

# **International Mission Board celebrates balanced budget**

November 16, 2016

RICHMOND, Va. (BP)—International Mission Board trustees celebrated a balanced budget, unanimously approving the 2017 budget during their Nov. 10-11 meeting near Richmond, Va. Trustees also appointed 50 missionaries.

“I am pleased to share with you that because of generous giving from Southern Baptist churches to the IMB, disciples have been made and churches have been multiplied over the last year among the nations in truly breathtaking ways,” IMB President David Platt said.

“Furthermore, we are pleased to be able to present to you a balanced budget request for 2017 that projects growth in both fully supported missionary appointments as well as new pathways designed to see multitudes more men and women taking the gospel to people who have never heard it.”

The budget presented to trustees represents a reversal in a trend of recent years that has seen a decline of missionaries on the field. The budget proposes an increase in full-time, fully funded missionary appointments for 2017, Platt said, while also opening the door for missionaries to follow other pathways.

The 2017 budget request is balanced, with receipts and expenses both projected at \$270 million. Rodney Freeman, vice president of support services and IMB treasurer, noted the budget proposal reflects short-term financial responsibility and long-term organizational stability.

Lottie Moon Christmas Offering giving projections for the 2016 calendar

year are on pace to be the largest offering in IMB history, with projections the offering could exceed the 2015 record giving by 10 percent.

IMB projects appointing 451 personnel in 2017, which represents a 3 percent net increase in total field personnel—100 additional field personnel. Of those newly appointed, 351 will replace personnel who retire, complete a mid-term assignment or transition through resignations or other departures. In 2016, 310 missionaries were appointed, bringing IMB field personnel to 3,651.

“We are very excited to have these funds in the budget to send additional personnel, and these funds will only be used to send additional personnel,” Freeman told trustees.

Freeman also reported IMB contingency reserves are projected to be at five and a half months of operational expenses in 2017. The figure falls within SBC Executive Committee guidelines, which allows for a maximum of six months of operational expenses in contingency reserves.

Platt reminded trustees what the budget numbers represent—40,000 Southern Baptist churches partnering together through the Cooperative Program and the Lottie Moon Christmas Offering to send and support missionaries around the world.

Trustees also voted to affirm a revised mission statement for the organization, which states: “The International Mission Board partners with churches to empower limitless missionary teams who are evangelizing, discipling, planting and multiplying healthy churches, and training leaders among unreached peoples and places for the glory of God.”