

# O N W A R D

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## 550th Anniversary Celebration—Barbados

*Two Southern Province Moravians had the privilege of taking part in anniversary celebrations in other parts of the Worldwide Unity. Thomas Baucom tells of his experience in Barbados, and Kevin Frack shares some of the joys of being in the Czech Republic, here's where it all began:*

Spring Break has traditionally been a time for college students to book plane tickets to some tropical "paradise" in hopes of forgetting about studying for some length of time. In true collegiate fashion, I found myself on a flight to Barbados before my Spring Break officially started. Upon landing, I immediately felt the cold, dry air of the airplane disappear and transform into the warm yet breezy climate I had anticipated. I met up with Sam Gray and Will Sibert in the airport and we stepped through the threshold into a country none of us had ever experienced first hand. We were immediately met by Rev. Dr. Cicely Athill-Horsford and began our drive to Mt. Tabor Moravian Church, which would serve as our home for the week.

After a good night's rest assisted by a cool, tropical breeze and a breakfast of fresh fruit, bread and guava jam, we began preparations for that night's 550th Anniversary celebration at Calvary Moravian Church. The service was simply magnificent. The church was completely full of Moravians, evangelical groups, government officials and a television crew that was filming the ceremony for national television and radio. I was amazed that a church service would garner a national media audi-

ence and a speech from the office of the Prime Minister. While the occasion was organized around the anniversary, I was overjoyed to hear that the future missions of the Moravian Church were central to the thoughts and prayers of those in attendance.

# 550th

The following day Sam and Will conducted a workshop at Sharon Moravian Church, the oldest Moravian congregation on the island. It was obvious that the Moravians in Barbados wanted to focus their energies on missions, as their theme for this year

is "People On a Mission For God." The workshop attendees were very excited to gather together and discuss how they could, as Christians, reach out to the community. As we left Sharon that Saturday night, I found myself spiritually rejuvenated and anxious for worship the next morning.

I was not prepared for the events of Sunday in Barbados. I followed Sam to worship at the two congregations pastored by Rev. Athill-Horsford. The congregations of Penuel Moravian and Mt. Tabor Moravian sang, prayed and took communion together as I knew many other Moravians were doing at that same moment. I was consciously aware of my place not only as a member of the worldwide Unity but also as a member

*Continued on Page 7*

## God's Celebration in the Czech Republic

I was invited by the church in the Czech Republic to the 550th Anniversary celebrations. Even though 95% of the Czech Republic are not Christian, there is an openness to the movement of the Unity of the Brethren because it was so wrapped up in people like John Hus.

The Czech people remember John Hus as a national leader who was willing to stand in the face of foreign oppression and paid the price for it. So taking advantage of the openness of the Czech people, the Czech Moravians decided to unveil an exhibition they are sending out nationwide to remind them in non-religious terms about what happened in their life that

has affected people around the world.

The testimony I'd like to share is what happened on the evening of March 1 in the city of Liberec. It was a nationally televised event. The President of the Czech Senate and the Governor of the state, the head of the Ministry of Finance, the Czech Idol (like American Idol), members of the Czech Moravian Board, Moravian music groups and I were the program.

The moderator for the evening was a national television host. He was a friend of one of the leaders of the provincial board. In the

*Continued on Page 7*

# A Message From Our President

As we celebrate our 550<sup>th</sup> year and plan new mission outreach to spread the word of Jesus Christ the Mission Society would like everyone to celebrate and plan with us. What better format than the up-coming "Mission Awareness and Celebration Dinner". Our Mission Awareness and Celebration dinner will be held at:

*New Philadelphia Moravian Church at 4440 Country Club Road, Winston-Salem*

on May 6, 2007,. Mission displays will start at 5:00 p.m. followed by dinner at 6:00 p.m. We will celebrate with music from



Nepal music team. Our international dinner will be prepared by the Nepalese student at Salem College. The dinner cost is \$8.00 per person. Please make your reservation by making and mailing your check to: Mission Society of the Moravian Church, 500 S. Church St ,

Winston-Salem, NC 27101 All proceeds from this celebration will go to build and support Moravian music in Nepal and Costa Rica. If you would like to exhibit and share your mission experience we invite you call Sheila Beaman at

773-1732 to reserve a place outside the fellowship hall at New Philadelphia. Please come and share your mission experience, be a catalyst for those who have been thinking about missions. We will also take the opportunity to commission summer mission teams. Please call the Mission Society office, 336-773-1732, if you are going on a mission trip.

Together we can build a mission outreach that will surpass the "Great Missionary Decade" of 1732 to 1741.

*Evon Crooks, President, Mission Society, Southern Province*

# AIDS Ministry: Breaking Down Walls—Bridging Congregations

*This new column, AIDS Ministry, will be a regular of the Onward. It will seek to keep us updated to the state of the pandemic of HIV/AIDS and the opportunities to serve through the Moravian Board of World Mission—North America.*



HIV and AIDS is a disaster of overwhelming magnitude that has had devastating effects on populations around the world, including our partners in Africa. We see growing risk with our partners in Central America and the Caribbean as well. It even impacts

people in our own neighborhoods. We believe that faith organizations have a crucial role to play in combating this disease, in raising awareness and understanding, breaking down walls that stigmatize and isolate people living with AIDS, promoting strategies for preven-

tion, and in compassionate caring for those who have HIV and AIDS. As part of our vision to serve others, the Board of World Mission is committed to educating ourselves about this disease and supporting our congregations and partner provinces as we confront the HIV/AIDS pandemic.

The Board of World Mission is seeking ways for North American congregations to act now and respond to the effects of HIV/AIDS in our sister provinces of Nicaragua, Guyana and South Africa. Expansion of Tanzanian and Honduran HIV/AIDS programs will bring more opportunities for ministry and service.

*For further information, contact Kim Bartholomew, MPH, at 610-868-1732 or kim@mcnp.org*

## Moravian Youth Missions: The Future Is Now

I think I speak for many of my brothers and sisters otherwise known as “the youth” when I say that we no longer prefer to be known as “the future of the Church.” Instead, with all due respect, we would request that the Church recognize us as a part of the *here and now*, particularly in helping to re-establish a Moravian identity founded in missions. And here’s why:

First and foremost, we love the Lord and we love the Moravian Church. For most of us, this is the community that God used to raise us and shape us. For all of us, it is a community rooted in many great traditions and an undeniable heritage of living out the Great Commission. While our taste in music may not always be the same, we’re not here to change everything that our predecessors

worked so faithfully to establish, only to build on our traditions and cultivate our identity in order to remain relevant to an ever-changing mission field. Our goal is not independence, but interdependence (see Acts 2:42-47). We need each other.

Second, we have a heart for justice. Many of us have grown up and grown sick of hearing about poverty, oppression and injustice in the news. We have heard that “knowing is half the battle,” but we understand now that it is only the first half. We believe that “faith without works is dead.” From Vacation Bible School to the college campus to the Gulf of Mississippi and the ends of the earth, we long to represent a faith that works now.

And lastly, we have the world at our doorstep. In an era of frequent flyer miles, the World Wide Web, and SKYPE, it is logistically easier now to “go” and make disciples than it ever has been. And many of us are already doing just that.

So on behalf of the youth of the Moravian Church, we thank all of those who have come before us to help establish this precedent. And thank you in advance for “not looking down on us because we are young,” but for allowing us to be a part of reclaiming our identity as “Missions People”. . . . now.

*Dusty Harrison, Youth Representative to the Board of World Mission, and serving campus ministry, supported by the Moravians, at William and Mary.*

*From Vacation Bible School to the college campus to the Gulf of Mississippi and the ends of the earth, we long to represent a faith that works now.*



## Announcing the Second Moravian Youth In Mission Summit

For all youth/young adults of the N.A. Provinces & Districts

**August 31st - September 3rd, 2007**

*Looking for direction? Is God calling You?*

*Interested in crossing cultures? Seeking a spiritual journey?*

Location: Laurel Ridge Camp & Conference Center

Contact: Glenna, Intern to BWM, at [gjas29@yahoo.com](mailto:gjas29@yahoo.com) or 336-922-6762, or Bishop Sam Gray, Rev. Will Sibert

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Mission Society, PO Drawer Y Salem Station Winston-Salem NC 27108

News submissions to Editor:

Glenna J. Tasedan at:  
2515 LakeSpring Ct. Winston-Salem, NC 27106. or

[moravianonward@yahoo.com](mailto:moravianonward@yahoo.com)

Pray Every Day ministry inquiries to Helen Gullledge at [helngull@aol.com](mailto:helngull@aol.com).

ONWARD is on the world wide web at

[www.bethabara.org/ONWARD.htm](http://www.bethabara.org/ONWARD.htm)

## A Mission Love Story *By retired missionary Laura Benson, as told to Lorena Gray*

**L**aura Prim was born in Birmingham, Alabama in 1914. She says that “prim” described her well. After attending the Presbyterian Training School in Richmond, Virginia (on a full scholarship) she went on to work in Christian Education for the Birmingham Presbitery, teaching and organizing Vacation Bible Schools in many local churches.

It just happened that the pastor of one of these churches had a friend from Seminary who just happened to be passing through town and whose car just happened to break down. Laura met the young man, who turned out to be Clark David Benson, born in Buffalo, New York in 1913. At the time, she didn’t know that he was a Moravian – the great-grandson of David Zeisberger Smith, and the grandson of Johann Renatus Smith (a missionary among the Cherokee people in Georgia and Oklahoma). The two visited for a short time, and then Clark left. Soon after that, he went to Honduras to serve in the Moravian Church along with George Heath. Laura didn’t expect to see him again.

Some time later, however, as Laura was leaving the office to go to lunch, she heard the phone in the upstairs office ringing. Since no one was there, she ran up the stairs and answered the phone. It was a woman who was inquiring about two local pastors. Laura ended up going to lunch with her, and she just happened to be Mrs. Benson, Clark’s mother! They talked about her son’s mission work in Hondu-

ras. Laura was very interested.

Clark and Laura began corresponding. A romance developed by air mail (love is in the air?). Late in 1944, Clark sent a letter with a very special proposal: would Laura travel to Honduras to marry him? Laura had never been on an airplane, but on January 17, 1945 she flew to San Pedro Sula, Honduras, where Clark was waiting for her. After almost two months of paper work and red tape, they were married on March 8, 1945.

Laura says that when they arrived in Cocobila (where they would be in ministry together), someone rang the bell (she remembers the man’s



name!) and the whole village came out to meet her and shake her hand. Teresa Alvarez (Lorena Gray’s grandmother) was in that crowd. According to Laura, Brother George Heath said to the village, “the young missionaries have arrived; please come and teach them how to speak!” And they did. In fact, 62 years later, Laura and Clark were able to conduct this interview in Miskitu.

Laura remembers fondly the time she spent getting to know the people, understanding the culture and learning how to live in La Mosquitia, Honduras. She says that there were no books on the subject, so she had the privilege of learning from people

instead. The Bensons worked with the Heaths and then were left in charge of the Cocobila district. Since there were no public schools, Laura worked in education in the surrounding villages. Clark traveled to many outstations to serve communion, baptize and minister to the people. In one unreached village, Ras, some people brought lumber and said to him, “we have not turned to God yet, but maybe our children will, and they will need a church.” The church that they built is now one of two Moravian congregations in that village.

Clark and Laura Benson returned to the United States in 1968. The Miskitu Moravians remember them as gentle, loving, devoted and practical people. Many Miskitu “old-timers” love to tell about how Clark would suddenly stop in the middle of a long motorboat trip, no matter where they might be at the time. He would say, “the motor needs to rest, and so do we.” An hour later, they would once again be on their way, refreshed and with a well-rested motor.

The Bensons live in “Go Ye Village,” a retirement community in Oklahoma. Every morning they pray together (using Pray Every Day from ONWARD!), read the Daily Text, share the passages of Scripture and then sing the hymns. Laura says that whenever possible they sing in Miskitu, just to remember.

*Please remember the Bensons in your prayers, giving thanks for their love story: the story of their love for each other, and their mutual love of God and God’s people around the world!*

# Prayer Focus

My name is Celeste Handy, and I grew up in a town called Axton, Virginia, which is about an hour north of Winston-Salem. I am half Cherokee with Lakota uncles, so I was raised in the culture and religion of Cherokee and Lakota peoples. I had a little exposure to Christianity through the youth group of a small Episcopal church my family joined for a brief time, but my father felt that Christianity and the church would influence me away from Native American culture. He was very proud of who we were, so he stopped taking us to church, but by then I had already developed a curiosity about the love and forgiveness I had experienced in youth group.

When I went to college in 1993, I went to Salem College in Winston-Salem. I was still curious about Christianity, so I decided to go to all the Bible studies and fellowship meetings available to me on campus. My most involvement was in the Episcopal Campus Fellowship and InterVarsity Christian Fellowship. In these two groups I experienced the same love and forgiveness that I experienced in the group at my church in high school. However, I was like my dad in that I was very proud of who I was as a Native American. I was afraid if I became

a Christian I would have to give up who I was culturally. However, my junior year in college, I met a group of people from the Triad Native American United Methodist Church at one of the powwows I attended each year. They began to show me how I could be culturally Native American and truly follow Christ as His child. This factored into my decision partway through my junior year to become a Christian, and I began helping with the youth group at my church soon after that.

During my senior year in college, I went to an InterVarsity missions convention called Urbana, which occurs every three years and usually has about 22,000 students in attendance. While I was there I went to all the workshops on Native American ministry. There I learned that only about two to ten percent of Native Americans know the Lord. I knew what the struggles were like becoming a Christian as a Native American, and I wanted to share with Native American people what I had found.

At the conference, I signed up for a trip to the Navajo reservation, and while I was there, the leader of the trip said he was looking for staff to

work with Native American college students. It was then that I decided to work here in New Mexico, where I have been for almost ten years.

I am planning to go to Thailand this summer. Please pray for the trip. Pray that I can earn or save enough money to come home to NC after the trip and visit.

*Celeste Handy, a graduate of Salem College, is in campus ministry, supported by the Moravians, at the Univ. of New Mexico; a school of mostly Native Americans.*



## WORLD MISSION RUMMAGE SALE

**SATURDAY, MAY 12 8AM**

**Fellowship Hall of  
Home Moravian Church**

*All proceeds will assist with international and local AIDS projects for this year. Please call Mallie Graham, 924.9409 for more information.*

## SOCCKER BALLS TO LABRADOR



**Recreational 3 X 3 Tournament \* All ages \* Saturday—May 5th**

**Bring your friends or be placed on a team**

**9 AM—12 NOON Jefferson Middle School**

*Contact George Tasedan, 336-922-6762 for pre-registration or register at the field*

**For every Registration, a soccer ball will be donated to the Labrador children**



Coordinator: Helen Gullledge

# Pray Everyday Day

May 2007

1. Lord, we praise you for the presence of the Moravian Church in Nepal. Bless the ministry of the School of Music and Worship that it would touch the hearts of young and old alike.
2. Thank you Father for the opportunity to serve those in great need following the disaster in Mississippi. We lift Mark Ebert and other brothers and sisters while they work to rebuild homes and lives. Let them be an example of Christ's love and care.
3. Thank you Lord for the welcome that Safiatu and Mohammed Braima received in Luawa-Yiehun, Sierra Leone, West Africa. Continue to strengthen them as they complete the library, begin the foundation of the church building, and care for the infant girl they have taken into their home.
4. Jesus, Let our praise extend beyond the walls of our churches into our neighborhoods. Empower us with boldness of action and speech as we reach out to invite others to join us in the experience of a relationship with You.
5. Father, touch the hearts and minds of our brothers and sisters in Labrador. Bless the young people who are going, and those who will continue your work in that community which is starving for examples of your love.
6. **Sunday**—We lift Anita and Neil Moree and pray that their last financial goals will be met swiftly, their travel plans and required papers be forth coming in a timely manner & keep them focused on the task of preparing to work with North African translation.
7. Pray deeply and listen for the Lord's direction. Let Him work through others as you are presented with opportunities you never thought of accepting. Be slow to say "no"; be open to listen for divine direction.
8. We thank you lord for all things that are good in our lives. From you we have our food, our health, our freedom to worship, and our eternal life. We thank you Lord for your love which is reflected in so many ways.
9. Holy Spirit, our Comforter, we rejoice to know that you always hear our prayers. You have the authority and the power to answer and to act in our lives. Teach us to trust your unfailing faithfulness and love.
10. Our Help and our Deliverer, we turn to you in our weakness for strength to face the problems of each day. May all who need empowerment find it today in your everlasting arms.
11. God of All Creation, you have breathed into us the breath of life. Help us to see and use this precious gift for your glory. Guard us from all that would destroy that gift within us
12. Prince of Peace, we pray for the wisdom and love needed to live in harmony with one another in our homes, neighborhoods, nation and world. Lead us from self-centeredness to caring and concern for all of your children.
13. **Sunday**—Lord Jesus, the old, old story of your love is made new in our lives. Fill us with your spirit so that our words and actions will convey this good news to others.
14. Heavenly Father, Grant that our faith not be shaken by adversity but that we may persevere the way that leads to perfect fellowship with Christ our Blessed Savior.
15. Give thanks to God for Michael and Cecilia Tesh and their dedication to the orphans, pre-schoolers, and babies in the "Ray of Hope" compound in Shimba Hills in Mombassa, Kenya, East Africa.
16. Ask God to continue to bless all mission committees and organizations by keeping them aware of mission needs. Praise Him from whom all blessings flow!
17. Thank God for Bishops Graham Rights and Blair Couch for the study book, WHAT WE BELIEVE: *A Glimpse at Moravian Theology*-- a clear and helpful resource used in most Women's Fellowship Circles.
18. Thank God for the efforts of Brent and Lisa Pampe and Esther Glas of the Western District to raise funds to purchase an Ultra Sound Machine for the clinic in Ahuas, Honduras and for all--from Western, Eastern, and Southern Districts--who have responded with funds and with volunteer labor for transport and set up.
19. Pray for our 2007 Moravian Summer Camp programs.
20. **Sunday**—Pray for Dr. Christopher Thomforde, the new President of Moravian College and Seminary; and for Dr. Susan Pauly, the new President of Salem Academy and College
21. Pray for Samaritan's Purse and the many places they serve in the name of Jesus. Lift Doug and Jacqueline Wilson as they serve in Uganda. Pray for the new believers.
22. Pray for the International Bible Study Groups of Bible Study Fellowship and Community Bible Study. Ask the Lord to bless the leaders and the children as well as the adults studying His Word.
23. Pray God's protection on Caroline, Michael, Samuel and Ian Woo as they live and witness to people in Asia. Pray against the spirit of depression as they work in an area without the support of a Christian family there.
24. Thank God for His ultimate provision of a house for the Moravian Upasana Church in Nepal. Pray that they would be able to financially support the church and its programs.
25. Pray for the Moravians from the East West Indies Province and the Surinam Province who are working together in mission work on St. Maarten
26. Pray for Christians in Laos; Christians are called "State Enemy Number One" and "should be eliminated" their government says. Pray for nearby nations of Thailand, Viet Nam and Burma (Myanmar).
27. **Sunday**—God inspired the writer of Psalm 2:8 to write: "Ask of me and I will make the nations your inheritance." Pray these words for spreading the Gospel.
28. Memorial Day. Pray by name for U.S. officials: Our President, Homeland Security, Michael Chertoff; Supreme Court Chief Justice John Roberts, and others.
29. Pray this prayer of St. Augustine: "Watch thou, dear Lord, over those who wake or watch and weep tonight and give thine angels charge over those who sleep."
30. Pray for doctors Norvelle Goff and Gerard Rudy and for nurse Sara Donoso (from Chile) serving God in La Mosquitia, Honduras, and for Bishop Wincap Cassy.
31. "Nearly half of the world's population (3.6 billion souls) live without the hope of salvation from Jesus Christ"

Contributors to the Pray Every Day this month were Jeff Fulp, Ethyl Mabe, Betty Hobbs and Bishop Robert Iobst. To contribute to the Pray Every Day next month, contact Helen Gullledge at [helngull@aol.com](mailto:helngull@aol.com).

## God's Celebration in the Czech Republic

*Continued from Page 1*

course of the evening he would read statements made by Moravian leaders through the centuries. As he began introducing people he would read a statement by Comenius or other historical figures. He paused and said, "This is powerful."

This was not a worship service.

It was a national event to unveil this gift to the nation and remind the Czech people about their history. My prayer was that without mentioning the name of Jesus or without using

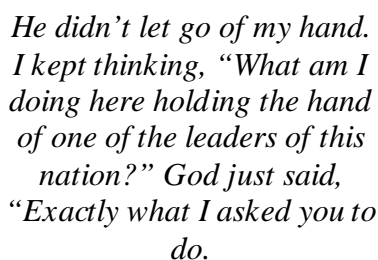
church language the people might receive the power of the Gospel. As the moderator began to read these quotes from historical figures he paused to think and then invited the President of the Czech Senate to come forward and bring greetings. The President acknowledged that he was touched by what God was doing with these people who were so involved with helping the poorest of the land. Then the Governor brought greetings and best wishes. The head of the Moravian Church in the Czech Republic gave a very brief historical overview. The Ministry of Finance presented before the nation a commemorative coin printed especially to acknowledge the 550 years of this movement of those so simply dedicated to Christ and His work in the land of the Czech Republic. Then they asked me to speak on the impact of what happened there in our world.

I began by saying, "I want you to imagine a pond that is calm and then a large rock is thrown into the pond. What happened 550 years ago was that a rock rippled the surface of the pond. The rock had been discovered anew that had been in the world since before the beginning

but lost sight of over the years."

This rock (we Christians know that this rock is Jesus!) unleashed a power in the land. Those who knew the strength of this rock and those who had come to experience the life of His Word were changed and became a force to be reckoned with not with arms or weapons of military power but of changed, transformed human lives. Those waves or ripples released an energy from these changed lives in very powerful ways.

The President of the Senate came to me and simply held my hand. He said he didn't know how to thank me for what I said. He said he was not a Christian but something in my words spoke to the very deepest part of him. He didn't let go of my hand. I kept thinking, "What am I doing here holding the hand of one of the lead-



*He didn't let go of my hand. I kept thinking, "What am I doing here holding the hand of one of the leaders of this nation?" God just said, "Exactly what I asked you to do."*

## Barbados *continued from Page 1*

of the larger body of Christ.

Later that afternoon, the congregations gathered and "marched" to Sharon Moravian for the weekend's final celebration. Each congregation held up signs with facts and symbols of each of the Moravian provinces and marched along the road together singing songs of praise. As I looked out into the sea of Moravians, I was struck by how many of them were young people. There were children barely old enough to be in elementary school shaking tambourines and college age youth singing and dancing in the streets. It was a powerful, outward display and a clear example of how the congregations in Barbados have recognized their youth, not as the future of the church, but as members of the church NOW. Al-

ers of this nation?" God just said, "Exactly what I asked you to do. You are being Christ to him, to hear his heart and to encourage his walk that he might know me too." Then the Czech Idol came up and said the same thing. We didn't have a religious conversation. That wasn't the issue. The issue was the message delivered and I think people's lives were changed. I don't speak Czech so I think it's kind of funny God is able to communicate across the barriers we erect. Without words God is able to send the most powerful messages. Without words or even using the name of Jesus, the people we meet might meet the work of God. Christ in you and me truly is the light of the world. Pray for the people of the Czech Republic that the light of His body there might reach a nation so that when all is said and done the dream of God is fulfilled.

*Rev. Kevin Frack, Pastor of Ardmore Moravian Church*

though this was technically the final celebration of the weekend, I left, not with nostalgia and thoughts of the past, but instead a feeling of eagerness and anticipation surrounding the missions of the future in Barbados, which will further unite the Moravians of all ages with their surrounding community.

I was able to feel the white sand and sample sugar cane, fresh guava and Bajan pepper sauce. While beautiful and tasty, those things paled in comparison to the true "paradise" I found—the excitement of my Moravian brethren and their devotion to sharing the peace, hope and love they have found in Christ with those outside the church.

*Thomas Baucom, Senior-NC State and part of the Nepal Music Team*

# Mission Awareness Dinner—May 6<sup>th</sup> - 5pm

Mailing Address here

500 S. Church St.  
Winston-Salem, NC 27101  
336-773-1732  
ADDRESS SERVICE REQUESTED

Mission Society of the Moravian Church, South,

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Winston-Salem, NC

## Mission Awareness Dinner

Sunday May 6<sup>th</sup>—5:00pm

New Philadelphia Moravian Church - Winston-Salem, NC

\$8.00/person

### Featuring. . .

- △ Nepalese and Central American food
- △ Nepalese and Central American music
- △ A report on the Nepal School of Worship & Music
- △ A presentation on the vision for the School of Music and Worship in Limon, Costa Rica
- △ An opportunity to support the “Antioch Project” of the BWM.
- △ A time of guided prayer
- △ Commissioning of outgoing mission trips

Call Mission Society office at 722-1732 for reservations. Tickets at door