

ADMIN DIRECTOR TO STRENGTHEN COMMITMENT TO OVERSEAS PROGRAMS

On Nov., 1, the Rev. Dr. Brian Wells began serving as director of Pittsburgh Theological Seminary's Doctor of Ministry program. He brings to his new position decades of experience in pastoral leadership and in higher-educational administration.

He comes to PTS from his positions as provost and vice president of academic affairs as well as professor of theology at Simmons College of Kentucky, Louisville, and as pastor of the city's Westwood Presbyterian Church. But prior to filling these roles, Dr. Wells held a wide variety of leadership positions in Indianapolis. He served as assistant director of the Institute of Urban Ministry and chair of the division of religious studies at Martin University, whose mission consists in serving low-income, minority, and adult learners; dean of student affairs and instructor of religion and Bible at Baptist Bible College; field education supervisor at Christian Theological Seminary; president of Zion Hope Christian School; and adjunct professor at Butler University, as well as at Eastern University in Philadelphia. He has also served as a pastor at Baptist churches not only in Indianapolis but also in Louisville and in Asbury Park, New Jersey.



In commenting on his own pursuit of a doctor of ministry degree, Dr. Wells notes, "After significant experiences in both pastoral work and the academy, I wanted an academic experience at the doctoral level that would appeal to my dual interest in the church and academy. I have long been influenced by the concept of the pastor-scholar . . . [and] have tried to bridge the gap between church and academy by maintaining a theology consistent with academic rigor and relevance to the church." Dr. Wells sees the primary challenge for D.Min. programs as lying in "sufficient broadness for taking seriously the differences in global ministry contexts." He observes that "Too often D.Min. programs tend to operate from a 'one-size-fits-all' approach. But true diversity seeks to contextualize the program within the various target communities by drawing on theological practitioners that are immersed in those situations." Noting that Pittsburgh Seminary has done the latter "very well, including in overseas contexts," Dr. Wells will seek to strengthen and further this aspect of our D.Min. program.

An active leader in the community and denomination, as well as in the workplace, Dr. Wells has served with Partners in Urban Transformation, The African Speaker's Bureau, the Vision and Planning Committee of the Mid-Kentucky Presbytery, and the Presbyterian Multicultural Network. He has provided leadership as president of the Black National Caucus PCUSA-Louisville Chapter and as co-president of CLOUT—Citizens of Louisville Organized and United Together. In the academic sphere, he holds membership in the American Academy of Religion, the Karl Barth Society, and the Society for the Study of Black Religion.

Dr. Wells earned his undergraduate degree in pastoral studies from Indianapolis's Indiana Baptist College; a master's degree focusing on systematic theology from Grand Rapids Theological Seminary, as well as a master of divinity equivalency degree from United Theological Seminary in Trotwood, Ohio; and a doctor of ministry degree also from United Theological Seminary, where he wrote his dissertation on "Transforming a Congregation for the Future." He has done post-graduate work in England at Oxford University. Previously ordained in the Baptist tradition, he was ordained as a teaching elder in the Presbyterian Church USA in 2013.

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