

## FROM THE DIRECTOR

**W**elcome to the 2020 Winter Term of the Course of Study School of Ohio (COSSO)!

For Christians the “desert” is not simply a place of physical barrenness and desolation. It is a place rich in spiritual significance. As found in the Scriptures, it was often in the desert that God encountered, formed, and transformed God’s people. As David Rensberger wrote, the gift of the desert is above all “solitude, the chance to be alone before God.” To be in “the desert . . . requires us to strip off all that is nonessential about ourselves.” It is in the solitude of the desert that we get “to know God through the loss of all that is false about ourselves and all that stands between us and our Creator.” It is in the desert that we learn to “remain attentive to God, [and] stay utterly dependent on God” (“Deserted Spaces” in *Weavings* 16/3 [2001]).

The United Methodist Church is now in a liminal space, that is, in the desert, with an uncertain future. No matter the outcome of the General Conference in May, the shape of The United Methodist Church would change considerably. Yet “now” should not be a time of despair or inactivity but an opportunity to rethink of and rediscover the church’s identity and purpose as God’s missionary community. Fully attentive to and utterly dependent on God, we are to seek our most truthful and creative responses to this time of inevitable change. We would need to continue to faithfully carry out our ministry, trusting in God’s sovereign faithfulness.

There is an important and exciting development for COSSO this year, to which I would like to call your attention. As announced, we have adopted a learning management system to enhance your learning experience. The program called Populi is user-friendly and covers both academics and online registration. Since January 15, all current COSSO students have been granted user access to Populi and now can register online for future courses! Let me take this opportunity to express my appreciation to Grace Wallace, COSSO Coordinator, for her hard and gifted work on setting up online registration and creating the course pages on Populi.

All of us on the COSSO staff are delighted to welcome you all—including fourteen new students and six graduating students—to the campus of MTSO. May God’s grace and continued guidance be with you through your COS journey in 2020.

Peace,

*Joon-Sik Park*

**Dr. Joon-Sik Park**

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



## FROM THE WRITING LAB

**“Do we have to cite our sources?”**

This question, when asked to an instructor assigning an essay, is usually accompanied with anxiety. When I think about why students are so anxious about citing the sources of information in their writing, I conclude that it must be related to the way citation has been generally taught to students. Citation of sources is accompanied with all kinds of unfamiliar terms that seem to refer to enormous and complex rules. For example, an instructor might respond to the aforementioned question with, “Yes, of course. Use the Chicago system, but not Chicago Author-Date, use the Chicago Note-Bibliography system.” An unfamiliar student is surely overwhelmed with talk of systems and windy cities. Indeed, the Chicago Manual of Style is an enormous book with page after page of rules and guidelines for citing sources. Perhaps some students assume that the instructor has such an expensive paper weight committed to memory and can spot the lone errant comma that should have been a period in the footnote. But the truth is that, while there are guidelines for every citation possibility, the student isn’t expected to know them all. The student only needs to understand why they exist so they can refer to the manual when they need to. Citation exists to help your writing by creating a framework for efficiently telling the reader which ideas belong to the author, and which ideas belong to other, outside authors. Many students feel anxious because they are uncertain when an idea should be cited to an author. The simple way to determine this is to ask yourself from a reader’s perspective, “Is it clear in my writing whose ideas belong to which authors?”



**Dr. Trad Noguiera-Godsey**  
*Writing Instructor*

### 2019 FALL GRADUATES

*(left to right) Chris Nelson, Carl Black, John Pajak, Cheryl Arnold, Mike Ramsey, Linda Slutz, Frank Zugaro Jr., Bob Greene, Mark Walus, Phil Rode*



## COSSO NEWSLETTER Volume 33 Winter 2020



## Course of Study School of Ohio

[www.cosohio.org](http://www.cosohio.org)

Term	Class Dates	Registration Deadline	Dorm Availability
2020 Spring	Apr. 17-18 & May 15-16	2/17/2019	FULL
2020 Summer	June 26-27 & Jul. 17-18	4/27/2020	1 room left
2020 Summer 2-Week	August 3-7 & 10-13	6/4/2020	OPEN
2020 Fall	Sept. 25-26 & Oct. 23-24	7/27/2020	FULL

## MEET YOUR PROFESSORS



### 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.

### Dr. Randy Litchfield

COS 123: Formation & Discipleship

Dr. Randy Litchfield received his Master of Religious Education from Anderson University School of Theology and his Ph.D. from Claremont School of Theology. He currently teaches Christian Education at MTSO.



### Rev. Dr. Paul Kim

COS 221 Bible II: Torah & Israel's History

Rev. Dr. Paul Kim received his M.Div. and Th.M. from Princeton Theological Seminary, and his Ph.D. from the Claremont School of Theology. A Presbyterian elder, he currently teaches Hebrew Bible at MTSO.

### Rev. Dr. Jeffrey Jaynes

COS 322 Theological Heritage III: Medieval-Reformation

Rev. Dr. Jeff Jaynes received an M.Div. from Fuller Theological Seminary and a Ph.D. from Ohio State University. A Presbyterian elder, he currently teaches Church History at MTSO.



### Dr. Yvonne Zimmerman

COS 424: Ethics

Dr. Yvonne Zimmerman received her M.T.S. from Candler School of Theology and her Ph.D. from Iliff School of Theology/ University of Denver. She is Associate Academic Dean and Associate Professor of Christian Ethics at MTSO.

### Rev. Dr. Britt Leslie

COS 521: Bible V: Acts, Epistles & Revelation

Rev. Dr. Britt Leslie received his Th.M. and Ph.D. from Lutheran School of Theology at Chicago. A United Methodist elder, he is currently Adjunct Professor of Biblical Studies at Manchester University in Indiana and South University in Georgia.



## SPIRITUAL FORMATION

### LET'S GET AWAY FROM IT ALL

The Christmas season is over and we are getting ready to head into another season of Lent, which will include more services and require more preparations. *Lord have mercy.* We've barely had time to recover since the New Year began. Perhaps, you were hoping for some down time to "get away" and relax a little or prepare COS assignments, and then more demands came – a funeral, a wedding or baptism, someone in the hospital, someone's mother died, someone in your family was ill, you got the flu, and the story goes on. The demands of ministry never end, they just change week to week, and there's never any time to relax, read, pray, and just "be." There's always something to "do" (besides write papers). *Christ have mercy.*

Ministry is like that – it always was and will be. Maybe no one has told you this but I'm telling you - ministry will suck the life out of you if you let it. *Lord have mercy.* Being a pastor is a non-stop job, lonely and isolating, but here you are and you now know it's not a 9-5 job. You won't know when to stop unless you stop. But God called you and you said "yes," and no one told you what kind of schedule you should have. And it is a blessing and you are a blessing, but you can't do this job without taking breaks, without pausing and praying and renewing your body, mind and spirit and getting away from it all. You must find ways to feed and renew your soul, and that will look different for each one of us. You must "get away" or you will surely burnout or fadeout or worse yet, dropout. But all is not doom and gloom – *Praise God.* You can take mini-breaks (half a day), mini-pauses (a few quiet minutes), a half hour walk or listen to music or take a nap. *Lord in your mercy.* Whatever you choose just do it, and then start planning a longer get away. The thing is, you need this, your church needs you to do this, in order to faithfully respond to God's call.

And one more thing. Getting away isn't wasting time, it's your responsibility, just as prayer is your responsibility, part of your job description as the spiritual leader of the church, and I'm not talking about praying at the hospital or in the car, I'm talking about quiet, set-aside intentional time with you and the One who called you. So, get the calendar out and make plans for "getting away from it all."

Joan Chittister talks about this in terms of those times when we are so weary that we actually think about leaving or quitting: "Why don't we just leave where we are, quit what we're doing and 'get away from it all'? Because we can't. Because it simply isn't possible." She goes on to say that "Getting away from it all is a myth. The purpose of life is to go where we need to go in order to get more of what our souls must have, in order to pour ourselves out again." (*from Welcome to the Wisdom of the World, Eerdmans*).

My prayer is that this year each of us will go where we need to go, so it won't be said that we burned out or dropped out, but that we took care of ourselves so we could pour ourselves out for the One who never stops calling us.

*Praise God from whom all blessings flow.*



Rev. Dr. Rebeka Maples  
Spiritual Formation Director

## FROM THE COORDINATOR

Here's a quick review of the past year:

	2019	2018
Students who took classes at MTSO:	221	228
Classes completed:	525	496
New students:	52	56
Graduates:	26	26

### Annual Conferences:

East Ohio, Greater New Jersey, Illinois Great Rivers, Indiana, Kentucky, Michigan, North Alabama, North Georgia, Rio Texas, Susquehanna, Upper New York, West Ohio, West Virginia, Western Pennsylvania, Wisconsin

### 2019 Enrichment Presentations:

Tim Van Meter, "Living Into the Hope of Creation"  
Ryan Schellenberg, "Care for Prisoners in Ancient Christianity"  
Randy Litchfield, "Calling, Ministry, and the Power of Place"  
Dee Stickley-Miner, "So What Do We Mean By Mission Anyways?"  
Linda L. Slutz, "Including Children with Autism in the Faith Community"  
Grace Wallace, "Introduction to Populi"

### In 2020:

We've started using Populi. So far, we've added 275 student users, received 40 online payments, and had 47 online registrations.

### COURSE PLANNING NOTE:

- ◆ For 2020 Spring, COS 423: Mission is FULL. COS 423 is next offered in the 2021 Winter & 2021 Summer 2-Week terms.
- ◆ For 2020 Fall, COS 324 is FULL. COS 324 is also offered in the 2020 Summer 2-Week & 2021 Winter terms.



Grace Wallace  
Coordinator

## FROM THE CHOIR ROOM

As the old saying goes, "*the one who sings prays twice.*" All are invited to join our COS choir. The ability to read music is optional.

Rehearsal is **Saturday morning 7:30-7:45 AM** in the choir room (off the Centrum). We perform one song during the Eucharist Service before lunch that same day. Bring your voice, brass, woodwind, string and percussion instruments as we make a joyful noise. If you would like the music ahead of time, please send me an email at <[LDouglass@mtso.edu](mailto:LDouglass@mtso.edu)>.



Lori Douglas Weaver, MMEd  
Choir Director