

# WHERE **WORLDS** MEET

DECEMBER 2017 / ISSUE 10



CHURCH OF THE NAZARENE  
EURASIA

subscribe [www.eurasiaregion.org](http://www.eurasiaregion.org)



## “Real family”

M+Power volunteer visits three European countries to spend time with refugee families he met in a camp in Greece.

3



## Changed by unconditional love

As teens, Michael and Debbie Kane were changed forever by the persistent love of a local church. Now, they pour out that love to others.

5

## A stranger as Saviour

In different ways, we can all understand what it means to be strangers.

2





Christmas Greeting from the Regional Director

## A Stranger as Saviour



What does it mean to be a stranger? How does it feel to be out of place?

Missionaries and evangelists across our region often have to face these questions. We hear these questions from those involved in studying a new language, and from young new believers who are rejected by their families because of their faith in Christ.

It is hard on everyone to be a stranger. It creates loneliness, social clumsiness, and confusion.

During this Advent season, I have pondered the story of a cross-cultural stranger: Ruth. She voluntarily moves to another country, a new people, and even a new faith. But what an amazing woman she turns out to be. She became a critical link, for the salvation of God's people, in the Messianic line from David to Jesus. Who would have thought this about her?

The stranger becomes the saviour. When we listen again to the story of God's Son becoming a human, and pursuing the path to the cross, we should feel the strangeness of it all. How odd, how unlike what we are used to! But the strangeness is our lifeline, our redemption.

As a couple, and as part of the regional mission team, we embrace the path of the strangeness of Christ. We have faith that Christmas is a promise for each one of us, wherever we live and serve: God opens unexpected doors into life, light, peace and healing through His Son Jesus.

*"May the LORD repay you for what you have done. May you be richly rewarded by the LORD, the God of Israel, under whose wings you have come to take refuge." Ruth 2:12*

Annemarie and I would like to wish you a blessed Christmas, where we will experience Christ the Saviour in new and unexpected strange ways!

Arthur Snijders, Regional Director

# “Real family”



**M+POWER**  
EURASIA

[www.eurasiaregion.org/volunteers](http://www.eurasiaregion.org/volunteers)

One year after Anderson Sanchez volunteered at a refugee camp where he became close to some of the families, he spent 3 weeks visiting them in their new northern European homes.

A university student in Manchester, U.K., Anderson gave the summer of 2016 as an M+Power volunteer. He joined other Nazarenes from the Eurasia Region and around the world in a multi-denominational partnership to serve in a Greek refugee camp.

Their roles went beyond sorting and handing out clothing and food. The volunteers sought to build relationships and trust with those they served, and in that context, to demonstrate God’s love for them.

“It was not just a project from the Nazarene

church. We really care about them and we really want to establish relationships with them, and not just treat them [like] one more project,” Anderson said.

Anderson and other team members became close with some of the families by spending much time together eating and talking. After the summer was over and team members returned home, they maintained regular contact with their new friends.

So, when some of the families were resettled in northern Europe, they invited Anderson to come visit them. In the refugee camp, they had all talked about how they wanted to meet again.

“When I was living in Greece, no one wanted to say goodbye. We had a really good time,” he said. “We were saying, ‘No, I am coming to visit you. We will meet again.’”

Spending three weeks in July and August receiving the hospitality of 12 families was a fulfillment of that promise. The families

see “FAMILY” • page 4

# FAMILY: Relationships grew even during separation

Continued from page 3

were thrilled to have Anderson and another volunteer to come and stay with them, and continue their friendship.

The governments in France, the Netherlands and Germany provide housing to refugees who have legally settled there. Anderson's friends are relieved to be in warmer, dryer shelter with private bathrooms, bedrooms and kitchens – unlike in the camps. Yet, they still face challenges. They need to learn the local language in order to secure visas. The older family members worry they won't be able to learn a new language.

Many come from cultures of hospitality where community is important and large, extended families live close together. But now they are excluded from surrounding society and neighbors by cultural and language barriers.

"They are always on their own," they told Anderson. "They miss eating together in big groups. They miss that time in Greece when we used to eat together at night, sharing food. Now ... they don't know too many people."

Anderson said that their relationships and language haven't progressed to the point of sharing spiritual and faith conversations, but he hopes someday it will.

"They do appreciate the fact we are Christians, and one family highlighted that they now look at Christians in a better position [than people of their own faith] because of what we are doing with them," he said.

He said the most special moment of the trip was when he arrived and the family ran toward him, and he ran toward them; he felt he was meeting his "real family."

"What we built in Greece didn't change for the time we were separated. It was really good."

Anderson is now serving as the Eurasia Region's M+Power coordinator for Northern Europe. A cross-cultural training event is scheduled for Glasgow, Scotland, in January, for people from Northern Europe who are interested in serving as cross-cultural volunteers in Eurasia.

"We hope to keep raising missionaries and volunteers and send them out to do ministry – compassionate ministries – that they go and find their call in the Kingdom, that they see the world is more than what we are seeing now." □

***"They now look at Christians in a better position because of what we are doing with them."***

***-- Anderson Sanchez, volunteer***

## Serve cross-culturally through M+Power!

M+Power is an opportunity for Nazarenes in Eurasia to participate in cross-cultural mission as short-term volunteers.

Service locations and opportunities are varied, but may include coffeehouse ministry, youth/children's ministries, finance work, media and education.

M+Power is for volunteers of any age to serve in the Church of the Nazarene throughout the Eurasia Region.

Jesus has called the Church to share the gospel -- through our words, actions, and lives -- in all parts of the earth. Sometimes this is in our own hometown

and sometimes it requires a passport.

Is God calling you to serve as a volunteer missionary?

Training will be held:

-- Glasgow, Scotland, 12-14 January;

-- Bangladesh, 9-11 May;

-- Jordan, 22-25, August.

Learn more, or sign up for a 2018 training event:

[www.eurasiaregion.org/volunteers](http://www.eurasiaregion.org/volunteers)



Testimony

## Changed by Unconditional Love

*The unconditional love of a local church family when they were growing up in the east end of Glasgow made Michael and Debbie Kane who they are today.*

That is why it now shapes their approach as the new chaplain and resident assistant/warden for Nazarene Theological College (NTC).

In August, the couple said goodbye to their local church family in Carrickfergus, Northern Ireland, where Michael served on the pastoral team for six years. They're excited to support the NTC community by continuing the rhythms of eating, praying and worshipping together.

Michael and Debbie both were first exposed to unconditional love and acceptance at the Parkhead Church of the Nazarene, Glasgow, Scotland, when they were adolescents.

Debbie, who grew up in a non-Christian household, encountered the church when she was 8 years old. Parkhead Nazarene members went to her neighborhood that summer to play with the kids and host a kids club. She and some of her friends began attending the church. But until that point, on the streets where Debbie had grown up, what she saw were drinking, arguing, shouting and cursing from adults.

The loving kindness and unending patience of the adults at church was mystifying and disorienting to her.

At 12, Debbie was the only one of her neighborhood

friends still attending regularly – although she was never shy of saying she hated the church and the people there.

“Obviously, I didn’t hate them because I was still there.”

“When I was about 11 my mom started going to the Nazarene church,” Michael said. “She gave her life to Jesus and got saved. That resulted in a huge transformation in her life.”

**“I wasn’t the easiest child in the world. I caused a lot of grief and made things difficult for them, but still, they continued to like and love me.”**

**-- Debbie Kane**

His mom took Michael and his two sisters to church as well. He didn’t like it at first, but “the people at Parkhead had a huge impression on me. Some of the most kindest and generous people I’ve ever met in my life.”

Michael prayed a prayer of faith when he was 15, but then he began to go drinking with friends. His social circle pulled him further into a lifestyle of drinking, trying drugs and partying.

Meanwhile, at 15, Debbie realized she was in love with the people of the church and Christ, and she decided to follow Him. She became a person of joy, developing a deep commitment to the church community.

After Debbie gave nearly a year of volunteer mission

see “LOVE” • page 6

## LOVE: Ministry nurtured by one local church

Continued from page 5

service with the Nazarene church in Ukraine, she and Michael were married. But Michael was still drinking, and it was getting worse.

The two saved up and went on a holiday to India, but they weren't prepared for the massive cultural change awaiting them. They landed in Delhi at 3 a.m. – alone. Everything about it was opposite to all they'd known in Scotland: the crowds, the intense heat, the unfamiliar smells, the traffic, the security guards with guns. It all overpowered and upset them. After arriving to their hotel, Debbie said, "We're not leaving here."

Michael felt helpless and alone. Flipping through the TV channels, the only station he found broadcasting in English was a Christian channel.

"The gospel brought everything back to me about my experiences growing up in the church," he said. "It was a really emotional experience. I started to cry and I turned to Debbie. I said, 'I think things are going to change.'"

God continued his transformative work in Michael, who put an end to his habits of drinking and partying, and devoted himself to knowing God and following him. It

wasn't long before he recognized God's call to ministry. They moved into the dormitory at NTC, in Manchester, UK, where Michael studied theology while Debbie worked.

"Our first experience here was a continuation of what we had known in the church," he said. "We continued to experience that community of love and acceptance."

Afterward, Michael joined the pastoral team at the Carrickfergus Church. They lived in a large house where their door was always open, and they brought many people around their table for meals and community.

This summer, they accepted the new roles at NTC, and again are living in the dormitory – now with their 2-year-old son, Mikey. They bring to NTC that unconditional love and acceptance of the people of God that first changed their lives in Glasgow.

"NTC is a safe place where people love and encourage and want you to flourish as an individual in all aspects of your life," Debbie said. "We're just an add on to what's already here." □

## GLOBAL FOCUS: Africa field sends first missionaries

Nazarene churches of the Africa Central Field have sent out one of their own families to serve as missionaries.

While districts and fields in several other areas in Africa have sent missionaries, it is the first time for the Central Field to send missionaries outside their field.

Originally from the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Milly and Agnes Ibanda are now settling into their new home on the island of Madagascar with their four children: Gustav, 11; Alphonsine, 10; Bertha, 3; and Theresa, 7 months.

The Nazarene denomination has had a thriving presence for 27 years in the North Kivu Central District of the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC), where the Ibandas grew up and began their family. Joyfully, yet in the midst of many challenges, local churches pledged a support offering of US \$700 for the family.

The other four districts in DRC pledged prayer support as they leave their country, language, culture and families.



Read their testimonies: <http://tiny.cc/3yu1oy>. □



# Who are Nazarenes?

## We are a Christian people

As members of the Church Universal, we join with all true believers in proclaiming the Lordship of Jesus Christ and in affirming the historic Trinitarian creeds and beliefs of the Christian faith. We value our Wesleyan-Holiness heritage and believe it to be a way of understanding the faith that is true to Scripture, reason, tradition, and experience.

## We are a holiness people

God, who is holy, calls us to a life of holiness. We believe that the Holy Spirit seeks to do in us a second work of grace, called by various terms including "entire sanctification" and "baptism with the Holy Spirit"-cleansing us from all sin, renewing us in the image of God, empowering us to love God with our whole heart, soul, mind, and strength, and our neighbors as ourselves, and producing in us the character of Christ. Holiness in the life of believers is most clearly understood as Christlikeness.

## We are a missional people

We are a sent people, responding to the call of Christ and empowered by the Holy Spirit to go into all the world, witnessing to the Lordship of Christ and participating with God in the building of the Church and the extension of His kingdom (Matthew 28:19-20; 2 Corinthians 6:1). Our mission (a) begins in worship, (b) ministers to the world in evangelism and compassion, (c) encourages believers toward Christian maturity through discipleship, and (d) prepares women and men for Christian service through Christian higher education.

Learn more at: [www.nazarene.org/articles-faith](http://www.nazarene.org/articles-faith)

*"Therefore the Lord himself will give you a sign. Behold, the virgin shall conceive and bear a son, and shall call his name Immanuel."*

*-- Isaiah 7:14*

## Prayer requests

Please pray for the refugees who have befriended Anderson Sanchez and the other Nazarenes who have volunteered to serve in refugee camps. Ask God to bless the ongoing relationships, that the Holy Spirit would create opportunities to share God's love and to talk about faith at the right times.

Pray for Michael, Debbie and Mikey Kane as they settle into their roles serving the students of Nazarene Theological College in Manchester, England. Ask God to anoint them with love, grace, wisdom, discernment in supporting the spiritual formation of theology students, many of whom are engaged in or will go on to serve in ministry.

## Where Worlds Meet

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

To subscribe, email to:

[communications@eurasiaregion.org](mailto:communications@eurasiaregion.org) or visit our website: [eurasiaregion.org](http://eurasiaregion.org)

## Follow Us

Facebook: [Facebook.com/eurasiaregion](https://www.facebook.com/eurasiaregion)

Twitter: [Twitter.com/eurasiaregion](https://twitter.com/eurasiaregion)

Vimeo: [Vimeo.com/eurasia](https://vimeo.com/eurasia)

Website: [www.eurasiaregion.org](http://www.eurasiaregion.org)

## Our Team

GINA POTTENGER  
Communications Coordinator  
[gpottenger@eurasiaregion.org](mailto:gpottenger@eurasiaregion.org)

TEANNA SUNBERG  
Central Europe Communications Coordinator  
[tsunberg@eurasiaregion.org](mailto:tsunberg@eurasiaregion.org)

ERIN KETCHUM  
W. Mediterranean Communications Coordinator  
[eketchum@eurasiaregion.org](mailto:eketchum@eurasiaregion.org)

ZEE GIMON  
CIS Field Communications Coordinator  
[zgimon@eurasiaregion.org](mailto:zgimon@eurasiaregion.org)

RANDOLF WOLST  
Website Designer  
[rwolst@eurasiaregion.org](mailto:rwolst@eurasiaregion.org)

REBECCA MOISIO  
Regional Video Producer  
[rmoisio@eurasiaregion.org](mailto:rmoisio@eurasiaregion.org)

ARTHUR SNIJDERS  
Regional Director  
[awsnijders@eurasiaregion.org](mailto:awsnijders@eurasiaregion.org)

## Eurasia Regional Office

Postfach 1217  
8207  
Schaffhausen  
Switzerland

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

Visit our website for more information:

[www.eurasiaregion.org](http://www.eurasiaregion.org)