

COURSE OF STUDY SCHOOL OF OHIO

COS 423 Mission

April 17-18 and May 15-16, 2020
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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 "Wesley and the Poor" in *The Portion of the Poor: Good News to the Poor in the Wesleyan Tradition*, Nashville, TN, Abingdon Press, 1995. (No need to buy the book, "Wesley and the Poor" posted in Populi)

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 posted in Populi.)

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

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

Class Schedule and Assignments

Reading Assignments for Weekend One

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 (Due April 17 - posted in Populi in the Assignments section of the course page or sent by email to the instructor). Please consult the assigned readings.

Write a 2 page paper (#1) that first engages with 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 "Wesley and the Poor" 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 (Due May 12 - posted in Populi in the Assignments section of the course page or sent by email to the instructor)

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 1st 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?

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

Assignment #5, (Due May 23 - posted in Populi in the Assignments section of the course page or sent by email to the instructor)

Write a 2 page paper (#5) that presents a vision of the mission of the church, in the light of John Wesley's criterion of the "welfare of the poor" in interaction with his view of sanctifying grace and social holiness as presented in class. Engage with the biblical image of the reign of God or kin-dom of God as it guides our mission.

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.

ACADEMIC HONOR POLICY

The Course of Study School of Ohio requires that all material submitted by a student in fulfilling academic requirements must be the original work of the student.

Violations of academic honor include any action by a student indicating lack of integrity in academic ethics. Violations include, but are not limited to, cheating and plagiarism.

Cheating includes seeking, acquiring, receiving or passing on information about the content of an examination prior to its authorized release or during its administration. Cheating also includes seeking, using, giving or obtaining unauthorized assistance in any academic assignment or examination.

Plagiarism is the act of presenting the published or unpublished words or ideas of another [including online resources] as if it were one's own work. A writer's work should be regarded as his or her own property. Any person who knowingly (whether intentionally or unintentionally) uses a writer's distinctive work without proper acknowledgement is guilty of plagiarism.

A student found guilty of a violation of the academic honor code, after a review of the case, may be subject to one or more of the following actions:

- (1) warning
- (2) probation
- (3) suspension for the remainder of the course
- (4) dismissal from the Course of Study School of Ohio
- (5) failing grade for the course.

Regardless of the outcome, a letter will be sent to the student's district superintendent and Board of Ordained Ministry.