

The Mission Society Commissions 13 New Missionaries

(Norcross/Atlanta, GA - September 14, 2008) – “At some point along the way, you will be asked about The Mission Society. Do me a favor. Remember that **this** day is the answer to that question,” the Rev. Dr. Phil Granger, Mission Society president, told an audience of Mission Society board, staff, missionaries, and friends, who had just participated in a service of worship and of the commissioning of 13 new missionaries.

The September 10 service, held at 8:00 a.m. in the Hilton Hotel in Norcross, Georgia, included a time of missionary testimony, communion, and the commissioning of men and women committing themselves to full-time cross-cultural mission ministry. To them, Granger spoke, “We rejoice together in your obedience to the Lord of the Harvest as you devote your lives to Christian mission. Your labors in and for Christ and the Kingdom of God will involve you with a variety of people, places, and cultures. You are called to live and serve among these people as servants desiring to fulfill Jesus’ commission to evangelize, disciple, teach, preach, and heal through a variety of Kingdom ministries.”

The new missionaries included people from four states. They were: the Rev. Tamlyn Collins (assigned to Zambia); Chris and Dora Barbee (assigned to Thailand); Jonathan and Amy Killen (assigned to Paraguay); Graham and Sharon Nichols (assigned to Ecuador); Laura Phillips (a campus minister at the University of Georgia Wesley Foundation); and five missionaries assigned to a secure location whose names cannot be released.

The testimony articulated by a new missionary seemed to represent well those gathered. “I spent the first 25 years of my life thinking I had life all worked out. God has made me realize and know whose plan it is. One of the ways He’s doing that is through this [calling us to missionary service.],” said the new missionary. (Name not released for security reasons.)

“God interrupted my life,” Jim Beise echoed. Beise, a minister, and his wife, Angela, are both musicians who served local churches in Mississippi before sensing their call to full-time missions. They led the worship for the commissioning service. Having recently returned to the United States from France, Jim and Angela reflected back on the beginning of their 15 years on the field. “I never said that God gave me a heart for France, because who could bear that?,” recalled Jim. (Among France’s 60 million inhabitants, most are reported to be deists, agnostics, or atheists.) “I could say that I was called to France, but it’s better to say I was invited. ... We *were* called, but where do you go that the Spirit of God has not gone before you?”

Beise continued, speaking of the “parched land of Western Europe.” “Life in France is great. Ministry in France is tough.”



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“Don’t ever become a great missionary at the expense of being a great disciple,” Angela Beise exhorted those gathered.

Concluding the service, President Granger said, “God has never asked for us to be great, wise, the best, but to live our lives constantly looking in His face.”

The commissioning service was held during The Mission Society’s bi-annual board meeting. Founded in 1984 in the Wesleyan tradition, The Mission Society recruits, trains, and sends Christian missionaries to minister around the world. At present, The Mission Society has more than 225 missionaries in 32 countries. The Mission Society develops diverse programs and ministries in accordance 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 overseas, helping equip churches for strategic outreach in their own communities and throughout the world. For more information on The Mission Society, call 1.800.478.8963 or visit www.themissionsociety.org.

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