

## FROM THE DIRECTOR

Let me welcome all of you, including six new students and fifteen graduating students, to the 2022 Fall Term of the Course of Study School of Ohio (COSSO)!

We are excited to offer fall term classes in a hybrid format and to welcome you back to our campus!

The Covid pandemic—which has claimed almost six and a half million lives globally and over a million lives in the US—continues to pose a great health challenge to us and disrupt many areas of our life. Writing for this column two years ago, I introduced H. Richard Niebuhr’s war articles published during World War II. Grappling with how to understand God’s relationship to the tragic events of war, Niebuhr argued that to discern and attend to God’s presence and action in history would be the first step toward constructing an appropriate and faithful human response.

Niebuhr’s insights into the interpretation of a tragic event reminds us that its greater burdens often fall on “the weak” and “the needy.” Thus, in such a time as this, it should be an important part of the mission of the church to seek to alleviate human suffering, especially the suffering of “the vulnerable,” both locally and globally.

I am fully aware that there are differing viewpoints on the COVID-19 vaccine, sometimes causing acute tension between relationships. Yet, I would like to invite our COS community to see COVID-19 vaccination as an expression of our neighbor love and of our caring for “the most vulnerable.”

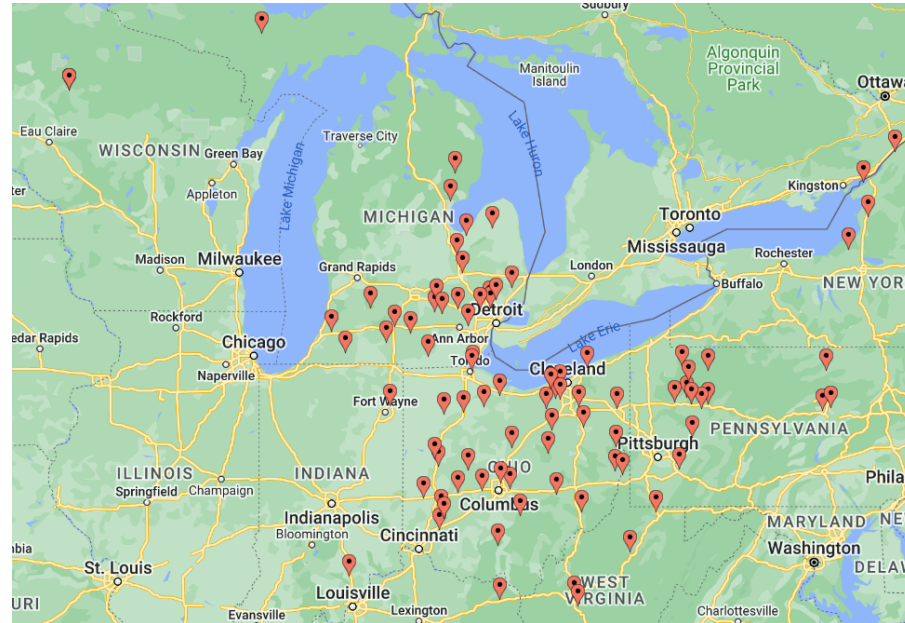
Let me take this opportunity to express my deep appreciation to the COSSO faculty for their willingness to convert their classes into a hybrid format and to the staff for their commitment to provide needed support in a timely manner. I hope that all of us—students, faculty, and staff—would be patient and generous with each other while adjusting to a new mode of learning and readjusting to engaging with one another in person.

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## FROM THE COORDINATOR

### COURSE PLANNING NOTES:

- Registration is open for all 2023 classes now. You can find the course planning grid [here](#) to help plan your classes.
- [A draft of the schedule for the 2022 Fall term is posted here](#)
- Students from 10 Annual Conferences are taking classes this 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 soon: COS choir is still on hiatus as we adjust to returning to meeting in-person.



Lori Douglas Weaver, MMEd



## COSSO NEWSLETTER

Volume 47  
Fall 2022



## Course of Study School of Ohio

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

Term	Class Dates	Registration Deadline	Dorm Availability
2023 Winter	Feb & Mar 17-18 (makeup dates 24-25)	12/16/22	Available
2023 Spring	April 14-15 & May 5-6	2/14/23	Available
2023 Summer (COS 324 is FULL)	June 16-17 & July 7-8	4/18/23	Available
2023 Summer 2-Week	July 31-August 11	6/1/23	Available



## 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. Tom and Rev. Jonathan Hanover**  
COS 124: Transformative Leadership

Rev. Dr. Tom Hanover earned both his M.Div. and D.Min. from United Theological Seminary. A retired UM elder, he served the West Ohio Conference as a District Superintendent from 2001 to 2008.

Rev. Jonathan Hanover received his M.Div. and D.Min. from United Theological Seminary. A UM elder, he serves Kenton First UMC in the West Ohio Conference.



**Rev. Dr. Brian K. White**  
322: Theological Heritage III: Medieval-Reformation

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

**Rev. Dr. Joe Thomas**  
COS 423: Mission

Dr. Joe Thomas received his M.Div. from Covenant Theological Seminary and his Ph.D. in Systematic Theology from St Michael's College of the University of Toronto. A priest in the Global Anglican Communion, he is a chaplain at St. Rita's Mercy Medical Center in Lima and has served a UMC Church in West Ohio.



**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

### COMING TOGETHER

Welcome to Fall term! This is our first time on campus since February 2020! It might not seem like much to some but it sure has created a lot of anxiety for me, and I have been wondering, why? We've been on campus before, we've gathered in the Centrum and attended classes in Werner Hall, and eaten meals in the Dining Hall, and some of us have slept in the Dorm. What am I nervous about?

Well, let's see – a pandemic, social distancing and masking, vaccines and boosters, shut downs and working from home, not to mention Zooming. Then there's political polarization on every topic under the sun, which reminds me of climate warming, flooding, droughts, wildfires and extreme heat warnings. And what about war and bombing nuclear plants? Okay, okay, you know all that, and so do I. We have been through anxiety-filled times and some of the stress and tension is still with us. So, coming together is bound to make us nervous, and excited.

Most churches have already gone back to in-person worship, and most protocols on group gatherings have been lifted, except at medical buildings. And here we are back on campus with many of those familiar requirements and guidelines. That's because the virus is still with us. People are still getting sick or dying from Covid, and even though we may be tired of it, the virus isn't tired. It is still spreading. So, you see, going back to campus makes me nervous, not because of gathering as one Body in one place, but because of what we cannot see. Okay, okay, you know all that, and so do I. So while I cope with my nervous excitement, I pray that coming together will make us more vigilant and more patient with each other and with prayer.

God has given us the will and the knowledge to do all we can to protect ourselves physically and to grow spiritually, and I am convinced we can do that in-person or in virtual space. We have gone from worshipping in sanctuaries to following services online, sharing communion and debating whether it is possible for God to bless elements in cyberspace. We have heard the beauty of voices singing in person and in virtual choirs. Now, we are preparing to do both in one service, with half of us gathered in the Centrum and half watching on Zoom. In all of these places, I have felt and believe that we are part of One Body, the body of Christ, and that God is always in the midst of us, wherever we are gathered, nervous or not.

Maybe I am a little nervous (and a little excited) about being back on campus because I am thinking about being blessed by the passion and love that you, as COS students and Local Pastors, bring to your ministry. It not only blesses your churches but it blesses the rest of us as well, and I am just a little eager to receive that blessing. When I think of the difference you are making in your ministry, I think how trifling and unimportant are the things about which I worry, compared with the wonder and glory of the faith you bring, faith which could transform the whole world if we would worry less about what might happen and focus more on the joy of being part of One Body.

May God bless us with peace-filled hearts, minds and bodies as we come together,

**Rev. Dr. Rebeka Maples**  
*Spiritual Formation Director*



## FROM THE DIRECTOR *continued*

All of us on the COSSO staff prayerfully look forward to journeying with you this fall. May God's grace, guidance, and strength continue to be with you and your congregations in times like these.

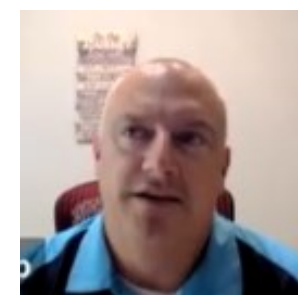
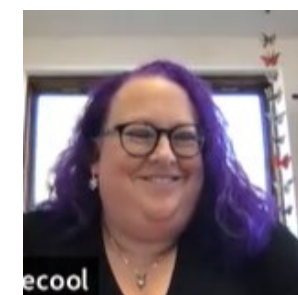
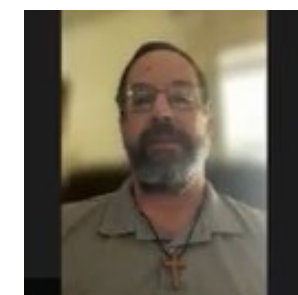
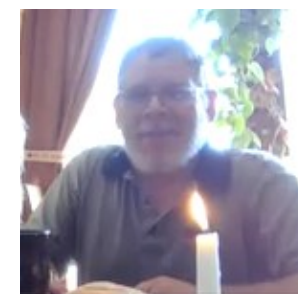
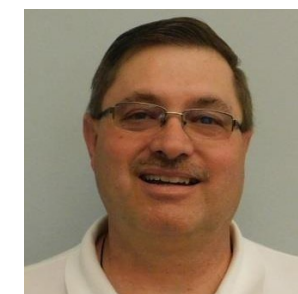
Peace,

**Dr. Joon-Sik Park**

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



## 2022 SUMMER 2-WEEK GRADUATES— CONGRATULATIONS!



L-R, top row: Derwood "Bud" Davis (Western Pennsylvania), Rick Foster (Michigan), and Ed Rodarmel (Susquehanna)

L-R, bottom row: John Sowers (West Ohio), Christy Suffecool (East Ohio), and Kenny Walkup Jr (Michigan)