

# NORTHEASTERN INDIANA DISTRICT CHURCH OF THE NAZARENE

## STATE OF THE CHURCH ADDRESS 2010

### DAVID G. ROLAND, DISTRICT SUPERINTENDENT

Dr. and Mrs. Jesse Middendorf, Dr. Jim Diehl, Dr. and Mrs. John Bowling, friends and delegates, Cheryl and I welcome you to the 68<sup>th</sup> District Assembly of the Northeastern Indiana District Church of the Nazarene. It is thrilling to see the family together again! You represent the heart of the NEI District, which is the local church, fully devoted to God. Week after week, we praise the Lord for you and ask for His abounding joy and victory. Thank you for the privilege of serving you.

Dr. Middendorf and Susan, we look forward to your anointed leadership and thank you for your life commitment to the church worldwide.

William Barclay wrote, “No commandment appears more frequently in the New Testament than the commandment to watch.” He urges us to watch for the trickery of satan, watch against temptations, watch out for false teaching, and watch for the return of Christ. We are to watch expectantly for the hand of God in the days ahead. It has been said that our task is not to foresee the future, but to enable it and embrace it. That’s Future Watch!

Ladies and Gentlemen, we now step into Future Watch!

This is the age of technology. The future has come to the present. We are connected in more ways than we could ever have imagined. Dave Ferguson noted in his book, *The Big Idea*, that as he sits at his computer to write, fourteen different windows are open on his laptop. One is his blog to tell the world what he thinks; the other thirteen are various websites so the world can tell him what it thinks. His iPod is on the charger, hooked up to iTunes, searching for updates on the latest music of his favorite artists, while his cell phone is sitting on the table, giving him total access to the entire planet and the entire planet total access to him. Amazing technology! We love to communicate and are in constant watch for our next message. One frustrated teenage girl complained, “ Don't you just hate when you're texting someone and they take forever to respond? Waiting for that message is soooo intense!!!”

### WATCH!

The Israelites were walking in disobedience and in danger of spiritual destruction. God loved them so much that He called Ezekiel saying, “*Son of man, I have made you a watchman to the house of Israel ...*” (Ezekiel 33:7). God empowered Ezekiel with the bold message of repentance and restoration but the people would not listen and the warnings were not heeded.

In 2005, the state of Connecticut, emergency management officials attempted to run a routine test of the Emergency Broadcast System. However, someone mistakenly pressed the wrong button. Before the error could be corrected, television and radio stations sounded the alarm urging citizens all over the state to evacuate immediately! Believe it or not, no one responded! As a matter of fact, the state police did not receive one single call regarding that alert.

In ancient days, as in our day, there were those assigned to watch for danger. Most cities were surrounded by a stone wall structure for protection. Watchmen, usually soldiers, were positioned at strategic points along the wall where they could see for miles around. Watchmen had to be alert to enemy attack, threats to their harvest, and impending storms. If an enemy presence was detected, the watchman would alert the people by blowing his horn to warn the city and call the army to action. Not only was the dependability of the watchman critical but the response of the people was essential to the safety of all.

We must be alert and listen to God's voice as He cries out to a new generation that we too must be vigilant WATCHMEN. Let's hear what the scriptures say...

- We must watch for ourselves.  
*"Watch and pray so that you will not fall into temptation ..."* (Matthew 26:41)
- As parents, we need to be watchmen over our children.  
*"We will tell the next generation the praiseworthy deeds of the Lord ..."* (Psalm 78:4).
- As adults, we have a responsibility to our community and society to watch and pray.  
*"And we urge you, brothers, warn those who are idle, encourage the timid, help the weak, be patient with everyone"* (1 Thessalonians 5:14).
- As pastors, we have a responsibility to the church and to all ears that will hear.  
*"... devote yourself to the public reading of Scripture, to preaching and to teaching. Watch your life and doctrine closely. Persevere in them, because if you do, you will save both yourself and your hearers ..."* (I Timothy 4:13, 16).

Are you a watchman? To be an effective watchman is not to wring our hands in worry over future shock but it is to:

- Be Holy
- Put Jesus first
- Study His Word
- Evangelize and Disciple others to become future watchmen

Effective watchmen serve the Lord and the church. NEI pastors and laypersons alike, you are teaching the Word and seeking God's direction. You are caring for the church lawn, serving meals, and rocking our babies in the church nursery. Watchmen are singing in the choir, working youth camps, and teaching VBS. You are paying the bills, and spending time in prayerful watch. Repeat after me, "I AM A WATCHMAN!"

### **Celebrating the NEI Watchmen**

NEI watchmen, you have individually and collectively forged ahead in faithful service to the Lord in a year of many challenges. I applaud you pastors and leaders for your selfless sacrifices. Cheryl and I, *"... continually remember before our God and Father your work produced by faith, your labor prompted by love, and your endurance inspired by hope in our Lord Jesus Christ"* (I Thessalonians 1:3).

Let us express our deepest appreciation for the following watchmen.

Tawnya Hadley serves the district office with a genuine heart for ministry. We are the fortunate recipients of her gifts and talents that range widely from finance to visioning. Thank you, Tawnya! We are grateful also to Heather Bonifield, for her contribution to the district office.

The contribution of the District Advisory Board is beyond expression. They are prayerful, steadfast, wise, and Spirit filled. It is a tremendous privilege to serve the Lord with these great watchmen.

We commend Rev. Ken Stirratt and Dr. Phil Rogers for the organization of a strong School of Ministry which operates in as many as eight locations across the district. The District Ministry Board is to be congratulated for excellence in developing fine quality ministers. The efforts of this board will culminate in the ordination of eight new ministers at this assembly.

For the past fourteen years, under the proficient leadership of Rev. Gary Cable, our Sunday School & Discipleship Department has thrived. We are indebted to this faithful watchman for his passionate vision and selfless investment in Sunday School & Discipleship Ministries. This spring, Rev. Cable passed the torch of leadership to another capable watchman, Rev. Andy Dayton.

Our Sunday School, Missions, and Youth Department heads returned from General Assembly with a fresh new vision and determination to unite in their common goal. They have enthusiastically joined forces in prayer and planning. It is thrilling to see such a cooperative spirit. Thank you, Rev. Andy Dayton, Mrs. Luanne Frank, and Rev. Dane Mathews.

I want to personally express my deepest appreciation to District Secretary, Rev. Ron Whitlock. His organizational skills and efficiency are surpassed only by his faith and devotion to the Lord. His contribution to this assembly and to the NEI District is immeasurable. Thank you!

In 2006, Certified Financial Planner and Analyst, Steve Doan, stepped to center stage to serve us as District Treasurer. His gifts and expertise in finance led us in implementing new policies and practices for sound financial performance. In these days of economic uncertainties words cannot begin to express the benefits of Steve's financial wisdom and our appreciation for his personal and professional attention. Following this assembly Steve will be turning his interest to other business and personal priorities. Thanks Steve for your friendship and for the lasting influence of your work.

Shiloh Park continues to be a place of spiritual renewal for children, teens, and adults of all ages. Under the remarkable leadership of camp managers, Dan and Karen Heincker, and with the wise council of Chairman, Rev. Jim Ballenger, and the Camp Board, the future of Shiloh Park is bright! We are making progress on the tabernacle, maintaining our buildings and grounds, paying down the debt, and building a strong clientele ensuring financial stability. Your financial contributions to Shiloh Park are essential and we thank you for all your support.

With devoted watchmen like these, the NEI District is in good hands!

### **WATCH AND PRAISE**

We must watch and praise. The news media paints a bleak future. Their sobering headlines dominate our thinking. With a weak economy, bankrupt businesses, job losses, homes repossessed, and families

devastated by the emotional stress of it all, some are of the opinion that there is little hope. Dr. Marilyn McCool, our denominational Treasurer, stressed that the Church of the Nazarene has ‘Good News’!

*“Jesus, our CEO, has not stepped down; He is still in command. The value of our mission continues to increase. The investment in our mission is risk-free, and insured against rust or thieves. Our heavenly home is not in foreclosure; it is still ours, prepared and waiting. We have an ongoing job; to make Christ like disciples in the nations. Our Leader, the Lord Jesus Christ, has infused His resources, making a difference with hope!”*

I am happy to report good news for the NEI District! We celebrate 1,390 new conversions! Three hundred and eighty were baptized! We received 759 (+144) New Nazarenes into church membership totaling 12,994 members. We ministered to an average of 10,338 in weekly corporate worship, and through Sunday School & Discipleship we ministered to 8,297 (43%) out of our 18,900 member responsibility list.

NEI District, you are truly faithful watchmen. In spite of a difficult economy and limited resources, you have continued to be faithful in finance. Forty-six churches paid their allocations in full or overpaid! Collectively, our churches raised \$14,459,379 which is a decrease of \$733,467 from last year. But, through God’s miraculous provision you have sacrificed to pay more funds for ministry to others than in 2009. The Pensions Fund and the District Mission Fund received the highest percentage payment since 2006!

WEF: 95.17% \$861,895

P&B: 95.38% \$242,451

ONU: 85.02% \$359,303

DISTRICT MISSION FUND: 93.63% \$553,982

The denominational budgeting process has been under review for several years. At the 2009 General Assembly the decision was made to shift from an expense based formula to an income based system of the “Tithe Plus” or 15% of money raised. In most cases this will allow for more dollars to support the local church mission. The new formula for Funding the Mission is simply, the amount raised, minus missions giving, times the percentages for the four ministry areas: WEF 5.5%, P&B 2%, ONU 2.5%, and the District Mission Fund 5%.

A pastor left District Assembly last year with new resolve, that his church must pay their allocations in full. After years of paying little or nothing toward funds for others, the pastor approached his treasurer with the conviction that not only should Christians tithe but so should the church. The good news is that his report at this assembly will reflect that every allocation is paid in full and over paid. Not only that, but the church raised \$10,000 over the previous year.

Another one of our churches owed a \$40,000 debt it simply could not pay. In desperation the pastor approached the company for payment reduction. Much to his surprise the company reduced the debt to \$20,000 with the stipulation that it must be paid in three days. The pastor prayerfully approached an individual in the church asking for a loan. Two days passed without promise. On the third day a check

was written for \$20,000. When asked about a payment schedule and interest, the layman responded, “Oh pastor, I am not loaning money to the church. It is my gift!”

A.W. Tozer said, “Anything that God has ever done, He can do now! Anything that God has ever done anywhere, He can do here! Anything God has ever done for anyone, He can do for you!”

## **Enduring Gifts**

The District Enduring Gifts Endowment is entering its third year. This endowment provides a means for donors to leave a legacy gift to advance the Kingdom through church planting, healthcare, leadership development, local church assistance, district buildings, and Shiloh Park Campgrounds. The interest earned from the endowed funds provides a pool from which the grants are awarded to both district and local ministries. We appreciate Segue’s guidance in the implementation of the endowment program.

Our continued ability to provide these grants is dependent upon your gifts. Thank you to those who have participated. The process is set in motion! In 2009 the District Advisory Board reviewed a number of applications and awarded five grants to NEI churches. They launched new ministries and invested in local facility repairs.

We are pleased to announce the 2010 recipients:

- Auburn Church, Rev. Dan White - for children’s pastor training
- Anderson First, Rev. Gary Cable - for Hispanic salary support
- Orland Church, Rev. Rodger Strong - to help fund the expense of a new sewer system
- Shiloh Park, Rev. Dan Heincker - for video technology

You too could receive a grant by simply submitting an application. Go to [www.neinazarene.org](http://www.neinazarene.org) and click on the NEI Endowment tab.

**Indiana Nazarene Clergy Association (INCA)** was formed when the four Indiana Districts received a grant from the Lilly Foundation for the purpose of strengthening the tenure of pastors.

Specifically, our first focus has been to address health and wellness issues among our ministry team. Since last July, a number of NEI pastors, staff, and spouses have aggressively sought to improve their health. One ministry spouse says that through a series of medical test, funded by INCA, that she was alerted to a life threatening condition. Other successes include weight loss:

- Pastor Al Dayton has lost 23 pounds and Lynda 10 pounds.
- Pastor Ken and Rosie Stirratt have lost 40 pounds each.
- The Anderson New Life congregation has lost a total of 276 pounds.
- Pastor Terry Fittro has lost 56 pounds.
- Darrell Cox has lost 80 pounds.
- Dr. Harold Clay has lost 103 pounds.

Research indicates that health and finance are two of the major deterrents to long pastoral tenure. Our attention to Health and Wellness is ongoing and requires a lifetime discipline. The next step is also vital as we focus on personal finance. INCA has partnered with Olivet Nazarene University to make available an online course in personal financial planning. INCA has also partnered with financial consultants who can give personalized advice on specific circumstances. We genuinely care about our ministerial watchmen!

### **WATCH AND CELEBRATE**

**Missional Award of Excellence** This award is presented to churches that have celebrated at least one water baptism, received at least one new Nazarene by profession of faith, had an increase in primary worship attendance average over the previous year, and all funds for others paid in full.

Anderson Parkview - Rev. Jeff Floyd  
Elkhart Crossroads Community - Dr. Marc Royer  
Hartford City - Rev. Steve High  
Muncie Forest Park - Rev. David Delk  
Muncie Northside - Rev. Jerry VanNatter  
Peru - Rev. Tony Winter  
Shipshewana - Rev. Andy Dayton  
Tunker Sugar Creek Fellowship - Rev. Larry Sheets  
Warsaw New Harvest - Rev. Bill Keen  
Yorktown - Rev. Marty Ballard

**Evangelistic Honor Roll** This award is based on a sliding scale of membership size, and presented to churches who have received a record number of new Nazarenes into membership.

Church Size 25-74: At least 2 new members by profession of Faith  
Garrett The Crossing - Rev. Kent Wright +7  
Muncie New Horizon - Rev. Mike Konkle +8  
Tunker Sugar Creek Fellowship - Rev. Larry Sheets +31  
Warsaw New Harvest - Rev. Bill Keen +7  
Church Size 75-124: At least 10 new members by profession of faith  
Muncie Forest Park - Rev. David Delk +10  
Portland First - Rev. Rich Secor +13  
Church Size 125-174: At least 13 new members by profession of faith  
Shipshewana - Rev. Andy Dayton +22  
Church Size 175-224: At least 16 new members by profession of faith  
Anderson Parkview - Rev Jeff Floyd +21  
Church Size 500+: At least 30 new members by profession of faith  
Ft. Wayne Grace Point - Rev. Chuck Sunberg +49  
Elkhart Crossroads Community - Dr. Marc Royer +205

### **Generational Leadership Award 2010**

**Rev. David E. & Betty Whitteberry**

## **FUTURE WATCH**

The Lord is ministering on the **Ball State University** campus through the zealous leadership of watchmen Cary and Chris Miller. At 10 PM on a Thursday night I witnessed an unbelievable blessing. With standing room only, hundreds of students gathered to worship the Lord. On this secular campus, through student led ministry, God's Word is being boldly taught and energizing students for the cause of Christ.

It is thrilling to observe students discipling students. Here is just one incredible example. As a freshman at Ball State, Eric attended Cary's small group Bible Study. Through months of mentoring and spiritual growth, Eric started one of his own where he met Bryan. Through months of discipleship and nurturing in the faith, Bryan has also begun a small group Bible study where others are coming to know Christ. Praise the Lord for these passionate watchmen.

### **Church Planting**

Church planting must remain a high priority. Planting new churches, both Anglo and ethnic, continues to be one of the most effective sources of evangelism. Eddy Gibbs said, "Old churches must not simply stand as monuments to the past, but as spiritual grandparents they invest in the future by passing their life to others and releasing their offspring to form new congregations." Last year we organized two new churches, which are here tonight, as thriving testimonies to the value of planting new works.

Missional Director of Hispanic Ministries, Dr. Carlos Sol and Edna, are a tremendous blessing to me and to the district family. His strong work ethic and genuine commitment to Christ motivates him to a three-fold mission: to win people to Christ, to disciple converts for future leadership, and to plant churches.

Dr. Sol is vigilant in the preparation of leaders. He directs the Hispanic extension of the District School of Ministry, teaching Biblical theology and Nazarene polity on a weekly basis. The benefits of his devoted leadership are reflected in the following strong NewStarts:

**Anderson First Hispanic** - Under the gifted ministry of Pastor Elias and Lillian Cabello, this congregation has grown to nearly sixty. Senior Pastor Gary Cable and the Anderson First family have enthusiastically embraced this ministry and its pastor. They provide supplemental financing and sponsor a community clothing distribution which serves as a contact for evangelism.

**Crossroads Hispanic in Goshen** - Under the leadership of Pastor Samuel Que, this body of believers is thriving with approximately 150 meeting weekly. Their participation in an international radio broadcast spreads the gospel message in Spanish from Elkhart to around the world. We appreciate Crossroads senior pastor, Dr. Marc Royer, for his passionate vision for this Hispanic ministry.

**New Paris Hispanic** - Pastor Claudia Lopez and her husband, Javier, effectively shepherd the New Paris Hispanic flock. God is honoring their personal sacrifice as they minister to families confronted with job loss and economic difficulties. Let's watch and pray over these servants of the Lord.

**LaGrange Hispanic** - Our latest efforts in church planting are focused on LaGrange. Dr. Sol has been meeting weekly with a group of prospective laymen who have expressed a strong interest in organizing a Hispanic church. The target launch of this new work is October 10, 2010. Pray for these future watchmen!

**Grace Point South** - A second campus of the Ft. Wayne Grace Point Church is a multicultural ministry pastored by Revs. Javier and Annette Mondragon. This gifted couple ministers in both Spanish and English to a vibrant growing congregation. Throughout this year, they have received 22 members by profession of faith who testified to salvation through water baptism. Pastors Chuck and Carla Sunberg, along with the Grace Point North Church family, are continually devoting their leadership resources and supplemental funding to insure the buoyancy of this young congregation.

**Blue River Valley ReStart** – The Luray Church was near death, had low morale, no vision for the future except survival, and few people. But a couple of years ago, God placed it on the heart of Dr. Phil Rogers and the Middletown Church to reach out and make them an extension of Middletown. It has taken some time and a lot of hard work by Pastor Greg and Julie Alexander to establish vision again, connect with the community, and to remodel an old run down building to one that welcomes company. Now the worship is life transforming and the community is starting to open themselves to the outstretched arms of the church. Pray for these watchmen as they present the message of hope and minister in Jesus name.

Let's look ahead to the future of church planting. Our goal in 2009 was to start 10 new works by 2014. Three NewStarts are well on their way but the planting of these new works will require a pastor, or a godly layperson, and a leadership team, who are willing to step out of their comfort zone and by faith to commit to parenting a new group of believers. Are you the one?

Let me tell you about **Operation 10-10-10!** October 10, 2010 is "Transformation Sunday"... all out for souls, Sunday! This emphasis is to challenge every local church to a year of passionate evangelism with each one of us asking, "What can "I" do to reach my world for Christ?" Operation 10-10-10 challenges us to:

1. Intensify prayer, fast for spiritual renewal, and pray for a burden!
2. Plan for special evangelism events.
3. Begin a home Bible study with the intention of becoming a new church plant.
4. Organize Sunday School and Discipleship small groups focused on a specific need.
5. Start a new ethnic ministry.
6. Mentor others by passionately sharing your testimony.

Operation 10-10-10 ... 10 new converts ... 10 new churches ... 10/10 praying! That's Future Watch!

Set your cell phone alarm for 10:10 PM as a reminder to pray every night and every morning at 10:10. Make this a prayer watch as we seek to reach Northeast Indiana for the cause of Christ.

Our prayers must also embrace the saving and strengthening of existing churches. Our district is partnering with Sunday School & Discipleship Ministries to provide a consultant, at no cost, who will work with up to five churches in discipleship training. If you are interested you may apply through Rev. Andy Dayton, SDMI Chairman.

## WATCH AND PRAY

Steadfast watchmen are in a constant attitude of watchfulness. Paul wrote to the church at Corinth, “*Keep your eyes open, hold tight to your convictions, give it all you've got, be resolute, and love without stopping*” 1 Corinthians 16:13.

*USA Today* reported that one of the most tragic events during the Reagan Presidency was the Sunday morning terrorist bombing of the Marine barracks in Beirut. Hundreds of Americans were killed or wounded as they slept. A suicide bomber, driving a vehicle of explosives, lined up with the target and with full throttle, before the watchmen could even get their rifles to their shoulders, he rammed through the front doors of the building bringing destruction and death.

Marine Corps Commandant Paul Kelly visited some of the wounded survivors in a Frankfurt, Germany, hospital. Among them was Corporal Jeffrey Nashton, severely wounded in the incident. Nashton had so many tubes running in and out of his body that a witness said he looked more like a machine than a man; yet he survived.

As Kelly neared him, Nashton, struggling to move and racked with pain, motioned for a piece of paper and a pen. He wrote a brief note and passed it back to the Commandant. On the slip of paper were but two words - “Semper Fi,” the Latin motto of the Marines meaning “forever faithful.”

It is only through God’s strength that we are faithful watchmen; forever faithful to the cause of Christ. Watchman, do not waiver in your devotion to God! Be vigilant in your watch. At 10:10, when your alarm sounds, make it a prayer watch. Watch over your own soul. Watch over the spiritual welfare of your children. Watch and pray over your community. And, with a holy heart, guard your church for future Watchmen.

No one knows the hour when Christ will come again.

To quote Starbucks, “Life is short, stay awake.”

But, Jesus put it this way, “*Watch and pray ... I AM COMING SOON!*”

Respectfully watching,

David G. Roland