The Rev. J. Harry Haines, 1917–2007, a native of New Zealand, was a missionary in China and Malaysia for 21 years, an ecumenical relief executive and for years, the director and major promoter of the United Methodist Committee on Relief.

Haines was an outspoken advocate for those in need and for education about the impact of poverty and political oppression on millions of people. Haines strongly supported economic self-development of people in poor countries and among the marginalized in more affluent regions. In 1984, shortly after his retirement, Haines made an urgent appeal to the church to “realize that we’re living in a bitterly divided world (and) we have limited resources; therefore, we have to be specialists in designated areas in the least developed countries.” Overcoming that divide was for Haines a part of mission.

“He was a man of great energy and contagious hope,” said Randy Day, Global Ministries’ general secretary on Haines’ death in 2007. “He was a dynamic speaker and loved nothing more than to visit congregations to tell them the story of how the church responds to disasters and humanitarian needs.” Haines wrote seven books, including an analysis of China and its 20th century political revolutions.

Haines was born June 29, 1917. He and his wife, the former Loma Housley, the daughter of missionaries, had four sons.

Haines received his early schooling in New Zealand, Australia and England. He was awarded a bachelor’s degree from Western Maryland University, Westminster, and his theological degree from what is today Wesley Theological Seminary. His MA and Ph.D. degrees were from Princeton University. He held membership in several United Methodist annual (regional) conferences during his ministry, the last being Oregon-Idaho.