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EURASIA

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Through cooking together, playing sport, learning language and providing opportunities to volunteer, a Glasgow congregation walks with displaced people in their city, providing something they need more than material assistance: community and relationship.



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Scotland church builds community among refugees

Nazarenes enter Belarus

A family in Russia plans to relocate to this neighboring country to establish denominational presence.

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Beautiful cooperation

Two Nazarene colleges in Eurasia work together to bring theological education to eight local leaders in Germany.



Letter from the editor

New year, new look

With the start of a new year comes a new look! We are proud to introduce the new design for *Where Worlds Meet*, the monthly newsletter of the Eurasia Region. We hope you like it, and welcome your feedback on how we can continue to improve it in the coming months: email us at communications@eurasiaregion.org. We have already taken into account the requests from readers that, whenever possible, stories flow onto the immediately next page, rather than jumping several pages down.

In addition, we have continued to make improvements to the regional website since we launched the current design in the fall of 2015. At www.eurasiaregion.org, you can see the new graphic headers on each page, and the addition of new resources and downloads. We continue to improve the site as we go along, and again we welcome your feedback for how we can make it better.

Don't forget you can also view the video stories of Nazarenes across Eurasia at our Vimeo page: www.vimeo.com/eurasia.

This month we welcome our new full-time volunteer, Rebecca Moio, from the USA, who brings video filming and production expertise to the region for the next year.

But we want to keep growing our team!

We continue to rely on a growing regional network of Eurasian writers, designers, website experts, translators and coordinators to help us identify and develop stories, news, images, videos and other desired content that interconnects Eurasian Nazarenes across our vast and diverse region. There are always more stories to tell and more work to be done than our small team can accommodate. If you have an interest in joining our network as a communications professional, please contact us at communications@eurasiaregion.org. We would love to hear how you envision contributing.

Also, if you have an idea for a story we should consider, contact us. Our list of field communication coordinators is on the back page of this newsletter.

Warm greetings and many blessings to you for 2017.

-- Gina Pottenger, communications coordinator

Northern Europe Field

Recognising humanity in the refugee crisis

By Ted Voigt

Church journeys with displaced people in Glasgow

Pick up any newspaper and you are sure to find stories of the war-ravaged Middle East and the millions of people displaced by violence. You may also read of refugee camps, border closures, and world leaders negotiating the numbers their nations can take. These issues have made their way into our collective awareness, and the stories of refugees weigh on our hearts from afar. But, for many of us, the refugee crisis is not just a distant sadness, it's a present reality, a growing part of daily life in our towns and villages.

Dave White lives on the east side of Glasgow in Scotland, and helps lead the Parkhead Church of the Nazarene's efforts to minister to internationally displaced people in their community.

"East enders tended to be very sort of 'white working class,'" he says, "but over the last few years we've seen increasing numbers of people from other countries join us." He describes an experience not at all uncommon to many, especially those across Europe.

"At one point," explains White, "Glasgow was the only city in Scotland that took refugees; they were a growing portion of the population, and it was easy to see there were growing needs. Then, about two years ago, the pieces of an opportunity came together out of existing partnerships. A local doctor got in touch, explaining a need for English language training for adults. Another group was equipped to offer some training and needed a space and the Parkhead Church had space to offer."

English language classes began, and the church building met a real need. But when the church people came face to face with the people of the "European refugee crisis," they changed from a headline to human beings.

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SCOTLAND: Displaced people need community

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“We would classify it as re-humanisation” says White, describing the range of needs the church and their partners began to be able to address. Some needed shoes or warm clothes. Others needed help getting a doctor’s appointment.

But the needs go even beyond the immediately apparent and practical.

“The need was for English, but a lot of these people come from cultures where hospitality is paramount. We became more aware of a need for hospitality,” White said.

The re-humanization process goes far beyond basic clothing and language training; there was also a need for community. In the summer, when many programs wind down and people go on their holidays, the Parkhead Church decided to begin serving lunch, in addition to the English classes. Then they started a monthly football match, which White says, is a universal language. Volunteers began to advocate for those in the process of seeking asylum. Members of the class began volunteering, cooking meals for the rest of the group.

A common theme arising in the Parkhead Church’s work with displaced people is that sharing is not one sided. Volunteering, they have found, is actually a way that

some people can find new purpose and self-confidence while they wait in a new land. When Burns Night came around (a Scottish cultural celebration of the poet Robert Burns), the church organised a traditional celebration, but they resisted the temptation to make it about them. They invited everyone to bring their own dishes from their homelands, and together they ate and danced in a celebration much more authentic to the texture of the Scotland they find themselves in today.

Volunteering is actually a way that some people can find new purpose and self-confidence while they wait in a new land.

The community that they have created is making a difference, and its impact is lasting.

“Even if they’ve been moved to another part of the city, having got their asylum claim, quite a few of them would still keep coming back even though it was a 40-minute journey on a bus because they had a connection here,” says White.

The work of welcoming outsiders has not come without challenges, including instances of cultural xenophobia. And beyond simple prejudices, there exists a complex tension of religions. Many displaced people bring their own religious practices with them but they are not always able to find adequate facilities. At the same time, Christians who are faithfully working to welcome those in need find themselves struggling to find appropriate ways to share their own faith. But for now, all have been able to share the table, as well as the football pitch, and that’s something.

“If you look at Jesus in the Gospels, He’s constantly helping people stand on their own two feet, and giving them the dignity they’re due, and that is transformative.” ♦



Author's note:

The work with displaced people in Parkhead Church of the Nazarene began with a network of existing partnerships and an interest in meeting the needs of their community. Even if those needs aren't as obvious, there are likely to be people in similar situations not far from home. If you need ideas for where to start, Nazarene Compassionate Ministries has some helpful documents on their website here:

(<http://www.ncm.org/refugees.html>)



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2017 Training events:

May 15-18, Nepal

August 4-6, Netherlands

October 6-8, Ukraine

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www.eurasiaregion.org/volunteers

Nazarene presence set for Belarus



Belarus

- Population: 9.5 million
- Religion: 48% Orthodox Christian; 7% Catholic; 3.5% other
- Languages: 70% Russian; 23% Belarusian; 3.1 % other
- Median age: 40 years
- Urban population: 76%
- Occupations: 58% service; 32% industry; 9.3% agriculture

CIS Field

By Gina Grate Pottenger

Cantarella family making plans to relocate to new country in CIS

When a group of Nazarene leaders visited Belarus in late 2015 to learn from local Christian leaders of other denominations regarding what it has taken to grow their churches in that former Soviet country, they heard a cautiously optimistic tale.

While established churches report expending enormous effort to plant even one church in a year, they sense God is doing something there, despite that 41 percent of the population report having no religious belief (U.S. State Department).

One said, “We’ve been praying and we sense that something new is happening in Belarus, and your coming is like evidence that God is starting something fresh here and we welcome you. We’ll work with you,” recalls Scott Rainey, field strategy coordinator for the CIS Field, of which Belarus will be a part.

Davide and Tatiana “Tanya” Cantarella, who have been ministering in Moscow for the past decade (Davide for nine years as district superintendent and currently as district education coordinator; Tatiana was Moscow First Church pastor for some time), will move to Belarus in early 2017 to establish the Church of the Nazarene’s presence there.

Davide said the idea began to form in his heart and mind a number of years ago.

“It was never a fully developed thought, it was just one of those things it would be a cool thing to do one day,” he said.

Then, he and Tanya began to sense they might move somewhere soon. They had become parents of Ilyana in early 2014, and Tanya had taken a one-year sabbatical, so they were already experiencing transition. They thought

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BELARUS: Goal to expand to six new CIS countries

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whatever came next would keep them in Moscow or somewhere in Russia, Tanya's home country (Davide is from Sicily).

They began praying for direction. Several opportunities presented themselves to the family, but none seemed right.

In May 2015, Rainey asked them to consider moving to Belarus. They and a few trusted friends prayed about the proposal for two months. "Then we had a pretty good feeling this was something the Lord wanted us to do."

Later that year, the Cantarellas went with Rainey to Belarus, accompanied by Hermann Gschwandtner, a retired regional missionary who had helped open the work of the denomination in the former Soviet Union 30 years ago. They met with two established Christian groups to listen and learn.

"We had to come in with the attitude of learners. Share your knowledge and wisdom and recommendations," Davide said.

The two local leaders invited them warmly and expressed openness to cooperation.

The family made a second visit, visiting Christians in six main cities

across the country. Again, they were received warmly.

Yet, the leaders were honest about the challenges.

When the group got to Minsk,



the capital, they met with a non-Christian woman who is an authority on sign language in the country. They were connected with her because Tanya has studied sign language and Moscow First Church had a long-time active ministry with the deaf.

The woman was particularly impressed with how Tanya had trained Moscow couples in sign language so they could qualify to adopt 14 deaf children in an

orphanage. Because of her efforts, 13 of the children were adopted.

"When are you moving here? We want you here right now," Davide says the woman told them. "Are you looking for an apartment? How about this area here? I want to help you.' It was the most unbelievable meeting that we had."

As fluent Russian speakers, the Cantarellas will have the advantage of moving to a country where everyone speaks Russian. Also, Tanya has a Russian passport, and Davide will soon have one.

Although Belarus has somewhat restrictive religious freedom laws, the authorities favor churches that engage in social work. "This is an avenue we will explore."

The move to Belarus is one of four new places where leaders in the CIS Field have chosen to establish a presence in the next 12 months. That bold plan is part of a larger that includes expanding from a presence in six CIS countries to 12 within the next 15 years. ♦

Read more on the CIS Field's plan: <http://www.eurasiaregion.org/vision-2020-cis-field-embraces-challenge-to-double-in-15-years/>

Northern Europe Field



Watch Helmut's story in our latest video testimony: vimeo.com/192433954.

In the 1970s, Helmut was forced to become an informer for the East Germany secret police. But God gave him the courage to resign. Over time, however, he walked away from God. God, however, had not walked away from Helmut.

After the flood

The Moncalieri Church of the Nazarene, Italy, cleans up after newly renovated building is flooded.



After three days of heavy rain in northern Italy at the end of November, which caused widespread flooding and killed two people, the sanitation system in the neighborhood of Moncalieri Church of the Nazarene could not unload the rain waters into the river because it was over-flooded. The water backed up in the piping system and in a couple of hours all the church's neighborhood was flooded. Basement cellars were filled up with dirty waters about two meters high. The church's basement was also flooded: kitchen, fellowship room, Sunday school classes. This was after they had just finished renovating everything. The flood damage totalled €7,000.

It took a week for the church members to clean up, throwing away all the furniture and redoing the separation walls of the rooms, and two doors of the classrooms. A love offering was gathered in all the Italy District churches to help with the cost to repair the damages.

The Moncalieri church, which averages 45 in sunday worship service attendance, is back to normal activities in their newly cleaned up church building. ♦



Top left and bottom right: The church's lower level filled with water two meters high. Bottom left: The fellowship hall and Sunday school classrooms had just been renovated before the flood. The congregation cleaned up, and with love offerings from the district, purchased new furniture. Photos courtesy Moncalieri Church Facebook page.

Pastoral retreat in Rome teaches self-care

It was a blessed time spent with a fine group of servants of the Lord in beautiful Rome, Oct. 18-20, 2016.

Thanks a lot to Joe Gorman, faculty member at Northwest Nazarene University, who led us through a healthy and vital holistic lifestyle journey. This implies taking care of our souls as our bodies, as well: a better you.

Some good advice on the matter comes to us from John Wesley: "It will be a double blessing if you give yourself up to the Great Physician, that He may heal soul and body together and unquestionably this is His design. He

wants to give you ...both inward and outward health". (To A. Knox 26 oct. 1778) The same Jesus who said, "Go ye into the world and preach the Gospel (Mark 16:15), also said "Come ye apart and rest awhile" (Mark 6:31).

How do we refill our inner reservoir? Health care encompasses various facets of oneself: physical, mental, emotional, social and spiritual. It includes also good habits, hobbies, exercise, nutrition, sleep, etc. Therefore soul and physical good care makes for:



healthy families; healthy ministers; healthy churches.

It was precious time to renew friendship... and gain new insights. ♦

-- Mariella Bellissima Cereda



Education, Northern Europe Field

Beautiful cooperation

Two Nazarene colleges in Eurasia work together to help eight local leaders in Germany continue their theological education.

Joseph Wood (front), lecturer at Nazarene Theological College, taught one of the pre-MA classes to the KiA leaders in Frankfurt in fall 2016. Photo courtesy Wood.

By Gina Grate Pottenger
Eurasia Region Communications

Thanks to a partnership between Nazarene colleges in the Eurasia Region, eight church leaders with Kirche in Aktion (KiA) in Germany are earning their Master's Degree in Theology without stepping away from their ministry.

KiA (churchinaction.com) is a church planting effort with 26 locations in four cities: Frankfurt, Mainz, Darmstadt and Wiesbaden, involved in urban ministry at sites such as pubs, coffee shops and cinemas, working with the homeless, the elderly, asylum seekers, prostitutes and other inner city populations.

Most of the pastors already have bachelor's degrees in other subjects but, due to their involvement with KiA, became interested in postgraduate study in theology. Some are seeking ordination.

One of the cohort was himself an asylum seeker; another is a marketing and project management professional, but recently sensed a call into ministry; another has a finance background. Another is a new believer who found Christ through KiA and was baptized in January 2016.

Eric Smith is a KiA city pastor in Darmstadt who realized a need to study theology.

"One reason is to gain a better understanding of the Christian faith and tradition, its history and the way it's shaped the world we live in," wrote Smith. "A second reason is that I've continued to gain more interest in the area of apologetics. Working in the context of western Europe, specifically Germany, I've gotten into many interesting

conversations with people who have very much been influenced by 'post-modernism,' as well as Muslim refugees."

Last spring, after meeting at an Urban Mission evening, one of the founding pastors, Cris Zimmermann, talked with Deirdre Brower Latz, principal at Nazarene Theological College (NTC) in Manchester, UK, about NTC supporting the formal education of their leaders. As this evolved, NTC also started a conversation with European Nazarene College, which has a learning center in Frankfurt, to help prepare the students for postgraduate study.

"The MA in Theology has a range of options, so it allows the students to start together with a common

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NTC: Leaders will remain in ministry context while learning

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foundation, then select the pathways that suit them best," said NTC Academic Dean Peter Rae.

"Some are taking the Urban Ministry pathway to prepare them to work in the world's cities; some are taking the Humanitarian Development route; still others are passionate about the Church's response to Islam, so are taking the MA in 'Christian Engagement with Islam.'"

It is quite routine at NTC to have practitioners learning; indeed, one of the values of the college is that it exists to serve the church by equipping its leaders for relevant ministry and mission.

However, only a few in the group had prior studies in theology, which would make it difficult for them to study at the post-graduate level.

"To study with NTC they need to know at least two areas – one is historical theology, and the other is Introduction to Biblical Studies,"

said Klaus Arnold, rector of European Nazarene College (EuNC).

EuNC was asked to help provide the pre-master's level courses that the leaders needed. Last autumn, the students took a course at EuNC's Germany Learning Center in Frankfurt, and a second by intensive study and videoconference with NTC.

In January, the cohort began their MA work through NTC, committing to read and prepare one day per week, and then joining short intensive courses several times a year at the NTC campus in

Manchester, while applying what they learn to their current ministry contexts.



"It's a dual learning program," said Philip Zimmermann, cofounder of KiA with Cris. "You are already in ministry and having responsibilities, and at the same

time theoretically and theologically you are educated on deeper truth."

NTC's MA in Theology (Urban Ministry) is particularly relevant to the cohort, as KiA is pushing the envelope of evangelical ministry, tailoring it to a post-modern European urban setting, experimenting and taking risks to reach people with the gospel.

"That's the question we are wrestling with, and the Church in general is wrestling with: How do we engage in church planting in urban cities? Because the way we used to do it is not working anymore,"

Philip said. "It might be working in villages, but what about the urban centers? How can we do it there? We are an incubator to try out a few things. Some things don't work at all and some things are working great."

Philip said NTC's MA is a perfect fit for the needs of KiA pastors and lay leaders, many of whom need to not only know how to do ministry in an urban context, but why, and the theological foundations for why they do it in certain ways.

Dr. Joseph Wood, a lecturer at NTC, taught one of the pre-MA courses, joining the students in their direct

Nazarene Theological College

"We are a Christian college in the evangelical Wesleyan Holiness tradition committed to the mission of God through providing theological education that is academically robust and practically relevant."

-- NTC's Mission Statement

NTC offers learning at the BA, MA and PhD levels, full-time and part-time, on campus and through distance learning.

European Nazarene College

"Enabling Christlike Disciples for Ministry."

-- EuNC's Mission Statement

EuNC offers a Certificate and Qualification in Spiritual Formation, and a Diploma and Qualification in Christian Ministry.

On the web

NTC: nazarene.ac.uk

EuNC: eunc.edu

ministry context.

"I have been thoroughly impressed at the level of theological thinking this cohort has exhibited, but what impacted me the most is how their thinking is clothed in hospitality," he said. "I left feeling inspired, excited, and exhausted. KiA are on full-throttle. It's in their name: 'Action!'"



Christmas around Eurasia

See how some Nazarene churches in the region celebrated Christmas



Sri Lanka, South Asia Field

Annual get together and Christmas Celebration 2016 held at Haliela Nazarene Ministry Center on 9th December 2016.

Pastors and ministers and all staff of NCM Lanka gathered in this place for a great celebration.

We had special guests: Carol Rotz, D. Litt. et Phil. (Adjunct Professor - Northwest Nazarene University) and Rev. Simon Jothi (Principal - South Asia Nazarene Bible College), both taught courses to SANBC students.



Dr. Carol shared God's word with us.

Shalom Church kids performed special welcoming dance. We had some other special programs like dramas, carol songs and presenting of gifts. This program end with communion lunch.

Photos courtesy Oshan Isemonth.



Christmas around Eurasia

Jordan, Eastern Mediterranean Field



In Amman, the Gardens Church of the Nazarene celebrated Christmas with about 350 people in attendance.



Kosova, Central Europe Field

The Suhareka Church of the Nazarene. *Photos courtesy Sarah Thibault.*



Christmas around Eurasia

India Field

The Chikhli Church of the Nazarene, Central Maharashtra District, celebrated Christmas by focusing on Isaiah 11: 1-5, the characteristics of baby Jesus. Photos courtesy Nitin Saraf.



Below: The CIDCO Church of the Nazarene, Central Maharashtra District, celebrated Christmas by involving the children in the worship. Photos courtesy James Patil.



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is the monthly newsletter for the Eurasia Region of the Church of the Nazarene.

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Website: www.eurasiaregion.org

Our Team

GINA POTTENGER
Eurasia Region Communications Coordinator
gottenger@eurasiaregion.org

TEANNA SUNBERG
Central Europe Communications Coordinator
tsunberg@eurasiaregion.org

ERIN KETCHUM
W. Mediterranean Communications
Coordinator
eketchum@eurasiaregion.org

ZEE GIMON
CIS Field Communications Coordinator
zee.gimon@gmail.com

RANDOLF WOLST
Website Designer
rwolst@eurasiaregion.org

REBECCA MOISIO
Regional Video Editor
rmoisio@eurasiaregion.org

ARTHUR SNIJDERS
Regional Director
asnijders@eurasiaregion.org

Eurasia Regional Office

Postfach 1217
8207
Schaffhausen
Switzerland

phone: (+49) 7734 93050
email: communications@eurasiaregion.org

Visit our website for more information:

www.eurasiaregion.org

CIS Field

Ukraine church celebrates 15th anniversary on TV news



Recently, the Vinnitsa, Ukraine, Church of the Nazarene celebrated its 15th anniversary. A local news channel was present as, during a celebratory worship, Pastor Vladimir Masuk told the history of the beginning of the church and its ministry, what difficulties had to be overcome, and how over the years God has led the church, cultivated new ministers and leaders, and transformed lives.

Watch video: Watch: <http://tiny.cc/1bjijy>

“You are my refuge and my shield; I have put my hope in your word.”

-- Psalm 119:114

Prayer requests

Please pray for the Parkhead Church of the Nazarene in Glasgow, Scotland, and the many other local churches who are reaching out to serve and walk alongside displaced people in their midst. Ask God to provide wisdom, compassion, resources and the commitment to journey with the displaced who are going through the difficult adjustments to new cultures, languages and homeland.

Pray for Davide and Tatiana Cantarella as they plan their move to Belarus this year. Ask God to make their way straight, to open doors and provide clear direction. Ask God to send them people of peace and bridges to the society as they establish the denomination's presence in a new country.

Pray for the leaders of Kirche in Aktion, Germany, as they begin their theological studies. Ask God to help them connect and apply the truths they are learning to their ministry contexts, to find time and energy to fit study alongside work. Also pray for God's hand of blessing upon EuNC, NTC and MWRC as they continue to provide quality higher education and holiness research and resources in Eurasia.

Pray for Arthur and Annemarie Snijders (regional director) as they travel the region to participate in district assemblies during a rigorous travel schedule in the next few months. Ask God to provide full health and energy, safe travels, and meaningful and fruitful time with leaders and local churches across the region.