

# Unfinished

A publication of The Mission Society

Spring 2007 | 36



## Cuba: Not forgotten

The story of God's boundless work among the "restricted" people of Cuba

UNFINISHED  
Spring 2007, Issue 36

**Publisher/CEO**  
Philip R. Granger

**Editor**  
Ruth A. Burgner

**Researcher/Contributing Writer**  
Reed Hoppe

**Design**  
Point of Vision / www.pointofvision.com

**Information Technology Director**  
Phyllis Hughes

**Founding President/President Emeritus**  
H.T. Maclin

*Unfinished* is a publication of The Mission Society. Subscriptions are free upon request.

Send subscription requests, change of addresses, and all correspondence to P.O. Box 922637, Norcross, Georgia 30010 or call 800.478.8963 (FAX 770.446.3044). The Mission Society is funded entirely by gifts from individuals and local congregations. All gifts are tax-exempt and are gratefully acknowledged. The Mission Society's publication is a member of the Evangelical Press Association. Please visit The Mission Society online at: [www.themissionsociety.org](http://www.themissionsociety.org).

The Mission Society staff: Jay Anderson, Theresa Bennefield, Ron Braund, Dennis Brown, Sara Brown, Ruth Burgner, Amanda Coleman, Richard Coleman, Janice Colvin, Doug Cozart, Phoebe Crosby, Frank Decker, Anna Drewry, Leslie Fellows, Debbie Finney, Philip R. Granger, Lauren Helveston, Reed Hoppe, Phyllis Hughes, Brenda Lee, Beverly Mancuso, Dick McClain, Caroline Ngure, Daniel Ngure, Jennifer Preble, Ivar Quindstrand, Jim Ramsay, Rick Roberts, Stan Self, Johanna Stahl, Darrell L. Whiteman, Allison Wiggins, Tracy Wiggins, Larry Williams, Johnny Winkle, Roger Wright

The Mission Society board of directors: Jorge Acevedo, Cape Coral, FL; Paul Baddour, Heathrow, FL; Ed Bell, Georgetown, SC; Julie Broderson, Versailles, KY; W. Andrew Clark, Johnson City, TN; Jim Davis, Dalton, GA; Les Fowler, Asheboro, NC; Anne Frame, Brentwood, TN; William Goff, Jr. (board chairman), Ball Ground, GA; Philip R. Granger, Sugar Hill, GA; William M. Johnson, Canton, GA; João Carlos Lopes, Curitiba, Brazil; H.T. Maclin, Decatur, GA; Don McGehee, Ruston, LA; Josef Otsin, Kumasi, Ghana; Joe Peabody, Dalton, GA; Janet Rockey, Georgetown, SC; Jerald Russell, Maryville, TN; Quentin Scholtz, Danville, KY; Richard Weber, Sandy Springs, GA

**Our vision:** The Cross of Christ within arm's reach of everyone in the world;

**Our mission:** To facilitate obedience to the Great Commission by the Body of Christ;

**Our strategy:** To create self-reproducing, indigenous, discipling Christian communities by mobilizing cross-cultural witnesses for Christ in partnership with nationals.

# BRISTOL HOUSE

*Your Partner in Discipleship*



**OUR FAITH TODAY**  
April 2006

*Leading United Methodists Answer Your Questions*

**Q** Why should Christians read the Old Testament?

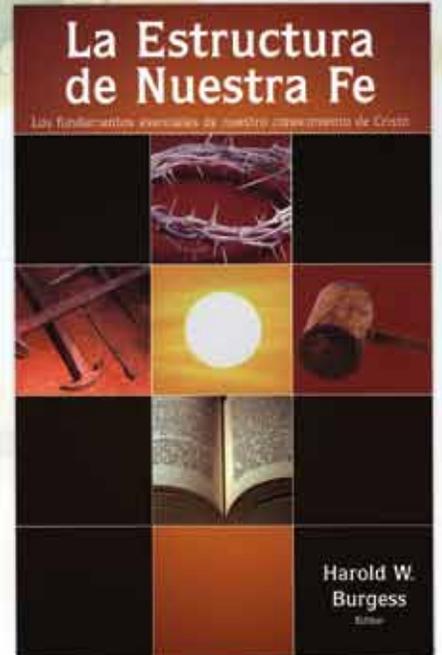
**A** The simple answer to the question is that reading the Old Testament is not only a duty, but it is also a privilege. It is a privilege because it allows us to see the roots of our faith and the character of God. It is a duty because it is the Word of God, and we are called to obey it. The Old Testament is the foundation of our faith, and it is the source of our spiritual life. It is the Word of God, and it is the source of our spiritual life. It is the Word of God, and it is the source of our spiritual life.

**Q** Why do we pray in Jesus' name?

**A** As the youngest child in my family (and the only boy) I didn't always get my way. In essence my older sisters, I could always say, "But Mom said so," then something would happen, and I would realize that my sisters were right. I would say, "But Mom said so," then something would happen, and I would realize that my sisters were right. I would say, "But Mom said so," then something would happen, and I would realize that my sisters were right.

**Q** Why is it so important to be a church?

**A** When we consider the New Testament we find that



**La Estructura de Nuestra Fe**

*Una fundamentación bíblica de nuestra creencia en Cristo*

Harold W. Burgess

## OUR FAITH TODAY

THIS MONTHLY BULLETIN INSERT answers questions about United Methodist practices, the Scriptures, personal and social holiness and more. A new section, written by **The Mission Society** staff, offers informative and inspiring stories from around the world.

**Mission Society** President and CEO, Philip Granger, says, "This bulletin insert is a way to minister to your congregation as you seek to offer the love and message of Jesus Christ in your own community and in communities at the ends of the earth."

Shipped and billed in quarterly installments.  
**\$3.75 per 50 per month.**



## Bristol House, Ltd.

1-800-451-7323 (READ)

[WWW.BRISTOLHOUSELTD.COM](http://WWW.BRISTOLHOUSELTD.COM)

Ask for your free catalog!

## NOW IN SPANISH

A NEW WESLEYAN basic belief study, prepared by Asbury Theological Seminary students and edited by Dr. Harold Burgess, has now been translated into Spanish. Readers learn about the nature of God, salvation, grace, the Scriptures and much more.

**\$9.95**

Volume discounts available

*“Consider Jesus. We have no other message.”—Bishop Stephen Neill*



## Cuba's Church unveiled

4

This mysterious island's growing witness cannot be hidden; its emergence may infect the global Church.

## How beautiful

10

Here are ways you or your Sunday school class can partner with missionaries. What you do with these pages can be life-changing for families and communities around the world – and for you.

## Perspective

2

**No exceptions** – A word for those not called to missions (or so they think)

## Personnel Needs

16

Read the variety of missionary service positions available all over the world. Consider serving on the field for a month – or for a lifetime

## World

17

**The Incarnation at 12,000 feet** – Read how God is using the Ivey family in the lives of the people of the Andes

## News

18

**The state of the Gospel** – Mongolia is first on a “top-10 list” that might surprise you

**Accelerating the spread of the Gospel** – The Mission Society engages in a partnership to launch a missionary-sending organization

## Church Ministry

21

**Is your church on mission?** – Four changes that can move your church forward in mission



# No exceptions

A word for those not called to missions (or so they think)

Before any committee wrote your church's mission statement, your congregation already had its mission. Jesus declared it when He said: "Go into all the world and make disciples." In other words, missions is *every* church's mission.

But the long arm of missions goes beyond the local church. Paul teaches in I Corinthians 12 that the Church is the Body of Christ. The word "body" is a metaphor, which we usually think of as referencing how all the members of a congregation function together to accomplish the task set before them. Each member has a gift, and the gift is needed to accomplish the ministry of the church.

But Paul's "body language" is more than a metaphor for our getting along with each other. Paul's analogy is a statement that the reason for the existence of the Church is to be the Body of Christ – to be the presence, the incarnation of Christ – in this current age. As such, the ministry of Jesus is to be the ministry focus of the Church. A quick read of the scriptures shows that the primary ministry of Christ is to restore the relationship between God and man. He came to reconcile the least, the last, and the lost to God and to usher those who would receive Him into eternal life. That was His mission, and that is the mission He has entrusted to His Church.

Being reminded of this – that God has entrusted His Body with His mission – should give us all great joy. We should all be offering a resounding "amen" in praise for what God has done. Instead, some believers may instead think to themselves, "But thank God I haven't been called to mission or ministry! It is clearly someone else's responsibility to fulfill the Great Commission."

To which I might say, "But just as is true with your church, before *you* received *your* specific call, you already had a general call. The Great Commission was not given to the Church as a collective body of people. The Great Commission was given to individuals to fulfill. In fact the

Church was called into existence to graft individuals into Christ in a supportive network which aids every member in the accomplishment of God's call on their life. Simply put, members do not exist for the Church; the Church exists for the members, all of whom are called to obedience to the Great Commission.

Now don't misunderstand me. I am *not* saying that the local church exists to wait on its members, so they do not have to carry out God's call on their life. What I am saying is that the church exists to provide a supportive environment to encourage, aid, support, and disciple individuals to be all that God created them to be, and to help them fulfill their call.

This being the case, then the issue is not, "Am I called?" The issue is, "What is my specific call and how do I fulfill it?" In the words of one of our missionaries, "*Jesus never said, 'For all of you who find it convenient, or exciting and adventuresome, go into the world and preach the Gospel.' He told us all to do that. The job for some of us is to stay home and pray. The job for some of us is to provide the means for others to go. And the job for some of us is to give it all up and go.*"

We all have a call on our lives. Jesus gave it to us in the Great Commission. The question is not *whether I'm called,*



"The Great Commission was not given to the Church as a collective body of people. The Great Commission was given to individuals to fulfill."

## Want to develop a mission strategy or plan a mission event in your church?

Mobilizing your church for greater outreach can begin with the Global Outreach Weekend. The Mission Society team is available to come to your church and present the six-hour **Global Outreach Seminar**, as well as to minister during your worship services on Sunday. This seminar is designed to cast a greater vision for outreach and introduce effective means of mobilizing the entire congregation.

In addition, three essential strategies that are taught in the Global Outreach Seminar are now being presented in a more in-depth interactive workshop format in 2007:

### **Conducting a Global Impact Celebration** **April 20-21, 2007**

*Norcross, GA*

This workshop will equip church leaders to plan, promote, and execute an annual high-impact missions celebration event in your local church. Cost is \$99 per person.

### **Developing a Global Outreach Plan** **September 7-8, 2007**

*Atlanta, GA*

This workshop will provide each participant with the training and tools needed to implement an effective missional structure and strategy that will be a unique fit for your local church. Cost is \$99 per person.

### **Equipping Short-Term Mission Leaders**

**April 13-14**

**April 27-28**

**May 4-5**

*Ashland, OH*

*Atlanta, GA*

*Tuscaloosa, AL*

This interactive training will equip leaders to develop and execute an effective short-term missions plan, and to train and disciple the members of your short-term mission teams.

Cost is \$99 per person.

For more information and to register online, visit us at [www.themissionsociety.org](http://www.themissionsociety.org) or contact us at 1.800.478.8963 ext. 9046 or [cr@themissionsociety.org](mailto:cr@themissionsociety.org).

it is *what does my specific call look like?*

How has God uniquely gifted me to help accomplish Christ's mission on earth?

As you read this issue of *Unfinished*, look at how others have responded and ascertained God's specific call. See how a vibrant church has emerged in Cuba because many have not ignored the call. Listen to how individuals have responded to God and left everything to go and serve because they have not ignored the call. Close your eyes and see the countless individuals who pray for these ministries and provide financial support because they have not ignored the call. Then listen anew to God's call on your life and respond as Isaiah responded, "Here I am, Lord. Send me." ☩

**The Rev. Dr. Philip R. Granger**, *The Mission Society president and CEO, is an elder in the North Indiana Annual Conference of The United Methodist Church.*

#### **TELL YOUR FRIENDS.**

Want your friends to receive *Unfinished*? Just include their names and contact information on the enclosed response card and mail in the envelope provided. *Unfinished* (published four times a year) is provided for free and can be a great way to share with your friends about how God is working in the world – through your Mission Society.

# Cuba's Church unveiled

This mysterious island's growing witness cannot be hidden; its emergence may infect the global Church

By John Michael De Marco



It is said to be the longest 90 miles on earth – the span separating Miami from Havana. Cuba seems like another world, marked by both communist-government-imposed restrictions and breathtaking beauty. Described as a “crumbling paradise,” this sequestered nation has many secrets to offer us, not the least of which is how the Church flourishes despite persecution.

A missionary walks five kilometers to the community where she is planting a church. Another woman teaches exercise classes to the elderly, so she can share with them the love of Jesus.

A prisoner and long-time drug addict discovers a freedom he never imagined through a relationship with the living God. Others who battled alcoholism for years find instant deliverance in Christ; their once-shaky hands are now still.

A prominent biologist donates his house so a church can have a place to gather. His career is protecting crocodiles from extinction. “But,” he says, “the greatest thing I have done in my life is to donate this house to the church.”

A couple sells their refrigerator in order to buy a printer for their computer – something they will need for their new lives as seminary students. A group of 180 worshippers, for whom “church” is a 20-foot-by-30-foot room in a home, plants 14 missionary churches in eight years, and its leaders commit to disciple 10 persons each.

**These are the Methodist believers in Cuba. This is the Kingdom of God.**

#### **“A church full of the Holy Spirit”**

Last November The Mission Society president, Philip Granger, and vice presidents Frank Decker and Ivar Quindsland traveled to Cuba to visit with the Methodists there. “Basically, we were going with our eyes and ears open, without any preconceived notions of what we planned to do,” chronicled Decker. “We went to just listen and explore.”

What Decker and the others found was, as Granger wrote, “a church full of the Holy Spirit and sold out for Jesus.”

Amazingly, the Methodist Church in Cuba nearly ceased to exist a mere decade ago. The conclusion of Castro’s revolution (in 1959) led to the expulsion of all missionaries from the island nation. Just three ordained clergy remained in the Methodist Church, and most of its property was seized by the communist regime. For many years those who dared to visit a church were interrogated by the government. Churches are not permitted to construct new buildings and must meet in private homes. One congregation was forced to wait seven years for permission to purchase a van.

And yet during the past decade, this same Methodist Church has grown to more than 300 ordained clergy, 700 lay pastors, and more than 300,000 members. (During that same span, hundreds of United Methodist congregations dotting the United States have dwindled to a handful of members in the midst of a culture soaked in wealth and freedom.)

“Eight years ago when I got into this position, I was struggling with the Lord, asking Him how to lead the church. It was a very tense moment,” Bishop Ricardo Pereira, of the Methodist Church in Cuba, told *Unfinished*. “But one day when I was in my office, I had a vision. I saw the map in Cuba, and many plants were coming out of it. They all came out from different places of Cuba. The Lord told me that He was going to make the Church grow as never before.

“And this is what happened: We had only 96 pastoral charges, and today we have 244. We had 150 mission churches, and at present we have over 800. God has used us as a vessel for Him. All the honor and glory to Him.”

One Cuban district superintendent told Decker that the Methodist Church is the largest church in Cuba that hasn’t split, and is therefore one of the strongest.” The bishop added, “The main reason (for our growth) has been that our church has identified itself with the gifts of the Spirit, depending on prayer, fasting, and the preaching of the Word of God.”

The human dimension to this inspiring spiritual odyssey gives pause for serious reflection. Granger wrote, “As we were overwhelmed by joy, we were also engulfed in sorrow. The pastors and members of the church have paid a terrible price. Some live in rat-infested barns



In Cuba (once an “atheist,” now officially a “secular” state), religion has grown despite prohibitions against public worship. Although Protestantism is growing more quickly, the Roman Catholic Church is the island’s largest organized religious body. In 1962, Castro’s government shut down more than 400 Catholic schools, charging that they spread dangerous beliefs among the people. Nearly 30 years later, anti-religion policies relaxed somewhat. In November 1996, Castro invited Pope John Paul II to visit Cuba. The next year, Christmas was officially recognized as a holiday for the first time since 1969, and the following year it was permanently reinstated as a national holiday.

*photo by Ivar Quindslund*

or houses with holes in the walls.... Pastors exist on a salary of seven dollars a month. That’s right – a month.”

According to one Cuban pastor, the Cuban Methodist Church represents the fire of American missionaries who came and brought the Gospel. The church emphasizes personal experience, the pastor explained, adding, “Evangelism has taken root here, and no one can stop it. We are praying that the whole world will be reached for Jesus.” A female leader in this pastor’s church observed, “We do not have silver or gold, but what we do have we give to you: Jesus.”

#### **How Cuban ministers see themselves**

“The Cuban Methodists have a real biblical view of ministry. They haven’t really been infected with a concept of the professionalization of the clergy,” Decker noted. “The ministers really see themselves as servants. We met all the district superintendents, and they weren’t necessarily older; the bishop looks for people who are zealous and fervent for God, and that’s the main criteria.”

This is distinct from American United Methodism, Decker observed, where at clergy gatherings, one often overhears a colleague noting how they will “never be given that big church because they aren’t old enough; they haven’t paid their dues.

“I didn’t get a sense of that in Cuba. Age does not determine why people serve in certain places.”

Cuban Methodism, Decker asserted, is a good example of how the Church flourishes under less-than-ideal political conditions. In one biblical analogy, Jesus describes the Gospel as yeast, which, Decker pointed out, grows in darkness and obscure places. “You think of the Church in Cuba, or China, or other places where there is oppression, and the Church is growing.”

Decker was humbled by his time with the Cuban believers. “It kind of put into perspective some of the things that we have to deal with here as not being all that challenging or daunting. It gave me

a sense of gratitude for the faithfulness of these people who live on so little, and yet have such a zeal for God.”

Revival has spread across the Methodist Church in Cuba, because leaders have focused on the right things, Decker asserted, such as outreach rather than institutional self-preservation.

Bishop Pereira, in turn, was pleased by his encounter with The Mission Society ambassadors. “We have met some people who are also committed to world evangelism, something that has been a priority of the Methodist Church in Cuba. We found that we have so much in common [with The Mission Society], we can partner easily with people like these.”

“You have come to Cuba at the right time,” the bishop told his new U.S. friends. “Our people have lived with communism for a long time and used to be excited about communist ideology, but now there is emptiness in their hearts. There will be drastic changes in the future, and the Church must be ready.” ☩

## Partnering with Cuba's Church

*Cuban Methodists may be open to partnership – but not the kind of partnership you might think.*

"People would typically think, 'You've been to Cuba, so now you're planning to send missionaries there,'" surmised Frank Decker, The Mission Society vice president who was part of a team who traveled to Cuba last November. "That's not exactly the full story. The Mission Society is looking at partnering with the Cubans, but we're realizing they have a great model for church-planting from which we can learn."

### **OUT-OF-THE-BOX PARTNERSHIP POSSIBILITIES:**

#### **1. Send interns to Cuba**

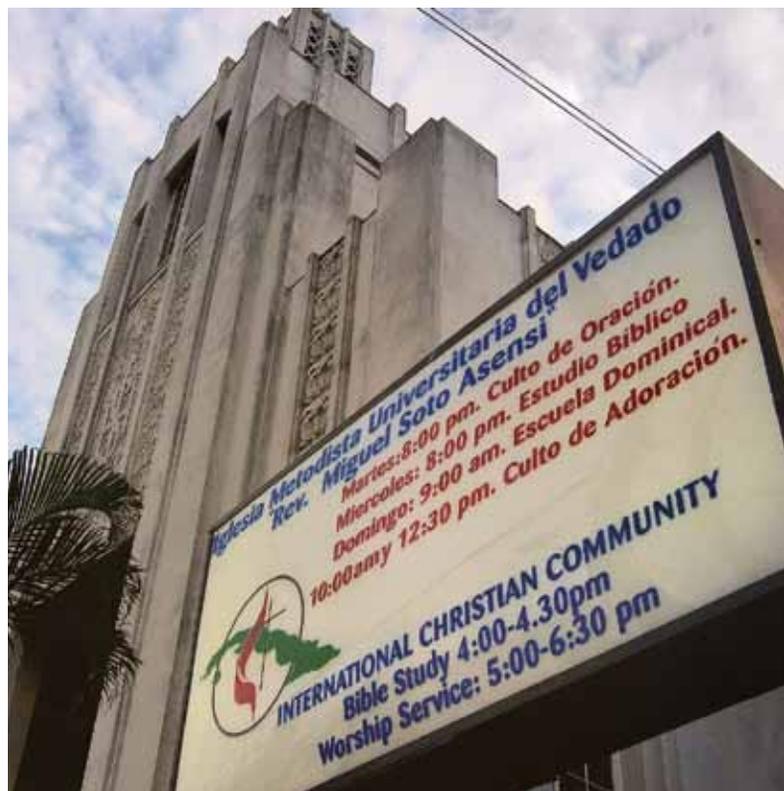
One possibility, said Decker, is The Mission Society's sending interns to Cuba to learn from the Methodist church-planters there. Cuba's Methodist Church model stands in contrast to the Western system (in which pastors attend seminary, then are sent to a church or two before finding out how fruitful their ministry can become).

"I don't have a church to offer to anybody," Cuba's Methodist Bishop Pereira said. "If someone comes to me and says, 'I want to be a pastor,' I will tell them, 'Go and start a church.'" After a few years the district superintendent looks at whether that church is bearing fruit, and if so, the pastor will be considered as a possible candidate for more extensive education.

#### **2. Help Cubans plant churches in other nations**

Another idea, Decker explained, involves The Mission Society's helping Cubans travel to other areas in Latin America to plant churches. The Cuban Methodists have a strong desire to send missionaries cross-culturally, and Bishop Pereira is convinced that God wants to use his church as a catalyst for change in other churches.

Methodists in Cuba would also like to see more of their people forging into areas where there are presently no house churches. And they dream of Cuban work teams one day traveling to the United States, once the political barriers are removed. "Cuban believers have so much to share with us," Decker said.



#### **3. Help re-infuse the seminary with evangelical Christian teaching**

Another opportunity for partnership involves Cuba's Matanzas Seminary, which is an official institution for the Methodist, Episcopalian, and Presbyterian churches. Here, the more evangelical instructors have found themselves outnumbered. "We are exploring ways in which we can enable an evangelical Methodist presence at the seminary again," Decker said. "Some dominant elements of the seminary leadership from other denominations no longer believe in the evangelical tenants which founded the school. Cuba's Methodist Church is therefore looking for ways to infuse more traditional, orthodox Christianity back into the core of the seminary's teaching. In the meantime, alternative means of training pastors are being pursued."

In addition to the Matanzas Seminary (where eight Methodist students remain), Methodist clergy in Cuba also are trained through courses at Camp Canaan in Santa Clara, Cuba. In addition, 10 percent of Methodist Church laypersons are enrolled in lay training courses. There is a great need for training pastors with an evangelical vision and discipling believers, Pereira noted.

The Cuban Methodists are very interested in the possibility of receiving additional discipleship resources and materials, for the purposes of equipping believers, Decker observed. "It's pretty expensive to print things there."



photos by Frank Decker

The Mission Society has invited Bishop Pereira to send Cuban personnel to cross-cultural training in Brazil this spring. In turn, the bishop has invited representatives from The Mission Society to attend the Cuban Methodist Church Annual Conference this June.

### The challenge of not “westernizing”

So what can each of us do to make a difference for these believers in Cuba who so powerfully personify the Kingdom of God? “I think the most important thing is to pray for Cuba,” Decker advised. “I’m not sure that a lot of Americans rushing in there is the answer. We’re looking at ways of partnering that will maintain the spiritual eco-balance.

“I think of China. God is using the situation there to grow genuine Christianity. And if China opens up, and a bunch of Western missionaries rush in, I’m not sure that would be the

best thing. It’s a challenge to be involved in mission without westernizing. That’s the challenge in Cuba. We don’t want to bring our infatuation with prosperity.

“It’s about the Kingdom, and about people knowing Jesus, and nothing else. In my opinion, Cuban believers have a much better sense of doing the right things for the right reasons,” Decker reflected.

The Mission Society team and the bishop discussed the danger of the Cuban Church becoming spiritually dull when, and if, prosperity develops in his country. As Decker jotted down in his journal, “The spirit of God will not abide with a spirit of self-indulgence.”

*John Michael De Marco is a United Methodist deacon and a freelance writer, speaker, and trainer based in Central Florida.*

**A secret to Cuban Methodism’s growth** “One Tuesday night we went to a very lively, charismatic Methodist Church service in Cuba with 200-300 people. I’ve seen large Methodist churches in Lima, Peru (which is about the same age as the Church in Cuba) with only 12 people in attendance on a Sunday,” notes Ivar Quindslund, Mission Society vice president, who is a former missionary to Peru and was a team member to Cuba. “Many Methodist entities in Latin America have stayed dependent on help from the Church in the United States and have not been open to evangelism. Those Latin American churches are dying. By contrast, Cuba’s Methodist Church bishop has said, ‘Despite the very difficult environment in which we exist, we’re going to do what’s right. We’re going to do evangelism, and God will make us grow.’ And they have.”

## Hankering for Havana?

*What you should know before traveling to an embargoed nation*

The Mission Society's recent trip to Cuba was not as simple as hopping on a plane. Such travel requires the receipt of a *religious visa*, which has become more elusive as the communist government flexes its muscle.

The visa is required for those who wish to preach in public places or spend the night in a resident's home. It is distinct from a *tourist visa*, which is easier to obtain but provides fewer opportunities for ministry. Churches and missionary organizations must submit their religious visa applications months in advance of a planned trip, and often do not know until the last minute whether it will be granted.

"We got a religious visa, and were told it was the first religious visa offered to the [Cuban] Methodist Church in four months, because of something that had happened politically," said Frank Decker, vice president of The Mission Society. "We received permission from the Foreign Currency Control of the U.S. Treasury to spend money in Cuba. (Our government frowns upon U.S. citizens spending money there "because of the embargo.) Apparently few American travelers to Cuba request permission from the U.S. government.

"We were adamant about obtaining all the right documents and 'going through the front door' in our travel to Cuba," says Philip Granger, president of The Mission Society, "because we want to build a long-term relationship there without any fear of government sanctions."

The Mission Society representatives also had to change planes in Cancun, Mexico, because the U.S. embargo means that there are no commercial flights directly to Cuba.

Other Christian groups with a heart for Cuba have been navigating the same hurdles. The Florida Annual Conference of The United Methodist Church recently reported that its thriving partnership with Cuban churches has been hindered by the tighter restrictions in both countries. Until 2006, the Conference was able to receive an umbrella license that covered all 700 or so churches interested in traveling to Cuba. Now, each individual church must apply for its own religious visa – in addition to pursuing one from the Cuban government.

## CUBA BEFORE CASTRO

*A look back gives "reason to be optimistic" about Cuba's future*

"Anyone who really wants to understand Cuban reality should start by understanding that Cubans managed to build a relatively successful nation before Castro," writes Roger F. Noriega, former Secretary of State for Western Hemisphere Affairs. Here, he revisits pre-revolution Cuba.

- The Cuba which Castro took over in 1959 was one of the most prosperous and egalitarian societies of the Americas, near the top according to most sociodemographic indicators, behind only Argentina and Uruguay.
- Today, Cuba's infant mortality rate is the second lowest in Latin America; however, pre-Castro Cuba ranked thirteenth in the world, with the best rate in Latin America.
- Pre-Castro Cuba had, in all of Latin America, the third-highest daily caloric intake, the fourth-highest literacy rate, the second-highest number of passenger cars per capita, and ranked fourth in the production of rice.
- Pre-Castro Cuba had the third-highest newspaper circulation per capita and second-highest cinema attendance per capita in Latin America. It had the largest middle class of its peers in the Western Hemisphere.
- In the 1940s and 1950s Cuba had progressive labor, land tenure, education, and health laws that rivaled those of many of its neighbors in the region. For example, the 1940 Cuban constitution established such labor laws as the right to work, a maximum 40-hour work week, one month of annual vacation, social security, and the rights to form and join unions.

*With 10-year career on Capital Hill, Ambassador Roger F. Noriega is a visiting fellow coordinating the American Enterprise Institute's program on Western Hemisphere issues. The preceding excerpts were taken from his article, "Let Cuba Be Cuban Again" (February 8, 2007), LA NUEVA CUBA.*

# How beautiful

are the feet of those who bring good news



*“Whoever loves his brother lives in the light ...” – I John 2:10, NIV*

Around the world, your Mission Society missionaries initiate and manage projects to care for the physical and spiritual needs of the people they serve. Here is your opportunity to join with them in caring for orphans and street children, to provide literacy training, seminary training, agricultural training, to plant churches, to disciple new believers, and much more. Take these pages to your Sunday school class or small group, and consider how you might announce the Good News and love of Jesus Christ to the world’s people.

## **EGYPT, TURKEY, AND ZAMBIA**

### **Children's Home for Orphans**

For the past 25 years, citizens of the Middle East have been ministering to orphans and street children in their own nation and in other places around the world. They have founded children's homes to house the orphans who would otherwise be forced to live on the streets. Through their ministry many children have come to know Christ and have had the opportunity to experience the love and security of a family environment.

*To support the ministry of the Children's Home in Egypt, please make a donation to Project #618.*

- Sponsoring a child – \$35 per month
- Sponsoring a ministry leader – \$100 per month
- Sponsoring a Children's Home – \$200 per month

*To support the ministry of the Children's Home in Turkey, please make a donation to Project #616.*

- Sponsor a child - \$50 per month
- Sponsor a ministry leader – \$150 per month
- Sponsor a Children's Home – \$500 per month

*To support the ministry of the AIDS orphans in Zambia, please make a donation to Project #617.*

- Sponsor a child – \$30 per month
- Sponsor a ministry leader – \$100 per month
- Provide a bed, mattress, and blanket for a child – \$100

## **FRANCE**

### **La Fonderie, ministry among artists**

Jim and Angela Beise founded La Fonderie and have been actively engaged in the lives of Parisian artists through discipleship, weekend retreats, coaching, and prayer. Art shows, small concerts, coffee house events, rehearsals, and creative project development will serve to build and nurture a community of artists who are uniquely gifted and

positioned to impact and lead in the culture and in the Church.

*To support the ministry of La Fonderie, please make a donation to Project #798.*

## **GHANA**

### **Ankaase Literacy Program**

Anne Gongwer, a former-teacher-turned-missionary, identified the need for increased education and literacy training in the village of Ankaase and the surrounding area. Since many of the children in rural villages do not have the opportunity to attend school, the illiteracy rate is high in remote areas. Anne began the Ankaase Literacy Program, enabling many Ghanaians to learn how to read and write in their native tongue.

*To support the ministry of the Ankaase Literacy Program, please make a donation to Project #714.*

### **Ankaase Methodist Faith-Healing Hospital**

In 1990, J.K. Manuh, a Ghanaian from the village of Ankaase, Ghana, decided to build a hospital in his hometown in order to meet the dire need for medical care. Today, the now 17-year-old Ankaase Methodist Faith-Healing Hospital is a model facility and provides medical care for the more than 10,000 residents in the immediate area and for those in surrounding towns and villages. It serves as a catalyst for the transformation of lives through ministry to the physical and spiritual needs of patients. Dr. Cameron Gongwer, a missionary-doctor from Indiana, and Ghanaian doctors work as a team to meet the needs of the residents of their community.

*To support the ministry of the Ankaase Methodist Faith-Healing Hospital, please make a donation to Project #711.*

### **Ankaase Nutrition Center**

Started in 2001 by missionary-nurse Lola Buchanan, the Ankaase Nutrition Center is now managed solely by

*“I have held many things in my hands, and I have lost them all.*

*But whatever I have placed in God’s hands, that I still possess.” — Martin Luther*



Ghanaians. The Center was started as a feeding program for the high population of malnourished children in the village. Doctors and nurses assess the children’s physical health and implement nutritional feeding plans to improve health and ensure weight gain.

*To support the ministry of the Ankaase Nutrition Center, please make a donation to Project #719.*

### **Community Health Evangelism (CHE)**

The Community Health Evangelism (CHE) program is a multifaceted, community-based approach to ministry that addresses the needs of the whole person. In the CHE program, nationals reach out to their neighbors by providing preventative disease education, sharing the Gospel message, and funding micro-loan programs to facilitate community development. Since the inception of the CHE program in Ghana in 2002, eight villages have adopted the program and begun 15 CHE programs. More than 13,000 people have received medical care and heard the Gospel message. Dozens have accepted Christ as their Lord and have begun attending church. Not only has the physical health of residents in remote villages of Ghana improved, but the spiritual health of the community is improving as well.

*To support the ministry of CHE in Ghana, please make a donation to Project #752.*

### **Lake Bosomtwi Medical Care**

Through the efforts of Irish pioneer missionaries in 1968 in partnership with the national church of Ghana, a vision was born for medical and community development work in the village of Amakom. The clinic has a staff of 15 Ghanaian nationals and two missionaries, Andrew and Juliana Jernigan. The clinic is a member of the Christian Health Association of Ghana (CHAG) and is administered by the Methodist Church of Ghana. The vision of showing the love of God to the people of the villages of Lake Bosomtwi through sharing health, education, discipleship, and teaching transformation through God will come to fruition in the years ahead with your commitment to investing in Project 611.

*To support the ministry of Lake Bosomtwi, please make a donation to Project #611.*

### **GLOBAL RESOURCE TEAM**

#### **Agrimissions**

Agrimissions was founded by Larry Williams, The Mission Society’s Global Resource Team director, and seeks to use the talents and skills of agricultural specialists to help people throughout the world to improve the conditions in which they live. Volunteers through Agrimissions provide on-site training for farms overseas, instruction related to technical and nutritional concerns, and improved sanitation and water quality.

*To support the ministry of Agrimissions, please make a donation to Project #777.*

## KAZAKHSTAN

### Appletree House

The Appletree House is an outreach to children from disadvantaged families struggling with issues of alcoholism and poverty. The ministry provides a safe place, a warm meal, and a loving hug to children at risk.

*To support the ministry of the Appletree House, please make a donation to Project #725.*

### Al-anon/Alateen – Kazakhstan Development

Al-anon/Alateen is an international program that assists families of alcoholics in dealing with the disease. It helps relatives cope with the situation, provides a safe environment

to deal with their hurt, and seeks to break the cycle of alcoholism by working with those close to the alcoholic. Several groups have been started in the city and opportunities exist to expand to other areas.

*To support the ministry of Al-anon/Alateen, please make a donation to Project #713.*

### Church Building

The church established by the Kazakhstan team is in its eleventh year of existence, but still does not have a permanent structure in which to meet. Presently the congregation rents space, but the current building is limited in ministry opportunities and lacks the stability that a building



symbolizes in Russian culture. Church members have been contributing to a building fund for several years and seek others who would partner with them in realizing this vision. *To support the ministry of the Kazakhstan Church, please make a donation to Project #781.*

### **Church-planting**

Donations to church-planting projects allow Mission Society team members to provide support for national believers to reach out in new cities and villages for the purpose of establishing churches. In many places throughout the region there is no opportunity for Christian worship. *To support the ministry of Church-planting, please make a donation to Project #730.*

### **Friendship School Scholarships**

The Mission Society team in Kazakhstan operates a grade one-through-eleven school for local children which includes both a state curriculum and intensive English instruction. The costs of the school are covered by the children's tuition. The scholarship fund allows us to accept some deserving children whose families could not otherwise afford to send their children to the Friendship School.

*To support the ministry of the Friendship School Scholarships, please make a donation to Project #783.*

### **Theological Education**

A seminary was founded to provide solid, biblically-based classes and seminars for future leaders of the church. Most classes are taught by Mission Society team members. In addition to offering theological education, directors assist in sending key national leaders to conferences and seminars in other locations.

*To support the ministry of Theological Education, please make a donation to Project #770.*

## **PARAGUAY**

### **Agriculture Project**

The Paraguay Agriculture Project is located in Yrybucua, Paraguay as a training center to assist the Guarani people in increasing their income. The center is a multi-purpose facility used for education, evangelism, and as a meeting room for short-term teams. It is called Centro Agritecnico Metodista del Paraguay. The center conducts research, houses demonstration plots for agricultural experiments, and serves as a focus for promoting the Agrimissions' motto: "First the bread – then the Bread of Life!"

*To support the ministry of the Paraguay Agriculture Project, please make a donation to Project #777.*

### **Mobile Medical Clinic**

Responding to a need for more widely available medical care in remote regions of Paraguay, The Mission Society sent a Mobile Medical Clinic to assist with health-care demands. The Clinic is equipped with a pharmacy area, kitchen, and medical examining rooms, which provide medical professionals a place to treat patients.

*To support the ministry of the Mobile Medical Clinic, please make a donation to Project #794.*

### **Paraguay School Project**

Missionaries working in Paraguay began the Paraguay School Project in order to keep children off the street while their parents are at work. Several schools are now included in the initiative and are supported by individuals and churches.

*To support the ministry of the Paraguay School Project, please make a donation to Project #605.*

### **Santani Church Project**

The Bakers, a Mission Society missionary couple, have been appointed to the Methodist Church of Paraguay and assigned to the small town of San Estanislao, locally known as "Santani." Santani is a rural region and people walk several

*“I am no longer my own, but thine. Put me to what thou wilt.”*

*—from John Wesley’s Covenant Service*

miles in order to attend church. In order to reach more people who now have minimal access to a Christian church, the Bakers are starting new congregations in outlying areas. Donations to the Santani Church Project are used to buy materials for the construction of new churches. Local people volunteer to build the churches in their area.

*To support the ministry of the Santani Church Project, please make a donation to Project #600.*

#### **GIVING IS EASY**

To contribute to these projects, to missionaries, or to the missionary support services of The Mission Society, complete the enclosed response card and mail in envelope provided. Make checks payable to The Mission Society, and include project number on the memo line. Send to: The Mission Society, 6234 Crooked Creek Road, Norcross, GA 30092. To give by credit card or electronic funds transfer (from checking account), visit [www.themissionsociety.org](http://www.themissionsociety.org), click on “Donate,” then “Donate online.” Thank you for opening your heart to the people of the world.

#### **Water Well Project**

Missionaries Ed and Linda Baker began the Paraguay Water Well Project, drilling and installing water wells at churches, church camps, and other locations where the gift of abundant, clean water can be used as a vehicle to share the Gospel. The Bakers work with local pastors and usually drill wells at their churches. In addition to wells, sanitation facilities such as bathrooms and clothes-washing stations are usually constructed for use by the pastor’s family and the congregation. This ministry is fully supported by donations from churches, companies, and individuals.

*To support the ministry of the Water Well Project, please make a donation to Project #743.*

#### **RUSSIA**

##### **Khabarovsk Orphanage**

For the past several years, The Mission Society team in Khabarovsk, Russia has worked with the city’s 14 orphanages. Team members distribute humanitarian aid and spend time with the children in order to invest in their lives. Donations will help with the purchase and distribution of supplies such as blankets, clothes, food, and toys.

*To support the ministry of the Khabarovsk Orphanage, please make a donation to Project #780. †*



# Booming missions

The new face of a growing missionary force has a few wrinkles. Many baby boomers are taking early retirement to volunteer in the mission field. Some are signing up for a few weeks, others for several years.

Nelson Malwitz, founder of Finishers Project, says many Christians hit 50 at the peak of their careers but desire more than workplace success. “The Lord didn’t design us to coast out of our flowery beds of ease, but to make some sort of difference.”

The Mission Society offers a range of terms of service from one month to five years. Is God calling you to cross-cultural mission service? Visit us at [www.themissionsociety.org](http://www.themissionsociety.org), or call us at 1.800.478.8963.

*Parts of this article were taken from “A Boom for Missions, early boomer retirees are giving back in big numbers,” by John W. Kennedy, Christianity Today, January 25, 2007.*



About half of The Mission Society’s 203 missionaries are 45 years old or older, a fact indicative of an interesting trend: Baby boomers and second- and third-career people are increasingly responding to God’s call to missions.

## Missionaries needed in new locations

### POSITIONS AVAILABLE:

#### Healthcare workers

Doctors, nurses, dentists, ophthalmologists, and pharmacists are needed in rural settings where very little medical care is available. Offer physical as well as spiritual healing to thousands of patients around the world.

*Ghana, Paraguay, Peru, and Russia*

#### English teachers (TESL)

Individuals are needed to teach English as a second language. Relationships formed in educational settings can open doors for sharing the Gospel with students. Instruction in TESL available during missionary training.

*Hungary, Kazakhstan, Paraguay, and Peru*

#### Urgent need for TESL teachers

Teach a conversational English program in Kazakhstan for the 2007-2008 academic school year. The qualifications include a love for children (elementary through high school), a desire to make an impact for the Kingdom through character/integrity in relationships with students and staff, and a four-year college degree (in any field, not just teaching or English). Great opportunity for intern or mission explorer. Best to be in Kazakhstan by August 2007.

#### Children & youth ministers

Work with missionaries and national workers to provide spiritual nurturing and mentoring for fledgling youth and children’s ministries.

*Hungary, Kazakhstan, Paraguay, and Peru*

#### Hospital chaplain

Chaplain needed to minister in the Ankaase Methodist Faith-Healing Hospital in Ankaase, Ghana. Work with healthcare professionals in this village clinic and minister to both the patients and their families. Hundreds of Ghanaians treated each week. Some pastoral experience required.

*Ghana*

#### Orphanage workers

Abandoned children in Russia are in need of persons called to ministries of compassion, evangelism, and discipleship. Work in and among orphanages in the Russian Far East.

*Russia*

#### Community health workers

Motivated and creative people are needed to help implement a program of community development among villagers and their families. While there are no medical or professional skill requirements (training in Community Health Evangelism is available), leadership and relational skills are a must.

*Ghana, Mexico, and Paraguay*

#### Teacher for young missionary

Home-school teacher needed for fourth-grade girl, the daughter of missionaries in Ghana. Other ministry opportunities are available within the village of Ankaase, Ghana to build relationships with national Ghanaians and share Christ through the local hospital and community. Some fundraising necessary.

*Ghana*

#### K-12th grade teachers

K-12th grade teachers are needed yearly for a variety of grades and subjects in several schools overseas. Classes are taught in English, and a modest salary is provided. Share your faith through building relationships with students and their parents in this strategic ministry.

*Hungary, Kazakhstan, Mexico, and Paraguay*

#### Literacy teachers

Act as a teacher’s assistant to missionaries teaching both English and native literacy. Students learn their own “mother-tongue” reading and writing skills while reading the Bible. Education majors and TESL teachers especially encouraged to apply.

*Ghana and Peru*

#### Director of short-term teams

Coordinator of short-term mission teams needed to organize and communicate with teams traveling from the United States. Highly organized and motivated person desired to minister to teams and facilitate projects to help the community.

*Paraguay and Peru*

#### Pastors and theological teachers

Opportunities abound to teach courses, seminars, and conferences in local seminaries throughout several nations. Leadership development training of pastors and other theological leaders needed. Applicants should have pastoral experience and/or seminary-level training.

*Ecuador, Ghana, Kazakhstan, Mexico, Paraguay, and Russia*

#### Agricultural missionary

Seeking an agricultural specialist with the responsibilities of maintaining relations with national agriculture specialists, working one-on-one with local farmers in improving yields, marketing, and soil. Individual will maintain small plot research sites to gather information on crop systems. This individual should be a strong Christian, self-motivated, with a deep calling to missions.

*Ghana and Paraguay*

#### Missionary Training Center director

Couple needed to work in a missionary training center/ seminary in Curitiba, Parana, Brazil. Administrative and teaching skills with past missionary experience required. Vehicle and furnished housing provided.

*Brazil*

#### Terms of service:

**Mission intern** – 1-11 months

**Mission explorer 1 & 2** – One- or two-year term

**Career missionary** – Five years including one year on homeland retreat

**Global Resource Mobilizer** – Serve in the field with The Mission Society for weeks to months at a time, consulting on a particular project in one’s discipline of expertise.

*If you are interested in these or other positions, please contact The Mission Society. Visit us at [www.themissionsociety.org](http://www.themissionsociety.org) or call 1.800.478.8963.*



## The Incarnation at 12,000 feet

Everything you ever wanted to know about ministry up in the Andes you can learn from the One who came down to earth.

This past December I traveled to Peru to visit our missionaries there. Arthur and Mary Alice Ivey and their three children, Benjamin, Joshua, and Mary Beth, live in Huancayo, high up in the Andes, at an altitude of nearly 12,000 feet. It took me a couple of days to get my blood count up to handle the altitude! I wasn't operating on all cylinders those first couple of days.

The Iveys provide an example of what we expect of our missionaries. They spent their first year (of their now-five years in Peru) focused on learning the language and culture. Just as I couldn't do much at all until my body adjusted to the altitude, the Iveys needed to take the necessary time to adjust to their new home, to "cross" into the new culture. If I had started running or hiking my first day in Huancayo, I probably would have passed out or just failed at what I attempted. If missionaries don't take the time to learn language and culture, too often their ministry is ineffective, and sometimes they simply burn out since they never feel at home or truly connect with the local people.

### "Incarnational mission"

The Scripture tells us, "And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us" (John 1:14). Jesus, who was fully God, came and lived among us. This is what theologians have termed the "Incarnation." In our missionary training, we teach the importance of doing missions as Jesus did – incarnationally. "Incarnational missions" means doing what the Iveys have done – to live in the culture of the

people, to speak their language, to understand their history, their needs, their hurts, their aspirations, allowing God's Spirit to show through our lives.

After living in the area and developing a solid grasp of Spanish, Arthur Ivey saw the need for discipleship. There were several churches in existence, but they didn't seem to be impacting the lives of people, and certainly did not seem to have a vision for reaching out to the unchurched in the area and beyond. The Iveys and some of their Peruvian brothers



"Incarnational missions" means doing what the Iveys (pictured here) have done – to live in the culture of the people, to speak their language, to understand their history, their needs, their hurts, their aspirations, allowing God's spirit to show through our lives.



and sisters identified Spanish-language material from various sources that served the community needs, and they began small groups with people interested in going deeper with the Lord. The groups drew from people of various churches, including pastors.

The discipleship program has grown rapidly to the point that Arthur is having a hard time keeping up with the demand to start new groups, now extending to the jungle on the other side of the mountain. With his fair skin, straw hat, and tall stature, Arthur can't exactly pass as a Peruvian. But when he or Mary Alice sits and talks with the people of Peru, understanding their issues, sharing their lives, and allowing Christ to shine through, the people appreciate it and respond.

The three Ivey children attend a local school and are proficient in Spanish. Ben graduated this year at the top of his class. The children have been immersed in the culture, have Peruvian friends, and participate in the ministries.

While I was in Peru, one Quechuan pastor told me, "Others come and go. Arthur Ivey and his family came and stayed. They understood what we needed and helped us find a solution." That is an example of what we mean by *incarnational* ministry! ☩

*After 10 years on the mission field in Central Asia, Jim Ramsay now serves as The Mission Society's director of field ministry.*

# The state of the Gospel

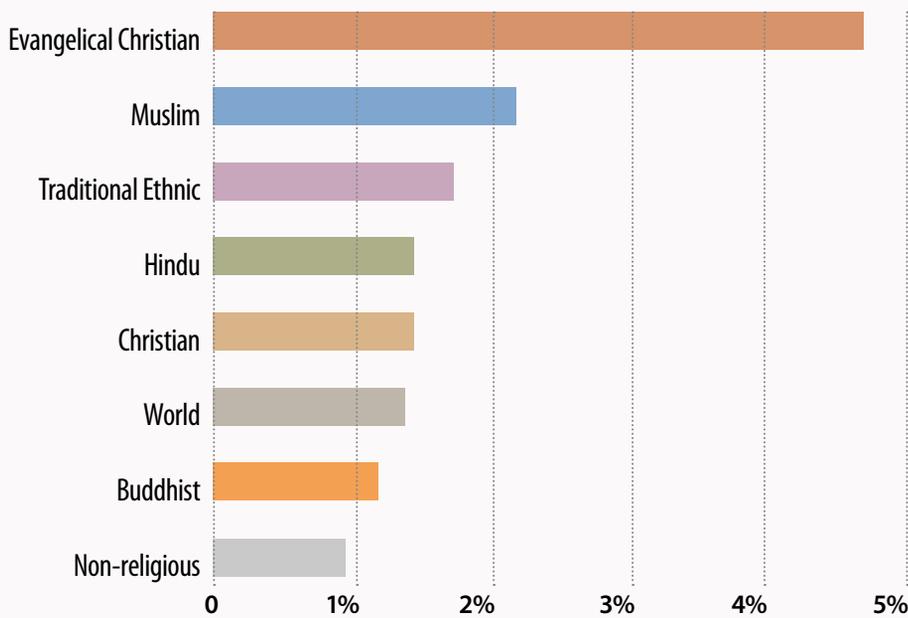
Evangelical Christianity is fastest growing among world religions. That's the good news, but...

Last September, Jason Mandryk, editor of Operation World, and Justin Long, senior editor of Momentum, delivered a report on the current state of world evangelization to 400 delegates attending the Lausanne Younger Leaders Gathering in Malaysia. The following is gleaned from their report. For much more on this subject, and to download an information-packed Powerpoint presentation for your small group or church, visit [OperationWorld.com](http://OperationWorld.com) and click on "YLG Presentation."

The world's population is growing at an average rate of 1.2% yearly. Any religion that seeks to increase its presence in the world must exceed this growth rate. On the chart, we see Christian (referring to those who confess to be part of any historic Christian tradition) is actually in the middle, not growing as quickly as Islam or ethnic religions. Evangelical Christian (referring to those who are active in their faith), however, is the fastest growing of this group. While this is good news, bear in mind that Evangelicals are much smaller in number.

If you think the United States is the top missionary-sending nation in the world, you are right. It has an estimated 46,381 missionaries. However, the United States doesn't even make the list of the top 10 "most efficient" mission senders (meaning those nations with the fewest number of believers required to send one mission worker). Mongolia tops that list, with a ratio of 1:222 (mission worker: believers)!

## ANNUAL GROWTH RATE OF WORLD RELIGIONS



## TOP 10 MOST EFFICIENT MISSION SENDERS

- |                   |       |
|-------------------|-------|
| 1. Mongolia       | 1:222 |
| 2. Lebanon        | 1:295 |
| 3. Singapore      | 1:400 |
| 4. Niger          | 1:451 |
| 5. Nepal          | 1:458 |
| 6. Sri Lanka      | 1:479 |
| 7. Spain          | 1:512 |
| 8. Faeroe Islands | 1:533 |
| 9. Mali           | 1:608 |
| 10. Thailand      | 1:633 |

Ranked by total number of missionaries sent out per Protestant, Independent, and Anglican believers in the country. Source: *Operation World*

This information gleaned from the November/December 2006 issue of *Momentum*. For more on this subject, visit [www.momentum-mag.org](http://www.momentum-mag.org). To download an information-packed Powerpoint presentation for your small group or church, visit [www.operationworld.com](http://www.operationworld.com) and click on "YLG Presentation."

## Accelerating the spread of the Gospel



The homeland of Christianity has shifted dramatically and decisively to the Southern Hemisphere, away from the West. Given this shift, it will likely be missionaries from Latin American and non-Western nations who will continue God's project of announcing His love to the world. And in these nations, which have historically been missionary-receivers, God is moving powerfully in the hearts of His people, giving them dreams of reaching out as missionaries to His world.

In 2006, The Mission Society engaged in a new kind of partnership – a partnership to help launch a missionary-sending organization in Brazil that would recruit, train, and place Latin American missionaries around the world.

“A renewal movement is sweeping through the Church of Brazil,” writes The Mission Society vice president, Frank Decker. “And these believers are exhibiting a vision for participating in mission beyond their geographical and cultural boundaries.”

In early 2007, the first missionary candidate week was held by the First Region of the Brazilian Methodist Church. Fifteen missionary candidates – eight

women, seven men – gathered at the IMFORM Mission Center in Teresopolis, Brazil, and a team from The Mission Society was present, serving as consultants and presenters.

“These men and women are all deeply engaged in ministry at present,” wrote The Mission Society's Lauren Helveston. “Several are pastors. Many are ministering in situations that require them to literally put their lives on the line daily.... These were some of the most deeply committed, spiritual, gracious, and loving people I have ever had the privilege to be with.”

Beginning in June 2007, The Mission Society will begin training its missionaries in Brazil jointly with Brazilian missionaries.

### WE'LL HELP REVIEW YOUR ESTATE PLAN



#### PLANNING

Whether you rely entirely upon a will to distribute your estate, or whether it is part of a more complex estate plan, a periodic review is necessary.

Family changes, inflation, changes in tax and probate laws, as well as changes in your desires. . .all require periodic review of your estate plan.

Our **Guide to Planning Your Estate** will be a valuable source of information as you begin this review.

Or if you have not completed your estate plan, it will help you take the first step in this important act of stewardship.

Please write for your free copy today.

***"It has been several years since my estate plan was completed. I know it should be reviewed, but I don't know where to start."***

**THE MISSION SOCIETY**  
6234 CROOKED CREEK ROAD, NORCROSS, GA 30092-3106  
678.542.9037 E-MAIL: [dbrown@themissionsociety.org](mailto:dbrown@themissionsociety.org)

© Lifestyle Giving, Inc., 2007



# Is your church on mission?

Four changes that can move your church forward in outreach

Someone has said, “Missions is not a program of the church. The church is a program of God’s mission.” Moving a church from operating a “missions program” to being moved by a missional heart will require at least four major changes.

**1. Move from Maintenance to Mission**

- Maintenance looks inward. Mission looks outward.
- Maintenance focuses on ourselves. Mission focuses on others.
- Maintenance puts the priority on property (church building, etc.). Mission puts the priority on people.
- Maintenance depends upon our own limited resources. Mission trusts in God’s unlimited resources.

*Ask yourself: For whom does the Church exist? Itself? Or others?*

**2. Move from “Come-To” to “Go-To” Churches**

- We typically invite people who don’t know Christ to *come* to our churches, but Jesus told us to *go* to the people.
- “Come-To” churches focus on the “found.” “Go-To” churches focus on the “lost.”
- “Come-To” churches keep their members busy with the congregation’s activities. “Go-To” churches encourage their members to be on mission in the world.

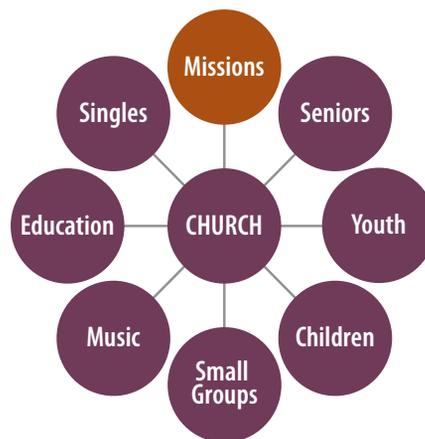
*Ask yourself: How and where do we encounter unchurched people? Are we waiting for them to come to us? Or are we going to them?*

**3. Move from ministry by Ordained Professionals to ministry by Ordinary Believers**

- Hired ministers vs. laity engaged in the work of ministry.
- Pastor’s time invested in doing the work of ministry vs. pastor’s time equipping saints.
- Limited number of members involved vs. every member in ministry.

*Ask yourself: Who does the work of mission and ministry?*

**4. Move from a Missions Program to a Missional Heart**



**MISSIONS AS A PROGRAM OF THE CHURCH**



**MISSIONS AS A PRIORITY OF THE CHURCH**

*Ask yourself: Where does mission fit into the life of the church?*

**Dick McClain** is The Mission Society vice president for ministry operations and an elder in the North Georgia Annual Conference of The United Methodist Church.

## What's working for us: Georgia congregation reports

"Our church started partnering with churches in Ghana, and the excitement is contagious."

The Mission Society and The Methodist Church – Ghana offer an opportunity for churches in the United States to partner with established churches in Ghana. Together, these U.S. and Ghanaian churches work to establish and strengthen new churches in the under-reached areas of northern Ghana through an initiative called the "Twinning Programme." In the following, Georgia's Northbrook United Methodist Church tells of its new involvement in a trans-Atlantic partnership.

Thanks to the "Twinning Programme," Northbrook United Methodist Church has been able to enter a partnership with two Ghanaian churches located in Ajumako and Afransi. Our relationship is just getting off the ground, but there is already a lot of excitement around Northbrook and

the two cities in Ghana. Just yesterday the leaders of the churches in Afransi and Ajumako met to make plans for the church construction that the three congregations will be jointly undertaking. Today, people from both villages will begin laying blocks with the building supplies provided by Northbrook. In six weeks, a team from Northbrook will be on the ground in Ghana to assist with the roof construction. God willing, we will worship together under this new roof eight short days after our arrival. A lot is going on, and this is just the beginning.

A team of three from Northbrook traveled to Ghana this past October to meet with the clergy and laity from both cities to jointly make plans for the new church in Afransi. The people there welcomed us with open arms, and their excitement

was contagious. Our experiences of a totally different culture (including dancing down the aisle on a dirt floor to bring our offerings to God) will remain in our hearts and minds far beyond the building of a church. Our team returned with an expanded vision for an ongoing relationship with these villages and a new sense of calling to share the love of God to the ends of the earth.

*By Charles Clements, Northbrook United Methodist Church, Roswell, Georgia  
clem323@comcast.net*

*This is the first in a "What's working for us" series of articles, in which U.S. churches report how God is using their congregations in mission.*

## Get out of the church

Church-growth programs not working for your flock? Check this out.

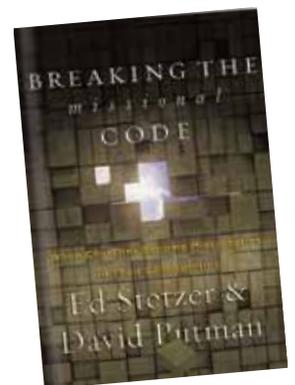
By Stan Self

The Mission Society, through its Global Outreach Seminar, has for the past six years conveyed to churches the need to be strategic as they engage in missions locally, nationally, and internationally. Authors Ed Stetzer and David Putman in their book, *Breaking the Missional Code*, reinforce that notion in the context of local church outreach.

They rightly point out that while "packaged" church-growth programs have been useful for some churches, these programs don't necessarily enable the local church to address the specific needs of their particular community. Therefore, to be most effective, churches need to discover the approaches to employ in their local context. This will require leaving the confines of the church building and going out into the community to observe, engage, and learn. Moreover, it may require staying out in the

community to minister. Simply put, the local church should see their community as a mission field and themselves as missionaries in it. Beyond this basic concept, the book is full of examples and "best practices" that can serve as a catalyst for taking a strategic approach in the community. If a church is serious about reaching its community for Christ, this book will prove to be very useful in that effort.

*Stan Self is The Mission Society's director of Church Ministry.*



**W**ith the good news of the Christ child born among us, The Mission Society missionaries and their families minister in 32 nations around the world. We offer their names here. How we thank you for your prayers for them!

**The Mission Society missionaries:**

Michael Agwanda, Ari Arfaras, Sandra August, Ed & Linda Baker, Jose & Audrey Banales, Erica Beeles, Jim & Angela Beise, Liz Boggess, Reid & Lola Buchanan, Margaret Buell, Debra Buenting, Doug & Brooke Burns, Julie Campbell, John & Sandra Carrick, Chris & Sue Champion, Charlie & Miki Chastain, Amantha Claxton, Cathy Coburn, David & Carol Cosby, Patrick Cummings, Tim & Daina Datwyler, Don & Laura Dickerson, Christian & Angelica Dickson, Caren Dilts, Billy & Laurie Drum, John & Colleen Eisenberg, Micah Eldridge, Sue Fuller, Dan Godwin, Cam & Anne Gongwer, James & Barbara Gray, Dave & Beth Greenawalt, Alicia Grey, Justin Grogg, Florencio & Maria Guzman, Charlie & Chris Hanak, Kevin & Laura Heikes, John & Katheryn Heinz, Jon & Jeanne

Herrin, Neal & Mari Hicks, Ron & Bonnie Hipwell, Ronnie & Angi Hopkins, Andrew & Margaret Howell, Arthur & Mary Alice Ivey, Charles & Becky Jackson, Charlie & Mary Kay Jackson, Andrew & Juliana Jernigan, Trevor Johnston, Wilson Kendrick, Esaho & Beatrice Kipuke, Clay & Deborah Kirkland, Sue Kolljeski, Joetta Lehman, Ash & Audra McEuen, Cheryl McGraw, Grant Miller, Mike & Claire Mozley, Dondee Nations, Steve Nikkel, Sara Olds, Ron & Michelle Olson, Donald & Carol Paige, Peter & Esther Pereira, Len & Betsy Phillips, Courtney Picardo, Martin & Tracy Reeves, Leon & Vicki Reich, John & Rosalie Rentz, Ben & Jenny Reyes, Ruben Rodriguez, John & Bess Russell, Wendi Schambach, Michael & Jannike Seward, Kirk & Nicole Sims, Rick & Debra Slingsluff, Amanda Smith, Mike & Valerie Smith, Nancy Stelow,

Robert & Linda Spitaleri, David & Jennifer Thompson, Ron & Belinda Tyler, Bill & Beth Ury, Reed Walters, Mark & Johanna Waltz, Tate Welling, Larry Williams, Steve & Heather Wilson, Dai & Neva Wysong

In addition to those listed above, 38 missionaries serve in areas where security is an issue for Christian workers. For that reason, they remain unnamed here. Thank you for praying for these dear brothers and sisters, as they face unique challenges.

For more information about The Mission Society missionaries or fields, visit our website at [www.themissionsociety.org](http://www.themissionsociety.org).

## May we pray for you?

Each morning at The Mission Society, we start by praying. We pray for the world. We pray for our missionaries. And we pray for you. Do you have prayer concerns that you would like to share with us? We invite you to do so. Here's how: Write your request on the response card included in this mailing and return it in the envelope provided, or

- Email us at [prayerrequest@themissionsociety.org](mailto:prayerrequest@themissionsociety.org), or
- Call us at 770.446.1381 (ext. PRAY or 7729) and leave your prayer request message, or
- Write us at: Prayer, The Mission Society, 6234 Crooked Creek Road, Norcross, GA 30092

Your shared concerns will be handled with care and prayed for by our staff and visiting missionaries. Thank you for the privilege of joining you in prayer.

