



“They began to relate their experiences on the road and how He was recognized by them in the breaking of the bread...”
(Luke 24:35, painting from Jesus de Mafa collection)?

Dear fellow mission leaders,

We were so grateful to our friends at Frontera de Cristo for allowing us to join in Coffee and Conversation in April to think together about mission in these changing times and for their permission to send you this invitation.

Our research among 1200 mission leaders of Protestant, Catholic and Evangelical local congregations—the lay or ordained people who serve on the church’s mission committee, lead the youth on mission trips, serve as the mission pastor or director, or guide the women’s circle into deeper engagement in mission—showed both a deep commitment to their work and a strong sense that they felt unprepared to respond to the complex challenges of local and global mission. Many felt isolated and are looking the chance to connect with other congregational mission leaders around the theology and “better practices” of short-term mission trips, financial grants, effective mission partnerships, intercultural communication, ethical considerations, mobilizing new mission leaders and strategies to care for children.

To respond to this urgent need, in February 2023 Pittsburgh Theological Seminary (PTS) is initiating a 16-month online program, the Graduate Certificate in Missional Leadership. The online program will include:

- Four courses (Introduction to Missional Leadership, Leading Congregations in Mission, an experience-based course on leading mission trips, and one elective of the participant’s choice, such as Urban Ministry, Contextual Analysis, Missional Theology of Leslie Newbigin, or others);
- Monthly online cohort gatherings with other mission leaders, Bala, and Hunter;
- Two on-campus retreats to build community and strengthen cohort members’ connections and networking skills.

We're writing to you as a congregational mission leader who might benefit from this program—as a mission committee member or chair, a mission pastor or director, a youth or women's leader. We invite you to consider joining the cohort of leaders for this online program. We're happy to talk with you personally and answer any questions you might have. Here's the link to request more information, including schedules, costs, and financial aid:

<https://www.pts.edu/certificate-missional-leadership>

To give you a flavor for some of the strategies and tools we'll offer in the program, here's a link to an article Hunter did for Presbyterian Outlook in February of this year on the "superpowers" every congregational mission leader possesses:

<https://pres-outlook.org/2022/03/five-hidden-superpowers-of-congregational-mission-leaders/>

We look forward to all God will do for the world and our church with a cohort of trained and encouraged leaders from Mr. Rogers' seminary!

With you in Christ,

Hunter Farrell & Balajiedlang Khyllap
World Mission Initiative
Pittsburgh Theological Seminary

Co-authors, Freeing Congregational Mission: A Practical Vision for Companionship, Cultural Humility & Co-Development (<https://www.freeingmission.com><<https://www.ivpress.com/freeing-congregational-mission>>)

P.S., If you know of others who might benefit from this program, would you kindly forward them this note? Thank you!



Mr. Rogers invites Officer Clemmons to share a cool moment at a time when public swimming pools in the U.S. were still segregated.