



where WORLDS meet



the monthly newsletter for the church of the nazarene in eurasia

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Three South Asia Countries Form Communications Teams

By Gina Pottenger

Twenty-seven Bangladeshi Nazarenes divided into groups of three to tramp along the dusty, gravelly roads of a small village in Jessore, in the southwest of Bangladesh. They went in search of villagers they could interview.

The groups were doing a practice session as part of a three-day storyteller training, with the objective of forming a communications team for the Church of the Nazarene in Bangladesh.

Eurasia Region Communications held storyteller training events in three South Asian countries in October, including Nepal and Sri Lanka, to form teams in each country that will be responsible for collecting and writing the stories of what God is doing through the Church of the Nazarene in each country. The aim is to share their mission stories with both the region and the global Nazarene family.

The Bangladesh training was held October 15 to 17; the Nepal training was the 20th to the 22nd; and the Sri Lanka training was the 28th to the 30th.

Rev. Dilli Subba, the district superintendent for the Church of the Nazarene in Nepal, requested the training for his country back in 2011, before the material was fully developed.

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MEET THE NEW REGIONAL DIRECTOR



By Gina Pottenger

In October, Arthur Snijders, field strategy coordinator for the Northern Europe Field, was elected as the new regional director of the Eurasia Region. He follows Gustavo Crocker, who served in the position for 10 years until being elected as a general superintendent of the denomination in July.

Where Worlds Meet sat down with Snijders over Skype to talk to him about the ministry experiences that have prepared him for this new role, as well as his thoughts on the future of the region. Part 1 of the interview is featured in this edition, and part 2 will follow in December.

WWM: Talk about your background – how you found Christ and also realized your call to ministry?

Snijders: My parents come from Salvation Army. I became a Christian at the beginning of my high school years. A friend invited me to come to a Youth for Christ day and I went with him. There was personal testimony of a young man. He used an object lesson with a pedal car. It's a little car that you have to move your feet back and forth to make it go forward. He was making

a difference between a toy car to a car with an engine – Christ is the engine. That really was a picture that indicated clearly to me what I needed and what God wanted to give to me. After that there was an invitation to pray to receive Christ and that's what I did. All of a sudden there was a really strong desire to get to know the Word of God. It was not there before.

WWM: What led you into ministry?

Snijders: As I completed my high school, [the church] encouraged us to do at least a year in a Bible college so that's what I did. There was not a special calling. In my third year I had a professor who had a deep, deep love for the local church. He could show from the Bible that God spoke about the local church as being the temple where Paul says in 1 Corinthians, "You are a temple of the living God." He's talking about the local church. Intellectually and in theory that kind of changed my opinion that the local church is far more important to God than I ever properly understood.

The only way to ... become one body is to really love one another and that way we learn about Christ.... Loving the people in the local church, that's

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Rotterdam Church Ministers to Bulgarian Immigrants

By Matt Lee

A changing neighborhood and growth of an immigrant population has provided new ministry opportunities for the Rotterdam Church of the Nazarene in the Netherlands.

After growing to about 150 members, the church started to decline in the 1990s, coinciding with the decline of the surrounding neighborhood. As membership dropped, income dropped and internal problems arose.

In 2007 there was no permanent pastor and the church had no clear direction to go forward. It was evident something needed to change if the church was to survive.

In the summer of 2008 the congregation called Stephen Overduin to come and pastor the church.

"Through time and prayer [the church] decided to become a city church that focused on the people in the immediate neighborhood, the poor and the immigrants," Overduin said.

Bulgarians and Romanians do not have official status by the government, which means that they are allowed to be there but are not allowed to be employed by an existing business. They are, however, allowed to start their own company.

"They also do not have any rights. People can charge them as much as they want for rent without any protection. It is a group that the government doesn't want to have here," Overduin said.

In 2009, Jay Sunberg, the field strategy coordinator, called Overduin to let him know that Aleko Nachov, a member of the Nazarene church in Bulgaria, was moving to Rotterdam because he felt called to work with the immigrants as well as to look for work. Nachov's first Sunday he sat in the front of the church and smiled the entire service without understanding anything.

After the first month he began to bring other Bulgarians to the service. It was then that he met a university student named Stefan.

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RD from page 1

something that is the core of the calling to become a pastor.

WWM: How has God used your prior ministry roles to prepare you for leading the region?

Snijders: The first four years of our ministry as a pastor's couple were not in the Netherlands but in England. God, in those early years, brought together two things – a love for the local church, and a deep appreciation for what God is doing and showing in other cultures. It took us a while to really connect with the British people. I think the Lord really enabled us to see that ... we were up against language barriers, cultural barriers, all these obstacles. This is how the Lord started to prepare us. The international connection stayed with us, especially when I became district superintendent.

WWM: How did you react when finding out you were being considered and then elected as the new regional director?

Snijders: People were saying that my name was circulating but I didn't worry about that because I thought in order to be an RD you have to be a full-fledged manager and have experience in running an organization. I didn't worry about that because I thought I'm not a manager. I gave very little thought. I said I do not fit the profile.

Then when the search committee called me for interview They said the profile that we have created calls for a team builder and a team leader; someone who is able to build bridges between peoples and cultures and teams; someone who has a real heart for missionaries and their families. That interview was the very first time that I really seriously considered that they were serious about looking at me for RD. I was shell shocked. We prayed about it. We asked friends to pray. In the end we said, yes, we will allow our names to go forward. People were very, very affirming and generous in their responses. It makes me feel very humbled.

WWM: How do you feel about being the first person from this region to lead the region?

Snijders: I think that it is a very significant step. I have seen that our

church and our international church leadership is capable of great trust. The region as a whole and the leaders who are there, and me as an RD, we are trusted and we are entrusted with the ministry and the message of our church. I see that as something of great value.

WWM: Coming from a post modern European context, how will that affect your leadership in parts of the region that don't share that cultural context?

Snijders: John Stott says discipleship is double listening. You have to listen to the world and you have to listen to the Word of God. I think that is how I look at connecting postmodern Europe and the young revival experience in the church of, for instance, Bangladesh. In these other cultures [such as the Middle East or India], because of globalization you will face some of the very same questions that the church in the West is facing, but I think the questions will be similar and at the same time the answers will be different. I think God enables Christians to answer the very same questions in different ways.

WWM: How would you describe your leadership style?

Snijders: I think my leadership style is one where I tend to listen and ask questions before I make decisions or give directions. I tend to bring people together and build a team, use the strengths that are in the team. I've learned sometimes the hard way that being a leader, you know what it means to stay put and endure and not walk away, not even from difficult situations or difficult decisions. I do not easily give up.

WWM: What is the transition plan and when do you expect to be fully immersed in the job?

Snijders: We will use November and December for orientation and getting connected with the regional office and the field strategy coordinators. From January onward I will be full-time regional director.

Check back in our December edition of Where Worlds Meet to read the second part of the interview.



Participants in Bangladesh



Participants in Nepal

“When you have very good stories, touching stories, the story that touches the heart of the people, if we share these ... to the global Nazarene people, that will encourage them, that will also inspire them, and at the same time we honor and glorify god,” Subba said.

The three-day training included lessons on the topics of why we tell stories, what makes a story, how to write in narrative style, how to conduct an interview and how to follow ethical practices. There was also a photography workshop.

The storyteller training was a combination of theory and practice. Each new communications team spent time doing interviews, as well as writing practice stories, followed by critique of their work.

“We have learned a lot of new things, like story structure, how we should take interviews and things like copyright, and some five senses like feel, touch and smell,” said Sumon Corraya, who is responsible for some ministry reports from Bangladesh Nazarene Mission. “As a storyteller, it is very new for me.”

Many of the participants are involved in coordinating reports for ministries such as JESUS Film or NCM child development centers. In most cases reports are required to include a story. Sushil Dattbhatt, a participant in Nepal, said that the training will enable them to produce more compelling stories in their reports.

“Some of the reports, they’re not very standard reports from here,” said Cheryl Peter, the correspondent secretary for JESUS Film ministry in Sri

Lanka. “I can implement the systems what we studied and I can ... make it a correct testimony and send it out.”

“Stories are so important because of globalization and communication,” said Halaswar Chandra Barman, a participant in Bangladesh. “When ... wise people read this story, they think about our country, about our people.”

Bhakta Raj Limbu, a participant in Nepal, said “everybody should learn this training” because testimonies and stories encourage others. Although he does not feel he is a writer, he said he will try to apply what he learned in the training.

At the conclusion of the training, each country team developed a mission statement, a set of goals, and a specific strategy plan to reach their goals. The teams in Bangladesh and Nepal also made a commitment of a minimum number of stories they would write per month.

The Storyteller “training is helping us to tell the story of what God is doing in a way that will lead many to praise God for His power and love,” said Field Strategy Coordinator Hermann Gschwandtner.

It is hoped that the newly formed communications teams will produce stories of what God is doing in their countries to share both in ministry reports and in *Where Worlds Meet*, *NCN News* and *Engage* magazine – all publications to inform and educate Nazarenes around the world.



Participants in Sri Lanka



Jesus is Greater

By a South Asian JESUS Film Team

Somebody was screaming in a place near Ajoy's house.

Ajoy's house was crowded for such an unusual event and his neighbors were trying to make a goddess, happy by offering milk, banana, flowers and other materials to a boy who was possessed by the goddess. Somebody brought pigeons to kill to offer blood to the goddess. This is what was happening in Ajoy's house the whole afternoon. The incident took place on 6 August 2013.

In the meantime we went to the village and saw the situation. We asked Ajoy about the matter. Without explaining the matter he said, "Maybe you can't conduct the JESUS film tonight. I am sorry."

"Please tell us what happened?" I wanted to know.

"Our goddess became angry with us and came in my son. Please go away, otherwise she will become angrier and may kill my son and destroy our houses," he said with panic.

I held Ajoy by his hand and told him, "Our God, Jesus, is more powerful than [the goddess]."

Ajoy became shocked and couldn't believe it. He asked, "Really? Could you prove what you say?"

"Yes," I said, "[it] is an evil spirit and all the evil spirits are afraid of Jesus Christ, the Holy Spirit. The power of Holy Spirit can drive the evil spirit away from the boy and we will prove it now."

Saying this I opened my Bible and took a glass of water and blessed the water. Telling the others to move aside, I sprinkled the blessed water on the boy and commanded the evil spirit, "Go away from here. In the name of Jesus

I asked you to leave the boy. Leave the boy at once."

"These people worship me," the boy opened his mouth, "please don't harm me, I am leaving and will never come back."

I shouted, "Leave these people at once and never come back."

After a while the boy became conscious as the evil spirit left the boy.

The villagers, men and women became very much surprised to see the power of the Holy Spirit that they wanted to know more about our faith and our God. We didn't spend more time in discussion as we went to conduct the JESUS film; we arranged to start the showing program. We conducted the JESUS film among a good number of people and the villagers watched the entire film with much interest.

Later we went back to the village several times and conducted a preaching service. During our follow-up preaching there, the villagers used to join in our religious discussions and preaching and became united with the strong leadership of Ajoy. Through our regular preaching about the true way to go to heaven and the worship service, the villagers realized that they

are sinners and could get salvation only through Jesus Christ. We saw Ajoy and his family put their complete faith in Jesus.

One day Ajoy's wife asked, "Brother, I am great sinner. Will Jesus come to my heart?"

In reply I joyfully said, "Today, from this moment Jesus wants to live in your heart. If you submit your life to Jesus, you will be happy forever in your eternal life."

"I believe in Jesus as my Savior and Lord. I will leave all my evil activities from now."

Ajoy's wife submitted her life to Jesus.

The other villagers who brought their faith in Jesus as the Savior became very much happy to hear the testimony of Ajoy's wife.

Therefore, we were able to form a preaching point and transformed it into a church-type mission with the leadership of Brother Ajoy and are continuing our follow-up preaching among the villagers.



Eurasia Region Videos Now Available

Khakollaris Story*

This is a story of a woman in Albania growing up in a household with a different faith other than her Christian faith. Although Khakollari's family discouraged her from being a follower of Christ, she persisted and is now an ordained pastor.



click on the picture above to be taken to the video or go to
<http://medialibrary.nazarene.org/media/resurrections-xhakollaris-story>

Youth Worx*

In Beeston, England, one group looks past an area's poverty, crime, and addiction to reach out to youth. Youth Worx, a ministry of South Leeds Church of the Nazarene, helps teens come from darkness into Christ's freedom.



click on the picture above to be taken to the video or go to
<http://medialibrary.nazarene.org/media/youth-worx>

*** To download a video to show in church, go to one of the links and click "download" under the video.**

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CONSIDER PRINTING ENOUGH OF THESE CARDS TO DISTRIBUTE TO YOUR CONGREGATION MEMBERS ON SUNDAYS,
INVITING THEM TO STAY INFORMED ON WHAT GOD IS DOING THROUGH OUR CHURCH ACROSS THE EURASIA REGION.
WITH THIS CARD, YOUR LAY PEOPLE CAN SIGN UP TO RECEIVE WEEKLY AND MONTHLY MISSION STORIES FROM EURASIA REGION COMMUNICATIONS



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*“Cast your cares
on the LORD and
He will sustain you;
He will never
let the righteous
be shaken.” (NIV)
Psalm 55:22*

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ROTTERDAM

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Stefan, who was a Christian, was from Bulgaria and he also spoke Dutch and began to translate the services until he graduated and moved back to Bulgaria.

God provided again when Nikola Dimchev began to attend. He and Nachov took on more responsibility with the group of Bulgarians, and began to learn more about the Bible and preaching. Soon, they would be in the sanctuary for the first part of the service. Then, when it came time for the sermon, they would move to the fellowship hall where one of them would deliver a sermon in their native tongue.

“Our congregation is very supportive of the immigrants. They have come to trust us because we accept them and want them to be a part of our fellowship even though there is a language barrier,” Overduin said.

The congregation cannot help the immigrants when it comes

to financial or physical needs due to lack of resources, but they can help them spiritually and emotionally through being loving and accepting.

Overduin said, “In one service five immigrants gave their lives to the Lord and a few months later we had a baptism service where four of them got baptized.”

This past summer they organized three different language classes per week, staffed by volunteers of the church, that are offered to the immigrants to help them learn the language and learn more about The Netherlands.

Because of the congregation’s warmth and love, there are 20 to 30 Bulgarians that call the Rotterdam Church of the Nazarene their home church and many more have come to visit.

Prayer Requests

- Please pray for God’s continued blessing on the Rotterdam Church of the Nazarene and their continued ministry to the Bulgarian Immigrants.
- Please pray for the newly formed communications teams that were formed in Bangladesh, Nepal and Sri Lanka, that they will meet their goals and find stories of what God is doing in their field.
- Please pray for the continued ministry of the JESUS Film project. Pray that God will continue to bless the workers and give them safety and wisdom as well as for all of the people that will attend each of the JESUS Film showings.
- Please pray for Arthur Snijders the Eurasia Region’s new director. Pray that his move and the transition process will go smoothly and he and his wife adapt to their new role in ministry. Also, pray for wisdom, guidance and vision for the Eurasia Region.
- Christ commands us to pray for more workers for the harvest in Luke 10:2: “The harvest is plentiful, but the workers are few. Ask the Lord of the harvest, therefore, to send out workers into his harvest field” (NIV). Pray that God would raise up and equip new workers across the region.

Where Worlds Meet is the monthly newsletter for the Eurasia Region of the Church of the Nazarene. To subscribe, e-mail communications@eurasiaregion.org or visit www.eurasiaregion.org.

We welcome stories, photos and prayer requests. E-mail submissions to communications@eurasiaregion.org

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