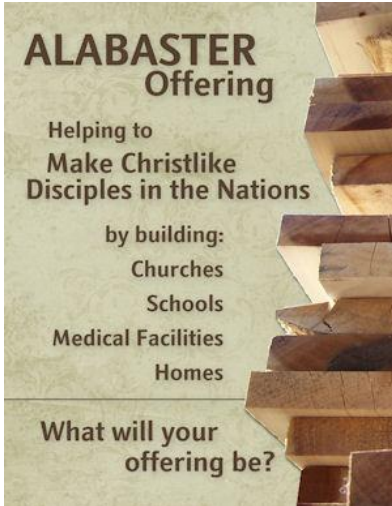


What is Alabaster

The Alabaster Offering provides funds for property and buildings around the world. It gives a sense of permanence, the attitude that the Church of the Nazarene intends to "put down roots." Eighty percent of the money is used in world mission areas, and twenty percent goes to multicultural congregations in the United States and Canada. Alabaster funds help provide land for most Work & Witness projects. The entire offering goes toward the construction of churches, schools, medical facilities, and homes for missionaries and national workers.



How Are Alabaster Offerings Received? The Alabaster Offering gets to the mission field via several avenues. The most widely used is the Alabaster Box. Individuals are challenged to regularly contribute the cost of items they desire but do not need. The boxes also serve as reminders to pray for those people who will benefit from Alabaster buildings.

In September and February, the money is collected. Sometimes a "march offering" is received with individuals carrying their boxes to the front of the church and pouring the money into a large offering container. The way an offering is received is as varied as the world areas in which the Church of the Nazarene has a presence; however, it is always accompanied with a spirit of rejoicing.

Many churches receive regular offerings throughout the year that are designated as Alabaster funds. This is often a part of the Faith Promise plan for missions giving. However, the semi-annual offerings should still be received, allowing opportunity for giving by those not participating in other ways.

Alabaster should be well-publicized. All ages are encouraged to participate with leaders educating local churches as to the need for centers of holiness evangelism around the world.

History of Alabaster

In 1948, Rev. Elizabeth Venum, Global Council member, was asked to think and pray about a challenging project for NMI. Rev. Venum knew if God wanted the project to take place, He would provide the plan. On the return trip from Kansas City, God gave her His plan of giving "love" gifts. It was modeled after the sacrifice of the woman who anointed Jesus' head with expensive perfume poured from an Alabaster jar (Matthew 26:6-13).

At the Global NMI Council meeting in 1949, Mrs. Venum told of the Alabaster plan God had given her. The Council unanimously adopted the plan, and the first offering was received in 1949.

The Board of General Superintendents approved the plan for Alabaster funds to be used exclusively for buildings and properties in cross-cultural ministries.

Now, more than 60 years later, Alabaster is still strong, having provided more than 8,300 projects since 1949. Faithful Nazarenes around the world have given more than \$92 million dollars for this much-needed ministry.

