

where WORLDS meet

the monthly newsletter for the church of the nazarene in eurasia

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REFUGEE CRISIS IN CROATIA



More than 120,000 people have entered Croatia on their way to Austria and Germany. Nazarenes are providing support on their way.

By Carol Skinner
Special to Eurasia Region Communications

Since mid-September, when Hungary shut its borders to migrants traveling on foot from the Middle East, more than 120,000 people have entered Croatia on their way to Germany and Austria to seek refugee status, according to the Croatian website <http://www.24sata.hr/>

Nazarene missionaries in Croatia joined hands with numerous nonprofits and other agencies to provide assistance to the travelers as they pass through the country.

In late September, Trino Jara, coordinator of Eurasia Region and Global Holistic Child Development Ministries for Nazarene Compassionate Ministries, and representatives for Heart to Heart International came to Zagreb, the capital of Croatia, to meet with Nazarenes and believers from other denominations at the European Center

for the Study of War and Peace to discuss the current situation and plans for the future, as well as to pray together.

The group included Nazarene missionaries in Croatia Dave and Betsy Scott, missionaries in Hungary Bob Skinner and Carol Skinner, as well as short-term missionaries Chris and Karen Lewis, Ashley Huber, and numerous believers from other organizations and churches.

The Lewises came from Scotland in September to specifically volunteer with ministry to the refugees in Hungary, then moved to Croatia when Hungary closed its borders in mid-September. Having registered as volunteers with the Red Cross, they are now working in what is being called a "tent city" in Opatovac, where the Red Cross is registering refugees and providing them assistance.

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Armenian Nazarenes assist refugees

By Pastor Rita Lao
Special to Eurasia Region Communications

According to the United Nations Refugee Agency, 17,000 Syrians -- primarily of ethnic Armenian background -- have found refuge in Armenia since the start of the Syrian civil war in 2010.

Leaving their belongings, houses, shops, factories, extended family members, they have come to Armenia, hoping to provide a safe environment for their children and families. All of them have to start from zero. Their experiences are very different from the Armenian context. They have challenges and difficulties finding jobs, starting small businesses, paying for rent and daily expenses, and adapting to the new life in all its aspects.

For most of them, the unknown is a paralyzing factor for their

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Related reading

- Read how Nazarenes positioned across the Middle East and Europe have been responding to refugees on the move: <http://tiny.cc/ymdpd4x>
- Nazarenes in the Middle East have been working with Syrian refugees for years. Read how local churches in Lebanon have been serving the refugees in their midst: <http://tiny.cc/gopd4x>
- The Eurasia Region reported on how local churches in Jordan have been helping refugees among them: <http://tiny.cc/9ppd4x>
- Watch this video about how a church in Lebanon made a difference for one refugee child: <http://tiny.cc/hvpd4x>
- Video: A Nazarene school in Lebanon is not only ministering to Lebanese children, but to Syrian refugee kids who were without hope for continuing their education: <http://tiny.cc/hwpd4x>
- Read how God revealed himself miraculously to a refugee, and how a local Nazarene church helped her understand the truth: <http://tiny.cc/84pd4x>
- As an immigrant in a foreign country, Hamadi met a Christian who was not afraid to introduce him to Jesus: <http://tiny.cc/15pd4x>
- Download a guidebook for tips about how to care for refugees in your own community: <http://tiny.cc/86pd4x>

How to respond

Share

Nazarene Compassionate Ministries has developed several resources, including bulletin inserts and a PowerPoint presentation to educate your congregation or Sunday school class on the refugee crisis. Visit <http://www.ncm.org/refugees.html> and then click on “church resources.”

Give

Churches and individuals around the world can support efforts to minister to refugee families through local Nazarene churches by giving to the NCM Refugee and Immigrant Support Fund.

In Germany, please donate through Helping Hands e.V., IBAN: DE56 5075 0094 0000 022394, SWIFT-BIC: HELADEF1GEL.

For other countries, please give through your local church or district, designating your gift to the NCM Refugee and Immigrant Support Fund. □

ARMENIA: Church connects refugees to services, training

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daily life. They don't know what has happened to their houses and shops. Others don't know how long they will have to stay in Armenia, and to deal with unemployment and lack of resources.

The government of the Republic of Armenia has been trying to support many of the families by providing Armenian passports to those with an Armenian background. Nongovernment organizations, independently or in partnership with the United Nations Armenia, have been initiating some short-term relief assistance programs and micro-business loans. However, daily details and challenges that many of those families face are usually unattended.

The Church of the Nazarene in Yerevan, Armenia, has been establishing relationships with Syrian families, and many needs have started to be uncovered in the process. Below is the story of a family and its encounter with the Yerevan church:

A family of four -- the mother and her 12- and 6-year-old sons and 9-year-old daughter -- arrived in Armenia in May 2014. The father and the grandfather had been kidnapped and killed by a militant group, and the mother had been receiving threat calls from the group. Armenia became their only haven.

Arriving to the new land was not easy. The mother has to deal with the growing needs of the three children, for whom life has become a big question mark. They have to deal with loss, anger, fear, frustration and questions that so many times remain unanswered.

After coming to a church service, the family started to develop relationships with the church members. The identified needs are vast, and the church has started to initiate support by tackling different need areas.

Home visits and food items are being provided according to need. The mother is being encouraged to follow cake baking and decorating classes to start a small business. The

church is planning to assist her in equipping her kitchen for that home business.

One of the church members, also a Syrian, is teaching her how to make waxing for goldsmith production, so that she can have some pocket money through this skill.

The young son is attending karate classes in his school for free. The older wanted to attend, too, but because of lack of resources, the mother did not give him her consent. Finding this activity a way for the boy to release and learn to control his anger and negative emotions, the church decided to fund this activity and let the older boy attend the karate classes, as well.

The church has also taken into account the possible need for professional psychological support in the near future.

The church assists individuals and families by networking and referring them to services they need, finding apartments for rent, looking for employment and orienting them in business development issues. The church would like to also provide more services for the families, such as providing school support sessions for the children who have a hard time adapting to the Eastern Armenian dialect and Russian language in the school.

The church is also trying to have funds to support a number of families in attending skills development classes, and starting home businesses. Along the process, the church is looking forward to further enroll the parents and children in the church life, and bring them to a relationship with the church and a growing relationship with Christ, which will be their ultimate anchor that will sustain them in their new life and its challenges and difficulties. □

Going to the Eurasia Region Conference 2015?
Visit eurasiaconference.org for speakers,
workshops and more.



Eurasia Regional Conference 2015 from Eurasia Media



WE ARE DEBTORS
to every man
TO GIVE HIM THE GOSPEL
in the same measure
IN WHICH WE HAVE
RECEIVED IT.

Phineas F. Bresee

22 November



THANK OFFERING FOR THE WORLD EVANGELISM FUND

“Developing the Future” is the theme of the 2015 Thanksgiving, or Thank, Offering. As we remember the Lord’s unfailing love, the psalmist calls on us to “sacrifice thank offerings and tell of his works with songs of joy” (Psalm 107:22). We join you in prayer and preparation for this annual emphasis in the Church of the Nazarene. Through this offering given to the World Evangelism Fund, we do more together than we ever could alone. God receives our humble gifts and uses our generosity to accomplish amazing things — in language schools, church plants, mission hospitals, and many other ministries.

Every time we choose to serve God by giving back, we become a part of God’s future — a future that spreads into eternity as people around the world come to a saving knowledge of Christ. The 2015 offering celebrates how our gifts

help spread the gospel, both now and in the future.

In Psalm 22, the writer praises God and calls on all people to worship the Lord. He declares that the greatness of God will be obvious because of what God will do. Through the World Evangelism Fund, the Church of the Nazarene is able to share His greatness and goodness with people everywhere.

Praise God for how He has used our gifts in the last year:

- 702 missionaries and 310 missionary kids were deployed from 35 world areas.
- 378 people joined the Church of the Nazarene every day. That is 16 people per hour!
- 143,870 students were enrolled in Nazarene preschool, primary, and secondary schools.

Let’s reflect on the many ways in which God has blessed us, and imagine what God will do through our generation and those that follow as we continue to serve Him.

The offering will be received on 11 October 2015 in Canada and 22 November 2015 globally. (Please note that not all areas will receive the offering on these dates, depending on the calendar of each field or district.)

Resources will be available at nazarene.org/generosity in English, Spanish, Portuguese, French, and Korean. If you have questions, contact Stewardship Ministries at stewardship@nazarene.org.

Yours in Christ,

The Board of General Superintendents

CROATIA: Nazarenes distribute Arabic care cards

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Their activities have ranged from picking up trash, distributing tents, blankets and sleeping bags, serving soup and tea, as well as connecting with the refugees to answer their questions and calm their fears.

The Scotts and Huber are also working in Opatovac, as well as Bapska.

“These have been amazing opportunities to help people directly, because at the time no special approval

or registration was needed to be with the refugees in these places,” wrote Carol Skinner. “This has afforded many opportunities to talk with the refugees, answer questions, or at least calm their fears of the next step.

Betsy wrote: “As a result of the meeting, Chris took the initiative to reach out to a pastor in Syria to ask about translating a text from English to Arabic. So, we made cards to give to people

with beautiful, soothing, caring words of encouragement — just a sweet note to let them know we care about what they’re going through and, most importantly, stating that if they need prayer, to send an email to the address listed. We printed and laminated them so as to protect them from the weather. We hope this ministry of encouragement helps people feel cared for and that they would feel the peace of Jesus on their journey.” □

Ukraine youth team goes on mission in Moldova



By Zee Gimon with Andrei Manakov
Eurasia Region Communications

What is a good first step in sharing the Gospel with someone? Getting to know that person and establishing a relationship with them. This principle was chosen as the main one during the youth camp that took place in Chisinau, Moldova.

“It was quite an interesting experience,” said Andrei Manakov, one of the team leaders from Ukraine. “On one hand, we were tired after the all-Ukrainian summer youth camp, but at the same time we were excited about the opportunity to serve teenagers at the KENT youth camp.” KENT stands for “Who If Not You?” (“Кто Если Не Ты” in Russian)

Altogether, there were 11 leaders from Ukraine, ranging in age from 17 to 30, who came to help, as well as four people from the U.S.

There were 35 non-Christian teens at the camp. Only three of them visited the church before and heard about Jesus and salvation. For everyone else, it was something new and not quite understandable. This caused the team to make decisions on things that are usually standard; for example, what songs to sing if none of the teens knew the worship songs?

Most of the teens came from single-parent families -- someone did not have a father, someone did not have a mother. Thus, it was difficult for them to understand: “How can it be true that God loves me, even if my parents left me?”

The first several days, it was very difficult to earn teenagers’ trust. The team did not try to force them to read the Bible or tell them something special. The main goal was to show the Christian way of life by setting a personal example.

“We allowed God to work with their hearts and it was wonderful to see how the ice began to melt,” said Manakov. “It was especially wonderful when we had small groups and could share our own testimonies with our kids and tell about our very own journey to God and with God, how our lives have changed when we accepted Christ.”

And God worked miracles. Twenty out of 35 answered the altar call, asked Jesus to be their Savior, and started coming to the Church of the Nazarene in Chisinau, Moldova, where Iryna and Sergey Talalay are serving as missionaries. The KENT Club meetings now gather 15 to 20 people each week. Considering that these were the teens who did not even want to hear about God at the beginning of the camp, this is a victory.

“Right now, we really need a leader for that particular ministry, because we have so many ideas for this club and one day a week is not enough. And when it comes to teenagers, we can’t just rely on Sunday services to maintain a meaningful relationship with them,” said Iryna Talalay.

The KENT Camp was only the beginning of a great adventure and



Manakov shared the team’s plans for the future: “We are now working on gathering financial support for another trip to Moldova to spend more quality time with the teens there. It is wonderful to see God at work so vividly.”

“I was glad that God gave me this opportunity to go to Moldova and serve there. This has been my first mission trip outside of Ukraine and I was happy I could share the Gospel with kids,” said Anna, one of the group members. “Besides, God has worked in me through this camp because I have learned to trust God and rely on Him more in my daily life.”

Please join the Ukrainian and Moldovan teams in praying for the teenagers who began their faith journey and for a leader for the KENT Club ministry who would take this initiative to the next level. □

Bangladesh districts unite for mission conference



One hundred and thirty people gathered in Bangladesh, representing all three of the country's districts, to celebrate missions and to learn more about how to be involved.



In early September, the three districts of Bangladesh united for a mission conference, with the objectives of having inter-district fellowship, sharing information and experiences between districts, developing good relationships, encouraging participants to be active in the ministry of Nazarene Missions International (NMI), and to learn more about God's mission to the world. It was the first such conference since 2010, when Bangladesh divided from one district into three districts due to rapid church growth. There were 130 in attendance.

The field strategy coordinator for South Asia presented about the Church of the Nazarene denomination's values, faith and how Nazarenes can be involved in mission work. Other topics during the conference included helping kids to be mission minded, balancing ministry, family and career, and teaching youth to change the world.

There were times of worship and prayer. Several shared their personal testimonies.

"It was an effective conference and I believe God touched people's hearts for mission work, for unreached people," said Silvia, the NMI president of the Northwest District. The conference encouraged participants to be more faithful to the Lord and use their life for God's glory." □

Learn more about NMI at www.eurasiaregion.org/nmi





BACK TO SCHOOL IN LEBANON



The Nazarene Evangelical School in Lebanon is one of several Nazarene schools in the Middle East. The 200+ students returned to classes at the end of September. Among them are a number of Syrian refugee students on scholarship through Nazarene Compassionate Ministries.

The schools combine children from different faiths or denominations, but they all attend chapel, study the Bible and learn about Jesus. The schools focus on teaching children to overcome differences and to love one another. Watch a video about life at the school in Lebanon: <https://vimeo.com/85333554>



M+POWER volunteer goes to Nepal

Christian Bangert (center) is spending 3 1/2 months in Nepal, supporting local leaders in earthquake aftermath ministry.

By Gina Grate Pottenger
Eurasia Region Communications



At the beginning of September Christian Bangert, of Gelnhausen, Germany, left for a 3 1/2 month assignment as an M+Power volunteer, working with the Nazarene church in Nepal.

He is filling a support role for the Nepal leadership as they work on plans for helping people to rebuild after the April 2015 earthquake, as well as to establish 10 child-focused community development centers for long-term ministry in carefully selected communities.

M+Power is a Eurasia Region initiative to match up willing volunteers with short and long-term service opportunities throughout the region.

Bangert is among the first of three people from the region to serve with M+Power. A chemical engineer, Bangert has participated in a number of short-term mission teams from Germany, working in South Asia and Eastern Europe; most of his previous trips lasted a week or two. So, this is the longest ministry trip he has done, and it's also the longest time he has spent outside his native Germany.

Prior to leaving for Nepal, Bangert attended the Eurasia Mission Orientation (EMO) in Büsingen, Germany, in May, one of two held in the region this year to prepare potential volunteers for cross-cultural ministry.

"Wherever I go with Work & Witness teams, I have this feeling in my heart that this is what I'm passionate about. Now I'm done with my studies. [I thought] if it's God's plan, I'll take the first step, and I did this, and everything just fell into place and worked fine. I really think that God was calling me because I could also see that He's working," he said in a video interview from the Nazarene district center in Kathmandu.

One sign for Bangert was that his company allowed him to take the 3 1/2 months off work for the trip.

Since being in Nepal, Bangert has been assisting the local Nepal team with visiting earthquake-hit communities, and in preparing a project proposal which they have submitted to Nazarene Compassionate Ministries. The proposal includes goals to build 50 new, earthquake-proof houses and to do 70 partial constructions. They also want to establish 10 child-focused community development centers in three to four districts where there is currently no Nazarene or church presence.

While Bangert has traveled widely on mission trips before, it is quite different to go without a team, and be gone longer

than a week or so, he said.

"In a team you work much more in a shorter time and it's more stressful and you don't get the chance to have deep relations with people," he said. "Here you have time to build relations and get a deeper feeling and understanding for the culture."

One of his favorite memories during his time in Nepal so far was when he went with the local Nazarenes to a village in the mountains. When they arrived, many of the people were out in the street because of a festival that was under way.

"I started to connect to the children and after 5 to 10 minutes I was chasing them all through the town and we ran and played and had so much fun. It was a wonderful time."

Language and culture barriers have not prevented Bangert from having meaningful interactions with the local people.

"I don't understand their language, but still they receive you with an open heart. They're friendly and kind. That was something very special to me."

Bangert had advice for others in Eurasia who may be considering serving as volunteers cross-culturally somewhere else in the region: "If you have that feeling on your mind and your heart, then pray about it. But not just pray about it -- try and see if God opens the doors, because if we just sit and just pray and don't try, nobody will come knocking on your door, most probably." □

If you would like to explore volunteerism on the Eurasia Region, visit www.eurasiaregion.org/volunteers





M+POWER
EURASIA



IS GOD CALLING YOU?

Become a missionary in the Eurasia Region!

Find out more and apply now.

To explore your call or train for missionary assignment,
visit the website.

www.eurasiaregion.org/volunteers

*“The King will reply,
‘Truly I tell you,
whatever you did for
one of the least of
these brothers and
sisters of mine, you
did for me.’”
- Matthew 25:40*

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

Tips for helping refugees

As a tidal wave of people moving from the Middle East engulfs Europe, many Nazarenes are asking how they and their local churches can practice hospitality by effectively ministering to the complex needs of these relocating people.

Nazarene Compassionate Ministries (NCM) has provided a booklet with a wide range of ideas for how local churches can organize to meet numerous practical needs of immigrants, from low-investment to medium- and high-investment involvement.

Some tips include giving immigrants an orientation tour of the new city where they find themselves; offering language classes; or providing safe spaces for displaced people to visit during daytime hours.

The booklet also describes ways to be culturally sensitive to the religious and gender differences of people coming from the Middle East, as well as the particular needs of those fleeing war zones and traumatic experiences.

The booklet urges churches to involve

a refugee or asylum seeker from the community to identify needs and plan the church's response.

To access this booklet, visit <http://www.eurasiaregion.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/09/Responding-to-Refugee-Crisis-version-4.9.15.docx>

Feel free to circulate it within your local churches and districts.

To give to the work of NCM and local churches who are serving Middle East refugees across the Eurasia Region, visit <http://www.ncm.org/refugees.html>. □



Prayer Requests

- Please pray for the millions of people displaced by war and violence in the Middle East. Ask God to bring peace to these areas, and safety to the people. Pray for the Church around the world as it seeks the most effective ways to show God's love to these people.
- Please pray for God to be very present among the teachers, staff and students at the Nazarene schools in the Middle East. Ask God to help the students to learn well, to love one another and Jesus, and to carry the lessons they are learning into their families and communities.
- Pray for Christian Bangert and the other M+Power volunteers as they serve in new cultures. Ask God to provide all they need to be effective and to learn and grow. Also, ask God to send more volunteers into the harvest.
- Pray for the Nazarenes in Bangladesh, to implement what they learned and heard from God at the NMI convention in early September.
- 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

Gina Pottenger, Comm. Coordinator
gpottenger@eurasiaregion.org
Randolf Wolst, Website Designer
rwolst@eurasiaregion.org
Arthur Snijders, Regional Director
awsnijders@eurasiaregion.org

facebook

vimeo

twitter



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Eurasia Regional Office • Postfach 1217 • 8207 Schaffhausen, Switzerland
Phone (+49) 7734 93050 • Fax (+49) 7734 930550 • E-mail whereworldsmeet@eurasiaregion.org