

# where WORLDS meet

the monthly newsletter for the church of the nazarene in eurasia

YEAR 13, ISSUE 6 • JULY 2016

## Right place, Right time

Kosovar-U.S. mission team arrives in time to save project from disaster



Photos courtesy the Manns

The Church of the Nazarene in Kosova was part of a joint Work & Witness project with a Massachusetts church (USA) to help with the Sofia Church of the Nazarene's new ministry center. When the team arrived, they immediately found something wrong at the work site. One day later would have been too late.

By Gina Grate Pottenger  
Eurasia Region Communications

The project planned for the Work & Witness teams wasn't ready.

The Sofia Ministry Center, in Bulgaria, had suffered repeated delays in construction. As the dates loomed for the arrival of the combined team of Nazarenes from the church in Kosova and a church in Massachusetts, U.S., the groups were urged to postpone their trip. Everyone thought there would be nothing for them to do.

Everyone was wrong.

Adthe, a civil engineer on the Kosovar team, walked up to the building site the first day and looked over what the contracted builders had done so far. He said, "They're doing it wrong."

A cursory glance told him the pillars were too high for the planned roof, which was going to be poured the next day. He obtained the blue prints, which confirmed his suspicion.

The project engineer was brought in and when she examined the blue prints, comparing them to the building in front of her, she agreed with Adthe. The construction was halted.

The following day, Adthe, the local building engineer and the construction crew went back to re-measure the pillars. They discovered that, in fact, the pillars weren't too high – the beginnings of the roof had been built too low.

"Because it was going to be a public

see "SOFIA" • page 3

## GOING BEYOND THE CHURCH

Retired pastor offers services in pub

By Bruce Lloyd  
British Isles South District

The Sheffield Nazarene Church is in the Heeley suburb, about one mile (1.5 kilometers) from the Sheffield city centre, in England. It was established 35 years ago and has always been at the heart of the local community, with activities for all ages.

I recently retired as the church's pastor, and I, along with others, have felt for some time a desire to start a church that's different—for people who don't attend "normal church," especially those who have attended the midweek activities of the church down through the years, but for whatever reason chose not to join in Sunday morning worship services.

Just after I retired, the Waggon & Horses public house, which is about 100 metres from the church, had a new manager.

The Waggon and Horses pub has had a long reputation as a place of violence and petty crime, but when I went to see the new manager, I discovered that, like myself, she is a former probation officer and keen to develop the pub as more of a community resource. She also had a church upbringing and she willingly agreed to let me start Heeley Pub Church in the smaller function room, especially after I and a church friend re-decorated it for her.

Initially, a trial run of monthly

see "PUB" • page 5

*'The next step will not be what I expect.'*

## Healed from illness, young man shares faith

By Gina Grate Pottenger

When \*Sergey was 12 years old, he became so ill that his body was paralyzed. A missionary doctor told his family that even in the West, there is no cure for the problem afflicting his brain.

"I could talk, I could see and watch everything, but I couldn't move," he said. "They thought maybe that illness couldn't be healed. Our doctors didn't know what to do."

It wasn't the first time that modern medicine had failed him. When he was 6, he suffered from asthma. Doctors in his city treated him, but the medicines they tried did not work. Once he had such a bad asthma attack that he stopped breathing for more than 15 minutes before God answered the prayers of his mother and relatives to save his life, and he took his next breath.

His grandmother and mother had raised him in the church, even though his father and their extended family came from the dominant religion of their culture in Central Asia. So, Sergey knew the Lord from an early age. As the days passed in the hospital, he prayed. Yet he did so not knowing if he would ever be free from a bed.

After about a month, God again answered the prayers of believers and Sergey was miraculously healed.

His faith continued to grow as he grew. While still in the 5th grade, Sergey was surrounded by kids from

the dominant faith. They believed that to follow Jesus was to betray the culture and traditions of their families and country. Even to hold a Bible was considered a great sin.

Some of Sergey's friends were enthusiastic about literature and poetry and they dreamed of being writers. So he would send them verses from the Bible, which they liked very much. When they asked him where these beautiful words came from, he told them it was the Bible.

**"I felt that moment that God wanted to protect me, and He has some plan for my life."**

**-- Sergey**

At first, his friends were angry, feeling he had tricked them. They began studying the Bible so they could argue with him and prove his faith in Jesus was based on a lie. Eventually they seemed to know the Bible far better than their own scriptures, he says.

Despite his childhood illnesses, Sergey became a strong, athletic young man, and began alpine climbing in his mountainous country. One day, as he and some friends were scaling

a nearly vertical mountain face, the wind suddenly pulled at his body and, combined with the weight of his backpack, began to peel him away from the rock. He was helpless as he felt his body falling back from the mountain.

Then he felt strong hands push him toward the mountain face until he could get a new grip on the rocks. He turned to thank his friend for saving his life, but when he looked over his shoulder, no one was there. He looked up and saw that his friend was ahead of him on the mountain.

"At that moment I felt that was really a miracle. And I felt that moment that God wanted to protect me and He has some plan for my life."

Now a 20-year-old university student, Sergey continues to share his faith with his new classmates. Some of them saw him reading the Bible on his phone.

"And now all of them, they are interested in my faith, and they are asking about that and tomorrow one of them will come [to our meeting]." Others have also visited to see what his faith is about.

One of his friends, an atheist, asked if they could go to the mountains together. When they arrived, Sergey asked why they had come. His friend said he wanted to pray.

"And after that, at least 10 times we went to the mountains and prayed there.



# SOPIA: 'God was using us there in great ways'

continued from page 1



building, the ceiling has to be a certain height," said Gil Thibault, who helps to lead ministry in Kosova. "If they had continued with the project as it was, they would have built the ceiling too low and when they would have brought in the inspectors at the end to pass inspection, it wouldn't have been possible to have a church there because the ceilings would not have been up to code."

Missionary Jennifer Mann, serving in Sofia with her husband Doug, and helping oversee the Sofia Ministry Center project, said, "If they had not seen that, it would have been a complete and utter disaster."

The Sofia Ministry Center has been a dream of the local Sofia Church of the Nazarene for years. The congregation has been forced to move multiple times because they haven't had their own building. They'd been saving money and dreamed of not only having a church building for worship and discipleship, but a multi-level center where they could serve their community.

While the setback on the construction meant the mission team didn't do much with the actual building, bringing an engineer who could save the project was enough.

## A cross-cultural partnership

The presence of the Kosovar team in Sofia was the result of a partnership between the Church of the Nazarene in Kosova, and the Wollaston Church of the Nazarene, Massachusetts. The partnership is one of mutual love and support, in which the two churches pray for one another, meet over Skype once a month, and work on ministry projects together, such as assembling crisis care kits for Nazarene Compassionate

Ministries.

Kosova, which has been rebuilding since a devastating civil war in the 1990s, is still wracked with 30 percent unemployment (60 percent for youth), according to the U.S. State Department. Many people eat just one meal a day. The nation is often on the receiving end of international aid. That has shaped not only the national psyche, but the church mindset, Thibault said.

However, the Nazarenes in Kosova are starting to see themselves differently – as people called by God, no matter their resources, to serve others and partner with Him in His mission to their communities and the world.

So the Kosova church and the Wollaston church dreamed of doing something even more significant together – which birthed the plan for a joint mission trip.

Financially it was not feasible for the Kosova church to raise all the funds needed to go on an international mission trip, especially when people in Kosova don't get vacation from their jobs, or paid when they're away. But they managed to raise the fees for their visas, and planned to drive to Bulgaria. The Wollaston church financed the rest of their travel expenses.

## We can serve, too

"This is the first time we've been able to go and minister in a different context," said Imir Gashi, from the Kosova church. "That was very special for all of our people. We're used to being on the receiving end, and having missionaries come over and minister to us. We felt like, OK, we've come to a point we're able to go and bless others and minister to others. That was a critical point for the

church in general."

It's a realization Sarah Thibault said they've been working to help the church see: "They have gifts and skills, and even if they don't have money, there are still ways they can be givers."

One young man from the Kosova team actually removed the clothes he was wearing and gave them to a Bulgarian man who was living on the street. He later said that he had never comprehended why so many people came from other countries to help in Kosova, using their own resources and time. But at the end of the trip, the young man said he now understood the joy of giving, and how it eclipsed the pleasure of receiving.

According to Gashi, the trip helped to further instill a missional mentality in the Kosovar congregation. And also cemented their relationship with the Wollaston Nazarenes.

"This partnership with Wollaston, it really materialized during that mission trip," Gashi said. "Just the connections we made with them, and to be able to leave our places and both of us go in Bulgaria and minister there. We were really blessed." □

## What is a "Partnership"?

A partnership is defined as a relationship between two or more organizations aimed at achieving specified Kingdom goals through mutual responsibility and cooperation.

Read more: <http://tiny.cc/5d10cy>

# 'I did not hold back': A testimony



Photo courtesy Silvia

By Silvia  
NMI coordinator in Bangladesh

*Mr. Jagat\*, who attends a Nazarene church in Bangladesh, gives his testimony.*

This Bible verse influenced me to become a good Christian: "Jesus replied, 'No one who puts a hand to the plow and looks back is fit for service in the kingdom of God.'" Luke 9:62

I come from a family that worships many gods. My father and forefathers

were followers of [the dominant] religion. I was not very happy with the [ritual] prayer. I felt like we are praying to gods who cannot respond. For this reason, I was seeking a true God whom I could worship.

One day I was riding on a bicycle and met with some Nazarene friends. I asked, "Where are you going?" They replied, "We have a baptism service, we are going there." I was interested to see the baptism service. So I went there with my wife and child. When I saw the baptism, a strange feeling was brewing inside me. I don't know why, but I liked that service and their prayer. I told my wife that I want to be a Christian. My wife did not agree at that time. After that we came back home. I prayed to God to change my wife's mind.

Then I talked with our Nazarene brothers and showed my interest in being baptized. They gave a schedule for baptism when some other brothers and sisters were scheduled to be baptized.

I went that day and found that the other brothers and sisters who were

supposed to be baptized did not turn up. I did not hold back. Only myself was baptized that day, and the others were baptized six months later.

A few days after my baptism, one of my Nazarene brothers told me to enroll in the SANBC (South Asia Nazarene Bible College) course. It was the time for harvesting. As I am poor, and harvesting is the only way that I earn income, it was very necessary for me to work the land. Then I remembered the Bible verse, "No one who puts a hand to the plow and looks back is fit for service in the kingdom of God." I forgot all my basic needs and determined to enroll at SANBC. I went there and attended the courses.

Since then, I am living a faithful Christian life. God has used me to cure many sick people through prayer. Though I have faced many problems, I did not hold back. And as long as I will live, I will be working for the kingdom of God. □

*\*Name changed and location omitted for security*

## Youth in India participate in leadership training

By Vijay Bhalerao  
NYI coordinator, India Field

It is our privilege to be part of Nazarene Youth International – India (NYI). It was a joy and wonderful experience to attend the NYI Council and Youth Leaders training held at Kolkata. God really blessed us through the different devotional messages and the training sessions held by Rev. Amitava Chatterjee (NYI India Field advisor), Rev. Gary Hartke (Global NYI director) and Diego Lopez (NYI Regional director).

We learned that God has blessed us with our youthfulness and it is important for us to know God, allow Him to fulfill His eternal plans in us. We feel so proud to be a part of a big Nazarene family through NYI.

Many of us had a narrow understanding of NYI before attending the sessions. But we thank God for letting us know the different ministries we can do in the India field.

We also learned about ourselves: Who am I? Who are we? What is my own testimony and what is my friend's

testimony? Through answering these questions we found encouragement: how wonderfully God has saved our own brothers and sisters and chosen them for His youth ministries.

Young age is a blessing, and it brings many responsibilities. We need to be careful to make good decisions for our life while we are still in our youth. We were asked to draw our "life journey," and many of us were engaged with paper and coloured pencils to draw it. Many of us had never thought before how wonderfully God has led us step by step so far.



Photo courtesy Vijay Bhalerao

We also learned in the sociology training session about the global culture, thinking, context, methodologies, communication ideas and skills, needs of people, educational approach, and relational things that are changing in their own contexts. Thus God has chosen us to relate to the people and youth, to learn their context, thinking and their needs.

Over all, the youth leader training was a great blessing to all of us. We were moved by the Spirit of God to go to our respective districts and churches and minister to the young people. □



# Bangladesh leaders unite in prayer gathering

By Silvia  
District NMI coordinator, Bangladesh

Nazarene Missions International (NMI) Northwest District of Bangladesh recently organized a prayer fellowship. There were 60 participants from 38 churches within five areas who attended the event, including representatives of Sunday School and Discipleship Ministries, Nazarene Youth International, area conveners and local church pastors.

The main theme of the event was: "And pray in the spirit on all occasions with all kinds of prayers and requests. With this in mind, be alert and always keep on praying for all the Lord's people." – Ephesians 6:18

The main objectives of the event were:

1. To encourage the local leaders/churches
2. To pray for the local churches
3. To pray for the transition period of the Church of the Nazarene Bangladesh

People were very encouraged through the prayer time. Some said that confusion and worries left them through the experience of praying together. Participants were moved emotionally as



they prayed for our churches.

Some participants shared their testimonies, which encouraged other participants. The participants promised to help the local churches in their area to promote the mission of God. Local leadership is developing through this

kind of event as well.

Local NMI women leaders promised to establish a church, so, women are participating directly in God's mission.

The church is facing very challenging times in Bangladesh; please pray for them. □

## PUB: 'We need to look at bigger picture of our call'

*continued from page 1*

services was set up for March, April and May, each one starting at 4 p.m. on Sundays and lasting about 45 minutes, followed by refreshments.

God's timing is amazing. I never had time to do this sort of thing when I was a full-time pastor, but now that I have the time, God has opened up the opportunity.

The Pub Church is about faith, hope and love in a very relaxed and informal setting where people don't have to worry about what to wear or where to sit. The style/content of the services is aimed at non-church people and includes secular and spiritual music, chat, interviews, stories, guest singers, video clips, prayer and humour in a "magazine" format with no item lasting longer than five minutes.

The first two services saw 20 to 25 in attendance. Most of these were existing church people who came to see what a pub church would be like before

they invite their non-church family and friends. The small number of non-church people who have already come to the initial services have shown particular interest in the prayer spot, asking for prayers for their families.

One lady who doesn't attend "normal" church said that she really liked the Heeley Pub Church because the minister was "not up there looking down on us but down there walking among us." She also said she was going to invite three friends to the next one.

Those attending asked if we could make it a permanent thing. After the three-month experiment, the Pub Church is still going.

The manager has been serving afternoon tea with cream cakes after the service, which is very popular with virtually all of those attending.

There are difficult issues to face, such

as doing church in a place that serves alcohol. Jesus has called us to go into the world with His life-transforming gospel of forgiveness for sins -- resulting in abundant life before the grave and eternal life beyond it.

We believe that we need to look at the bigger picture of our call to make new disciples by finding new ways of connecting and communicating with those outside the church.

I believe we have been challenged by God to make this first step of faith, leaning very much on His strength, compassion and wisdom. We will never know where God will lead us unless and until we make that first step of faith - which is always scary, but also exciting!

We have made that first step. □





# Lost

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# Eurasia Communications seeking media professionals

## Join our team!

Did you know that Eurasia Region has a website, a video channel, a monthly newsletter, breaking news Snapshots, social media channels, and that we also try to help resource Nazarenes across Eurasia, as well as globally, with the media they need to tell God's story in their local churches and cultural contexts?

Did you also know that our team is made up of just a handful of people, scattered across Eurasia?

Do you have skills and experience in:

- journalism
- graphic design
- social media management
- film and video production
- editing
- website design and development
- translation
- radio or Internet broadcasting or podcasting?

If you're wondering how you can put your gifts to use for God's kingdom, consider volunteering with the Eurasia

Region Church of the Nazarene communications team.

We are looking for people to join our network, based in your home country, plugging into our work around your regular activities such as job or school. We also need full-time volunteers who can serve for one to two years through M+Power.

To learn more about how to join our regional team network, email Gina at

*Are you creative?*  
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Watch the above video here: <https://vimeo.com/163674750>. □

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*“Do not judge, and you will not be judged. Do not condemn, and you will not be condemned. Forgive, and you will be forgiven.”*  
**Luke 6:37 (NIV)**

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

Send us your story ideas, too!

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## SERGEY: Leads youth, preaches

*continued from page 2*

He's not going to church now and I couldn't say that he's a believer now. But he wants to pray, he wants to know more about God."

Corruption is widespread throughout all levels of society in his country, including in higher education. Sergey said that many professors tell their students that they will fail if the students don't pay them bribes. Sergey has refused, and yet he continues to receive the highest marks in his classes.

Sergey began leading a house group at the age of 17, and the believers began calling him pastor. He has become the leader of his youth group and regularly preaches.

Many spiritual leaders throughout his life have told him that in his future, "I will not have land under my feet because I will go to other lands and preach." He doesn't know what this means, but what he does know is "the next step will not be what I expect." □

*\*Name changed and location omitted for security reasons.*

## Share global Nazarene video news

The Asia-Pacific Region is releasing a series of 5-minute Nazarene news roundup videos that share current stories of churches involved in their communities around the world.

World Mission Communications News videos are a great resource for sharing with your church. In under 5 minutes, each video reports on what Nazarenes are

doing globally, told with pictures and video footage. Show these videos during mission reports at church, or post to your church or personal Facebook pages or church website.

Check out the July edition and find links to other recent video reports: <http://tiny.cc/s9z2cy> □

## Prayer Requests

- Please pray for the Nazarenes in Kosova, as they continue to grow in their understanding of being a "sending church" and discover new ways to partner with God in His mission to the people in Kosova and beyond. Please also pray for God's hand to be on the continued construction of the Sofia Ministry Center in Bulgaria.
- Please pray for Sergey and the believers in Central Asia, as they seek discernment, strength and courage to share their faith with others, and to grow more deeply in their love for Jesus.
- Pray for the church in Bangladesh as they continue to seek God's blessing and leading, and as they work toward unity.
- Pray for Pastor Bruce Lloyd and the Pub Church meeting in Heeley, England. Ask God to work through this innovative approach to meeting people where they are, and bringing the gospel to them, rather than waiting for them to come into a traditional church building. Pray for God to change lives and bring transformation to the community.

*Where Worlds Meet is the monthly newsletter for the Eurasia Region of the Church of the Nazarene. To subscribe, e-mail [communications@eurasiaregion.org](mailto:communications@eurasiaregion.org) or visit [www.eurasiaregion.org](http://www.eurasiaregion.org).*

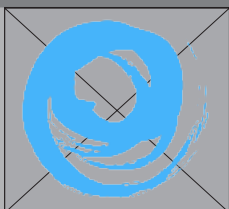
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