

WHERE WORLDS MEET

SEPTEMBER 2019 / ISSUE 7



CHURCH OF THE NAZARENE
EURASIA

subscribe www.eurasiaregion.org

First missionaries to country share their experience

Request prayer for capacity to learn the language.



2



5

Volunteer to Romania practices flexibility

James Clarkson left Scotland for a year to help out any way he was needed -- from IT support and graphic design to supporting youth ministry.

Biblical holiness as vocation?

Upcoming Regional Theology Conference, held in conjunction with the regional conferences, will ask how God's people can live out holiness as vocation in diverse contexts.



8



First missionaries in South Asian country talk about their experience

By Gina Grate Pottenger

Ben and Amy* are the first Nazarene missionaries to be sent to this South Asian country*. The Nazarene work has been thriving and growing there for many years, and the couple resettled in a large city in 2018 to help support the growth and development of ministry across the country, as well as in several neighboring countries.*

The American couple is 12 months into this, their first, overseas missionary assignment, after serving 10 years supporting Nazarene missions administratively from the United States.

Amy recently took time to answer questions in an interview about their first year's experience.

WWM: What have been some of the highlights of your experience so far?

Amy: Shortly after we were here, the person who

helps around the facility invited us to his home for dinner.

He doesn't speak English. At that time, we spoke very little of his language. He invited his children's teacher to come to the meal to be the translator for us.

He met us on the road to make sure we got there. They fixed what would be the equivalent of a feast: two meats, vegetables, Coca-Cola that was chilled. It was all just so thoughtful and so aware of us. It made me want to live up to that standard. Am I that aware of those around me?

It was truly one of the greatest honors of my life to be invited to his home.

WWM: Have you had people to your home, as well?

Amy: We try to do something with the young people once or twice a month. It started with a young man we met, he's 19 years old now. We realized he was alone here, and started asking him to come up. He would have someone with him and they would come.

Last Saturday, we had about eight or nine; that was our biggest group. It's a time to hang out and we always serve coffee or tea and some sort of snack. Then we will play games.

WWM: What is something interesting about where you live?

Amy: The neat thing about this country, in just the 12 months we've been here we can



The South Asia Field is made up of Nepal, Bangladesh, Sri Lanka and Pakistan.

FIRST: 'I have more empathy, patience and compassion'

see it evolving as far as the economy. For example, roads are under construction. In fact, it makes me kind of sad because one of my favorite places to shop was just a row of tin and bamboo little kiosks. We went away for a trip, and when we came back they were all gone because they're building a building there.



WWM: What are some things you are doing to adjust to where you live?

Amy: They eat with their fingers here, so we do the same. If we're in a village, we always eat with our fingers, even if they offer us utensils. We want them to know we appreciate their culture, and sometimes, truthfully, the food is just easier to eat with your fingers. For example, when it's fish with bones in it.

WWM: As Americans coming from a culture that communicates more directly, how are you adapting to the ways people in South Asia communicate more indirectly?

Amy: We keep asking questions. We will ask a question a different way. We've learned subtle cues, like if they say, "Yes, I can do that, but it would be difficult," what that really means is, "No." The other thing, if you invite them to your home, and they can't come, they will say, "I will try to make it," which usually means, "I'm not going to be there." It's just living in the culture and learning it. It's asking more questions and asking in different ways and paying attention to the subtlety of the answers.

WWM: You visit many local churches in your travels. How would you describe the local church in South Asia?

Amy: We've been in many, many Nazarene churches. I am always

surprised at how similar they are to churches in America. Not the music, because we don't know most of the songs, they're not in English and they don't sound familiar, generally. But the way it's structured. It feels very orderly and cohesive. There's always lots of prayer; prayer is a major component, and music is a major component.

As Westerners, we are viewed as representatives of the general church....We are always trying to use that to give them words of encouragement. To connect them to the larger body, so they don't feel like they're just a little church in a village. They're part of a global church.

WWM: What has been the most challenging part of your adjustment so far?

Amy: One thing I have dealt with, and is the most difficult, personally, is guilt: the constant awareness of how fortunate I am, not just financially in comparison, but spiritually.

I think it does make me more aware of those around me. I feel like I have much more empathy, more patience and more compassion. I have to push it (the guilt) out of the way and keep my eyes on Christ, because the guilt is just a distraction. My guilt over their situation is not the point. Of myself I have no ability whatsoever, anyway. I feel like, as we witness wins and strides being made, and good things happening, it

will chip away at that guilt.

WWM: What has helped make the transition easier?

Amy: What's really helped is technology. I have people with whom I regularly exchange video messages. When I wake up in the morning there's a message for me. When they wake up they have a message for them. Sometimes we talk when we're both awake. I can't imagine the feeling of being completely disconnected prior to the Internet and technology.

Before we left the States, we went through Launch training with other missionaries at different stages of their journey. Some had not been on the field yet, and some had been on the field six years. That was so amazingly helpful, even though we had been through missionary training prior. It serves as a support group for us; we have our own WhatsApp group. It is a group where we all can speak honestly. We're all on the journey together.

The Eurasia Region has a wonderful structure for member care. Melanie Eaton is our member care person and she is very conscientious about follow-up. We have missionary mentors who were missionaries on the field previously that are now back in the States. We talk with them as needed.

I feel like we're thriving. □

**Names and location omitted for security reasons.*



Have you ever felt invisible?

Every day, followers of Jesus across Eurasia are made to feel invisible ...

... invisible in our secularized cultures.

... invisible as a minority faith group.

... invisible as an underground church.

... invisible as a church not recognized by our governments.


Christians also wrestle an invisible world of spiritual forces.

Yet, our hope is in the invisible, powerful movement of the Holy Spirit, who gives us victory over all that seeks to diminish us.

Welcome to the invisible world!

At the 2019 and 2020 Eurasia Regional Conferences, experience that as one diverse, international body united in our one, holy God, we are not so invisible as we might think.

www.invisibleconference.org

INV  S  BLE
— WORLD —



Volunteer learns flexibility is key

James Clarkson's year in Romania as an M+Power volunteer stretches him to try new things, jump in wherever needed

By Gina Grate Pottenger

On 5 July 2018, James Clarkson graduated with his bachelor's degree in accounting and finance. On 6 July, he was on a plane for Romania.

If Clarkson, originally from Scotland, could have left a few days sooner, he would have. He was eager to hit the ground on his six-month volunteer assignment through M+Power.

Called to Romania

He first had the sense that God was calling him to cross-cultural service when he attended the Church of the Nazarene's 2017 General Assembly, a global gathering of Nazarenes held every four years.

"I really felt in my heart that God had something special for me. I really felt God

was laying on my heart going to volunteer in Romania for a year," Clarkson said.

Growing up in a missions-minded family, including a grandfather who is currently volunteering in another part of the region through M+Power, Clarkson had a personal connection with Romania: a cousin, Dorothy Tarrant, had ministered there for many years.

In January 2018, Clarkson attended the Glasgow M+Power training, which he says helped prepare him to be adaptable, and equipped him with other skills he would need for a successful year of cross-cultural service.

"The training I loved, I thought it was really good. We did [role playing scenarios]," he said. "It was funny: my role-playing group was a group going to Romania. I was randomly assigned to it. And then that's where I ended up going."

Adapting to cross-cultural ministry challenges

Clarkson initially committed to six months in Brasov, the city where the Romania District's superintendent family, Josh and Shannon

see "ROMANIA" • page 6

ROMANIA: 'My faith was really challenged'

Continued from page 5

Herndon, is working to plant a church.

His initial challenge was one that faces many cross-cultural workers: a feeling of isolation. It was the first time he had lived alone, in his own apartment; and it was across town from the missionaries.

And, like most other volunteers, Clarkson also needed to adjust to the unexpected: He had come to Romania hoping to be involved with the new church plant, but because there had never been an official Nazarene presence in Brasov, Romania, before, more time was needed to get to know the city, build relationships with people, and find the right ministry location.

Clarkson adapted to the changing circumstances by volunteering to help wherever he found a need in the local Nazarene ministries, including technology support for the ministries in Romania, and across the Central Europe Field.

For instance, he fixed computers for the Veritas Project, and provided IT support for the field strategy coordinator, who oversees the countries that make up the Central Europe Field. Clarkson also created graphic designs and supplied website support for the field. He helped run the technology for the Central Europe Field's conference in Albania.

But he also contributed to local ministries, such as getting involved with the kids' club reaching Roma children in Tigmandru and volunteering in Sighisoara Church of the Nazarene's youth group. He supported the district superintendent family in whatever they needed, such as hosting Work & Witness teams, construction and painting.

"I was kind of a jack of all trades. You do so many different things," he said.

His third challenge was trying to learn the language. He'd already started studying Romanian through the Duolingo smart phone app before he left Scotland. And once he arrived, he used his free time to continue.

"I thought I was prepared. But then when I showed up, I discovered that whatever you learned before moving there isn't really good enough," he said. "Then I found it way better when I had a good friend who was a translator.... You pick up words way more when you're around people."

Thanks to the sufficient support funds he raised by hiking the United Kingdom's highest mountain, as well as generous gifts from his home church, Clarkson was able to extend his time in Romania by four months. He moved to Sighisoara to be closer to the church and youth group where he gave much of his volunteer time.

Learning to try, not give up

The 10 months of ministry in Romania were a positive learning experience, Clarkson said.

"One thing I learned was to take on the challenge, even though in your head you think you can't do it. I'd rather strive to do it," he said. "My faith was really challenged a few times. The first few months I was ready to give up and go home. But I just trusted what God had for me and just strived to do that."

He witnessed firsthand the obstacles, the struggles and even the opposition that missionaries experience when engaged in



Josh Herndon (right) is the district superintendent for the Romania District, where James Clarkson (left) volunteered for a year.

ministry, especially when trying to start something new.

"James is the first M+Power volunteer that we have worked with. We feel he is a great example of a young person stepping completely out of his comfort zone to participate in ministry outside of his own cultural context," said Shannon Herndon. "James jumped in and did his absolute best at any task we asked him to tackle. He didn't let his comfort or personal preferences dictate what he would or would not do during his time in Romania. He pushed through challenges and uncomfortable moments and, because of his perseverance, he grew as a person, and contributed well to the multiple ministries he was a part of during his year in Romania!"

Now that he's back home, Clarkson is considering theological studies as the next calling God may have for him. □

Find out more about how to volunteer at www.eurasiaregion.org/volunteers

WELCOME TO THE

INVISIBLE WORLD

Promote 2019 Eurasia Regional Conference

Download and share videos to build momentum for the conferences
in Cyprus, November 2019, and India, January 2020:

www.vimeo.com/eurasia



Invisible World - Invisible Worship

 Eurasia Media | six plays



Welcome to the Invisible World - Featuring Annemarie

 Eurasia Media | 14 plays



Welcome to the Invisible World - Featuring Arthur Snijders

 Eurasia Media | 49 plays



Invisible World Regional Conference

 Eurasia Media | 360 plays

Regional Theology Conference to explore biblical call to holiness as vocation in diverse contexts

By Gina Grate Pottenger

If the biblical call to be God's holy people is an identity and a vocation, what does that calling look like among the diverse Nazarene family across the Eurasia Region, with all its complexities and challenges?

That is the question that will be

"If we find our identity in Christ, that will bring us all together in the church to act, rather than debate."

-- Mária Gusztinné-Tulipán,
organizing committee member

asked at the upcoming Regional Theology Conference, held in two locations in conjunction with the Eurasia Regional Conferences: 4 November 2019, in Cyprus, and 23 January 2020, in Hyderabad, India.

"This came out of a need," said Mária Gusztinné-Tulipán, a member of the organizing committee from Hungary. "There's a lot of issues that the world – and we Christians, also – face about our identity. Sometimes you have hot debates at specific levels around very challenging issues."

The theme was drawn from 1 Peter 1:16 – 2:10, which was written to members of the early church, calling them to live out their identity and

vocation in a hostile environment. The passage has haunting relevance today in the Eurasia Region, asking how believers can express their calling and identity in these diverse contexts.

Rather than being lured into cultural debates about questions of identity, the committee aims for the conference participants to examine scripture and Wesleyan theology around identity and vocation as a holy people of God.

"That should inform what kind of responses we give to these challenging questions, generally as the Church of the Nazarene in Eurasia, and also in our context in each area of the region," Gusztinné-Tulipán said. "If we find our identity in Christ, that will bring us all together in the church to act rather than debate."

Four main papers will address the theme from four areas of emphasis: missiology, pastoral/practical theology, historical theology and biblical theology. Titles include: "On Earth as it is in Heaven," "Christian Discipleship in a Time of Uncertainty," and "Participating in the Mission of God."

There will also be several short response papers (in each area), and time set aside for small group dialogue around the presentations. Representatives of all four Nazarene colleges in Eurasia will be among the nearly two dozen presenters. The day will end with sharing holy communion.

"I think the importance of such a

conference for a global church like ours cannot be overstated," said Subhash Dongardive, a member of the conference planning committee from India, and director of advanced theological studies at South Asia Nazarene Bible College. "It helps the Nazarene scholars, leaders, along with the participants, to tie the loose ends of theological ideas and concepts together, resolve theological issues, and clarify theological doubts. It is rather dangerous to leave them unaddressed in the context of theological confusion and chaos in which we serve."

Having the conference in both regional conference locations – Cyprus and India – is designed to increase participation.

"Whenever Global or Regional Theological Conferences are held, representation has been sent from South Asia; however, it makes participation very limited," said Dongardive. "Having a separate Theology Day for India and South Asia (Pakistan, Nepal, Sri Lanka, and Bangladesh) would make the wider participation possible from each South Asian country and their respective districts. Also, some of our scholars get the opportunity to write and present papers on a wider platform of the Church."

Attendance is not just for theologians or academics, but is open to anyone who wishes to attend.

Registration is available on the regional conference website: www.invisibleconference.org. □

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

"Humble yourselves therefore under the mighty hand of God, that he may exalt you in due time."
-- 1 Peter 5:6

Prayer requests

Please pray for the Regional Theology Conference, taking place before the regional conferences in Cyprus (November) and India (January). Ask God to bless those who attend, that they would hear God's voice through the papers and discussions, and lead the church in holiness as vocation.

Pray for Ben and Amy, the first Nazarene missionaries in a South Asian country. Ask God to give them extra capacity for learning the language, for health and safety as they live and travel throughout the field, for deepening relationships, and for discernment and wisdom as they support the ministries of Nazarenes across the field.

Pray for the work in Romania that James Clarkson was part of through M+Power. Ask God to bless and direct plans to plant a new church in Brasov; and for the Nazarene leaders and lay people as they evangelize the lost, disciple and educate the believers, and follow the Holy Spirit in ministering to their nation. Ask God to direct James' next steps.

Where Worlds Meet

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

To subscribe, email to:

communications@eurasiaregion.org or
visit our website: eurasiaregion.org

Follow Us

Facebook: Facebook.com/eurasiaregion

Twitter: Twitter.com/eurasiaregion

Vimeo: Vimeo.com/eurasia

Website: www.eurasiaregion.org

Our Team

DAVID MONTGOMERY
Regional Communications Coordinator
dmontgomery@eurasiaregion.org

GINA POTTINGER
Editor, *Where Worlds Meet*
gpottenger@eurasiaregion.org

RAJIV YANGAD
India Field Communications Coordinator
yangadrajiv@gmail.com

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

ZEE GIMON
CIS Field Communications Coordinator
zgimon@eurasiaregion.org

TEANNA SUNBERG
Central Europe Field Communications Coordinator
tsunberg@eurasiaregion.org

RANDOLF WOLST
Website Content Manager
rwolst@eurasiaregion.org

NICOLE ALMEIDA
Regional Writer
nalmeida@eurasiaregion.org

ARTHUR SNIJDERS
Regional Director
awsnijders@eurasiaregion.org

Eurasia Regional Office
Junkerstrasse 60
Buesingen Am Hochrhein
Switzerland 8238
phone: (+49) 7734 93050
email: communications@eurasiaregion.org
www.eurasiaregion.org