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IM Announces New Director of Mission Mobilization



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International Ministries (IM) is excited to announce the selection of the Rev. Dr. Rodney Ragwan as director of Mission Mobilization. Ragwan began his service in this key leadership position on June 1.

In this position, formerly titled director of Vocational Development, Ragwan is cultivating relationships with prospective global servants and counseling them in their discernment of God's call; managing IM's application and assessment process for mission candidates; and training and supervising pre-assignment global servants in network building, fundraising and preparation for long-term mission service. Ragwan will also host IM's annual Hear the Call conference, a weekend retreat for adults who are exploring a personal call to join God in global mission.

Ragwan follows the Rev. Jim Bell, who held this role since 2012. Bell continues with IM as associate executive director for Global Mission.

"I am delighted that Rodney has accepted God's call to lead IM's mission mobilization ministries," says Bell. "Rodney demonstrates a unique combination of theological and missiological expertise with a pastoral heart and relational warmth. I expect he will be greatly appreciated as a spiritual guide and coach for those who are discerning God's call to global mission work."

Ragwan is a native of Durban, South Africa, and earned a Licentiate in Theology (L.Th.)* from the Baptist Theological College of Southern Africa. He has also received a Doctorate of Ministry (D.Min.) from Palmer Theological Seminary and a Ph.D. from the University of Pretoria. He is now a member of Springfield Baptist Church in Springfield, Pennsylvania.

Bell comments, "With multiple academic degrees in missiology, Christian thought and ministry to marriage and family, Rodney brings significant expertise and experience to IM's ongoing efforts to engage increasing numbers of long-term global servants in cross-cultural ministry."

"I am excited to be part of this amazing mission sending organization," said Ragwan. "I appreciate the mission model that IM uses, in which Christian leaders are encouraged to carry out mission from a theological base that is informed, coherent and biblically grounded. As a person who was a recipient of the good news of the gospel, I am now participating in preparing global servants of different genders, ethnicities and racial backgrounds to participate in God's mission around the world."

Ragwan's own diverse professional background and education and his dedication to serving as a humble servant of God uniquely qualify him for this role. In his home country of South Africa, he served with the Baptist Association of South Africa, first as the Christian education director, then as mission director and finally as president. Ragwan has also served as a pastor in both South Africa and the U.S., and in recent years he has worked in administrative and faculty positions at Eastern University and Palmer Seminary. As the first director of Palmer's Openseminary program, Ragwan was intensively involved in mentoring, coaching and counseling prospective students who were discerning God's direction for their lives and ministries, and he also accompanied students in the initial stages of the seminary experience.

Ragwan and the ministries of IM crossed paths in surprising ways before he ever considered a call with the mission organization. Ragwan reflects, "While researching my dissertation, I uncovered a wealth of information on IM's relationship with the Baptist Association of South Africa, the organization I led from 2001 to 2003. This relationship started in the 1800s in India, a country of my ancestors that I have yet to visit. Through the ministry of the American Baptist missionaries in India, an indigenous missionary, the Rev. John Rangiah, and his family responded to a call to go to South Africa to work with the Telugu-speaking indentured laborers who had earlier arrived from India." In addition to his discovery of this historical connection, Ragwan also encountered IM in his own ministry. He explains, "While serving the Baptist Association of South Africa as President, I worked with IM's area director for Africa at that time, the Rev. Charles Jones, and led the association into a partnership with IM."

Ragwan and his wife, Eva Anita, live in Lansdowne, Pennsylvania, and have three adult children and two grandchildren. Please join IM in welcoming Ragwan to his new role! He

can be reached by email at rragwan@internationalministries.org.

*Licentiate in Theology is a theology degree. It is a theological qualification commonly awarded for those studying theology in the United Kingdom, Malta, Canada, Australia, New Zealand, and South Africa. The academic rank varies from undergraduate degree to master's degree. (Wikipedia)