



**ANNUAL REPORT  
OF THE  
BOARD OF GENERAL SUPERINTENDENTS  
TO THE  
89<sup>TH</sup> GENERAL BOARD  
CHURCH OF THE NAZARENE**

**February 2012**

***“Called To Be Witnesses”***

## Introduction

*Rejoice always, pray continually, give thanks in all circumstances;*

*for this is God's will for you in Christ Jesus (1 Thessalonians 5:16–18, NIV).*

This is the spirit with which we formally welcome you to the 89<sup>th</sup> General Board Session of the Church of the Nazarene. We present to you our annual “on the record” accounting of spiritual and administrative leadership of the church.

Consider this report an update of a story that began 104 years ago at the founding of our denomination, made possible by the dedicated and sacrificial efforts of over two million Nazarenes in 156 world areas: pastors, laypeople, missionaries, district superintendents, Sunday School teachers, evangelists, compassionate ministry leaders, chaplains, and educators.

This is the third General Board Session of the 2009–2013 quadrennium. There will be one more General Board Session in February 2013, just five months prior to the 28<sup>th</sup> General Assembly in Indianapolis, Indiana, USA, in June.

While we want to do everything possible to continue the “family feeling” that characterizes general assemblies, limited financial resources are causing us to rethink how the international community of faith should be convened.

Pray for our general secretary and his staff as they work to meet the needs of our growing fellowship. Pray, too, that the Spirit of God will be felt in a powerful way, leading us forward in the early years of our second century as a denomination.

One year ago in Louisville, Kentucky, USA, the general superintendents called for a time of prayer and encouragement within the General Board. Prayer partners were assigned, information cards were distributed, and Board members were asked to pray for each other.

The person whose card you received in Louisville will remain your prayer partner for the rest of the quadrennium. We trust you have been able to reconnect during our time in Overland Park, Kansas, USA.

While improving personal relationships is important, the ultimate purpose of this initiative is for us to grow closer to God and to understand His will for our lives and our church. Prayer makes this possible.

We thank General Secretary David Wilson, his administrative director, Judy Veigl, and their staff for an outstanding job of preparing for General Board and serving all of us during plenary and committee meetings. Please join me in expressing appreciation to these dedicated servants of the church.

**State of the Global Ministry Center  
(General Mission Interests)**

The Global Ministry Center (GMC) saw the pendulum swing in both directions in 2011 while searching for the middle.

One direction was a significant reduction in workforce at the GMC. This began in February when the BGS laid out a work plan during General Board in Louisville, addressing what was to

become a \$10 million reduction in World Evangelism Fund (WEF) giving between 2008 and 2011.

What made this type of action difficult was the fact that GMC employees are good, faithful people who work diligently in their assignments and feel called to service.

Parting with staff, even those taking early retirement, is never easy; but this became necessary due to the financial situation at the Global Ministry Center. Some churches, districts, and colleges are experiencing similar challenges.

Three items are worth noting regarding Global Ministry Center personnel:

- The number of employees and contracted missionaries serving the GMC was reduced by approximately 40.
- Changes made in Sunday School and Discipleship Ministries International in September included vacating two directors' positions while keeping in place a range of services to adults and children.
- The WEF-funded "full time equivalency" (FTE) employment at the GMC is now 116—a reduction of 128 since 1988.

The BGS consulted repeatedly with the Executive and Finance Committees of the General Board to ensure that proper care was given in making decisions that involved finances and personnel.

Our Board extends special thanks to the GMC officers, directors, and staff for implementing the work plan, balancing the budgets, and cooperating with the BGS during this difficult process.

### A Week of Miracles

Thankfully, the pendulum also swung the other direction in 2011 as the Global Ministry Center experienced miracles of God's provision and answers to prayers for General Board-owned assets and properties.

The first miracle was the sale of the USA Church Loan Fund portfolio to the Wesleyan Investment Foundation. The result of this transaction was that the General Board received payment of nearly \$27 million for the loan portfolio. This made it possible for the general treasurer to use part of the proceeds from the sale to pay off construction bonds for the GMC.

The Global Ministry Center is now debt free! Praise the Lord!

The Executive Committee, with input from the General Board Investment Committee, approved investing the remaining funds as a long-term capital asset; these funds will not be used for regular operating expenses. Proceeds of approximately \$8 million are now invested as a capital asset approved by the General Board.

The second miracle involved the International Center. After several months of negotiations, the general treasurer, acting on behalf of the General Board, sold the former Nazarene Headquarters at 6401 The Paseo, Kansas City, Missouri, USA, to The Ewing Marion Kauffman Foundation of Kansas City. The sale price was \$2.7 million. These proceeds were also part of the debt resolution for the Global Ministry Center.

The General Board's balance sheet improved significantly with these transactions; however, income and expenses still require careful monitoring.

We give God all the honor and glory for the great things He has done.

### Global Ministry Center Summary

The financial pendulum may have swung in different directions in 2011, but the goal of the GMC remains the same: to focus general leadership and administrative support in Lenexa on global mission strategy and facilitation of a connectional holiness church.

While some retiring missionaries and others who left the fields are not being replaced, it is a high priority for the Board of General Superintendents to keep our commitments to the 737 WEF-salaried and contracted missionaries.\*

The new cost structure makes additional financial resources available for investment in world evangelization through Global Mission regions.

After three unsettling years, we are beginning to see the contours of a new GMC, which by *Manual* is given responsibility for day-to-day supervision of the church's general mission interests. The Global Ministry Center will focus on the things it does well by shifting some programs to churches, districts, and regions, and discontinuing what is not needed or has run its course.

In response to the Global Ministry Task Force Report, the BGS voted to move SDMI and NYI to the Global Mission Department, reporting to the Global Mission Director. The general superintendents accepted, in concept, the idea of regionalizing SDMI and NYI. However, the decision includes keeping some global coordination in place at the GMC.

The Board of General Superintendents is also exploring ways to collaborate with other Wesleyan-holiness denominations and fellowships. Following a recommendation from the

2009 General Assembly, we are carefully pursuing partnerships for mission and ministry with others of the same doctrine.

In December a news release was issued to announce the creation of a Global Wesleyan Alliance made up of 10 faith communions; the Church of the Nazarene is a founding member. The Alliance will be official upon the approval of the governing bodies of each denomination or faith communion.

### Global Ministry Center Transitions

This evening the General Board said farewell to E. LeBron Fairbanks, Louie E. Bustle, and H. Melvin McCullough, who together have given nearly 140 years of service to the Church of the Nazarene. Dr. Fairbanks served as education commissioner at the GMC from March 2008 through September 2011. Before coming to the Global Ministry Center, he, along with his wife, Anne, had a distinguished career as an associate pastor, senior pastor, academic dean, and president of Asia-Pacific Nazarene Theological Seminary, Manila, Philippines.

Dr. Fairbanks also served for 17 years as president of Mount Vernon Nazarene University, Mount Vernon, Ohio, USA, where upon his retirement he was designated president emeritus by their Board of Trustees. Dr. Fairbanks is now founding director of BoardServe.Org.

Louie E. Bustle, whose lifetime of service in the Church of the Nazarene will be highlighted in the Monday evening plenary meeting, concludes 17 years as Global Mission director (formerly World Mission director). Dr. Bustle was elected to this position at the 1994 General Board Session.

Under his leadership global mission areas grew from 1.1 million members in 1994 to 2.1 million members in 2011.

We also say goodbye to H. Melvin McCullough. Dr. McCullough began in pastoral ministry, served as executive director of Youth Ministries for the Church of the Nazarene, and became district superintendent of the Washington Pacific District. He was elected as the inaugural president of the Church of the Nazarene Foundation in 2004 while serving as senior pastor of Bethany (Oklahoma) First Church of the Nazarene. Dr. McCullough was president of the General Board for eight years and on the Board of Pensions for 19 years.

## **State of the Church**

### A Global Church

From its beginning our denomination has had an international dimension. “In developing a global ministry, the Church of the Nazarene has depended historically on the energies of national workers who have shared with missionaries the tasks of preaching and teaching the word of grace.” (*Manual* Historical Statement footnote, pg 23)

This historical vision makes it possible to have indigenous witnesses in place so that future generations can be introduced to the Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ, by someone within their own culture.

Because of our worldwide presence and national leadership, the Church of the Nazarene is uniquely positioned for every country to be a sending country and every region a sending region for missionaries and volunteers.



Opportunities abound for making Christlike disciples in the nations.

Our church's mission has always been more dependent on movements of the Holy Spirit than on a favorable economic climate; at the same time, financial resources are needed in order to deploy missionaries, train national leaders, and sustain new fields.

While funding the mission remains largely with the churches of the United States, more world areas, including Brazil, Korea, and Sub-Saharan Africa, are taking on greater responsibility for sending missionaries, supporting national leaders, and starting churches.

As a result of the denomination's prayers and sacrificial giving, Global Mission is recommending to this General Board the deployment of 14 missionaries and expansion into three new world areas.

We praise God for His continued blessings on the Church of the Nazarene.

### Tracking Progress

Measuring progress is an important part of church life, and we need to make sure we are evaluating the right things. This is good stewardship.

The GMC works closely with churches, districts, and regions to update statistical information.

The denomination has a reliable system of reporting, but we need to make sure we are keeping up with changes in local ministry.

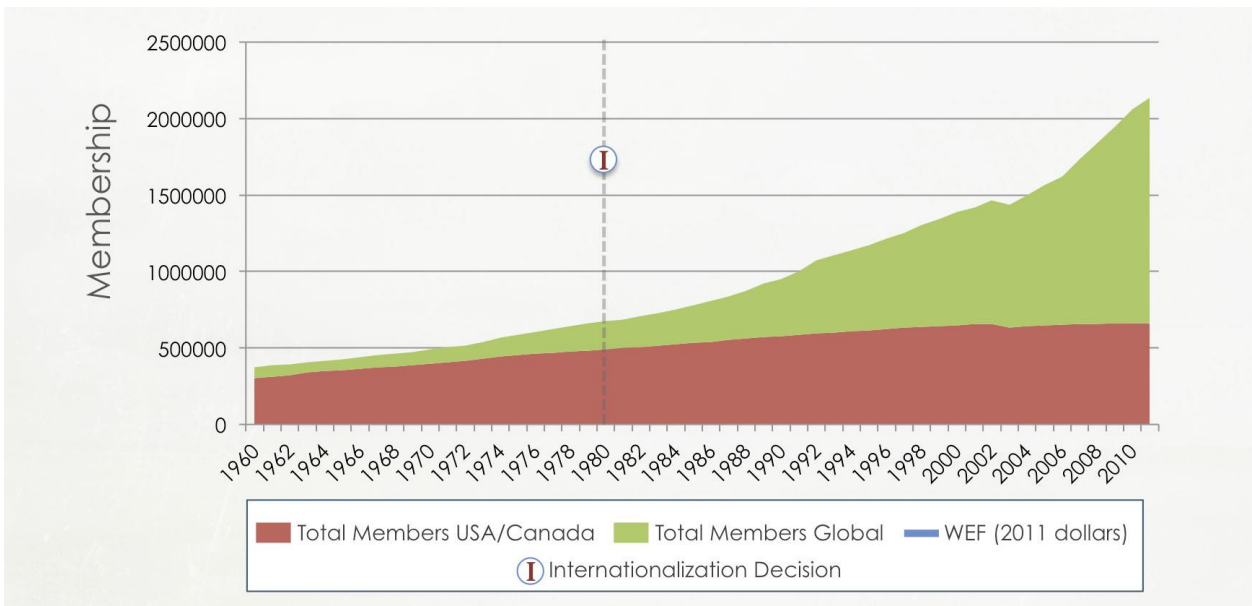
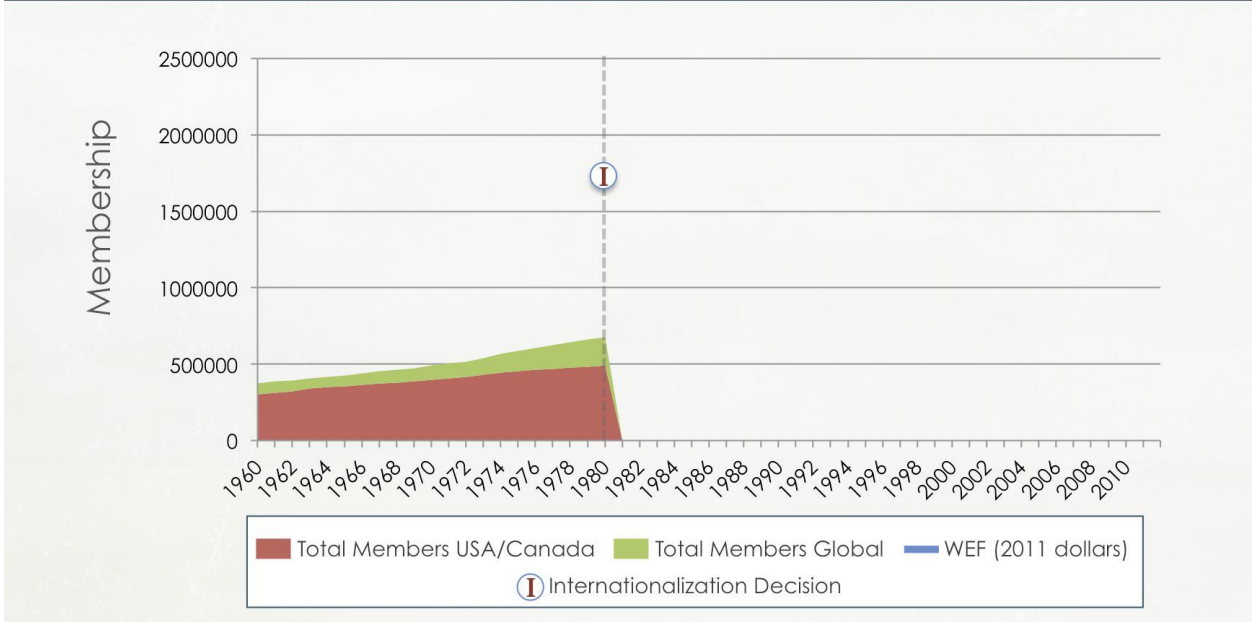
Here is a look at key data from the general secretary's report for 2011:

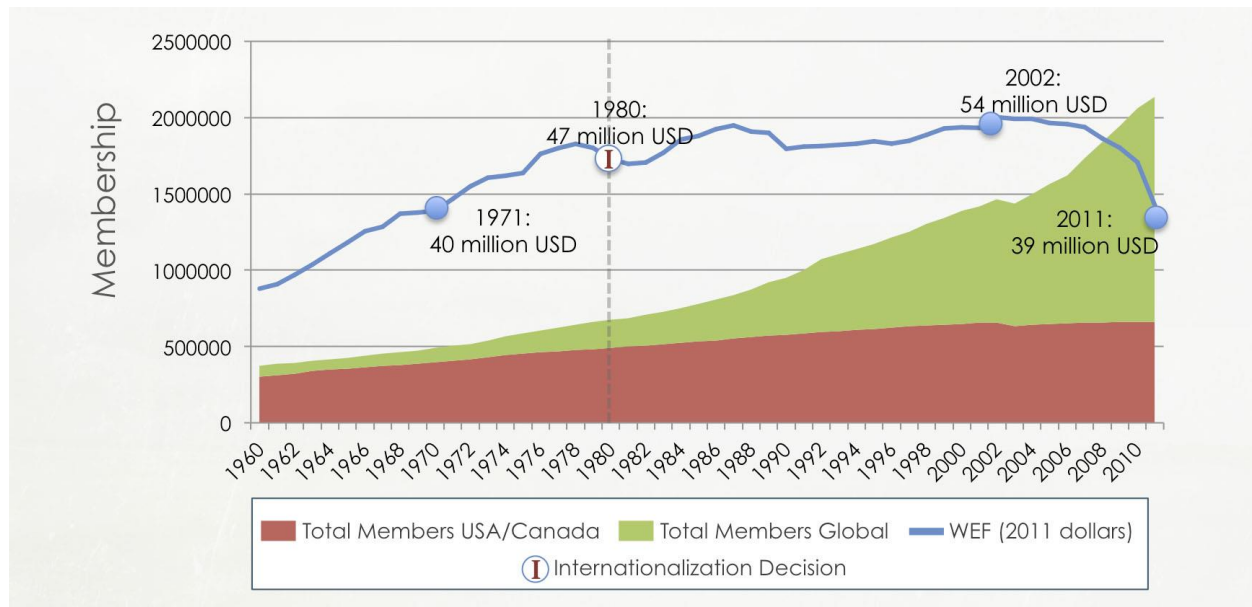
- Total membership in the Church of the Nazarene is now 2.1 million—a nearly 4 percent increase over 2010 and a 50 percent decadal increase or 718,500 new members.
- There are 27,500 churches worldwide; 19,250 are organized.
- 807 churches were organized this year.
- 157,000 new Nazarenes were reported, a decrease of 16,200 over 2010.
- Total church income in the United States, which provided approximately 95 percent of the World Evangelism Fund in 2011, dropped an astonishing \$103 million from 2008 to 2011. This helps explain the precipitous \$10 million decline in WEF income over the past four years.
- WEF giving in 2011 was \$38.8 million, mission specials received \$31.4 million.
  - Just over 26 percent of churches gave 5.5 percent or more of non-missions giving to WEF.
  - An additional 37 percent of churches reported some WEF giving.
  - Thirty-seven percent of churches reported no WEF giving.
- WEF overpayment in the USA/Canada Region reached \$4.4 million, which is being used to assist in covering the cost of expansion into new world areas and to support existing commitments to missionaries already in the fields.
  - The number of USA/Canada districts having reached or exceeded 100 percent of their WEF allocation is up from 15 districts in 2010 to 57 districts in 2011.
- Even with an expanded use of WEF overpayment, the general mission interests are facing a serious challenge in allocating the World Evangelism Fund while the church experiences dramatic growth in certain world areas.

- The following three slides illustrate the tension between a declining WEF, continued membership growth, and internationalization:

## WEF and 50-Year Membership Trajectory

### Church of the Nazarene





### Horn of Africa

It is the privilege of the Board of General Superintendents to serve caring and compassionate Nazarenes. In addition to our recovery assistance following Haiti's 2010 earthquake, a call for help is going out from Nazarene Compassionate Ministries on behalf of the Horn of Africa, where thousands of people are starving—including Nazarene pastors and their families.

(<http://www.ncm.org/africahunger/>)

Just over \$800,000 has been received to provide food and medical care for our brothers and sisters in Christ in this part of Africa. More will be needed, but we express gratitude to the church for this generous outpouring of initial support in strained economic times.

## What If?

In Matthew 16 Jesus realized that His time was short, that His days in the flesh were numbered. Was there anyone who had recognized Him for who and what He was? Were there any who would carry on His work and labor for His kingdom when He was gone from the flesh?

The very survival of the Christian faith was at stake. He stood in an area littered with the temples of the Syrian gods, in a place where the white marble splendor of the home of Caesar-worship dominated the landscape. And there—of all places—this amazing Jesus, determined to put all to the test, asked his followers who they believed Him to be.

### Who Do You Say That I Am?

We find this in Matthew 16:13–16: “When Jesus came to the region of Caesarea Philippi, he asked his disciples, ‘**Who do people say the Son of Man is?**’ They replied, ‘Some say John the Baptist; others say Elijah; and still others, Jeremiah or one of the prophets.’ ‘**But what about you?**’ he asked. ‘**Who do you say I am?**’ Simon Peter answered, ‘You are the Christ, the Son of the living God.’”

“You are the Christ, the Son of the living God!” What a confession!

Carl F. H. Henry wrote: “Without a recovery of the spiritual convictions and vitality which marked the church as she came into existence, Christianity is unlikely to remain a serious contender among world religions.”

Then in verse 17 Jesus responded to Peter’s confession. “**Blessed are you, Simon son of Jonah, for this was not revealed to you by flesh and blood, but by my Father in heaven. And I tell you**

that you are Peter, and on this rock I will build my church, and the gates of Hades will not overcome it. I will give you the keys of the kingdom of heaven; whatever you bind on earth will be bound in heaven, and whatever you loose on earth will be loosed in heaven”

(Matthew 16:17–19, NIV).

Note the exact words spoken by Christ in verse 18.

- Fact 1: “My church”

The Church is Christ’s.

It is not about a building.

It is not about a denominational structure.

The building of Christ’s Church is about the gathering of His people—and the

Church of the Nazarene is a vital part of that gathering.

- Fact 2: “I will build”

Christ is unquestionably the builder of the Church and the power behind its structure.

(1 Corinthians 3:11)

The Church of Jesus Christ is built on two things:

- o the divine revelation that our Lord and Savior is the Messiah, the Son of the Living God.
- o a profession of faith in Christ (see Peter’s confession in Matthew 16:16).

- Fact 3: “The gates of hell shall not prevail”

The Church is held up and held together by Christ. (Colossians 1:17)

Christ Himself protects the Church.

- Fact 4: “I will give you the keys of the kingdom of heaven.”

He has given us, His followers, the keys of the Kingdom.

We have the opportunity to bring people to the Kingdom by presenting them with the message of salvation.

He has given us not only the keys and authority but also the power to be His witnesses.

The same Holy Spirit that empowered Christ’s earthly ministry and raised Him from the grave is given to us for service. Speaking just before His ascension, Jesus gave final instructions to the disciples: “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, NIV).

Note the order of things.

First, we are to receive power from the Holy Spirit.

Christ made it clear that “witnessing” by those who are filled with the Holy Spirit is essential for building His Church. Paul reminded the church at Ephesus to “be filled with the Spirit” (Ephesians 5:18, NASB). This is why Jesus said that we need the Holy Spirit first. It is the “spirit of holiness” that is essential to our witness. Holy living and a sanctified life are possible here and

now because they come from God's promise to give us "a new heart and a new spirit" (Ezekiel 36:26, NIV).

What does it mean to be a Christian witness?

*Witnessing is the way we act in front of the world.*

It is the way we act in front of our families.

It is the way we act in front of our coworkers.

It is the way we act in front of our churches.

It is the way we act in front of our Sunday School classes and small groups.

It is the way we act in front of our neighbors.

It is the way we act in front of strangers.

Behavior that is not Christlike undermines the credibility of our witness.

Being a witness—sharing the gospel and spreading scriptural holiness—requires prayer. It requires faith. It requires the Word. It requires us to be Spirit-filled and Spirit-led in our daily walk with Christ. A worthy goal for every follower of Christ is to strengthen the quality of his or her witness.

Since the Church of the Nazarene Statement of Mission was refined five years ago, the general superintendents have spent time raising awareness for making Christlike disciples in the nations. We are committed to our core values of being Christian, Holiness, and Missional. These values are foundational for the church's unique witness.



However, it is time to begin focusing more on *how* the mission is realized *personally*—in local churches, in our schools, in the workplace, and where we live.

Just think how many *different* people 2.1 million Nazarenes know. Think about how big and how diverse is the “Nazarene network” we hear so much about.

- Imagine what would happen if a greater number of Nazarenes would become engaged as Christ’s witnesses, display “spiritual boldness,” and put faith into action as found in the Book of Acts.
- Imagine what would happen if a greater number of Nazarenes would take personal responsibility for Christ’s commandment to go and make disciples in their homes, neighborhoods, communities, and cities in the nations.
- Imagine how different life would be if more Christians followed the teaching of Jesus and lived the Great Commandment—to love the Lord our God with all our heart, and with all our soul, and with all our strength, and with all our mind, and to love our neighbor as ourselves. (Luke 10:27)
- Imagine what would happen if not only individuals were motivated, but if local churches were inspired by the Holy Spirit. Local churches have ultimate responsibility when it comes to implementing mission and ministry.
- Imagine what would happen if every local church was committed to creatively mobilizing and encouraging their people to be bold witnesses and committed disciple makers.

If by chance some churches are waiting for “permission” to reach out in different ways, then you have “permission” *and* encouragement from the general superintendents to do so.

The fact is that Nazarene churches around the world are already trying new things in order to connect with their communities. Sometimes these initiatives work and sometimes they do not. But that should not keep churches from being innovative in reaching people with the gospel of Jesus Christ.

The church has to expand its communication to utilize new media popular in today's culture. This includes Facebook with its 800 million members and a 50 percent daily usage, texting (but not while driving), Twitter, and even older technology like e-mail and websites. It is possible to be a digitally-connected church for ministry, for outreach, for spiritual growth, and even for receiving tithes and offerings—which should be understood as an act of worship.

A note of caution is in order. In the age of Facebook, people still need face time. Do not let the virtual completely replace the personal. The Church would do well to remember that it is the person of the Holy Spirit who reveals Jesus Christ to unbelievers—not technology.

Let's think about this together:

- What if more local churches became externally focused?
- What if more local churches were encouraged to try new things?
- What if more pastors equipped and commissioned their laity for service?
- What if more of our laity, once equipped and commissioned, took the initiative to explore new areas of ministry? This might include starting home Bible studies, teaching Sunday school classes, or engaging in church planting.
- What if Nazarene churches and districts cooperated with the Global Wesleyan Alliance and others in order to work smarter in urban areas?

- What if more Nazarenes made a commitment to strengthen their witness in the coming year through prayer and the study of God's Word?
- What if, in the largest cities and the smallest villages, Nazarenes of all ages would once again hear the call of God, be filled with the Holy Spirit, go into their worlds as empowered witnesses, and become involved in making disciples?

### Sarcoxie, Missouri, USA

Last year I was invited to speak at the 60<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Church of the Nazarene in Sarcoxie, Missouri, USA. When I arrived, I did not know if there was a town or not. Even after having been there, I still do not know if there is really a town. However, there is a Church of the Nazarene.

Pastor Wayne Rose is a retired evangelist who went to Sarcoxie to keep the doors of the church open. About 60 people attended the anniversary service. It began with special music by a trio consisting of the pastor, an 83-year-old church pianist, and her sister who has Alzheimer's. They sang a wonderful song, and the sister did not miss a word. After the trio, another talented group led the music.

I preached and then turned the service back to the pastor. Little did I realize that he would offer a greater sermon through the testimonies of his people. He called a young man to the front, a senior at the local high school, who had won the MidAmerica Nazarene University art contest the previous day. Everyone congratulated him.

The pastor said someone had invited this young man to church, and he became the church's first youth. He then invited his best friend, who in turn invited his girlfriend. The girlfriend invited

her mother and two siblings. The mother invited her sister with three children. The sister invited another friend. There they were, standing in front of the congregation—11 people from the seed of one invitation. This had a New Testament feel to it.

We applauded.

Then the pastor asked a family to come forward who had joined the church that morning. This family had been invited by another family, who had been invited by another family, who in turn invited another family.

Little did I realize that the Sarcoxie Church of the Nazarene had averaged less than ten people the previous year. Now the average attendance is around 60.

We had a dinner after the service. The man who grilled the hamburgers shared his testimony with me. All the worldly habits had been his. The pastor began to visit the man at his workplace. After a few months, this gentleman accepted Christ as his personal Savior, and his life and family have been totally changed.

As I left Sarcoxie the Holy Spirit spoke to me, “David, *do not underestimate what seems small.*”

God is working in that church and community. Souls are being born again. Disciple making is underway. The kingdom of God is growing. Jesus is building His Church!

Why? Because of faithful witnesses.

## Lifting Up Jesus

As we think about becoming creative in our outreach, the words of Jesus are instructive regarding the content of our communication. “And I, if I be lifted up from the earth, will draw all men unto me” (John 12:32, KJV).

We are to lift up Christ, not ourselves.

We are to lift up Christ, not our methodologies.

We are to lift up Christ, not our programs.

We are to lift up Christ, not our “successes.”

Humility and holy living go hand in hand.

When people look at us, they should not see the world. When people look at us, they should not see our face. When they look at us, as they looked into the face of the pastor in Sarcoxie, they should see the love of JESUS.

As we learned from the small town in Missouri, our future is being shaped and influenced by the way 2.1 million Nazarenes in over 27,000 local churches respond to the call of Jesus Christ to continue His work—often one conversation at a time. It is happening in Missouri, in Africa, in Brazil, in India, and around the world.

In closing, we offer this simple prayer:

*Father God, fill us with your Spirit. Teach us your ways. Help us obey your commands. Fill our hearts with your unconditional love for others. Tomorrow may we be more like your Son, Jesus Christ than we are today. Grant us your grace and peace in the days ahead. Amen.*

Respectfully and prayerfully submitted,  
Board of General Superintendents

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Prepared and presented by David W. Graves.

Footnotes:

\*2011 annual General Board contracted missionary personnel including volunteers. Source: Global Mission

\**Manual* Historical Statement