

## February 2010 (dot) Stewardship eNewsletter From Stewardship Ministries, Church of the Nazarene

### Stewardship on the Road



Last Sunday, I worshipped at Bethel, Ohio, Church of the Nazarene. It happened to be the final Sunday of Pastor Scott Wade's stewardship series. My first experience through the door was an encounter with a fresh literature display. I immediately knew from the prevalence of Mission Connection, NTS and MVNU literature, Nazarene Compassionate Ministries publications and more that this church is proud to be a part of its denomination. Next, I was warmly welcomed in a clean, bright foyer.

A nice visual of the series theme, One Life – One Love – One Legacy, graced the platform. The worship time was anointed and well-led. After a joke about the denomination sending the director of stewardship to spy on his stewardship sermon, the message began with video testimonies from the congregation. The first was Duke, sporting a 10-gallon hat, talking to his horse about priorities. I know, but it worked, okay? Then two young men shared their paths toward the practice of tithing. The first indicated that it was a result of God's call. The other conveyed that tithing was easier in college, when income was meager. When maturity and higher income arrived, the decision to tithe was more difficult. Although this was perplexing, the practice has become more meaningful for him and his family.

Pastor Wade complimented the congregation on their generosity and shared Scriptures from Deuteronomy 6:5 and Luke 10:27: "Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your strength and with all your mind." He defined strength as giving all our available resources to his purposes.

After a scriptural exposition from Psalm 116, the message turned practical. This congregation is joining Nazarenes from all over the world in the mission of making Christlike disciples in the nations through the Easter offering for the World Evangelism Fund – only nine weeks away. Sprinkled throughout the congregation, Sunday School class leaders shared how their class plans to take the matter of global mission seriously. They each shared plans for their class' participation in the Easter offering. The point of the message was clear: use what you have for the purposes of God.

Nearing the end of the service, as the offering was received, two worshippers testified spontaneously about their own tithing experiences. One said that her practice for years was to pay tithe at the end of each month. But one month there wasn't enough money left for the Lord's 10 percent. Going forward, she decided that tithe would come from her first check every month. This has become the new pattern for her life. Another reported a financial crisis and the decision to give anyway. The Lord came through with a series of blessings. Literally, the doorbell rang and a financial solution, in the form of a buyer for some real estate, was on the other side of the door.

This congregation and its pastoral leadership take their responsibilities seriously. They recognize that their mission is larger than their own community. They are willing to discuss financial stewardship openly, honestly and biblically. It was a blessed, refreshing stewardship Sunday.

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Mark E. Lail  
MINISTRY DIRECTOR

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## **Building Friendships from Tennessee to Peru**

For the East Tennessee District Churches of the Nazarene, budgets and Ten Percent projects have names and faces associated with them. The names and faces belong to dozens of Nazarenes in Peru whom a team of volunteers met in November 2008.

In the midst of planning her district's second trip to Peru, district NMI president Theresa Hodge reflected on how project participation changed the global mission outlook of her district.

In 2008, the East Tennessee District paid 97 percent of World Evangelism Fund (WEF) allocation; this year, they are on track to completely fulfill – and possibly overpay – their giving goals for 2009. “WEF has to be in place for other ministries to exist. [Projects] encourage full support of WEF,” Theresa said. “It's hand-in-hand... Ten Percent [projects] enhance the experience of paying WEF.”

In her first year as district president, she knew projects like Work and Witness had lapsed for too long. Partnering with the Maryville, Tenn., Church of the Nazarene, she and other district leaders raised funds and recruited volunteers to connect with Nazarenes in Nauta and Iquitos, Peru. The trip, which included 20 Nazarenes from the district, was the catalyst that ignited a three-year plan that includes returning to Peru in April – this time with JESUS Film.

“The volunteers who went to Peru came back with a passion for missions, which encourages local and district support of the World Evangelism Fund,” Theresa said. “Their churches are now paying WEF first because they see the value of the whole program.”

Partnerships, friendships, and relationships like the ones established between the Nazarenes in East Tennessee and Nazarenes in Peru are an invaluable element of participation in the connectional ministry of the Church of the Nazarene's global mission.

“We feel like we know people in Peru – so we're excited to go back,” Theresa said.

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Josh Jakobitz  
CREATIVE COORDINATOR

## **Order Offering Envelopes in time for Easter**



The Easter Offering for World Evangelism Fund is traditionally taken on Palm Sunday or Easter Sunday to benefit the global mission of the Church of the Nazarene. Each local church has a World Evangelism Fund goal, and the Easter offering is a great time to celebrate the resurrection of our Lord while raising funds to keep evangelism and compassion on the forefront of our mission focus. To help collect funds, offering envelopes and posters are available free of charge from [Nazarene Publishing House](#).

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Stewardship Ministries / NPH

Thanks for reading!  
Mark E. Lail, director  
Tom Felder, resources manager  
Josh Jakobitz, creative coordinator  
Jamie Connally, office assistant