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## **United Methodist Board of Global Ministries Chief Executive Shares Goals, Vision for World Mission**

### ***Dr. Thomas Kemper Addresses Board of The Mission Society***

NORCROSS, Ga. — Like the 72 missionaries in the Gospel of Luke whom Jesus sent out into the harvest, all who are disciples of Jesus “get sent,” said Dr. Thomas Kemper to The Mission Society board of directors at their semi-annual meeting Wednesday.

Kemper is the general secretary of the United Methodist General Board of Global Ministries (GBGM). His address followed an address last month by Dick McClain, president of The Mission Society, at the GBGM fall board meeting in New York.

The four goals of United Methodist missions that Kemper shared in his address are making disciples of Jesus for the transformation of the world; strengthening and developing Christian communities; alleviating human suffering; and seeking justice, freedom and peace.

"The Kingdom is much more than one organization and one understanding of the Kingdom," Kemper said. "Missions don't rely on our means, and not even on our gifts, or even on our wealth.

"We think it's all about money, but it's about people, giving of ourselves," Kemper said. As Christ sends his people into the harvest, which Jesus describes as "plentiful," he said, "Let us work together that so the Kingdom of God is right at the doorsteps of people we meet and serve."

Kemper, of Hamburg, Germany, served eight years as a missionary in Brazil with his wife, Barbara Hübner-Kemper, through the German United Methodist Board of Missions. While on the mission field he taught at the Brazilian Theological Seminary in Sao Paulo, ministered to the homeless and poor, and was involved in church planting. While serving as a missionary in London he served with the German Methodist Mission and ministered to Vietnamese boat people.

In an interview with United Methodist News Service, Kemper said that cooperation can be mutually beneficial for both agencies as they address real issues that arise in mission areas where each organization has personnel or may plan to deploy workers.

McClain noted that the mission field is both global and local, citing demographics in an area near the offices of The Mission Society where 35 percent of the residents are recent immigrants and 85 percent are Muslims.

This diversity presents “amazing opportunities and significant challenges to churches all over America,” McClain said. “While the content of the gospel has not changed, the context in which we proclaim it has changed dramatically, almost overnight.”

"The Mission Society's board members and I were greatly honored that Dr. Kemper shared with us his heart for making disciples of Jesus Christ to the ends of the earth," McClain said. "Dr. Kemper's



vision for taking the Good News to those who must hear Christ's message of hope is one that likewise resonates at the core of The Mission Society."

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. 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 37 countries.

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