

## WMI ENCOURAGES MISSION WORK IN CONGREGATIONS, MID COUNCILS



For seven years the World Mission Initiative at Pittsburgh Theological Seminary has worked to

help congregations and mid councils look outside themselves into the world, and it will underscore that commitment at its upcoming spring mission conference. Scheduled for March 23-24, 2012, the gathering will bring together individuals, congregations, and mid councils to explore practical ways to look forward, said the Rev. Dr. Donald Dawson, director of the World Mission Initiative and the New Wilmington Mission Conference.

The hope is to help pastors, mission leaders, mission committee members, and others to “take away at least one thing that they could use in their church to help their church become more missional focused, more turned out toward the world,” he said. The Initiative, dedicated to developing mission vision, nurturing missionary vocations, and cultivating missional congregations, equips students for global mission. It also supports, educates, and encourages congregations, and its ongoing mission conference is the centerpiece of that work.

The conference averages about 300 participants, primarily from the Pittsburgh region, which includes nine Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) presbyteries. Plenary sessions, workshops, and fellowship time are included in the conference. Among those slated to give presentations at the 2012 conference are Hunter Farrell, the PC(USA)’s director of World Mission, and Urgessa Biru, founder of Ethiopia-focused Light of Hope Ministry. Dawson elaborated on the need for such an event, saying it’s critical to fulfilling the Christian church’s call. The Great Commission is the essential purpose of the church, he said. “The world is changing and we have to change with it,” says Dawson, noting that the conference theme is “A Relevant Church in a Changing World.”

He adds, “We are trying to help churches be reenergized around our essential task of serving others and taking the gospel to the world.”

Visit the WMI [website](#) for more information on the conference.



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