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## **NCN News**

### **Top Stories for the week of February 17, 2012**

#### **Longtime general secretary B. Edgar Johnson passes away**

The Church of the Nazarene has lost a dear friend and beloved leader.

B. Edgar Johnson, who served the denomination as its general secretary from 1964 to 1990, passed away Friday morning in Nampa, Idaho. He was 90.

Johnson, a Colorado native who was called to ministry when he was 16, had his first ministerial appointment in the form of a 1941 summer pastorate in the Colorado Conference of the Evangelical Church at the age of 20. He then served as pastor of the Long Beach, California, Evangelical Church, where he served for two years. In 1943 he transferred into the Church of the Nazarene and served at Los Angeles First Church. A graduate of Pasadena Nazarene College, where he later received a doctor of divinity degree, his first senior pastorate in the Church of the Nazarene was in 1946 in Whitter, California, on the Anaheim District. He also served as pastor of Santa Ana First Church of the Nazarene and Upland Church of the Nazarene in California.

Johnson became general secretary in 1964 after the death of S. T. Ludwig. He took office just three months before the General Assembly of that year and served in that position until 1990, when he became executive secretary of the National Association of Evangelicals.

Johnson was in continuous pastoral service from the beginning of his summer pastorate in Colorado up until he became general secretary.

"Dr. B. Edgar Johnson redefined the office of general secretary," said David Wilson, current general secretary for the Church of the Nazarene. "He helped to expand the influence of the Church of the Nazarene through his work with sister denominations and theological societies. His gentle, Christlike spirit was a joy to all who knew him and worked with him. Countless stories have been shared throughout the Global Ministry Center by people who were recipients of his kindness. We are saddened by his loss and will miss him greatly."

During his years in Kansas City, Johnson was active in numerous local enterprises and personally knew each mayor of Kansas City during that period. He and his wife, Kathryn, later moved to Nampa, Idaho, where he was on staff at College Church of the Nazarene and actively involved with Northwest Nazarene University.

In his "retirement," Johnson worked with the same commitment and dedication as in prior periods, creating ways to bring families together and strengthen the Nampa community. NNU said Johnson was instrumental in launching 15 non-profit organizations and coalitions for the purpose of strengthening families and assisting underserved children, at-risk youth, and seniors in Nampa. His call to service was rooted in the call to ministry that he received as a teenager. Johnson described it as God speaking to him, not in audible words, but "louder."

Throughout his life, Johnson served thousands of people and volunteered at numerous charitable organizations locally and around the world. In addition to dedicating time and service to NNU, he started the B. Edgar and Kathryn Johnson Endowed Scholarship.

Kathryn, Johnson's wife of 63 years, passed away in 2007. In 2009 he married Vada Kellerer and together they continued to enjoy the blessings of community service and actively participated with numerous Nampa

charities.

Funeral services for B. Edgar Johnson will be on Monday, February 20, 1 p.m. at the Brandt Center on the NNU campus. Arrangements are being made through Alsips Funeral Home in Nampa.

Prayer is requested for the Johnson family.

### **Tragedy in the midst of service**

A Work and Witness team from the Fergus Falls, Minnesota, Church of the Nazarene was putting the finishing touches on rebuilding a clinic in Haiti last Saturday morning when tragedy struck.

Paul Dennis, a 52-year-old known for his love of helping others, was hurt in a construction accident and was not able to recover from his injuries. He passed away shortly after the accident despite receiving immediate medical attention from doctors who were part of the team.

Fergus Falls pastor Steven Hoffman was part of the Work and Witness team and was present to counsel team members. The group, who was in Bleck near the Dominican Republic border, conducted outreach projects later that day before returning Sunday to Port-au-Prince as scheduled.

They returned home to Minnesota on Wednesday.

Dennis recently served the Prairie Lakes District as Nazarene Missions International president and deputation coordinator. He was Minnesota's NMI district president for a year before the Dakota and Minnesota districts became the Prairie Lakes District.

He is survived by his wife Lori, who did not make the trip, and two children, Meghan (Hunter) Matt and Jeremy (Beth).

The Dennis family asked that, in lieu of flowers, contributions be made to Work and Witness, Church of the Nazarene. For information on how to donate and for an opportunity to sign a guest book, [click here](#).

Prayer is requested for the Dennis family and members of the Fergus Falls team.

### **MNU's new president inspires Pioneer spirit**

David Spittal inspired the MidAmerica Nazarene University community in his first full week. The university's fifth president met with faculty and staff on his first day and spoke in chapel on Tuesday.

Spittal said God is up to something at MNU, citing the text of Isaiah 43:19 (NIV), "See I am doing a new thing."

"He is calling us out," he said. "The question is, are you willing to put it all on the line and allow Him to do this new thing?"

And putting it all on the line is what Spittal believes will make the difference in the life of this university in the coming months and years.

"This university is not ours, it is God's," he said. "God has had his hand of protection on this place."

His schedule over the first 10 days is packed with meetings, appearances, and speeches as Spittal immerses himself in the culture and operations of the university.

Spittal said his primary goal is to get to know MNU, especially its students. He also has an incremental 30, 60, and 90-day plan that will include strategic decisions in the areas of finances and enrollment.

“There are challenges ahead, but we will go through it with God’s help,” he said. “We can trust Him with everything about this institution.”

Spittal comes to MNU with an extensive background in public and private education. Holding undergraduate and graduate degrees in music education and a doctorate in educational administration from Ball State University, he taught public school music and served as assistant superintendent and then superintendent of schools in two Indiana public school districts.

Spittal spent seven years as vice president and dean of adult and graduate studies at Indiana Wesleyan University. He then served as president of Southern Wesleyan University in South Carolina from 1994 to 2011.

Both Spittal and his wife, Donna (Perry), were raised in Nazarene parsonages. His father and grandparents were Nazarene ministers in Canada and Illinois.

“I spent my childhood on the front pews as my father preached and led worship,” he said.

In addition to his extensive experience as an educator, Spittal has served several Nazarene churches as a worship or choir director, Sunday School teacher, and church board member.

While the Spittals affiliated with the Wesleyan Church to fulfill his responsibilities as president of Southern Wesleyan University, he said he is thrilled to return to the Church of the Nazarene.

"I have already experienced what it feels like to be home again," he said.

--[MidAmerica Nazarene University](#)

### **Terminally ill Australian missionary honored with Good Samaritan Award**

Belinda "BJ" Alder, Australian missionary to Thailand, was honored by the global church in the presentation of a Good Samaritan Award on February 9. She passed away just six days later at the age of 33.

At the time the award was given, Alder was in the final stage of her battle with cancer, surrounded by family and close friends. Nazarene Compassionate Ministries Asia-Pacific Coordinator David Harris made the surprise presentation via Skype.

The Alder family joined in worship and celebrated their last communion together as Belinda's father, Bruce Alder, principal of Nazarene Theological College, Brisbane, served the elements to his family.

NTC colleague and Director of Research and Curriculum Development David McEwan led the family in a poignant sharing of the Eucharist.

Australia-New Zealand Field Strategy Coordinator John Moore and his wife, Vicki, also participated in the service, expressing their support for Belinda and the Alder family.

Up until her diagnosis of cancer late in 2009, Belinda served at the Maetang Tribal Children's Home in northern Thailand.

Belinda's call to missions was dramatically affirmed during an Australian youth missions trip to Fiji, in 1998. The team endured what became an arduous trip on the open sea in a small, outboard-powered boat. They were concerned when they had not reached their destination after more than eight hours of what was supposed to be a four-hour journey. It was during that time that God directed Belinda's attention to the sky above, giving her the mandate to serve Him, under His sky, wherever that may be and to whomever it may be.

That experience has been the touchstone of Belinda's life and ministry, inspiring young and old alike throughout her native Australia, but also across the region and globe. Belinda recently [retold the story](#) for Nazarene Global Mission's *Engage* magazine.

In spite of a life-impacting illness, Belinda continued to be vitally involved in a discipleship group for young women, resourced youth ministry on the Australia Northern Pacific District, served on Nazarene Youth International Asia-Pacific's regional council, and contributed to the development of an Australian missions strategy. Her most recent goal was to be well enough to participate in the upcoming Australia-New Zealand Field missional church conference.

Unfortunately, she wouldn't meet that goal as she peacefully passed away on the morning of February 15.

"Dear friends, we grieve this morning the passing of our beloved Belinda, quietly, peacefully, her mum and dad with her, and with her last breath, a sweet smile," Harris wrote.

"Our hearts ache, we weep, yet, we are buoyed beyond measure that BJ is in the presence of the One who created her, redeemed her, transformed her, used her for His glory in the work of the Kingdom, accomplishing His purposes on earth and in the hearts of many," he continued. "What a privilege to have journeyed with this dynamic, gregarious, spiritual giant."

Belinda's most passionate and prayerful desire was for family and friends who are not yet believers to become disciples of Christ as a result of her life's testimony and witness to God's grace and peace in the midst of pain and suffering.

It was Belinda's wish that a foundation or trust be established to honor her passion for ministry and missions in perpetuity. The fund will offer scholarships affirming, encouraging, and supporting young people's equipping for and engagement in missions. For information on this, to sign a guest book, or to give to the foundation, [click here](#).

The Allder family offers their sincere appreciation for the many loving expressions of support and prayer, including those posted on the aptly named Facebook group, "[Under His Sky](#)." Prayer is requested for the Allder family and Belinda's extended family with the Church of the Nazarene's Asia-Pacific Region.

Messages of condolence may be sent to:

Allder Family  
40 Woodlands Drive  
Thornlands Qld 4164, Australia

--[Nazarene Compassionate Ministries Asia-Pacific](#)

### **Former Australian district superintendent passes away**

Max W. Stone, the first Australian-born superintendent of the Australia Southern District of the Church of the Nazarene, passed away on January 19 in Mandurah, Western Australia, after a lengthy battle with cancer. He was 77.

Stone was saved during a special service at the Prospect North Methodist Church in Adelaide, Australia, in 1946. After hearing the radio program titled "Showers of Blessing," Stone contacted the Church of the Nazarene and began attending the Croydon Park Church of the Nazarene. A season of revival at the Croydon Park church resulted in five young men eventually becoming Nazarene pastors in Australia; Stone was the first.

Stone met Janet in Sunday School and in 1954 they were married. The couple soon moved to Sydney, where

they attended the Nazarene Bible college. After graduation, Stone began his pastoral ministry at the church he first attended, Croydon Park Church of the Nazarene, in 1958 and was later ordained in 1961. Two years later Stone was elected to the District Advisory Board of the Australia District, and was also elected district secretary. He retained these positions under the new district, Australian Southern District, which was created in 1977.

In 1964 Stone moved to the Stafford Church of the Nazarene in Brisbane, Queensland, and subsequently pastored Nazarene congregations in Biloela, Queensland (1969-1973); and Gawler, South Australia (1974-1980), when he supervised the construction of the Ingle Farm church and later the present church building. In 1980 Stone accepted a call to the church in Wantirna, Victoria, where its present church building was erected under his leadership.

He once wrote that he considered "building new churches" as his most outstanding accomplishment. He built three.

Stone was appointed superintendent of the Australia Southern District in 1983 by General Superintendent Eugene L. Stowe. Stone continued as pastor at Wantirna for another six years. During his time as a district superintendent, Stone was also a supply pastor at the Golden Grove Church of the Nazarene in Adelaide and at the Nazarene churches in Gawler and at Birrong, New South Wales.

In 1985 Stone was elected to the General Board and to the Board of Trustees of Asia-Pacific Nazarene Theological Seminary, serving four-year terms. Additionally, he was a longtime member of the board of Nazarene Theological College, Thornlands, Australia.

Stone resigned as district superintendent in 1994 due to health concerns and he and Janet relocated to Western Australia. During his retirement years, he served as a supply pastor in Perth, as a chaplain for Baptist Care, and as chaplain of the Mandurah Gardens Retirement Village until a year before his death.

He is survived by his wife, Janet, and his three sons: Garry, Mark, and David; five grandchildren; and a great-grandchild. Condolences may be sent to:

Mrs. Janet Stone  
Mandurah Gardens Estate  
37/445 Pinjarra Rd  
Coodanup WA 6210

--[NCN News submissions](#)

### **A safe haven in Syria**

Nearly 400 civilians have been killed because of violence in Syria and at least one expert predicts the turmoil will last several more months.

"Thousands are still going to die," Syria specialist Michael Lüders told a German news channel last week.

The violence in Syria reached the capital at the end of January. Thousands of Iraqi refugees who fled their country to the safety of Damascus were painfully reminded of what they left behind, wondering where they could find a safe haven.

For 140 Iraqi refugee children ages 4 to 19, their safe haven is called "Acts of God," a program in a Nazarene school located in the Old City of Damascus, where fighting has recently intensified.

Most of these children cannot attend a regular school, so this program, now in its fourth year, is their only chance of continuing their education.

Four afternoons a week, year round, they receive a nutritious snack, participate in chapel, and divide into age groups for three hours of lessons in mathematics, English, Arabic, history, science, and discipleship. The majority of the students have lived through traumatic experiences and many of the teachers are themselves Iraqi refugees and know the children's pain. They take time to listen to the children individually, showing them love, offering encouragement, and helping them deal with trauma.

"We are so proud of the Syrian Nazarenes who continue to provide this incredible service that is making a difference in the lives of the students," wrote Rod Green, Nazarene Compassionate Ministries coordinator for the Eastern Mediterranean Field, which includes Syria and Iraq. "The program really provides encouragement and skills that help Iraqi children feel they are not forgotten and loved. The students learn how to worship, love, and serve God; it also keeps them engaged in learning in hopes that they can one day continue their education in a serious way when they move to a more permanent living situation."

Teachers are greatly encouraged when former students who have moved on call from abroad to say how much the Acts of God program meant to them, that they're still reading their Bibles, and they haven't forgotten what they learned in chapel.

But encouragement comes from other sources, too.

In their Christmas Eve services, several Nazarene churches in Germany collected a "Christmas offering" totaling 3,400 Euro (about US\$4,500) designated for the Acts of God program.

The teachers say this was an answer to their prayers.

"For three months we've had a plan to purchase a blanket for each student in the program," said Nancy Samara, director of the Acts of God program and NCM coordinator for Syria. "I prayed to God to send us money for this, but we didn't receive any support in the three months I prayed. I was so encouraged to hear the news of [the] donation! Now we can buy a large blanket for each child and there will be money left over to help run the program."

The blankets will be custom-produced in a local textile factory with all of Psalm 121 printed on them.

"This psalm is about God's protection," Green said. "The message to the children is that the Lord will protect you from all evil. The Lord is your keeper, and even though you sleep under this blanket, the Lord will stay awake and guard you through the night."

"This message is particularly important now to the people living in Syria."

Individuals who wish to sponsor one of the children who attend the Acts of God program, or any of the other children who are available for sponsorship in Syria, please visit Nazarene Child Sponsorship at [cs.ncm.org](http://cs.ncm.org) and type "Syrian Arab Republic" in the "Location" search bar.

--Eurasia Region Church of the Nazarene

### **Northeast Oklahoma DS elected to General Board**

Northeast Oklahoma District Superintendent H. David McKellips will replace David Busic on the Church of the Nazarene's General Board following Busic's election as president of Nazarene Theological Seminary.

Busic [began his position at NTS](#) on September 13, 2011, and the final votes for his General Board replacement were received on January 8, 2012.

McKellips' service as a senior pastor includes churches in Parsons, Kansas, and Tulsa, Oklahoma (Central). He was in pastoral service at Las Vegas First Church of the Nazarene and Bethany, Oklahoma, First Church of the Nazarene. He has been the Northeast Oklahoma District superintendent since 2006.

The Kansas native has served on several boards of the Northeast Oklahoma District, was an anchor pastor

and conference presenter for Mainstay Ministries of Wheaton, Illinois, and spent time as a member of the Board of Trustees of Nazarene Bible College and the Board of Directors of Nazarene Publishing House.

McKellips graduated from MidAmerica Nazarene University in 1977 with a degree in religion and philosophy. He went on to earn his master of divinity degree from Nazarene Theological Seminary in 1981 and his doctor of ministry degree from Fuller Theological Seminary in Pasadena, California, in 2000.

The denomination's General Board is made up of 48 pastors and lay persons who are responsible for the legislation, budgeting, programs, and structure of all Nazarene institutions. The General Board is also responsible for electing members to the Board of General Superintendents. Administration, detailed strategies, and plans are the responsibility of not only the Board of General Superintendents, but also the officers and directors of the General Board.

### **Tonga's Mango Tree Centre receives long-awaited wheelchair van**

Since 1994 Mango Tree Centre has been reaching out to people with disabilities. At long last they can do so with more efficiency, thanks to prayer and a specially-equipped van.

The Nazarene rehabilitation center, directed by missionaries In-kwon and Jeong-seok Kim in the Pacific island nation of Tonga, ministers to children, youth, and adults who have cerebral palsy, spinal cord injuries (quadriplegia, paraplegia), epilepsy, and intellectual impairment. The center also reaches out to the families of the disabled, helping them to see that disabilities are not a result of a curse or punishment from God.

For some time the Mango Tree Centre was in desperate need of proper transportation for the disabled. Such transportation would enable those individuals with disabilities to participate in the Mango Tree Centre's rehabilitative programs such as computer and physiotherapy classes.

The solution was a specially-designed van equipped to load, transport, and unload wheelchairs. The wheelchair van would benefit not only the 10 wheelchair users who are taking computer courses at the Mango Tree Centre, but also many people with spinal cord injuries who need to travel to the hospital. Such specially-equipped vans are expensive and not available on Tonga.

Though it seemed like an impossible dream, God had already made a way to accomplish it. Through a Vacation Bible School offering, children all over the world raised money to purchase vehicles for evangelism. A big portion of the offering had been used to meet significant needs on the Church of the Nazarene's Asia-Pacific Region, but some funds still remained in the account and were allocated to the special needs van. In addition, God moved the hearts of several donors to bless the disabled children, youth, and adults of Tonga by giving to this project. A search was made and in January 2012 a well-equipped Toyota HiAce wheelchair van was located and purchased in New Zealand.

The van was put aboard a boat in Auckland to start its 1,300-mile ocean voyage to the Mango Tree Centre. Prior to arrival in Tonga, a sudden significant obstacle arose. In-kwon discovered that the importation tax on the wheelchair van was far more than the funds available. He appealed for a tax exemption for the van. On January 24, the tax exemption request was sent to the Tongan Revenue Office. The application was rejected.

On January 27, In-kwon wrote to Harmon Schmelzenbach, South Pacific Field strategy coordinator, to request that Nazarenes around the world pray for the favor of the authorities that the tax exemption might be granted. In addition, the Asia-Pacific regional office sent an appeal letter to the revenue officials, stating that children all around the world had given the funds for the wheelchair van.

On January 31, In-kwon returned to the revenue office, praying that this time the outcome would be different.

After his appointment he was able to share the following news: "I met the official again and showed the letter with the other supportive documents and photos. When she read the letter, God touched her heart and she

said 'Now I am convinced' and she immediately granted the exemption."

On the second of February, In-kwon drove the wheelchair van away from the wharf to its new home at the Mango Tree Centre. The long-awaited blessing and gift of love and compassion from children all over the world was received with heartfelt thanks.

--[NCN News submissions](#)

### **In Memoriam**

The following is a weekly listing of Nazarene ministers and leaders who have recently gone home to be with the Lord. Notices were received February 13-17, 2012.

[Betty I. Adkins](#), 82, of New Albany, Indiana, passed away February 12. She was a former missionary with her late husband, George W. Adkins. Together they served in Bolivia and Chile. George W. Adkins, who also pastored in Oklahoma, passed away in 2006.

[Belinda "BJ" Allder](#), 33, of Thornlands, Queensland, Australia, passed away February 15. She was a former missionary, serving in Thailand. She also served as field Nazarene Youth International coordinator. ([story](#))

[Floyd W. Going](#), 95, of Stillwater, Oklahoma, passed away on January 31. He was a longtime layperson at Stillwater First Church of the Nazarene, where he served on the church board for several decades and was known as "a friend of preachers," his family said. He is survived by his wife, Norma L. (Crank) Going.

[Paul L. Hoskins](#), 84, of Mitchell, Indiana, passed away February 9. He was a retired minister and evangelist, serving in Indiana. He is survived by his wife, Frances Ellen (Duncan) Hoskins.

[B. Edgar Johnson](#), 90, of Nampa, Idaho, passed away February 17. He was a retired minister who served in California, but is most known for his service as general secretary for the denomination (1964-1990). He was preceded in death by his wife, Kathryn, who passed away in 2007. He is survived by his wife, Vada Johnson. ([story](#))

[Lino Nuu](#), 64, of Stockton, California, passed away on December 9. He was a minister, serving at the Stockton Samoan Church of the Nazarene. Nuu previously served in San Jose, California, and Samoa. He is survived by his wife, Filia Nuu.

[Venice B. Robbins](#), 92, of Colorado Springs, Colorado, passed away on February 14. She was the widow of minister and educator Forrest D. Robbins, who served in Illinois and Indiana. He passed away in 2000.

[Max W. Stone](#), 77, of Coodanup, Australia, passed away January 19. He was the first Australian-born superintendent of the Church of the Nazarene's Australia Southern District. He also served as a pastor and as a member of the General Board. He is survived by his wife, Janet Stone. ([story](#))

[Esther S. \(Whitman\) Wilson](#), 98, of Charlotte, North Carolina, passed away February 13. She was the widow of minister Morris E. Wilson, who served in New York. He passed away in 2000.

For previous editions of *In Memoriam*, see the "Passings" section on [ncnnews.com](#) by [clicking here](#).

*Note: Please join with us in prayer for the families who have lost loved ones. Click on names for full stories, funeral information, local online obituaries, and/or guest books (if available). To submit an entry of a minister or church leader, send to [submitnews@ncnnews.com](mailto:submitnews@ncnnews.com).*

--Compiled by NCN News