

17TH ANNUAL REPORT / 2023

Rev. Steve Scott, District Superintendent

Consistency

FAITH – TRUTH – PRESENCE



Debbie & Steve Scott
37th Anniversary - Hungry Horse, MT

WITH SINCERE GRATITUDE I bring my 17th report as

District Superintendent of the Sacramento District, now in my

35th year as an ordained elder in the Church of the Nazarene. I'm humbled every day by the profound blessing of knowing and serving Jesus Christ as my Savior and Lord, and I thank God for the honor of serving with a leadership team that includes the following colleagues and friends who are faithfully serving the Sacramento District:

...from the District Office, Kaitlin Peoples/Executive Assistant (8 ½ yrs.), coordinator of office procedures, editor of all district publications, and assistant with various duties of the District Superintendent; Bonnie Marroquin/ Administrative Assistant since July of 2022, who serves as logistical coordinator for all major district events, and assists with clerical duties in the office; and Delona Archer/District Treasurer for the past 21 ½ months. Kaitlin, Bonnie, and Delona all serve with a great spirit and a deep love for the church. I am honored to serve with them!

...all the Senior/Lead Pastors, Associate Pastoral Staff and spouses who faithfully serve the communities of the Sacramento District.

...the District Advisory Board: Rev. Renee Bennett/Stockton Axis; Rev. John Perez/Sacramento Community; Rev. Scott Hubbard/Lodi Faith Community; Rev. Doug Smith/Yuba City Hope Point; Joe McCoy/Oroville, Mark Bennett/Stockton Axis; Jeff Dickerson/ Auburn Parkside; Gary Greeno/ Stockton Horizon. I deeply appreciate your heart and mind for the Kingdom of God, and for your companionship on this journey.

...Rev. Austin Bender/Nazarene Youth Int'l President; Rev. Darlene Franks/ Nazarene Discipleship Int'l Chair; Rev. Dan Hopkins/ Nazarene Missions Int'l President; Dr. Leon Skinner/ District Institute of Ministry Director; Rev. Ron Zimmer/Summer Camps Director; Rev. Jon Fitzpatrick/District Secretary; the Ministerial Studies & Credentials Boards (listed by name in their respective reports); and all the members of the NDI Board, NMI Council, and NYI Council; and most recently, the appointment of Rev. Kyle Johnson, Director of New Church Development.



TO ALL OF YOU, your leadership is deeply appreciated and will impact countless lives for years to come.

And, a special thank you to my wife Debbie, for all her love and support in so many ways!

Please join me in expressing our gratitude to this amazing group of people!

DURING 2022-2023 my responsibilities as District Superintendent included the honor and joy of:

- ♦ visiting and interacting on **37** church campuses on the district,
- ♦ preaching in **24** worship services,
- ♦ participating in **30** Church Board & Congregational Meetings,
- ♦ conducting **10** Church/Pastoral Reviews,
- ♦ chairing the pastoral search process in **4** churches,
- ♦ participating in **28** District Board/Staff/Committee/Council meetings
- ♦ meeting with **120** pastors & ministry leaders for various issues & needs,
- ♦ hosting **2** in-person Pastor's Days, **2** ZOOM seminars for senior/lead pastors, church board secretaries, and local church treasurers), and **2** New Pastor Orientation sessions,
- ♦ logging in to **33** ZOOM and conference call meetings,
- ♦ concluding my **23rd** year as a member of the Point Loma Nazarene University Board of Trustees.



In the past year I participated in the following events for leadership and personal development: USA/Canada District Superintendent Leadership Development Program; District NMI Leadership Retreat; District Ministerial Candidate Seminar; PLNU New Church Planting Seminar; Nazarene Compassionate Ministries Wildfire Response Seminar; and chairing the PLNU Trustees External Engagement Committee.

MY ONGOING VISION FOR US as local churches has been and continues to affirm that we are the literal presence of Christ in our communities. On the day of His ascension Jesus said, “*you will receive power to be my witnesses.*” Every year I affirm my desire for us to be devoted members of the body of Christ, deeply inspired by the Great Commission. I encourage you to embrace these core understandings of what we do in our communities by engaging in ministries that will result in:

- ♦ ***newborn believers*** who are being delivered and disciplined through our ministries;
- ♦ ***maturing believers*** who are discovering all that it means to be devoted followers of Jesus;
- ♦ ***at least 10%*** of annual giving committed to the regional & global mission of the church;
- ♦ ***annual accountability*** by reporting your stewardship and viability as an authentic church;
- ♦ ***intentional plans*** to partner in the planting of new churches in our local mission areas; and
- ♦ ***an ongoing***, relational partnership in our local communities through outreach & service.



WE CURRENTLY HAVE 45 active organized churches (plus **4** inactive organized churches, **1** of which is being leased by a Church other than Nazarene), **3** Church Type Missions, **11** parent affiliated congregations (PAC) for second languages, and **3** new starts, for a total of **62** active congregations.

As I shared in my report last year, and more recently at our Pastor's Day in September, we have places of opportunity in our region in which it would be so great to launch new churches, such as the areas of:

- ♦ Dixon/Davis (Capital West)
- ♦ Orland/Willows (North Valley)
- ♦ Folsom/El Dorado Hills (Capital East)
- ♦ Fernley (Sierra Nevada)
- ♦ Lathrop/Manteca (Delta)

I'M PLEASED TO ANNOUNCE that since last year's Reunion we are partnering with Yuba City Hope Point to plant a new church in the Plumas Lake area, south of Marysville. Pastor Colby Middlebrooks is receiving his first district license at this Assembly, and is serving as pastor of Revive Church through the support of LIFELINE giving. In their first preview event on April 1, over 400 people came from the community. Thank you, Pastor Colby, Revive Church, and Hope Point Church, for moving into this community with a vision to start a new ministry in Jesus' name. Please continue in prayer for our new church strategies. We need visionary, faith driven people who are willing to collaborate with others to increase our presence and influence for the sake of the gospel.

I HAVE BEEN THINKING ABOUT the significance of **Consistency** in who we are and in how we serve in our communities. In recent years, much of our story has been one of pivoting and learning how to adapt to challenges; though I'm sure previous generations would testify to the same experience. My heart is burdened for some of the declines we have experienced in the past five years. My heart is also deeply encouraged when I see the results of churches who have learned to embrace the power of the gospel in the face of a culture that is often indifferent to the transforming work of God in the lives of people. The spiritual indifference to Jesus in our communities is greater than it has ever been in my life; and we have the perfect antidote.

As the body of Christ, I believe we need to revive an understanding of consistency as it relates to our defined mission and how we engage in that mission. I believe a very high priority for us must be to cultivate the presence of Jesus as His Church, and inside the neighborhoods of our communities.

THE WELLNESS OF OUR MISSION as local congregations impacts the consistency with which we understand and engage in our mission to BE Christ like, and lead others to BECOME Christ like. As we seek God for our daily needs and desires, we need to genuinely invite our heavenly Father to do what He wants to do, in us, and through us. It is easy to believe in the consistency of God as long as it is compatible with what we like about our church, our pastor, and our community impact. I hope we are willing to go even deeper to declare that we are servants of God, here to do whatever He desires to do so powerfully in and through us.

As I read through the 11th Article of Faith for the Church of the Nazarene, I can hear the spirit of consistency in our statement on the Church, which reads:

We believe in the Church, the community that confesses Jesus Christ as Lord, the covenant people of God made new in Christ, the Body of Christ called together by the Holy Spirit through the Word.

God calls the Church to express its life in the unity and fellowship of the Spirit; in worship through the preaching of the Word, observance of the sacraments, and ministry in His name; by obedience to Christ, holy living, and mutual accountability.



The mission of the Church in the world is to share in the redemptive and reconciling ministry of Christ in the power of the Spirit. The Church fulfills its mission by making disciples through evangelism, education, showing compassion, working for justice, and bearing witness to the kingdom of God.

The Church is a historical reality that organizes itself in culturally conditioned forms, exists both as local congregations and as a universal body, and also sets apart persons called of God for specific ministries. God calls the Church to live under His rule in anticipation of the consummation at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ.

I have been watching the church (in person and online); listening for direction that could help us to experience a dynamic of consistency in our **faith**, in the **truth** we proclaim, and in the **presence** of God by the Holy Spirit, living through our local churches.

SO AS THE CHURCH, WHAT DOES IT MEAN FOR THERE TO BE CONSISTENCY IN OUR FAITH?

I believe that faith is a critical identity of a local church to their community; faith that is expressed through trust in the One who consistently provides for us as our Creator and sustainer; faith in the One we follow as a corporate expression, more than just an expression of us as individual, but as a uniting principle to which we all agree, we are people of faith in the One who loves us, and gave Himself for us (Ephesians 5:1-2).

AS THE CHURCH, WHAT DOES IT MEAN FOR THERE TO BE CONSISTENCY IN OUR TRUTH?

Truth is revealed by God, through the proclamation of His Word; not our slant on His Word, but on the divinely inspired Word He has given to us. God's Word consistently calls everyone, and invites everyone out of darkness into His glorious light. Sometimes I think we undervalue Article 4, "...given by divine inspiration, inerrantly revealing the will of God concerning us in all things necessary to our salvation..."; perhaps some think this means we're on our own for everything not necessary to our salvation; but in reality, our salvation is everything! And the truth for a life in Christ can only be defined by God's Word.

AS THE CHURCH, WHAT DOES IT MEAN FOR THERE TO BE CONSISTENCY IN PRESENCE?

We believe the presence of God is imparted by the Holy Spirit. As the church, we are more than a destination; we are called to be His presence in our community, a kinetic presence; salt, light, compassion. Just as the rod and staff of Jesus comfort, guide, and instruct us, I believe the consistency of the Church must be expressed through a presence that feeds, clothes, and courageously calls people out of darkness, into the righteousness of a life in Christ. As a presence, we are doing more than just representing Jesus, we are speaking Jesus into the lives of all people.



So when we welcome the consistency of God's will as the church, it brings us to the feet of Jesus, at the foot of the cross. The consistency of God is here to set us free to be dissatisfied with the predictable,

and instead, to engage in the transforming work of God. I believe the consistency of God is the only way to navigate through the experiences of life. The only way to dwell in the consistency of God is by faith, proclaiming the truth that salvation through Jesus fulfills all things, heals all things, empowers all things, and enables us to be living witnesses of His presence. While we are seeking to do whatever it takes to fulfill our mission, I'm wondering, how desperately do we desire the consistency of God to be present and active amongst us, being an influential presence in our communities, and declaring a message that inspires people to transition from sinfulness to righteousness.

So, WHAT IS THE OUTCOME OF CONSISTENCY AS THE CHURCH IN TODAY'S WORLD?



As believers, our calling goes far beyond protecting the church; it is about creating an influence through our unified faith in Jesus Christ, our love for biblical truth, and our willingness to be the people through whom God's presence walks into the brokenness of peoples' lives and faithfully proclaims a gospel that brings freedom to the captive, restoration to the disoriented, and a future of hope for so many people who would love to discover the healing of reconciliation in their lives.

I pray that together we will thrive as the Church of Jesus Christ, in anticipation of a revival in our passion to be devoted, courageous proclaimers of the gospel, through the power of the Holy Spirit.

Yours in Christ,

Steven R. Scott

For this purpose, I also labor, striving
according to His power
which works mightily within me.

• Colossians 1:29 – New American Standard Bible •