

GENERAL ASSEMBLY: REVISITED

Postponed for two years as a result of Covid-19, the 30th General Assembly and Conventions were held 9th-16th June in Indianapolis, Indiana, USA. It was a long wait; the last General Assembly was held in 2017. And from the four corners they came – from nearly 170 world areas – in their hundreds and thousands. The Eurasia Region, which has nearly 8,000 congregations and over 285,000 members was well represented with over 240

delegates and visitors attending – this included nearly 40 from the UK.

Meeting under the theme, “Jesus the Hope”, the programme included seminars, business meetings, an exhibition hall, regional events, evening worship and praise gatherings, a Sunday morning preaching and communion celebration. As part of the assembly business, two new General Superintendents were elected.

For some, who attended from the UK, it was their first experience of a General Assembly...here are some of their reports.

From the beginning Dr Gustavo Crocker (General Superintendent) stated that the Church of the Nazarene belonged to no gathering or authority (including Generals) other than Jesus. Rapturous applause and cheers from thousands of worldwide representatives confirmed consent from the church. Here I felt that Dr Crocker had taken the church and placed it in Jesus' hands, which was a beautiful thing to see. We truly have a blessed church. **Stewart MacPhail – Cramlington**

I was both honoured and humbled to be invited to participate as South District Youth Pastor at the 2023 NYI convention, and as a visitor to the wider General Assembly. At first, the scale of the event felt slightly overwhelming, however, I was truly inspired by the beauty and diversity of our denomination, and how incredible the global community we are part of really is. Adjusting the lens through which I view church, to recognise its global reach, while being blessed by its local strength in so many places, has been a real blessing for me. **Pastor Beth Ford – Bolton Brownlow Fold**

I have long dreamt of attending the General Assembly, and it was an honour to be a delegate for the South District. Encountering Nazarenes from all over the world, speaking with leaders whose work I've followed for years, and reconnecting with old friends all made it an experience I'll never forget. **Rev David Gilmour – Llay**

What a joy and a privilege to be a delegate and represent the North District as an elder at my first General Assembly. The theme was 'Jesus is Lord'. It was overwhelming but exciting to be involved in making decisions about the future of our church in “making disciples of all nations”. I also helped to man the Nazarene Theological College stand in the Exhibition Hall. **Rev Lorraine Bell – Belfast Donegall Road**

It was a privilege and joy to be there worshipping with our Global church family, hearing stories of lives transformed and restored all over the world. **Helen McPhail – Cramlington**

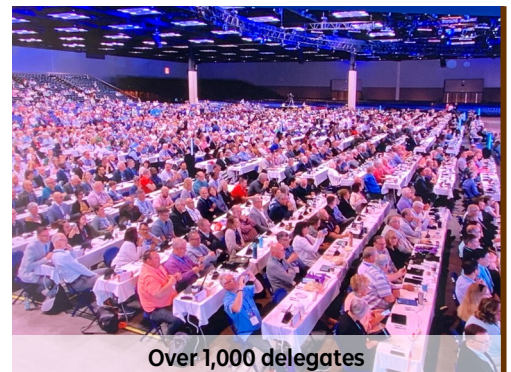
It was an absolute honour to represent the South District at the General Assembly. Worshipping with so many like-minded sisters and brothers was something I'll never forget! **Sarah Gilmour – Llay**

The General Assembly was something I always dreamt of attending, so my first time was an experience I will never forget. From being voted as a delegate to being in NMI (missionary convention) meetings and meeting people from all over the world; words cannot describe the feeling of being there in person. The biggest highlight was meeting a Papua New Guinea (PNG) family who I felt I already knew from living with Rev Ellen Syvret (former missionary to PNG). Meeting Rev Peter Kui (PNG District Superintendent) and his family was a special moment as we cried and hugged. To see how God saves his people through people called to the Church of the Nazarene makes me feel honoured and blessed to be a part of it. **Pastor Jenna Jones – Leeds Sanctuary**

It was a privilege to represent the North District at the General Assembly; this was a new experience for me and I wasn't quite sure what to expect. Most of my days were spent on the Christian Action committee and it was hard work. However, the evening gatherings and the Sunday morning service where we worshipped together and shared communion as the global church were beautiful and significant. General Assembly is a great time to be reminded that we are part of a bigger story as individuals, as churches, as followers of Jesus Christ. **Rev Ruth Turner – North District Superintendent**



UK Delegates



Over 1,000 delegates



New General Superintendent
Dr T. Scott Daniels



New General Superintendent
Dr Christian Sarmiento



Eurasia Delegates & Visitors

IN MEMORIAM *Remembering those who have served*



Rev Joseph (Joe) John Bentham passed away 1st July – the day after his 85th birthday. Born in Lambeth, London, Joe had a challenging childhood which included losing his father who was killed in N. Africa during World War II when Joe was 4. A career in building and architecture was cut short as a result of financial pressures at home. Over the years Joe had a number of jobs which included postal worker, an army career in the Grenadier Guards – Joe received the smartest guardsman award and served during the Cyprus conflict (1956-1959) – and, more recently, working as a traffic warden and then for 10 years for the Watford Police as Station Duty Officer. But it was in 1959, while he was employed in the wages department of a steel manufacturer that Joe met Naomi Tranter. This resulted in a friendship that was to lead to marriage and an introduction to the Tranter family, which introduced Joe to the Christian Faith. Joe came to faith in 1961. Joe & Naomi were the first couple to be married in the original Woodside building. They eventually became parents to 3 sons, Mark, Graham and Matthew.

Between 1973 and 1982 the Benthams lived and ministered in New Zealand and Australia with Joe pastoring Nazarene churches and for a time serving as District Superintendent in New Zealand. Joe was ordained in 1981. Upon returning to the UK Joe was to become pastor of the London, Clapham Junction Church for some 14 years. It was a severe blow when, in the space of a couple of years, Joe and Naomi were to lose two of their sons, Matthew in 2019 and Graham in 2021. Both sons are deeply missed.

A Service of Thanksgiving for the life and ministry of Rev Joe Bentham was held Friday, 21st July in the Woodside, Watford Church. Led by Warren S. Tranter (brother-in-law to Joe, who brought the main tribute) others taking part included, Rev Tommy Goodwin MBE (former interim pastor), Lorraine Daw (Clapham Junction Church), and members of the family. For the closing hymn, Naomi went to the keyboard and Mark Bentham took up his guitar to lead the congregation in the singing of the closing hymn, "It is well, with my soul."

CHURCH RENOVATION



- Other areas of ministry will include: breakfast club for community or coffee. mornings; Feeding the homeless and Luncheon for seniors.
- All weekly services and Bible study will be live streamed on YouTube.

Pictured are local pastor, Dr Trevor Christians and Twyla Christians. Dr Christians reports;

"In December 2019, we embarked on the long-awaited building renovation project. In fact, initial plans started back in 2015 with designs and planning approval from the local council. We were all excited as the dream of a new church building was about to become a reality. We continued having church services in the old sanctuary in 2020 until we were told to vacate the premises as the building site was declared unsafe for us to continue with church services.

A few months into the project everything came to a standstill because of Covid19 and church services went on-line, and the building project was delayed for about two years. We began to feel the pressure of not having our own premises and many became disillusioned and left, others remained indoors yet some remained faithful. Our finances were being depleted and ways had to be found to keep the gospel ship moving forward. God led me to call our church to prayer and fasting, and God heard our cry and our people began giving beyond what they were able to give! Telephonic prayer initiatives were started which continues to this day. Some passersby, who attended our church as Sunday School children, began ringing and wanted to make a donation to the church. People from all over the world pledged and donated to the work at Clapham Junction. We are indeed indebted to all of God's faithful people, our District Leadership, and Global Church Alabaster funding, for standing with us during this time.

About a year ago we were able to move into the new wing of our new church and have services again - it was a very emotional time for us. We now anxiously await the final completion of our main sanctuary and the dedication of our new church building. The end goal and long-awaited vision is about to become a reality. Soon, very soon, we will have much cause to celebrate the completion and dedication of our new sanctuary. "To God be the glory great things He has done."

Originally Speke Hall – the headquarters of the Pentecostal League of Prayer led by R. Reader Harris KC – the work united with the Church of the Nazarene in the early 1950s. Redevelopment of the area in the 1960s resulted in the relocation of the church to Grant Road and the new Clapham Junction Church of the Nazarene building was opened on 23th May 1970.

The church building, which was over 50 years old, has been completely renovated and a new wing added. The old building consisted of a ground floor hall and the first-floor hall which was where church services were held. Now the first floor has been broken through to create a high ceiling with the church sanctuary now on the ground floor, and with a new entrance from Grant Road (no longer a side entrance but a front entrance). The new wing consists of the following:

1. Two-bedroom manse/flat on first floor
2. Modern commercial kitchen
3. Atrium/Minor hall
4. Disabled toilet
5. Male and Female toilets
6. Pastor's office

Ministry opportunities that lie ahead include...

- Seminars and conferences can be held in the atrium and sanctuary.
- Plans to open a Coffee Shop.
- The flat could be used as a rental for short stay B&B.
- The first floor will be used for office space/work station.





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BUSY SUMMER AT NTC

Principal Visits

NTC's Principal Deirdre Brower Latz spoke at the Goshen Centre (UK) alongside NTC Alum Dieudonne Nzayi and attended the Science for Seminaries conference in Durham.

Summer Festivals

NTC was well represented at summer festivals this year. Ian Rooney and Anne Isaacs (pictured right) represented NTC at Dreaming the Impossible and Anna Whitfield joined several panels on youth ministry and community development at Greenbelt. George Herrera exhibited at a video game conference and several others.

Roof Repairs Complete

At long last, the £100,000+ repairs to the White House's 100+ year old roof is complete. Thank you for your generosity!

UPCOMING EVENTS

9th - 11th October:

The Didsbury Lectures with Dr Amos Yong.
Book in at bit.ly/NTCDidsbury23

21st October:

NTC Graduation with Dr Andy Ollerton



ONLINE PROGRAMMES AT NTC

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RETIREMENT



Representatives from the Hartlepool, Cramlington, and Sunderland churches joined with the Stockton fellowship, on Saturday, 24th June, to mark the retirement of Rev Ernest & Anne Stafford. The Staffords have been engaged in the Christian ministry for over 50 years in Nazarene Pastorates, and serving as missionaries in South America with the OMS (now One Mission) and the Church of the Nazarene. In addition, the Staffords have served in the Free Methodist Church in Ulster and in the Methodist Church in the USA. For the past 10 years, and in their retirement years, the Staffords have pastored the Stockton Church of the Nazarene.

Those taking part in the 'Farewell Service' included Rev Rob Fitzjohn (Cramlington), Rev Ruth Turner (DS), who brought a short message, and local church member, Heather Paterson, who presented the Staffords with a lovely clock. The service was led by Rev Stafford. Pictured are the Staffords with Rev Ruth Turner (DS).

COMMUNITY FUN DAY

The Lurgan, N. Ireland, church hosted a 'Fun Day' on Saturday, 9th August. Full use was made of the carpark area as well as the church hall. Activities ranged from a mobile farm with pony & trap rides, a play bus, inflatables, colouring and baking competitions - which were judged by local MP Carla Lockart and Councillor Peter Haire (who are pictured with Lurgan pastor, Rev Philip Evans, centre). The Church Sanctuary was a quiet space and had been transformed into a prayer garden.

Rev Evans reports, "...with almost 400 folk coming through the gates and nearly 300 burgers served, we rejoice in the many contacts made and seeds sown for the Kingdom."



OTHER NEWS



MISSION TO BULGARIA

A team from Glasgow East Nazarene (Parkhead Nazarene and The Charter) travelled to Bulgaria 19th-31st July to work alongside District Superintendent, Rev Zhaneta Georgieva-Yordanova. The team helped to run 'kids-clubs' in the villages of Vidrare and Dzurovo. The theme was, "Who God Is and What He Has Done For Us", and the programme included Bible stories, crafts, songs and games. About 50 children attended from both villages. The team also made visits to the 'Protected Home' in Vidrare, which is a facility for young adults with special needs, as well as participating in a hill-top communion service with the Manaselska reka church project. Pictured, (back row: l.to r) Alicia Smith, Heather Allan, Beth Allan, (front row: l.to r) Georgia Smith, Deian Dimitrov (Principal of the Vidrare School), DS Zhaneta Georgieva-Yordanova, Ruth Lloyd (this is Ruth's 11th Mission trip to Bulgaria).



COMMISSIONING SERVICE

Bethany Pierce, Youth Leader at Lisburn Nazarene, has accepted a position with Logos Ministries International as a Youth & Schools Outreach Worker commencing September 2023. A Commissioning Service for Bethany was held on Sunday morning, 10th September at the

Lisburn Church of the Nazarene. Pray for Bethany as she commences this work visiting Schools, SU groups and Church Youth Groups, in addition to her role as NYI President at Lisburn. Pictured are members of the Lisburn NMI Committee (l.to r) Edward Crothers, Deborah Pierce, Bethany Pierce, Pastor Stephen McTernaghan, Carolynne McTernaghan.

BREAKTHRU

The South District Church Holiday was held 16th-20th August at Cliff College, Derbyshire, with over 200 attending. Immediately preceding Breakthru (14th-16th August) a Pastors Retreat was held. This year's Breakthru theme was "Shakeable People, Unshakeable God" with Rev Ruth Turner (North District Superintendent) as the speaker; Gabriel Modesto (Birmingham) was the speaker for the teens. The programme included a theatre show from 4Front Theatre Company, wood-fired pizzas, a Disney Themed night and much more.



NORTH DISTRICT YOUTH

Many were disappointed when Northbreak 2023 was cancelled so the District YP leadership planned some events during what would have been "Northbreak Week". with events held on Saturday 5th August in Carlisle and Belfast. In Carlisle, 30 people from 4 churches enjoyed a programme of games, milkshakes, and some wonderful food provided by Fay McGowan and the Carlisle folk.

In Northern Ireland the event was to have been a "Beach Bash" held at Whiterocks Beach on the North Coast but the presence of blue-green algae meant the event had to be held in the Belfast, Megain, Church. The "Big Beach Bash" included an indoor BBQ, games hosted by the Desertmartin and Megain churches – which included volleyball and 'Nuke'n'Ball' (a Nazarene classic!) water pistols and a karaoke. Approx 45 from 5 churches attended and the organisers say, "It was great to have so many young people gathered together, seeing friends, making new ones and overall connecting with one another."



SUNDAY SCHOOL CAMP

"Nearly 50 campers from across the North District participated in this year's Nazarene Discipleship International Camp held during the week beginning 17th July at the Windmill Christian Centre, Arbroath. The theme for the week was "What Would Jesus Do?" which helped campers explore what it might look like to live for Jesus in every area of their lives. Activities included a 'town scavenger hunt', a day at the beach and the 'Masked Singer!' The last night was a special highlight as we witnessed the Holy Spirit moving powerfully and a number of our young people giving their lives to Christ. Thank you for your prayers and support for Summer Camp this year."

