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## **The Mission Society Sharpens Focus on ‘Least Reached’**

*Organization’s ‘Unfinished’ Magazine Features Renewed Emphasis on Reaching Groups with Little Access to Gospel At Home, Abroad*

NORCROSS, Ga. – “Least reached people” are often considered those without written or oral scriptures in their own language, often overseas. But the world’s “least reached” can also be found in the heart of the United States, in immigrant communities or the inner cities, where residents have no Christian believers in their lives.

The Mission Society, which deploys Christian missionaries across the globe, has re-examined its mission and re-affirmed its roots, recasting its aim to reach the “least reached” with the gospel. In the current issue of “[Unfinished](#),” the organization’s quarterly publication, ministry leaders explain a newly galvanized attention on reaching those who have never really learned who Jesus is.

“In the past, mission organizations have talked more about unreached people groups,” says the Rev. Dick McClain, president of The Mission Society. “But we’ve chosen to use the language of least reached people groups, because it is a relative term, one we can all relate to.... We all need to be thinking strategically about those areas and population segments in our communities that may have little access to the good news.”

That said, The Mission Society still prepares and sends missionaries overseas, of late with a heightened priority on those who have little or no contact with the gospel. The organization adopted a recast mission statement in February 2010 to reflect its renewed focus: “The Mission Society exists to mobilize and deploy the body of Christ globally to join Jesus in his mission, especially among the least reached peoples.” Currently, 40 percent of the organization’s missionaries serve “least reached” populations.

But with the center of gravity of Christianity shifting, and only 35 percent of the world’s Christian population residing in North America and Europe, The Mission Society officials say the Western church has increasingly taken a support role to those in Africa, Latin America, and parts of Asia who are increasingly engaged in missions work themselves.

“We go into developing countries and train pastors and lay leaders to be missionally focused, so that they no longer have the mentality of ‘When is the West going to come and minister to us?’” says Michael Mozley, The Mission Society’s senior director of international mobilization. “They are saying, ‘God is calling us to be globally focused in everything that we do. He is calling us to reach the least reached in our own countries.’”

The Mission Society has also devoted itself to helping local U.S. churches embrace that calling. Stan Self, the organization’s senior director of church ministry, explains how The Mission Society offers the local church the “three Ts” of transforming itself to reflect Christ’s call: teaching, tools and training wheels. “Everything we do in our teaching is about helping equip the church to go into all the world,” Self says.



## The Mission Society

To learn more about the “three Ts” and The Mission Society’s growing collaboration with missions efforts in the “global South and East,” and to sign up for a free subscription to “Unfinished,” visit [www.themissionsociety.org](http://www.themissionsociety.org). The issue also includes global conversion stories from The Mission Society missionaries and the article “Money Well Spent?” which explores whether Western missionaries are still necessary.

Founded in 1984 in the Wesleyan tradition, The Mission Society ([www.themissionsociety.org](http://www.themissionsociety.org)) exists to mobilize and deploy the body of Christ globally to join Jesus in His mission, especially among the least-reached peoples. To that end, the Mission Society recruits, trains and sends Christian missionaries to minister around the world. It develops diverse programs and ministries in keeping with its missionaries’ unique callings and gifts, ranging from well-drilling and the arts, to more traditional ministries, such as teaching English and church-planting. Its church ministry department provides seminars, workshops and mentoring for congregations in the United States and abroad, helping equip churches for outreach in their communities and worldwide. Its vision is for the Kingdom of God to advance among all peoples, bringing about redemption and reconciliation through Jesus Christ. At present, The Mission Society has more than 200 missionaries in 32 countries.

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