

where WORLDS meet

the monthly newsletter for the church of the nazarene in eurasia

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EARTHQUAKE NAZARENES IN NEPAL RESPOND



Photos courtesy Gina Pottenger

Two large earthquakes have devastated parts of Nepal on April 25 and May 12. The Church of the Nazarene is bringing relief and aid to those affected.

By Gina Grate Pottenger
Eurasia Region Communications

For the past three weeks, following two earthquakes measuring above a 7.0 magnitude and amid numerous disruptive aftershocks, some as large as a 5 on the scale, the Nazarene disaster response team in Nepal have continued traveling to rural villages in the hard-hit Sindhupalchok District to conduct assessments of what emergency aid the communities need, and to deliver hundreds of bags of rice, boxes of food, tarps, blankets and disaster hygiene kits.

The response team, made up of pastors, lay leaders and others, on Thursday delivered 173 food boxes which will feed 101 families for about a week, and 127 disaster hygiene kits. On Friday, they delivered emergency food boxes to 132 families whose homes were destroyed, as well as hygiene kits. The supplies were donated by Heart to Heart International. Since then, they

have traveled to numerous villages and distributed hundreds more packages of food, blankets and tarps for temporary shelters.

The denomination has more than 300 churches with 8,000 members in Nepal. Since the catastrophic April 25 earthquake, the church has been working in coordination with the United Nations and government of Nepal to determine plans of action for how to most effectively help people, many of whom are now homeless.

After the initial May 4 food delivery to bring rice, oil and salt to a village with 223 households who had not received aid since the earthquake, the team has decided what is most urgently needed are shelters. Most people's crops are fine and they will have a normal harvest, although some lost livestock, and many lost the food they had stored up in their homes,

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Sofia church breaks ground

By Gina Grate Pottenger
Eurasia Region Communications

This spring, the members of the Church of the Nazarene in Sofia, Bulgaria, broke ground on land they purchased some years ago to build a new sanctuary. After years of praying, planning and drawing up architectural plans, the construction is about to begin.

Recently, Doug Mann, district superintendent for Bulgaria and interim pastor of the Sofia church, signed the architectural plans and submitted them to the government agency which issues building permits. Contractors have said the building can be complete in six months, and that the congregation can be worshipping there by Christmas.

"We can barely believe it's actually happening," said missionary Jennifer Mann, adding that the church has owned the property since 2001. "The Bulgarian church has been dreaming for well over a decade. I think when those bulldozers roll in, it will make it very real.

The planned 360-square-meter church building will be two floors; the upper level will house the sanctuary, bathrooms and a pastor's office. The ground floor will be an open, multi-purpose space for

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NEPAL: Nazarenes distribute emergency relief

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which is why emergency food aid is needed immediately, so they can eat until their crops are ready to come in around July.

As the heavy rains of monsoon season quickly approach, the church in Nepal is focusing its long-term rebuilding efforts on helping people build earthquake-proof permanent housing, preferably using locally available materials. Research is currently being conducted to determine the most suitable designs and materials to be used, and where to purchase them.

The global church has mobilized in prayer and giving to Nepal during this time of uncertainty and suffering.

“I have never witnessed so much compassion, prayer, help, and willingness to contribute in practical ways as during this crisis,” said Arthur Snijders, Eurasia Region director. “It feels like we are joining hands all over the world to bring relief to those suffering in Nepal. I am very proud of our Nazarene family.”

To support the relief efforts, your donations through Nazarene Compassionate Ministries will provide for ongoing emergency needs, including water, food, tents, and blankets, as well as other long-term recovery efforts. Visit <https://give.nazarene.org/donate/f/125135>

In Germany, send your donation to Helping Hands Germany:
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For any other country, give through your local church or district, designating your gift to the NCM Nepal Earthquake Relief. ☐



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Nazarene relief efforts
following the first
earthquake, and read
the latest coverage:
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Bangladesh church supports Nepal efforts

By Gina Grate Pottenger
Eurasia Region Communications



Photos courtesy Gina Pottenger

Two NCM Nepal staff members conduct a focus group assessment in the village of Sangbote, east of Kathmandu, to find out what the community members need and what kind of assistance they want. The volunteers used an assessment given by the church in Bangladesh.

Thursday, May 7, two disaster experts from the Church of the Nazarene in Bangladesh, Samuel and George, arrived in Nepal to support the short-term and long-term relief efforts being conducted by the church in Nepal.

Bangladesh, neighbor to Nepal, is a disaster-prone country, subject to cyclones, floods, droughts and tidal surges. As a result, the church in Bangladesh has extensive experience in bringing relief and compassion to people suffering from natural disasters.

Immediately after the first earthquake in Nepal on April 25, the church in Bangladesh extended an offer of assistance. Rev. Dilli, the district superintendent of Nepal, gladly accepted the gesture of love and support. Bangladesh Nazarene Mission sent a copy of their assessment training manual, which the Nepal relief team found very helpful in preparing their team for their first expedition to evaluate needs in a remote village called Tindhara, and helped them successfully bring aid a few days later. (See article: <http://tiny.cc/21j2xx>)

"It's my privilege to come here and stand alongside the team and help the people in the time of disaster," said Samuel. "I had an experience in



George (left) and Samuel, disaster experts in the Church of the Nazarene Bangladesh, came for one week to provide disaster relief support to the Nepal church.

proposal and report writing, so I want to utilize my expertise to help NCM Nepal to develop their proposals and need assessment."

Eurasia Region Director Arthur Snijders said, "As Eurasia Region, we are giving priority to 'interconnectedness' within our very diverse region - the biblical principle that everyone is called to receive and to give. The Nepal earthquake shows what this means in practice: the needs of Nepal are met by Nazarenes from Bangladesh who share what they have received as a result of the many disasters in their own country. I heartily commend our

Bangladesh church for their reaching out to their brothers and sisters in Nepal."

Sukamal Biswas, field strategy coordinator for the South Asia Field, said, "I am very happy that as a neighbor country, Bangladesh are able to send two experts for working closely with NCM team in Nepal. Church of the Nazarene members in Bangladesh and Bangladesh Nazarene Mission workers also contributed one day's salary for Nepal brother and sisters." □

First non-missionary to lead France District

Rev. Joseph Toguyera, a long-time pastor on the France District, last month became the first non-missionary to be appointed as its district superintendent. Joseph, who was ordained in 1995, has served as pastor of the Paris I Church of the Nazarene for many years, was part of Nazarene Missions International, and planted a new church in Ecouen in 2006. He has been part of the district advisory board for several years.

Joseph and his wife, Josephine, moved to France from Chad in 1989 to study theology, and because of civil war in Chad, they were unable to return home. So they became part of the denomination in France.

In the following interview, we hear his heart for the church and the people of France, and how he plans to lead the district forward in the coming days.

WWM: How did you come to know Christ personally?

JOSEPH: I wasn't raised in a Christian family, but there was the civil war that was going on in Chad in 1979 and it was there that I came across how evil man could be. I met some people who were distributing Christian literature and I took it home. The literature that I was reading really answered a lot of questions that I had: That God created man in his image, just and good, but that because of the fall and because of sin, the evil became real in them; that death and sickness and evil were essentially consequence of this sin that was introduced. But God gave His son that whomever believes in Him would have eternal life. And because of this they would be able to encounter with the love that would surpass the hate that was present in man. And it was through that that I was touched and convinced that coming to God I could have eternal life – that I could be forgiven, that I could be purified and that I could be considered as a child of God.

I joined with a youth group of the local church that was there in Chad and attended this church for a number of years, which helped my faith. And then I was baptized a few months later at the church.

It was not long after that I had some friends at school that were just harassing me and making fun of me because I had become a Christian, and I had a strong passion because of that to study more the Word of God so that I could give a response to why I had given my life



to Christ to the people around me that didn't understand.

WWM: How did your experience in Chad influence or shape your ministry in France?

JOSEPH: What it's made me realize, that experience, is even in France that men need God; there's a real need for God in humanity. No matter where the person finds themselves, regardless of where they live, all need the gospel to be saved. The conviction that I have is that evil in men and disobedience in men is present in all men regardless of their background or their culture or their experience.

WWM: How did you get involved in the Church of the Nazarene?

JOSEPH: I was looking for a place to do a pastoral internship in a local church and that's when I met Noel Alvez, who was the pastor of the Paris I Church of the Nazarene at the time, and it was through meeting him that I then started my associate training with the church as I assisted in a pastoral role in the Church of the Nazarene.

WWM: What is your vision for the future of the France District?

JOSEPH: I dream of the unity of our pastors. I dream for the unity of our churches, to really consecrate ourselves to the Great Commission, because it's our reason for being. And I dream that

we are able to mutualize our resources, our strengths, our gifts – spiritual, physical, financial – so that the district may grow and may develop into other phases.

It's incredible to think that it's been more than 35 years that the Church of the Nazarene has been in France. And today there is no one pastor of the France District that is working full time in ministry and is supported full time by the church. Each pastor works outside of ministry in the secular world and is only able then to give of their evenings and weekends to ministry. I dream about being able to change that.

WWM: Do you have another job, too?

JOSEPH: Yes, in fact I am a taxi chauffeur during the week. And it's been fun. I've actually had many opportunities to be able to share the gospel in my taxi in the week.

WWM: How can the Church of the Nazarene around the world pray for you and for the France District most effectively?

JOSEPH: I ask that the global church pray for our pastors and their families. Pray for unity in our district. And just that that reconciliation will take place and that our unity will then come as a result. □

SOFIA: Church expects move-in date of Christmas

continued from page 2

outreach ministries to the neighborhood. There will be sliding walls so they can divide the space into as many as three rooms for things like theological education and English as a Second Language classes. Additionally, there will be a kitchen where the congregation plans to offer a cafe for community events such as moms and tots and music evenings as well as hosting community meals.

The building will be disabled accessible, including a lift.

“Our plan is to build something we can afford right now, and then as the church grows, there will be room on that same plot to build another building or do something else with the land if they need to. There’s room for expansion,” said missionary Jennifer Mann. The land is more than 2,000 square meters.

The design includes solar panels for power, and a green water system that will clean water and reuse it to flush toilets and water the grounds.

“We hope to keep our electric and water bills low in the future for the church to sustain itself,” Mann said.

Local contractors will build the main structure by August. Then a Work & Witness team is expected to come in September to paint, and the Manns are looking for other teams to do tiling, install the kitchen and lay the



Sofia church breaks ground on land for new building.

landscaping.

The congregation has stayed at a size of around 15 to 20 regular attenders for several years due to moving locations repeatedly when rental spaces became suddenly unavailable for different reasons, Doug Mann has explained. That is why they are eager to have a permanent space that they own so they will have a base of operation for

consistent community ministry in the years to come, and to attract people they would otherwise lose every time they relocate.

Jennifer said that they are looking for short- and mid-term volunteers to come and help when it’s time to launch outreach ministries. □

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-- Ephesians 4:32

Do you have pictures of your church ministry in Eurasia that you would like to share with the region? Send them to communications@eurasiaregion.org and we'll consider posting them on our Facebook page.

www.eurasiaregion.org

Nazarene loses home, has peace

Amal*, a brick mason in Nepal, receives requests from his neighbors to repair their houses that fell during the April 25 earthquake. But his own house also collapsed that day, and now he worries about how he will be able to rebuild his own house. He built his house 20 years ago and lives there with his wife and two sons. While the family was all safe during the disaster, most of their possessions were lost under a pile of rubble.

Amal has been part of a Nazarene house church in his city for three years. Before that, life was difficult — he suffered from jaundice and work was not going well. And yet every time he met Christians, he sensed something was different about them. They had peace.

Overwhelmed by the difficulties of everyday life, he was fascinated by the Christians his granddaughter brought to his house one day three years ago. They came to sing and pray over his wife, who was sick. Drawn to them, he asked if he could visit their church.

Now he goes to church regularly. He says that before he became a Christian, he felt the full weight of his daily



difficulties. And while those difficulties are still present, he feels true peace since coming to faith in Jesus. Finally, he is able to live in the peace that he had seen in the others.

The coming months — probably years — will be difficult for Amal and his family as they work to rebuild their lives and their home, brick by brick. But he knows that even in these tragic days, God will give him a peace that passes understanding.

**Name changed for protection and privacy*

-- Reprinted from NCM: <http://blog.ncm.org>

Prayer Requests

- Please pray for the people and government of Nepal, as they rebuild their lives and communities following two large earthquakes. Ask God to give the Church grace, compassion and resourcefulness in assisting the people with relief and long-term redevelopment plans.
- Please pray for the Sofia Church of the Nazarene, as they construct their first church building. Pray for the building to be finished on schedule, for teams to come and help finish it, and for the church's presence in the community going forward.
- Pray for the Holy Spirit's anointing on the France District, as well as their new district superintendent Joseph Toguyera, and his wife Josephine. Ask God to bring unity and reconciliation and a new vision for the future under their leadership.
- 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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