lesson) for the number of people who will be attending.
- Gather pens/pencils for attendees.
- Make a copy of the Introduction and cut out the second and third paragraphs that describe the two pastors' viewpoints. Ask two attendees to each read one of the paragraphs.
- Ask someone to keep time.
- For additional study, make copies of the scripture references listed on the two webpages listed in the Resource section and have additional Bibles on hand to look up passages.

Present

- Present the Introduction.
- Distribute pens/pencils and the handouts to attendees. Tell the group that they will have 10 minutes to read the passages and make notes about what they think God is telling us about witnessing to people far away and nearby. Let them know that they should not discuss their answers yet; this is for their opinions only.
- After the group has had sufficient time to think about the scriptures (10 minutes was a suggestion), ask for the group's thoughts on each passage. *(Let everyone know there are no right or wrong answers, and make sure that everyone has opportunity to voice their thoughts. If it seems that one or two are monopolizing the conversation, call on another group member before naming the passage and ask for that person's thoughts.)*

Option 2—Write It (for a group that likes activity)

Prepare

- Place several Bibles throughout the room, such that people have to move to them to access them. Have a poster board and a marker near each Bible for participants to write on.
- Write the references of the passages from the handout on small pieces of poster board that the leader will hold.
- Divide the participants into groups as they enter, and ask them to sit as a group.

Present

- Present the Introduction.
- Tell the group that you will show them a scripture reference, and they need to get to a Bible, look up the passage, and write as many phrases from the passage that apply to witnessing nearby or far away. Then you will give them another passage, but they must go to a Bible in another location in the room to look that one up.
- After the participants have responded to each passage, ask the groups to discuss what they wrote and why.

Option 3—Discuss It

- Present the Introduction.
- Discuss the following questions. There are no right or wrong answers, but because the topic of the lesson is the biblical basis for missions, ask people to use passages from the Bible as part of their rationale. To assist them, make copies of the scripture references listed on the two webpages listed in the Resource section and have additional Bibles on hand to look up passages.
 - Why do you think God wants us to witness to people around the world?
 - How well do you think our local church does in helping provide a global witness?
 - Why do you think God wants us to witness to people nearby?
 - How well do you think our local church helps in witnessing to those nearby?
 - In your opinion, what does God think of the difference of opinion about witnessing nearby or far away?

ACT ON IT (practical ideas for personal involvement)

- Encourage the group to talk about what the church does to witness locally, then progress to a discussion of what else you could do as individuals, as small groups, or as a congregation. Choose the most feasible of the ideas presented and discuss a plan on how to make that happen.
- Have the group discuss what the church does to witness globally. Brainstorm about what your church needs to do to help those ideas come to fruition.
- Spend time in prayer, asking God to develop a passion for souls within your congregation.

RESOURCES (“handy helps” for the leader)

- <http://home.snu.edu/~hculbert/biblical.htm>
- <http://home.snu.edu/~hculbert/biblicnt.htm>
- www.gordonconwell.edu/ockenga/research/documents/1IBMR2015.pdf

Missions: It's Scriptural

Lesson 1

Genesis 12:1-3

The Lord had said to Abram, "Go from your country, your people and your father's household to the land I will show you.

"I will make you into a great nation,
and I will bless you;
I will make your name great,
and you will be a blessing.
I will bless those who bless you,
and whoever curses you I will curse;
and all peoples on earth
will be blessed through you.

Joshua 4:21-24

[Joshua] said to the Israelites, "In the future when your descendants ask their parents, 'What do these stones mean?' tell them, 'Israel crossed the Jordan on dry ground.' For the Lord your God dried up the Jordan before you until you had crossed over. The Lord your God did to the Jordan what he had done to the Red Sea when he dried it up before us until we had crossed over. He did this so that all the peoples of the earth might know that the hand of the Lord is powerful and so that you might always fear the Lord your God."

Matthew 28:19-20

Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age."

Acts 1:8

But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes on you; and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth.

Ephesians 2:12-19

Remember that at that time you were separate from Christ, excluded from citizenship in Israel and foreigners to the covenants of the promise, without hope and without God in the world. But now in Christ Jesus you who once were far away have been brought near by the blood of Christ.

For he himself is our peace, who has made the two groups one and has destroyed the barrier, the dividing wall of hostility, by setting aside in his flesh the law with its commands and regulations. His purpose was to create in himself one new humanity out of the two, thus making peace, and in one body to reconcile both of them to God through the cross, by which he put to death their hostility. He came and preached peace to you who were far away and peace to those who were near. For through him we both have access to the Father by one Spirit.

Consequently, you are no longer foreigners and strangers, but fellow citizens with God's people and also members of his household.

Notes

Lesson 2

Infusing Missions in Others

FAST FACTS

- In Kenya, the religious demographics of the population are: Christian—82.5% (Protestant—47.4%, Catholic—23.3%, Other—11.8%), Muslim—11.1%, Traditionalists—1.6%, Other—1.7%, None—2.4%, Unspecified—0.7% (2009 census—*CIA World Factbook*)
- In the Church of the Nazarene in Kenya:
 - Districts: 6
 - Organized Churches: 235
 - Members: 23,059
 - National Workers
 - Elders: 80
 - Licensed Ministers: 235
- Foreign domestic workers make up around 3 percent of the Hong Kong population. In 2013, there were 320,000 foreign domestic helpers in Hong Kong, of which 50 percent were from the Philippines, 47 percent from Indonesia, and the rest from Thailand, Myanmar, Bangladesh, Nepal, Pakistan, and Sri Lanka. (*South China Morning Post*)
- The ethnicity of the population in Hong Kong is: Chinese—93.1%, Indonesian—1.9%, Filipino—1.9%, Other—3% (2011 est.—*CIA World Factbook*)
- In the Church of the Nazarene in Hong Kong:
 - District: 1
 - Organized Churches: 2
 - Members: 210
 - National Workers
 - Elders: 4
 - Licensed Ministers: 1

[Source: 2015 Annual Statistics of the Church of the Nazarene]

SCRIPTURE: “But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes on you; and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth.” (Acts 1:8)

LESSON PURPOSE

To help people understand that churches and individuals must be taught to care for people near and far.

RESOURCES (“handy helps” for the leader)

- Video: <http://medialibrary.nazarene.org/media/one-body-many-faces>

Embracing the World One Country at a Time

Gift Mtukwa (m-TEWK-wah), pastor of the University Church of the Nazarene in Nairobi and theology lecturer at Africa Nazarene University (ANU), wants African Christians to embrace a global, missional orientation.

“When the gospel was in Europe, they decided to take the gospel to other parts of the world,” says Pastor Mtukwa. “We need to say, how are we going to benefit the rest of the world with the gospel? Are we going to produce missionaries to go around the world to preach the gospel?”

Build Awareness Nearby

As part of the church’s efforts to transform the community around ANU, it launched a compassionate ministry. The church family was encouraged to buy extra items when grocery shopping and bring them to the church. In this way, the church started a food ministry, providing food to families who are truly in need. The congregation is so dedicated to this ministry that they are operating it without involvement from the pastors.

They also began providing breakfast before Sunday worship services. They realized that many children attending the church had not yet eaten that day. Some of the adults are now joining in the breakfast as well.

The church became aware that there were many teenagers in the community whose parents couldn’t pay the fees to enroll them in secondary school. (In Nairobi, primary school is free, but secondary school is not.) The congregation knew that if the teens didn’t complete secondary school, they would never be able to go to a university. So the church created a scholarship fund and has sponsored a number of students over the years, some fully covered for the entirety of their secondary education and some who needed partial help for a term or two. The church leaders encourage individual members, as well as the church as a whole, to assist the students in need of financial help.

Learn and Intercede Globally

The University Church intercedes for those they may not be able to physically reach with the message of salvation. During each Sunday worship service, time is allocated for someone to give a brief background of a nation, highlighting details that require divine intervention. The world area may or may not have a Nazarene presence. The person then leads the congregation in the first intercessory prayer

for the week. Throughout the rest of the week, the congregation is encouraged to pray daily for the featured world area.

Intertwining Cords of Love

Elma Mago (EL-ma MAG-goh), pastor of the International Church of the Nazarene in Hong Kong, heard God’s call to pastoral ministry just after she graduated from high school in the Philippines. As a delegate to a Sunday School convention, she listened to a speaker from India, who talked about the need for the gospel to be preached in his country.

“I thought to myself, ‘How about the Philippines?’ He gave a challenge and I decided to answer the call.”

She enrolled in Asia-Pacific Nazarene Theological Seminary (APNTS) in Taytay, Philippines, to study theology and prepare to lead a local church. Attending APNTS put her in touch with a variety of cultures, because the students come from many world areas.

“As a result, I was able to do away with that ethnocentric attitude; instead I’ve learned to respect and really appreciate others’ cultures.”

After graduation, Elma was invited to become lead pastor at the church in Hong Kong. The congregation is made up of Filipina women with jobs as domestic helpers to Chinese families.

In Hong Kong and the Philippines, there are several fast-growing cults that attract thousands of people who do not have a solid grounding in Christian beliefs. Relying on her theological education, Pastor Elma has had multiple opportunities to guide and teach women who have come from several of those cults.

“Christian theology is necessary in the ministry as the foundation of the church,” she said. “People serving in the ministry should know what to believe and why they believe; they should be able to defend what they believe scripturally. The people they’re serving have theological issues that should be addressed rightly; if not, they can be a potential target and may fall into the traps of false teachings, false religions, and self-made prophets.”

Because Pastor Elma studied for three years at APNTS, she has helped many women understand Christian truth so they are transformed by the love of Jesus. In turn, they embrace their missional calling to share Jesus with their family, friends, and employers, thus growing the church.

[Sources: Gina Grate Pottenger and Elma Mago]

PRESENTATION IDEAS

Option 1—Thinking Acts 1:8

Prepare

- Ask for people to assist in the presentation: one person to present “Embracing the World One Country at a Time” and one person to present “Intertwining Cords of Love.”
- Make copies of the Lesson 2 Handout (at the end of this lesson) for attendees, and have pens/pencils available for them.
- Prior to the session, distribute handouts and pens/pencils to participants.

Present

- As an introduction, read Acts 1:8 to those in attendance and let them know that they will learn of two congregations who are living out the instructions Christ gave in that scripture.
- Instruct attendees to listen to each mission story and have them write instances of how the congregations were being witnesses in their “Jerusalem, Judea and Samaria, and the ends of the earth” in the circles labeled as such.
- After the stories have been told, ask the group to discuss what they wrote in their circles.

Option 2—From Jerusalem to the Ends of the Earth (for a group that likes activity)

Prepare

- Ask for people to assist in the presentation: one person to present “Embracing the World One Country at a Time” and one person to present “Intertwining Cords of Love.”
- On small sheets of paper, write “Gift Mtukwa” and “Elma Mago”—enough for each member of your group to have at least one of each name.
- On large pieces of paper, write “Jerusalem,” “Judea and Samaria,” and “Ends of the Earth” and place them in three locations around the room where the group will be meeting.
- Prior to the session, distribute both names to attendees.

Present

- As an introduction, read Acts 1:8 to those in attendance and let them know that they will learn of two congregations who are living out the instructions Christ gave in that scripture.
- Instruct people to listen to the stories and place the name of each person in one of the locations around the room. Explain that in some cases, that person’s name could be placed in multiple locations, so the attendees will need to decide where they will place the name and why.
- After the stories have been told and the group has placed the names, ask the group to discuss why they placed the names where they did.

Option 3—Discuss Acts 1:8

- Read Acts 1:8, then briefly tell the mission stories (avoid reading them).
- Discuss the following questions.
 - Pastor Gift Mtukwa asks, “How are we going to benefit the rest of the world with the gospel?” How would you answer that question?
 - Have the group discuss each ministry under the “Build Awareness Nearby” section. How would a church initiate and operate such ministries, and what challenges might a congregation face in doing so?
 - What do you think about Pastor Elma Mago’s comment about respecting other cultures and how, as individuals, your group might go about doing that?

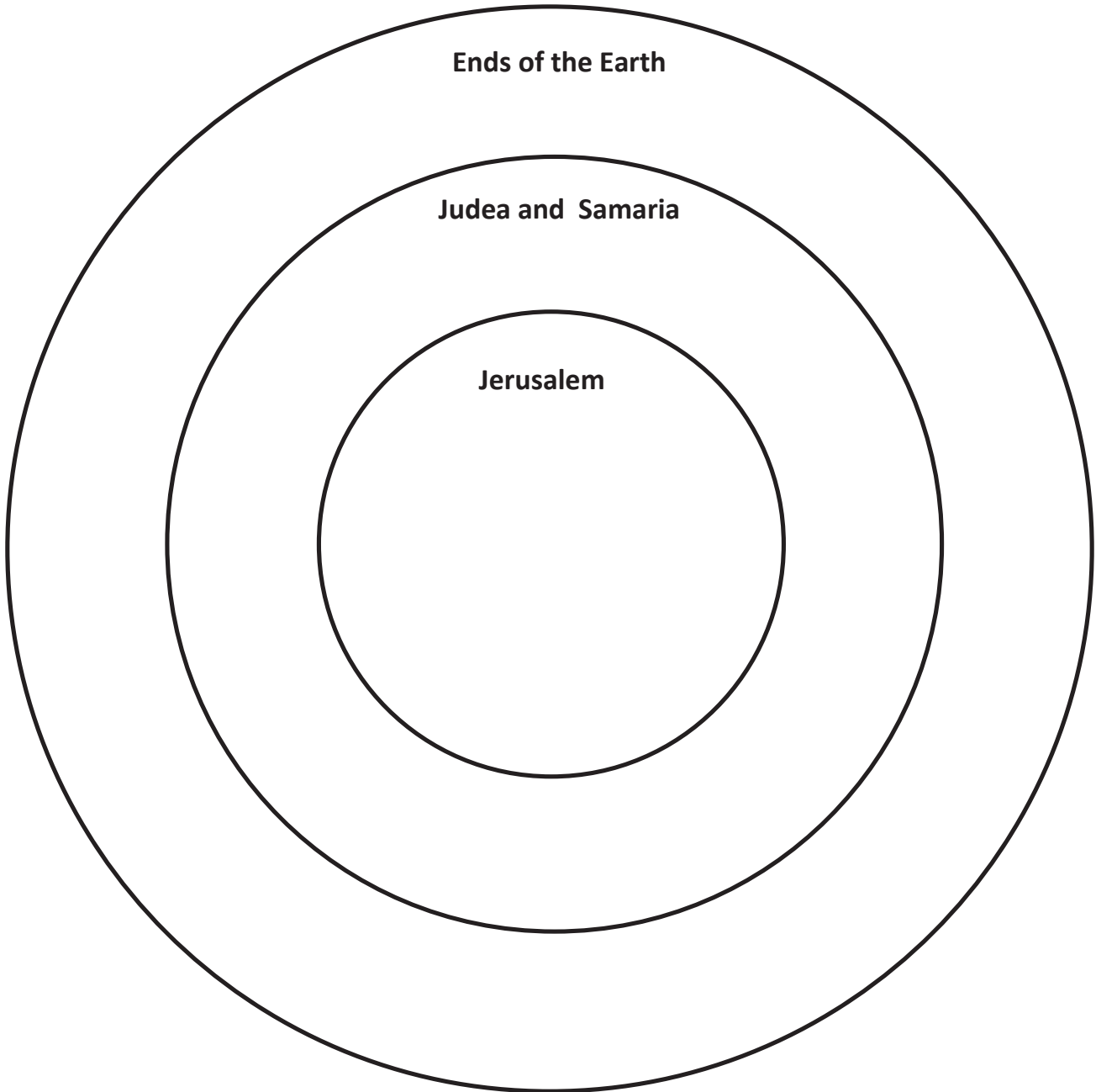
ACT ON IT (practical ideas for personal involvement)

- Are there groups in your community that your congregation could help? Discuss how you can help a nearby apartment complex, school, or assisted living facility, develop a strategy, and implement it.
- Discuss practical ways to help your church develop an awareness of what is happening globally and how you can help your people begin to infuse missions into their thoughts, prayers, and lives.
- Do you have other cultural groups in your community who could benefit from the gifts and talents of your congregation? Perhaps someone could help teach your language or provide events to introduce that community to some of the local customs and holidays.

Infusing Missions in Others

Lesson 2

Instructions: As the mission stories in the lesson are presented, write how and where those congregations are being witnesses in light of Acts 1:8.



**But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes on you;
and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria,
and to the ends of the earth.**

—Acts 1:8

Lesson 3

Genesis—It's a Beginning

FAST FACTS

- Over 50% of the world's population live in a city of 100,000 people or more, and that number is estimated to skyrocket to 70% by 2050.
- There are more than 160 cities and Caribbean island nations in the Mesoamerica Region that have a population of 100,000+ people.
- Field leaders in the Mesoamerica Region have designated 23 cities and 5 Caribbean island nations as priority sites that will receive teams of volunteer missionaries.
- The plan is for 112 volunteer missionaries to be deployed on the Mesoamerica Region by the year 2020.
- As of 2015, almost half of the missionaries serving with the Church of the Nazarene around the world were volunteer missionaries.

[Source: Mesoamerica Genesis website: www.mesoamericagenesis.com]

SCRIPTURE: “As Paul and Barnabas were leaving the synagogue, the people invited them to speak further about these things on the next Sabbath. When the congregation was dismissed, many of the Jews and devout converts to Judaism followed Paul and Barnabas, who talked with them and urged them to continue in the grace of God. On the next Sabbath almost the whole city gathered to hear the word of the Lord.” (Acts 13:42-44)

LESSON PURPOSE

To appreciate Mesoamerica Genesis, a new ministry to large cities on the Mesoamerica Region and how it can benefit our church.

LESSON INFORMATION

Introduction to Genesis

Fifty percent of the world's population live in an urban center and that number is steadily increasing. The Mesoamerica Region has identified 28 urban centers and Caribbean islands with little or no presence of the Church of the Nazarene. It is urgent that we reach these places with the message of Jesus Christ.

Mesoamerica Genesis is an all-inclusive church planting and missionary sending strategy. Every year until 2020, teams of volunteer missionaries will work in coordination with a Nazarene district to begin new congregations in 28 designated sites.

The leaders of Genesis believe that a healthy church is a missional church. In particular, they believe that:

- A missional church in the city will practice authentic worship of a God that transforms lives through His mercy, grace, and love.

- A missional church in the city is a community of believers that embrace the call of God to go and make Christlike disciples in the nations, both in its surrounding neighborhood and in the world.
- A missional church in the city will be a presence in its neighborhood, living lives of holiness and compassion in very difficult places.

People who wish to serve in Genesis must apply; and, upon acceptance, they receive six weeks' online training, as well as four weeks of residential classes in Santo Domingo, Dominican Republic. Some of the topics of courses and workshops are urban mission, church planting, discipleship, missionary policy, and communication.

The Genesis missionaries are involved in urban church planting for two years at a Genesis site and participate in a re-entry retreat at the end of the assignment.

[Source: Mesoamerica Genesis website]

Jessi and Luz

Genesis missionaries Jessi (JEH-see) and Luz (LOOS) began working with a mother church in Haina (HIE-nah), Dominican Republic, in 2014 to help grow the church. The church and missionaries celebrated the fruits of this growth in April 2015 by baptizing nine believers.

One of the women who attended the church was responsible for preparing the baptism program. There was a time of worship, and Pastor Edilio Balbuena (eh-DEE-lee-oh bal-BWAY-nah), pastor of the mother church, preached the sermon. One by one, Balbuena baptized the new believers with the help of

the Genesis missionaries. The newly baptized believers spent the rest of the day with their brothers and sisters in Christ, celebrating with food and fellowship on the banks of the river.

Those baptized are being disciplined so they will better understand their new life in Christ. They have also been studying the Articles of Faith and are preparing for membership with the Church of the Nazarene. In addition, 12 others were on track to be baptized in 2015.

[Source: NCN News]

PRESENTATION IDEAS

Option 1—What Is Genesis?

Prepare

- Ask for people to assist in the presentation: one person to present “Introduction to Genesis” and one person to present “Jessi and Luz.”
- Make copies of Lesson 3 Handout (at the end of this lesson) for attendees, and have pens/pencils available for them.
- Prior to the session, distribute handouts and pens/pencils to participants

Present

- Begin by reading Acts 13:42-44, then say, **Today we are going to learn about a ministry on the Mesoamerica Region of the Church of the Nazarene called Genesis.**
- Have the two people present the sections in the Lesson Information portion of this lesson.
- Distribute the copies of the handout and pens/pencils. Ask the group to spend about five minutes and individually write how they think your church is a Genesis Church or how it could improve.
- Ask the group about their thoughts on how much your church is a Genesis Church.

Option 2—How Genesis Are We? (for a group that likes activity)

Prepare

- Ask for people to assist in the presentation: one person to present “Introduction to Genesis” and one person to present “Jessi and Luz.”
- Ask one person to serve as time keeper when the groups write their ideas on the poster boards.
- Have 10 poster boards around the room, each listing a Genesis Church characteristic (see the Lesson 3 Handout) at the top. Have markers by each poster board.

Present

- Begin by reading Acts 13:42-44, then say, **Today we are going to learn about a ministry in the Mesoamerica Region of the Church of the Nazarene called Genesis.**
- Have the two people present the sections in the Lesson Information portion of this lesson.
- Divide the group into smaller groups, ask each group to go to a poster board, then tell them they have two minutes to write how your church fits that characteristic or how it can improve. When two minutes are up, the group will move to the next poster board with a characteristic on it.
- After the groups have visited each poster board, discuss what was written.

Option 3—Discuss It

- Read the Fast Facts from the beginning of the lesson, then give an overview of the Lesson Information and distribute the Lesson 3 Handout.
- Ask the group to discuss the following questions:
 - What surprised you from the Fast Facts and why? (Some may be surprised at the high percentage of volunteer missionaries; this is a new development in recent years and one that we will probably see continue for some time.)
 - What specific challenges do you think that volunteer missionaries face?
 - What advantages do you think volunteer missionaries have?

ACT ON IT (practical ideas for personal involvement)

- If your church or district has a person who is serving as a volunteer missionary for the Church of the Nazarene, have them speak to your group either live or via Skype or Facetime, telling about what they do, what challenges they face, and how your church can support them (this could be financially, encouragement through correspondence, or through prayer).
- Intercede for the ministry of Mesoamerica Genesis. The list is useful for all urban areas. After praying for the cities and target areas in Mesoamerica, pray for the urban center closest to you.
 - Pray for **broken families** to be restored.
 - Pray for **single parents** as they raise children without much support.
 - Pray for the **protection of children** exposed to domestic violence.
 - Pray for **gang activity** to end.
 - Pray for **young adults** addicted to drugs.
 - Pray for **people to know the Lord**.

RESOURCES (“handy helps” for the leader)

- Genesis Website: www.mesoamericagenesis.com
- Videos
 - www.youtube.com/watch?v=xOsYpFROCUE
 - www.youtube.com/watch?v=VnC9PGvv8jw

GENESIS—It's a Beginning

Lesson 3

Mesoamerica Genesis has determined 10 characteristics of a Genesis Church to help churches know what they are doing well and what they need to work on. Read each characteristic and write what your church does that is applicable to that characteristic and/or how it can improve.

A Genesis Church is a Church that:

1. Weekly celebrates services that are **relevant to and transformational for its surroundings**.
2. Serves as a **continual presence** in its community through the **practice of compassion**.
3. Creates and utilizes a **plan to involve each Nazarene** (of any age group) in **discipleship and ministry** on the local and/or district level.
4. Is **actively involved** in the planting of a **new congregation** in the urban center.
5. **Preaches holiness** regularly and **practices holiness** daily.
6. **Intentionally identifies, develops, and sends** out pastors, missionaries, and new church planters, with a focus on the **educational strategy** of the denomination.
7. Assures that the entire congregation and all ministries **work within a team** and **collaborate with a unified mission** to make disciples.
8. Involves everyone in the congregation in **interceding** for the **needs of their community and the world**.
9. **Generously** provides economic resources to **finance the mission** in their city, their district, and the world.
10. **Self-evaluates and communicates results** to various levels of leadership (local, district, etc.), **making changes** when indicated.

From the Genesis website:
www.mesoamericagenesis.org/genesis-begins-with-me

Lesson 4

Reaching the Community Through Its Children

FAST FACTS

- In Madagascar:
 - Population under the age of 15—40%
 - Child labor for ages 5—14—28%
 - Literacy rate ages 15 and over—64.7% with females lagging behind males
- Homelessness in Hawaii
 - Federal statistics show that for every 100,000 people in Hawaii, 487 are homeless.
 - It is estimated that 15,000 Hawaiian residents are “homeless at some point of the year” and at least 11 percent of those individuals are children, while 14 percent are military veterans (report submitted by Hope Services Hawaii).

[Sources: *CIA World Factbook*; *Headlines & Global News* (www.HNGN.com)]

SCRIPTURE: “Jesus said, ‘Let the little children come to me, and do not hinder them, for the kingdom of heaven belongs to such as these.’” (Matthew 19:14)

LESSON PURPOSE

To understand that the way to reach a community is often through ministering to its children

LESSON INFORMATION

Introduction

Matthew 19:14 says, “Jesus said, ‘Let the little children come to me, and do not hinder them, for the kingdom of heaven belongs to such as these.’” Today, we will learn how two places on opposite sides of the globe minister to children, resulting in ministry to the rest of the family.

Education and Job Skills

At the Nazarene district center in Antananarivo (ahn-tah-nah-nah-REE-voh), Madagascar, rooms that used to sit vacant are now alive with activity as students learn English, study the Bible, and gain computer skills. The new learning center is named Living Hope School.

Missionaries Ronald and Shelly Miller saw the school as a way to support the district financially—students pay a monthly fee equal to about US\$5 to \$10—while also equipping community members with job skills. They expected an inaugural class of about five students. Instead, 18 students enrolled, ages 15 to 40 years old.

“Here in Madagascar, education in general is very, very low,” Shelly said. “There are not enough schools in the country to accommodate all the children, so there are a lot of kids who never get to finish high school.” The Living Hope School is a place where anyone, with a high school diploma or not, can come and learn.

The goal is to get the school accredited and expand class offerings. Currently, there are five teachers in Bible, English, and computer basics.

Many people worked together in the past year to make Living Hope a reality, including Madagascar District Superintendent Richard Ravelomanantsoa (ree-SHAR rah-vel-oh-mahn-ah-SOO-ah) and his wife, Therese (te-REZ), director of the Street Kids Center, along with NCM’s Pastor Patrice Ratovoarilala (pah-TREES rah-TOO-voo-ah-ree-LAH-lah) and Vola Harisoa (VOO-lah ah-ree-SOO-ah). Two Work & Witness teams worked on the building, and one team donated 20 computers. Because of the volunteer work and donations, the school’s start-up cost for NCM was less than US\$500.

Another vision for Living Hope is that it will provide a place for youth who graduate from Antananarivo's compassionate ministry center, the AMI-4 Street Kids Center. The center provides 420 children under the age of 18 with meals, education, and support.

The school will also provide local pastors with computer training.

[Source: *NCN News*]

Where Can Tutoring Lead?

Lily (not her real name) is a sixth grader who—as of 2015—had lived for two years at the Hope for a New Beginning transitional shelter for the homeless at Onelau'ena (OH-ne-lau-eh-nah) in Kapolei (KAH-poh-lay), Hawaii. Lily's mother died in 2014, leaving her with a 19-year-old sister who had three boys of her own. Still in grade school, Lily spent most of her time caring for her nephews.

Members of local Nazarene churches began visiting the shelter to minister to the residents, particularly to provide tutoring to children and youth through the Kokua (KOH-koo-uh) Compassion Group, a compassionate ministry of the Hawaii Pacific District in the USA.

Each week, approximately 10-15 volunteers tutor the students after school. Education is a priority for Kokua because the staff and volunteers believe educating the children will help break the cycle of poverty. Many of the children fall so far behind in their education that they drop out in middle school.

Parents of the children being tutored by Kokua are eager for their children to succeed in school. However, many of them are uneducated or not able to speak

English, so they are not equipped to help their children with homework or even to advocate for their kids with the school.

That's why in the future, the team at Kokua hopes to add English classes for the parents, too. Kokua also schedules larger events, such as literacy fairs, hygiene or clothing drives, movie nights, carnivals, and other types of activities with up to 60 people helping.

Kokua is designed to be a district-wide compassionate ministry, under which churches on all the islands can register and start up contextually appropriate ministries to their communities.

Lily was one of the recipients of tutoring by the Kokua Compassion Group. Several women invested in Lily's life, invited her to church activities, took her to movies or for dinner, and spent time with her.

At church, Lily heard that Jesus loves her and invited Jesus into her life. Excited about the stories she was hearing, she asked the youth pastor if they were written in a book so she could read them. Shocked that she didn't know what a Bible was, the youth pastor immediately gave her one.

"Through our tutoring program, kids form such deep, long-lasting relationships with all the volunteers," said Rachel Campbell, program director for Kokua Compassion Group. "Through families [visiting] and donating and spending time...[Lily] has found a second family."

Lily is just one of many people at the shelter who are experiencing the love of Jesus in new ways.

[Source: *Engage* magazine]

RESOURCES ("handy helps" for the leader)

- Websites:
 - <http://nazarene.org/article/madagascar-school-aims-empower-students>
 - <http://engagemagazine.com/content/hawaii-pacific-district-churches-cooperate-compassionate-ministry>
 - www.kokuacompassiongroup.com

PRESENTATION IDEAS

Option 1—Kids Are the Keys

Prepare

- Ask for people to assist: one person to present “Education and Job Skills” and two people to present “Where Can Tutoring Lead?” (one will present the portions about Lilly at the beginning and end, and one will present the section about the Kokua Compassion Group in the middle).
- Make copies of the Lesson 4 Handout (at the end of this lesson) for attendees, and have pens/pencils available for them.
- Prior to the session, distribute handouts and pens/pencils to participants, asking them to listen to the stories for similarities and differences between the two locations.

Present

- Present the Introduction, then ask members of the group to listen to the stories for similarities and differences between the two locations.
- Have the people who are assisting tell the portions of the lesson for which they are responsible.
- After the presentations, ask individuals in the group what they wrote about the similarities and differences between the ministries in Madagascar and Hawaii.

Option 2—Letting Children Lead (for a group that likes activity)

Prepare

- Ask for people to assist: one person to present “Education and Job Skills” and two people to present “Where Can Tutoring Lead?” (one will present the portions about Lilly at the beginning and end, and one will present the section about the Kokua Compassion Group in the middle).
- Have poster boards in two locations in the room—one labeled “Madagascar” and one labeled “Hawaii.” Place markers beside the poster boards.

Present

- Give the Introduction, then explain to the group that they need to pay close attention, as they will be relating a part of the presentation to a smaller group later in the session.
- Have the people who are assisting tell the portions of the lesson for which they are responsible.
- Assign individuals to the Madagascar or the Hawaii sections of the room. Ask the groups to recall information from the presentation and write their comments on the poster boards, telling them they have 10 minutes to share their ideas.
- At the end of 10 minutes, have the groups give their synopses of the information.

Option 3—Discuss It

- Give an overview of the Lesson Information.
- Discuss the following questions:
 - How can education help people live fair and just lives?
 - Why do you think the school in Madagascar charges for classes if the people have limited finances?
 - If the church doesn’t provide one, where else might young people find a second family?
 - What do you remember about a time when God spoke to you through your Bible reading?

ACT ON IT (practical ideas for personal involvement)

- What could your church/group do to help with language/education for an immigrant or other groups that could use your assistance? What unique gifts/talents does your group have to help?
- What other groups (zone, district, other denominations) might partner for greater impact?

Reaching the Community Through Its Children

Lesson 4

Instructions: Today's lesson was about ministries in two island locations. As you listen to the stories, write down similarities and differences you hear between the two locations.

	Differences	Similarities
Madagascar		
Hawaii		

Lesson 5

A New View on a Glass House

FAST FACTS

Xperience TV:

- People in broadcast area: 70.000 (70,000) in Vlaardingen, 1.2 million in Rotterdam area.
- Audience: Diverse; Xperience TV focuses on young people.
- Contacts from Xperience TV: YouTube visits are between 500 and 10.000 (10,000) viewers, depending on the topic. About 50 to 75 young people (including young people in the crew) visit the studio regularly on a monthly basis. They see new people coming to our studio every month.
- “Powered by 35 young people and 5 old people.” (Xperience TV website)

World Mission Broadcast:

- 32 languages
- 72 countries
- 140 programs

[Sources: Xperience TV; World Mission Broadcast]

SCRIPTURE: “My eyes stay open through the watches of the night, that I may meditate on your promises.”
(Psalm 119:148)

LESSON PURPOSE

To understand how young people have taken responsibility to introduce their community to Christ and the Church of the Nazarene and how World Mission Broadcast partnered with them for an event.

LESSON INFORMATION

Introduction

“Those who live in glass houses should not throw stones.” Glass houses are not the best of habitations for a variety of reasons; however, today we will learn of the Glass House in Vlaardingen (VLAHR-deeng-uhn), Netherlands, that was in existence for only 24 hours in 2015 and helped a number of people there.

Xperience TV

Xperience TV is a Nazarene live TV show (broadcast online) made by Nazarene young people for young people in Vlaardingen, Netherlands, building a bridge to other people in their city and throughout the country.

The monthly show takes place at the Vlaardingen Church of the Nazarene, where the youth set up the studio. The format is a late-night show full of music, games, interviews, and serious thoughts shared with

viewers. Invitations are extended to young people to see the show in the studio.

Following the show, there is a time of fellowship in the church’s youth cafe where people in the audience also learn of other activities, like small groups and Bible studies. Just being at the show helps change some young people. They feel loved, can be themselves, and can meet people who care about them.

The leaders deliberately invite non-Christian young people to participate in the production team in order to experience the “real church.” The non-Christians see that there are arguments and miscommunications, but also forgiveness, respect, and love. Those people slowly change, get interested, join other activities, build relationships, and get to know Jesus more and more.

Xperience TV began in 2014; in its first year, the church’s youth group doubled in size! Not only are the young people of the church enthusiastic, others who

do not know Jesus attend the broadcasts and don't have a clue they're entering a church. However, they are touched by the atmosphere and the fact that they are fully accepted.

The Glass House Project

The Glass House Project was organized by the crew of Xperience TV and took place December 11–12, 2015. The non-stop, 24-hour TV show was held in the middle of Vlaardingen, and it was full of music and hilarious challenges to raise money and awareness for “silent disasters.”

The initial plan was to host the event in the church's parking lot. When the city government learned of the project, they were enthusiastic, encouraging the youth to host it in the square. This was an unexpected response to an event organized by a church, as most people in the Netherlands have a negative attitude toward evangelism.

The Glass House project had multiple goals:

1. Raise money for a “silent disaster” in the world.

The Glass House Project is a well-known project in the Netherlands. It's organized by a secular radio station and the Netherlands Red Cross to raise money for “silent disasters” in the world. People in the Netherlands are encouraged to start their own projects to raise money. The Xperience TV crew, as Christians, embraced the project and organized their own Glass House.

2. Make people think about “silent disasters” in their own city.

During the 24-hour show, the Xperience TV crew challenged people to take action against “silent disasters” in Vlaardingen, such as “lonely elder people, single mums without any income, or refugees who just came to our city.” They encouraged people to invest in their neighbors and neighborhoods. During the event, the crew focused on a caring way of life, a Christian precept.

3. Build relationships.

With the Glass House Project, the crew had the same philosophy as that of Xperience TV—show the Christlike life by example. The group prayed, ate, struggled, and forgave. New relationships were forged, and people were invited to the monthly shows, where they continued to see Christlike disciples.

4. Be present as a church.

Just being present as a church for 24 hours in the center of Vlaardingen had an impact. In addition, the church organized a 24-hour prayer chain during the event and NMI's Prayer Mobilization Line encouraged people around the world to pray during the event as well.

The crew at Xperience TV invited members of the church to join them at the Glass House, to chat with visitors, to perhaps pray with them, and to invite them to church in the weeks after.

[Source: Wouter van der Zeijden]

World Mission Broadcast

World Mission Broadcast (WMB) is a ministry of the Church of the Nazarene that takes the gospel to the world through radio, television, and Internet programs. On the air since 1944, WMB reaches even the most remote parts of the world, with words of hope and holiness...and lives are changed.

Xperience TV is a ministry paid for by the Vlaardingen Church of the Nazarene. However, WMB provided 25 percent of the costs for the Glass House Project. The remainder of the finances were provided by people within the church (25 percent) and people from outside the church (50 percent).

PRESENTATION IDEAS

Option 1—Glass House Pop-up

Prepare

- Make a copy of the Lesson Information, cutting each section apart and numbering it according to the order in the Lesson Information.
- Ask people to assist in the presentation, assuring them that each part is very short and letting them know that they needn't come to the front, just stand up and read the information where they are. Distribute the sections to each person participating.

Present

- Begin by reading the Introduction, then say, **I have numbered the sections for the presentation. If my assistants will just pop-up where they are and read their information, I would be grateful.**
- Have the presenters present Lesson Information.
- Discuss what your church could do to support your youth in their efforts in reaching out to your community and to the world.

Option 2—I Can See Clearly Now (for a group that likes activity)

Prepare

- Make a copy of the Lesson Information, cutting each section apart. Glue the sections to newsprint or construction paper. Turn the paper over, and number the sections according to the order in the Lesson Information.
- Get either an unused window frame (with the glass still in it) or a framed wall mirror. Using masking tape, attach the lesson sections (number side up) to the glass. Try to cover as much of the glass as possible; it doesn't matter if they overlap. (If you decide to have them overlap, you will need to have the last numbers on the bottom layer, so the first numbers will be easily accessible.)
- Set the window or mirror on an easel at the front of the room, making sure it will not fall.
- As people enter, ask several to assist in the presentation, assuring them that each part is very short and giving each person a number that corresponds with a section that person will pull off the glass and read.

Present

- Begin by reading the Introduction, then say, **This glass will help us remember what our lesson is about today. I asked several people to assist me in the presentation. If the person with Number 1 will come up, gently pull off the numbered paper and read the information on the back. Following that person will be Person Number 2, and so on.**
- Have the presenters present Lesson Information.
- Discuss what your church could do to support your youth in their efforts in reaching out to your community and to the world.

RESOURCES (“handy helps” for the leader)

- Websites:
 - Xperience TV: www.xptv.nl
 - World Mission Broadcast: www.worldmissionbroadcast.org
- Video:
 - An intro to Xperience TV: <https://youtu.be/sIOln3VcS8>
 - WMB Promotional Video: <http://www.nazarene.org/wmb-promotional-resources>

Option 3—Discuss It

- Give an overview of the Lesson Information.
- Ask the group to discuss the following questions:
 - What details do you think the Vlaardingen congregation had to discuss and plan to help their young people begin the Xperience TV ministry?
 - How could small groups in your church—either age-specific or not—develop a ministry to people near you, perhaps a different culture or with other needs?
 - The Glass House Project for Vlaardingen was to help “silent disasters” in their area. What “silent disasters” could your church help alleviate?

ACT ON IT (practical ideas for personal involvement)

- Consider having your church create its own Glass House Project. It doesn't have to be a broadcast, but it could be a way to help your community be aware of issues in your city. You can decide the project and when and where it will be held. What details need to be addressed to bring about such an event?
- Encourage your group to participate in the annual World Mission Broadcast Offering. While traditionally received in June, an awareness emphasis and offering for WMB can be done anytime during the year. The offering provides funding for Nazarene radio, television, and Internet program production, airtime, and follow-up strategies.
- Pray:
 - For the ministry of Xperience TV, that they will continue to enthusiastically reach out to young people in the Netherlands and that God will call young people to serve Him as a result of their participation in Xperience TV.
 - For the people who learned about the Church of the Nazarene through the Glass House Project, that they will understand how much Jesus loves them.
 - For people around the world who share the gospel via the programs provided by World Mission Broadcast and for the people who learn about God's love, Christ's sacrifice and resurrection, and the Holy Spirit's comfort as a result of these radio, television, and Internet programs.

UPDATE

The Glass House Project by the youth group of the Vlaardingen, Netherlands, Church of the Nazarene in cooperation with the community, raised more than 11,000 euros (US\$12,460) for a national Red Cross fundraising drive.

Two DJs from the city's radio station agreed to join with Xperience TV's presenter duo in the glass house. The program was simulcast on Xperience TV, the radio station, and a local TV station for 24 hours.

On December 11, 2015, at 4 p.m., in front of a large crowd, the Vlaardingen city mayor ceremonially locked the DJs and presenters inside the glass house. During the next 24 hours, individuals dropped off donations. At one point, a scouting group and an ill-reputed motorcycle gang both converged on the square to drop off checks, presenting quite a contrast—but also the spirit generated by the Vlaardingen Church's call for everyone to work together in stopping silent disasters.

[Source: *Eurasia Region Snapshots*, December 22, 2015: www.eurasiaregion.org/news/snap-shots]

Lesson 6

Looking After Orphans in Their Distress

FAST FACTS

- 2014 Ebola Epidemic
 - Called the “largest in history” by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC)—10 nations were affected at one time or another. The 3 nations with the most cases were Guinea (Conakry), Sierra Leone, and Liberia. The Church of the Nazarene has a presence in those countries.
 - The first cases were reported in Guinea on March 25, 2014.
 - On November 19, 2015, Liberia reported three confirmed cases from the same family being treated and 150 contacts being monitored.
 - As of December 7, 2015, the following cumulative numbers were reported:
 - Total Cases (Suspected, Probable, and Confirmed): 28,637
 - Laboratory-Confirmed Cases: 15,249
 - Total Deaths: 11,315
 - Vigilance for detection will need to continue in 2016.
- Ebola Orphans (as of February 6, 2015):
 - More than 16,600 children had lost a parent or caregiver to Ebola in Sierra Leone, Guinea, and Liberia—including 3,600 children who lost both parents.
 - Less than 3 percent had to be placed outside family or community care.

[Sources: Centers for Disease Control and Prevention; World Health Organization; UNICEF]

SCRIPTURE: “Religion that God our Father accepts as pure and faultless is this: to look after orphans and widows in their distress and to keep oneself from being polluted by the world.” (James 1:27)

LESSON PURPOSE

To recognize that, despite medical efforts to the contrary, people die from tragic diseases and the survivors often need support in many ways.

LESSON INFORMATION

Caring for Ebola Orphans

The Ebola outbreak of 2014 left thousands of orphans. Nazarene churches in two of the most affected countries, Sierra Leone and Liberia, are weaving together a safety net to help some of the children stay in school and experience the love of God. Education fees often devour an extensive amount of household incomes, making it difficult for children to go to school. Even before the Ebola outbreak, large percentages of children in Sierra Leone, Liberia, and Guinea Conakry (GIN-ee KAH-nah-kree) weren't in school.

Local churches, working hand-in-hand with Nazarene Compassionate Ministries (NCM), have instigated the “21 and Free” campaign. The campaign refers to the number of days one must be in quarantine before being declared Ebola-free. “This campaign has been a great tool for our pastors and young people in reaching out to our various communities with the message that these children should be treated well, with dignity and respect, without any stigma attached to them,” said Steven S. Kanu (KAH-new), the Nazarene church's zone coordinator for the Waterloo area in Sierra Leone.

Sierra Leone

“We really have the hearts to help, to reach out to these children and show them some love, because that is the first thing that they need,” said Vidal Cole (vee-DAHL KOHL), Sierra Leone district superintendent.

“We want...to do whatever we can so that these children will not think that society has forgotten about them, that the world has turned their backs on them.”

Churches’ efforts are making a difference, but there are still many orphans in need of food and access to education. The Nazarene primary school run by Kanu’s church is sponsoring the education of 20 orphans, with the help of other churches in the district. He says, “As some children have heard and seen what we have done in helping, they have also come and asked for help; but because of the space, we have put them on a waiting list.”

Though orphans are often taken in by relatives, they still might face emotional neglect and a shortage of resources, Cole said. Farming is the main source of income for families in the Waterloo area, and adding another person to an already crowded home and stretched budget is challenging.

The church’s outreach throughout the Ebola crisis has drawn more children to church and has changed the way people view the purpose of the church, Cole said. They are realizing that church is not just about worshiping on Sunday, but about caring for one’s neighbors.

“By God’s grace, I see the church as a beacon of hope and light to our dark community,” Kanu said. “I believe God wants to use us to bring about transformation in our community.”

Liberia

The church in Liberia has created a Community Health Evangelism Team led by Elizabeth Johnson, who provides counseling for 11 Ebola orphans and 22 survivors in Monrovia.

Nazarenes in Liberia are also funding education for the two youngest children of Pastor Joe and Hannah Sonkpah (suhnk-PAH) who both died from the disease. The family’s church, Grace Chapel Church of the Nazarene, and other churches on the district are collaborating to care for the children’s physical and spiritual needs, said Daniel Johnson, the Nazarene ministries coordinator in Liberia.

“In spite of the economic hardship caused by the Ebola outbreak, the Church of the Nazarene in Liberia is making tremendous effort to meet the educational needs of Ebola orphans,” Johnson said.

Orphans in Sierra Leone (20) and in Liberia (26) are attending school through sponsorships from local Nazarene churches and NCM. More than just meeting the immediate needs of children orphaned by Ebola, the church is seeking to empower them for the future through education, loving relationships, and discipleship.

[Source: Amy Crofford]

PRESENTATION IDEAS

Option 1—Looking After the Orphans

Prepare

- Make copies of the Fast Facts at the beginning of the lesson, cut them apart, and number them in the order they are listed.
- Ask three people to help present the lesson, using the sections: “Ebola Orphans,” “Sierra Leone,” and “Liberia.”
- Distribute the Fast Facts to people as they come in, explaining that they will help begin the lesson with this short, but sobering fact.

Present

- As an introduction, ask the people to whom you distributed the Fast Facts to read them in numerical order.
- Have the people helping with the lesson present their material.

Option 2—Seek Out the Sobering Statistics (for a group that likes activity)

Prepare

- Ask three people to help present the lesson, using the sections: “Ebola Orphans,” “Sierra Leone,” and “Liberia.”
- Write each Fast Fact on a piece of paper, number them accordingly, and hide them around the room where you will be meeting.

Present

- Once the group has gathered, tell them that you have hidden 11 statistics around the room. Let them know that they have two minutes to find all of them. Once they are all found, you will explain what to do with them.
- As an introduction, ask the people who found the Fast Facts to read them in numerical order.
- Have the people helping with the lesson present their material.

Option 3—Discuss It

- Give an overview of the Lesson Information.
- Discuss the following questions:
 - What do you think of Pastor Cole’s statement that the first thing children need is love?
 - How do you think people responded to their neighbors when they learned those neighbors had Ebola (especially when intertwined with superstition and lack of knowledge)? And how much do you think people noticed?
 - What groups in your community have a stigma attached to how they live? How can you “look after them in their distress”?

RESOURCES (“handy helps” for the leader)

- **Websites:**
 - Centers for Disease Control and Prevention: www.cdc.gov
 - World Health Organization: www.who.int/en/
 - UNICEF: www.unicefusa.org
 - NCM Ebola Relief: www.ncm.org/ebolarelief.html
 - 21 and Free explanation guide, PowerPoint slides, and poster
 - Prayer guides, prayer station guides, and fasting guides—great for dedicated time of prayer and fasting.

ACT ON IT (practical ideas for personal involvement)

- Daniel (Dany) Gomis (DAN-uhl [DAH-nee] goh-MEES) is the field strategy coordinator for the Africa West Field of which Guinea Conakry, Sierra Leone, and Liberia are a part. Your giving to the World Evangelism Fund provides the support for those areas in which many missionaries like Dany serve. By your participation in the World Evangelism Fund, you allow the Church of the Nazarene to provide ministries to those suffering from Ebola and to those families who lost loved ones in the Ebola epidemic.
- Dany suggests having a time of fasting and prayer weekly for those affected by the epidemic:
 - Pray for God to bind any fear and loose peace in the hearts of the people of West Africa.
 - Pray for district superintendents, pastors, leaders, and churches in Liberia, Sierra Leone, and Guinea Conakry, that the Lord will use them powerfully in these difficult days.
 - Pray for God's wisdom and protection for the medical personnel in Ebola-affected areas.
 - Pray for the heads of nations and decision-makers in Sierra Leone, Liberia, and Guinea Conakry.
- Inform and educate by checking the World Health Organization for updates.
- This lesson would be great to use in conjunction with a Vacation Bible School or children's camp, and have the children make the 21- bead bracelet that is suggested on the NCM Ebola website. See the Resources section for the link to the website.
- Local Nazarene churches in Liberia and Sierra Leone are working closely with Nazarene Compassionate Ministries to support impoverished communities and those affected by the Ebola outbreak in 2014-2015. Throughout the outbreak, the 220 churches in those countries have responded compassionately by helping the most vulnerable people affected by the virus. With the support of the Church of the Nazarene globally, the churches are providing food aid and hygiene kits, as well as implementing campaigns designed to reduce the stigma associated with Ebola.

Since the Ebola response began, support in areas such as health promotion, hygiene, sanitation, and water supply, have been greatly needed. As a result, churches in Sierra Leone and Liberia are partnering with NCM to improve access to safe water, sanitation, and hygiene in 16 communities affected by the Ebola virus. This initiative involves the drilling of 16 boreholes and a comprehensive approach to promoting hygiene and sanitation.

If you or your church would like to sponsor one of these 16 communities for the duration of this initiative, please e-mail NCM (ncm@nazarene.org). The total cost per community is US\$16,000. Any donation is appreciated.

Lesson 7

Serving as the Hands and Feet of Jesus

FAST FACTS

Kingdom of Tonga

- Population of Tonga is 106,501 (July 2015 est.)
- Braille is a system of raised dots that can be read with the fingers by people who are blind or who have low vision. Braille is not a language. Rather, it is a code by which many languages—such as English, Spanish, Arabic, Chinese, and dozens of others—may be written and read.

[Sources: *CIA World Factbook*; American Foundation for the Blind]

SCRIPTURE: “I was eyes to the blind and feet to the lame.” (Job 29:15)

LESSON PURPOSE

To appreciate the work of a ministry serving the physically challenged and their families and the obstacles it overcomes.

LESSON INFORMATION

Introducing the Mango Tree Centre

The Mango Tree Centre for People with Disabilities (MTC) offers a holistic and family-centered rehabilitation service for people with disabilities in the Kingdom of Tonga (TOHNG-ah). In 1997, this ministry began through the work of Doc and Charmayne Old, missionaries from the Church of the Nazarene. To them, the disabled children in Tonga were “hidden treasures.” They started MTC to look for and serve the “hidden treasures.”

The following are ways MTC serves people with disabilities and their families:

- 1. Home Visit Care:** The MTC personnel regularly visit the disabled and provide minor medical and rehabilitative service, needed materials, prayer and Bible study, and emotional support. Through this assistance, MTC encourages and supports children with disabilities in living happy lives.
- 2. Rehabilitative Therapy:** MTC provides disabled children with rehabilitative treatment and special education services and teaches the children social skills as early intervention programs.
- 3. Braille Course:** The Braille course was established for children with visual impairment. They learn Braille, as well as the other subjects regularly studied in school.
- 4. Computer Class:** A computer class for the disabled is provided by MTC, helping them secure employment.
- 5. Family Support:** MTC provides information and encouragement for the parents of the disabled children that are served by the ministry. Regular Bible studies are conducted to help parents lead their families in faith.
- 6. Mobility Aids Provision:** MTC helps the disabled move comfortably by renovating the interiors of their houses. They also provide mobile aids, such as wheelchairs, crutches, etc.
- 7. Annual Family Camp:** A camp for people with disabilities is hosted each year to restore their faith and to give them opportunities for recreation and fellowship in beautiful places.

A Vision for the Future

Many children with impaired vision who live in Tonga are neglected by their parents and teachers at school because disability is seen as punishment from God. They eventually leave school due to bad grades. The Mango Tree Centre for People with Disabilities (MTC) recently began helping visually impaired children, in addition to those with cerebral palsy.

William is a 6-year-old visually impaired boy. MTC enrolled William in an English-speaking Christian primary school, because—in Tonga—it is difficult to learn Braille without knowing English. William's school fee is funded by the students from a college in New Zealand.

The Centre made a tilted desk for William and a reading desk that allows him to adjust the height, bringing the book closer to his eyes. Every morning in the MTC van, William happily says, "Good morning" and "Thank you." When he arrives at school, his friends from class come running out to welcome him.

Mango Tree's strategy is that, through this assistance, William will grow up to become a warm-hearted young man who knows how to love and take care of others and, most of all, knows and accepts the love of our Lord and Savior.

[Source: In-Kwon Kim, a Korean missionary serving at the MTC]

Serving as the Hands and Feet of Christ

Mango Tree Centre for People with Disabilities (MTC) hosted a Disability Bible Camp in August 2015. For two days, youth and adults with disabilities joined in a passionate time of praise, worship, and fellowship!

"Our mission is to not only provide rehabilitation for the people with disabilities, but to also serve them and their families, both physically and spiritually," said In-Kwon Kim (in-kwahn kim), administrator of the MTC.

Later in the month, great roars of joy and cheering bursts could be heard from all around the MTC, as they celebrated Disability Sport Week!

"We stood in awe as Iloa (il-LOH-ah), who had been in bed all of his life due to his quadriplegia, let out laughter and lifted his hands to hit the ball that had been thrown his way," said Kim.

Siaosi (shi-ah-OH-shi), a paraplegic, and Maneo (mah-NAY-oh), a double amputee, playfully fought over who would get the ball, while the people with visual impairment came together around a table to play a game of soccer. It was a sight to behold, as the children listened intently to the sound of the rolling ball and then hit it into the opponent's goal!

The Mango Tree Centre is truly affecting lives, but not without the help of many nations! Earlier in the summer, students from the Lincoln University in New Zealand visited MTC for 10 days and built beautiful herb and flower gardens. The students designed the gardens and even raised the funds themselves. Gardening is beneficial for the emotional health and social development of people with disabilities. Planting flowers and looking after them is especially helpful for rehabilitative therapy.

In many instances throughout the islands of the South Pacific, children born with disabilities are seen as "curses" from the gods. It is through serving as the tangible hands and feet of Christ that the Mango Tree Centre is literally bringing these little children to Jesus. But not just the children; for when you love the children, their parents follow!

Serving as the tangible hands and feet of Christ... lives are affected for eternity!

[Source: Asia-Pacific Region]

Meet the Kims

The Kims, In-Kwon and Jeong-Seok Nam (johng-sohk nahm), are regional missionaries for the Church of the Nazarene in the Kingdom of Tonga. They began serving in February 2007, working at the Mango Tree Centre for People with Disabilities (MTC) in Nuku'alofa (noo-koo-ah-LOH-fah), Tonga.

In-Kwon graduated from Korea University, Chung-Ang (choong-ahng) Graduate School in South Korea, and the Bible College of New Zealand. Jeong-Seok graduated from Kyung-Hee (kyuhng-hee) University in South Korea and the Bible College of New Zealand.

For more than 10 years, In-Kwon and Jeong-Seok helped the disabled children in Korea. After that, they served the street children and slum dwellers in Nairobi, Kenya, for several years.

In 2007, the Kims took on the leadership of MTC, which offers holistic and family-centered rehabilitation services for people with disabilities.

The Kims were married in 1989 and have three children.

[Source: Global Mission website, "Missionary Profiles"]

PRESENTATION IDEAS

Option 1—Serving as the Hands and Feet of Christ

Prepare

- At least a week before, ask people to help you present 2 or more of the sections in the Lesson Information, depending on the time available. Distribute the sections to your helpers.
- Make copies of the handout (located at the end of this lesson) for the number of people who will be attending, and gather pens/pencils for attendees.

Present

- Ask the people who are assisting you to present their material.
- Distribute the handouts and pens/pencils, and let the group know they have 10 minutes to complete the handout, using the instructions on the page.
- Discuss the difficulties people with disabilities face and how you can help them.

Option 2—A Vision for the Future (for a group that likes activity)

Prepare

- At least a week before, ask people to help you present 2 or more of the sections in the Lesson Information, depending on the time available to you. Distribute the sections to your helpers.
- For the Sense Challenge, gather items that people can smell, taste, hear, and touch, plus several blindfolds. (This could be done by 3 or 4 people or by the whole group, depending on your time.)
- Make copies of the handout (located at the end of this lesson) for the number of people who will be attending, and gather pens/pencils for attendees.

Present

- Use the Sense Challenge as an introduction; blindfold several people, bring them in individually, and have them say what they think they smell, hear, taste, and/or touch.
- Ask the people who are assisting you to present their material.
- Distribute the handouts and pens/pencils, and let the group know they have 10 minutes to complete the handout, using the instructions on the page.
- Discuss the difficulties people with disabilities face and how you can help them.

Option 3—Discuss It

- Give an overview of the Lesson Information.
- Discuss the following questions:
 - In many cultures, many diseases and ailments are considered punishments by God or gods. What do you think Christians can do to help overcome that belief?
 - How are families affected when there is a loved one who is physically or developmentally challenged? (Please be sensitive to members of your group, as you may have families in this situation.)
 - What does “serving as the hands and feet of Christ” mean to you?

ACT ON IT (practical ideas for personal involvement)

- What creative ways can your group assist people who either are physically challenged, or who have loved ones who are?
- By participating in the World Evangelism Fund, you help provide the structure upon which the Mango Tree Centre relies. Encourage your group to participate in this driving force for the Church of the Nazarene.
- Pray for MTC
 - Pray for In-Kwon and Jeong-Seok Kim, regional missionaries who help provide for the clients of MTC.
 - Pray that the people who serve at the center will not be overtaxed physically, overwhelmed emotionally, or drained spiritually by the ministry.
 - Pray that people will answer the call for needed personnel at MTC in the coming years.
 - Invite your group to pray about by participating in a missions trip to MTC or a similar ministry, either as individuals or as a church.

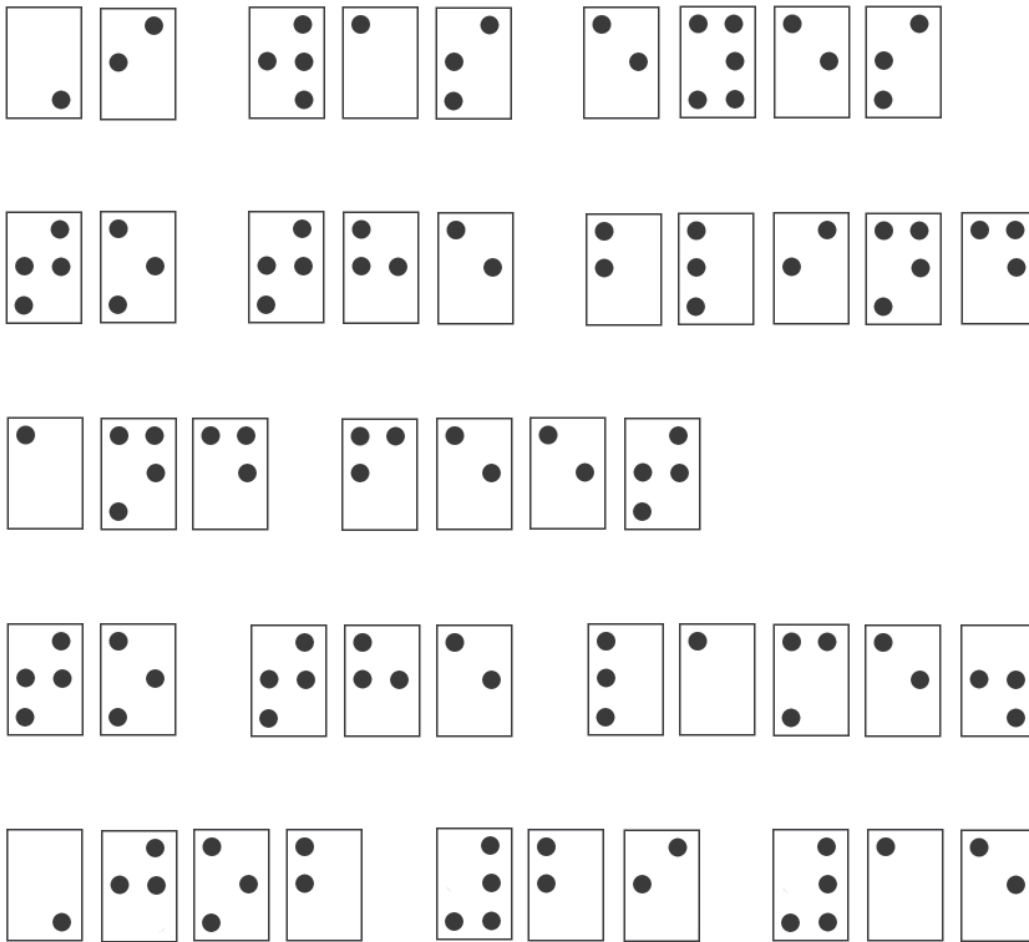
RESOURCES (“handy helps” for the leader)

- **Mango Tree Center Website:** <http://blog.daum.net/mangotreecentre>
- **2015 MTC Overview Video:** <https://youtu.be/67UkE71IfP0>
- **Additional Article: “Diamonds in the Rough”:** www.engagemagazine.com/content/diamonds-rough

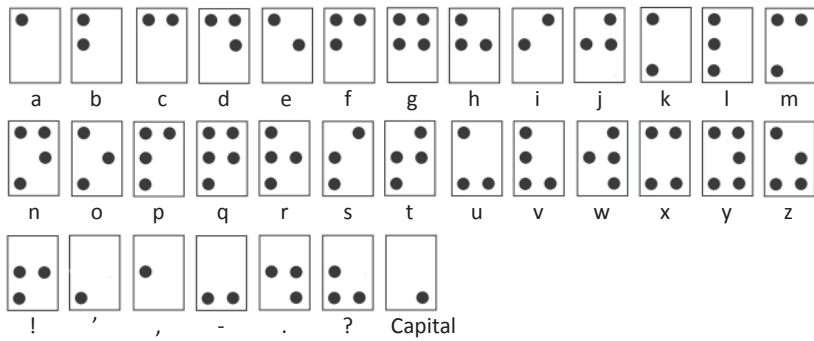
A Vision for the Future

Lesson 7

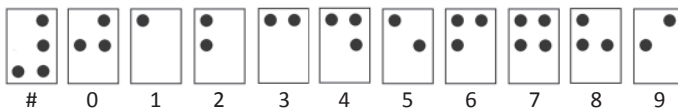
Instructions: Using the braille key below, write the message. As you do so, think about the difficulties that people who are physically challenged face and how you could help them.



Braille Alphabet



Numbers



Lesson 8

Mighty Moments in Myanmar

FAST FACTS

Myanmar

- Population: 56,320,206 (July 2015 est.)
- Myanmar is surrounded by Bangladesh and India on the west and China, Laos, and Thailand on the east.
- In the Church of the Nazarene in Myanmar:
 - District: 1
 - Organized Churches: 23
 - Members: 2,762
 - National Workers
 - Elders: 12
 - Licensed Ministers: 12

[Sources: *CIA World Factbook*; 2015 Annual Statistics of the Church of the Nazarene]

SCRIPTURE: “Because of the service by which you have proved yourselves, others will praise God for the obedience that accompanies your confession of the gospel of Christ, and for your generosity in sharing with them and with everyone else.” (2 Corinthians 9:13)

LESSON PURPOSE

To realize the role that obedience to God plays in the Church of the Nazarene in Myanmar’s past, present, and future.

LESSON INFORMATION

Robin Seia, Myanmar Pioneer

In January 2015, Dr. Robin Seia (SAY-ah), 70, retired after serving for 30 years as the district superintendent for the Church of the Nazarene in Myanmar (MEE-yuhn-mahr). Born to a Buddhist family, Robin accepted Christ as his Savior at the age of 17. While this created quite a stir, it eventually led to his mother accepting Christ, followed by his entire family.

When he was 20, Robin travelled to India for further Christian education. While there, he read the book *Why I Am a Nazarene*, which served as an introduction to the holiness message of the church. Robin worked for the Evangelical Fellowship of Burma for a number of years, then studied at Fuller Theological Seminary in Pasadena, California.

“I will never forget Pasadena First Church of the Nazarene,” said Dr. Seia. “The first Sunday that I walked in the door, they welcomed me in an incredible way. There was a man there by the name of Dr. Herald King.

Here I was, a foreign student, a stranger, but Dr. King picked me up every Sunday, he treated me like a son.”

In 1984, Robin returned to Myanmar, and the Church of the Nazarene was officially registered there.

Upon his retirement, Dr. Seia left a legacy of 23 organized churches and more than 2,700 members.

[Source: David Phillips, Southeast Asia Field Strategy Coordinator]

Mighty Moments in Myanmar

In Myanmar, the Nine Mile Church of the Nazarene (NMC), averaging 10 people of all ages, gathers to pray and worship, meeting in the house of one of its members.

The church was planted through the prayers and obedience of Rinpuii (rin-POO-ee), who attended another Nazarene church, requiring her to travel 9 miles to attend. Rinpuii asked her pastor if she could

start a worship service in her house. The pastor agreed and invited other members to join Rinpuii. The congregation has worshipped together since 2013.

It is a beautiful picture of the Body of Christ. They love the Word of the Lord, share life-breathing testimonies, and find ways to share the love of Christ with their neighbors.

The members of Nine Mile have not heard the term “compassionate ministry” but they understand the words of Jesus and are doing what He did. They visit neighbors, share food, and provide medicine to those in need. They do this out of selflessness—not to be praised or to receive reciprocal gifts. It is important that the neighborhood feels the heart of the church and experiences the tangible love of Christ.

Not long after the church was started, Rinpuii’s daughter died unexpectedly, leaving Rinpuii feeling hopeless. One day while she was farming, Rinpuii saw a sparrow flying and singing beautifully, and Rinpuii especially sensed God’s grace.

“If God takes care, feeding and guiding this little sparrow, how much more has He poured out love and care to my daughter and me,” thought Rinpuii. After saying this out loud, Rinpuii was relieved from the sadness brought on by the loss of her daughter. She made the decision that to honor her daughter, she would serve the church even more faithfully.

As missionary Bill Kwon (kwahn) made his first visit to the Myanmar churches in 2014, he met a couple who invited him to their house. He was touched that they so warmly welcomed a foreigner to their home.

As he entered the home of Khawnthanga (kwom-THAHN-gah) and his wife, Sangluthangi (sahn-gloo-THAHN-gee), Bill was impressed by the presence of the Lord. Their family wasn’t wealthy; however, their four daughters were able to go to school, so God was blessing them.

About three years earlier, Sangluthangi was working in China. Khawnthanga stayed in Myanmar with the children. One morning as they prayed in the separate countries, the Lord spoke to them.

“We heard a strong voice from the Lord that commanded us to support [workers in the harvest],” said Khawnthanga. “We were shocked when Sangluthangi and I later learned that God had spoken to us in the same way at the same time, in two separate countries. We knew we had to obey.”

After Sangluthangi returned to Myanmar, the couple began supporting a ministry family, sending them US\$50 each month, average support for a pastor. Initially, the amount, in addition to their regular church giving and their own family’s bills, seemed almost impossible.

“It was not easy for us to make up our mind to obey, and accept the challenge of caring for a ministry family,” said Khawnthanga. “Once we committed, God has blessed, and we have not missed even one month in 3 years.”

The family testified how God provided for the mission to which He had called them. They told Bill how thankful they were to support a family who is ministering where they cannot. Bill later learned that the Myanmar Church of the Nazarene had sent 13 such ministry families to unreached areas of their country. The passion of these precious people for sharing the gospel, overcoming boundaries of nations and culture, is overwhelming.

Regardless of who we are, where we are, or what resources we have, we are all called to God’s mission!

[Source: Bill Kwon]

PRESENTATION IDEAS

Option 1—Mighty Moments in Myanmar

Prepare

- At least a week before, ask people to help you present the Lesson Information. Distribute the sections to your helpers.
- Make a copy of the Fast Facts, cut them apart for the Introduction to the lesson, and number them. Distribute a fact to a group member as that person enters, and ask the person to read it when called upon.

Present

- Ask the people who have Fast Facts to read them in numerical order.
- Ask the people assisting with the Lesson Information to present their material.

Option 2—Dash Toward Obedience (for a group that likes activity)

Prepare

- At least a week before, ask people to help you present the Lesson Information. Distribute the sections to your helpers.
- Write the Fast Facts and the scripture for the lesson on pieces of paper and scatter them randomly around the room.
- Make copies of the Lesson 8 handout, and have pens/pencils available for the group

Present

- At the beginning of the lesson, distribute the handouts and pens/pencils. Tell them the answers are scattered throughout the room, and the first person to answer them all correctly will win a prize that you select. Have individuals read their answers to the handout.
- Ask the people assisting with the Lesson Information to present their material.

Option 3—Discuss It

- Give an overview of the Lesson Information.
- Discuss the following questions:
 - In each of the stories, how were people obedient to God?
 - What did that obedience require the people to do?
 - What future do you see for the church in Myanmar? Why?

ACT ON IT (practical ideas for personal involvement)

- Have you as an individual or a church sensed direction from God to which you need to be obedient? What would that obedience require, and what would be the results? If you feel comfortable to discuss it, do so.
- As you regularly participate in the World Evangelism Fund, you allow others to be obedient to God's mission call on their lives or you help districts, churches, and individuals achieve what they sense God telling them to do. Please participate in the World Evangelism Fund.
- Pray
 - Pray for the work in Myanmar and for Bill Kwon and his wife, Mill, as they minister to the world area.
 - Rinpui requested prayer for the Nine Mile Church, that they would be the salt and light in a village that is in such need of Christ, and for her son, who is studying to be a pastor at a seminary in Korea, that he would be equipped to return to Myanmar and make Christlike disciples there.

RESOURCES (“handy helps” for the leader)

- Websites:
 - Southeast Asia Field, Asia-Pacific Region: www.asiapacificnazarene.org/southeast-asia
 - Bill and Mill Kwon: <http://app.nazarene.org/MissionaryProfiles/profile.jsp?profile=153418>
- Video:
 - Pray for Myanmar: <https://vimeo.com/113279994>

Myanmar—Dash Toward Obedience

Lesson 8

- Population: _____
- Myanmar is surrounded by _____ and _____ on the west and _____, _____, and _____ on the east.
- In the Church of the Nazarene in Myanmar:
 - Districts: ____
 - Organized Churches: ____
 - Members: _____
 - National Workers
 - Elders: ____
 - Licensed Ministers: ____

[Sources: *CIA World Factbook*; 2015 Annual Statistics of the Church of the Nazarene]

Regardless of who we are,
where we are, or what
resources we have, we are all
called to God's mission!



Lesson 9

We Need to Get Out More

FAST FACTS

Albania

- Albania's population is 3,029,278 (July 2015 est.)
- All mosques and churches were closed in 1967 and religious observances prohibited; in November 1990, Albania began allowing private religious practice.
- In the Church of the Nazarene in Albania:
 - Year Entered: 1993
 - District: 1 (Albania-Kosova District—numbers reflect both world areas)
 - Organized Churches: 5
 - Members: 112
 - National Workers
 - Elders: 2
 - Deacons: 1
 - Licensed Ministers: 6

Syria

- Syria's population is 17,064,854 (July 2014 est.)
- A refugee is someone who has been forced to leave a country because of war or for religious or political reasons.
- In the Church of the Nazarene in Syria:
 - Year Entered: 1920
 - District: 1
 - Organized Churches: 5
 - Members: 728
 - National Workers
 - Elders: 6
 - Licensed Ministers: 1

[Sources: *CIA World Factbook*; *Merriam-Webster Dictionary*; 2015 Annual Statistics of the Church of the Nazarene]

SCRIPTURE: “You, my brothers and sisters, were called to be free. But do not use your freedom to indulge the flesh; rather, serve one another humbly in love. For the entire law is fulfilled in keeping this one command: ‘Love your neighbor as yourself.’” (Galatians 5:13–14)

LESSON PURPOSE

To realize that cross-cultural witnessing opportunities are nearby, if we just make the effort to go where the people are.

Devotions at the Dump

Vera Broli (VE-ruh BROH-lee) lives in a small cement block house near the garbage dump in Sharr (Shuhr), Albania. The area is home to a community of Roma people—an often impoverished ethnic group that lives on the fringes of societies across Europe. The Roma people in Sharr live off the trash and discarded items brought to the dump in their neighborhood.

Vera Broli herself is not well-off, nor is she young, but on Mondays she faithfully walks to the dump to teach the Bible to the Roma people. Every other day, she walks about three kilometers (almost 2 miles) to the church of which she is a member.

In her daily devotions, she takes notes about the truths she finds in the Bible. Then she reads these notes to the Roma people who gather as part of the Bible study.

“We have the service outside because they don’t have houses, they have just these little wood things,” Vera said. “They don’t even have any stools to sit on; they sit on the ground. They were very hungry for the Word of God. They always are after us to listen more to the Bible, because they can’t read, most of them.”

Vera prayed that God would bring other people to work alongside her in Sharr. “The harvest was big, but I didn’t have workers,” she said.

Meanwhile, more than a year ago, the Kombinat (kohm-bee-NAHT) Church of the Nazarene sent its youth to host a Christmas service and present a drama in Sharr to the Roma people. Jeta Mukaj (YE-tuh MEW-kie), one of the youth, was disturbed to see the children running barefoot amidst the trash. “I asked God, ‘If you want me to do something for them, just tell me what to do and I’ll do it,’” Jeta said. “I heard in that moment, ‘They need love and they need attention; that’s all they need.’”

Jeta knew that Vera was already visiting the community, so she proposed that they go together. It was an answer to Vera’s prayers. The two women normally visit the community on Saturdays to work with the children.

Missionary Steve Beiler (BIE-luhr), who leads the ministry in Albania, was thrilled at the women’s initiative. “It’s one of these things that for us is exciting [because] it’s not missionary-led or missionaries saying we should do this,” Beiler said. “It’s people in the local church who are saying, ‘They need Jesus as well; can I do something?’”

The Roma people are learning to trust God to provide for their needs. They often ask God to let them find something in the trash that they can sell to buy

food. One time a woman asked God to help her and later found US\$80 in the trash. When the children asked God to help their families, one child found US\$150.

“Their trust in God started growing,” Vera said. “They started to understand this thing is good. Last Easter we had a special service with them. The women did the salvation prayer; 15 people, including men, accepted Christ.”

[Source: *Engage Magazine*]

‘I Can’t Stop Going There’

Among the 83,000 refugees from the Syrian war who have been living in a temporary refugee camp outside the country is an elderly widow. She fled across the border with her two grandchildren, leaving her son behind. Recently, a Nazarene pastor and several of his church members visited her tent to sit with her and listen to her story.

“When we entered her house, she started crying. When I asked her [why], I will never forget this woman,” Pastor Fadi (FAH-dee; not his real name) recalled. “She said, ‘I’m staying here 6 or 7 months. No one visited me. I used to go around and ask for help, and you are the first one to enter my house,’ and, really, she started crying.”

In 2012, Fadi and volunteers from his church began visiting refugees. In the time since then, life and conditions in the camp have worsened. In winter the tents are very cold, and in summer they are very hot. Crime is growing, and assaults on women and children occur regularly. The children, who cannot go to school, spend their days wandering without purpose. People are losing hope. Their temporary situation is turning into a permanent one.

Although it can be dangerous for visitors from the outside, the pastor and his congregation refuse to stay away. “I can’t stop going there,” Fadi said. “Even if it’s dangerous, there are people waiting for us and they really want to hear the Good News, so I can’t be relaxing at home and doing nothing. There are people outside; they really need to know about Jesus Christ.”

During the week, Fadi and the church team visits families of the children they meet at the Sunday School. One six-year-old boy had medical problems with both his heart and his eye. With permission, Pastor Fadi laid hands on the boy and prayed for him in Jesus’ name. Three days later, the boy’s mother called to report that when they went to the doctor for a checkup, the

doctor was astonished to find the boy's heart beating perfectly. The doctor declared the boy to be healed.

"What kind of prayer did you pray?" the woman wanted to know. Upon her invitation, the pastor returned to explain who Jesus is; as a result, she accepted Jesus as Lord.

Pastor Fadi said that many of the refugees are beginning to question their faith system because now they connect it to violence, war, and hatred. "When they see that as Christians we show them love and

care, some of them start asking [questions] and they start thinking."

Last year, the church baptized 14 of the refugees as new believers. One was a former militia member who has become a strong believer and openly encourages many other people to follow Jesus. He has brought 40 people to Christ, including his entire family.

[Source: Gina Grate Pottenger]

PRESENTATION IDEAS

Option 1—In Their Words

Prepare

- Make three copies of each story and highlight a character's quotation(s) on each one (see bullet points below for help):
 - "Devotions at the Dump"
 - Vera: paragraph 4; latter part of paragraph 5; last paragraph
 - Jeta: last part of paragraph 6
 - Steve: most of paragraph 8
 - "I Can't Stop Going There"
 - Fadi: First two sentences in paragraph 2; latter part of paragraph 4; last part of paragraph 7
 - Elderly Woman: Middle of paragraph 2
 - Mother: beginning of paragraph 6
- As they enter, ask some people to help you by reading the characters' quotes from the stories, giving them the copies of the stories. Let them know they can follow along, so they will know when to read their quotes.

Present

- Present the stories, telling the narrative that accompanies the quotations.
- Discuss the effort it takes Vera, Jeta, and Fadi to witness to the people to whom they feel called.
 - What kind of planning would it take?
 - Ask the group to describe what kind concerns they would have if they were in these people's places.
 - Discuss whether there are people from other cultures near you who might be overlooked. Who would they be?

RESOURCES ("handy helps" for the leader)

- **Websites:**
 - Eurasia Region: www.eurasiaregion.org
 - Engage Magazine: www.engagemagazine.org
- **Articles:**
 - "5 Intriguing Facts about the Roma": <http://www.livescience.com/40652-facts-about-roma-romani-gypsies.html>
 - "Romani People": https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Romani_people
- **Video:** "Open Doors: How the Church in Lebanon Is Reaching Out to Syrian Refugees": <http://medialibrary.nazarene.org/media/open-doors-how-the-church-in-lebanon-is-reaching-o>

Option 2—Get on Your Feet (for a group that likes activity)

Prepare

- Set up stations in your meeting room for any or all of the following topics:
 - Mission story (can use one or both of the stories depending on the time available)—use Prepare from Option 1 for this.
 - Research—Have some articles about the Roma people for people to review. Download the video about Syrian refugees and share it with your group. If you have Wi-Fi in the room where you meet, people could look at the Eurasia Region and *Engage* websites. Links to all of these items are listed in the resources at the end of the lesson.
 - Scripture—Have people try to learn Galatians 5:13–14 and also discuss how this scripture applies to the people in the stories.
 - Discussion—Write/type the questions from the “Discuss It” section and have them available at this station for your group to discuss.
 - “Act on It”—Have suggested items from this section, as well as any others in which your group might be interested, available for the group to discuss, strategize, and pray about.

Present

- Have the entire group go to the Mission Story station first and hear the presentations there.
- Divide your group into sub-groups of at least three (depending on the size of the whole group) and have each sub-group visit the remaining stations, allowing the sub-groups to stay at each station. You will probably want to have a time keeper, so everyone makes it to each station.

Option 3—Discuss It

- Give an overview of the Lesson Information.
- Discuss the following questions:
 - Explain how you would feel about someone in your church holding a Bible study in a dump and why you feel that way.
 - The Romani people have been persecuted throughout their history. Why do you think that is, and what can be done to alleviate such persecution?
 - How would you feel if your pastor did what Pastor Fadi did?
 - How would you feel if you were in the elderly Syrian woman’s place and had lived in a refugee camp without any visitors for more than 6 months?

ACT ON IT (practical ideas for personal involvement)

- What groups from cultures other than your own are nearby? How could your church—as a group or as individuals—assist these people? What steps would you need to take to do so?
- Nazarene Compassionate Ministries has special projects that benefit refugees around the world. Visit www.ncm.org and type “refugees” in the search window to see what opportunities are available.
- Pray
 - Pray for open homes, open hearts, and open minds when sharing the Good News.
 - Pray for Vera and Jeta in Albania and Pastor Fadi who serves Syrians who are refugees in his country, that their ministries will be fruitful for the Kingdom.

Lesson 10

When the Earth Shook Nepal

Editor's Note: If your church emphasizes Nazarene Compassionate Ministries in December, your group might enjoy this lesson at that time.

FAST FACTS

Nepal

- Nepal's population is 31,551,305 (July 2015 est.)
- In the Church of the Nazarene in Nepal:
 - Year Entered: 1998
 - District: 1
 - Organized Churches: 108
 - Members: 7,016
 - National Workers
 - Elders: 43
 - Licensed Ministers: 36

[Sources: *CIA World Factbook*; 2015 Annual Statistics of the Church of the Nazarene]

SCRIPTURE: “Now you are the body of Christ, and each one of you is a part of it.” (1 Corinthians 12:27)

LESSON PURPOSE

To understand that Nazarenes respond readily during a time of disaster and that the crisis doesn't end a few months after the disaster.

LESSON INFORMATION

Introduction

On April 25, 2015, an earthquake that measured 7.8 on the Richter Scale shook Nepal (neh-PAHL). Approximately 9,000 people were killed in the earthquake and its aftershocks, and the injured numbered approximately 22,000.

The earthquake struck on a Saturday, the day when Christians gather to worship, so most churches were full when the ground shook violently. Prakash (pruh-KAHSH), the pastor of a Nazarene church outside Kathmandu (KAT-man-doo), said he was preaching when the earthquake began. He told the congregation to remain where they were, as they were meeting on the top floor of the building and the congregation would be safer there. The building where Prakash's congregation met did not collapse, but it was damaged

to the point that they had to hold future church services outside.

Nazarene Compassionate Ministries (NCM) partnered with the Church of the Nazarene in Nepal to develop a relief and recovery plan and decided to first concentrate on the most critical needs: shelter, water, and food.

To provide food, Nepali NCM leaders combined short-term food distribution with long-term seed and garden projects—a successful strategy used in rural areas of Nepal to create food security.

The Nazarene Disaster Response team traveled to a community where NCM Nepal owns a piece of land and where a Nazarene church meets. Seventy percent of the houses there were destroyed. NCM provided the critical need for tents and blankets.

Later in the week, the team went to one of the hardest hit areas, near Kathmandu. The team provided aid to a community of approximately 1,000 people where the United Nations estimated 64 percent of homes were destroyed in the quake.

[Source: Nepal, Eurasia Region]

The World Responds

Costa Rica

Young people from Coronado Church of the Nazarene in Costa Rica (KOH-stah REE-kah) shared with Nazarenes in Nepal by praying and sending an offering through Costa Rica NCM Coordinator Dhariana Balbuena (dah-ree-AH-nah bahl-BWE-nah).

Balbuena, who is also the church's youth pastor, commented that even though the pre-teens and teens do not have jobs, they gave from their savings and from what their parents gave them. The youth collected such a large offering that it motivated the entire church to also collect a special offering.

"Our responsibility as the Body of Christ is to help each other and hopefully more people join in the relief efforts," said Balbuena. "We might not be able to travel to Nepal, but there is always something we can do in our community and local churches, not only through giving, but also by praying."

[Source: Mesoamerica Region]

Bangladesh

Immediately after the first earthquake, the Church of the Nazarene in Bangladesh (BAHNG-lah-desh) offered assistance. Bangladesh Nazarene Mission sent a copy of their assessment training manual, helping the Nepali relief team prepare to evaluate needs.

Bangladesh, Nepal's neighbor, is prone to cyclones, floods, droughts, and tidal surges. As a result, the church there is experienced in bringing relief and compassion to people suffering from disasters.

People from Bangladesh shared their experience in proposal and report writing and utilized their expertise to help NCM Nepal develop proposals and needs assessments.

In addition to the practical help onsite, members of the Church of the Nazarene in Bangladesh and Bangladesh Nazarene Mission workers contributed one day's salary for their Nepali brothers and sisters.

[Source: Eurasia Region]

United States

Jon Scott, pastor in the USA and former Nazarene missionary to Malawi, Mozambique, Romania, Azores, and Portugal, was preparing to leave for Nepal to teach. The earthquake hit the day before he was to leave. He and his wife, Margaret, spent the day collecting medicine, solar-powered equipment, water purifiers, and cell phone chargers. Instead of teaching, he lent a hand to those suffering as a result of the quake.

[Source: NCN News]

Germany

Early in September 2015, Christian Bangert (KREES-tee-ahn BAHNG-art) of Gelnhausen (geln-HAW-zin), Germany, went to Nepal for three and a half months as an M+Power (em-POW-uhr) volunteer. M+Power is a Eurasia Region initiative to match volunteers with short- and long-term service opportunities throughout the region.

Bangert had participated in a number of short-term mission teams in South Asia and Eastern Europe. He was passionate about serving cross-culturally. After receiving cross-cultural training on the Eurasia Region, he decided to help in Nepal. Christian could see God working in the plans, especially when the company he worked for allowed him to take off work for the trip.

Christian assisted the Nepali team with visiting earthquake-hit communities and preparing a project proposal for NCM. The proposal's goals included building 75 earthquake-proof houses. They also established 7 child-focused community development centers in four areas where there was no Nazarene or church presence.

Although Bangert had participated on mission trips previously, going to Nepal without a team for longer than a week or so allowed him to build relations and to understand the culture better.

[Source: Eurasia Region]

Six Months After the Quake

- Nepali Nazarene churches continued to respond to ongoing needs. Several weeks after the earthquake, the church's disaster teams provided 31 tons of food to more than 5,300 people, as well as emergency shelter (tents, tarps, and corrugated galvanized iron sheeting) to 350 households.
- A woman saw her house collapse and all the food stored inside destroyed. She and her two sons share a tarpaulin with some neighbors. She was thankful for the food aid delivered to them.
- A man was in church when the earthquake hit. From the church, he could see that his house was destroyed. "Due to the rainy season, it was getting difficult for us to live under a tarpaulin. My children were suffering from colds and fever due to getting wet by the rain. At night it was very difficult to sleep because of mosquitoes." He was one of 56 people who received iron sheets for housing.
- The Church of the Nazarene in Nepal is now focused on long-term recovery efforts, including helping families build permanent housing.
- Through a partnership with Canadian Foodgrains Bank, food was provided for 1,000 farming families for 3 months. Approximately 80 percent of Nepali families survive on subsistence farming. The earthquake wiped out crops; this aid provides food while families await the next harvest.

- During the relief phase of the disaster response, teams distributed water filters to more than 1,550 households, providing clean, safe drinking water for approximately 7,800 people in partnership with Sawyer International, as well as 9,000 hygiene kits, in partnership with Heart to Heart International.
- For long-term response, the church in Nepal is building 7 new child-focused community development centers. The centers will provide education, nutrition, emotional support, and spiritual nurturing to hundreds of children. There were 13 centers in Nepal before the earthquake. The first building is already in process.
- The church will also assist with community development, such as self-help groups, small business advancement, backyard gardens, and life-skills training, to help to interrupt the cycle of poverty.
- The process of recovery for families and communities in Nepal will not be fast. But the church in Nepal will be there to walk alongside those in need as long as it takes.

[Source: Nazarene Compassionate Ministries]

PRESENTATION IDEAS

Option 1—The Day the Earth Shook

Prepare

- Make a copy of "The World Responds" from the Lesson Information, cutting the country sub-sections apart and numbering them according to the order in the Lesson Information.
- Make a copy of "Six Months After the Quake" from the Lesson Information, cutting the bulleted items apart and numbering them according to the order in that section.
- As people enter, ask them to assist in the presentation. Depending on the size of your group, you may need to give participants more than one section. For "The World Responds" sections, select people who are comfortable with longer passages.

Present

- Begin by reading the Introduction, then say, **Now we will learn how Nazarenes around the world responded to this horrific disaster.** And have the presenters present "The World Responds."
- Following that section, say, **It is amazing to hear how people around the globe stepped in and helped in any way they could. Several of you are holding bulleted items; these tell stories of what happened six months or more after the earthquake. Would you read those items?** The "Six Months After the Quake" presenters speak.
- Follow up by reminding the group that responses to disasters trail off drastically in the weeks following the event and even more so when other disasters strike. Discuss how your group could help the Church of the Nazarene in Nepal now that it is a year or more after that earthquake struck.

Option 2—Move Around for Nepal (for a group that likes activity)

Prepare

- Make a copy of the following sections from the Lesson Information.
 - “The World Responds”—cut the country sub-sections apart and number them accordingly.
 - “Six Months After the Quake”—cut the bulleted items apart and number them accordingly.
- Secure paper and pens/pencils for each group member to have them.
- Scatter the sections around the room.

Present

- Present the Introduction, then explain that there are 13 pieces of paper in the room that describe how Nazarenes responded and what had happened 6 months after the earthquake. Tell them they have 15 minutes to make notes on the items, then the group will relate what they have learned.
- Keep time for the group. After 15 minutes, have individuals relate items from the notes. Ask the people to only list one at a time and not to repeat an item that has been given.

Option 3—Discuss It

- Give an overview of the Lesson Information. Depending on your available time, you may want to select sections of interest to your group.
- Discuss the following questions:
 - Disaster response tends to trail off as weeks pass. Why do you think that is?
 - Dictionary.com defines “donor fatigue” as “a general weariness and diminished public response to requests for aid to needy people or donations to charitable causes.” As individuals and as a group, what can we do to prevent donor fatigue?
 - Sometimes visiting a location in need makes it easier for a person or a group to give. Why do you think that is, and what do we do if we cannot visit an area?

ACT ON IT (practical ideas for personal involvement)

- Churches and individuals who want to support the church’s recovery efforts in Nepal can give to the Nepal Earthquake Fund. Donations are still needed to continue long-term recovery and rebuilding efforts. To learn where to send donations, visit this webpage: www.ncm.org/nepal-earthquake.html.
- Pray
 - Pray for children, families, and individuals who are still living in tents or under tarps.
 - Pray for farming families as they work to restore their crops.
 - Pray for church leaders and congregations as they minister to others.

RESOURCES (“handy helps” for the leader)

- **Website:** Nazarene Compassionate Ministries Nepal Earthquake Response (features additional articles, photos, videos, PowerPoint presentation, bulletin inserts, and instructions for donating): www.ncm.org/nepal-earthquake.html
- **Video:** Nazarene Media Library: <http://medialibrary.nazarene.org/library?q=Nepal> (There are a number of videos of Nazarenes’ response in addition to those videos on the NCM site.)

Lesson 11

Called and Sent

FAST FACTS

Church of the Nazarene South America Region

- The Church of the Nazarene South America Region has work in the countries of Argentina, Bolivia, Brazil, Chile, Colombia, Ecuador, Paraguay, Peru, Uruguay, and Venezuela.
 - The remaining countries on the continent—French Guiana, Guyana, and Suriname—also have a Nazarene presence; however, due to their cultures, they are part of the Mesoamerica Region.
- South America Region has:
 - Districts: 80
 - Organized Churches: 2,309
 - Full Members: 242,929
 - National Workers
 - Elders: 1,415
 - Deacons: 70
 - Licensed Ministers: 1,706

[Source: 2015 Annual Statistics of the Church of the Nazarene]

SCRIPTURE: “Then I heard the voice of the Lord saying, ‘Whom shall I send? And who will go for us?’ And I said, ‘Here am I. Send me!’” (Isaiah 6:8)

LESSON PURPOSE

To understand that God sends people to serve in places near where they were raised, but in another culture, and that we sometimes must wait for those calls to be realized.

LESSON INFORMATION

Introduction

Missionaries are called by God and sent by the church to serve in a culture that is not their own. Sometimes that means going very far away from where they are raised, but sometimes it means just crossing the street. Sometimes people sense God telling them to serve within their own region, but in a country other than the one in which they were raised. They still need to learn about that culture, and sometimes it requires having to learn a new language. Consider the stories of the following servants.

Called, Equipped, and Communicating

More than a decade ago, Pastor Glausio Neto (GLOU-soo NE-to) began to feel a passion for taking the gospel of Jesus Christ to people who are marginalized. While studying at the Nazarene Theological College in Rio de Janeiro (HEE-oo de zhah-NAY-roo), Brazil (brah-ZEEL), he invested his savings and sold many of his belongings to participate in an evangelistic project in northeastern Brazil. In this area, there were more than 10,000 people who lived in extreme poverty and who did not know Christ. After returning from the experience, his ministerial focus changed.

Following graduation, Glausio spent four more years training with Youth with a Mission for South America and in evangelism. He was a co-pastor in a local

Church of the Nazarene; however, soon the district superintendent sent him to work in Matogroso (mah-too-GROH-soo), Brazil. Two new Nazarene churches were a result of the work there.

When Glausio returned to the Rio de Janeiro, he married Monik (moh-NEEK). Both became employed at a nuclear plant, and they prospered economically. After a time, Monik expressed to Glausio that she thought it was time to return to what God had called them to do. Monik completed intensive training for six months with Youth with a Mission for South America. Upon the completion of Monik's studies, they began to save money and to pray. They asked God to guide them regarding where He wanted them to open a church.

While visiting a friend in Buenos Aires (BWE-nohs IER-es), Argentina (ahr-hen-TEE-nah), they felt that this was the area where they should serve. Soon, the call narrowed to the district of Moreno (moh-RE-noh) west of Buenos Aires. Both Argentine and Paraguayan families live in the area. Lack of schools and local medical care presented constant challenges and needs. These were compounded by problems of drugs, alcoholism, gender-based violence, and hunger.

Nonetheless, the love that grew in the hearts of Glausio and Monik for Moreno produced fruit. After one month of outreach, they had a regular attendance for Sunday worship of 20 adults and 50 children.

Pastor Glausio and Monik invested their savings to buy land in Moreno and are working toward building a daycare where children can spend the day. In this area, many parents must leave their children alone while they go to work. The Netos plan to serve three meals daily and provide a place for children to study and learn a skill. The children will experience biblical values and principles at the daycare, and the daycare will provide a practical service to the community. Later, the Netos would like to create a social center where skill training for all ages, including adults, will take place.

Pastor Glausio said, "We hope and pray that God will give us the strategies and resources to work with this community in a holistic way."

[Source: Glausio de Sousa Lima Neto]

From Purposeless to Planter

Napoleón Guerrero (nah-poh-le-OHN guh-RE-roh) was raised in Peru. He and his wife, Elena (ay-LAY-nah), are missionaries in Bolivia (boh-LEE-vee-ah).

Napoleón's life is one that shows how God can take a young man lacking direction and transform him into a church planter who is now training others to build the Kingdom.

When Napoleón was 12, his father sent him to Peru to study because of conflict between Peru (pe-ROO) and Ecuador (EK-wah-dohr). He went to Piura (PYOO-rah) where his older brother lived. When Napoleón was a teenager, his parents divorced, and the separation strongly affected his life. He grew up feeling empty inside, and his sole purposes in life were to make money and to enjoy the pleasures the world offered.

When he was 23, Napoleón started a business in the city of Sullana (soo-YAH-nah) and met a Nazarene family who treated him with love and spoke about God to the young man. These concepts were strange to him.

One night, he was alone in his room and felt anxious and alone. Napoleón decided to kneel down, apologize to God, and accept Jesus as his Lord and Savior. Suddenly, he experienced an indescribable peace. That night, he slept "like a baby."

After that, Napoleón wanted to tell others what had happened. He shared his experience with his pastor who explained that Napoleón had been "born again" and was a new creation in Christ (2 Corinthians 5:17).

As a new Christian, Napoleón believed that it wasn't right to spend time just sitting in a pew. At that time, God spoke to the young man about being involved in God's work. That is when Napoleón received his call to ministry.

In 1991, Guerrero was sent to an area of the city where he lived that had no Church of the Nazarene. Napoleón planted a church where he served as pastor for 23 years. Its foundation was solid; as a result, that church planted two more churches. After that, God provided opportunities for Napoleón to work with pastors and churches all over the country in house-to-house evangelism. This gave him church planting experience and allowed him to interact with missionaries from a variety of countries.

In 2014, Napoleón was asked to serve as a missionary for the Church of the Nazarene in Bolivia. After praying for God's direction, Napoleón and his wife, Elena, moved to La Paz (lah pahs), Bolivia, in March of that year. Later, Napoleón was invited to serve as the coordinator of Evangelism and Church Planting for Dynamic Church Planting International SAM. In that role, he and other instructors travel the South America Region and provide pastors and lay leaders with tools for church planting.

The Guerreros have three adult children. Their two sons are pastors, and their daughter is a clinical psychologist.

[Source: Church of the Nazarene South America Region]

PRESENTATION IDEAS

Option 1—God Sends Where We are Needed

Prepare

- Depending on the size of your group, get a map of South America that shows the continent's countries or create a PowerPoint slide. Using the map on the last page of this lesson as a guide, mark the locations of the places where the Netos and Guerreros moved.
- At least a week in advance, make copies of the “Called, Equipped, and Communicating” and “From Purposeless to Planter” sections of the Lesson Information, and ask people to help you with the presentation.

Present

- Begin by reading the Introduction, then explain that you will point out the God-directed travels of the servants in the stories.
- Ask the assistants to present the Lesson Information.
- Discuss how God used the experiences and strengths of the Netos and the Guerreros to expand the Church of the Nazarene in South America.

RESOURCES (“handy helps” for the leader)

- South America Region Website: <http://samnaz.org> The main site is in Spanish; however, there are links in the upper-right corner of the home page that allow for translation to Portuguese and English.
- Video—Nazarene Media Library: This segment is about Pastor Fabricio Porto, planting a church in Brazil. www.medialibrary.nazarene.org/media/we-cannot-stay-quiet-english (The segment is in English, Portuguese, and Spanish on this site.)

Option 2—Following God’s Guidance in South America (for a group that likes activity)

Prepare

- At least a week in advance, make copies of the “Called, Equipped, and Communicating” and “From Purposeless to Planter” sections of the Lesson Information, and ask people to help you with the presentation.
- Move all chairs to the edges of the meeting room, as the group will be crisscrossing the space and will remain standing until the Lesson Information has been presented.
- Using the map on the last page of this lesson as a guide, post pieces of paper with the names of the cities and countries throughout the meeting room.

Present

- Have those attending join you in the middle of the room, away from any of the “cities.”
- Begin by reading the Introduction and explain that the people assisting you will serve as guides to a variety of locations throughout South America as they tell stories about some of the people who serve there. Ask that the group not sit until their “travels” are through, when you will sit and discuss how God is using these servants in South America.
- Ask the assistants to present the Lesson Information, leading the group to each location.
- Discuss how God used the experiences and strengths of the Netos and the Guerreros to expand the Church of the Nazarene in South America.

Option 3—Discuss It

- Give an overview of the Lesson Information.
- Discuss the following questions:
 - Pastor Glausio felt called to serve the marginalized; however, later, he and his wife worked at a nuclear plant. How did God use the Netos’ experiences to benefit the Kingdom later?
 - How did Napoleón Guerrero’s background affect him as a pastor?
 - How has God used the experiences of your life to affect your witness?

ACT ON IT (practical ideas for personal involvement)

- By your participation in the World Evangelism Fund, you allow the Church of the Nazarene to go places where there is no holiness witness. It helps alleviate financial challenges.
- Pray
 - Pray for Glausio and Monik Neto, as they serve God and the people of Argentina, that their ministry will grow.
 - Pray for the daycare that the Netos are building, that God will work through it to reach the children and their families.
 - Pray for Napoleón Guerrero, that his church-planting students will share what they learn and will help the gospel spread throughout Bolivia and ultimately the world.



Lesson 12

Perfect Love Drives Out Fear

SCRIPTURE: “There is no fear in love. But perfect love drives out fear.” (1 John 4:18a)

LESSON PURPOSE

To recognize that, in the wake of evil in the world, it is easy to fall prey to fear; however, as followers of Christ, our response should be love, shrewdness, innocence, and prayer.

LESSON INFORMATION

Introduction

Say, **This lesson came about as a result of the terrorist attacks that took place in Beirut, Lebanon; Paris, France; and Baghdad, Iraq, in late 2015. Listen to the words of two Nazarene missionaries as they give voice to their thoughts, as well as reporting on the response of the Church of the Nazarene in France. After the presentations, we will have a time of prayer led by [insert name(s)].**

[Insert the reader's theatre at this point in the presentation. Feel free to change the number of readers. However, please do not change the text, as the following section is a continuation of that piece.]

Love and Fear

A statement by Jesus in Matthew 10:16 has been hovering in my thoughts for many months. It seems especially pertinent now: “I am sending you out like sheep among wolves. Therefore be as shrewd as snakes and as innocent as doves.”

Here, Jesus acknowledges that we are peaceful, like sheep, and yet all around us there are wolves—creatures that tear apart unwary and unprotected sheep with sharp teeth full of death.

Jesus admits that **He sends us out among the wolves**. He does not promise to remove us from the danger. We are sent directly into it.

Yet, in probably the only part of scripture that gives us a positive image of serpents, Jesus urges us to be shrewd, which means to be astute, sharp, discerning, aware. To keep our wits about us. At the same time, He calls us not to become cynical, but to remain innocent. Innocence is not the same thing as naivety. Naivety is akin to ignorance: to be unaware, blind. Innocence means to be pure, untainted by evil or immorality.

I find it interesting that both sheep and doves were common animals of sacrifice in the time before Jesus' ultimate sacrifice. Food for thought.

As Nazarenes across the Eurasia Region have been working among refugees from war-torn areas in the Middle East for more than five years, our people have been like sheep sent out among other sheep—lost sheep in need of protection and compassion and care. Yet, it has always been true that perhaps hidden among these wandering flocks have been wolves. That is why our people have needed to be shrewd as snakes, to assess those who requested help, to ask thoughtful questions, to make repeated visits, sometimes unpredictably varying the times of their visits. In spite of these very real dangers, they have never stopped reaching out in love. Our church members have been innocent, but not naive. They have been pure, but not ignorant.

They have loved, at risk to themselves. They have not allowed fear to swallow up their love.

I pray that our governments, militaries, and law enforcement agencies across the West and the Middle East will have the resources, discernment, wisdom, cunning, collaboration, and goodness to protect all innocent people from those who plan evil of all kinds, and to carry out godly justice by identifying, and fairly prosecuting and punishing those who break the laws of God and man.

While justice and protection of the peace is their calling, my calling as an individual follower of Christ is love—a love that takes risks.

While both love and fear co-exist within me, I pray that love will far outshine my fear. I ask Jesus to grant me shrewdness, in tandem with innocence. But most of all, love.

[Source: Gina Grate Pottenger]

We Believe in the Power of Prayer

Over the past week, we have been reminded that we live in a broken world in need of reconciliation only made possible in and through the person of Jesus Christ. Your Nazarene brothers and sisters in France covet your prayers as we process recent events, seek God's direction on how best to respond, and stand united as ambassadors for Christ.

While none of our over 300 Nazarenes were lost in the recent attacks in Paris, all have been confronted with the staunch reality that life is precious and fragile and can be taken from us due to the presence of real evil in our midst. All of the churches that make up the France District have responded to recent events by organizing special times of prayer and fasting. We pray for the families of the victims and for the perpetrators of these senseless attacks, for our brothers and sisters in Christ in France and beyond, and for our church, that we would all unite together and answer the charge to be ambassadors for Christ in a broken world.

We take great courage from knowing that we are a part of a global church family that believes in the power of prayer. Pray for all of our ministries in the country of France. Currently there are eight organized churches and two church-type missions. Our compassionate ministry arm of the church feeds and clothes countless people in need in Paris and its surrounding areas. Three of our congregations meet, minister, and worship within the Paris city limits. With heightened security measures put in place in and around Paris, pray that our churches would shine brightly as a beacon of hope through their living testimony and their service to the surrounding community.

We echo the words of Paul to the church in Rome and strive to show ourselves faithful to the marks of a true Christian for all those around us to come to know Christ and the hope that is found in Him:

Let love be genuine; hate what is evil, hold fast to what is good; love one another with mutual affection; outdo one another in showing honor. Do not lag in zeal, be ardent in spirit, serve the Lord. Rejoice in hope, be patient in suffering, persevere in prayer. Contribute to the needs of the saints; extend hospitality to strangers.

Bless those who persecute you; bless and do not curse them. Rejoice with those who rejoice, weep with those who weep. Live in harmony with one another; do not be haughty, but associate with the lowly; do not claim to be wiser than you are. Do not repay anyone evil for evil, but take thought for what is noble in the sight of all. If it is possible, so far as it depends on you, live peaceably with all. Beloved, never avenge yourselves, but leave room for the wrath of God; for it is written, "Vengeance is mine, I will repay, says the Lord." No, "if your enemies are hungry, feed them; if they are thirsty, give them something to drink; for by doing this you will heap burning coals on their heads." Do not be overcome by evil, but overcome evil with good.

Romans 12:9-21, NRSV

[Source: Brian Ketchum]

PRESENTATION IDEAS

Editor's Note: We have not provided multiple presentation options for this lesson, as the topic is somber and doesn't warrant more activity than prayer. Also a time of discussion could become divisive. For this lesson, the wisest response is the scripture presented by both missionaries, followed by a time of prayer.

Prepare

- Ask several people to help you present this lesson. Ideally, you will need the following:
 - Three people—To present “Perfect Love Drives Out Fear,” the reader's theatre for the introduction.
 - One Person—To present “Love and Fear.”
 - One Person—To present, “We Believe in the Power of Prayer.”
 - One Person (or more)—To direct the time of prayer at the end.
- Make copies of the prayer requests so that each participant may see them all.

Present

- Read the introductory paragraph, then invite the people who will be helping with the reader's theatre to begin, followed by the two other presenters.
- When the presentation is complete, distribute the prayer requests.
- Those guiding the prayer time should begin as soon as the requests are distributed.

ACT ON IT (practical ideas for personal involvement)

- During times of crisis, we go to prayer.
 - Pray for those people who have lost loved ones due to violence around the world.
 - Pray for the Church of the Nazarene, that we would unite and be ambassadors for Christ in a broken world.
 - Pray for the families of victims and for those who are experiencing fear as a result of violence in their countries, cities, and homes.
 - Pray for the perpetrators of attacks, both global and domestic.
 - Pray for our brothers and sisters in Christ, around the world, that their witness will be strong.

Perfect Love Drives Out Fear

(A Reader's Theatre)

Reader 1: I have been to Paris. I have been to Beirut. I have been to Istanbul. I have shared German language classes with Syrian and Turkish immigrants. I have visited the tiny, unfurnished apartments of refugees from Syria. I have listened to stories of persecution, kidnapping, and, ultimately, flight.

Reader 2: After four all-too-brief trips to the Middle East (which, of course, makes me no expert) and living in Western Europe for nearly six years, I have fallen in love with people from some of the most war-ravaged parts of the world. I have had coffee, tea, breakfast, dinner, and even spent the night at the home of new friends from a very different religion than mine. I prayed with one of them in the hospital.

Reader 3: The people of the Middle East and her refugees, not to mention my Christian brothers and sisters there, have become very dear to me. To tell the truth, they have changed my life, upset my worldview, washed the black and white of my politics to include a bit of grey.

All: I love them.

Reader 2: But as I reflect on yet another international political earthquake set off by terrorism that struck Beirut, Paris, and Baghdad in the last week,...

All: I feel conflicted.

Reader 3: I am filled with compassion for my fellow humans—Muslim, Christian and everything else in between—who are suffering from shock, trauma, loss, and mourning in Paris and across France, Lebanon, and Iraq.

Reader 1: At the same time, I am also filled with fear—fear for the future of Europe, the Middle East, and the whole world, as Satan and his spiritual forces, in partnership with willing human agents, are bringing chaos, destruction, death, hate, and darkness to my world of order, life, love, light, and ordinary daily joy.

Reader 2: I am afraid of what the future holds for all of us. I am afraid of how sometimes hate begets hate, and acts of violence beget vengeance—a snowball that seems to just build and grow rather than melt and dissipate.

Reader 1: I will admit that the fear I feel also extends to the swelling river of refugees—most of whom are of another religion than mine—who are flooding into Western Europe where I now live. How many of those running for their lives, trying to protect their families, fleeing war for peace, might be inadvertently trailing terrorists in their wake, wolves among sheep?

Reader 3: I have many questions. I had all those same questions earlier this summer. It would have been naive of all of us—even then—not to imagine the very scenarios that unfolded this week. But because of these events, those theoretical questions are now reality.

Reader 2: Will I allow my fear to overtake my love?

Reader 3: Will I turn away from the people I fear...

Reader 1: ...Now and in the future...

All: ...Rather than reach out my hands in love?