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*NWO District NMI President's Report – June 2023*

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<http://www.nwonaz.org/missions/>

### Our Vision

#### **Give what we have** – Matthew 14:16

Jesus replied, "They do not need to go away. You give them something to eat." (NIV)

#### **Limited vision** – Matthew 14:17

But they said, "We have only five small loaves of bread and two fish."

#### **God blesses what we give to Him** – Matthew 14: 19-21

He looked up to heaven and blessed the food...

### The Loaves and Fishes

We are so familiar with this story in the Bible that we may overlook the actual impact. With only 5 loaves and 2 fish, Jesus fed thousands of people and even had food left over. Please read that sentence again – what an amazing thing! My Dad who, with my Mom served the Lord for over 40 years as missionaries in the DR Congo and who are both now with Jesus used to always say, "It's a loaves and fishes thing" when he was faced with a situation of few resources and huge challenges. Often, as my husband Andy and I have served the Lord, we have also had challenges that far exceed our resources and experienced loaves and fishes moments as we've seen the Lord meet the challenges before us as we give what we have to Him.

When you as churches give your offerings to missions it may sometimes feel like just 5 loaves and two fishes, but it takes those loaves and fishes to feed a multitude. Never doubt what God can do through the offerings you place in the hands of Jesus. Little is much when God is in it.

Three things are necessary for our missions' programs to succeed around the world: prayers, offerings, and missionaries. You pray and you give so that others can go. It's teamwork. There is no going without giving, because giving enables more going. What you do each year in raising money for

missions is humbling and we can only say “thank you” because we know it takes love and sacrifice to make it happen. Thank you, mission Presidents, and thank you, Pastors, for leading the way to be a blessing all over the world. Northwest Ohio Nazarenes have led the way for many years in missions giving. Well done Buckeye state!

You have perhaps never seen yourself as a missionary, but your gifts demonstrate that’s exactly what you are. When you offer your loaves and fishes to God, from every corner of Northwest Ohio, you are impacting the world for Jesus.

When that young boy offered his lunch to Jesus that day, he had no idea what God would do with it. But 2000 years later we are still talking about a boy with no name. Perhaps no one will ever know your name, but do not doubt, God knows it, and He will bless what you give to Him. Often people don’t go to the mission field or go into ministry or lead local ministries as they feel they don’t have what it takes. Actually, that is a great thing to recognize – our own limitations as at those moments we can witness a loaves and fishes moment watching the Lord take what we give Him and bless it and multiply it and use it for His glory. Truly then the glory is the Lord’s and not ours. Our glory does not reach very far but God’s glory is eternal.

If the Lord is speaking to you about your own family, your local community or foreign missions, just keep giving what you have to Him and follow Him wherever He is leading. Then, you will experience real loaves and fishes moments over and over again. As My Dad would say right now – Hallelujah!

### [NWO NMI Highlights](#)

This past year has been wonderful. We have had a few new positions added to our District NMI Council:

- Nancy Dunson – District NMI Administrator
- Lauren Spyker Biggs – NMI District Vice President
- Marianne McBride – Network Coordinator Lead
- Jacob Pollard has been bringing great leadership to our media updates and changes. Keep checking our FB, Twitter, Instagram, and webpage for new updates.

- Kristine and Rev. Jon Spyker have also brought great leadership along with Lauren to our ACTION Retreat event and helped Marianne in her leadership of our Network Coordinators.
- Thank you too to Rev. Louis Reindel for his continued leadership of our Work and Witness events. We have had a wonderful trip this year in Kentucky, and we look forward to more district Work and Witness trips.

***The following are some comments from Lauren, Nancy, Marianne, and Jacob on their thoughts about this past year ...***

***From Lauren Spyker Biggs:***

This spring we held our second annual Adventure in Action Retreat at our NWO district Cross Oak Camp and Retreat Center. Our numbers were up, and we had over 25 children, teens and adults join in the fun! The Spirit moved in hearts on Friday evening as Rev. Kate Ratliff led us in a beautiful worship service. We enjoyed fellowship and fun with Pastor Andy Reynard and Pastor Dan Fulks as they led the group in collaborative and goofy games that helped us communicate and get to know one another. Saturday morning, we enjoyed hearing from our missions' panelists, Rev. Stephen Ambrose, Mr. Mel Miller and Rev. Jon Spyker, who shared how they and their respective local churches are engaging in their communities. We set out to do just that in the St. Marys community as we served in three different outreach opportunities. We sent groups to Agape Food Pantry and Thrift Store, Grand Lake St. Marys State Park, and Grande Lake Healthcare Center.

***From Nancy Dunson:***

I do believe the Lord is moving and preparing the fields onto harvest that we have not yet seen. I have enjoyed getting to know our missionaries who have been on our district this last year along with Pastor Eric coming and sharing how the Lord is moving in Germany. The ACTION Retreats have been a blessing to those who have attended and to the areas where we have served others. I have been thankful for Julie Pottenger taking on the Crisis Care Kits and School Pal Paks transporting and making sure the kits are packaged correctly. I have been blown away with Jacob and Kristine doing

the media areas. Both of you have the heart of missions and how to appeal to all ages.

I believe our whole council works so well together and this year we will be electing a few more to join our ranks. I am excited to see what the new year will bring but I am truly thankful for the wonderful year we have been blessed with.

***From Marianne McBride:***

It has been my privilege to see the Lord enabling and equipping me to serve as NMI Network Coordinator Lead during most of this church year. I have enjoyed communication with our district leadership, including our wonderful Network Coordinators, Local NMI Presidents, and Pastors. One highlight has been to see the ministry of Carlos Gordon come together this past February on our district -- from organizing his visits and transportation across the district to attending our Network Gathering with Carlos Gordon from Africa and hearing the wonderful feedback!



***From Jacob Pollard:***

In the past 6 months, NWO NMI has revitalized its push to engage in conversations and build relationships with others through social media. We have expanded to Twitter, Instagram, and YouTube. Furthermore, we have refreshed our logo and revamped our Facebook page. We are spreading our message to a larger and more diverse audience. Since the start of our revamp, we have connected with almost 70 newcomers to NMI social media, and we hope you will join us! We look forward to starting our new social media series "Spotlight on Missions" in the coming year, and your church might be featured... You don't want to miss out on what's ahead! You can find links to all of our social media pages on our link tree: [linktr.ee/NWOhioNmi](https://linktr.ee/NWOhioNmi)

## Moving Forward

It certainly is a wonderful privilege working together with these servants of the Lord and all our Council members and each of you in our churches. Council members who serve as Network Coordinators and others who help where they are needed do an incredible work for the Lord. I believe the Lord is widening our vision and helping us to realize our missional calling to everyone and helping us to follow Him as He leads.

This past year for me personally was incredible as we (the Clan) all met in Belfast, N. Ireland for a memorial service for my Dad, Bob McAllister. I am including [the link](#)<sup>1</sup> to the service in case you haven't seen it yet. As our family clan is international, it was amazing that we all made it to the same place at the same time for this service. It was wonderful to all be together and with many others in person and online to remember what God did through the life of my Father. As I was brought up in a missionary family, the call to missions was always front and center of everything we did. When the Lord gave me the idea of the ACTION Retreat, it was so in keeping with everything He has taught me from missionaries my entire life – God loves and died for everyone, and we must look around us wherever we are and reach people for Jesus. Lauren and her family brought us a great reminder of the loaves and fishes vision which we, as a council, had chosen as our vision direction for this year. Wherever we are and with whatever we have, we should be ready to reach out to others with love, humility, and the wonderful message of God's salvation. It was great to again see people of all ages working together in outreach nearby. Let's build up the numbers for this retreat which we plan to hold every year. Encourage individuals and families in your church to get involved!

As Jacob noted in his comments, we do want to hear more of what the Lord is doing where you are. We will be in touch to hear your stories and we want to share these online. I am also grateful for the invitations to your churches to share the vision and I look forward to visiting more this year.

We hope this year to also make connections with the District NYI ministries so that we can integrate some mission activities with youth activities moving forward.

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<sup>1</sup> <https://www.youtube.com/@mcallisterfamilymusic9448/videos>

We praise God for the missionaries who visited our district this past year. We certainly missed having missionaries visit during the Covid years and we are thankful to hear that the Lord has continued to work and bring people to salvation and discipleship all around the world. We serve an amazing God! Let's continue to follow Him wherever He leads.



**We serve a Savior who loves the entire world and does not prefer anyone over any other. Every soul matters to God and the Lord wants us to reach out to everyone in His name. Let's stay active in our service for the Lord!**