



Course of Study School
of Ohio

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	June 16-17 & July 7-8	4/18/23	Available
2023 Summer 2-Week	July 31-August 11	6/1/23	Available

FROM THE DIRECTOR

Let me welcome all of you, including eight new students and six graduating students, to the 2022 Summer 2-Week Term of the Course of Study School of Ohio (COSSO)!

H. Richard Niebuhr has been very formative in my theological development. I believe that his contribution to the theological and ethical thinking of the church in North America is as significant as any other twentieth-century theologians including his older brother Reinhold Niebuhr. Richard Niebuhr’s theological reflections, including those on the church and its mission, were profoundly theocentric. His radical monotheism was grounded in his understanding of God as both the principle of being and the principle of value: it is from God that the whole of creation derives its being and it is on God that every creature depends for its significance.

For Niebuhr, radical monotheism inevitably leads to universal acceptance of the value of all beings. “Monotheism is less than radical,” writes Niebuhr, “if it makes a distinction between the principle of being and the principle of value; so that while all being is acknowledged as absolutely dependent for existence on the One, only some beings are valued as having worth for it” (*Radical Monotheism and Western Culture*, 32). Since God is the principle of both being and value, every being has value in relation to God and is worthy of love.

Niebuhr also presents faith as a structure encompassing three closely linked elements: believing, trust, and loyalty. Thus, “where there is . . . no trust, there can be no believing, and there can be no trusting where there is no loyalty” (“The Triad of Faith,” 6). Faith in God is to be expressed as both trust in and loyalty to God. Furthermore, faith as loyalty is to be directed not only to the One who is the principle of being, but also to the One’s cause which is the realm of being. In the context of radical monotheistic faith, the scope of mission becomes as broad as the whole of creation, since whatever is, is good as part of the realm of being whose origin is in God. Christian mission then could be understood as embodying loyalty to God’s cause with unreserved trust and confidence in God as the value-center.

I hope that your theological education at the Course of Study School of Ohio would help you develop an integral ecclesiology, a holistic understanding of the nature and purpose of the church, which embraces the full scope of mission as broad as the whole of creation.

FROM THE DIRECTOR *continued*

Our classes will continue to be offered fully online through the Summer Two-Week Term this year. We hope to return to in-person classes in a hybrid format starting with the Fall Term.

All of us on the staff of the Course of Study School of Ohio look forward to journeying with you this summer!

Grace and 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



2022 SPRING GRADUATES—
CONGRATULATIONS!



Carl Hetler
(Indiana Conference)



and Jason Snyder
(East Ohio Conference)

MEET YOUR INSTRUCTORS



Rev. Dr. Sarah Lancaster

COS 122: Theological Heritage I: Introduction

Dr. Sarah Lancaster received her M.Div. from Perkins School of Theology and her Ph.D. from Southern Methodist University. An elder in the North Texas Annual Conference, she is Professor of Theology at MTSO.

Rev. Dr. Paul Kim

COS 221: Bible II: Torah and Israel's History

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 is Professor of Hebrew Bible



Dr. Brad Binau

COS 323: Congregational Care

Dr. Brad Binau received his M.Div. from Trinity Lutheran Seminary and his Ph.D. from Princeton Theological Seminary. He is Professor of Pastoral Theology at Trinity Lutheran Seminary.

Rev. Dr. Don Dotterer

COS 324: Preaching

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.



Rev. Dr. Mark Powell

COS 521: Bible V: Acts, Epistles, and Revelation

Dr. Mark Allan Powell received his M.Div. from Trinity Lutheran Seminary and his Ph.D. from Union Theological Seminary in Virginia. He is retired Professor of New Testament at Trinity Lutheran Seminary.

Rev. Dr. Jason Vickers

COS 524: Theological Reflection: Practice of Ministry

Dr. Jason Vickers received his M.Div. from Nazarene Theological Seminary and his Ph.D. from Southern Methodist University. He is Professor of Theology at Asbury Theological Seminary



SPIRITUAL FORMATION

GOD BLESS YOU!

Well, Pentecost is over and Trinity Sunday too, now what? Do we just sit around in Ordinary Time waiting for All Saints Day or Advent so we can celebrate God's divine presence again? Somehow, we have been programmed to think that God's presence requires tongues of fire or flashing lights, in order for us to experience the Spirit of God and to know that God is real. Of course, Pentecost celebrations are important and even necessary for our spiritual growth as Christians, it's just that when we are back in Ordinary time (which is most of the time), we start asking, where is God? Why has God abandoned us? Even though we know in our heart of hearts that God is always with us, we need reminders because we still ask the questions. We still feel the emptiness, especially with so much pulling at our heart strings, so much negativity, chaos and violence all around. And yet, God is still with us, God does not abandon us.

Joan Chittister tells a story that reminds me of how quickly we lose sight of God's presence: "Three-year-old Tommy was agitated and insisted on being alone with his infant brother. He was so intent on it that his parents were worried. Was it love or was it jealousy? Would he hurt the baby if he were left alone with him? So they set up a baby monitor by the crib and left the room. Sure enough, as soon as he was alone with the baby, Tommy went straight to the crib, shook the baby awake and said, 'Eddie, I'm your big brother Tommy. I want you to tell me what God looks like. You know because you just came from there but I'm three now and I'm beginning to forget'...." (paraphrase from Joan Chittister: Essential Writings, Orbis, 2014).

Is our awareness of God's presence just a thing of the past – here today, gone tomorrow? Yet, God is with us, no matter what we face or what is going on in the world. God is there, holding the dying, comforting the crying, giving hope where there is none. We remind each other of this when we say "God bless you; God help them; God, be with you." Even in the midst of hate and divisiveness, when cursing is more common than blessing, we offer these words to remind each other what God looks like. God looks like front line workers, soldiers, police officers, teachers, three-year-old children, and you and me.

Maybe if we keep saying these words often enough in ordinary time, we will remember God's presence inside and outside of holy days and formal worship time. Maybe we will keep hope alive even in a time when it is harder and harder to hold onto it. Maybe the Spirit will still rush through like a mighty wind and remind us of the presence of holiness right here, right now, right where we are. May we never forget what God looks like.

God bless you!

Rev. Dr. Rebeka Maples
Spiritual Formation Director



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.
- The 2022 Fall Course of Study term will meet in a split hybrid format—with COS 121, 124, and 322 meeting in-person Sept 16-17 and COS 423 and 521 meeting in-person October 14-15. Each class will meet for 4 hours on Zoom the weekend that it is not meeting in-person (Friday 7-9 pm and Saturday 9-11 am) and will have 6 hours of asynchronous work on Populi. [A draft of the schedule for the term is posted here](#)
- **If you've recently moved**, please send me your new address or update it on Populi, and let me know if you change districts

Students from 13 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 again in 2022 Fall!



Lori Douglas Weaver, MEd
Choir Director

