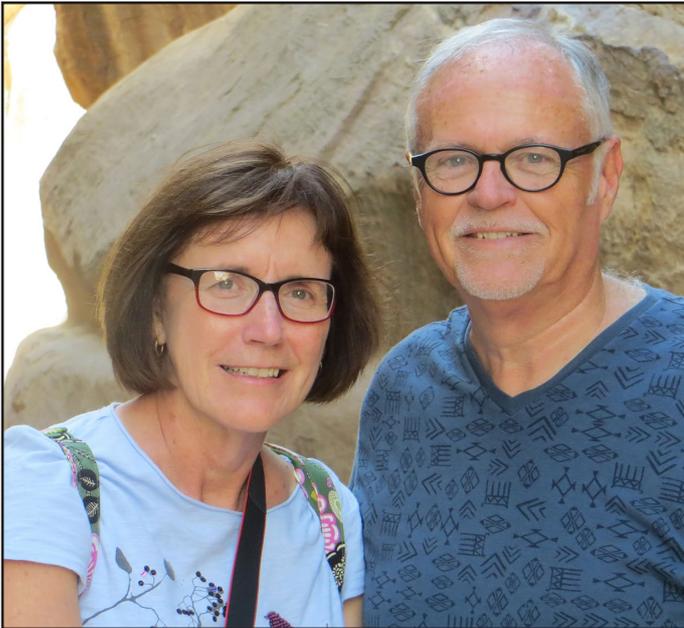


where WORLDS meet

the monthly newsletter for the church of the nazarene in eurasia

YEAR 12, ISSUE 2 • FEBRUARY 2015

TRANSITIONS SAYING GOODBYE



Lindell and Kay Browning served the Eastern Mediterranean Field for 35 years.

By Gina Grate Pottenger
Eurasia Region Communications

The Eurasia Region is saying goodbye to three of its field strategy coordinators (FSCs).

In the January edition of *Where Worlds Meet* we were introduced to two of the new field strategy coordinators (FSC): Khalil Halaseh, of Eastern Mediterranean Field, and Sukamal Biswas, of the South Asia Field.

Now we look back on decades of service by Hermann Gschwandtner, FSC for South Asia, who announced his retirement scheduled for April 2015; and Lindell Browning, FSC for the Eastern Mediterranean Field, who is currently on a year-long home assignment prior to retiring at the end of the year.

In December, Kyle Himmelwright, FSC for the Western Mediterranean Field, announced plans to return to the US to take on pastoral ministry this month. □



Hermann Gschwandtner has served several fields in the Eurasia Region over his 25-plus years.

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ALABASTER GIVING MONTH BRINGS OPPORTUNITY

Eurasia Region Communications

Traditionally, churches around the world receive an offering for the Church of the Nazarene denomination's Alabaster fund. The Alabaster fund has raised more than \$100 million since 1949, which is used to purchase land, construct churches, medical facilities, schools and homes for missionaries and national workers.

If your church would like to have an Alabaster Offering, there are promotional resources in English available on the NMI global web site (the video is in three languages): <http://nmi.nazarene.org/10079/story.html> and there are promotional ideas as well: <http://nmi.nazarene.org/10082/story.html>

If your church or other property or building were made possible through Alabaster, send us a note so we can work with you on a story: communications@eurasiaregion.org. □

Brownings retire from 35 years of leadership

By Gina Grate Pottenger
Eurasia Region Communications

Editor's note: Last month we met Khalil Halaseh, who is stepping into the role of field strategy coordinator (FSC) for the Eastern Mediterranean Field, taking over for long-time leader Lindell Browning. Now we say goodbye to Lindell and Kay, as they plan their retirement at the end of this year.

A field strategy coordinator provides leadership, strategic vision and direction to the districts and local churches that are located within a field. The Eurasia Region has seven fields.



Lindell and Kay Browning served the Eastern Mediterranean Field for 35 years, helping to identify and equip national people to take over across all levels of leadership in the field.

Lindell and Kay Browning are nearing retirement after serving the Eurasia Region for more than 35 years. For 22 years Lindell has led the Eastern Mediterranean Field as field strategy coordinator. This year he is turning over that role to Khalil Halaseh, a pastor in Jordan (read Halaseh's profile in the January edition of *Where Worlds Meet*).

The Eastern Mediterranean Field today is made up of six countries: Cyprus, Egypt, Jordan, Israel, Lebanon and Syria and two CAA. There are 30 organized churches and a membership of more than 2,000 people (based on statistics from 2012).

Recently Lindell and Kay reflected on their years of service on the field.

After studying Arabic for two years in Jordan, they began their work by pastoring a church in Nazareth for six years. From the very beginning, their intent was to raise up national leaders who could take over ministry at the local, district and field levels.

"We have 33 pastors, now," Lindell said. "We don't have any churches pastored by non-Arabs now. That was significant because that was our intention when we went – to identify indigenous leaders."

In 1985, while they were pastoring, the Nazarene church across the field experienced a revival, and out of that movement came today's pastors and district superintendent in Israel. As a result, the field relaunched

the Eastern Mediterranean Bible College, where many of them trained for ministry. The college, which had first opened in the 1950s, had ceased operations in 1960s due to regional conflict.

The Intifadah in Israel between 1988 and 1994 also prompted the church to become involved in ministry in the West Bank through Nazarene Compassionate Ministries.

"Our leadership are determined to stay and I think we're going to see some great things."

-- Lindell Browning

Another significant moment came when the Brownings were first able to re-establish contact with the leader of the church in Lebanon, Abdo Khanashat. The Lebanese churches and a primary school had been cut off from the rest of the field and the region from 1975 to 1991 due to Lebanon's civil war.

"Our first trip back to Beirut, meeting our leaders there, Abdo wept and said 'We've been so cut off from our church; we're so glad you came back and reconnected us with our church,'" Lindell recalled.

Through the reconnection the region

was able to send support to the churches and the school, which helped them boost and expand their ministry to their communities, even in the midst of turmoil.

A renewed commitment to the field for the family came during the First Gulf War in 1991. They had been serving in the Middle East for 10 years.

"That was a very stressful time and we were told we would have to leave if it got bad," Kay said. "Our kids were in school so it was difficult to think about disrupting their lives. We were torn between doing what we were told to do and wanting as a parent to keep our kids safe and also be sensitive to how traumatic this was. When we finally decided to go to Cyprus, we stayed there six weeks."

While they were in Cyprus they realized how much they longed to go back and felt a fresh sense of commitment to the field. Thankfully, they were able to return.

Lindell and Kay love the beauty and diversity across the Eastern Mediterranean Field, and are grateful that all four of their children, who are now adults, have a love for the Middle East and consider it their home.

"I think of a rich culture, a diverse culture, a fun-loving culture," Kay said. "All the cultures

Hermann Gschwandtner looks back on service

By Gina Grate Pottenger
Eurasia Region Communications

Editor's note: As Hermann Gschwandtner retires from decades of ministry in the Church of the Nazarene, stepping out of his most recent role of field strategy coordinator for the South Asia Field, he turns over leadership to Sukamal Biswas, with whom he has worked closely in developing the church in Bangladesh for the past 20 years. This article looks at Gschwandtner's years of leadership in the church, from Eastern Europe to South Asia, through compassionate ministries and JESUS Film.

Hermann Gschwandtner is retiring from his role as field strategy coordinator for the South Asia Field, a position he has held since 2010. But his leadership on the Eurasia Region goes back decades.

In his native country of Germany, Gschwandtner was running a parachurch organization that dealt with literature - evangelism. He became acquainted with the Church of the Nazarene when he met Richard Zanner, at the time district superintendent of the church in Germany. They met to discuss Sunday school materials and they would talk late into the night about theology. "He said to me, 'Well, you are really a Nazarene,' and asked me whether I would want to come and work for the Church of the Nazarene, and we developed a pretty good friendship," Gschwandtner recalls.

Through that connection, he eventually became the pastor of the Frankfurt First Church of the Nazarene.

Yet, he had always been involved directly or indirectly in missions, and thus emphasized missions at Frankfurt First. When he had general superintendent Dr. Jerald Johnson, come to speak for his church, Johnson suggested that Gschwandtner lead the denomination's efforts in Eastern Europe and the Soviet Union as Gschwandtner had experience and contacts in Eastern Europe through his previous work.

Gschwandtner soon realized that it was extremely difficult to register the church without other efforts. Therefore, entering new countries through compassionate ministries became the strategy. This allowed the work of the church to begin legally and it opened the hearts of people to eventually hear the gospel when they first felt loved and cared for regarding their physical and material needs, such as clothing, food and education.

Eventually, he added the responsibility of running compassionate ministries in India, South Asia, and the Eurasia Region, including starting the work of the church in Bangladesh, Pakistan, Nepal, and Sri Lanka. In several of these countries he had contacts through his earlier ministry.

In 2000, Gschwandtner was requested to run the JESUS Film Ministry in India and South Asia, and a year later to help part-time with the work of JESUS

Film Harvest Partners (JFHP), a U.S.-based Nazarene ministry that built a bridge between the U.S.-based parachurch organization Campus Crusade for Christ and the Nazarene denomination. JFHP raises funds to deploy ministry teams around the world who

conduct evangelism and discipleship, as well as plant churches, using the JESUS film and spin-off films about the story of Jesus. Gschwandtner turned over his compassionate ministries work, except for in South Asia and India, and worked for JFHP for a couple of years. Then he and his wife, Brigitte, returned to Germany to pastor part-time, as well as to continue running compassionate ministries and church planting (JESUS Film) in South Asia and India.

In 2010, he took over as field strategy coordinator for the South Asia Field, building on work done by those who held the role before him, which included



Hermann Gschwandtner retires after decades of serving the church across the Eurasia Region.

Arlen Jakobitz and Ron Gilbert.

Gschwandtner credits many of the accomplishments in South Asia to Sukamal Biswas, who served as district superintendent of Bangladesh and developed the strategy to make every church self-supporting from its birth, combined with planting churches holistically through compassionate ministries and JESUS film. Biswas will be taking over as field strategy coordinator when Gschwandtner retires. The two have worked together for 21 years.

"One thing I have learned is if you want to have the impossible as a result you have to dare the impossible," Gschwandtner said. "We did things that were just absolutely contrary to everything that is being done in missions. We refused to work in villages or places where other denominations were already working. In one of the five poorest countries of the world we built over 4,000 churches, of which not even one ever received one cent of subsidy."

When he first became involved in South Asia there were five church plants. At the end of 2014, there were more than 161,000 members, with nearly 3,300 organized churches (not including Pakistan). There are more than 1,000 licensed ministers and 261 ordained elders. In 2014, the field raised \$100,000 for the work of the church.

Today, the Church of the Nazarene is the largest Protestant denomination

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-- Hermann Gschwandtner



Save The Date

Who: All Nazarenes in the Eurasia Region

What: You are invited to attend the Eurasia Regional Conference.

When: 31 October - 4 November 2015

Where: Different facilities, but fly to the same airport as last time.

Why: Join with others from across the Eurasia Region for a time of spiritual renewal and fellowship.

Mark your calendars! More information to follow.

FSC: Grateful

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in Bangladesh, quite a feat considering that some denominations had been working there for more than 200 years and the Nazarene church only entered the country about 20 years ago, he said. Even in countries with a small population like Nepal and Sri Lanka around 10,000 people or more belong to “the people called Nazarenes.”

“When I look back, I am filled with gratefulness to the Lord who performs the impossible and who opens closed doors and who gives a great harvest that is truly plentiful and who provides the leaders and people and who truly builds His church,” he said.

“He is not only a leader,” Sukamal said. “Brigitte and Gschwandtner are like parents to me. Twenty years is not a short journey. Always I find he is along with me.” □

BROWNING: ‘Heart of shepherd’

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are really family oriented. They love children and they loved our kids. A lot of preconceived ideas are wrapped around the Middle East. [We have] the opportunity to dispel some of the preconceived ideas and judgments in that part of the world.”

Lindell said that he is most proud of the indigenous leadership that has been developed, including the milestone of turning over his job to a local leader.

Halaseh is grateful for Lindell’s years of leadership and mentoring as he grew up in the church and answered a call to pastoral ministry.

“Pastor Lindell has the heart of father and heart of shepherd,” Halaseh said. “He cared for me all the time and I believe he loves and respects me.”

The two first met in 1989 when Halaseh visited a relative in Jerusalem. As a new believer of just two weeks, he visited the Church of the Nazarene

where Lindell was the pastor. Lindell took time to encourage the young man. Years later, when Halaseh was a leader in his Nazarene church in Jordan, Lindell was named field strategy coordinator, and Halaseh remembered their encounter and his humility as a pastor. Over the years, Lindell continued to counsel and encourage Halaseh as he grew in his leadership and took on more responsibility in Jordan and the Middle East.

“I feel very positive about the future,” Lindell said. “I think there are going to be some adjustments for a new FSC, but I think he’ll do very well and the indigenous church is really now driving the ministry. I think our leadership are determined to stay and I think we’re going to see some great things.” □

Kamal Nade, beloved Sunday school teacher

Mrs. Kamal “Kamalbai” Surendra Nade, a long-time beloved Sunday school teacher at the Buldana Church of the Nazarene, India, passed away recently after serving the church for nearly 50 years.

Kamalbai began teaching Sunday School, especially reaching out to non-Christian children at her former church in Jalgaon Jamod in 1979. She herself had come to Christ as a child in Sunday school. When her family moved to Buldana, they began to attend the Nazarene church in 1989 and she continued Sunday school ministry there. She also led vacation Bible school to children in the community.

Kamalbai was known to teach using Christian songs, telling Bible stories with a flannel board and pictures, teaching Scripture memorization, and showing the children how to pray. She also led small skits and dramas. There were typically about 50 children in her classes at any one time.

Her daughter-in-law said, “I grew up in faith in God and learned to trust in the Lord for everything in my life. I also learned to fast and pray through her. I have been blessed by her teaching and have experienced the power of the same in my personal life over and over.”

The Buldana church Nazarene Missions International (NMI) president, Mrs. Orpah Battase, said, “She was my inspiration. She was an evangelist, she would never miss the NMI meeting and in every meeting, she would take detailed notes of whatever I taught or preached. She was a woman of sincere prayers. I am going to miss her a lot.”

Rajiv Yangad, superintendent of the Central Maharashtra District said, “I experienced a huge prayer support from her. She would personally come to me and clearly state how and what the Lord has spoken to her from the preaching and would assure her and her family’s daily prayer support without fail. She was a great Christian influence to her own children, church children, youth, women and several members as well.”

Kamalbai was preceded in death by her husband, Surendra and their son Sachin. They have two surviving children: Kiran and Leena. □



“I thank Christ Jesus our Lord, who has strengthened me, because He considered me faithful, putting me into service.”

-- 1 Timothy 1:12

Farewell to the Himmelwrights

By Arthur Snijders
Eurasia Regional Director

At the beginning of February the Himmelwright family will return to the United States to pastor the Columbia First Church of the Nazarene, South Carolina. We are grateful for the eight years they have been missionaries in the Western Mediterranean Field. Although they lived and served in Portugal, they have been engaged with the ministry in France, Spain, Italy and the Azores. As they themselves shared, they fully believed that the Lord had called them for long-term missionary service in Eurasia. As such Kyle and Jayme have given themselves to teaching, training, evangelistic projects and many other things.

Two years ago they adopted three daughters. This brought joy and many changes in their lives and ministries.



As regional director I am sad to see a committed and gifted couple go. However I believe Kyle and Jayme carry God’s calling in their hearts wherever they serve. They will be a mission-minded pastor couple with a big heart

for Eurasia. Please pray for all the transitions for this family. Also pray for Bruce McKellips, who will serve as field strategy coordinator for the field from 1 February. □

3 "I am the Lord,
your God, the Holy
One of Israel, the
God who saves you.
4 To me, you are
very dear,
and I love you."
—Isaiah 43:3a, 4a

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www.eurasiaregion.org

Is God calling you to mission?



M+POWER
EURASIA

For more information visit:
www.eurasiaregion.org/volunteers

The Eurasia Region is looking for people within the region whom God is calling into mission service. The new initiative, M-Power, is a way to identify, equip and mobilize Nazarenes to serve as missionary volunteers around the region. Sites are already being set up to receive missionaries. Visit the website to submit your application: www.eurasiaregion.org/volunteers. And share the site with people in your church or district who may be interested.

Prayer Requests

- Please pray for Lindell and Kay Browning, Hermann and Brigitte Gschwandtner and for Kyle and Jayme Himmelwright and their daughters as they transition to chapters in their mission calling that take them into new ministry or retirement. Ask God's blessing on their adaptation to living in the U.S., and for Him to meet all their needs.
- Please pray for the family and church of Kamal Nade, as they mourn her loss. Ask God to bring comfort, and to also raise up many new leaders from her 50 years of investing in children in India.
- 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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