

DON DAWSON LEADS WMI AND STUDENTS AROUND THE WORLD

Since 2000, the Rev. Dr. Don Dawson has been opening the global eyes of Pittsburgh Seminary students and others through the Seminary's World Mission Initiative. Don has relished the role of expanding both the educational and ministry aspects of WMI as 15-year director of this vital auxiliary program.

Educationally, Don has worked with the president, academic dean, and faculty to develop the missionally oriented church planting emphasis track within the master of divinity program, as well as to establish the Church Planting Initiative—a supporting PTS program that offers additional preparation for entrepreneurial, mission-minded Christian leaders ministering in non-traditional settings and ways. (CPI is directed by alumnus the Rev. Chris Brown '08.)



Bringing together the educational and ministry components of Don's work are the many short-term mission trips that Director Dawson and Associate Director the Rev. Jennifer Haddox '06 organize and lead every spring, summer, and fall. These trips give participants the opportunity to see firsthand how God is moving through the Church around the world and to participate in that work themselves.

For example, this year from the end of February through the first two weeks in March, Don will take seven PTS students to Nepal, where they will be hosted by a mega church that sees more than 1,000 worshipers at several services each week and that has planted 60 daughter churches. "We'll spend five days in a remote village working with one of those daughter churches," notes Don. "Students will have a remarkable opportunity to learn from people who've led this Christian movement in a closed Hindu nation where, 60 years ago, there were no Christians at all and it was illegal to be baptized." Today there are 1.5 million Christians in Nepal!

During the same time, Jen Haddox will lead a team in continuing a long-term WMI partnership with an unregistered church partner in Southeast Asia. Additionally, they will come alongside a small number of Christian leaders of an ethnic group with support and encouragement as these committed Christ-followers seek to share the Gospel with their people, considered unreached with the Good News.

Board of Directors member the Rev. Dr. Robert Weingartner '82 will take a third group to a destination new to WMI this year—Cuba. Don comments, "This new partnership comes at a timely moment as our two countries begin to break down more than 50 years of animosity." PTS students will join others from the Evangelical Theological Seminary in Matanzas for their weekend work in churches.

"It has been one of the greatest privileges of my life to have helped set more than 500 students and other WMI trip participants on the path to becoming world Christians," says Don. For more information about Don and Jen's work, the WMI program, and specific short-term mission trips, see <http://www.worldmissioninitiative.org/>.

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Pittsburgh Theological Seminary
616 North Highland Avenue
Pittsburgh, PA 15206
Phone: 412-362-5610



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