

# where WORLDS meet

the monthly newsletter for the church of the nazarene in eurasia  
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## Sometimes I Just Don't Understand

Thoughts from the  
South Asia Field  
by Ron Gilbert

Trust in the Lord with all your heart and lean not on your own understanding in all your ways acknowledge him and he will direct your path.

Proverbs 3:5-6

This is a scripture that has taken my wife Dianna and I around the world as we have endeavored to serve the Lord wherever He has asked us to serve. There have been times when I could not understand why He was asking us to leave a productive ministry and move into the area of the unknown.

I placed my life and heart and mind in his hands 33 years ago. The journey He has taken us on since that day has not always been understandable in many people's eyes, including mine, but as time passes we have always seen that God always had it right. When God asked us to step into the awesome assignment of South Asia I tried to understand it. Finally I just had to say, "Here we are, Lord." What an awesome privilege it is to see this great field develop through a movement that is empowered by God.

What is happening in South Asia is all happening to bring honor and glory to His name. There are so many things I see happening in South Asia I just don't understand; horrible persecution in India, civil war in Sri Lanka, earthquakes in Pakistan, floods and cyclones throughout our countries. How do you even begin to wrap your mind around the devastation of the tsunami that killed so many thousands of people?

I don't understand it all, but I have lived in the aftermath of these events and in some present situations. I have seen God open doors that had remained closed for centuries. We live in one of the most religious places in

see "South Asia" • page 3

## Jesus Film Keeps Growing South Asia Field

### Ministry Teams in Several Countries Recount Their Experiences

*Teams throughout India and South Asia have been using the Jesus Film to plant churches and disciple new believers for at least 10 years. With more than 115 teams currently registered on the fields and hundreds of showings a year, stories abound. Here are a few, in their own words. (For the safety of teams, names and locations have been removed.)*



We showed the Jesus Film to 80 people in one place. Among them was a middle-aged woman who came to us crying after the show.

We asked why she was crying. She said that she was worshipping a snake god. She had made an altar where she pasted pictures of the snakes. She saw different kinds of snakes in her dreams. They tried to bite her. She had similar dreams for 15 days. So, now she is living a life full of fear and uncertainty.

After hearing everything from her, we told her with a great confidence that if she accepts Christ as her savior, then she will never be troubled by the snakes.

Without delaying she accepted Christ to enjoy freedom in Him. She strongly claimed that from that day onward she is no more troubled by the snakes in her dream. Now she is growing in spirit day by day. Please, pray for her and also for her villagers so that they may know Christ in right time.

A person who was converted watching the Jesus Film and became a member of one of the Nazarene churches, suddenly stopped coming to church. We

went to his home to find out why.

We discovered that he was going to marry a Hindu girl. She told him that she would only marry him if he forsakes Christ and stops going to church, so he was ready to forsake Christ and accept the girl.

We were troubled deeply by his decision, but we could not stop him doing so. According to Hindu tradition, they were to marry on 2 August.

The bride was brought to the bridegroom's house, and as she was about to enter the house, she fainted and fell on the ground.

The bad news spread immediately throughout the village. They called witch doctors, after which she was taken to the hospital but she did not come to.

At last, they asked us to pray for her. We humbly accepted their request. God showed us a great miracle in that as soon as our prayer was over, she opened her eyes and started speaking. Immediately both them confessed their sins and shortcomings and the man returned to Christ and his wife too accepted Christ as her savior.

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# SOUTH ASIA

field focus



Sri Lanka



Bangladesh



Nepal



Bangladesh



Sri Lanka



Sri Lanka



Bangladesh

## SAsia: From the FSC

from page 1

in the world, and most of those religions talk about hope. But as Christians, there is a difference we are able to share. A song that I hear often says it so well, "My Hope Has A Name and His name Is Jesus." What a privilege we all have, not only to present hope, but the Source of hope: His name is Jesus.

Please pray for the people of South Asia, that they will not weaken in the face of persecution disasters, but that we all may stay strong in the Lord. Don't forget that if you will trust him and acknowledge him, He will give you the direction you look for. ♦

please pray

• The South Asia Field covers 11 countries, including Bangladesh, Nepal, Sri Lanka and Pakistan. Living among the mountains, deserts and agricultural farmlands of these nations are more than 1 billion people, representing numerous ethnic people groups. The dominant religion is Hinduism. Other religions include Islam, Buddhism animism and tribal religions, and a small minority of Christians.

• Nazarenes here share Jesus with South Asians is through the Jesus Film, in conjunction with discipleship classes and church planting. In addition, church leaders implement compassionate ministry projects to meet the many physical needs of South Asians. These ministries range from helping villages install sanitary water systems, to teaching classes on nutrition, or reading and writing.

• In spite of recent natural disasters, such as repeated widespread flooding and devastating earthquakes, political unrest and violence, the Church of the Nazarene is growing rapidly in South Asia.

• Pray for Jesus Film teams across South Asia, for safety for the team members and protection for their equipment. Pray for challenges as the film is shown in villages, for the spiritual growth of newly-organized churches, for open hearts and for the ministry planned in the coming year.

• Pray for Child Development Center care givers, that the children may experience the grace of God through them, and that, when applicable, their families would also be blessed by this ministry.

Pray for those affected by recurring floods and violence, for political tension in many of the countries on the field, and for strength and courage for the believers in each area.

## field facts

## Despite Calender Crunch, CIS Youth Keep Expanding Summer Ministry



*CIS Field*—CIS Field—Despite having to schedule around August’s regional youth conference in

Ukraine, summer ministry teams of youth from the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS) Field were able to expand their ministry of six years to four traveling teams to minister in Russia and Armenia.

Thirteen young people from 10 different churches held eight week-long Bible camps in the space of five weeks. Camps ranged from N. Gnutov and Peeteemork in Southern Russia, to the Volgograd area in Russia, to Moscow, to Goris and Voritan in southern Armenia to Akhuryan and Marileek in northern Armenia. Individual churches in Armenia, Ukraine and Central Asia also held Bible camps using the WordAction themes and materials that the field received permission to translate into Russian.

“What a joy to see the excitement of the children as they ran to meet the teams as they made their way to the individual churches or the rented school facilities each morning of the camps,” said field missionary Linda Russell.

The Sunday after the Vacation Bible School (VBS) in Marileek, several new children and a mother came to the services. The following week, even more children came to the rented apartment serving as home to the Nazarene Church in the village.

For the field, VBS has been a way to reach children for Christ and to build a bridge between the community and local Nazarene churches. It has been a way to involve youth in ministry outside of their local church as well as a time for training and developing skills for further ministry involvement. ♦

## CIS Mourns Loss of Ukrainian Pastor

*CIS Field*—After months battling a brain tumor, Vladimir Nikolaevich Khursin passed away October 3 in Kiev, Ukraine. He was the assistant pastor of Kiev First Church of the Nazarene.

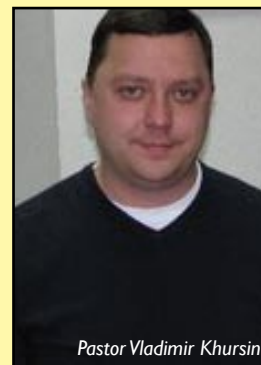
On 15 September, Khursin was admitted to the hospital with an infection and doctors sent him into surgery. Shortly after surgery, pneumonia set in and he was put on a respirator. After 10 days on a respirator in the intensive care unit, he passed away.

“We are sad, that is for sure,” said Cliff Wright, missionary to Ukraine. “Yet we all know and rejoice in the fact that Vladimir is right where he wants

to be, with his Lord and Savior, Jesus.”

Funeral services were held Monday, October 6.

Prayer is requested for Elena, Khursin’s sister, her husband, Yuriy, and son, Alex. This was Khursin’s only family. Prayer is also requested for the church family in Kiev. ♦



Pastor Vladimir Khursin

## Jesus Film: Team Stories from South Asia

from page 1

Halfway through a Jesus Film showing, some men came and told us angrily to stop the showing. We wanted to talk with them nicely but they got furious and came to beat us. We got frightened and stopped the film. The gang threatened us not to come to the village for preaching the Christian religion. We didn’t argue with them but packed up our equipment and sat on our friend’s verandah.

In the meantime, another man came and said, “I want to ask you why you are showing this film in this place? We came to know that you are giving temptation to the simple-minded people for converting them into your Christian religion.”

We tried to explain our program but the man got more agitated and began to shout at us with abusive words.

Then, one of the Jesus Film viewers, a Hindu local leader, showed courage and said, “What is the harm to show the film? We the village people want to see this. It is our personal right to see the film show. We are not doing any harm to you. We saw that Jesus is a very pious and great man. It is always good to know about the life of the saintly and Godly persons. We didn’t tell you to come here to watch the film. So we think you should not disturb us.”

The other viewers present supported the statement of the leader.

The angry man could not say anything, so he left, and we started the film again.

We read some verses from John 14 and preached on salvation and eternal life. The viewers seemed impressed to know about Jesus and they wanted to know about the Christian religion clearly. We gave the booklet “The Story of Jesus of Nazareth” to our friend and other interested viewers who can read.

After three days, we went to the village and carried out follow-up preaching. We are thankful to our Lord that we have

been able to start ministry in this village in the meantime.

After one showing, a woman from the local community came to us and told us that her husband had been sick for the last two months. She took him to village doctors for treatment but he was still suffering from fever and acute pain in his whole body. A Hindu priest asked her to sacrifice a goat to the goddess; she did it but her husband had not recovered.

She said, “I saw that Jesus cured many patients with their request. I believe that my husband can get cured through your prayer. So, I request you to please pray for my husband.” We were very much impressed with her faith in Jesus.

She requested us to go to their house. We saw her husband laid on the bed. I read Acts 3: 1-11, and to make the meaning clear to them I illustrated the verses with simpler words.

Then we put oil on her husband’s forehead and started praying for him. After our prayer we gave them the booklet “The Story of Jesus of Nazareth” for their reading and left.

The next day we visited the family again. The husband said the pain was much less than before. We prayed for him again, then left.

We returned three days later and found that he was well with no pain in his body. He also said that he read the booklet we gave him and he liked it very much.

We thanked our Lord for His miracle in this man’s life and also for his wife’s strong faith in Jesus. We continued our follow-up in this village with the cooperation of this family and other interested Jesus Film viewers. ♦

For more information about the Jesus Film, visit Jesus Film Harvest Partners at [www.jfhp.org](http://www.jfhp.org)

## NTC Graduates Head to Global Ministries



photos courtesy Peter Rae

by Peter Rae

Nazarene Theological College  
Manchester, England—Nazarene Theological College (NTC) awarded degrees to students from 13 different countries at its 2008 graduation ceremony on 11 October.

Three students graduated with the PhD degree: Greg Crofford (Bethany, Oklahoma, USA; missionary to East Africa); Robert Snow (Faculty Member at Ambrose University College, Calgary, Alberta, Canada) and Mary Spaulding (NTC's first woman PhD graduate, visiting lecturer at several Nazarene Colleges). This makes 17 successful research degree candidates graduated by NTC since 1999.

The diversity of the NTC community was well illustrated as a Jordanian Arab MA Graduate (Waleed Al Madanat) talked animatedly to a Jewish visiting lecturer (Roni ben-Toviah Mechanic) about the church in Israel and the West Bank. In total, 32 students graduated at this convocation, including postgraduates from Kenya, Korea, Jordan, the Philippines, Cape Verde, Germany, Ghana, Canada, the USA and the United Kingdom. Undergraduate students were also part of the celebration, with students



receiving degrees in Theology, Pastoral Studies, and Youth Work & Ministry.

Graduates leave NTC for a range of destinations: MA Graduate Danilho Carvalho was unable to attend the ceremony because of the urgency of beginning his missionary work in Angola. Pastoral Studies graduate Andrew Aveyard is already serving as a Nazarene Prison Chaplain in the Manchester establishment affectionately known as 'Strange-ways,' while Colin Duffy has moved continents to serve as an associate pastor in California. Karen Wilson (MA) is ministering with her husband in Tanzania. And Tim Keightley (PGDip) is running the 'Foxton Centre', a Christian Youth and Community Centre in Preston, Lancashire. ♦

## Six From Eurasia Experience Holiness Movement in Africa



photos courtesy Heidi Bowes



Addis Ababa, Ethiopia—Nazarene Missions International (NMI) leaders from 10 nations met in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia on 9 October for a Prayer Vision Tour of Africa. Participants encountered scenarios like the Horn of Africa, which now has 100 Nazarene churches of 70 or so attendees, where a year ago, none existed. Eurasians included Isabel Gonzales of Spain, Joyce Jothi of India Karnataka, Iris Sammet of Germany, Cathy Tarrant of British Isles North, Vardan Vardanyan of Russia North and Heidi Bowes from the Eurasia Regional Office.

"The trip was a wonderful and unique experience to see God's work in action, deep in the bush of Ethiopia," said Bowes, NMI Coordinator for Eurasia. "The group attended a double district assembly – which has now expanded to seven districts, one of which already has 172 churches. We participated in joyful worship services (Ethiopian style) and witnessed hundreds of people coming forward seeking holiness at a Holiness Conference. We witnessed a violently demon-possessed woman taken out of a service for prayer and return a physically and emotionally healthy and stable person. We heard many stories of miracles, averaging one a week in the field, and stories of God's love and power finding people in their state of need and transforming lives. We were challenged by the urgency and commitment of our Nazarene brothers and sisters to spread the gospel and message of holiness in religiously-resistant areas at all costs. These things are "normal" in Ethiopia and they were a tremendous blessing to us."

Before returning home, the American delegation continued to Kenya when four team members and one hotel cook were injured with varying degrees of burns from a gas cooking-canister explosion. All have returned to the States and are recovering; two team members are still receiving treatment. ♦

## Southeastern Europe Changes Leadership

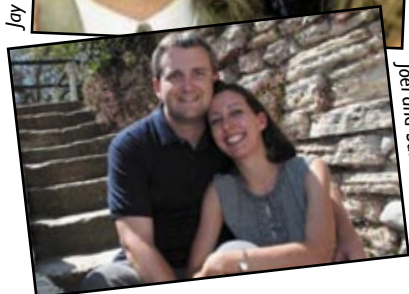
### Jay Sunberg to Begin As Field Strategy Coordinator in January

Eurasia Region—After nearly five years serving Southeastern Europe (SEE) as Field Strategy Coordinator, Joel and Sara Mullen will be transferring to the Western Mediterranean Field to resume ministry in Italy, where they first began working with Eurasia when they joined the region in 2001.

Beginning on 1 January, the role of Field Strategy Coordinator for SEE will be filled by Jay Sunberg, who, with his wife Teanna and four daughters, have been missionaries to Bulgaria for more than 10 years. ♦



Jay and Teanna Sunberg



Joel and Sara Mullen

# Due to Violence, Indian Christians Face Continued Displacement

East India—As the violence against Christians sparked in Orissa in August continues to spread, many remain homeless, hungry and fearful for their safety. Nazarene Compassionate Ministries personnel and local believers are working closely to relieve the suffering as they pray for peace.



photos by David Argabright



*“They came and threatened to kill us if we don’t revert to Hinduism. Some gave in, but we left everything and ran to the jungle. We had nothing but our clothes and a little bag on our back. The rest was taken, stolen or destroyed. For several days we lived in the jungle without food and with constant fear they would catch us and finish us off. But we finally escaped and reached Calcutta. Here I am waiting till the situation has died down. Then I will return and help our brothers and sisters. I also want to search for those who have given in out of fear and convey the love and forgiveness of Christ to them.” -Pastor B., India*



## Bulgaria, Romania, Hungary Partner in Church Planting Consultation

by Simone Finney  
Eurasia Communications

Razgrad, Bulgaria—Cristi Boseff doesn’t like games. He especially dislikes serious games. So when the Romanian pastor and 40 others were split into teams to play one during a weekend gathering for church planters from Eastern Europe, he wasn’t excited. “I thought I was going to be bored to death,” said Boseff, pastor of the Blessing Church in Bucharest, Romania. “But it was very unexpected. God works in unexpected ways.”

The game: plant a church in the fictional Eastern European country of Lower Slabobia, in and around a city named Sikigrad. Every five minutes that passed represented a month in the life of the game. Teams were required to make decisions on deadlines, create budgets and develop ministry plans for their churches. Like life, the game brought changes such as budget adjustments and natural disasters for the teams to work through.

“Everyone was looking at me,” said Boseff, who was chosen as the leader for his team, “and I said, ‘God I am looking at you.’ Things came into order, in a way I can’t explain now. Without realizing, we

started to come up with a plan.”

It was a group of nearly 40 church planters and leaders from Bulgaria (24), Romania (5) and Hungary (8) playing the four-hour game, which capped off a gathering in Razgrad, Bulgaria from 22-24 September. The weekend included discussions on how specific Eastern European pastors handle finances, facilities, church planting, etc. in their respective churches, and enabled the group to share about their common experiences.

This unity carried into the game: with representatives from all three countries mixed on each team, many expected a significant challenges between languages, experiences and cultural perspectives. Still, people found that their own life experiences pushed them to take the game seriously, and began utilizing one another’s gifts to create a plan for the church.

“We forgot it was a game,” said one woman, who nurtures several village churches near Stubel, Bulgaria. “We were ready to really go and plant a church in this town.”

“I was very impressed in the midst of the work,” said another participant. “We were different, we were from different

languages, but when the team started to work, I think the unity was more important than anything. Everybody understood what everyone else had to do. And we learned that where God is, there is faith, love and action.”

By the end of the weekend, the group developed a church-planting covenant of 12 principles that everyone agreed to use as a guide for their pastoral ministries.

It affirms a passionate, prayer-centered, team approach to ministry. It stresses the importance of creativity and moving toward interdependence.

The covenant helped voice an uncharacteristic unity for countries that have seen so much tension and conflict. Participants say they gained new perspectives on church planting, and felt connected to one another through common experiences.

Though the game was a theoretical experience, it was designed to reflect reality. In that case, Boseff’s experience with the game speaks to increasing hope in Southeastern Europe.

“We had a small amount of money, we had God on our side, and we had a church in an unknown place,” said Boseff. “That was our beginning.” ♦

*“Even in darkness  
light dawns for the  
upright, for the gracious  
and compassionate  
and righteous man.”*

Psalm 112:4

## Upcoming Events

- 9 November • International Day of Prayer for the Persecuted Church
- 20-21 November • Field Strategy Coordinator Meetings
- 22-26 November • Regional Advisory Council Meetings
- 26-30 November • Eurasia M-Team Retreat
- 30 November • Advent Begins
- 25 December • Jesus' Birthday (observed)
- 24 June - 3 July • General Assembly Orlando, Florida, USA

## Hungarian Wikipedia Features Naz. Entry



[www.wikipédia.hu](http://www.wikipédia.hu) (type “Názáreti”)

Hungary—Wikipedia, the Internet's largest encyclopedia, is one of the 10 most visited Web sites and is available in more than 250 languages. Hungarian Wikipedia, launched in 2003, contains 106,053 articles. Among them are 322 featured articles, which are, according to the site, “considered to be the best articles in Wikipedia.”

As a topic, Christianity has four articles: Canterbury St. Augustine, Eucharist, Pope John Paul II, Áron Márton.

Now, Názáreti Egyház (Church of the Nazarene) is part of this list.

Articles are reviewed before being featured. According to the site, “featured article candidates for accuracy, neutrality, completeness, and style according to our featured article criteria.”

On 30 September, Názáreti Egyház was a featured article for an entire week. Hungarian Wikipedia, launched in 2003, contains 106,053 articles. Among them are 322 featured articles, which are, according to the site, “considered to be the best articles in Wikipedia.”

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On 30 September, Názáreti Egyház article, written and researched by Rudolph Gusztin, was a featured article for an entire week.

“It is quite an honor for him and for the church to have this entry selected,” said Vicki Moore, missionary to Hungary. “We are all very proud of him and pleased that he found this enterprise worthy of his energies. It's an encouragement to the district and the field and the region!” ♦

## Prayer Requests

- Please pray for Nazarene brothers and sisters in Orissa, India, as well as for the many other Christians that are suffering continued violence at this time. Ask the Lord to intervene and protect His people. Pray for the NCM and Jesus Film staff who are currently preparing to respond and help wherever they can.
- Pray for the family of Vladimir Khursin (Elena, Yurij and Alex), and for the local church in Kiev, Ukraine and others on the CIS who have lost a pastor and friend.
- Pray for those who continue to be affected by significant flooding in Nepal, Bangladesh, Pakistan and India. Pray for relief and recovery for those who have lost homes and livelihoods in the devastation.
- Pray for the persecuted church around the world: for those who worship in secret, for those in prison, for those separated from family and friends, and for those who face continued challenges in order to follow Christ.
- Pray for the global church as it prepares for General Assembly and Conventions in Orlando, Florida, USA next summer. Pray for wisdom for those leading the organization and for districts who are currently choosing their delegates to the various conventions.

Where Worlds Meet is the monthly e-newsletter for the Eurasia Region of the Church of the Nazarene. To subscribe, please e-mail the editor at [whereworldsmeet@eurasiaregion.org](mailto:whereworldsmeet@eurasiaregion.org)

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