

*One Hundred Seventy-Second Annual Report*



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**DR. MARVIN (RICK) DUNBAR JR., Chairman**  
**DR. DAVID J. PLATT, President**

*Introduction*

On behalf of the International Mission Board, I want to thank you, Southern Baptists, for your permanence in the task of fulfilling the Great Commission given by our Lord. Because of your partnership through the IMB, disciples have been made and churches have been multiplied among the nations as we work together for the spread of the gospel around the world.

You have proven your commitment to the Lord's leadership year after year as you continue your faithful financial support through the Lottie Moon Christmas Offering and the Cooperative Program. In 2016, Southern Baptists gave \$153 million through the 2016-17 campaign to support IMB field personnel. As a result of your Lottie Moon gifts, as well as your continual giving to the Cooperative Program, the IMB consistently can operate on a budget that balances our receipts with our expenses.

Within the framework of this balanced budget, in 2017 we celebrated with you the sending of full-time, fully funded mission personnel while we continued to explore and send more missionaries going through new pathways designed to engage students, professionals, retirees, and others as part of our mission force. At the IMB's annual meeting dinner in Phoenix in June, approximately 1,350 Southern Baptists in attendance estimated that their congregations have a combined potential of 28,551 missionaries. That represents a fraction of the limitless opportunities God is giving us to join Him on mission. In September, we celebrated the service of our emeritus personnel when about 950 former personnel – representing a staggering combined service of 25,297 years – gathered at Ridgecrest.

Our emphasis on the 2017 Week of Prayer for International Missions highlighted examples of your Southern Baptist missionaries who serve through the IMB in some of the most challenging and difficult-to-reach places in the world. These missionaries, who represent your churches and are sent by you, have shared how God is at work despite hardship and struggles. Southern Baptist missionaries are evangelizing the lost, discipling believers, planting healthy churches, and training leaders – and the Lord is being glorified!

All of this is only possible through the grace of God and through the faithful and continued partnership of Southern Baptist churches. I am pleased to report to you the ways you are giving, supporting, sending and going. As you read this report, I invite you to give, support, send, and go all the more in the days ahead until every tribe, tongue, people, and nation has been reached with the good news of Jesus Christ.

David Platt  
President, International Mission Board