

COSSO Newsletter

Course of Study School of Ohio (COSSO)

2008
Autumn

From the Director's Desk

Rev. Diane Turner-Sharazz



Greetings!

Autumn is here. The leaves are changing, turning wonderful shades of orange-red, gold and brown. The days and nights are becoming cooler. Another season is upon us. That's the way it is here at the Course of Study School of Ohio. We are beginning a new season in our program. We have completed 2008 classes and look forward to our 2009 season.

As always, we are steadily seeking to improve our program to meet the needs of our students in better ways. To that end, ***we are beginning a pilot program with United Theological Seminary*** (our COSSO co-supporter) in which ***we will offer blended courses at the United campus in Dayton.*** Blended courses are courses that are comprised of online and residential components. Based on the COS weekend course configuration, the first session will be conducted online, over a four-week period, with the second weekend in-residence at United. ***We will begin with a single course, COS 111- Pastor as Interpreter of the Bible. The course begins February 20, 2009, online, with the in-residence weekend March 27-28th.*** Rev. Elizabeth Brown will be the instructor. This first course will be limited to eight (8) students. Four other courses will be taught during the year. In the late spring, beginning May 8, with in-residence on June 19-20, we will offer COS 114 – Pastoral Leadership and Administration (Instructor to be announced) and COS 312 – Our Theological Heritage: The Reformation (Dr. David Whitford, instructor. In the late fall session, beginning October 1, with in-residence November 6-7, we will offer COS 211 – Hebrew Bible I (TBA) and COS 212 Theological Heritage: Early and Medieval (Dr. Andrea Dickens).

The tuition for each course will be \$260 plus a \$50 technology fee. Registration fee remains at \$30. Registration information for COS 111 will be posted on the web-site in the near future. So watch out for info regarding registration and housing for the in-residence session in Dayton.

May God bless you and may you enjoy a blessed Thanksgiving, Advent, and Christmas season.

Diane Turner-Sharazz

FACULTY FOR 2009 WINTER SESSION HELD AT MTSO



Kenneth Cummings

Dr. Kenneth Cummings is an elder in the United Methodist Church, and presently serves as District Superintendent of the Frankfort District, Kentucky Conference. He has pastored churches in Mississippi, Ohio, and Kentucky, and has taught courses at the University of Cincinnati and Cincinnati State Technical and Community College.



Kathleen Farmer

Dr. Kathleen Farmer is Professor Emerita of Old Testament at United Theological Seminary. She is especially interested in teaching the responsible interpretation of biblical texts.



Paul Kim

Dr. H. Paul Kim is Associate Professor of Hebrew Bible at the Methodist Theological School in Ohio. ...As I study biblical texts, I am especially interested in exploring that rich heritage of conceptual diversity, and in asking what it means for us to inherit, interpret, and struggle with these theologies in our ministry within the Church and in our service to all humanity." Areas of interest: Prophetic literature; Form criticism; Intertextuality; Biblical theology; Comparative study; Asian/Asian-American hermeneutics



Vergel Lattimore

Dr. Vergel Lattimore is Professor of Pastoral Care and Counseling and Director of the MACM program at Methodist Theological School in Ohio. His particular areas of expertise include: Pastoral care; Pastoral Counseling; Pastoral psychotherapy; Addiction counseling; Marriage and Family therapy; Alcohol and drug abuse ministry; Community-based mental health services; Social change and cultural dynamics; Mental health and military chaplaincy. Dr. Lattimore is an elder in the African Methodist Episcopal Zion Church.



Tim Van Meter

Dr. Tim Van Meter is Assistant Professor of Christian Education and Youth Ministry at Methodist Theological School in Ohio. His particular areas of interest and expertise include: Teaching and research related to the spiritual and vocational aspirations of youth and young adults including youth cultures, popular culture, spiritual practices, ecology, justice and peace movements, communal movements, alternative forms of church and educational theory.



Robin Knowles Wallace

Dr. Robin Knowles Wallace is Professor of Worship and Music at Methodist Theological School in Ohio. Her particular areas of interest and expertise include: Worship; Congregational Song; Prayer; Sacraments; Feminist theology and Preaching.

WHY ARE THESE PEOPLE SMILING?



They graduated!

From left to right the October 2008 graduates are:

Paula Bryson

PAULA serves a large congregation as associate pastor at Ginghamburg UMC near Tipp City, Ohio. Paula began her COS work at MTSO in 2002 and has completed all her courses at COSSO. Her “words of wisdom” for her fellow COS students are these: “Relish the relationships you have made with both students and instructors. Stay open-minded so that you can glean something to take back to your congregation. Enjoy the whole experience as a time for personal growth. Most of all, stay close to God and get it done.”

Peggy Smith

PEGGY serves the Liberty and Centertown UM charge in Ohio County, Kentucky. Liberty UMC is a rural church near Beaver Dam, KY; Centertown UMC is located in Centertown, KY. Peggy began COS in the Appalachian Local Pastors School (ALPS) as a part-time pastor. When she became a full-time pastor, she chose MTSO “because of its small hometown atmosphere.” Peggy has found “total enjoyment” in both ALPS and COSSO: “There has always been material I could take back to my churches to teach or preach. Nothing has been wasted.” Peggy’s words to COS students are these: “Keep the faith....I envy you who remain, for I will miss this phase of my life.”

Larry Dunn

LARRY serves the Herminie UMC in Herminie, Pennsylvania. His church is “a growing congregation of loving people who are focused on outreach ministries... in the preparation of meals for the community and in caring for the senior citizen community.” Larry’s journey has included studies at Pittsburgh Theological Seminary, the “virtual” campus at Asbury Theological Seminary, and his final courses at the COSSO. His words of encouragement are these: “Figure out what you want to accomplish by prayerful discernment of God’s will; ... [then] stick to it! Commit yourself to the process and immerse yourself in your study.”

Pat Robbins

PAT serves the B.A.S.S. Charge in the Port Huron District of the Detroit Conference. It consists of Bethel, Akron, and Sutton Sunshine UM churches. A special outreach ministry is an apple orchard which has produced about 1,100 bushels of fruit in the past seven years; Pat describes this as a “great ministry.” He began COS in 1999 in the South Indiana Conference and completed three years of COS classes at MTSO. Memorable highlights of his COSSO courses are “the worship, the fellowship, the food, and the lovely campus.” Pat shares this advice: “Let your mind be opened to be tested and challenged.”



MORE NEWS about Spiritual Formation

From Rebeka Maples, Ph.D., Director of Spiritual Formation



Summer flowers have faded and autumn leaves are falling. Winter is just around the corner and promises to bring even more changes. The campaign ads have also gone and we are told more change is coming. As I watched the election results come in and heard the speeches by John McCain and Barack Obama, I was touched by their words as I realized that change has already come. For the first time in history, a white woman was on the vice presidential ballot and a black man was on the ballot for president. The grace and respect that John McCain offered in his concession speech and the poise and wisdom that Barack Obama reflected in his acceptance speech were unprecedented in American politics. They modeled for the world the best qualities in American culture, showing a way to disagree and remain at the table.

Change is a mysterious thing. It can come when we least expect it, but one thing we know, from birth to death, change is a part of the process of living and dying. I was reminded of this in a sermon by Rev. Patrick Clayborn, at a recent chapel service on the MTSO campus. Rev. Clayborn referred to Paul's letter to the Romans (12:1-3) in which Paul talks about change: "Do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your minds..." Rev. Clayborn reminded us that as pastors in the United Methodist Church we are called to be transformational leaders, and then he asked a poignant question, but how many of us are truly comfortable with that mandate?

Transformation or change. How do we do it? Do not be conformed to the world but transformed by the wisdom and knowledge that God has given to you (read the whole passage to get the meaning). Change is what we are called to promote. Change is what we are asked to accept, from the One who is woven into the very fabric of our being. From birth to death and beyond, change comes - physically, mentally and spiritually - not as something to fear but as something to embrace. God did not create the world for us to live in fear, although it sounds like that in much of the Old Testament, and it looks like that in much of our world. Jesus Christ came so we would understand and receive change. New life, change, is possible in this life because of his birth, death and resurrection. Now I know this is not the kind of change that McCain or Obama were talking about in their campaign ads, but it is part of our understanding of change as Christians. The world we live in affects us, but we are called to not be conformed to it. It will not save us. God alone does that by and through God's grace.

As autumn comes and changes the landscape of our lives, perhaps this is a good time to reflect on the seasons of our own lives. As the Earth moves from the season of harvest into her winter mode of barrenness and emptiness, perhaps this is a time to learn from her wisdom. It might be a good time to reflect on change and to make some changes in our lives, like clearing space and time to spend with the One who called us to serve as spiritual and transformational leaders, knowing that we cannot lead or transform anything. It is God who leads and transforms us. Our job is to prepare for those changes - to wait, to linger, to hibernate, perhaps to ruminate, and to cherish inactivity in our own empty seasons.

As we prepare for another season of Thanksgiving, I pray that this may be a season of change for each of us, that we may find ways to turn from our busy lives and learn ways to slow down, be quieter, relax and rest more, instead of trying to produce one harvest after another without giving our inner landscape a rest. Every day God gives us signs of change, reminders of God's presence among

us. It would be shame to miss them because we have one more field to harvest or another crop to plant before the winter freeze. Let the seasons of your life teach you the wisdom of change.

May blessings of Thanksgiving change our hearts into fountains of gratitude for the gifts of God's saving grace.

Course of Study School of Ohio
On the campus of the Methodist
Theological School of Ohio



"there is a season for everything..."

Listen

*What is this season in your life
saying to you?*



Photo of Rebeka Maples & her
husband, Jim Upton, at the
National Underground RR Museum
in Cincinnati. Jim is a
professor at OSU and was invited
to give a lecture there. It's a
great place to go for a day
trip.

Words Words Words

From Margaret VanSickle, Writing Coach



RIGHT WORDS FOR WRITING

There are a few errors that creep into our writing because they have become a common part of our spoken “slang-uage.” These problems are easy to avoid; so this will be our focus for this newsletter’s writing hint.

Many of you probably remember learning what seemed to be an infinitely long list of “prepositions,” a part of speech that was defined as “...a word that links a noun or pronoun to some other word in a sentence.” The “most common prepositions” included *about, above, across, after, around, at, before, below, beside, between, by, during, for* (sometimes), *from, in, into, like* (sometimes), *of, off, on, over, through, to, under, until, with*, plus other words that serve the function described in the definition of a preposition.

One grammar rule about prepositions that most students remember is that prepositions must have an object, a noun or pronoun that completes the meaning of the prepositional phrase. For example, “I walked around campus with Allison”; in this sentence, *with* is the preposition and *Allison* is the object of the preposition, answering the question “What?” or “Whom?” after the preposition.

One of the most frequent errors that I hear in speaking and see in writing involves pronouns that are used as an object of a preposition. Tucked away in your memory are two lists of pronouns: nominative pronouns (I, he, she, we, they) that are used as the subject of a verb or as a predicate nominative [We won’t go there this time!] and objective pronouns (me, him, her, us, them) that are used as direct objects, indirect objects, or as the object of a preposition. When the object of a preposition is a single pronoun, it is usually easy to determine which one to use.

For example, in the sentence, “Alice walked to class with (he, him), we would choose “him” as the correct pronoun with which to complete the sentence. However, for some reason, when more than one pronoun is used in a prepositional phrase, problems arise:

“Alexander spoke with (he, him) and (I, me) about the assignment. To avoid the errors of “he” and “I,” my suggestion is that you take a couple of seconds to decide which one you would use if only one object to the preposition was involved. Most of us would say, “Alexander spoke with him; Alexander spoke with me.” Therefore, the correct form of this sentence would be: “Alexander spoke with him and me.”

Other examples:

- a) The argument arose last night between Carla and (she, her).
- b) Please buy a ticket to the concert from Nancy or (I, me).
- c) Between you and (I, me), I think our new committee is doing well.
- d) The committee awarded the prize to Tom and (we, us).

Did you get them right? *Between* is a little awkward because it requires two objects; so try replacing *between* with *for* or *from*. The correct version of sentence “a” would be: The argument arose last night *for* her. Sentence “b” would be: Please buy a ticket to the concert *from* me. Sentence “c” would be: *For* me, I think our new committee is doing well. Sentence “d” would be: The committee awarded the prize...to *us*.

Just a reminder to all of you who have been brave enough to read through this writing tip: Listen and watch as you are hearing people talk or reading a paper or an article; I think you will be surprised at how frequently this type of error occurs.

DON'T FORGET TO SEND ME ANY EARLY DRAFTS OF PAPERS THAT YOU WOULD LIKE ME TO READ OVER AS YOU PREPARE FOR YOUR WINTER SESSION COSSO CLASSES. You can send them by “snail mail” to Margaret Van Sickle, 3081 Columbus Pike, Delaware, Ohio or by e-mail to mvansickle@mtso.edu.

Blessings and prayers for a wonderful Advent, Christmas, and Epiphany season for each of you and for your families!

Margaret

Views from the Coordinator

By Terri Litchfield



NEW! Course of Study School of Ohio Student Directory

Thanks to all students who have had their photo taken for the student directory. The original purpose for getting photos was to allow us to more quickly connect names and faces, and that's worked really well. Now that we have so many of your photos, we decided it's time to create a COSSO Student Directory. We haven't yet decided on the particulars, but we will make this available to all students who took classes here in 2008. We will include the following information for each student:

- name
- address
- home phone
- email address
- annual conference, district, conference status (full-time, part-time, other)
- photo

If you were a student here in 2008, haven't had your picture taken, and haven't sent me a jpg photo, please consider emailing a digital photo in jpg format ASAP. An email was sent to all 2008 COS students on Friday, October 24, 2008 which indicated whether or not we have your photo.

We hope all students will choose to be included in the directory. If you DO NOT want to be included in the directory, you must return the "Request to Withhold Information" form to me no later than November 30, 2008. You can download a form on the ABOUT COS page of our website at www.courseofstudyschoolofohio.com. Scroll down to the end of the FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS. (I hope "How do I opt out of the directory?" is NOT a frequently asked question!)

REGISTRATION

The registration deadline for 2009 Winter term is 11/15/08. Always check the homepage of the website for information on full/closed classes. If you are registering for 2009 Winter term, please note that in case of bad weather, make-up dates are 1/30-31 and 2/27-28.

When registering for COS classes, Please Please Please make sure you 1) get the required signatures, 2) check website for on-campus housing (if interested), 3) include the registration fee, and 4) allow enough time for the form to reach the COS office before the registration deadline.

Registration deadlines:

2009 Winter	11/15/08
2009 Spring	02/16/09
2009 Summer	04/15/09
2009 Summer Intensive	05/15/09
2009 Fall	07/15/09

Many students find it convenient to register for all courses for a given year on one form. Remember that the registration fee is non-refundable and non-transferable if you must withdraw from a term. Also remember to complete 100-level courses first (or email Rev. Diane Turner-Sharazz for approval to take a non-100 level course), take prerequisites before registering for COS 411 and COS 511, and complete all lower level courses before registering for 500-level courses. (Again, if there are no other options in a given term, you can request approval from Diane.)

There are now Word and Excel versions of the registration form on the REGISTRATION page of the website so you can download the form, open in Word/Excel to complete, and print it off, ready to send for signatures. Always keep a copy of your registration form for your records.

UPCOMING CLASSES

The 2010 schedule has been posted. Go to the SCHEDULE page and click on the link in the right-hand panel: 2009/10 Classes. The Course Planning Grid (available on the CURRICULUM page) now includes 2010 courses.

COS POLICY CHANGES EFFECTIVE JANUARY 1, 2009

We will have a revised COS Student Handbook early in 2009. Here are some policies to be aware of:

1) LATE REGISTRATIONS

A \$10 late fee will be charged to any account in which the registration form is received after the registration deadline. If a student submits a form for proper signatures prior to the registration deadline, but the form arrives at the COS office after the deadline, the registration will be processed but the \$10 late fee will apply. Make sure your district and conference offices are aware of the registration deadlines. Submit forms early!

2) CANCELLATION AND WITHDRAWAL

If a student withdraws prior to 14 days in advance of a course, tuition paid will be transferred to a future course. If a student withdraws within two weeks of the start of classes, a \$25.00 administrative fee will be assessed; any remaining tuition paid will be transferred to a future class. Registration fees are non-transferable and non-refundable.

3) 2009 ROOM & BOARD FEES

Weekend Terms	\$42/night = \$84/term (Friday night) Friday dinner, Saturday breakfast & lunch are provided for all students
Summer Intensive Term	\$370/12 nights Sunday night prior to start of classes through Thursday night prior to last day of classes Includes breakfast & lunch, M-F
	\$50 meal ticket if off-campus (optional) Includes breakfast & lunch, M-F (2 weeks)

Thanks for your cooperation!
Terri