

## **We are all a Part of the Great Commission**

### **How the Church of the Nazarene supports Missionaries**

In Acts chapter fourteen we see the activities of Paul and Barnabas as they are finishing their first missionary journey. Churches were established in several cities. New disciples were taught, and converts were trained to lead the churches. After four years they returned to Antioch.

The church of Antioch was their sending church. The four years had been filled with travels to many places. They had suffered hardships and opposition from religious leaders. They had also seen the Lord working in the hearts of people who heard the Gospel message for the very first time. We are not sure why Paul and Barnabas return after four years. It may have been that Paul and Barnabas realized if they were to continue to be effective in other cultures, they needed to return home to see loved ones and to share what God had been doing through their ministry. They needed to be refreshed through the support of their sending church.

In the Church of the Nazarene we require globally recognized missionaries to take a few months every couple of years away from their assignments to return to their home country, field and region. This is a time we call "Home Assignment". The purpose of Home Assignment is two-fold. The first reason it is to connect missions work in another location of the world with local churches. This is best done by missionaries who were sent out as they return for their Home Assignment. These missionaries give a first-hand report of God's work in their areas of ministry. This increases the involvement in the Great Commission through Missions awareness and prayer for the harvest. In Acts 14: 27–28 Paul and Barnabas did not report what they had done, but what the Lord had done. They were very careful to give God the glory for the wonderful results. They spent quality time with their sending church, and they reported how their work as missionaries had gone.

The second reason missionaries go on Home Assignment is the raising of support funds. The Church of the Nazarene has a blended system for financial support of missions and missionaries. We have a general fund called the World Evangelism Fund (WEF). As people around the world give through WEF, they are supporting the combined efforts of all Nazarene churches as we go into all the world. These funds provide the framework for the Nazarene global structure as well as the salaries for approximately half of the missionaries serving today. Every missionary benefits from WEF. Every missionary is also required to raise deputation funds to support their ministry focus. Deputation funds are needed for items such as vehicles, computers, equipment, furniture, travel and other ministry-related needs. It is through the selfless giving of local churches and individuals to deputation which allows missionaries to do the work they have been sent to do.

There is nothing more powerful than a report from one who has been there. If you want your church to better understand and have a deeper awareness of missions, then schedule a missionary speaker to come and share what God is doing through Nazarene missions. Having a missionary speak in your church or having several small churches combine efforts to host a missionary will give your people a vision beyond its own walls to become a missional church. As Nazarenes, we are a missional people!

## **How to Schedule a Missionary Speaker**

1. Contact your NMI president, Field NMI Coordinator or the Regional Office to see if there are missionaries available to speak.
2. Contact the missionary directly through email, telephone, WhatsApp or Facebook to see when they may be on Home Assignment (deputation) or visit their online Profile page at <https://nazarene.org/missionaryprofiles>
3. Arrange a time for the missionary family to come to your church/district to speak
  - a. It is best if several churches and/or districts work together to schedule a block of time for the missionary to be in your area. This helps to keep costs lower.
  - b. Think about organizing a special event such as a Missions weekend with food and fellowship.
  - c. Church services are always good times for the missionaries to share, but also consider Sunday School, Bible Studies, prayer groups, conventions, dinners and community impact weekends
4. Advertise when the missionaries are coming to speak in your church and community

## **What is the Church's Responsibility when inviting a Missionary?**

### **1. Communicate**

- a. Contact the missionary in advance to discuss details about the service. This might include:
  - i. The time service begins and typically ends
  - ii. The time you would like for them to arrive in order to set up
  - iii. The amount of time they will be given to speak.
- b. Communicate regarding technical needs.
  - i. Does the missionary have a power point or video to share?
  - ii. Does the church have the equipment to show a power point or should the missionary arrange to bring their own?

iii. Are there any other needs? Occasionally missionaries like to have a small table to display prayer cards or other items for the congregation to view from the country in which they serve.

c. Discuss housing and transportation needs.

d. Ask about their financial needs for deputation and special projects. Often deputation funds are used for the purchase and maintenance of a vehicle while on the field, but there are many other needs the missionary may have and can share.

## **2. Host.**

a. Care for the missionaries' needs while they are with you

i. Ask members of the church to supply meals, transportation, & lodging for the missionary family.

ii. Consider having a meal together as a church family to fellowship after the service

## **3. Give**

a. Make the financial needs known to your church/district so they can be prepared to partner with the work of the missionary.

b. Take up an offering at the end of the service for the missionary's deputation fund. This is separate from the regular tithes and offerings.

c. Remember, deputation funds do not belong to the missionary personally. They are designated for the work of that missionary in the mission field and can only be used for ministry-related expenses. All equipment purchased with deputation funds is property of the Church of the Nazarene.

## **4. Pray. Continue to partner with the missionary after they return to the field**

a. Prayer support is vital to accomplishing the Lord's work. Bathe the missionary in continued prayer

b. Stay in communication to encourage the missionary in the work.

c. Consider giving monthly or quarterly to support the mission work.

d. Send volunteers to assist in the work through short-term mission teams or volunteers to serve for a few months

e. Invite the missionary back to share the next time they are on Home Assignment