

“STILL BUILDING COMMUNITY”
Celebrating Graduation & Finding Community in Communion

PRELUDE **“Victory in Jesus”** **UMH #370**
<https://youtu.be/MgOSMd6qxhA>, recorded by Pastor Lori Douglas Weaver,
COS music director

WELCOME

Greeting from Grace Wallace, COS Coordinator
Introduction from Rev Dr Rebeka Maples, Spiritual Director
(participants on Zoom are invited to have some bread and drink ready for communion)

OPENING RESPONSES

Leader: To Pharisees minding their business,
 and fishers mending their nets:

ALL: JESUS SAID, ‘FOLLOW ME.’

Leader: To the money-handlers, the lawyers,
 the intellectuals, the power-brokers:

ALL: JESUS SAID, ‘FOLLOW ME.’

Leader: To the care takers and the cleaners,
 the married, the single,
 the young and the old,
 in the cities and rural areas:

ALL: JESUS SAYS, ‘FOLLOW ME.’

Leader: Then and now,
 together and apart,
 willing or doubting,
 ready or not,

ALL: JESUS SAYS, ‘FOLLOW ME!’

OPENING AFFIRMATION (*adapted from “An Act of Commitment,” The Iona Community,
Wild Goose Publications/www.ionabooks.com, 2017*)

Leader: We believe and trust in God
 who has created and is creating,
 who has come in Jesus –
 the Word made flesh –
 and who works in us and others
 by the power of the Spirit.

**ALL: We are called to be the church:
to celebrate God’s presence,
to live with respect for creation,
to love and serve others,
to seek justice and resist evil,
to proclaim Jesus, crucified and risen,
our hope in life and death.
God is with us. Thanks be to God.**

SONG “I Have Decided to Follow Jesus” (v 1 & 2)

TFWS #2129

Using Hymnary.org's FlexPresent tool: <https://my.hymnary.org/flexpresent-preview/>

SCRIPTURE Genesis 12:1-3; Genesis 22:1-2; Matthew 28:18-20

REFLECTION "GO, GO, GO!"

REV. DR. E. WRAY BRYANT

teaches COS 121: Bible I Introduction; 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.

SONG "I Have Decided to Follow Jesus" (v 3)

TFWS #2129

Using Hymnary.org's FlexPresent tool: <https://my.hymnary.org/flexpresent-preview/>

BLESSING OF GRADUATES

WORDS OF REFLECTION

FROM OUR GRADUATES:

BRIAN CARROLL, Western Pennsylvania Conference

CARMEN COOK, Michigan Conference

DAN EGGAN, East Ohio Conference

FROM REV. DR. JOON-SIK PARK, Director of COSSO

Director: The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ be with you.

ALL: And also with you.

Director: Let us pray together:

Eternal God, by your grace you have brought us together in your Church, which is the body of Christ. Grant your continuing grace to all who are called to leadership in your Church, that they may with diligence and faithfulness fulfill their ministries; and grant that we your people may follow where you lead, and serve you faithfully in the world; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

Director: Who is presented for graduation?

Coordinator: BRIAN CARROLL, CARMEN COOK & DAN EGGAN are presented for graduation from the Course of Study.

Director: Let us offer them our blessings and prayers:

(over each graduate)

In the name of Almighty God, our Creator, Redeemer, and Sustainer, we celebrate your graduation from the Course of Study. We commend you to your ministry as a Local Pastor in The United Methodist Church and pledge our continued prayers.

Spiritual Director:

May the Holy Spirit strengthen and guide you, that in all things you may do God's will in service to the church, in the name of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.

COS Coordinator:

Our congratulations and prayers go with you. Your certificate and gift for graduation will be sent to you.

Director: I invite everyone to offer your prayers and blessings for our graduates.

(you may type your prayer in Chat)

COS Coordinator:

Let us pray together,

Gracious God, we thank you for calling faithful servants to be Local Pastors in your

Church. We humbly place these graduates in your care. Give them courage, patience, and vision, and bless them with caring communities; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

Director: And now, remember your call. Preach the Good News. Shepherd the flock of Christ. And in all things, give God the glory, now and always.

In the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, I declare that you have graduated from the Course of Study.

(everyone unmutes themselves to cheer with gusto)

GRADUATION SONG **“Here I Am, Lord”** **(v 1 &3)** **UMH #593**
https://youtu.be/L_HnkYAwjy4, recorded & played by Pastor Lori Douglas Weaver

COMMUNION FOR CORONA TIMES

(parts adapted from “Leaderless Eucharist,” by Annie Heppenstall, Wild Goose Publications/ www.ionabooks.com, 2006)

This service is intended for leadership to be shared in ‘ordinary’ settings where everyone is free to share thanksgiving with confidence, drawing from scripture (Galatians 3:28-29), using a structure of traditional worship. The elements may be bread/crackers and any type of drink, to represent Jesus’ presence at all our meals. There is no one special prayer or particular sacred act that can only be enacted by ordained clergy. All words, all actions, are intended to be shared among the group. (For Zoom Worship, bread and drink are made ready in our own space.)

Leader: We are One community with one God,
we are brothers and sisters together,
shoulder to shoulder with all people and with all life.
God has welcomed each of us just as we are.
We give thanks that we are part of God’s community,
included in God’s love,
blessed by the Holy Spirit,
welcomed by Jesus into the church,
invited to draw close
and to share in the gift of eternal life.

Leader: We remember the Last Supper which Jesus shared with his followers, on the night before he died. And as they ate, he took a loaf of bread and gave thanks. He broke it, and gave the bread to them, saying, “Take, this is my body.”
(lifts up the bread, breaking it)

**ALL: THE BODY OF JESUS GIVEN FOR US.
 MAY HIS LIFE LIVE ON IN OUR LOVE.**

Leader: Then he took a cup, and after giving thanks he gave it to them, and they all drank. He said that the wine was his blood, sealing the bond of forgiveness between God and humanity.
(lifts the cup)

**ALL: THE BLOOD OF JESUS GIVEN FOR US.
 MAY HIS LIFE LIVE ON IN OUR LOVE.**

Leader: Spirit of God be around us and within us,
whisper over these gifts that they may remind us of your presence with us and feed our spiritual hunger.
God of us all, may your name be respected as holy.
May your kingdom come,
may your Holy Spirit overcome us and guide us.

Give us each day enough bread for tomorrow,
and forgive us our sins as we forgive others.
Spare us from temptation and keep us away from evil. **AMEN.**

**ALL: JESUS TOLD HIS FOLLOWERS TO REMEMBER HIM BY SHARING BREAD AND WINE.
WE REMEMBER HIS LIFE, DEATH AND RESURRECTION.**

(Distribution: sharing bread and drink at a distance)

Leader: We eat and give thanks. *(all eat their bread)*
We drink and remember. *(all drink)*

Leader: Let us give thanks,

**ALL: GOD AMONG US, THANK YOU FOR GIVING US OUR DAILY BREAD.
THANK YOU FOR GIVING US JESUS TO SHOW US THE WAY TO NEW LIFE.
ASK MUCH OF US, EXPECT MUCH FROM US.
ENABLE MUCH BY US, ENCOURAGE MANY THROUGH US,
SO WE MAY LIVE AS CITIZENS OF EARTH AND HEAVEN. AMEN.**

BLESSING

Leader: Now may God, who blesses us at baptism,
Calls us and empowers us through life,
Send us out to proclaim God's goodness. **AMEN.**

PRELUDE "When We All Get to Heaven" UMH #701
<https://youtu.be/Y4s0kUhvBUk>, recorded & played by Lori Douglas Weaver

COURSE OF STUDY SCHOOL OF OHIO
Methodist Theological School in
Ohio



*COSSO GRADUATION
SUMMER 2020*

BRIAN CARROLL
(WESTERN PENNSYLVANIA CONFERENCE)

What Church(es) do you serve? Tell us something about your congregation:

I serve The Greater Purpose Team Ministry consisting of six churches in the Mon Valley south of Pittsburgh in Washington and Greene Counties - Roscoe UMC of Roscoe, Howe UMC of Long Branch, Saint Paul-Denbo UMC of Denbo, Fredericktown UMC of Fredericktown, Jefferson UMC of Jefferson, and Rices Landing UMC of Rices Landing. These six churches are very loving and accepting congregations. The parish was formed with the idea that none could continue on their own, but together they could support one another with the stronger churches adding more to the pastor's salary pool. It has worked well, but all of the churches have been hurt somewhat for various reasons, and attendance has struggled. I am the PTLP, and I have a new senior pastor (FTLP) since July 1. We utilize a team of lay speakers from our churches to cover two churches each Sunday, and we rotate weekly doing two sermons every Sunday. Attendance was down somewhat anyway, and then came Covid-19. Most of our congregations are elderly, with one church losing most of their men; they have eight widows and two most active gentlemen with serious health issues. We do have a strong Missions program, but distance hinders the gathering for many of our programs. The congregations will participate financially, and that is a great help. Our individual congregations work hard within their own churches, and each will continue to the best of their ability, with the help of the Holy Spirit, to glorify and serve God for the glory of the kingdom.

Tell us something about your family:

I have been employed since September 2019 with UPMC hospitals as second level IT support for the Office of Academic Computing (Pitt faculty and research).

My wife (38 years): Debbie is a housewife and part time janitor at my home church where I grew up, in Beallsville, PA (Beallsville UMC).

Oldest grandson, Christian Culp: 14 years old and has lived with us since he was 2 weeks old. He will be a freshman at California Area High School this fall, but is currently spending the summer with his mother and family.

Three daughters:

Wendy Encapera: lives in Winchester, VA (Stephens City), just relocated there roughly 6 weeks ago, works for Winchester Medical as a lab technician, married (Jesse) and two children (Ava and Nicolas).

Christina Maglet: lives in Richeyville, PA, is a mother of three (Christian, Kirstin, and Donald III), a housewife and couponing hobbyist, and married to Donald.

Jennifer Christopher: lives in Mapletown, PA, works for a home health care agency, married to Butch with two children (Austin and Aiden).

When did you begin COS?

I began COS in the Spring of 2010, and I have only attended MTSO at the Delaware Campus.

Please describe a highlight of your COS experience:

It's been exciting to further my knowledge and education for the purpose of ministry to glorify our Lord for the benefit of the kingdom. It has also been a great experience meeting all the students and faculty and administration that have contributed to the successes I have experienced.

What words of wisdom do you have for those you are leaving behind?

Never give up, and if you get stuck remember to utilize your mentor, instructor, and even other classmates. Never get discouraged. I chose a slow path because I was working a full-time secular job which changed twice during my time. Once I was forced to withdraw from two of my classes and also to only take one the following year deviating from my plan of two classes a year. It seemed so far away to reach completion, but here I am. I took the advice of my mentor, and even though I thought I could not handle it, I took three classes one year to speed up my process and get me to where I am now. Keep Jesus as the center of your focus, and be patient. God does work in mysterious ways, and He will help you to achieve your goal if you remain focused and never give up!

CARMEN COOK
(MICHIGAN CONFERENCE)

What Church(es) do you serve? Tell us something about your congregation:

I am honored to serve at First United Methodist Church in Gladwin, MI as their pastor. This church is growing and even thriving and I am very proud of them as we are discovering what it means to truly worship God in these interesting days.

Tell us something about your family:

My family consists of my husband, Todd, and our four-legged "Child", Caesar. Both of them have vital roles in ministry. My husband works with prisoners as they come out of the system; and the Child goes to work with me and even to some services where he greets and loves on people. My mother has now moved to Gladwin and I am blessed to have her in my church and to be with me on a daily basis.

When did you begin COS?

I began COS at United and in Delaware in either 2014 or 2015 - it's been so long, I can't remember!

Please describe a highlight of your COS experience:

I have been blessed and challenged by all of the professors during COS. I have not always agreed with them, but I have been sharpened and have learned. There is one professor though that taught me a great deal about being a pastor. Rev. Rand, Preaching Professor, not only helped to sharpen me as a preacher but taught me about a pastor's heart. I am forever grateful for this man who took time to speak words of wisdom, pray for me, and listen to my concerns. He did more than teach preaching techniques. Thank you.

What words of wisdom do you have for those you are leaving behind?

These days are difficult and challenging - in the world and in our denomination. Don't quit!!! For such a time as this the Lord has called you. I know you are tired and stressed but I also know the Lord who has called you. You can do this because it is not by your strength! Stand firm and finish the race. If I don't see you again here on earth, I'll be looking for you around the throne where we will worship the One who has saved us.

May the Lord bless and keep you and use you in mighty ways as you discover the "more" that we are all called to be.

DAN EGGAN
(EAST OHIO CONFERENCE)

What Church(es) do you serve? Tell us something about your congregation:

I entered ministry in 2010 and have been serving my two churches in east-central Ohio since 2016- Fresno UMC and Isleta UMC. Both churches are mostly rural, small town churches. Together, I serve about 125 members, the congregations favor the more mature end of the spectrum but they are very active in the ways they care for their community. Fresno houses Martha's Cupboard which offers non-food, home and personal hygiene items to the needy. It has grown to become one of four significant outreach ministries in the county. Isleta has adopted Martha's Cupboard as their main ministry to support and that really warms my heart. Prior to going into ministry in 2010, I taught biology for 35 years in the school district that my churches are in. I have many former students and parents of former students in my congregations, so I came to them as a known entity which I think is pretty unique. Both congregations have been incredibly supportive and I know that is such a blessing for me.

Tell us something about your family:

I have been married to my high school sweetheart for 45 years and we dated 5 years before that. We have two adult children: son Nate who is an electrical engineer in Columbus, and Amber who is an RN in Cleveland. Nate and his wife Dori have blessed us with three beautiful granddaughters: Abby 10, Lizzy 5, and Elly 2.

When did you begin COS?

I began the Course of Study in the spring of 2011. All but two of my classes have been at MTSO, the other two were at United in Dayton. I was able to pick up a couple of classes there that I was not able to get at the time at MTSO.

Please describe a highlight of your COS experience:

In some ways, I have been going to school for 63 of my 68 years of life, so I suppose I am ready to be done. Truly though, I will miss coming down and having the interaction with fellow pastors, seeing friends I only see here, sharing our lives and ministry at dinner, the meaningful worship that was always structured just for us. I can truly say, I took away some nugget or tool from every class and this experience has shaped me into a far more effective pastor. Had we been on campus for graduation, I would have asked if we could sing, "It Is Well" one more time. To hear all those voices singing in heartfelt harmony echoing within the sanctuary was always something really special!

What words of wisdom do you have for those you are leaving behind?

I have told many people, if I didn't have to take these courses, I wouldn't have. But if I wouldn't have taken these courses, I would never be as effective a pastor as I am. MTSO has chosen wonderful instructors who in my educational experience have been very practical in their expectations, and in every class I have come away better equipped for ministry than when I started the class. I would encourage all to embrace the experience and find that nugget of information from each class that you can add to your toolbox.

I really would like to thank the MTSO family, Rev Rebeka and the worship team, Grace and the administrative team for making my experience at MTSO a very rewarding one.