

Connecting A New Generation

"We are the people of the 21st century," sang the 350-voice children's choir opening the Saturday night service of the 25th General Assembly. Dr. James H. Diehl spoke eloquently on "Jesus the Hope for All Generations." He read the proclamation from the Board of General Superintendents declaring the next 10 years a decade of emphasis on children and youth.

Today, children and youth have lives marked by uprootedness, disruption, insecurity, danger, and fear. Jesus the Hope is the answer. Every child saved at an early age has a lifetime to give to God. Rev. D. L. Moody was asked about a service where he preached. He answered, "Two and one-half people accepted Christ."

"Do you mean two adults and one child?"

"No," replied Rev. Moody, "on the contrary, it was two children and one adult. Adults have only half their lives left."

The Church of the Nazarene desires to reach children and youth and connect them and their families with faith in Jesus Christ.

The question is, "Will you make a difference? Will you commit to touching the lives of children and youth in the next 10 years?"

We will tell the next generation the praiseworthy deeds of the LORD, his power, and the wonders he has done (Psalm 78:4).

W. Talmadge Johnson
General Superintendent
Church of the Nazarene

Connecting A New Generation

eurasia
region

*Responding to the Great Commission,
the mission for the Eurasia Region of the Church of the Nazarene is
to develop an indigenous, interdependent, self-supporting,
holiness church in the Wesleyan-Arminian tradition.*

Connecting A New Generation

PROCLAMATION STATEMENT

WHEREAS children and youth make up more than one-third of the world's population;

WHEREAS children and youth are being increasingly influenced by forces outside the family and church;

WHEREAS many children and youth live lives increasingly scarred by uprootedness and disruption, resulting in helplessness;

WHEREAS the Church of the Nazarene desires to become an intergenerational faith community where children and youth are loved and valued;

WHEREAS the prime age to win a person to Christ is between the ages of 4 and 14;

THEREFORE THE BOARD OF GENERAL SUPERINTENDENTS CALLS THE CHURCH TO A DECADE OF EMPHASIS ON CHILDREN AND YOUTH—CONNECTING A NEW GENERATION.

WE HEREBY PROCLAIM JANUARY 2002 THROUGH JANUARY 2012 TO BE A DECADE FOR CONNECTING A NEW GENERATION WITHIN THE CHURCH OF THE NAZARENE.

Connecting A New Generation challenges each church to:

- ✧ Assess the needs and critical issues facing children and youth in its community.
- ✧ Create ministries that will meet the needs of children and youth.
- ✧ Support and nurture the family.
- ✧ Integrate children and youth into the faith community.

Connecting A New Generation

Mission, Vision, Action Steps

Our Mission

- ✧ To raise awareness and appreciation of the value of children and youth in the kingdom of God. They are "disciples in training," not "disciples in waiting."
- ✧ To encourage churches to minister effectively to the whole person—physically, mentally, emotionally, socially, and spiritually.
- ✧ To challenge and equip church leaders to envelop children and youth fully into the life and ministry of the faith community.
- ✧ To challenge and equip parents to nurture the spiritual formation of their children and youth.

Our Vision

We envision the Church of the Nazarene as an intergenerational faith community where children and youth are loved and valued, where they are ministered to and incorporated into the Church family through a wide variety of means and methods, and where they have opportunities to minister to others in ways consistent with their ages, development, abilities, and spiritual gifts.

Action Steps

Connection 1: **Commitment.**

Commit to making a difference in the lives of children and youth. Pledge to making a different world for children and youth in the next 10 years.

Connection 2: **Task Group.**

Select a task group to assess and make recommendations.

Connection 3: **Assess your church's emphasis on children and youth.**

Intention: That the task group leaders in each congregation will explore the following questions each year as an evaluative and directional tool.

1. What are the benefits/results of our current ministries to children and youth?
2. What are the current needs of children and youth in our church? Which of these needs are most significant for the church to fulfill?
3. What resources are available to meet the needs listed above? (people, finances, and programs)
4. In what ways is the church encouraging spiritual maturity in children and youth?
5. In what ways are children and youth involved in the vital ministry of the church?
6. What are the greatest needs (physical, mental, social, emotional, or spiritual) of the children and youth in our local community?
7. What will it take to address the needs described in the previous question?
8. What is God's desire for this church's ministry to children and youth? What prayers are we offering for children and youth?

Connection 4: **Goals**

Read the ten year goals and suggested implementation strategies accompanying this document or visit the <connecting.nazarene.org> website.

Connection 5: **Goals**

Refine these goals and strategies to meet your needs.

Connection 6: **Strategy**

Develop short and long-term implementation strategies.

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Goals

Goal 1:

That every church will annually assess the critical issues facing the children and youth in its community.

- ✧ Be aware of what children and youth need to experience quality life in all areas (physically, mentally, spiritually, socially, and emotionally).
- ✧ Create an assessment device to recognize the critical needs and issues of the children and youth in your community. Possible questions to include are:
 - ~ Is this a need in our church or community?
 - ~ What are we doing to meet this need?
 - ~ What (more) can we do to meet this need?

Goal 2:

That churches will explore the resources available to help them minister to children and youth.

- ✧ Evaluate your current ministry to children and youth. Identify resources available to you: health and welfare, intellectual development, spiritual formation, and social issues.
- ✧ Identify key personnel (regional, field, district) with specialized knowledge in various ministry areas: food programs, after school opportunities, mentoring, tutoring, or family ministry. Contact these persons for individual help.

Goal 3:

That every church will create ministries to meet the needs of children and youth.

- ✧ Research ministry ideas others are doing.
- ✧ Evaluate those ministries for meeting the needs of children and youth in your church.

Goal 4:

That every church will support and resource the family as a God-ordained structure for nurturing children and youth.

- ✧ Provide materials that highlight the scriptural teachings/understandings about children and youth, especially those that identify parents' responsibility to nurture their children and youth.
- ✧ Research sources for family ministry ideas at <connecting.nazarene.org>.
- ✧ Have a conference sometime during the decade that includes the issues faced in your area relating to children, youth, and their families.
- ✧ Contact the denominational Family Ministries office for current resources about family life at <www.nazarene.org> or <childmin@nazarene.org>.
- ✧ Plan family-oriented activities.

Goal 5:

That every church will help children and youth identify fully with Christ, helping them enter into a personal relationship with Him.

- ✧ Help the church see the value of children and youth.
- ✧ Develop and provide resources for your children and youth ministries.
- ✧ Give all children and youth the opportunity to accept Jesus Christ as their Savior.

Goal 6:

That all ministries within the church will partner to integrate children and youth into the faith community.

- ✧ Share stories of how children and youth have impacted the kingdom of God, such as helping parents or others to become Christians or completing ministry projects.
- ✧ Plan service projects (missions, Work & Witness, assisting others with needs in the local community) suitable for children and youth and their families.
- ✧ Provide stewardship materials for children and youth, and encourage stewardship among children and youth.
- ✧ Relate stories of children and youth in your area who are becoming vital agents of Kingdom work.

Goal 7:

That churches will consider ways to celebrate the significant developmental and spiritual milestones in the lives of children and youth.

- ✧ Affirm milestones and accomplishments of children and youth. Highlight events such as baby dedications/baptisms, salvation, church membership, and school events.
- ✧ Provide inexpensive awards and gifts to commemorate special milestones.

Goal 8:

That churches will disciple children and youth.

- ✧ Provide discipleship lessons for children and youth.
- ✧ Help parents know how to nurture their children and youth spiritually.

Contacts on the Eurasia Region

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If you are interested in receiving this brochure for use on your district or in your local churches, please contact the Eurasia Regional Office.