A former Canton man has been appointed by the Southern Baptist International Mission Board to work in the Southeast Asia in theological education.

The Rev. Michael K. Shipman and his wife, Katharine K. Troutt Shipman, have joined, nearly 4,200 mission board workers sharing Christ in 127 countries among 336 ethnic groups. The Shipmans were among 20 people appointed by the mission board during a service at Cottage Hill Baptist Church in January in Mobile, Ala.

The new workers will fill diverse job assignments from starting churches to using sports, education and business as tools of ministry.

The countries of Southeast Asia include more than 200 million Muslims and more than 100 million Buddhists, as well as millions of followers of Hinduism, animism and secularism. Most of the people of this part of the world have not yet had an opportunity to hear the gospel in a meaningful way, according to a news release from the Southern Baptist International Mission Board.

Shipman will work in theological education and Kathy Shipman will be involved in a variety of outreach ministries.

He is the son of Boyd and Helen Shipman of Canton. He grew up in Canton and considers it his hometown. Crestview Baptist Church near Canton and New Morgan Hill Baptist Church in Candler were influential in his Christian growth, he said.

He received a bachelor of science and master of divinity degrees from Liberty University in Lynchburg, Va. He attends Southeastern Baptist Theological Seminary in Wake Forest and expects to receive the doctor of ministry degree in May.

He was pastor of Houghton Lake Southern Baptist Church in Prudenville, Mich., and has made mission trips to Mexico, Miami and the Philippines.

Since 1992, Shipman has been pastor of Morningside Baptist Church in Brevard.

Kathy Shipman is the daughter of Donald and Diana Troutt of Leonardtown, Md. She considers Stafford, Va., her hometown. She received a bachelor of science degree from Liberty University in Lynchburg.

The Shipmans have two children: Bethany Michelle, 6, and Hannah Joy, 2. The family will go to the International Mission Board's training center in Rockville, Va., in April for an eight-week orientation before leaving to go overseas.

In 1996, International Mission Board workers helped lead 283,100 people to Christ and baptism. They and their overseas partners started 2,451 churches and reported a record 4.1 million members in 41,521 churches overseas.