

Unfinished

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Making missions our mission

U.S. churches are engaging the world

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Join us in The Mission

When you partner with The Mission Society, not only do you join us in The Mission to offer Christ to the world, but you join us in embracing our core values.

Our vision

The Kingdom of God advancing among all peoples bringing about redemption and reconciliation through Jesus Christ

Our mission

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.

Our core values

INCARNATION

The Mission Society seeks to minister to others by following the example of Jesus, who fully entered the human experience. In our cross-cultural ministry, we are committed to learning the local language, living among the people, ministering in culturally appropriate ways, demonstrating love for God and neighbor, and disciple-making among the nations.

INTEGRITY

The Mission Society desires to reflect the holiness of God in all we do. Personally and corporately we endeavor to make the character of Christ manifest in our lives and our ministry.

PASSION

We are not complacent about the One who matters supremely or the work God has given us to do; nor is our ministry prompted simply by duty, or even obedience. Our life together and our ministry are marked and motivated by passion for God and God's mission. We are passionate about Jesus, our mission, and all those involved in the journey with us.

PEOPLE

The Mission Society believes that people are of primary value. Because people matter to God, people matter to us. Our cross-cultural workers, staff, donors, volunteers, prayer partners, and those we seek to reach are of greatest worth to us. Because "relationships" and not "formulas" are our method, The Mission Society exudes an entrepreneurial culture where every member is encouraged to discern and pursue God's unique direction for his or her ministry.

PARTNERSHIP

Since it is the Kingdom of God that we are called to express and extend throughout the world, our ministry is about more than ourselves and our organization. We believe that working together enhances our witness and strengthens our ability to make disciples of all nations. The Mission Society therefore pursues partnership in ministry endeavors – with churches, nationals, Christian organizations, and individuals.

PRAYER

It is only through the power and presence of the Spirit of Christ that we can live up to the high and holy intentions embodied in these values. We acknowledge our absolute dependence on God and seek both His guidance and His strength each day. Therefore, The Mission Society is a praying community.

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–Ephesians 1:22-23, NRSV*



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Churches, come alive again

There is a different way to do missions that could revive your church



"I cannot begin to thank The Mission Society enough," wrote the Rev. Dr. Jim Lowry, then senior pastor of Norcross First UMC, Norcross, Georgia. "You have been a catalyst to help us see with God's eyes His plan for our church. ... Many people in our church feel like this has been a turning point for us, spiritually and financially."

"We've got to do a better job working with churches! We're ministering in lots of congregations, but we're not really making a difference."

That was the assessment of our president, Al Vom Steeg, in 1999. Al said he felt like after we conducted a missions event in a church, the leaders pulled out their "to-do list" for the year, scrolled down to "missions," and put a check mark by it. They had now "done missions" for the year. In fact, all they had done was really a meeting.

Al's concern led us into an extended period of evaluation, exploration, study, and prayer. We knew there had to be a better way. Something was missing, but we weren't sure what it was.

Two things took place about that same time that God used to point us in a new direction. First, Bill Johnson, a lay leader in a megachurch in the Atlanta area (Bill now serves as chairman of The Mission

Society's board of directors) worked with Al and others to conduct a radically new kind of "missions conference" for his church. Dubbed "Face To Face With Je-

"I am unabashedly optimistic and enthusiastic when it comes to engaging the local church in God's mission. ... This issue of *Unfinished* is devoted to local churches just like yours. They are making extraordinary contributions to the cause of Christ around the world."

sus," the event had a huge impact on Bill's church. And it convinced not only him, but also Al, that we didn't have to keep "doing missions" the way we'd been doing it in the local church.

The second thing that happened was that we were introduced to Global Focus, an organization that specialized in mobilizing local churches for missions. Global Focus was breaking important new ground, was seeing churches transformed, and was eager to team up with others who would join in doing a much, much better job of getting congregations strategically engaged in missions.

Journey of discovery

Within a few months, God had laid on both Al's and my hearts that I should lead this new effort for The Mission Society. So in September, of 2000, I handed the reins of what was then our "mission ministries division" to the far more capable hands of Frank Decker and stepped out in faith to begin what became an amazing journey of learning and discovery among local churches literally from coast to coast. By then we

had formed a partnership with Global Focus, so it was my privilege to work with them for the next few years. It would be hard to overstate how much I learned from Global Focus founder Larry Reesor and his colleagues. I will be eternally grateful to them for the extraordinary investment they made in my life and in The Mission Society.

Several years later, prompted by the need to have resources that were more precisely aligned with The Mission Society's strategic objectives, we began to develop our own teaching seminar and coaching materials. Today that has blossomed into a comprehensive array of resources for local churches that make up our "Global Outreach" ministry.

Along the way, God brought Stan Self to us. A 38-year veteran of the telecommunications industry, Stan had played a major role in his company's training organization. The effectiveness and the scope of our training materials and processes have grown exponentially under Stan's leadership, as countless congregations can attest.*

Wealth of vision

Looking over the past decade, it's clear that we have learned so much from the churches we've been privileged to serve. There is an enormous wealth of vision and creativity just waiting to be tapped among God's people, and we've been the grateful recipients of much of it.

We've also discovered that far from being blasé about missions, the people in most churches are ready and willing to

invest themselves wholeheartedly in God's mission. They're ready to pray fervently, to give sacrificially, and to go enthusiastically IF. ...IF they are presented with a compelling vision that is worthy of their best; IF church leaders get serious about developing and implementing effective mission strategies; IF it's clear that what people are being asked to do is *strategic* and *significant*, and IF it has the potential for real fruitfulness. I hope The Mission Society has been able to make a contribution in these regards.

In case it's not already apparent, let me say it straight out. I am unabashedly optimistic and enthusiastic when it comes to engaging the local church in God's mission, whether it be across the street or around the world. If you are too, or if you would like to believe that what I'm saying is true, then read on. This issue of *Unfinished* is devoted to local churches just like yours. They are making extraordinary contributions to the cause of Christ around the world, and I for one feel very privileged to labor side-by-side with them in Jesus' name. ✚

Dick McClain is the president and CEO of The Mission Society and is an elder in the North Georgia Annual Conference of The United Methodist Church.

*To read an interview with Dick McClain and Stan Self, see page 10.



"But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes on you; and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth."

—Acts 1:8, New International Version



Youth from The U help construct a roof for a family during a short-term mission trip to in Memphis, Tennessee.

Local churches have long measured success by the *incoming* nickels and noses. But what happens when a church shifts focus, and starts gauging effectiveness, instead, by what goes *out* from the church? This Texas congregation's story offers a bright example of a new standard for church "success."

Church done inside out

University United Methodist Church is helping change San Antonio and the world

By Reed Haigler Hoppe

Referred to as "The U" by most of its congregation, University United Methodist Church in San Antonio, Texas is a thriving church by any standards. With an average attendance of 2,700 in its five Sunday morning worship services, University has done well to attract the people of San Antonio. However, attracting people to Sunday services is not its main goal. University members are actively seeking to change their community and world for Jesus.

I talked with the outreach pastor, the Rev. Adam Knight, about The U's mission ministry and how the congregation has been changed by the church's increasingly missional focus.

Knight came to The U in June 2007, after serving as an associate pastor at another church in Texas. Missions had been part of his job description before, and he found that he loved getting people involved in local and international mission opportunities. "I have come to love watching people develop a passion for missionary service," he says. At The U, he had the opportunity to serve as a full-time mission pastor and develop the church's mission ministries in a new direction.

Knight and the Rev. Charles Anderson, University United Methodist Church's senior pastor, decided to focus their mission efforts on engaging the congregation in hands-on opportunities. "Our church has always been mercy-minded. What we have tried to do is take that gift and channel it

into being mission-centered – letting that gift of mercy lead us into the community and the world," he says. So he and lay leadership developed a multitude of opportunities for people to become personally involved in their community and world – to be the hands and feet of Jesus.

"One of the biggest challenges for a church being involved in missions is to not let it become a program. Mission is not a program of the church. It is part of a Christian life. All followers of Jesus need to be involved in mission." That mentality has permeated the congregation, of which a large percentage is personally involved in mission.

A verse to do missions by

That same theology is foundational to The Mission Society and intricately woven into the teaching of its Global Outreach Weekend (*see page 11*). Churches are often torn between concentrating on local or international missions. The Global Outreach Weekend seminar addresses what can be an impasse by teaching something called the "Acts 1:8 principle," which demonstrates that the Church was commissioned to make disciples locally (in "Jerusalem"), regionally/nationally (in "Judea and Samaria"), and internationally (to the ends of the earth). The teachings of the Global Outreach Weekend provide for a deeper understanding of the biblical basis of the Church's mission, both at home and around the world. It offers a fresh perspective on the peoples of the world, including the 1.9



The U's "Under the Bridge" ministry to homeless people in downtown San Antonio. Volunteers provide a worship service and a hot meal once a month.

billion people who have never heard of Jesus. Participants are challenged to embrace the call God has placed on each of us to become part of His mission.

The U hosted a Global Outreach Weekend in 2008 to educate and excite the congregation regarding its role in God's mission. Those who attended the event felt a renewed passion for mission work. In February 2009, The U held its first Global Impact Celebration. The Global Impact Celebration is an annual mission event that is designed to mobilize the entire congregation for global outreach. (See page 15.) The Global Impact Celebration personalizes missions through interaction with cross-cultural workers and through hands-on involvement with mission projects. The response was stunning as The U members got to know the missionaries they were supporting and heard stories of the people to whom they were ministering. "People were really energized following the Global Impact Celebration," said Knight. "One woman remarked that she could feel a Spirit in the church that weekend that had not been here for a while."

Over time, Knight has seen a shift in the congregation's thinking of mission. "Instead of having people tell me, 'You know, the church should really be doing something about this,' I'm starting to hear, 'We should be doing something about this; what can I do to get this moving?' It is a refreshing change," he says.

Jerusalem

The U's local ministries primarily include outreach to the homeless and refugee population in San Antonio. The congregation partners with local organizations such as Habitat for Humanity, area food banks, and homeless shelters.

San Antonio is home to a large refugee population. A group of people from The U have helped more than 50 Bhutanese settle in the area and provided basic necessities such as food, rides to run errands, and help with employment opportunities. In addition, the leaders of this ministry bring their Bhutanese friends to church each week and provide Sunday school classes for their children.

The U has several outreach opportunities to the homeless in San Antonio. Members from the U lead a worship service each month under a bridge in downtown San Antonio, where a large number of homeless reside. After the service, members from The U serve a meal and build relationships with the men and women. They also partner with San Antonio Metropolitan Ministry to provide volunteers to help with two locations where homeless people can stay. Magdalena House is an outreach for abused women and children which offers transitional housing. The U volunteers provide educational and employment assistance to the women. The U has also built 17 houses through Habitat for Humanity over the years.

The Manger Project is a ministry targeting new mothers. San Antonio has a high infant mortality rate,



More than 800 volunteers from The U built 70 hurricane shelters in 50 hours. The shelters were shipped to Haiti to provide families with protection during hurricane season.

which The U is fighting by providing pack-n-plays to any mother who needs one. “We are trying to have an impact on the infant mortality rate in San Antonio, and we believe not having a crib is a big reason for the high rates. In addition to the crib, we give the new moms a blanket from our quilt ministry, a new Bible, information about our church and our ‘Mothers of Preschoolers’ group, as well as pray with all of the moms we visit,” says Knight.

The Kairos Prison Ministry was developed to establish and maintain a Christian community within prison units of the Texas Department of Criminal Justice. Church members periodically lead three-day spiritual retreats for the inmates, and return each month to continue to build the relationships established.

Judea and Samaria

The U has also been active in disaster recovery work throughout Texas. Hurricanes Rita and Ike destroyed large parts of south Texas, and The U responded by sending teams to help clean up, rebuild, and minister to residents. Knight led a first response team to south Houston days after Hurricane Ike struck.

The ends of the earth

Globally, The U offers a host of international mission trips. The U visits the same locations each year to build relationships with the local people, missionaries, and the

organizations/churches with which they work. Two medical teams travel to Camanchaj, Guatemala and Uspantan, Guatemala each year to perform surgeries, general care, dental work, and other health care needs. Another team works with street children in Bogota, Colombia.

In addition, teams travel regularly to the Texas/Mexico border to provide medical care, children’s ministry, and assist with construction projects. Pastors in Piedras Negras, Mexico asked The U for help ministering to the large population of children in their community. The church has responded by sending six-to-eight teams each year to the area to focus on the children and teach them about the love of God revealed in Jesus Christ. The U is now expanding to include Ciudad Acuna, Mexico as well, where they will provide teams dedicated to medical care, construction, and children’s ministry. The U hosts “Christmas Celebrations” in Piedras Negras, Mexico each December. They partner with eight Methodist churches in Piedras Negras to provide Christmas parties for more than 500 children.

In addition, The U supports more than 30 missionaries working across the globe. These cross-cultural workers are involved in a variety of ministries including church planting, medical work, care for orphans and widows, training indigenous pastors, Bible translation, and ministering to least reached people groups. The missionaries are sent through more than 14 different organizations and



Participants from one of the “Intro to Missions” trips to Costa Rica gather with a national pastor in front of a Methodist Church where they worshipped and worked to help renovate.

work with national Christians in the area as well.

Knight also leads an “Intro to Mission” trip to San José, Costa Rica. “It is specifically designed for people who have never been on an international mission trip before. We participate in construction projects, children’s ministry, and learn about the culture,” he says. This year, The U members constructed 70 hurricane shelters that were shipped to Haiti to provide protection during hurricane season. Next year, The U is planning to expand its international trips to include working with the Methodist Church in Zimbabwe.

It is amazing to see “the joy experienced by someone when they realize they are able to make a huge impact in the world when they step out of what is comfortable and let the Holy Spirit use them in a significant way,” Knight said. For example, “I took a young woman to Costa Rica with me two years ago on the ‘Intro to Missions’ trip. Since that experience, she has participated in one of our Guatemala medical teams, she led our trip to Colombia this year, and now she works in our Outreach office here at The U. She heard God’s call by stepping out in faith.”

Missional DNA

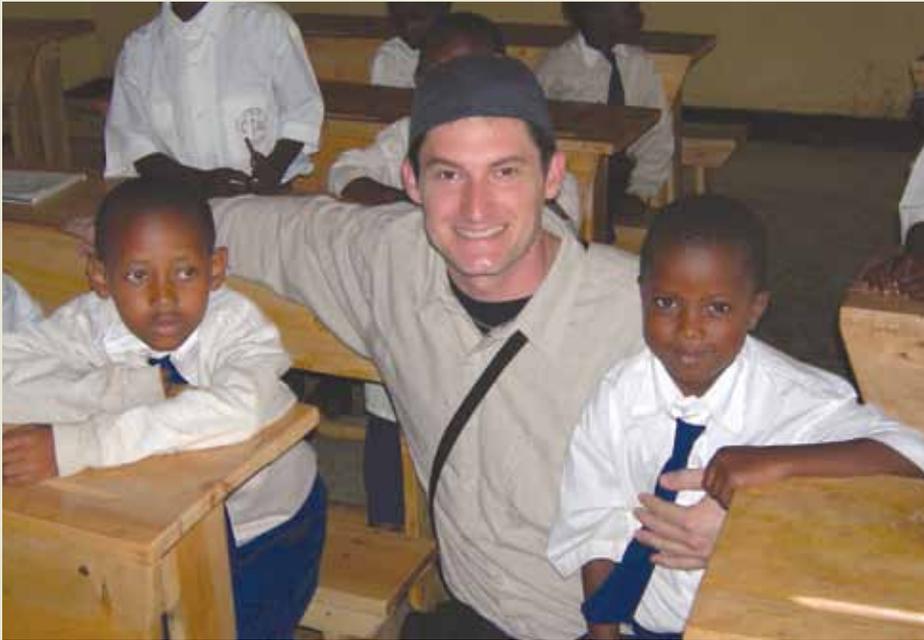
Knight continues to step out in faith as well as he continues to lead The U into greater missional involvement. He is currently overseeing the planting of a second campus for The U on the far west side of San Antonio, where

there is not a large evangelical presence. Although The U will not start holding services until January 2011, church members are already at work in the community. “We want to show the area that we are committed to them,” said Knight.

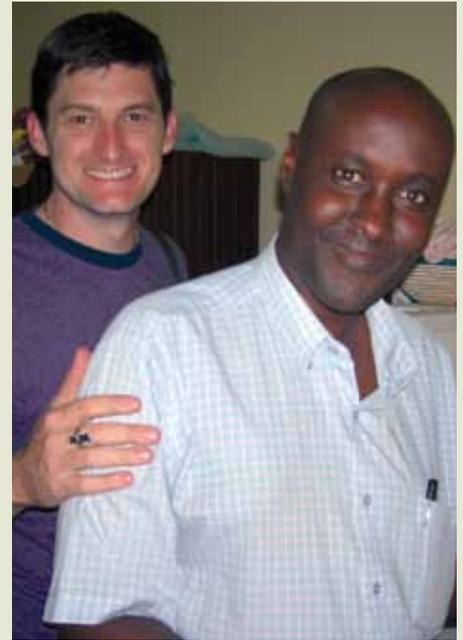
Volunteers are cleaning and repairing playgrounds and community areas in several neighborhoods. They are also helping to repair an old “honky tonk,” where they will hold worship services. “We want the community to see the church fixing up the bar. It is all an attempt to put the missional DNA into our new campus – the understanding that we want to minister to the community by blessing the community. It seems very Wesleyan – to take the message of Jesus to the places where the people who really need to hear it already are,” he said.

The U is obviously committed to their city and their world. With so many people catching God’s vision for mission and becoming personally involved, only time will tell the impact one church can make. †

Reed Haigler Hoppe is the associate editor of The Mission Society and is an ordained deacon in the Alabama-West Florida Conference of The United Methodist Church.



Ryan Barnett visits children at a school The U helps support in Kigali, Rwanda.



Barnett and the Rev. Nathan Amooti, who visits The U each year, share dinner together during one of Barnett's visits.

Shift in perspective

How The U's worship pastor became an advocate for missions

The Rev. Ryan Barnett never intended to participate in cross-cultural missions. As the worship pastor at The U, Barnett saw his ministry as the congregation he served. When a friend asked him to take a short-term trip to Rwanda, he reluctantly agreed. "What I realized is that, if I am going to be a theological leader of the people of God, then I have to understand the people of God. And that group is much larger than my own congregation."

Barnett's experience in Rwanda forever shifted his perspective of missions. "Missions isn't going somewhere to show people how to do things or trying to give them all the answers. Missions is a partnership of Christians from around the world working together," he said.

While there he built relationships with local pastors and sought to

understand the needs of the people. He visited a micro-business in which Hutu and Tutsi women were making soap by hand in order to support their families.

"Missions isn't going somewhere to show people how to do things or trying to give them all the answers.

Missions is a partnership of Christians from around the world working together."

During the process of working together, many embraced reconciliation and forgiveness. Members of The U are helping more women with micro-businesses, as well as helping to build schools and churches.

When Barnett returned from Rwanda, he continued to build relationships

with the pastors with whom he worked while there. Each year a Rwandan pastor travels to San Antonio and preaches at The U. "His presence in our church has opened up the congregation's understanding of worldwide Christendom and helped them to feel more connected to Christians in Rwanda."

"I believe that you can't ask people to do what you aren't yourself willing to do," said Barnett. "Every pastor should go on an annual cross-cultural mission trip. It opens up a part of Christianity that you would never otherwise experience."

Role reversal

For too long, churches and mission agencies have had things backwards, say Dick McClain and Stan Self.

An interview

For about 200 years, it was commonly assumed that mission agencies should be provided for and “served” by local churches. But The Mission Society, for one, has taken a 180 degree shift in that thinking. Recognizing that the local church (not the mission agency) is God’s primary mission agent in the world, The Mission Society seeks to better serve the local church. The result has been more congregations doing significant and strategic mission “here, there, and everywhere.”

More than 10 years ago, The Mission Society’s church ministry department was formed to serve U.S. local churches. Offering workshops, seminars, and mentoring, this department’s goal is to help churches fulfill their own calling in the world.

Here, Mission Society President the Rev. Dick McClain and Senior Director for Church Ministry Stan Self talk about the transformation that happens in churches that make missions their mission.



Grace Church, a United Methodist congregation in Cape Coral, Florida, is among the churches with which The Mission Society has partnered. Today, nine years after its first Global Outreach event, Grace reaches to communities locally, regionally, and internationally, and has grown to four campuses.

Left: The Rev. Jorge Acevedo with members of Grace.

Stan, let's say a church invites your team in to do a "Global Outreach Weekend." Describe the first experience that that church will have.

Self: We begin by simply teaching the biblical foundations for missions. We make the point that God is a missionary God, and the Bible is a missionary book, and the church is a missionary community. And we support all that with scripture. That foundational training includes taking a look at the world as it is today. The statistics, teaching, and videos we present can shock some people, particularly as they begin to see the numbers of people who virtually have no access to the gospel. So then, together, we begin to think through: given the biblical teaching and given the world's condition, what does all this mean for us as individuals and as a congregation?

At that point we try to lay out some key strategies for how the local church (or the individual) can really become one who is on mission with God. Then we add helps to aid a congregation or individual in the process of living that out. We call this first event a catalytic event, meaning that, based on the knowledge gained, there is a path or process by which to change – in this case, to change the way that church does missions. (*For*

more about the church ministries services, see page 15.)

Generally speaking, are the churches that contact you already involved in missions?

Self: The levels of involvement are all across the board. You rarely go into a church where there isn't at least a core group or even a single individual who has caught a vision for missions and is sold out about taking the gospel to other people – whether that be locally or on the other side of the world. In some cases, the church may be actively involved in missions, but somewhere along the way, its people (or a group of people) may have come to the conclusion that there ought to be a way to go about missions that is not done by just one group, but is integral to everything the congregation as a whole does.

McClain: When we were just getting started with this, a pastor in Florida said in a meeting that he felt like his church was the United Way of missions. He said, "We raise money; we give money to a lot of projects. We're doing a lot of stuff, but I'm not sure if we're really making a difference." And that's been, I think, a common theme.

With the explosion of short-term

missions, it's hard to find a congregation today that doesn't send at least one mission team a year, be it their youth group or whomever. I think one of the results of that is, for a lot of churches, sending short-term mission teams has almost become synonymous with the church's being involved in missions. Missions for those churches is a matter of tactics. If you ask, "Are you doing missions," the church might answer, "Yes. We send short-term teams." In those instances, often there has not been a strategic approach to the church's missions' efforts. There may be activity, but the church may never have stopped to figure out what it is trying to accomplish. So it may be doing something in missions, but not really making a dent in the greatest needs in the world.

But that becomes for us an entry point to a conversation. We're finding that there are many different entry points – from those rare churches that basically say, "We're not doing anything; we need to get into the game," to churches who say, "Yes, we're doing some mission trips, but boy, we need some help," to churches who say, "We're doing a lot, but there's not really any design to what we're doing." Any one of those entry points allow us to offer some practical strategies. The strategies we offer are not "one size fits



Global Outreach Seminar curriculum developed by The Mission Society has been passed on to six other U.S. mission agencies, translated into at least five other languages, and taught in six countries, including Kenya, where the East Africa Mobilization Conference was held in 2006. These events are designed to equip leaders to mobilize their churches for mission – to reach their own unreached populations for Christ.

all,” but provide a basic template that has proven effective in a wide variety of churches – big, small, and everything in between.

Self: There are two words that we use over and over and over again: We say that churches ought to be *strategic* and *significant* in what they do. And to do that, you have to seek the mind and face of God. What one church is called to in missions will not be the same as the church down the street, or the church in the next town. Every church is unique. We believe God has a plan for each individual church, just as He has a plan for each individual life.

A church's contacting The Mission Society might be an indicator that its church leaders or congregation are sensing a call to change. In your experience with churches, what are some of the common experiences or events that prepare a church to be open to change?

McClain: Very often what makes a church open to getting more involved in missions is a person. Not unlike the history of revivals, when God wants to do something, he finds a woman or a man who has a heart for it and uses that person. I can think of person after person who maybe went, say, to some conference,

had their heart set on fire, then went back home and wouldn't be quiet until something changed in their church. God uses those people to begin to bring others on board.

Self: Then at some point in this process, there has to be a buy-in from the pastor. That's really a non-negotiable with us.

What does it take to be a pastor who will enact this kind of change in the direction of a church?

Self: I think probably the number-one thing is a passion for seeing people come into right relationship with God, and being willing to do whatever it takes to see that happen.

Risk-taking is probably pretty far up the list as well, because you do have to step out in faith. Getting more missionally involved will require a change in the way you normally do your church business. The process will require that you entrust a lot of what goes on to the laity. You have to have confidence that God will work through them and let them do what they need to do. For strong leaders, this is not always the easiest thing to do.

McClain: There are several things I would say regarding what's needed in

the pastor. First of all, that she or he be a leader. The way you can tell if someone is a leader is to look behind them and see if anyone is following. Whatever gifts you may think that he or she has, if no one is following that person, then he or she is not a leader. So the pastor has to be a leader and has to be willing to lead and say, “Follow me.”

Second, I think a pastor has to be willing to be a learner. Some of the churches where I've personally seen the most significant transformation have been where there have been very effective leaders who were willing to learn, who didn't assume they already knew it all. They trusted our team enough to say, “We've brought you in here. You aren't doing this for the first time.” They were willing to follow and, in the process, to encourage others to follow them.

Third, a clear vision. Churches must answer the “why” question. And the answer to “why” must be, like Stan said, to see people come to Christ. Why else would you make the sacrifices, send the money, send the people, and all the rest that this ultimately will involve if you're not really convinced about that vision. So there's got to be a clear vision, and that has to be rooted in people coming to know Christ.

Then, fourth (and this goes along with what Stan said): courage. Courage to act.

“One” doesn’t have to be lonely

Be your church’s voice for missions

There is hardly a congregation devoid of at least one person who has passion for missions. If you are that one person – or one group – in your congregation, here is some encouragement for you.

Self: Be passionately persistent, and make people say *no*. If you’re trying to plan a mission event or rally support, even though you think someone won’t say *yes*, ask them anyway. The worst they can say is *no*.

Courage to make mistakes. Courage to be rejected by some, because not everyone is going to go along with this. It’s pretty rare that everyone in the church buys in. There will always be some who will say, “I don’t think we ought to be doing this.” So the pastor must have courage to stand up to the naysayers.

Self: I think a pastor has to be willing “to make the main thing the main thing.” I have met enough pastors to know that they are pulled in a million different directions. Demanding and disgruntled parishioners, administrative duties, community relations, and a host of other issues can dominate their lives. So it is important that a pastor recognize that there is something bigger than all of that. There is a call on the Church that is laid out in scripture and he or she must attach themselves to that vision God has for their congregation to go and make disciples.

McClain: I remember a pastor standing up at the end of one of our teachings having heard about the-then 1.8 billion people who are beyond the reach of the gospel [that number is now 1.9 billion], and he shook his head and said, “I’ve been in ministry 35 years, and I’ve never done anything to help the 1.8 billion people. You need to pray for me.” He was a very

McClain: Pray a lot. And cast a really positive vision. Focus a lot more on what the church could be and what it could do, rather than on what it isn’t and what it’s not doing. People don’t respond very well to negative motivation. Get “on fire” yourself, then get yourself in front of the church, and watch what the Lord does.

fine pastor with an excellent ministry who had always preached Jesus, but the light only then dawned on him that there was a bigger world out there, and that he had not led his church in being in mission.

Talk about some of the transformation you’ve seen in churches.

Self: I think of a large United Methodist Church in the Atlanta area that had never thought much about unreached people, and today reaching the un-

“Our desire is to see every person in every local church strategically engaged in missions. And if that happened, the world would be changed.”

reached is one of its core strategies. I think about another church in Florida that had been, by its own testimony, primarily focused on itself and the community around it. Then the church caught a vision for the whole world, and it began to reach out to the ends of the earth. Once it did, things came full circle. The church began to see other people in its own vicinity who were among the “least reached” and “marginalized” people of

the world. Today this church has one of the premier ministries in the United States to marginalized people.

McClain: That church, interestingly enough, had been missionally focused, but it had been focused entirely on local missions. One might think that if a church got really involved in reaching unreached people in other parts of the world, its resources and enthusiasm would diminish for local ministry. But today, now at the nine-year mark of this church’s expanding its mission focus, while this church has become significantly engaged internationally, it has also grown to now having four campuses and is probably one of the largest blue-collar mega-churches in the United States.

Self: In some churches, missionaries are being raised up from among congregations who could not have imagined that ever happening. And then there are other churches that caught a vision for local, regional, and international missions, and God has not only led them to do that ministry, but to also teach other churches how to do that. All this really supports the idea that every church is unique, and that as we seek God’s face, He will direct churches in ways that are contextual and appropriate for them.



Churches tell us, “You told us such-and-such would happen, and such-and-such would happen, but man, so much more has happened, even beyond what we could imagine.” When we align our priorities with God’s, He seems to honor that. We see this over and over and over again.

But what you’re talking about is not a church-growth program.

McClain: You’re right. We’ve worked with some congregations – the one in Florida is a notable example – where the church was already growing and nine years later, it’s grown even more as the church has embraced the world. There are other congregations in small communities that will never be big churches; there are not that many people around. But bigness and effectiveness are two different things.

If the premise is that every follower of Jesus ought to join Jesus on His mission, then a church that is significant, successful, and strategic in mission has nothing to do with size, but has something to do with the number of people who have gotten “on mission” with God. And small churches can do that very effectively. In fact, if your objective is to move toward a greater and greater percentage of a congregation becoming missionally involved,

9 times out of 10, the small church can out-perform the big church anyway.

Self: But the beauty about what we do is that it’s all scalable. If you are a church of 75 or of 7500, it doesn’t matter. Our desire is to see every person in every local church strategically engaged in missions. And if that happened, the world would be changed.

If our local churches remain as they are today, what will be the consequences?

McClain: We’ve remarked sometimes that a lot of churches are perfectly positioned for exponential growth if ever the 1950s would return. If you think about the changing context in which we live and minister, I don’t know of any way for local churches to begin to effectively reach their communities apart from a missional – even a missionary – mindset. We live in a cross-cultural world.

Self: Also, it used to be that the church was the central focal point, not only of worship, but of society.

McClain: And it isn’t any more. And so, unless the church makes a very fundamental shift and begins to see itself as a missionary community “on mission with

“What one church is called to do in missions will not be the same as the church down the street, or the church in the next town. ... We believe God has a plan for each individual church, just as He has a plan for each individual life.”

God” right in its own community just as much as around the world, it will not be successful in addressing the needs in the community today, or significantly touching people’s lives.

In our seminar, we identify road-blocks to becoming missional. One of them is the “maintenance mindset.” Another is a “come-to mindset” – which is the thinking that churches should wait for people to come to them. And I think that’s where a lot of churches are stuck. Back in the 50s, people would come to our churches; you just had to have a nice building, soft pews, and air conditioning, and eventually, they would come. That doesn’t happen any more. The church has got to go to the community.

Self: I’ve read that people are wanting to do more these days than come and sit and take notes on what the preacher is saying. Communities now are so different, if you don’t get out of your church, you’ll never understand the people that you’re hoping will show up inside of your church. You’ve got to get out there and engage them in life.

McClain: Now let me make an observation: I began serving with the church ministry department 10 years ago at a time when I was sort of depressed about



“One of the biggest questions we are facing in our churches today is not: *How do we get people in the church?*, but *How do we get our people in the church out of the church and into the world?*” –Stan Self

Designed with your church in mind

The Mission Society offers the following workshops that are designed to assist local churches become more strategic, significant, and skilled in their outreach. All workshops include teaching, video presentations, and hands-on activities.

Global Outreach Workshop

Target Population: Church staff and leaders, mission team members, interested church members

Length: Six hours

Description: This workshop foundationally presents a deeper understanding of the biblical basis of global missions, a greater awareness of the world, and a challenge to greater involvement in outreach both locally and internationally. Given this foundation, participants are provided six essential strategies that the church can employ to be on mission with God.

Equipping Short-Term Mission Leaders Workshop

Target Population: Leaders of short-term missions (short-term team members will find the workshop useful as well)

Length: Seven hours

Description: This training will equip leaders to develop and execute an effective short-term missions plan and to train and disciple the members of their short-term mission teams. The workshop addresses spiritual formation, cultural understanding, team dynamics, and logistics.

Developing a Global Outreach Plan Workshop

Target Population: Church staff and missions team members

Length: Five hours

Description: This workshop will lead you through a comprehensive process of developing a global outreach plan, based on an Acts 1:8 model (*see article on page 5*), that is designed to unleash the unique missions destiny of your church.

Conducting a Global Impact Celebration Workshop

Target Population: Church staff and missions team members

Length: Five hours

Description: This workshop teaches the key principles necessary to conduct a transformational annual missions celebration in your church. A Global Impact Celebration is designed to mobilize the entire congregation for global outreach by bringing the world to your church and personalizing missions through interaction with cross-cultural workers and hands-on involvement with mission projects.

the state of churches and their relatively tepid interest in missions. But what I've discovered over the years is that churches are eager to be significantly engaged – way beyond what we ever imagined would be the case. People want to be part of what God is doing, and when given half a chance, pointed in the right direction, and offered some reasonable tools, folks are ready to give. They're ready to pray. They're ready to go. They're ready

to change. They're ready to put themselves out there. They really want to do something significant, and you see all too often that they just haven't been adequately challenged. The church's vision has been too small for them.

I think this comes back to what Stan said earlier: When you align yourself with the purposes of God, God blesses that. Maybe the reason why there is not a lot of fruit at things we work so hard

at is because maybe we're going against the grain of what God's doing. And when we join Jesus in His mission, it shouldn't be surprising that suddenly things start to click – and that there are unintended positive consequences that go well beyond the church's "mission program," because the church has finally stepped into what it was created to be. ✝



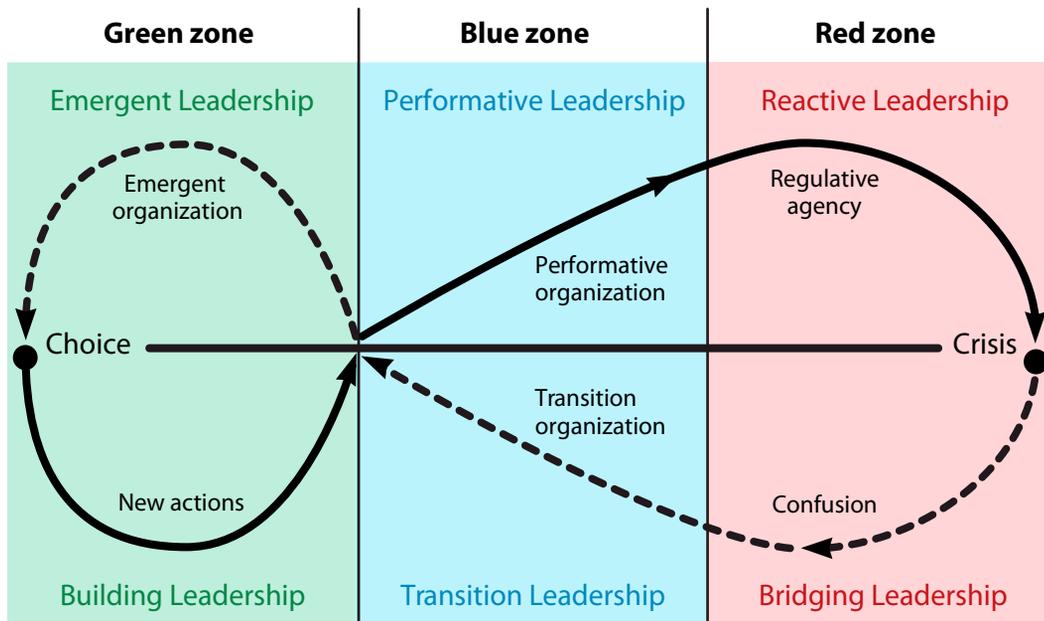
Where are we?

In the fog of rapidly changing culture, churches can feel lost or doubtful that there is any way forward. But “a congregation can be transformed into a missional community,” say authors Alan Roxburgh and Fred Romanuk. Here, they offer guidance through confusing periods of change and transition.

“God is present in the churches today,” write authors Alan J. Roxburgh and Fred Romanuk. “Across the world, the church is moving through incredible transformation and growth despite terrible hardship. Yet the church in North America, Western Europe, and Australia is in serious decline. In response to the fear and anxiety provoked by this trend, leaders turn to programs and methodologies that promise recovery and growth through marketing and measuring. Some leaders confess they don’t know what to do. They have

little idea of the dynamics that got congregations and denominations into this kind of trouble in the first place.

In The Missional Leader: Equipping Your Church to Reach a Changing World, authors Alan J. Roxburgh and Fred Romanuk offer a map to guide congregations through periods of change and transition. The following is a condensation of chapter 3.



The graph here illustrates three zones of organizational culture that congregations and denominations form at various times.

A Map: The Three Zone Model of Missional Leadership

Through much of the 20th century, congregations thrived in a relatively stable and predictable context where churchgoing was the accepted norm. Throughout the century, denominations, training schools, credentialing processes, leadership models, and organizational structures invested heavily in producing leaders with a highly developed capacity to perform the requirements and expectations of a church in this stable, predictable environment. The result is multiple generations of leaders with little experience or knowledge of how to lead when the context tips out of stability into discontinuous [abrupt] change. We are now in such a time. The Three Zone Model constitutes a framework comprised of an emergent zone, a performative zone, and a reactive zone. Each zone has two sections, upper and lower, with its own characteristics and associated leadership requirements.

The Emergent Zone Congregation

In the emergent zone, a congregation's culture is one of maximum innovation and creativity.

Emergent Upper Zone: Pioneering

A congregation in this zone experiments with and discovers various creative ways to indwell and engage the communities and neighborhoods in which its people are located. In this zone, a church is adaptive; members are encouraged to cultivate experiments and interact with one another rather than wait on top-down, preplanned strategy.

Missional leadership cultivates an environment in which the people of God imagine together a new future rather than one already determined by a leader. The pioneering emergent zone is a period of maximum creativity and experimentation for a congregation. Engagement with Scripture plays a big part, as does how members engage their context as well as their beliefs about what God is up to in the context. Members learn as they go because they're in a situation where they've never been before.

Emergent Lower Zone: Experimenting

A congregation gradually moves out of this phase of emergent creativity. The learn-as-you-go period wanes as appropriate habits and structures are built into the congregation. This shift represents the need to give form and order to what is emerging. Leadership capacities now involve developing structures, habits, and practices to allow the congregation to regularize its engagements with its context. The challenge in this zone is maintaining the tension between an active emergent culture that still percolates ideas and interacts dynamically with its environment, and the need to embed habits and practices internally.

Leadership in this zone keeps the congregation free of hierarchy and top-down or expert authority. It sees strategy as emergent, not linear.

The Performative Zone Congregation

A congregational culture in the performative zone has the organizational structures, skills, and capacities required to



Emergent Zone

In the emergent zone, a congregation's culture is one of maximum innovation and creativity. A church is adaptive. Leadership is free of hierarchy. Engagement with Scripture plays a big role.

perform well in a stable environment such as the middle decades of the 20th century. The upper and lower sections of this zone function distinctly; we examine the upper performance zone and then move on to the reactive zone before returning to the lower performative zone.

Performative Upper Zone

The organizational culture focuses on performing well what has been learned and proven to work. The primary values are not innovation but skilled performance.

Performance congregations and leaders have been the dominant form of organizational culture for North American churches throughout the 20th century. They're predictable; they function within clearly understood and accepted frameworks. But note an important characteristic about this organizational culture: a performative culture functions best in a stable, predictable environment; it is not organized to deal with discontinuous [abrupt] change. Performative organizations require this kind of environment to thrive. People attracted to them want stability rather than change.

Leaders [in the performative upper zone] are professionals with a degree certified by a denomination to do the performative work of the church. They believe top-down planning brings the best results. Planning is rationalized, not emergent. It is based on the predictability of past results and an assumption that the future will continue to develop in much the same way as things have been in the past.

Detoured to the Reactive Zone

Before describing the lower section of the performative zone, it is necessary to describe the reactive zone. The environment in which the congregation had functioned so well begins to change. When this happens, the congregation enters the reactive zone.

The Reactive Zone Congregation

The reactive zone describes what happens to an upper performative zone congregational culture when it encounters discontinuous [abrupt] change. As the cultural and social context goes through massive change, the skills and habits of a leader in an upper performative zone culture are insufficient to navigate in the new environment.

In the reactive zone, leaders work harder, for longer hours, and with fewer resources at what they have been doing all along. They find they must address ever more crises with little time to imagine alternatives. Productivity declines, creativity disappears, and stress grows. As the congregation or denomination moves deeper into crisis, leaders face demands to put out fires, manage dysfunction, and furnish solutions. These demands leave them with neither the time nor energy to do the job for which they were hired. Feeling they have no answers, the leaders struggle or leave a situation they never signed on for. This is the reactive zone. Like the emergent zone and the performative zone, it has two distinct sections, upper and lower.

Reactive Upper Zone: The Overworked Congregation

Organizations and leaders in the upper section of the reactive zone respond to the changing environment by working harder



Performative Zone

A congregational culture in the performative zone has the organizational structures, skills, and capacities required to perform well in a stable environment such as the middle decades of the 20th century. A performative zone congregation resists change that requires them to shift significantly away from the habits, skills, and capacities that have brought them success up to this point.

to make their dominant habits, programs, and actions effective. A good example is the shift in technology that changed how newspapers set articles into print. In the mid-1970s, newspapers discovered they could quickly and efficiently type on a computer bypassing the need for a typesetter. Typesetters responded to this change in a way that is typical of the upper reactive zone. They became reactive, seeking to create contractual agreements that would not simply maintain their position, but turn back the clock and reestablish the domain they had enjoyed for hundreds of years.

When an established, stable performative zone organization suddenly finds itself in the reactive zone, its leaders react by seeking to return to performative zone stability. The reactive zone is about using regulation to gain back control of an organization. The reactive zone seems to emerge suddenly and without warning, undermining the viability of church life. Because leaders do not understand the situation, they default to the performative zone, with skills that have always worked up to this point.

Reactive Zone: Crisis

For some time, leaders continue to function as if past habits will work, because it's the only way they know how to respond and there's little capacity to read what is actually happening. Sooner or later, however, comes growing awareness that regulatory, performative reaction is making no difference in a deteriorating situation. In response, an organization makes program cuts and staff reductions as the funding base erodes. The reactive zone crisis manifests in a variety of ways:

- People become anxious, expressing anger at leaders for their inability to address the situation.
- Staff retreats into ever-deeper silos to protect their dwindling budget and positions. Subtle power and political struggle emerges as they fight over policy, staff, and finances in order to maintain control.
- People take sides and demonize each other over secondary issues, which further reduces the system's ability to address the real crisis.
- A constitution, books of order, and operations manuals are used to assert control.
- Some, including leaders, opt out of the organization's life.

Reactive Lower Zone: The Confused Congregation

The lower section of the reactive zone marks a period of maximum confusion and discouragement. There are two leadership challenges in the reactive zone. First, one must become aware that the challenges are no longer routine and can't be addressed by the methods and strategies of the performative zone. Decisions must be made and action taken that no longer fit an established paradigm.

Second, the reactive zone is a place of instability and crisis that must be managed, not fixed. While people are experiencing crisis, they cannot risk substantive change. The organization needs a measure of stability to cultivate the creativity and innovation required to rediscover missional life. The primary skills for doing this involve cultivating dialogue and listening across the system or denomination. This is usually not the first instinct of reactive zone leaders in crisis, who often address



Reactive Zone

As the cultural and social context goes through massive change, the skills and habits of a leader in an upper performative zone culture are insufficient to navigate in the new environment. In the reactive zone, leaders work harder, for longer hours, and with fewer resources at what they have been doing all along. The role of the leader in this zone is not to escape the crisis through initiating some new, bold plan, but to invite people into a place of dialogue and engagement amid crisis. It is there that God's people will begin to discern and imagine a different future for themselves.

their own anxiety by coming up with some form of bold plan. For example, this supposedly bold new vision might involve reaching a certain group or type in the community, or planting a huge number of new congregations over a 10-year period, and so on.

As a methodology, [the vision] is leader-driven, from the top, and does not engage the people themselves in forming new imagination. In most cases, the bold new future soon begins to look a whole lot like the same old present, and the main result is that leaders spend down hope among the people.

A reactive zone crisis is a transition where people recognize the impossibility of regaining a lost past but have not yet internalized how to become another kind of culture. In the reactive zone, the role of the leader is not to escape the crisis through a bold plan, but to invite people into a place of dialogue and engagement amid crisis. It is there that people (God's people among whom the Spirit is present) begin to discern and imagine a different future for themselves. This leadership calls for a combination of performative and learning organization skills.

The Performative Lower Zone: Transition Organizations

Once a congregation in the reactive zone realizes its regulatory responses are no longer working and the crisis reaches a critical level, the congregation faces a number of options. It might continue in a state of distress and move into a period of steep decline leading to death; it might seek out a leaders who will impart a new vision and remake the congregation in a radically new mold; it can choose to enter the performative lower zone, which has the potential of inviting people to learn again how

they might imagine fresh ways of being God's people. This is a difficult place of choice, because the work of moving through the performative zone is hard.

At this point in its life, the congregation is caught up in a significant polarity. On one side are the voices and forces demanding radical action and bold innovation. On the other side are those who want to maintain elements of the tradition and story that have shaped the congregation and its past. This is a significant tension, and the temptation is to resolve it in a win-lose direction whereby one side comes to shape the agenda. But what the move into the lower section of the performative zone does is not close down the polarity, but instead invites both sides to engage one another. It is in the tension of managing the polarity that the potential for creativity and new life can begin to emerge from among people themselves. But this is not an inevitable or evolutionary process; the congregation and its leaders must consciously choose this direction.

The leader in this part of the performative zone understands that top-down solutions don't bring cultural change. What is required is a process that cultivates new imagination among people themselves.

In this zone, the leader needs to work with the symbols, experiences, and narratives that appropriately communicate the reality of God's story. These symbols (Word, Sacrament, worship) represent both stability and the instability that God brings about among a people. For example, this is when worship needs to be shaped and led with excellence; preaching, visitation, and a number of other elements experienced as deeply embedded in the congregation's life must be done with

Transitional leadership

Give attention to important differences between *change* and *transition*

Change is what happens to us from forces outside ourselves over which we have no control. Most of us deal fairly well with continuous change, which is ongoing, gradual, and expected. But discontinuous change is much more disturbing and difficult. Congregations do not do well with this unexpected, dramatic change; they need entirely different skills and capacities than those that had served them well in the past.

Besides continuous and discontinuous change, there is also transition, which is

our inner response to change coming from outside ourselves. Transition is a powerful reality in our lives. One congregation in the Northeast experienced a precipitous loss of membership over a two-year period, from about 950 to about 650. When teams of people began interviewing members about this situation, they saw a range of emotions, from grief to apathy. But the dominant one was a sense of inertia, anger, and loss of hope in anything changing. These are all illustrations of the deep, inner emotional response to discontinuous change called transition.

In a congregation struggling with discontinuous change, it isn't the changes that will defeat the leader but the transitions. As the congregation enters

the crisis of confusion of discontinuous change, the reflexive response of leaders is to come up with a plan to fix the crisis and return the organization to its normal experience of effectiveness and success. The problem with this response is that the plans focus on change; they ignore transition. Unless an organization learns to address its transition issues, it will never create an effective change process.

In chapter five of The Missional Leader: Equipping Your Church to Reach a Changing World (the book from which the preceding has been excerpted), the authors explain how to lead through transition so as to address discontinuous change.

a high level of skill and care. By performing these elements well, one introduces a level of confidence and stability while innovative experimenting is developing. This lower part of the performative zone requires transitional leadership. (See sidebar above.)

Summary: Principles for Leading Missional Transformation

We have introduced the Three Zone Model to hundreds of leaders. Some ask if it's necessary to cycle continuously through the zones. They wonder if it is possible to short-circuit the reactive zone. The short answer is that it isn't. Sooner or later, every congregation moves through the cycle in one form or another. This is about God's engagement with the church. Scripture presents a recurring story of God taking people into the desert, or into captivity, as a means of renewing and converting them all over again to faithful living.

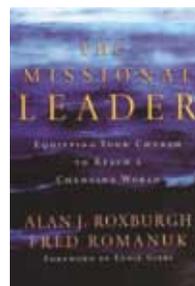
It is useful to keep in mind five basic principles for leading missional transformation:

1. No performative zone organization lasts forever.
2. We can't see all the steps along the way. Discontinuous change is the norm.
3. Any performative or reactive zone congregation can adapt. The key to missional change is innovating and adaptive culture.
4. Adaptive change happens by cultivating emergent zone culture. It's a bottom-up rather than top-down process.

5. Cultivating a missional congregation requires new leadership skills and capacities. †

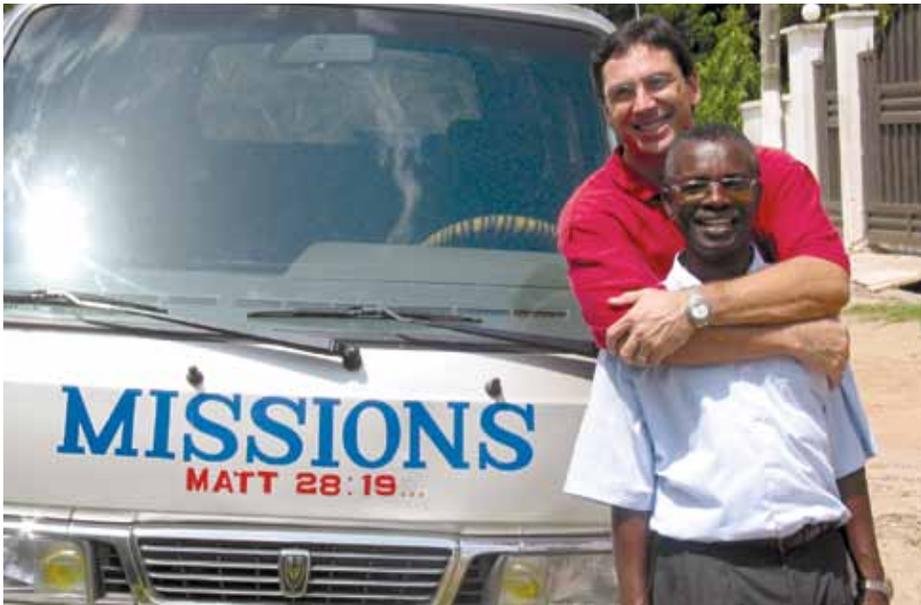
Alan J. Roxburgh is a pastor, teacher, writer, and consultant with more than 30 years of experience in church leadership, consulting, and seminary education. He works with the Allelon Missional Leadership Network in the formation of leaders for the missional church.

Fred Romanuk is an organizational psychologist who has led strategic planning initiatives for many large organizations in Canada and the United States. He has also worked with senior executives in assessing and developing the capabilities of people in leadership roles.



The preceding has been excerpted from *The Missional Leader: Equipping Your Church to Reach a Changing World*, published by Jossey-Bass, 2006. Used by permission.

The Mission Society boosts efforts to help equip international churches for missions



“What I’m always most excited about,” says Michael Mozley, who heads The Mission Society’s new international mobilization department, “is developing Kingdom relationships with people globally. But we are not about just having relationships for relationship sake. We want to be very sensitive to (1) the move of God and (2) partnering with people in strategic places around the globe. We want to be praying, ‘God, where are the most strategic places where we can partner and collaborate with someone who has the same heart as we have – who is missional, biblical, and global.’”

Left: Michael with Global Servants’ missionary Sammy Odarno.

On September 1, Michael Mozley, former missionary to Ghana, joined The Mission Society staff to head its new international mobilization department. The recent great expansion of Christianity in the global south and in parts of Asia has introduced a need within world evangelization. Says Mozley, “In many instances, these international congregations are great at church planting. They’re great at evangelism and at bringing people to Christ. But even in places where churches have been established for 175 years, they may not be producing missionaries. So that’s the whole impetus behind my role in international mobilization. We want to go to these churches and ask, ‘What are you doing about missions?’ and become a resource for them to help them reach unreached communities in their own nations and beyond for Christ.

“The most difficult challenge we have is the simple fact that when Christianity

was introduced to many of these places, it fell short of communicating the whole gospel, which included the responsibility to carry out the Great Commission. So helping these churches shift into a global, missional mindset is the challenge, (which is also true in many churches in the United States).”

Relationship is key

Prior to the launch of this department, The Mission Society held international missions conferences in six countries, introducing church leaders in those countries to some of the principles offered in its Global Outreach Seminar. As fruit of those ministries, several churches have launched mission efforts. Mozley now hopes to take those efforts to the next level.

“What we want to be about is not only delivering a missions message to leaders in developing countries; we want to also develop relationships that are deep and

valued. And with that comes responsibility to help Christian leaders bring about holistic transformation of communities.

Mozley, who is currently enrolled in a Ph.D. program in African Studies at Akrofi-Christaller Institute of Theology, Mission, and Culture in Ghana, West Africa, served with his family since 1999 in Ghana. As a result of his training and experience, he sees in his new role another opportunity. “In many countries, the church overseas was established as a Western model, and people embraced it as their own. They rather enjoy and take great pride in the traditions of a foreign system. So, as we go out to begin relationships with these church leaders, one of the greatest challenges is getting the minds and hearts of these peoples to take ownership of what can be truly theirs.” ☩



Leaving a Legacy: Remembering The Mission Society in Your Will

Psalm 24:1 tells us that “the earth is the Lord’s, and everything in it.” Throughout scripture, God calls on us as His followers to be good stewards of all the resources He has created and gives us. He blesses us not to increase our standard of living, but to increase our standard of giving.

By including The Mission Society in your will, you can leave a legacy of giving toward Kingdom ministry around the world. Through your generosity, countless lives and communities will receive the transforming love and grace of our Lord Jesus for years to come.

Thank you for prayerfully considering The Mission Society in your will and estate plan.

If you’d like to discuss more details about including The Mission Society in your will, please email us at dbrown@themissionsociety.org or call 1-800-478-8963 ext. 9037.



Six new missionaries approved for service

Six new missionaries were approved for service with The Mission Society at the conclusion of the Candidate Assessment and Orientation event on September 16, 2010. This group of cross-cultural workers will join other teams of Mission Society missionaries in various locations around the globe.

Three of the six new missionaries are planning to serve in secure locations, and their names cannot be published for security purposes. They will join fields in locations such as India and the Middle East.

The Rev. Dick McClain, The Mission Society’s president and CEO, remarked, “Reaching least reached people groups with the good news of Jesus has been at the heart of The Mission Society’s ministry from the very beginning. Today it is a matter of strategic priority. We rejoice that 50% of the current class of missionary candidates hope to serve among unreached people groups in restricted-access areas of the world. This continues a trend that has been evident among our new missionaries for the past two years.”

The new cross-cultural workers who are going to non-secure fields include:

Paul and Kelly Wiegert reside in Mt. Olive, Alabama with their three children, Madeline (10), Trent (7), and Megan (2). They plan to minister in Latin America in the areas of church planting and discipleship. Paul is a graduate of Azusa Pacific University, and Kelly is a graduate of Radford University.

Natalie Brown lives in Youngstown, Ohio, with her son, Ryan. She currently leads VBS for her church, among other ministry involvements. She plans to serve in Haiti. ☩

Free e-newsletter

Sign up for The Mission Society’s monthly e-newsletter! Stay informed about the latest news and events regarding the organization, as well as opportunities to get involved. Free podcasts, links to articles, and messages from the president are available as well. Subscribe at www.themissionsociety.org/forms/contactus/60/.



More than a budget line item

When a local church and its missionary strengthen their relationship, God's mission wins



"The missionary should be known by the entire church and perceived as an extension of that local church's own engagement in world mission. Missionaries supported by a church should be part of the mission vision God has given that church." *Shown here: Missionaries to Mexico, Ron, Bonnie, and Ryan Hipwell with friends "Pastor Rob" and Lynn Kifer of Pulaski, Pennsylvania.*

The Mission Society holds the primacy of the local church in mission as one of its core values. Missions is not the job of the mission agency. The agency's job is to assist the local church in fulfilling its call to be engaged in God's mission. That has been the incentive for The Mission Society's involvement in church mobilization efforts inside the United States and in several international settings.

I'd like to reflect a bit on what implication this core value has in how we train our missionaries to view the local church. Since we are a "faith-based mission agency," all of our missionaries are responsible for developing their financial support to underwrite the expenses of their service. This is a daunting task! There can be a temptation among missionaries to view the local church simply as a means to this end – a source of funding alone. And once the funding has been obtained, missionaries can risk falling into an attitude in which

they communicate with the local church just enough to maintain the funding, but view those duties as a distraction from their "real" ministry focus.

More than a funding source

We instill in our missionaries the attitude that part of their role is to help mobilize the local church in mission. Rather than seeing the local church simply as a source of funding or even of prayer support, we want them to seek relationships with local churches. Rather than the missionary simply being a line item on the local church budget, often known only to the few people on the mission committee, the missionary should be known by the entire church and perceived as an extension of that local church's own engagement in world mission. Missionaries supported by a church should be part of the mission vision God has given that church. They should not be chosen simply to make an impressive support map!

I remember when we were first embarking on the task of building our support team to enable our family to move to and minister in Kazakhstan. I had grown up in the church; still, I could not remember ever hearing about missions or meeting a missionary. The closest to it I could recall was an occasional offering being collected for the denomination's mission budget. So when we began our deputation, I was eager to visit churches in person and to encourage a close relationship with our family throughout our years in Kazakhstan.

We prayed that the Lord would open the doors for us to speak and didn't even worry about support potential. We just went where the invitations were given, regardless of size or location. That took us to more than 60 churches and church groups! While some churches didn't really desire that close of a relationship, many have maintained a tight connection with our family that has

continued to this day, 15 years later. They have prayed with us through our challenges, celebrated the victories, watched our children grow up. Many even “moved” with us as the Lord redirected our ministry from being located in Kazakhstan to our current roles at The Mission Society headquarters of serving all of our missionaries worldwide.

Here are (right) some practical tips that churches and missionaries can use to help build this sort of relationship.

God’s mission is indeed the task given the Church by our Lord. By building close relationships between those called to go serve cross-culturally and the churches behind them, all will experience the blessing of our Lord since that is how He has ordained that it should function! †

Jim Ramsay, a former missionary to Central Asia, is the senior director of field ministry.



When your missionary visits, make the most of it. Get him or her in front of small groups in the church.

Grow the relationship: Five easy ways

Practical tips for your church to get to know your missionaries

1. The missionary cannot often visit your church in person, so when he or she does, make the most of it. Get him or her in front of small groups in the church. Don’t forget the children and youth. While the pulpit is great, it is really not the place from which relationships will be built, so find creative ways to engage the congregation with the missionary beyond the worship service.
2. While your missionaries are overseas, include them on your weekly bulletin’s prayer list; include an excerpt from their newsletter or blog in the bulletin or on a projected slide shown before the worship service begins. Ask them to write something for your church newsletter or just include an update from their recent communications.
3. Invite classes or small groups to “adopt a missionary” and communicate with him or her regularly. You might even schedule an occasional Skype call and video conference your missionary right into the Sunday service or the Sunday school class. Be sure to let the missionary know what’s happening in the church and how to pray for it.
4. Get classes to send birthday cards to the missionary children.
5. Encourage a team from the church to travel to where your missionary serves and assist in some way. Don’t limit this to the traditional short-term team approach, since that may not be possible in many areas of the world. Perhaps a small prayer team can go to pray for and encourage, or a pastoral team can make a visit. †



Got direction?

Church leaders, if you're feeling lost or aimless, we can help you chart a new course



As you read this article, please know there is a world eagerly awaiting the good news of Jesus, and they are waiting to hear from your church. Are you planning, seriously planning, for that to happen?

While surfing the internet a couple of years ago, I came across a blog by Tony Morgan (www.tonymorganlive.com) titled *10 Advantages of Doing Ministry Without a Ministry Plan*. Upon reading through the list, I recounted, with some grief, the numerous church meetings I have endured in the past. You may recall the same anguish I have felt as you read the list of advantages of having no plan.

1. You give the loudest person the opportunity to decide what happens at your church.
2. Sharp leaders who are accustomed to serving in organizations with clearly defined plans for future growth won't stick around your church. That means more ministry for you!
3. You'll get to hone your debating skills as people argue about what to do next.
4. More meetings! Where there's no strategy, the meetings flourish.

5. Some people call them church splits. We like to call them church plants.

6. You don't have to worry about celebrating success, because no one even knows what success looks like. It's just better to keep that a secret.

7. Rather than trying to discern God's will for your ministry, you can just rely on dumb luck.

8. You don't have to pray as much, because there's nothing to pray for. As an added bonus, that means you don't have to develop as much faith either – whatever happens...happens.

9. You can count your offerings a lot faster, because people will save their financial gifts for organizations that actually have a plan for the money they receive.

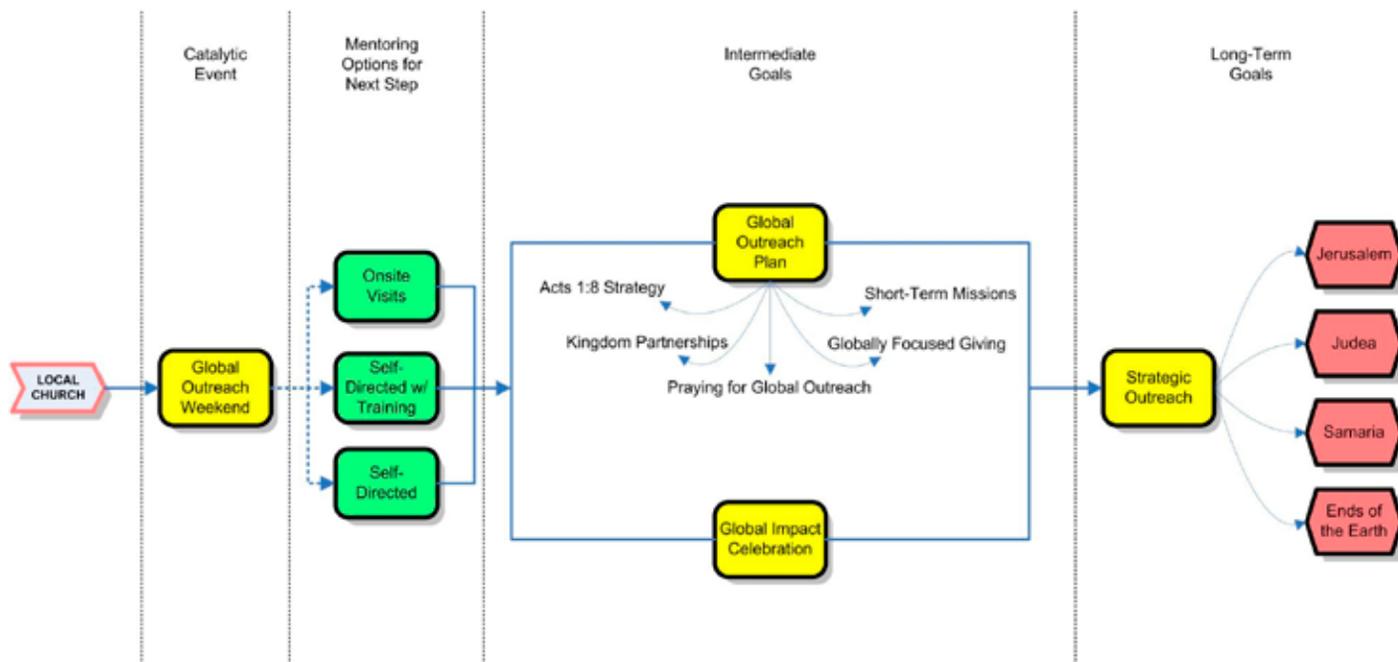
10. Your lack of a ministry plan is actually a ministry plan, it just will accomplish very little.

Although tongue-in-cheek, Tony Morgan makes a good point. Having a plan is important. People throughout history have discovered this as evidenced by the number of planning clichés that exist. Who hasn't heard, "Failing to plan is planning to fail." Or how about the Thomas Alva Edison quote, "Good fortune is what happens when opportunity meets with planning." A good friend of mine was frequently heard saying, "If you don't have a plan, you will fit in someone else's plan."

Planning in the Bible

The Bible both describes and speaks directly to this idea of planning. Moses sending the spies into Canaan, Joshua marching around the city of Jericho, Nehemiah rebuilding the walls of Jerusalem, and David's eschewing battle armor and selecting the sling are examples of God driven strategic planning. Jesus selected twelve primary disciples and of that group chose three to be in His inner circle. His strategy

Global Outreach Process for the Local Church



We are available to partner with your church to lead you through part or all of the process outlined above. For more information, contact The Mission Society at bmancuso@themissionsociety.org.

included teaching in public, healing people of all types of maladies, and eventually going to the cross, dying, and being resurrected. We Christians even refer to the Plan of Salvation. Consider also verses such as, “Plans fail for lack of counsel, but with many advisers they succeed. (Proverbs 15:22, NIV),”

“Commit to the LORD whatever you do, and your plans will succeed. (Proverbs 16:3),” “Surely the Sovereign LORD does nothing without revealing his plan to his servants the prophets. (Amos 3:7, NIV),” and this well known verse, “I know the plans I have for you, declares the Lord, plans to prosper you and not to harm you, plans to give you hope and a future. (Jeremiah 29:11, NIV)” Note that even God is a planner.

Planning in the local church

So, what is the connection between planning and a local church’s missions efforts? The work of reaching out to people with the love of Christ is so important that it must not be left to

chance, relegated to others, or carried out in a haphazard manner. In fulfilling the great calling that God has entrusted to the Church, we need to know His will and put in place a strategy that will accomplish His desire. That’s not always an easy task but it is very doable when approached correctly.

The centerpiece of The Mission Society’s work with local churches is the Global Outreach Plan. Its purpose is to provide a framework so that the local church’s outreach efforts are strategic, significant, and reflect God’s purpose. We believe this process is so important that we teach it as an essential strategy in our Global Outreach Workshop, we deliver a stand-alone workshop focusing only on Developing a Global Outreach Plan, and we have produced a step-by-step guide to steer a church through the planning process. The Global Outreach Plan is based on the assumption that God’s approach to meeting the physical, emotional, and spiritual needs of people is not a one-size-fits-all methodology.

Time and time again, we have seen local churches develop their unique plans that then are implemented to impact the world for Christ. Their plans are never the same but because they are God directed they accomplish His purposes. Our desire is to see every church engaged in this sort of strategic outreach planning. As you read this article, please know there is a world eagerly awaiting the good news of Jesus, and they are waiting to hear from your church. Are you planning, seriously planning, for that to happen?

Colonel John “Hannibal” Smith, leader of the A-Team, closed every television episode with, “I love it when a plan comes together.” I think God does as well. Especially, when those plans were drawn up by a local church that has considered His will for them and they serve to reach those for whom He died with the good news of His love. †

Stan Self is The Mission Society's senior director of church ministry.



The world to come to South Africa

How you can experience this historic mission event



CT 2010 will be held at Cape Town. Of its 400 U.S. delegates, three will be from The Mission Society.

Approximately 11,000 athletes from more than 200 countries participated in the 2008 Olympics held in Beijing, China. Watching the opening ceremony brought tears to my eyes as I saw each nation parade along the floor of the Beijing National Stadium. I couldn't help but think: *This is what heaven will be like.* Until this day, the Olympics Opening Ceremony remains the primary event that comes to my mind when I think of the diversity we will experience in heaven.

In less than one month, however, I'm sure another image will take its place: Cape Town 2010 (CT 2010). Also known as the Third Lausanne Congress on World Evangelization, CT 2010 is projected to be one of the most diverse gatherings of Christians in the history of the world. Approximately 4,000 leaders from more than 200 countries representing various ethnicities, ages, and races will be a part of this historic October 16-25 gathering. By God's grace, I have been invited to attend.

The Lausanne Movement traces its

roots to a group of Christian leaders, including such evangelicals as Billy Graham, who expressed the need for the Church to assemble itself and address the task of global evangelization. The Billy Graham Evangelical Association, in partnership with Christianity Today, hosted several meetings, the first of which took place in 1966 in Berlin. Sensing the need for a larger and more diverse gathering of leaders, Graham and other Christian leaders put together a 1974 Congress in Lausanne, Switzerland.

Also known as the Third Lausanne Congress on World Evangelization, CT 2010 is projected to be one of the most diverse gathering of Christians in the history of the world.

Nearly 2,700 attendees from 150 nations attended, including The Mission Society's founding president, H.T. Maclin, and founding board member, Ira Gallaway. Maclin and Gallaway joined other attendees in 10 days of discussion, fellowship, worship, and prayer. Outcomes from the Congress included the formation of the Lausanne Covenant, the introduction of the term "unreached people groups" by Ralph Winter, and a new spirit of cooperation among Christians around the world. Winter's contribution especially reframed the way the Church viewed missions. Instead of

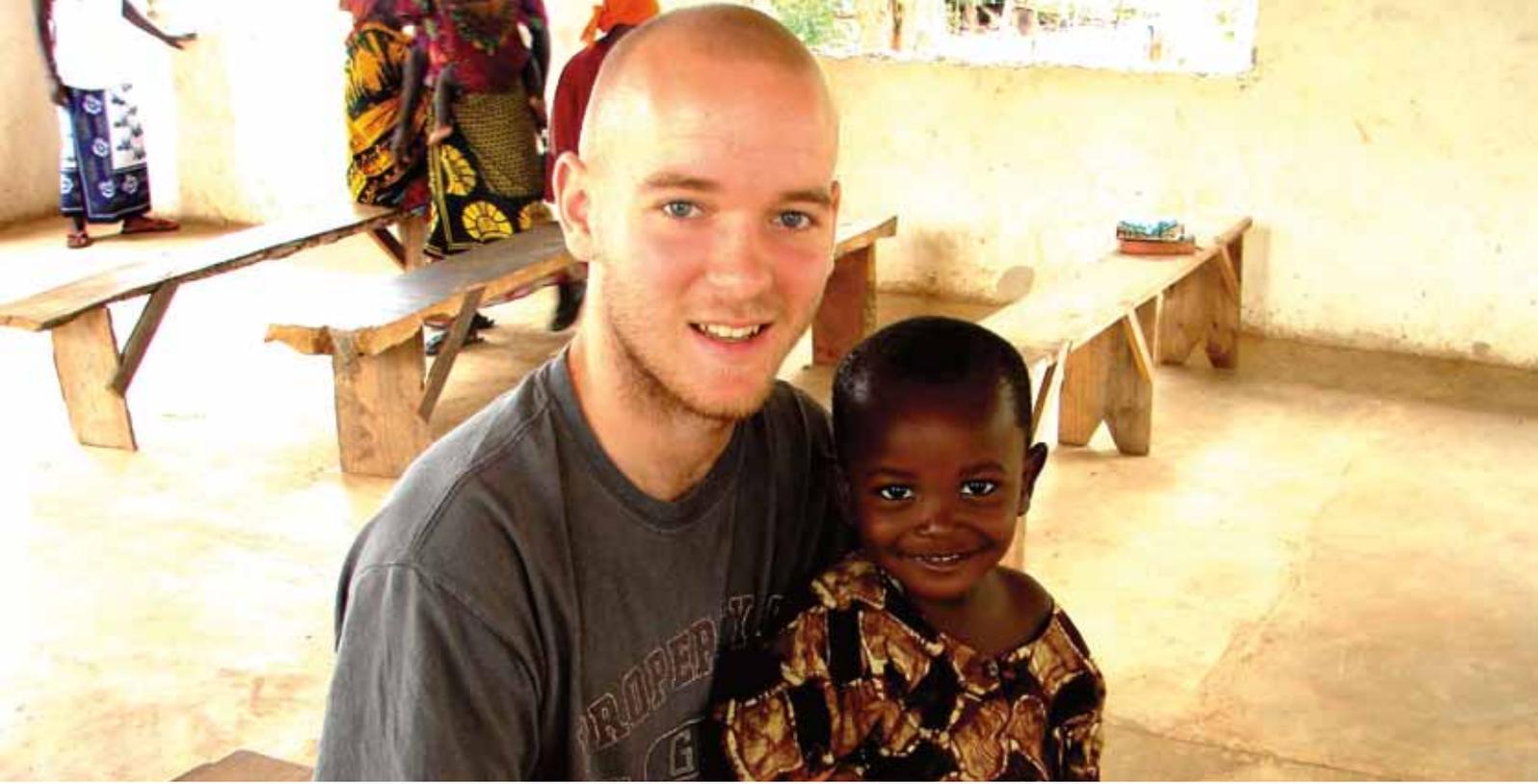
seeing the Great Commission as a task that was completed, the participants recognized that certain groups had never been exposed to the gospel. It was therefore the Church's responsibility to identify these peoples and engage them with the message of Christ.

Following the 1974 Congress, a number of meetings took place around the world to discuss and strategize how the Body of Christ could not only evangelize the world, but also address social issues that plagued the planet. Among these meetings were the second Lausanne Congress, held in Manila in 1989; several "Younger Leaders" gatherings, and various group-specific consultations.

Three people from The Mission Society will participate in CT 2010: Darrell Whiteman, Kirk Sims, and me. We three, a part of the 400-person U.S. delegation, will spend time in fellowship, discussion, prayer, and worship just as did our predecessors.

I, for one, am looking forward to this prelude to heaven. If you are interested in learning more about the Lausanne movement, go to www.lausanne.org. Through this website, you will be able to read landmark documents, interact with others around the world, and even experience certain components of the Cape Town 2010 event. ✝

Richard Coleman is the director of mobilization and candidacy for The Mission Society.



Calling all young people

It's often been said that our generation is one of great passion; that we have the passion and opportunities to do things that have never been done before.

The question is, **“What will you and I do with that passion?”**

Are you interested in cross-cultural ministry? Perhaps sensing a call to missions? Filled with a passion for people and to follow Jesus wherever He may lead you? But at the same time, are you maybe not so sure where to begin or where to even get started in pursuing this calling?

Then maybe a Mission Society Internship for 1-18 months could be just the right fit for you.

Engage another culture. Learn from missionaries and national church leaders with years of experience. Make friends across borders. Live among people in their own culture. Immerse yourself in something deeper – something bigger than yourself.

Find out and experience what Jesus is already doing in the midst of other cultures all over the world. Be forever changed. Let the direction of what the Lord has for your life be shaped. Discover more of Jesus Himself.

The Mission Society Internship. Do something different. Be something different. Live something different.

Now accepting inquiries and applications for the next training event in Norcross. Departure for the field may follow immediately afterward. Please contact: Kate Hilderbrandt at khilderbrandt@themissionsociety.org.

Follow The Mission Society on Twitter at [tms_world](https://twitter.com/tms_world).

Join our Facebook fan page at www.facebook.com/themissionsociety

Read our blog at themissionsocietyblog.com

With the good news of Jesus, The Mission Society missionaries and their families minister in 39 nations around the world. We offer their names here. How we thank you for your prayers for them!

The Mission Society missionaries:

Michael Agwanda, Ed & Linda Baker, José & Audrey Bañales, Chris & Dora Barbee, Jim & Angela Beise, Rose Blank, Liz Boggess, Natalie Brown, Reid & Lola Buchanan, Debra Buenting, Julie Campbell, John & Sandra Carrick, David & Carol Cosby, Gary & Tula Crumpton, Travis and Lorna Curry, Adam & Jennifer Dalenburg, Tim & Daina Datwyler, Christian & Angelica Dickson, Billy & Laurie Drum, Tara Dunn, Lem & Anna Egipto, John & Colleen Eisenburg, Sue Fuller, Cam & Anne Gongwer, Tim & Jennifer Goshorn, Florencio & María Guzman, Charles & Chris Hanak, Marshall Head, John & Katheryn Heinz, Jill Henderson, Jon & Jeanne Herrin,

Neal & Mari Hicks, Ron & Bonnie Hipwell, Ronnie & Angi Hopkins, Andrew & Margaret Howell, Arthur & Mary Alice Ivey, Charles & Mary Kay Jackson, Jonathan & Amy Killen, Esaho & Beatrice Kipuke, Sue Kolljeski, Joetta Lehman, Rich & Kathy Lively, Kristen Matveia, Ash & Audra McEuen, Steve & Shannon Mersinger, Katie Nash, Doug & Becky Neel, Laura Newton, Graham & Sharon Nichols, Ron & Michelle Olson, Donald & Carol Paige, Peter & Esther Pereira, Len & Betsy Phillips, Martin & Tracy Reeves, Leon & Vicki Reich, Louise Reimer, John & Rosalie Rentz, Ben & Jenny Reyes, Jennifer Saunders, Michael & Jannike Seward, Daniel & Katie Simmons, Kirk & Nicole Sims, Amanda Smith, Robert

& Linda Spitaleri, Elliott & Katherine Stotler, Bryan & Beth Tatum, Ron & Belinda Tyler, Paul & Kelly Wiegert, Larry Williams, Jamie and Holle Wollin, Dai & Neva Wysong

In addition to those listed above, other Mission Society 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.

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, 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.