



Let me welcome all of you, including thirteen new students and two graduates, to the 2026 Spring Term of the Course of Study School of Ohio (COSSO)!

I hope that you and your congregation had a blessed and glorious Easter!

In an essay entitled “Discernment on the Way to Emmaus: Resurrection Imagination and Practices in Luke 24:13–35” (*Journal for Preachers* 20:2 [Easter 1997]: 44–49), New Testament scholar Stan Saunders describes well how exceedingly difficult the act of seeing clearly is. As the disciples at first could not recognize the risen Lord in their midst, we also often fail to discern God’s life-giving presence in our life together and ministry.

What Saunders stresses is the need for us to cultivate and nurture a “resurrection imagination,” which is rooted in and shaped by Jesus’ life, ministry, and crucifixion. Such imagination enables us to discern and witness the presence of Jesus and signs of resurrection in our midst as well as in our ministry context. Without a “resurrection imagination,” Christians and churches will “inevitably become blinded by the ‘realities’ of this world” with their capacities of discernment severely limited and dulled. However, faithful Christian witness requires seeing clearly and proclaiming boldly that the resurrected Lord now reigns, and not the principalities and powers of this world.

I hope that the classes you take at the COSO will help you cultivate and nurture the capacity to see and discern clearly, asking deeper questions and authentically embracing your call to ministry.

As announced, Ms. Grace Wallace is leaving the COSO to become the Registrar at Methodist Theological School in Ohio. She has served as the COSO Coordinator since 2019, with professional excellence and steadfast dedication to both the COS program and students. She has been a great gift to all of us and will be dearly missed. I am deeply grateful for her years of faithful and committed service. Please join me in wishing God’s blessings on Grace and her new path.

All of us on the COSO staff look forward to journeying with you this term and pray for God’s continued guidance over your studies and ministry.

Peace,

Joon-Sik Park

Dr. Joon-Sik Park

Director of the Course of Study School of Ohio

E. Stanley Jones Professor of World Evangelism

Methodist Theological School in Ohio



**2026 WINTER GRADUATES—
CONGRATULATIONS!**



Nate Eckert
Indiana Conference

and Larry Embury,
Michigan Conference



**Course of Study School
of Ohio**

<https://cosohio.org/> and
<https://cosohio.populiweb.com/>

Term	Class Dates	Registration Deadline
2026 Summer	Jul. 10-11 & Jul. 31-Aug. 1	5/12/26
2026 Fall	Sept. 11-12 & Oct 9-10	7/14/26
	2027 Schedule TBA later this spring	

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 Emeritus Professor of Religion at Capital University.

Rev. Robin Dillon

COS 223: Worship and Sacraments

Rev. Dillon received her M.Div. from MTSO. An elder in the East Ohio Conference, she is the Lead Pastor at Lakewood UMC and serves as Dean of the East-West Ohio Clergy Licensing School.



Rev. Dr. Robin Knowles Wallace

COS 324: Preaching

Rev. Dr. Robin Knowles Wallace received her M.T.S. from Candler School of Theology and her Ph.D. from Garrett Evangelical Theological Seminary/Northwestern University. An ordained UCC minister, she is Emerita Professor of Worship and Music at MTSO.



Dr. Glen Messer

COS 422: Theological Heritage IV: Wesleyan Movement

Dr. Glen Messer received his M.Div. and Th.D. from Boston University. From 2012-2016 he served as associate ecumenical staff officer for theology and dialogue with the UMC Council of Bishops Office of Christian Unity and Interreligious Relationships.



Dr. Chuck Gutenson

COS 523: Evangelism

Dr. Chuck Gutenson received an M.Div. from Asbury Theological Seminary and a Ph.D. in Philosophical Theology from Southern Methodist University. He is a church consultant, and previously served 10 years at Asbury Seminary, most recently as professor of Theology and Philosophy.



SPIRITUAL FORMATION

BEYOND EASTER

The world feels a little crazy right now with political tensions and wars spreading, making the work of keeping peace in our churches and communities more and more challenging. Divisions between people have widened and many people, especially pastors, are feeling exhausted with food and gasoline prices rising, while jobs and income becomes more and more uncertain. How do we offer reassurance and pastoral care when there are so many negative and contradictory voices bombarding us? Perhaps, when things settle down, we could offer a great healing with prayers and songs. But when will that be? I hear the psalmists crying, "How long, O Lord? Will you forget me forever?" (Psalm 13:1), and "How can we sing the Lord's song in a foreign land?" (Psalm 137:4). How do we find peace and calm in the midst of chaos? One way may be more near to us than we think; it comes from the source of all our joy - Easter or Easter-ing!

"Easter-ing" is an old concept that challenges us to engage in the meaning of Easter throughout the year. It encourages us to actively celebrate and experience Easter as an on-going process, not something that ends on Easter Day. Easter-ing means living into the power of the resurrection, by moving our focus from Good Friday and the power of death, to rolling back the barriers that blind us, like greed and prejudice, and finding joy in the new life we were praying for all through Lent.

Looking beyond Easter, brings this ancient word, Easter-ing, to life. It makes Easter an action verb, something we celebrate all year and in all seasons. An Easter-ing Service is one way of lifting up the joy of Easter after Easter is over, by focusing on prayer and song. Since the early church, Christians have prayed and sung about faith and looked for hope in worship, funerals, weddings and baptisms, and other gatherings in troubling times. The Psalms themselves were written in exile as songs to be sung in protest or chanted as laments. Singing touches the heart, and prepares the mind for living in the world, in a way that spoken or written words cannot.

Fr. Richard Rohr (cac.org/daily_meditations) points out, "The present disorder is our time of exile and has solidified in us an urgent commitment to our work of action and contemplation." He claims, prayer is needed more than ever before! Grounding our responses in prayer and worship is essential for the deep healing that is needed in our country and in our lives. Do not discount the power of God's love at work in worship and prayer, even in our small congregations.

Easter-ing includes prayer, scripture and song for Easter and beyond, emphasizing the recurring themes of hope, transformation, renewal and spiritual living. Singing keeps Easter alive in us and helps capture our need for living and growing spiritually, and for finding peace and healing in troubling times. As we move through the Easter season, and beyond, may you hear some of the songs the ancients are still singing, beneath all the storms

SPIRITUAL FORMATION cont.

around you. And may you share those songs with the people who are looking to you for guidance and hope.

From your spiritual director,

Rev. Dr. Rebeka Maples

Spiritual Formation Director



FROM THE COORDINATOR

- Note for 2026 Fall classes: as announced in our email on 4/1/26, all 2026 Fall classes will now meet fully online

Students from 10 Annual Conferences are taking classes in the 2026

Spring term:



Thank you so much to everyone who has sent me well-wishes or kept me in their prayers as I move into my new position. It has been such an honor and a blessing to be your COSSO Coordinator,

Grace Wallace

COSSO Coordinator

