

## COURSE OF STUDY SCHOOL OF OHIO COS 423 Mission

June 21-22 and July 12-13, 2019

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This course introduces the theology and scope of mission, and the pastor's role in leading congregations in their mission as agents of God's transforming redemption.

Students will be able to:

1. Articulate a biblical and theological framework for Christian mission.
2. Explain the Wesleyan relationship of personal piety and social holiness.
3. Examine and reflect on unjust social realities and the response of the church locally and globally.
4. Analyze their ministry context and develop strategies for transforming mission.

The mission of the church is to serve God and neighbor by transmitting the Gospel for the redemption of the world. Redemption is God's holy activity that transforms individuals, societies and all of life. Each day will begin with reflection on scripture and our Wesleyan commitment to the poor.

### ***Required Reading***

King, Martin Luther, Jr., *Why We Can't Wait*, New York, Harper & Row, 1964.

Meeks, Doug (ed.), Chapter 1 of *The Portion of the Poor: Good News to the Poor in the Wesleyan Tradition*, Nashville, TN, Abingdon Press, 1995.  
(will be posted)

**The Book of Discipline of The United Methodist Church**, Nashville, The United Methodist Publishing House.

Robert, Dana, *Christian Mission: How Christianity Became a World Religion*, Chichester, U.K: Wiley-Blackwell, 2009. (Study guide will be posted.)

Miroslav Volf, *A Public Faith: How Followers of Christ Should Serve the Common Good*, Grand Rapids, Mich: Brazos Press, 2011. (Study guide will be posted.)

**Supplementary:** Theodore W. Jennings, *Good News to the Poor*

### **Class Schedule and Assignments**

#### **Reading Assignments for Writing Assignments and the First Weekend**

*Book of Discipline*, ¶101, ¶104, ¶122

*Why We Can't Wait*, pay special attention to Ch. 5 "Letter from a Birmingham Jail."

**Christian Mission: How Christianity Became a World Religion.**

**Scriptures:** Luke 4:14-30, Deuteronomy 26:1-15, Isaiah 58:1-14, Amos 5:18-24, Micah 4:1-4

**Assignments #1 & #2 for the 1st Weekend (To be sent to the instructor by June 14)**

**Write a 2 page paper (#1)** that first responds to crossing cultural boundaries as the key to the spread of Christianity as presented in the text **Christian Mission** and then examine what this means for the mission of the church today as a denomination and in the local church seeking to cross cultural boundaries?

**Write a 2 page paper (#2)** What do you learn from **Why We Can't Wait** for how the church can address social ills? What is the role of the church in the community and world to work for social justice? How do we lead individuals to claim their social responsibility? What does Jesus call us to? What support for your position do you find in scripture?

**Overview Week One:**

- ❑ The primary task of the church
- ❑ The role of the church in the community and world
- ❑ H. Richard Niebuhr's *Christ and Culture* Typology
- ❑ Mission as the crossing of cultural boundaries
- ❑ The primary task of the church
- ❑ Moving beyond individualism as persons in intersubjective community
- ❑ Congregation-Based Community Organizing
- ❑ How do we move from mercy to justice?

**Reading Assignments for Weekend Two**

*Book of Discipline*, ¶120–136, ¶ 201 – 204, ¶160-166

electronic copy of Chapter 1 of Meeks, Doug (ed.), *The Portion of the Poor: Good News to the Poor in the Wesleyan Tradition*, 20 pages

*A Public Faith*: pp ix – xvii (Introduction), pp. 3-21 and pp. 55-148

**Scriptures:** Luke 10:25-37, Acts 10:1-11:18, Romans 12, 2 Corinthians 5:16-21, Matthew 25:31-46

**Assignments #3 & #4 for the 2nd Weekend (To be sent to the instructor by July 10)**

**Write a 2 page paper (#3)**, that builds on Paper #1 and addresses how the church can make disciples and transform the world. The process described in ¶122 is called the primary task or core process. Briefly describe each aspect in practical terms in a flowing process that leads to mission and transformation. How can we lead congregations outside of themselves to serve? How does this process relate to the understanding that Christianity spreads through crossing cultural boundaries that we discussed in paper #1? How does the church need to cross cultural boundaries today?

**Write a 2 page paper (#4)** that builds on the foundation of Paper #2 in mainly in relation to A Public Faith. How does A Public Faith speak to the role of the church in the community and world to work for the common good? How can the church contribute to building social structures that are consistent with the gospel?

Choose one of the following two options to guide your use of A Public Faith in response to the 1<sup>st</sup> paragraph:

- a) How can the church operate in Volf's religious political pluralism, his alternative to both total secular exclusion and religious totalitarianism? The six points of religious political pluralism are laid out on page xv.

or

- b) How can we make plausible the claim that love of God and love of neighbor is the key to human flourishing? How can we claim the prophetic role of Christian communities: to engage to mend the world, to foster human flourishing, and to serve the common good?

As helpful to support your paper use concepts we have studied like: Person in Community, Reign of God, Holiness and Social Holiness, Moving from Mission to Justice, Congregation based organizing and other readings.

**A Quiz** to let students demonstrate learning will be given during class on **Saturday**. [It is not something to worry about. There will be a study guide and you will do alright.]

**Overview of Week Two:**

- ❑ Religious political pluralism that is centered in Christ and lives well with diverse faiths and people
- ❑ The Reign of God and our Wesleyan tradition of social holiness
- ❑ Building on the Wesleyan view of ministry with the poor
- ❑ Defining Mission in the Local Church

**Attendance, Participation and Grading**

Grades will be based on attendance, participation and assignments. Class participation showing engagement in the topic is expected. Attendance, participation and engagement will determine 20% of your grade. Assignments will constitute 80% of your final grade for the class. Grading will be based on articulation of the faith basis (biblical and theological) for the church's involvement in the world. Late assignments will not be accepted.