

# NMI Historical Celebration Points

We have plenty to celebrate! Below are some of the highlights of Nazarene missions.

1. Hiram F. Reynolds cast the vision for missions as Chief Executive of the General Board of Foreign Missions.
2. In 1915, at the fourth General Assembly, the General Assembly Committee on Foreign Missions recommended that each church have an organization to increase knowledge and interest in missions. This, the Woman's Missionary Society, began what we know today as Nazarene Missions International.
3. The basic tenets of the early WMS included increasing knowledge and interest in missions by prayer, by obtaining special speakers, by keeping in touch with the missionaries, and by cooperating with the local church board to raise apportionments for missions.
4. In 1915, three women were appointed to represent their three major geographic areas of the church and prepare a constitution and by laws for the local, district, and general WMS organizations: Rev. Mrs. Susan N. Fitkin (East region); Mrs. Ada Bresee (West) region; and Mrs. J.T. Benson (South Region).
5. In 1919, 14 women met to serve on the first Woman's General Missionary Committee (now the General NMI Council). They represented 7 areas in the United States, Canada, and the British Isles. Susan Fitkin was elected General President; Ada Bresee as Vice President; Mrs. J. T. Benson as Treasurer; and Dr. Julia Gibson as Secretary.
6. At the General Assembly in 1923, the first WMS constitution was officially adopted and placed in the *Manual*.
7. The first General WMS Convention was held in Columbus, Ohio, in June 1928, with the main lines of the organization established.
8. In 1928, the name was changed from Woman's Missionary Society to the Woman's Foreign Missionary Society (WFMS).
9. In 1952, the Women's Foreign Missionary Society was renamed Nazarene Foreign Mission Society as men, youth, and children were introduced into the organization.
10. In 1964, Nazarene Foreign Mission Society's name was changed to Nazarene World Missionary Society.
11. In 1980, Nazarene World Missionary Society's name was changed to the Nazarene World Mission Society to reflect the international aspect of the organization.
12. In 2001, the Nazarene World Mission Society's name was changed to Nazarene Missions International.

13. The focus of NMI has always been to filter ideas, challenges, and projects to the district and local NMI.
14. NMI is the denominations' organizational representative dedicated to the cause of world evangelization. Other departments also support missions, but NMI is tasked with bringing each mission area in to the local church so every Nazarene can be part of the global outreach, spreading the good news of full salvation (holiness) to the ends of the earth.
15. In October 1920, the first WFMS page in *The Other Sheep* (now part of *Holiness Today*) encouraged all to pray for missions.
16. In 1921, a missionary picture set that cost 10 cents was published to help people pray for specific missionaries. This was the forerunner of the *Missionary Prayer Book* and Missionary Profiles Online.
17. In April 1924, an article in *The Other Sheep* introduced the Prayer and Fasting League, which adopted a mission focus. The challenge was to fast one meal a week and pray for missions during the meal time; and to give at least 25 cents a week for the support of the missionary work, which became the World Evangelism Fund.
18. Even in the midst of the Great Depression WFMS giving increased almost doubled from before, to \$466,245.
19. In 1953 the Prayer Chart was introduced. Prayer requests were given in *The Other Sheep*, and put some of these on their prayer charts. Then a star was put beside requests as they were answered.
20. In 1958, the Nazarene Foreign Missionary Society introduced the Saturday night SKYWATCH, encouraging people to pray 30 minutes each week for the work on the mission fields, and 30 minutes for an unsaved loved one.
21. In 1981, the Prayer Mobilization Line became a special telephone line linking missionaries and local churches. People called 816-444-PRAY to learn about the latest needs.
22. Prayer Mobilization Line is now found on the NMI Website and is now delivered to 8573 people via email each week.
23. Prayer Mobilization Line has 2759 followers on its Facebook page, with an average 8.6k reach.
24. In 2012, PML began to be translated into Spanish.
25. In 2015, Prayer Mobilization Line will start being translated into Portuguese.
26. Since 1989, NMI has challenged members to pray for one million hours each quadrennium for the General Assemblies and Conventions, and constituents have repeatedly met these goals.

27. NMI provides resources for churches to use in celebrating the Nazarene World Week of Prayer, the International Day of Prayer for the Persecuted Church, 10/40 Window Prayer Focus, and more.
28. In 1913, a small magazine, *The Other Sheep*, was created to inform and inspire Nazarenes about missions. Years later, this became *World Mission Magazine*.
29. In 1920, the first leaflets were used as a source of mission education. The early leaflets focused on China and India, and teaching children about missions.
30. In 1927, the first study book, *Latin Americans, Our Southern Neighbors*, was published.
31. In 1934, the first Missionary Training Course was launched to give more in-depth information on missions.
32. In 1958, mission education lessons were developed specifically for children. Lessons for youth followed.
33. In 2010, NMI developed *Living Mission* to inform, inspire, and involve people in God's mission.
34. In 1934, a Missionary Training Course was launched which consisted of a study book, a biography of an outstanding missionary, and two missions books. Teens were required to read 16 of 25 books during the quadrennium.
35. Before mission books were developed for children, stories and pictures were published on a sheet of paper called *Junior Light Bearers*.
36. In 1964, the General Council of the Nazarene World Mission Society decided to offer mission books as books on tape...in cassette form.
37. In 2003, the NMI mission books were offered as audio books available on CDS.
38. In 2012, the mission books were offered in e-book and MP4 formats.
39. The mission education plan was revised in 1996 to give Nazarenes mission education credits for hands-on mission experiences, such as participating in mission service projects or attending district- or zone-sponsored events.
40. In 1964, NMI added a specific objective to focus on providing mission education and challenge for children and youth.
41. The first Youth Mission Commitment Day was held in November 1991
42. The Mission Call Coordinator role was added to local and district NMI councils with the charge to find, encourage, and develop children, youth, and young adults who feel God's call to mission service.
43. The first communication to local missionary societies was called *Bulletin*. In 1946 it was enlarged and called *General Council Tidings*. In 1982 the appeal broadened more and was called *Focus*.

44. In 2010, NMI partnered with Global Mission Mobilization and NYI to host Mission Immersion, which gave students an introduction to the missionary life.
45. In the early days, around 1924, the World Foreign Mission Society collected general dues of 10 cents per member per month (\$1.20 per year) to raise funds for world evangelism.
46. NMI provides resources to help churches encourage participation in the Easter, Thanksgiving, and Prayer and Fasting offerings, which support missions through the World Evangelism Fund.
47. In 1949, when the department of World Mission faced a financial crisis, Dr. Louise Chapman, general WFMS president, prayed all night asking God to give them a plan to meet the crisis. Early in the morning, God gave them the 10 Percent Plan—churches tithing income just as individuals do.
48. In 1991, the Award of Excellence program began, which honors churches overpaying their World Evangelism Fund by 3 percent or \$1000. A district receives the district Award of Excellence by paying 100 percent of its World Evangelism Fund.
49. In 2013, NMI initiated a World Evangelism Fund video series, to highlight stories of real people and ministries that were changed as a result of the World Evangelism Fund.
50. The Alaska district has given WEF in full for more than 60 years running.
51. In 1949, Rev. Elizabeth Vennum, a General Council member, presented the idea of people giving Alabaster love gifts to the Master, just as the woman in the Bible poured her alabaster jar of perfume on Jesus' head.
52. In 1949, the Board of General Superintendents approved the plan for Alabaster funds to be used exclusively for buildings and properties in cross-cultural ministries.
53. The first Alabaster boxes were provided in 1949 with their openings held in September and February. That first year, Alabaster offerings were \$46,602.
54. Alabaster love gifts have helped finance 10,000 building projects.
55. In 1994, the General NWMS Council instituted the Alabaster Love Building (ALB) program for donors to give toward a specific building or property in honor of individuals and churches.
56. Eighty percent of Alabaster funds go to world mission areas; twenty percent go to multicultural ministries in the United States and Canada.
57. In 1997, NWMS introduced an Alabaster box specifically for children.
58. In 1999-2000, the NWMS Council set a \$5 million goal to celebrate the 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of Alabaster. The goal was exceeded with \$7.3 million given.
59. In 2012, Alabaster giving reached the collective \$100 million mark.

60. In 1953, NFMS was asked to raise \$10,000 for the Spanish Broadcast Radio Ministry, which eventually became the World Mission Broadcast.
61. World Mission Broadcast now projects messages in 30 languages and dialects in more than 90 countries of the world.
62. In 1919, each member of the WMS was asked to contribute 10 cents a year to the Relief and Retirement Fund to provide medical aid and pensions for missionaries. This amount was gradually increased to 60 cents.
63. In 1976, Relief and Retirement was renamed Medical Plan, with the name changed again in 2005 to Missionary Health Care.
64. In 1919, the Memorial Roll program began, stipulating the contribution of \$25 (now \$50) to place the name of a deceased loved one or friend on the Memorial Roll. These donations support missionary health care.
65. In 1976, Distinguished Service Awards were introduced with the \$100 proceeds going to Missionary Health Care. The award honors a living person for his or her service in the church.
66. In 2001, Gifts from the Heart was introduced so people can donate to the Missionary Health Care for anniversaries, birthdays, new arrivals, or to honor others.
67. In 1916, WMS Nazarenes in the Southern California District began “Box Work” to support missionaries in a tangible way, sending boxes of donations to the mission field.
68. In 1976, the LINKS program began through which districts adopt missionaries to pray for them, write letters, provide financial gifts, and celebrate the missionaries’ special occasions with them.
69. In the early 1950s, the Missionary Christmas Fund began, which ensured that all missionary families would receive money for Christmas gifts and subscriptions to denominational periodicals.
70. In 1929, the Nazarene Missionary Sanitarium and Institute, later known as the Samaritan Hospital and School of Nursing was started to provide medical help for ailing missionaries on furloughs and to provide a training center for future missionary nurses.
71. The first recorded instance of Nazarene compassionate ministries was a 1920 drought-caused famine that left 20 million people in China starving. A China Famine Relief Fund received \$25,000 and Nazarene missionaries there were also placed in charge of relief projects and distributing thousands of dollars worth of food provided by the International Relief Commission.
72. In the 1970s, the church of the Nazarene began to enter the area of compassionate ministries as part of its planned agenda.

- 73.** A famine in Haiti in 1975 led to the establishment of the Hunger Fund to help such crises. The next year, after an earthquake in Guatemala, this was renamed the Hunger and Disaster Fund.
- 74.** Between 1975 and the end of the quinquennium, \$1.25 million was sent in for the Hunger and Disaster Fund and 23 countries had received help.
- 75.** In the early 1970s, the Nazarene Medical Fellowship was created with a focus to help with missions. Doctors were available for phone and shortwave radio consultations with mission hospitals, and invited full-time doctors to join their staffs for learning purposes. When dentists joined the program, it was renamed the Nazarene Medical-Dental Fellowship. This is now part of NCM.
- 76.** In the 1980s, Rev. H. B. London, Jr., as pastor at Salem Oregon, started a “Great Commission School of Missions” to instruct those with various skills and professions who wanted to volunteer a few months on World Mission fields. This was later called Nazarenes in Volunteer Service.
- 77.** A spin-off of NIVS was Nazarene Agmission Volunteers (NAV), which helped mission countries develop programs and agricultural methods to provide essential food supplies.
- 78.** In 1972, Dr. Paul Gamertsfelder and Dr. Morris Weigelt were the first two men elected to the General NMI Council.
- 79.** Initially to get men more active in NWMS, in 1973, Dr. Paul Gamertsfelder began a program called “Men in Mission,” a program in which men paid their own way to go to the mission field and use their skills to build the kingdom. Later this became Work & Witness.
- 80.** In 1976, a full time Work & Witness coordinator was hired to work with this popular program, which NMI leaders support and often plan locally and in the districts.
- 81.** In 1984, Nazarene Compassionate Ministries (NCM) was formed to facilitate the compassionate ministry effort of the Church of the Nazarene around the world.
- 82.** In 1975, the Nazarene Hunger and Disaster Fund began as NWMS members and other Nazarenes began giving spontaneously to help victims of natural disasters. The name was changed to NCM Fund in 1991 and through it, NMI leaders mobilize people to show their care in tangible ways.
- 83.** In 1994, NCM and NWMS joined forces to form the MedCare Pak program. It was later replaced with Crisis Care Kits.
- 84.** In 2005, NMI started working with the School Pal-Pak program that helped children around the world with packages of needed school supplies.
- 85.** In 1948, WFMS sponsored the Fitkin Bible Training School in China, raising \$74,000 in honor of Susan Fitkin’s retirement as society president.
- 86.** In 1954, NFMS gathered \$100,000 to help open the work of Papua New Guinea to celebrate the 40<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of NFMS.

87. In 1959, the NFMS Juniors' offering to open work in Samoa raised \$40,000.
88. In 1964-1965, for NWMS's 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary \$150,000 was raised to build the hospital in Papua, New Guinea.
89. In 1964, Africa Literature Fund was NWMS's project to honor Dr. Louise Chapman's retirement as NWMS president.
90. In 1982, NWMS raised \$592,000 in the Venezuela Project offering to open work there.
91. In 1986, the *International Mission Education Journal* project raised \$75,646 for the translation of mission education materials into other languages. This honored Wanda Knox, former missionary and general NWMS director.
92. In 1995, NWMS's 75<sup>th</sup> Anniversary project was raising \$885,484 for Evangelism in Hong Kong/Chinese communities worldwide.
93. In 1996, NWMS raised a special offering of \$150,000 for Casa Robles, a missionary retirement center.
94. In 1996, NWMS's 80<sup>th</sup> anniversary project was giving \$450,000 toward the International Student Scholarship Fund.
95. In 1997, NWMS's denomination-wide children's project Wings for the Gospel raised \$500,000 for Nazarene Mission Aviation in the Mexico/Central America and African Regions.
96. In 2004, "Witness on Wheels" (WOW) the NMI denomination-wide children's project raised \$419,000 to provide transportation for ministry to children and their leaders (Asia-Pacific, Caribbean, Eurasia, and South America Regions).
97. NMI's 90<sup>th</sup> Anniversary project, "Books for Pastors—Tools for Ministry" raised \$2.4 in 2004-2006 to help implement the Wesleyan-Holiness Digital Library, which is a free, open access, digital resource of books, literature, multimedia material, and archives.
98. Since 1923, participants in what is now NMI have studied 1040 leaflets, study books, mission books, and other mission education materials.
99. In 2014, NMI members numbered 1,027,004 globally, with NMI in 16,708 local churches.
100. Next to the USA/Canada region, the Africa region has the most NMI participants, numbering 200,941.
101. In 2014, NMI partnered with pastors, church boards, Global Mission, and Stewardship to help churches raise \$37,745,955 for the World Evangelism Fund
102. Beyond the World Evangelism Fund, in 2014, churches gave \$26, 690,717 US.

- 103.** Nazarenes are evangelizing or discipling people in 159 world areas.
- 104.** Global missionaries were deployed from 35 world areas in 2014—8 world areas more than the previous year.
- 105.** 702 missionaries and 310 missionary kids (including Mission Corps kids) served in 2014, including 307 Mission Corps.
- 106.** In 2014, Missionary Health Care provided US\$418,371 for Nazarene missionaries.
- 107.** In 2014, LINKS generated US\$253,277 (up 6.60% percent from 2013), connecting churches and missionaries. NMI continued to improve the LINKS process.
- 108.** In 2014, Nazarenes gave \$2,565,079 for Alabaster offerings. Since NMI began this offering in 1949, members have given more than \$100 million for projects including churches and chapels, Bible schools, other school buildings, mission and district centers, hospitals and clinics, missionaries' and national workers' homes, land, and other projects. The Alabaster Offering is used in all six global regions—Africa, Asia-Pacific, Eurasia, Mesoamerica, South America, and USA/Canada. No Alabaster funds are used for administrative costs.
- 109.** In 2014, the NMI International Student Scholarship Fund provided 109 scholarships for students to attend Nazarene theological institutions globally—an increase of 36 scholarships from the year before.
- 110.** In 2014 NMI partnered with World Mission Broadcast (WMB), giving US\$440,431, an increase of \$20,815, to air the gospel in 72 countries, 34 languages, and 140 broadcast programs.
- 111.** In 2014, NMI partnered with JESUS Film Harvest Partners, which helps 619 Nazarene JESUS Film teams share God's love. From October 2013 through September 2014, these teams reported 3,120,174 evangelistic contacts, with 747,949 (24 percent) indicating decisions for Christ and 528,039 (71 percent of decisions) discipleship follow-ups. JESUS Film teams started 7,058 preaching points in the 2014 fiscal year.
- 112.** NMI partnered with NCM to send a total of 625,913 Crisis Care kits worldwide.
- 113.** NMI partnered with NCM to send a total of 97,270 School Pal-Paks.
- 114.** In 2014, NMI partnered with NCM to support 12,780 children through Child Development Centers and Pastor Kid Programs.
- 115.** In 2014, NMI helped Work & Witness raise US\$2,288,891 (up 18.25% from 2013) to deploy 623 teams consisting of 6715 adults and 3296 youth for a total of 10,011 participants.
- 116.** Since 1974, 15,294 Work & Witness (W&W) teams with 254,941 participants have worked a sum of 8,016 *years* of donated labor.



117. In 1954, the first Spanish program, “La Hora Nazarena” was produced to be broadcast to Mexico, despite the ban on religious broadcasting in the country. At one time 800 local Latin America stations of all sizes carried the program.
118. *Engage* magazine reports regularly on missions around the world. In 2014 the *Engage* subscription base was 3886, with individuals visiting the *Engage* website at the rate of 3472 visits per month.
119. The Church of the Nazarene had an international dimension from its beginning. By the uniting assembly of 1908, Nazarenes served and witnessed not only in North America but also as missionaries in Mexico, the Cape Verde Islands, India, Japan, and South Africa.
120. The Church of the Nazarene’s extension into the Australia-South Pacific area began in 1945.
121. In 1948, the Church of the Nazarene moved into mission fields in continental Europe.
122. By 1936, the ratio of national workers to missionaries throughout the worldwide Church of the Nazarene was greater than five to one.
123. The Nazarene Medical Missionary Union organized in the early 1920s to build Bresee Memorial Hospital in Tamingfu, China.
124. Education is an aspect of world ministry exemplified early by Hope School for Girls, founded in Calcutta by Mrs. Sukhoda Banarji in 1905 and adopted the following year by the Church of the Nazarene.
125. The earliest work outside the United States and Canada was in India, followed by Cape Verde, China, Japan, and Mexico. The Pentecostal Mission, which merged with the Church of the Nazarene in 1915, added mission work in Cuba, Central America, and South America.
126. As the church grew culturally and linguistically diverse, it committed itself in 1980 to internationalization—a deliberate policy of being one church of congregations and districts worldwide, rather than splitting into national churches like earlier Protestant denominations had done.
127. By the 2001 General Assembly, 42 percent of delegates spoke English as their second language or did not speak it at all.
128. Today, 65 percent of Nazarenes and over 80 percent of the church's 439 districts are outside the United States.
129. In earlier days, some parts of the world were more open to the gospel, so there were Nazarene congregations in Syria and Palestine by 1922.
130. General Superintendent H. F. Reynolds advocated "a mission to the world," support for world evangelization became a distinguishing characteristic of Nazarene life.

- 131.** In 2012, the General Board approved for the Church of the Nazarene to enter the following areas: Africa Region—South Sudan; Mesoamerica Region—Turks and Caicos; and a new Creative Access Area.
- 132.** 444 Districts have been established around the world with nearly 26,000 clergy.
- 133.** For NMI's 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary celebration, "100 Years. One Mission. Endless Possibilities," regions and Nazarene mission entities submitted initiatives for districts around the world to adopt. Nearly \$1.5 million worth of projects have been adopted.