

## FROM THE DIRECTOR'S DESK

Rev. Dr. Joon-Sik Park

Welcome to the 2017 Fall Term of the Course of Study School of Ohio (COSSO)!

In an article titled "The Evangelical Priesthood," the noted Lutheran theologian Paul Althaus reflects on the meaning of the priesthood of the minister. First, a minister is priestly when he or she "truly lives in the presence of God." A "constant, pervading consciousness of the presence of God," based on a genuine encounter with God and the gospel, must be discernible in every pastor, and affect and shape every aspect of ministry—preaching, pastoral visiting, and counseling. Parishioners expect and desire to find *the sense of the reality of God* in their pastors.

Secondly, at the same time, a priestly minister lives with and among his or her people, as Jesus did. A life constantly lived in the awareness of God leads the minister not away from people but to them, seeking out where they really are. Priestly pastors are "never safe and secure within the walls of the church," but "acquainted with all the inner stresses and burdens of human existence, all the failures, all the guilt." "It is a dreadful thing," writes Althaus, "if people no longer come to the minister with their conflicts and their burdens," since he or she does not understand them.

An important part of the vocation of the minister is to keep the community of faith attentive to the presence and purpose of God, and to be a guide in its journey of knowing and loving God. Ministers have been called to touch the lives of the faithful at the level of their most profound longings and ultimate issues. Without a deep sense of the holy or of the reality of God, the ministry would remain shallow.

I hope that, through your theological education at COSSO, you would be formed as a minister who is truly *priestly*, a minister who could faithfully integrate prayer, study, and service.

All of us on the COSSO staff are excited to welcome all of you—including seventeen new and twelve graduating students—and pray for God's continued guidance and blessings on your COS journeys.

Grace and peace,  
Joon-Sik Park  
E. Stanley Jones Professor of World Evangelism



## FROM THE WRITING INSTRUCTOR

Dr. Trad Nogueira-Godsey



"The fact is that blank pages inspire me with terror. What will I put on them? Will it be good enough? Will I have to throw it out?" – Margaret Atwood

Many of us, whether a scholar, a teacher, or a minister can relate to Margaret Atwood's sentiments above. The "terror" of a blank page (or Word document) has gripped many of us as we sit down to write. Writing anxiety is an all too common phenomenon among writers of all levels, and if we let it stew it can sometimes get out of control, leading to panic attacks or triggering a latent anxiety disorder. How do we stop our anxiety from running amok? One way is to recognize that writing is a process. No one, not even Margaret Atwood, is able to sit down and produce a first draft that goes straight to the printing press. Writing any piece of work takes a lot of time and hard work, and it can be difficult to see the final product when we are staring at a blank screen. But we don't have to see the final product when we are just starting. Begin by developing your own process that includes: 1. Pre-writing techniques, such as generating questions and reading relevant materials; 2. A writing period in which you don't scrutinize your work, you just write; 3. Ample time for revision; and 4. Editing and Formatting your paper. By breaking your process into steps, you can tackle each step without feeling the weight of the entire paper on your shoulders.

## 2017 SUMMER 2-WEEK COS GRADUATES

Douglas Brink, Robert Dister, Mark Fuerstenau, Jon Osmundson,  
Robert Mesnard, Linda Lacovic, Ann Skiba



Course of Study School of Ohio  
[www.cosohio.org](http://www.cosohio.org)

Term	Class Dates	Registration Deadline	Dorm Available
2018 Winter	Feb. 9-10 & Mar. 9-10	12/11/2017	NO
2018 Spring	April 13-14 & May 11-12	2/12/2018	NO
2018 Summer	June 22-23 & July 13-14	4/23/2018	YES
2018 Summer 2 week	August 6-10 & 13-16	6/7/2018	YES
2018 Fall	Sept. 28-29 & Oct. 26-27	7/30/2018	NO

# 2017 Fall COS Faculty

## FROM THE DIRECTOR OF SPIRITUAL FORMATION



Rev. Rebeka Maples, Ph.D.

## VIEW FROM THE COORDINATOR



Terri Litchfield



Sarah Lancaster

COS 122 Theological Heritage I: Introduction

Rev. 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.

Justus Hunter

COS 222 Theological Heritage II: Early Church

Dr. Justus Hunter received his M.Div. from Asbury Theological Seminary and his Ph.D. from Southern Methodist University. He is Assistant Professor of Church History at United Theological Seminary.



Jeff Jaynes

COS 222 Theological Heritage II: Early Church

Rev. Dr. Jeff Jaynes received an M.Div. from Fuller Theological Seminary and a Ph.D. from Ohio State University. A Presbyterian elder, he currently teaches Church History at MTSO.

Mark Powell

COS 321 Bible: Gospels

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



Ervin Smith

COS 424 Ethics

Rev. Dr. Ervin Smith received an M.Div. from Drew Theological School and a Ph.D. from Garret-Evangelical Theological Seminary/Northwestern University. He is Emeritus Professor of Christian Ethics at MTSO.

Linda Mercadante

COS 522: Theology in the Contemporary Church

Rev. Dr. Linda Mercadante, a Presbyterian elder, received an M.C.S. from Regent College in Vancouver and a Ph.D. from Princeton Theological Seminary. Currently, she is Professor of Theology at MTSO.



### Praying in Ordinary Time

The church calendar is divided between holy and ordinary time, and yet, we live in both. In actual time, there is no separation between the ordinary and the holy, most of life is spent in ordinary moments. We move through our everyday routines until something happens that turns our ordinary lives upside down, and we hear ourselves and others saying, Where is God? Why is God making this happen? In these times, we are forced to rely on what led us through our days before this happened. Whatever we practice in ordinary time will hold us back or lift us up when things fall apart. Finding holiness in the ordinary will be our saving grace no matter what comes.

So, what do you practice in ordinary time? What do you do to draw closer to the One who called you into this holy work of ministry? What guides you when someone starts blaming God for tragedies, disease and natural disasters? Life is not fair, and there is a lot of confusion among Christians and non-Christians alike about God's presence in our lives. God is all-powerful, but God does not cause bad things to happen. A loving God does not destroy creation, sitting in the heavens saying, this child will die of cancer or that man will die in a car crash or those women will be raped and tortured. That is not the work of a God of grace and mercy.

Where is God in our lives? God is the first to hold us when tragedy strikes, and God's tears are the first to fall when one of us is wounded. In the interconnected web of life, God is always there picking us up and putting the pieces back together that humans or other forces destroy. Our challenge is to be like Christ, to continually find ways to live with the rest of creation, and to understand that what affects one of us affects all of us, that we are all connected by the same thread of destiny, that none of us moves forward unless we all move together (M.L. King, Jr., 1969). Most of us are disheartened by the negative voices we hear from people in positions of power or on the streets and in our churches. Yet, our call is the same today as it was yesterday, to love our neighbor as ourselves and to keep hope alive. And that begins right where we are, with an ordinary practice of prayer in ordinary time.

Did you know... you can register to take either one or two classes in the Summer 2-Week term? Many students enjoy taking classes in this format. Questions? See Terri.

### COS Class Schedule Notes:

- 2019 schedule is posted and registration is open.

### Enrichment Session for the Fall term:

Please mark your calendars for the Enrichment session on Friday, October 27, 2:00. We welcome MTSO faculty member, Rev. Dr. Francesca Nuzzolese, to present "**ALL YOU NEED IS LOVE: A Pastoral Response to Sex Trafficking and Human Exploitation.**"

In our contemporary society, the sex trafficking industry is growing and thriving on multiple forms of exploitation of human victims as young as kindergarten-age girls and boys and middle aged women. The demand for sex work as a quick strategy to make money with increasing abduction and recruitment of victims, from the poorest countries of the world as well as from the most affluent suburbs of our Western cities, expresses an unprecedented state of human degradation, which should urge the Christian community towards a serious theological and pastoral intervention. Yet, in my experience as a pastoral practitioner and as a theologian, the Church and theological discourse appears powerless or ineffective in its mandate to care and protect the most vulnerable in our midst. Why is this the case? How can the Church take responsibility for the victims of trafficking? What if *knowledge, hope* and *faith* were not enough, and a more radical form of *love* was needed, for the Church to powerfully challenge and dismantle the strongholds of human exploitation?

## CHOIR NEWS



Lori Douglas Weaver, Music Director

It has been said that the one who sings prays twice. We perform all types of music and are always open to new ideas. Join us for choir rehearsal Saturday, 7:30-7:45 AM, in the choir room. Both solo and blending voices are needed. The only requirement for membership is the enjoyment of making a joyful noise!