

NMI Central

NAZARENE MISSIONS INTERNATIONAL

25 October 2023

Asia-Pacific Region



Fiji

Fiji is an archipelago of over 330 islands in the South Pacific. The history of Fiji is complex and the country has struggled to agree on a workable form of government, given the many challenges related to the oceanic expanse of the archipelago, and the unique histories and customs of these islands. Christianity has been viewed with suspicion historically, because of European colonial critique of customs, and a misunderstanding or overstatement of what was not understood within the culture. The Church of the Nazarene began its work in 1995 and has attempted a variety of ministry and mission approaches, finding an effective and grace-filled incarnational presence. Fiji is part of the culturally diverse and widespread Melanesia-South Pacific Field. Youth are a key focus group on the Fiji district, and as you will read in the story that follows, many of the youth are rising to the challenges of the day, seizing opportunities for involvement in projects that will make a difference in Fiji.



1,061 Members



19 Fully Organized Churches; 11 Not Yet Organized Churches



13 District Licensed Ministers and 16 Ordained Ministers on 1 District



PRAYER

- Pray that our young people will have a transformational encounter with God, and that their church family will have wisdom to know how to advise and guide them on their journey of faith and response.
- Pray that all local churches will have a clear missions focus that challenges every generation to encounter the world around them with the love and grace of God, impacting lives and making Christlike disciples.



PRAISE

- We praise God for a promising recovery from the pandemic, and for those who have felt a call to prepare for ministry through the Passion Church of the Nazarene.
- We give thanks for all that was provided to make a youth Alabaster project possible, and for their keen interest in missions and building a sustainable church in Fiji.

NMI SNAPSHOT



Passion is more than the name of a church planted in the Navua country side of Fiji; it is a driving force in all the church does to engage its youth in ministry and missions. The Passion Church of the Nazarene began just before Covid, and though gathering of churches was restricted, Passion continued with zoom services of worship on Sundays, and discipleship classes, as well as keeping people connected through online fellowship. Online theology classes also began during this time to encourage local pastors in their studies. In March 2022, two of the leaders received their local licenses; in 2023, these pastors received their district licenses. Passion supports the ongoing education of its youth, believing it is important to the holistic development of youth, equipping them, and mobilizing them with a heart for missions. Their slogan: *“We do not have to be great to start, but we have to start to be great!”*



The strong commitment of Passion Church of the Nazarene is to 1) engage young people with biblical and missional stories; 2) encourage them to pray; 3) experience a missions trip; and 4) expand the definition of missions, and see their part in the mission of God. These areas of focus led to a missions trip to Vanuatu in 2023. Heavily impacted by two back-to-back cyclones, the work in Vanuatu needed help to recover. Youth from Passion in Fiji travelled to Vanuatu, bringing financial assistance from the Community of Grace Church of the Nazarene, as well as practical gifts of clothing. The team also carried out repairs and maintenance work on the missionaries’ home in Vanuatu.



Passion youth on Vanuatu missions trip.

Passion is engaged in house-to-house visitation, led by the young people, where they share the Word, pray for the families of classmates from school, and bless these families with groceries. Discovering that these families do not actually attend any church, is confirmation of the Spirit's prompts to visit them.

Face-to-face discipleship sessions that include group discussion, sharing of thoughts and perspectives, and praying together, are now incorporated into the regular calendar of Passion. One mindset instilled in our young people is: "One life matters!" They focus on one friend at a time in school, and bring them to their Friday youth group. Friends of our Passion youth now join these sessions, leading to at least one friend of another religion coming to faith in Christ, now excited to be part of the Passion family.



On Sunday afternoons, a service is held in Suva, the capital, to cater to our young people in University. Following the service, there is a time of fellowship, and a light meal is provided for our university youth and their friends before they return to campus.



A Sunday afternoon meal shared with University students before returning to campus.

Four of Passion’s leaders attended the 2023 Global Conventions and General Assembly—a first for three of the four. *“Understanding the heart of the church, and the scope and depth of being a Nazarene in the global family, was one of the biggest takeaways. Spending time and meeting the global family, some of which you only read about, made a significant impact.”* [Palinda Kaituu, pastor and district NMI president] Being intentional with prayers for global missionaries, and local missions involvement is being instilled into our young people’s lives.

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