



Course of Study School of Ohio

www.cosohio.org

Term	Class Dates	Registration Deadline	Dorm Availability
2023 Fall	Sept. 15-16 & Oct. 13-14	<i>get in touch with Grace ASAP if you need late reg</i>	Hybrid: <u>Available each wkend</u>
2024 Winter	Feb. 16-17 & Mar. 17-18	12/18/23	Online term
2024 Spring	Apr. 12-13 & May 3-4	2/12/24	Online term
2024 Summer	July 12-13 & Aug. 2-3	5/13/24	Online term

FROM THE DIRECTOR

Let me welcome all of you, including three new students and one graduate, to the 2023 Summer 2-Week Term of the Course of Study School of Ohio (COSSO)!

There is an inseparable link between the presence and work of the Holy Spirit and the mission of the church. In the book of Acts, it is the Holy Spirit who keeps urging the church to move beyond its boundaries in its missional and evangelistic endeavor. One of the most significant events in Acts was the conversion of Cornelius—the first full-blown encounter between a Christian Jew and a Gentile, with significant implications for the future mission and evangelism of the early church. Here the issue was not the legitimacy of a Gentile mission, but the inclusion of Gentiles at the table-fellowship.

Throughout the whole incident, hospitality becomes and remains a pervasive and thorny issue. Clearly, the Cornelius story was about the social barrier to the Gentile mission. For the Jerusalem church to overcome such a barrier, Peter first had to experience a conversion, learning firsthand that “God shows no partiality” (Acts 10:34). Peter’s conversion then led to the conversion of the church from ethnocentrism to multiculturalism. According to Beverly Gaventa, “Indeed, in Luke’s account, Peter and company undergo a change that is more wrenching by far than the change experienced by Cornelius.”

Unfortunately, the church today is still faced with the same kind of challenge—to overcome its ethnocentrism and homogeneity and to reach people of different races, cultures, and economic classes. As Darrell Guder said, there is always a danger for the church to pursue “culturally exclusive forms of Christian witness and church formation.” However, authentic mission and evangelism invites believers to go beyond their comfort zone to meet and form a community with people who are different from them, confronting the prevailing homogeneous patterns of human relationships in society.

I hope that the courses we offer at COSSO would help you envision and pursue a community of faith that intentionally crosses boundaries—whether racial, cultural, or economic—established by society and communicates God’s redeeming love in Christ with genuine welcoming.

FROM THE DIRECTOR, cont.

All of us on the COSSO staff look forward to journeying with you this term, and pray for God’s continued guidance and blessings on your studies and ministry.

Peace,

Joon-Sik Park

Dr. Joon-Sik Park

*Director of the Course of Study School of Ohio
E. Stanley Jones Professor of World Evangelism
at MTSO*



2023 SUMMER GRADUATE— CONGRATULATIONS!



Michael Mitchell
West Ohio

MEET YOUR INSTRUCTORS

Rev. Dr. Wray Bryant

COS 121: Bible I: Introduction

Dr. E. Wray Bryant received his M.Div. from Trinity Lutheran Seminary and his Ph.D. in Hebrew Bible from the Southern Baptist Theological Seminary in Louisville. He is Assistant Professor of Religion at Capital University.



Rev. Dr. Steve Trefz

COS 124: Transformational Leadership

Dr. Trefz received his M.Div. and D.Min. from Garrett-Evangelical Theological Seminary. An ordained elder in the Dakotas Conference, he is Professor of Practical Theology and Director of the Wesley House of Study at Kairos University in Sioux Falls.



Rev. Dr. Brian White

COS 222: Theological Heritage II: Early Church

Dr. Brian K. White received his M.Div. from Asbury Theological Seminary and his D.Min. in Congregational Leadership from Garrett Evangelical Theological Seminary. A United Methodist Elder, he serves St. Mark's UMC in the Indiana conference.



Rev. Dr. Walter Taylor

COS 321: Bible III: Gospels

Rev. Dr. Taylor received his M.Div. from Lutheran Theological Seminary and his Ph.D. from Claremont University. A Lutheran pastor, he is emeritus professor of New Testament at Trinity Lutheran Seminary.



Rev. Dr. Don Dotterer

COS 522: Theology in the Contemporary Church

Dr. Donald W. Dotterer received both his M.Div. and Ph.D. in Theology and Philosophy of Religion from Boston University. He is a retired elder of the Western Pennsylvania Conference.



SPIRITUAL FORMATION

WHICH ONE ARE YOU?

My question is, which one are you? A human being or a human doing? We are called human beings, but when I look around, most people are usually "doing" not "being." So why aren't we called human doings? We are always "doing" something so there's very little time to just "be." The thing is, it is not an either/or question - we need to do and be. How do we balance the two when the life of a pastor seems to be nothing but work? We even work on the Sabbath (to share the Word of God), which sets us up for ignoring Sabbath rest (there's no time) and giving little attention to prayer (we do it during services, at hospitals, in emails, in the car). We're so busy doing, we forget about being, until something stops us (exhaustion, health issues, burnout).

This leads to another question: how do we stop and just "be" - be in prayer, be alone with God, in silence, in nature, whatever soothes our soul, slows our mind, and rests our body? Sure, God is in all things, but how do we go from doing to being where God is? Taking time off every week, every month, every year for personal retreat time is crucial for our mind, body and spirit. Being in silence, in prayer space refreshes and renews us for doing the familiar routine. Being in holy time reminds us that what we do is holy work but we cannot do any of it without being. And summer is a good time to start thinking about this. All I am suggesting is take some time to stop doing and start being. Give yourself permission to put God on the calendar, set aside time each day, each week, each month for God. No one will have the nerve to object and if they do, refer them to the Book of Discipline which states clearly that pastors will spend time in personal prayer, retreat, and devotion. That is our foundation for seeing the world as God sees it, for hearing what God is calling us to do, and we can only do that if we stop and be.

It's true that our personal day away or long vacations will not save us or the world, but we need the wisdom of holy time, of being still, to remind us that ours is a holy calling, and stepping away strengthens us for the leadership we need in these negative and volatile times. So, the question is not which one are you? The question is, what are you doing and when are you being, in order to follow the Gospel where you are in the here and now?

Rev. Dr. Rebeka Maples
Spiritual Formation Director



FROM THE COORDINATOR

Registration notes:

- 2023 Fall is meeting in a hybrid format. COS 121, 222, and 323 will meet in-person weekend 1. COS 424 and 522 will meet in-person weekend 2. Each class will meet on Zoom the weekend not in person.
- We are planning to meet in the same format in 2024, with the Winter, Spring, and Summer terms fully online and the Fall term hybrid

Students from 9 Annual Conferences are taking classes in the 2023 Summer 2-week term ↓



Grace Wallace
Coordinator



FROM THE CHOIR ROOM

As the old saying goes, "*the one who sings prays twice.*" We look forward to singing together again when we can safely do so in person.



Lori Douglas Weaver, MEd
Choir Director

