

## 2017 Report of the District Superintendent

J. Phillip Fuller, D. Min.

*“And pray for us, too, that God may open a door for our message, so that we may proclaim the mystery of Christ, for which I am in chains.” Colossians 4:3 NIV*

Dr. David & Sharon Graves, pastors, members, and friends of the Assembly. I am honored to bring you my thirteenth report. A few weeks ago, I visited my friends, Cecil and Bev Jones, at his retirement from the superintendency of the Maine district. In one gathering we were invited to form groups for prayer where I met Wally, a veteran pastor on the district. He pastors one of but a few growing churches in Maine. We invited him to lead the prayer for our group. His prayer deeply impacted me. He prayed: *“Thank You, God, for all that you have allowed me to do. I want to do more!”* My report is about that prayer; that with God’s help we can do more.

### The Door!

In John’s gospel Jesus says, “I am the door!” Jesus proclaims that he is the way to the Father. Since Jesus is the only way, our hearts are filled with love for everyone, our desire is that everyone, through Jesus, can know forgiveness and experience the optimism of His grace.

*If opportunity  
doesn’t knock,  
build a door.*

**Milton Berle**

Additionally, the Apostle Paul believed that God opened special doors of ministry. Paul asked the Colossians (4:3 NIV) believers this, *“And pray for us, too, that God may open a door for our message, so that we may proclaim the mystery of Christ, for which I am in chains.”* One such instance is at Troas where Paul, on his way presumably to Corinth, and while waiting on Titus, found that God opened an opportunity to preach the gospel. All of this matches our understanding of the great commission, which is both “go” and “as you go” make disciples. Jesus is the door of salvation. We stand before doors of opportunity to point people to Jesus the doorway of deliverance.

### A Remarkable Year Amazing District Activities

These activities included Ministry Team Retreat, VA Ladies Conference, Summer Camps, D.I.G. Campmeeting, Quizzing Retreat, Hispanic Family Camp, Ultra-Camp, Festival of Life, Zone Pastor Huddles, Teaching Church Harrisonburg & Newport News, Project Galilee, Credentials Board, Ministerial Studies Board, District Advisory Board, DCPI Training, District Training Center, Istituto Teologico Nazareno, and the work of NYI, SDMI and NMI.

### Gratitude

The work of the District is deeply indebted to pastors and laypeople who fully engage their mission. Thanks be to God for dedicated service. The work of the district is deeply indebted to an amazing staff and key leaders: Rigoberto Acosta, George Stevenson, Wayne Lynch, Rachel Sherman, Cheri Sheridan, Todd Kern, Bill Dillon, Camelot Shuff, Julie Armbrister, Jerry Varner, Charlotte Holter, Charles Tillman, Richard Higginson, Steve Guizar, Bradley Billet, David Woods, Joyce Grambo and Kerry Willis.

### Personal

We are grateful for your amazing love and kindness extended to us. We are unworthy of your kindness. Thank you for welcoming Laura into our family and for praying with us for my father, Roy Fuller, who turned 80 in April.

## Transitions, Pruning and Growth

Rigoberto Acosta has indicated his desire to retire at this assembly. While he will continue as a coach we already feel the loss of his energy and passion.

We officially closed the ministries at Harbor Community, Chesapeake Hickory Community and Sterling Peniel. Since May we closed two more ministries. Our goal continues to be to advance the kingdom. Seasons of pruning are always challenging to process emotionally. I stumbled across this Winston Churchill quote, *“Success is not final, failure is not fatal: it is the courage to continue that counts,”* and these words from Isaiah, *“Remember not the former things, nor consider the things of old. Behold, I am doing a new thing; now it springs forth, do you not perceive it? I will make a way in the wilderness and rivers in the desert.”* Isaiah 43:18-19 (ESV). Yet, despite this pruning, we have experienced growth and see encouraging signs:

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counts. ~ Churchill*

- Nine out of 10 (89%) of our churches reported at least 1 convert (compared to 63% last year)
  - *On average 38 persons were converted every week through ministries of our churches*
- Eight out of 10 (78%) of our Churches reported at least 1 baptism (compared to 51.5% last year)
  - *On average 9 persons were baptized every week through ministries of our churches*
- 80% of our Churches reported at least 1 new member (compared to 44%)
- Pastoral vacancies are minimal. New leaders join the team!
- Several new church planting conversations are ongoing.

Pause to reflect on these developments. Praise God, we are moving in the right direction. Love is the primary motivation for evangelism, not the growth of a denomination, but, rather, God’s divine call of love placed in our hearts for Him and for others.

## Missional Priorities :: Envision, Equip, Encourage, Evangelize and Excel through Accountability

With God’s help, I pray that each pastor and each local church will, even today, **envision** a brighter future. I implore you to dream big. Pray big. Plan big. Not for the sake of bigger, but for the sake of heaven. Kevin Harney said, *“If your church is content doing nice things for a group of nice people who all meet weekly to enjoy each other’s niceness, you have lost your way and forgotten why the church exists.”* This truth has implications for our work as a district. I envision a greater connectivity among us and a method for greater joyful accountability. Through the year, as God directs, I will appoint leaders over clusters of churches whose primary task is to pray, talk and act, together with pastors and lay leaders on the *primary mission* of the church.

Our prayer is that we will find courage from one another. Let me share with you a story on courage. **Encouragement**, I’m certain, comes through prayer. Please add this date to your calendar for a district wide prayer gathering, October 22 & 23, 2017.

This past year we invested in **equipping** ministers and people. Kerry Willis and Camelot Shuff invested in dozens of leaders through excellent Teaching Church events. We hosted a special training, Embracing Neighbors, Engaging Culture. Kerry Willis hosted a season of personal renewal through Project Galilee. Ministerial Studies Board reports 26 new persons enrolled in course of study preparation. DCPI reports more than 150 persons have now been trained in Church Planting principles. Many laypersons have taken classes through the *Istituto Teologico*

*Nazareno*. Something unique transpired in our Ministry Team Retreat. Pastors still reference Mark Bane's visit – how God used his messages to return us to a fruitful first love.

At the assembly, a year ago, I asked God to change my heart regarding **evangelism** to break the *status quo* of outreach in my own life. And for every change I hope God brings to you I'm asking him to double those changes in me. My own spiritual temperature at best was a three on a 10-point scale. I asked God to help me become a four. He is answering my prayer. God has increased my temperature for evangelism. He helped me this year with conversations with Geronimo, Heather, Barb, Steve, Maddie and several others that I cannot name. My preaching now more than ever finds a way to strike one clear note. I've successfully invited people to church services and I'm trusting God to report a conversion. A pastor pulled me aside at a zone huddle and said, "I appreciate your passion for evangelism and I applaud the evangelism emphasis, and we will continue working hard for victories here in [insert name of town] ... I just want you to remember that at times this is a hard place." I paused briefly to say, "In Virginia we only have two kinds of places to serve, 'hard' and 'harder' so I'm joining you in prayer." Three days later I received a text message from that very same pastor that read: "One conversion today! PTL"

There are some church planting dreams in your hearts. Pastors, if you have a dream about planting a church let me know. Let's partner in this. Three grants are waiting to be distributed to those churches ready to launch a new church ministry. We have more people than ever trained by DCPI (Thank you Reggie Phillips!) and we must start more new churches to reach our 1% vision for the lost in Virginia. These locations are not on a map with push pins in the DRC, but rather, these new start locations are in your hearts! Where does God want you to go and start something new?

It is not enough to say, "Let's Evangelize!" The district advisory board has granted major funding for the *Organic Outreach Intensive Training*, a two-day event, **October 11 & 12, 2017** at Salem Fields Community Church. Additional resources are available at the Streams table including two great books that need to be in your library.

More than ever I realize that we can spur one another to **excellence** through loving **accountability**. I need you. You need me. We need each other. We need accountability like *DS Blue Ribbon Recognition* or our *No Zeros Initiative*, but, let me say candidly ... human accountability pales in comparison to the joyful accountability of pleasing the Father, and the pleasure of doing His will. His motivation is love and so it is with us. We love our district family. We love each pastor. We are humbled to hear and witness the stories of dedication, passion and sacrifice. We share your burdens and we believe that great victory is just around the corner. The prayer of Wally, the veteran pastor from Maine, is still ringing in my heart. I'm asking that it be the prayer for all of us: "*Thank You, Father, for all You've allowed me to do. I want to do more!*"

*Thank You, Father, for all  
You've allowed me to do. I  
want to do more!*  
**Pastor Wally**

Respectfully Submitted for Others and For His Glory,

J. Phillip Fuller

## **DISTRICT SUPERINTENDENT'S BLUE RIBBON RECOGNITION**

- Bloxom Community
- Chesapeake First
- Front Royal
- Leesburg
- Lynchburg First
- Richmond Cross Pointe
- Richmond Varina
- Winchester First

## **GENERAL SUPERINTENDENT GROWTH AWARD**

- Chesapeake First ... Pastor Michael Goff
- Hampton Puerta de Salvacion ... Pastors Randolph and Nirky Paulino
- Woodbridge Iglesia ... Pastor Jose Soliz

## **STAR EVANGELISM/NEW NAZARENES**

*The following list is based on Percentage Gains vs. Worship Attendance*

- Annandale Presencia de Dios
- Berryville Compassion
- Bloxom Community
- Chesapeake Branch
- Chesapeake First
- Crozet Gathering
- Culpeper Home Community
- Danville Calvary
- Dumfries La Vid Verdadera
- Falls Church Emmanuele
- Fredericksburg Iglesia
- Hampton Puerta de Salvación
- Harrisonburg Esperanza Viva
- Hopewell Fuente de Agua Viva
- Leesburg Iglesia
- Lorton Santidad A Johova
- Manassas
- Manassas Cristo Vive
- Mount Vernon Iglesia
- Orange
- Richmond El Remanente
- Richmond Hope Community
- Richmond Southside-Enon
- Salem Living Well
- Salem Un Camino Mejor
- South Stafford
- Tidewater Central Renacer Con Cristo
- Verona Living Stone
- Virginia Beach El Shaddai
- Williamsburg Iglesia
- Winchester Luz y Vida
- Woodbridge Iglesia
- Woodstock Esperanza Viva

*The following Churches are among the Top 10 in Numerical Gain for New Nazarenes*

- Lynchburg First
- Fredericksburg Salem Fields Community
- Richmond Southside
- Harrisonburg First
- Richmond Woodville

## WORLD EVANGELISM CHURCH (All Budgets/Appportionments Paid in Full)

- Alexandria First
- Annandale Calvary
- Annandale Presencia de Dios
- Arlington First
- Berryville Compassion
- Bloxom Community
- Bristol Scenic Park
- Bristol Turning Point
- Charlottesville Northridge Community
- Chesapeake Branch
- Chesapeake First
- Colonial Heights
- Covington First
- Crewe
- Culpeper Hope Community
- Dinwiddie
- Dulles Family Life
- Dumfries La Vid Verdadera
- Floyd
- Forest Family Fellowship
- Fredericksburg Iglesia
- Fredericksburg The Bridge
- Front Royal
- Gwynn's Island
- Hampton Puerta de Salvacion
- Harrisonburg First
- Highland Springs
- Hopewell
- Hopewell Iglesia del Nazareno Fuente de Agua Viva
- Leesburg
- Leesburg Iglesia del Nazareno
- Lorton Santidad a Jehova
- Loudoun Valley
- Louisa Huntington Community Fellowship
- Lynchburg First
- Madison Heights Emmanuel
- Manassas
- Manassas Cristo Vive
- Mount Crawford Dayspring
- Mount Vernon Iglesia del Nazareno
- Newport News
- Norfolk Calvary
- Portsmouth
- Pulaski New Life
- Richmond Casa de mi Padre
- Richmond Chester Outreach
- Richmond Comunidad Esperanza Iglesia del Nazareno
- Richmond Connecting Pointe
- Richmond Cross Pointe
- Richmond El Remanente
- Richmond Hope Community
- Richmond Living Water
- Richmond Southside
- Richmond Varina
- Richmond Woodville
- Roanoke Amor Viviente
- Roanoke East Gate
- Roanoke First
- Roanoke Grandview Heights
- Rockbridge Community
- Salem Living Well
- Saltville
- Spring Creek
- Staunton
- Stuarts Draft Good Shepherd
- Tidewater Central
- Tidewater Central Renacer Con Cristo
- Verona Living Stone
- Virginia Beach El Shaddai
- Virginia Beach First
- White Stone
- Williamsburg Iglesia del Nazareno
- Winchester First
- Woodbridge
- Woodbridge Iglesia del Nazareno
- Woodstock Redemption Hill