

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE  
April 6, 2010

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## ***The Mission Society Names Director of Agrimissions Neel Brings International, Conservation***

NORCROSS, Ga. (April 6) -- Douglas Neel has been appointed director of Agrimissions, a ministry of the interdenominational agency The Mission Society.

Founded in 2000 to help relieve hunger and poverty in communities around the world, Agrimissions is The Mission Society's extension for field missionaries, offering such ministries as nutritional and on-site agricultural training, water quality improvement and pilot projects. TMS Agrimissions helps nationals and missionaries launch and advance agricultural projects in Ecuador, Paraguay, Brazil, Peru and areas of Central Asia.

"The Mission Society Agrimissions program is very much a fit for my wife Becky and me," Neel said. "It's smaller and family-oriented, with Wesleyan roots. Our heart is helping people in agrarian societies learn better cultivating methods to help themselves meet their physical needs. That's the central purpose of Agrimissions."

"Doug offers a wealth of experience, both agricultural and on the mission field," said the Rev. Dick McClain, president of The Mission Society. "He is an outstanding choice to direct Agrimissions."

Neel, 59, brings to the directorship two years' experience as a missionary in Ecuador and 35 in agriculture, almost half of them as a soil and range conservationist with the Natural Resources Conservation Service of the United States Department of Agriculture. In the early 1980s, Neel envisioned linking agriculture and missions by teaching missionaries ways to improve crop yields. Missionaries, in turn, would share what they learn with people on the mission field, enhancing spiritual and physical health and well-being.

Decades later, he found that The Mission Society shared this vision. In January 2007, the Neels joined international mission ministry, which named Doug Neel associate director of Agrimissions. Becky Neel, who is Agrimissions' administrative assistant, brings 20 years' experience as a church secretary and an executive secretary in the private sector.

Neel's passion is spreading the word about The Mission Society's Agrimissions so others can join the team. "We can't meet all the requests for assistance, because we simply haven't enough people," Neel said. "My main thrust is to raise up new workers, as well as networking."

Founded in 1984 in the Wesleyan tradition, The Mission Society ([www.themissionsociety.org](http://www.themissionsociety.org)) recruits, trains and sends Christian missionaries to minister around the world. At present, The Mission Society has more than 200 missionaries in 32 countries. It develops diverse programs and ministries in accordance with its missionaries' unique callings and gifts, ranging from well drilling and the arts to more traditional ministries, such as teaching English and church planting. Its church ministry department provides seminars, workshops and mentoring for congregations in the United States and overseas, helping equip churches for strategic outreach in their communities and throughout the world.

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