

# THE STORY

## MAGAZINE AND ANNUAL REPORT

MTSO adapts  
and thrives  
amidst  
a pandemic

New students  
share their  
aspirations

A Bible study  
group grounds  
alums' work  
at the margins

Tejai Beulah  
and Kyle Brooks  
join the faculty

The library  
welcomes  
a director  
for a new age

Alums have  
a valuable role  
in recruiting  
efforts



# MTSO

Methodist Theological School in Ohio

[www.mtso.edu](http://www.mtso.edu)

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**A commencement like no other ✱ Dean and Vice President for Academic Affairs Valerie Bridgeman congratulated graduates during MTSO's virtual commencement May 23. The online ceremony was one of many ways the school adapted to the challenges of the coronavirus pandemic. Learn more about our response on page 4.**

Founded in 1958, Methodist Theological School in Ohio is one of 13 seminaries formally affiliated with and funded in part by the United Methodist Church. Located in Central Ohio, MTSO offers six graduate degree programs: Master of Divinity, Master of Arts in Counseling Ministries, Master of Arts in Practical Theology, Master of Arts in Social Justice, Master of Theological Studies and Doctor of Ministry. It also offers graduate-level certificate programs in Basic Theological Education, United Methodist Deacon Studies and the Advanced Course of Study in the United Methodist Church. In addition, MTSO provides courses for General Board of Higher Education and Ministry certification.

MTSO is accredited by the Association of Theological Schools in the United States and Canada and the Higher Learning Commission of the North Central Association of Colleges and Schools. Its degree programs are authorized by the Ohio Board of Regents and approved by the University Senate of the United Methodist Church.

We welcome your comments. Please send them to [drussell@mtso.edu](mailto:drussell@mtso.edu), or Danny Russell, MTSO, 3081 Columbus Pike, Delaware, Ohio 43015.

# Adapting, surviving and, yes, thriving

By Jay Rundell  
President

We reach out to you with this year's *Story Magazine* amidst truly extraordinary times. The coronavirus pandemic is impacting virtually every aspect of life the world over. Protests against racial injustice and long-overdue movements for change have gripped our nation. Social and political division and divisiveness are palpable in virtually all of our communities.

Higher education is facing mounting enrollment and financial challenges. Churches already struggling to adapt to new cultural and denominational trends are now attempting to engage people through all of this while often limited to virtual gatherings and truncated programming and worship.

I am pleased to tell you that Methodist Theological School in Ohio is thriving nonetheless. We certainly have our challenges, but our mission of providing theological education and leadership in pursuit of a just, sustainable and generative world has rarely seemed more relevant.

The school's motto, ensclosed on the cornerstone of Werner Hall, is "To Preach the Word." While the idea of what it means to preach – and through which mediums and modalities we do it – is clearly in flux in this season, we have throughout our history linked the preached word to the Gospel call for social justice and public good. We have important things to do and teach in this time, and our students will be prepared to do and preach likewise.

If you follow our *Campus View* publications, you are familiar with how we've functioned in recent months. We moved March 10 to fully online classes and remote working for the remainder of the semester. Classes for the Course of Study School of Ohio were moved online at this time and have remained online since. Extensive effort was made to keep the educational experience as authentic and robust as possible. A wonderful combination

of patience and ingenuity led to a successful conclusion of the spring term. Meaningful convocation and commencement ceremonies were held in an online format.

The summer involved transforming the campus and our community life for MTSO Campus Extend: a learning experience gathered across physical and virtual space. This incorporated a "hyflex" educational model that blends into one class, in real time, campus-based students (meeting in person) with videoconferencing students (connecting remotely), augmented with additional asynchronous work.

With some students physically returning to the classroom, we committed ourselves to what we've called "Healthy Together," which involves covenanting with one another around safe interactions. Changes to the physical campus in support of this new approach were completed by early August, with extensive technology upgrades, furniture rearranged, room capacities dramatically reduced, one-way traffic patterns established in hallways and signage guiding our individual efforts to interact safely. Throughout, we committed to monitoring the best available public health and scientific advice and pledged to act swiftly if plans needed to change again.

We began the semester with about half of our classes in the hyflex format and about a third of students on campus in some way. Chapel services were live, with part of the community present – socially distanced and masked – in the Alford Centrum and part participating online. Meals were served on the busiest days, again with careful practices in place. To our knowledge, we've had no instances of COVID-19 on campus. The sense of community and shared commitment was strong even as we worked through steep learning curves.

By mid-October, the virus was surging again across the country, and cases in Ohio jumped by 60 percent over the first half of the month. On Oct. 18, we announced a decision to pivot back to fully online



education. While this was not in response to a campus outbreak of any kind, we take our connection and responsibility to our neighbors in the broader community seriously, and we embraced an opportunity to diminish physical social contact.

Beyond this semester, classes will be fully online during the January Term. Regarding the Spring Semester, we've pledged that all spring classes will be available online. In coming weeks, we will evaluate whether we can augment online learning with a return to a hyflex model or some other form of in-person classroom experience.

I am deeply grateful for the patience and perseverance of students, faculty and staff as we've moved through this novel time together. I am equally grateful to all of you who make up the broader MTSO community and base of support. Thank you for all you do to extend our mission in your own places and through your investment in our work.

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Jay Rundell". The signature is fluid and cursive, written in a professional style.

# Called to serve in a compelling age

## New students have found an academic home at MTSO

This year's incoming students launched their academic year unlike any previous MTSO class. Some arrived in person to physically distanced classrooms in Gault Hall on Aug. 21. Others used videoconferencing to join their on-campus classmates. Although they may have selected different modes for their learning

during the pandemic, these students share an expectation to be challenged and invigorated by their time within this unique community. Here are profiles of five promising new students, featuring their own words from admissions essays.



### AJANAE DAWKINS

#### *Standing in the gap*

When she was 3 years old, Dawkins stood in her grandfather's pulpit and summoned as much of her father's bravado as she could muster as she belted out the *Barney & Friends* theme song to a nearly empty sanctuary. Despite that early experience in the pulpit and a long lineage of pastors, Dawkins never believed she would follow the trajectory she now embraces.

"I resented anyone who suggested my writing and speaking skills coupled with my love for the Gospel meant that I was on the same path," she said. "I arrived at my undergraduate institution very unsure about my identity as a Christian and holding a warped concept of the Gospel, as many do when God is taught through restriction and fear."

After joining a Bible study led by a Black woman who was pursuing graduate-level theological education, Dawkins began to expand her

understanding of Jesus' teaching and the role of women in society and in church.

"This experience pushed me to want to stand in the gap in theological discussion and biblical instruction the way that other Black women had for me," she said. "My hope is that by pursuing an advanced theological degree I am more equipped as an educator, speaker and performer to incorporate the gospel while talking about issues of social justice, trauma and liberation. Even more specifically, I want to be equipped to give more nuanced and accurate examination of scripture that does not rely on harmful cultural practices, but gives people permission to see themselves as full humans whose identities and plights are critical to God."

Dawkins, a recipient of an MTSO legacy scholarship, found MTSO to be a perfect fit for her pursuit of both Master of Divinity and Master of Arts in Social Justice degrees.

"MTSO's focus on mentorship, highlighting the voice of marginalized persons and plentiful resources, made this my primary school to pursue these two degrees," she said.

### ASHTON DUPLER

#### *Challenging stunted theological understandings*

After earning a degree in urban ministry from Mount Vernon Nazarene University in 2018, Dupler began to question his original intention to seek a Master of Divinity degree.

"While I was finishing my bachelor's degree and exploring graduate options, I became extremely burdened by the lack of representation of persons of color in my denomination and a lack of parishes being rooted in impoverished or working-class communities," he said. "The more I learned about these disparities, I came to understand that my denomination, as well as other churches, were not neutral institutions but were energizing racist ideas and unintentionally serving one class of people."

His commitment to work in an urban setting did not waver, and he relocated to Dayton to work as a forklift operator.

"In pursuing this work as a way of life and primary source of income,

I was free to minister to communities which could not afford a full-time salary for a pastor," he said.

While finding his footing in ministry in a local church, Dupler has explored several areas of theological thought that are new to him. Exploration of writings from the Potawatomi Nation revealed the interconnectivity of ecology and spirituality.

These readings "made me realize that my theology of creation is stunted, so academically I would like to be immersed in traditions and voices who can give me a foundation," he said. "There are other perspectives and theologies I need to research more deeply, including feminist and womanist theologies. Academically, I want to be challenged to think differently and be invited into new language and methods."

As the recipient of the Zook Scholarship, Dupler is now ready to embrace his original goal: the pursuit of a Master of Divinity degree.





## BETH AIELLO

*A passion for working with young adults*

Aiello, an Alford Scholar, has seamlessly merged her love of community with her lifelong commitment to the United Methodist Church.

"I attended Sunday school and youth fellowship regularly at John Stewart United Methodist Church in a small town in northwest Ohio," she said. "I was nourished in a sheltered, supportive community of believers."

Wanting to continue her education at a United Methodist undergraduate school, she enrolled at Pfeiffer University in Misenheimer, North Carolina, where she completed a double major in youth ministry and religion. During her undergraduate studies, she discovered her passion for outdoor pursuits. Much of her career has focused on youth ministry in camping settings through the church and Girl Scouts.

"I have focused on serving youth by making God's creation more accessible and by creating an environment where they could try new things and take risks," she said. "Nature has been a conduit to God for me since I was young, and serving youth in this way was such a profound experience."

Recently, Aiello made a career change and began serving as director of support services at King Avenue United Methodist Church in Columbus. It was here that she found herself at a crossroads: "The more I looked back on the path I have taken, the stronger the feeling that while my work was worthy and important, it was not the environment to which I was called to serve," she said.

Aiello is pursuing two degrees: a Master of Arts in Counseling Ministries and a Master of Divinity. She is seeking United Methodist ordination and considering a career in college chaplaincy.

"It is important to me," she said, "to make people feel welcome, to help to correct misunderstandings about religion, to affirm people of all faiths and to promote peace. I want to be someone who helps young adults, who sees them, who values their background and beliefs, and who doesn't always try to answer questions but sets them on the path to self-discovery."

## JAWWAD LOVE

*Strengthening leadership skills*

"I believe the call for my life in this season is to prepare for greater leadership in the church and community," Love said.

MTSO's Doctor of Ministry program is unlocking new possibilities for Love, a busy mid-career minister. An ordained elder in the African Methodist Episcopal Zion Church since 2001, Love has joined this year's D.Min. cohort to enhance his ability to serve his congregation and community in Oakland, California. He has served since 2016 as senior pastor of Greater Cooper AME Zion Church, where he has focused on increasing the opportunities for his congregation to serve the greater Oakland area. He has guided his congregation on several new initiatives including tutorial services for neighborhood kids, mental health support for members of the community and voter registration drives.

"We live out the call for our lives by finding joy in service," Love said. "The act of serving allows us the opportunity to become practitioners of our faith."

## JOSHUA BAUDIN

*Finding connections*

Baudin has felt a restlessness stirring since he graduated with a major in biology and a minor in chemistry from Judson University. The science didn't add up to the life he felt called to live.

"I had become distracted by the pursuit of the position and lost sight of my call," he said. "Having a prestigious title and a good income was what I thought I needed to live into my full potential."

Ultimately, he found this dissatisfying. Having attended an Episcopal church for the past 10 years, he began his search for a meaningful career as an Episcopalian postulant for holy orders.

"My priest friends said when I visited the right seminary, I would know it. They described a place of home, of belonging," he said. "We visited three seminaries. Although I aligned theologically and socially with one of the schools in a strong way, it just was not right."

He sought the counsel of trusted friends.

Through discussion and prayer, he said, "I learned that the problem was not the school, but rather the course of study did not align with my calling."

His continued search led him to MTSO and a unique way to merge his understanding of science with a focus on theology. Baudin is seeking a Master of Arts in Social Justice degree with help from the Werner Scholarship.

"When I found MTSO's ecotheology program, my heart began beating fast," he said. "The program will develop me in the areas where I have passion: theology, creation and social justice."



Thanks to MTSO's Campus Extend, a learning experience across physical and virtual space, Love is able to join his classmates for classes and discussions while remaining in California.

"The Doctor of Ministry program with the concentration of Global Christian Leadership in the Urban Context speaks to my desire to be a change agent," he said. "My goal for study in the program centers around formalizing and developing processes for leadership development. I imagine a ministry setting where learning is at the center of the community. Where the focus on the totality of a person is at the forefront. Where faith is formed by teaching that lifts the whole person."

"I believe this Doctor of Ministry journey will equip me with the necessary tools to add value and vision to my faith community," he said. "I am both excited and nervous for the challenge ahead. I find comfort in knowing that God has prepared me for this next leg of the journey."



# The COVID response, from A to Zoom

## How MTSO tended to its mission in the midst of pandemic



**Loosely connected** \* *Convocation and chapel services were held in a reconfigured Alford Centrum*

No less than the rest of the planet, MTSO has spent most of 2020 responding to the novel coronavirus. In a series of announcements that began in early March, President Jay Rundell pledged to monitor the advice of medical experts and to balance concerns for health and safety with the school's commitment to a vibrant learning community.

A timeline of actions the school has taken reflects the shifting nature of our understanding of the pandemic. It also spotlights the caution, resourcefulness, flexibility, resiliency and resolve the students, faculty and staff brought to a crisis that was all but unthinkable as 2020 began.

**March 10:** On the second day of the school's Spring Break week, Rundell announced that all class sessions would be taught online "through at least April 12," which was Easter. He also announced the

suspension of meal service in Dunn Dining Hall; postponement of events; suspension of school-sponsored international travel; and preparations for telecommuting options for faculty and staff. A special web page, [www.mtso.edu/covid-19](http://www.mtso.edu/covid-19), was launched to provide up-to-date information. "During these challenging days," Rundell wrote, "all of us – students, faculty and staff – will be called upon to adapt to a new reality."

**March 16:** Online teaching was extended through the end of the Spring Semester, and Spring Break was extended a second week to provide students, faculty and staff adequate time to adjust and prepare for fully online education. Dickhaut Library was closed, Tuesday chapel services were moved online and staff members were instructed to work from home to the extent possible. Rundell announced that plans for the May 23 commencement ceremony were under review. "We have weighed each action above

carefully and made our decisions with heavy hearts," he wrote.

**March 20:** Following a Zoom meeting with graduating seniors, Rundell emailed the senior class to announce that commencement would be postponed to an unspecified future date: "While we're eager to mark our calendars and look forward to that time together, we don't want to risk choosing a date today only to reschedule again down the road."

**April 16:** Following another online consultation with graduating seniors, Rundell announced that MTSO would hold commencement online, at the date and time originally scheduled.

**May 22:** Rundell announced plans for MTSO's Fall Semester, dubbed MTSO Campus Extend: a learning experience gathered across physical and virtual space. He explained that classes would use a

“hyflex” educational model that blends into one class, in real time, campus-based students (meeting in person) with videoconferencing students (connecting remotely), augmented with additional asynchronous work throughout the week. The fall calendar was modified, eliminating a fall break in October and creating a two-week Thanksgiving break, with plans to end all on-campus classes after Nov. 18.

**May 23:** The online commencement ceremony began promptly at 11 a.m., featuring a compiled virtual procession of graduates and faculty members in full academic regalia. The ceremony video is archived at [www.mtso.edu/commencement](http://www.mtso.edu/commencement).

**June 2:** The Administrative Council appointed Community Relations Manager Susan Zimmerman as project facilitator for MTSO Campus Extend, launching 12 weeks of intense preparation for the Fall Semester, involving faculty, staff and students from every corner of the campus. Classrooms were outfitted with new cameras and microphones to bring on-campus and online students into synchronous contact. Faculty members



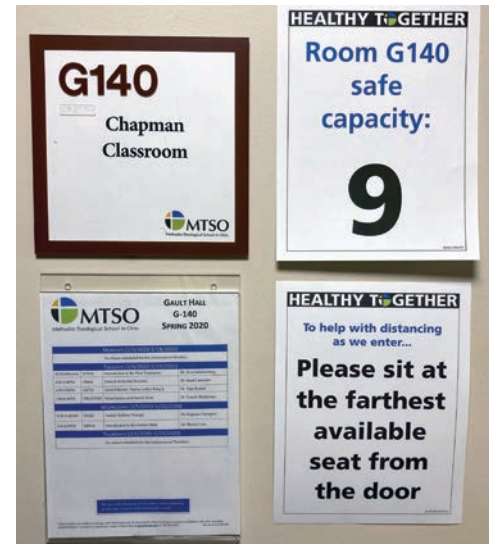
**Wall of fame** \* 2020's virtual commencement begat a composite class photo

redesigned their classes to be taught in a new format. Furniture was rearranged or removed from many spaces to encourage physical distancing. Signs, branded “Healthy Together,” were posted throughout campus to establish new room capacities and modify traffic patterns in hallways and stairwells. Kits for cleaning and sanitizing surfaces were placed in public spaces.

**July 15:** New Healthy Together Protocols were published, covering requirements for face coverings, physical distancing and general wellness. All students and employees were required to read and sign the protocols before the start of Fall Semester.

**Aug. 21:** The Fall Semester began, with new students welcomed both virtually and physically to orientation. Students and faculty gathered for fall classes either in person or online, depending on their individual preference. Student teaching assistants, drawing on training during the summer, managed classroom technology so faculty members could focus on instruction. Along with the start of classes, Tuesday chapel resumed with the option of attending either online or in person. The Alford Centrum was reconfigured, with a capacity of 29 physically distanced seats. Dunn Dining Hall began accepting orders for vegan and non-vegan boxed lunches on Tuesdays, the most populous day of the week on campus. Purchased lunches were placed on a breezeway table for pickup. Preaching at Opening Convocation during the first week of classes, Dean Valerie Bridgeman proposed redefining “2020” as a curse word.

**Sept. 22:** Mindful of the additional need to discourage flu transmission in the midst of a pandemic, MTSO offered free flu shots to all members of the campus community



**Signs of the times** \* Gault Hall, like all campus facilities, has been well-marked

and those in their households. Each person who was vaccinated received a Tootsie Pop.

**Oct. 18:** Rundell announced an immediate pivot to fully online instruction, ending an in-person option eight weeks into the 12-week semester. He emphasized that there had been no known instances of COVID-19 on the campus but cited MTSO's civic responsibility to further diminish the chances the virus could spread via MTSO to our neighbors in the broader community. He further announced that all January Term classes would be taught online. Regarding the Spring Semester, he pledged that all spring classes will be available online, with ongoing assessment regarding the possibility of offering in-person classroom instruction as well. “Thank you for your ongoing flexibility and perseverance in this trying time,” Rundell concluded. “It’s a privilege to be in community with all of you.” \*

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For more information about MTSO's trustees and governance, visit [www.mtso.edu/governance](http://www.mtso.edu/governance).

# A library director for a new age

## Elonda Clay wants to help students progress from search to research

Thoughts of literature, science, teaching and theology have coursed through the inquisitive mind of Elonda Clay for much of her life. They converge now as she assumes a role for which she seems perfectly suited. In July, she became director of MTSO's John Dickhaut Library, replacing Paul Burnam, who retired at the end of the last academic year.

"I'm grateful for Paul's stewardship and his work with Dave Powell and Beth Bringman over many years to shape our library," said MTSO President Jay Rundell. "Elonda is the right person to lead the library in supporting our emerging learning modalities."

As a student at Kansas State University, Clay studied electrical engineering – "I found that wasn't very exciting" – before earning a physical science degree. She taught school for some time before spending several years as a nanny. "And then it hit me: I love books."

Clay earned an M.A. in library and information science from the University of Missouri in 1998. Seven years later, she received her Master of Divinity degree from Interdenominational Theological Center. Her thesis: "Subtle Impact: Technology Trends and the Black Church." She's now a Ph.D. candidate in theology and religious studies at Vrije Universiteit Amsterdam in the Netherlands, preparing a dissertation that takes a critical look at popularly marketed DNA tests.

"They would say, 'Taking this genetic test will be like talking to your ancestors. Taking this genetic test will undo the damage of slavery.' And so I began to say: OK, what are the types of myths that are being constructed around genetic ancestry testing? And how do we need to approach it in a more ethical fashion so that we can talk about things like genetic property and genetic privacy? We can talk about how these companies that are doing the testing, once they have your genetic information, are reselling this information over and over again. What does it mean that there are really no people of color involved in this process of gathering genetic information?"

While pursuing her own education, Clay has served as a resource to higher-ed students in a number of appointments. She taught an advanced seminar in religion and science at the Lutheran School of Theology at Chicago and served as an archivist and digital librarian at Philander Smith College in Little Rock. She comes to MTSO from Metropolitan Community College, a five-campus system in the Kansas City area, where she was a reference librarian and served on the adjunct faculty, teaching research skills, information literacy and digital literacy. She looks forward to the personalized assistance she'll be able to offer here after working on a campus with 4,000 students.

Clay has a clear sense of the value of skilled librarians in the age of Google. "I joke, 'Who's going to organize that internet of yours?' Some people may not have done research in a while. Others who are coming from undergraduate, in my experience, may know how to *search*, but they need help learning how to *research*."



**"I really want to focus on the research process" \* Clay comes to MTSO from the Metropolitan Community College system in Kansas City**

Well aware that she's assuming her new role in the midst of a pandemic, Clay wants to help relieve the consternation of students who might not be able to visit and browse the library in the ways they had hoped: "My goal is to give students more opportunities to have one-on-one consultations if they're needed. I really want to focus on the research process and what that looks like in terms of having to do most of it remotely."

Clay chose to make the move from Missouri after determining her skills fit MTSO's mission well. "There has been a seismic shift, not just in terms of theological education but in terms of libraries, in terms of the world, in terms public health," she said. "And so with the nexus of those things coming together, I just feel that MTSO is the type of environment where we can proceed with some innovative things." \*



# Bible study grounds work at the margins

## Canton-area pastors meet monthly with MTSO's Tim Van Meter

In the spring of 2018, Tim Van Meter received an invitation he was excited to accept. Benita Rollins, then the Tuscarawas District superintendent in the United Methodist Church's East Ohio Conference, had assembled the Tuscarawas Urban Action Team, and she wanted team members to learn more about food insecurity. A 1982 graduate and former administrator of MTSO, Rollins was well aware of the school's work with Seminary Hill Farm, so she asked Van Meter, who holds MTSO's Alford Chair of Christian Education and Youth Ministry and coordinates the school's ecological initiatives, to come to Canton and speak with the group.

That first meeting went well, but more important, several months later it spawned a monthly Bible study led by Van Meter. He continues to meet monthly with the group, which includes a number of recent MTSO graduates who are driven to make a difference for those at the margins.

"It grounds us," said Becky Evanoff ('19), who serves as pastor of Fairhope UMC in Louisville and Lexington UMC in Alliance. "As we're thinking about food and food scarcity, many of the things that he brings up in Bible study remind us that this has always been something that we have been working on as part of our Christian call."

"It's nice to intentionally spend a half an hour or 45 minutes in study and reflection and in exegesis that we might not have the time to do ourselves," said Michael Farmer ('20), associate pastor at Crossroads UMC in Canton. Don Ackerman ('19), pastor of Crossroads, concurs: "It's kind of nice to go to church as a pastor and have somebody else do that for you."



**"We very much respect what each other does" ✨  
September's meeting**

Ackerman and Farmer's downtown congregation was known as First Methodist Episcopal Church back when it counted President William and Ida McKinley among its members. Today it's better known for commitments to social justice and serving members of the community in need.

After the coronavirus pandemic struck, members of the action team responded by beginning a food pantry, serving as many as 350 households a week. Plans are now under way to open a free store by the end of the year. The team also drives everything from mentoring and school outreach programs to financial assistance with rent and utilities.

Shortly after the killing of George Floyd by a Minneapolis police officer, Ackerman invited Evanoff and Farmer to meet him at Crossroads to begin a Sunday afternoon prayer walk of 8.4 miles, marking the 8 minutes and 46 seconds that Floyd suffered. Word spread quickly, and to Ackerman's surprise, 250 people arrived at the church steps that afternoon, including Rollins and East Ohio Bishop Tracy S. Malone. "People were joining on the side of the road,"

Ackerman said. "It was beautiful."

Van Meter is inspired by the work of those in the Bible study, which has also included MTSO alumni Kyle Gould ('17), Jake Heskett ('20) and Hyeran Yu ('18).

"I've told the group several times that this has deepened and grounded my vision of how pastors engage in ministry," Van Meter said. "The majority of people in the room are theologically trained, but they still have this ongoing and intense experience of being in relationship with folks at the very margins of our society. They bring that back into the scripture, and it's very much helped my teaching."

Evanoff is convinced professional relationships are vital to effective ministry: "Many other schools teach that ministry is a Lone Ranger thing where you go in and you do things by yourself. But what we've been taught through MTSO is how connected we truly are and how connected we have to stay if we want Christianity to continue to do what it's meant to do and not just sit in a building."

Beyond the specific advantages of the Bible study, Van Meter sees a broader theme that gives lie to a discouraging notion.

"There are people within ministry and seminaries who believe there's a disconnect between what seminaries do and what the church needs," he said. "I think part of what's happening here is we're finding that it's deeply connected. We're in relationship deeply enough that we very much respect what each other does."

"These men and women are spectacular. It's a privilege to be with them monthly." ✨

# Alum news

If you're an alum or former faculty or staff member of MTSO and have news to share about your vocational or personal milestones, please submit it via the link at [www.mtso.edu/update](http://www.mtso.edu/update). If you don't have an Internet connection, you may mail your news to us at Alum News, MTSO, 3081 Columbus Pike, Delaware, Ohio 43015.

## 1966

**Robert D. Dobson** and his wife are active in the United Methodist Church in Negaunee, Michigan. He also spends time researching and writing books on local and church history. All twelve of his publications are available for purchase on Amazon.com.

## 1969

**Joe Beavon** celebrated the 51st anniversary of his ordination in July 2020. He has retired from the West Ohio UM Conference, and currently lives in Kentucky where he serves as an Americorps mentor at Knox Central High School.

**David Mansperger** has retired from the East Ohio Conference of the United Methodist Church. [demansperger@yahoo.com](mailto:demansperger@yahoo.com)

After working for 32 years for Ohio Bureau of Vocational Rehabilitation, **Gordon McNamee** has retired. He is grateful to continue working as a vocational rehabilitation counselor for the Office of Workers' Compensation Programs. His wife for 46 years, Mary, died three years ago. [gordonmcnamee@yahoo.com](mailto:gordonmcnamee@yahoo.com)

## 1971

**Roger B. Moore** and his wife, Ellen, celebrated their 50<sup>th</sup> wedding anniversary in July 2020. They are enjoying retirement in Ashland, Ohio, after 41 years of active ministry in both Ohio and Florida conferences. They continue to be involved at the Christ UMC in Ashland.

## 1972

**Ed Garten** retired from the University of Dayton in 2008. Ed continues to teach in the University's Learning in Retirement Institute. Additionally, he continues to publish in several areas of educational leadership. His most recent publication "School Desegregation in Summers County, West Virginia 1954 – 1963,"

appeared in the summer 2020 issue of West Virginia's state historical journal, *Goldenseal*. [eddiegarten1948@gmail.com](mailto:eddiegarten1948@gmail.com)

## 1974

**Sherry Brown** has retired. [sbrown.i.b@gmail.com](mailto:sbrown.i.b@gmail.com)

## 1975

**Carol Mays** has retired after forty years of writing and publishing inspirational books and working in the roles of public service and quality assurance. Carol also wished to share her remembrance that while at MTSO, she was one of two female students enrolled.

**Brian Straub** has been busy serving as a supply pastor since his 2013 retirement. Additionally, he is currently president of the West Ohio Wesleyan Covenant Association. [bkstraub@columbus.rr.com](mailto:bkstraub@columbus.rr.com)

## 1976

As of June 2020, **Allan Jones** is enjoying retirement from his clergy position in the Iowa Annual Conference. He currently resides in Santa Rose, California.

**John Landon** has retired. [jandp@rochester.rr.com](mailto:jandp@rochester.rr.com)

## 1978

**M. (Morris) Lee Ellenberger** retired after 41 years pastoral ministry. He and his wife, Debby, settled in State College, Pennsylvania.

**Richard Kevin Seckel** and **Carol Ann Seckel** celebrated their 50th wedding anniversary this year. Since 2014, they have been enjoying their retirement and have recently moved to Oregon.

## 1981

**John Schlupe** retired from pastoral ministry in 2017 from the UCC First Congregational Church in Tallmadge, Ohio. He founded the

specialized ministry, Warriors' Journey Home: Listen - Speak - Heal, to provide healing of the invisible wounds of war and military service. This grass-roots ministry utilizes community as essential to healing the Moral Injury and Post Traumatic Stress Disorder. There are four locations in Northeast Ohio; one in Hartford, Wisconsin; and an affiliate in Perkasio, Pennsylvania, called Compass. [warriorsjourneyhome@gmail.com](mailto:warriorsjourneyhome@gmail.com)

## 1982

**William Hughes Jr.** has retired after 39 years in public school teaching. He is married to Deloris Christine, and they have five children and five grandchildren. [wfhjms@yahoo.com](mailto:wfhjms@yahoo.com)

**Benita Rollins** retired in July 2020 and currently lives in Sheffield Village, Ohio. Benita has recently taken up weight-lifting and is continuing her education by taking courses of interest in astronomy and archeology at Lorain Community College. [brollins92@aol.com](mailto:brollins92@aol.com)

**Terry Washburn** is a retired elder of the West Ohio UM Conference. He currently serves as interim pastor of the First Presbyterian Church of Hillsboro, Ohio. He is also adjunct faculty at Southern State Community College, teaching political science and courses on Western civilization. Terry is the chairperson of Highland County Republican Central Committee in Ohio.

## 1987

**Phyllis Cole-Dai** has published her 10<sup>th</sup> book, *For the Sake of One We Love and Are Losing: A Meditative Poem and Journal*. It can be found exclusively at [phylliscoledai.com](http://phylliscoledai.com)

**Bruce Kent** and his wife Dawn are enjoying retirement in Port Clinton. He is also serving a West Ohio Conference congregation. [bkent3@woh.rr.com](mailto:bkent3@woh.rr.com)

**Theodore Whitely** has recently received a Ph.D. in African American Ministry from Newburgh Theological Seminary in Newburgh, Indiana. His dissertation has been published as a book entitled, *African American Ministry Topics*, and is available for purchase through most major online book-retailers. [bettytedwhitely@att.net](mailto:bettytedwhitely@att.net)

## 1993

**Kathleen Sides** has retired from 27 years in parish ministry in Iowa. [kathysides@hotmail.com](mailto:kathysides@hotmail.com)

## 1995

**Ruth Ann Scoby** is currently living in Findlay, Ohio, and enjoying retirement from her position as an elder in the West Ohio Conference.

## 1997

**Sherry Parker-Lewis** has been appointed as senior director of church relations for the United Methodist Foundation of Michigan in July 2020. She and her husband, Rev. George Lewis, will reside in Mattawan, Michigan. [shparker01@gmail.com](mailto:shparker01@gmail.com)

## 1999

**Mark Butler** received the 2019 Champion of Children Award from the Ohio Family and Children First Coordinators Association. The association recognized his advocacy efforts, which resulted in \$18 million in funding to prevent forced custody relinquishment of multi-system youth. [markwbulter@live.com](mailto:markwbulter@live.com)

After 16 years in the field as a social worker, **Bethany Johnson** has been appointed to Mizpah UMC in Reidsville, North Carolina.

**Michael Ludle** began a new appointment at First UMC Ravenswood in the West Virginia Conference. He is celebrating his 18th year of appointments and his 11th year of ordination in the United Methodist Church. [pastormludle@gmail.com](mailto:pastormludle@gmail.com)

**Ken Moody-Arndt** retired in 2013 after serving in a variety of churches and denominational settings. He currently lives in Cleveland and attends Lakewood UMC, where he leads a Sunday communion service. He continues to enjoy being a singer and songwriter. He can be found playing at open-mic nights in Cleveland and the surrounding communities. [kenneth.moodyarnrdt333@gmail.com](mailto:kenneth.moodyarnrdt333@gmail.com)

Continues

# Students and alums ordained and commissioned

*We recognize and congratulate our alumni and students who have recently been ordained and commissioned, along with those taking other significant leadership steps. The list below is organized by conferences of the United Methodist Church, followed by other denominations.*

## Baltimore-Washington

Ordained as elder:

- **R. Lorraine Brown**, serving as pastor at Simpson UMC in Mount Airy, Maryland

## East Ohio

Commissioned as elder:

- **Jacob Heskett**, serving as associate pastor of Faith UMC in North Canton
- **Shannon Trenton**, serving as pastor of Church Hill UMC in Youngstown
- **Jonathan Williams**, serving as pastor of Minerva UMC in Minerva
- **Hyeran Yu**, serving as pastor of Mt. Zion UMC in Bucyrus

Ordained as elder:

- **Kyle Gould**, serving as pastor of Aldersgate UMC in Alliance
- **Luigi Perez Perez**, serving as pastor of La Porte UMC in Elyria

- **Amy Shipley**, serving as pastor at Bennett's Corners Community UMC in Hinckley

## Indiana

Commissioned as deacon:

- **Janelle Ohlemiller**, serving as associate pastor Grace UMC in Lafayette
- **Julie Pimlot**, serving at Heart to Heart Hospice and Main Street UMC in Boonville

## Michigan

Commissioned as elder:

- **Nick Berlanga**, serving as associate pastor of First UMC Ann Arbor
- **Martin Cobb**
- **Suzanne Hutchison**, serving as associate pastor of Plymouth First UMC

Ordained as elder:

- **Matthew Chapman**, serving as pastor of Traverse Bay UMC in Traverse City
- **Mary Loring**, serving as pastor of Belleville First UMC

Ordained as deacon:

- **Rodney Gasaway**, serving Newburg UMC in Livonia

## West Ohio

Commissioned as elder:

- **Andy Burns**, serving as pastor at Church of the Savior UMC in Westerville
- **Cecil Thompson**, serving as lead pastor of Braden UMC in Toledo

Ordained as elder:

- **Katya Brodbeck**, serving as associate pastor of Powell UMC

## West Virginia

Commissioned as elder:

- **Brad Davis**, serving as pastor at Nighbert Memorial UMC in Logan, West Virginia Orthodox Anglican Church

## Orthodox Anglican Church

Ordained to the priesthood:

- **John Kincaid**, serving as priest-in-charge at St. Mary Magdalene Anglican Mission in California United Church of Christ

## United Church of Christ

Ordained:

- **Susan Langner**, serving as minister to youth at First Community Church in Columbus
- **Joyce Wealand**, serving as pastor of Grace UCC in Uniontown

from previous page

## 2001

**Lee Bassett** retired from ministry in 2011 after serving as youth pastor at Murrysville First UMC in Murrysville, Pennsylvania. Lee continued to work as a Crisis Intervention Specialist for six years and became an early intervention case worker for the state of Pennsylvania. Lee retired in February 2019 after a series of health issues requiring surgery, therapy and a lengthy recovery.

## 2002

**Charles Neff** has recently been hired as Executive Director of Christian Ministry at Ashland University.

## 2004

**John Kincaid** has been ordained as a priest in the Orthodox Anglican Church. He is starting an Orthodox Anglican church plant in Palm Desert, California.  
[obi1.kennobi@gmail.com](mailto:obi1.kennobi@gmail.com)

**Denise McGuiness**, along with Rev. David Tinney, has released a new, expanded edition of *Available Light: Awakening Spirituality through Photography*.

[livingtreecs@comcast.net](mailto:livingtreecs@comcast.net)

## 2005

**Maureen Webber** has retired from her ministry at Bath Church UCC in Akron, Ohio. She and her husband, Dale, have enjoyed retirement by spending time with their children and grandchildren.

[revmowebber@gmail.com](mailto:revmowebber@gmail.com)

## 2007

**Paula Archdeacon** retired in January 2020. She and her husband bought a home and are enjoying their time with family in Newark, Ohio.  
[pk.pastorpaula@gmail.com](mailto:pk.pastorpaula@gmail.com)

## 2008

**Sandra Anderson** currently lives in Richmond, Virginia, where she works as a community-based counselor. In July 2020, Sandra passed the NCMHCE exam to become a licensed professional counselor.

[cabinetres@hotmail.com](mailto:cabinetres@hotmail.com)

**Nancy Day-Achauer** has been appointed to Maynard Avenue UMC in Columbus, Ohio.  
[nancypda@gmail.com](mailto:nancypda@gmail.com)

## 2010

**Matt Landry** was appointed Senior Pastor of First UMC of South Bend, Indiana, in July 2019. He recently received the Lacy Ecumenical Medal and an Honorary Doctor of Letters from St Paul's Christian University. In August 2019, Matt and his family welcomed their second son, Luke Joseph. Matt was featured in the August 2020 issue of *Michiana Life Magazine*.

[pastormattlandry@gmail.com](mailto:pastormattlandry@gmail.com)

## 2011

**Leslie Taylor** has been called to serve as the senior minister of First Christian Church (Disciples of Christ), in Concord, California.

[DrLCT@icloud.com](mailto:DrLCT@icloud.com)

## 2012

**Sue Tamilio**, an ordained United Church of Christ pastor, works full-time with formerly incarcerated individuals who suffer with severe and persistent mental health diagnoses and

### A REQUEST OF ALUMNI

## Build on your legacy by helping us recruit

### Here's how to have a conversation with a potential MTSO student

By Rev. Benjamin J. Hall, MTS '14  
*Director of Enrollment Management*

The COVID-19 pandemic has created challenges to the entirety of MTSO's campus, including our Admissions Office, which is embracing new ways to recruit dynamic and dedicated students.

Without campus visits and regional events, we've relied more heavily on virtual recruiting, hosting online open houses and participating in virtual graduate school events. Obviously, though, we miss the opportunity to engage in person with those who are looking into graduate theological education.

This, my fellow alum, is where we need your help. You are an MTSO graduate because you chose – before you ever set foot on our campus – to pursue a life of lasting significance. I invite you to expand



your personal legacy by helping potential servant leaders in your sphere of influence consider whether an MTSO education could set them on a path to a fulfilling vocation.

Chances are, you have a friend, a colleague, a member of your congregation or even a relative who has something special to offer the world. But it might feel a little daunting to broach the subject. I'd like to make it easier for you by sharing a few ways to think about that conversation.

**It's not your job to convince someone to attend theological school.** After you ask, "Have you ever considered attending seminary?" allow some time for the person to process your question. Then, listen. We once had a student who thought about seminary a full 15 years before she enrolled at MTSO.

addiction. Additionally, she began serving a quarter-time appointment at UMC of Brook Park in July. [sue.tamilio@gmail.com](mailto:sue.tamilio@gmail.com)

## 2014

**R. Lorraine Brown** was awarded a D.Min of Strategic Leadership in the Black Church from Garrett Evangelical Theological Seminary in Evanston, Illinois. [rev.rlbrown@gmail.com](mailto:rev.rlbrown@gmail.com)

**Jennifer Edwell** and her partner welcomed their son Beckham in November 2019.

In May 2020, she completed her Ph.D. at the University of North Carolina-Chapel Hill. She currently teaches at UC Berkeley. Her dissertation entitled, "Origin Stories: The Rhetorical Ecology of American Birth Medicine," can be viewed online at [cdr.lib.unc.edu/concern/dissertations/7h149w33d](http://cdr.lib.unc.edu/concern/dissertations/7h149w33d)

**Susan Ranous** has been appointed director of stewardship of the Upper New York Conference of the United Methodist Church. [sranousactg@twcny.rr.com](mailto:sranousactg@twcny.rr.com)

## 2016

**Wendy Hansen-Smith** has been appointed to Hopewell UMC in Groveport, Ohio. She also continues to serve at New Life Community Outreach in Columbus. [w.hansensmith@gmail.com](mailto:w.hansensmith@gmail.com)

**John Henderson** is pursuing a Master of Arts in Educational Studies with Higher Learning Education Administration concentration at the University of Cincinnati. [hendersonjohnt@gmail.com](mailto:hendersonjohnt@gmail.com)

## 2017

**Matthew Chapman** has been appointed to Traverse Bay UMC in Traverse City, Michigan. [pastor.matthew.chapman@gmail.com](mailto:pastor.matthew.chapman@gmail.com)

**Elizabeth (Staten) Gedert** and her husband welcomed their son Samuel in December 2019. She continues to serve as pastor of Zion United Church of Christ in Delaware, Ohio. [bethfromchurch@gmail.com](mailto:bethfromchurch@gmail.com)

## 2018

**Robert Blanchard** currently serves in a new appointment at Lansing First United Methodist Church in Michigan.

**Kelsey Ryan-Simkins** celebrated the arrival of her first child, Asher James, in March 2020. [krsimkins@gmail.com](mailto:krsimkins@gmail.com)

## 2020

**Megan Buehler** has recently been assigned to Church of the Redeemer UMC in Cleveland Heights. "We are a small but mighty reconciling congregation." [mbuehler08@gmail.com](mailto:mbuehler08@gmail.com)

**Cassie Oliver** is working at Carthage College as the assistant program coordinator for the Center of Faith and Spirituality. [coliver1993@gmail.com](mailto:coliver1993@gmail.com)

**Parish ministry is just one of many vocational paths that begin at MTSO:** We have students preparing for – and graduates thriving in – such fields as nonprofit leadership, counseling, public policy, health care and community organizing. We also have welcomed students already in those fields who realize an MTSO degree enhances their ability to make a difference where they are.

**Many successful MTSO students enroll before they figure out what they want to do "when they grow up."** We offer five master's degrees: Master of Divinity, Master of Arts in Counseling Ministries, Master of Theological Studies, Master of Arts in Practical Theology and Master of Arts in Social Justice. Students can and do begin in one program before switching to another when their call becomes clearer. Adding a second degree is another option. They can even get their feet wet by enrolling as what we call "occasional" students, taking a few classes to see if we're a good fit.

**Scholarships can reduce – or eliminate – a student's financial burden.** Potential graduate students who are understandably concerned about educational debt will likely be pleasantly surprised to learn about the options we offer. Half of MTSO's full-time master's students have earned full-tuition scholarships, and more than 90 percent have scholarships of some kind. Our admissions and financial-aid folks will help to identify seminary scholarships for which incoming students qualify.

**There's more to learn after a master's degree.** MTSO's Doctor of Ministry program provides those in ministry with advanced professional development in service to the church and the world. If you know someone who is looking to enhance their ability to analyze and conceptualize theological issues emerging from their ministry contexts, our D.Min. could be perfect for them.

**Your patience and availability are valuable.** Sometimes we talk to someone in the spring who ends up sitting in class a few short months later. Other times, we'll have conversations that continue for several years before leading to enrollment. After listening to your friend's discernment process, make it clear you're happy to chat again sometime. Whether they end up in seminary or not, they'll be honored by the generosity you show with your time and attention.

If your friend is ready to learn more, please share my email and phone number – or pass their name and contact information on to me, and I or one of my admissions colleagues will happily touch base. You can reach me at [bhall@mtso.edu](mailto:bhall@mtso.edu) or 740-362-3447.

Thanks for considering this vital service to the church, the world, the school and the person you approach. I look forward to hearing from you.

# History fuels a teaching ministry

## Shaped academically by MTSO, Tejai Beulah joins the teaching faculty

In mid-June, the Youngstown church where Tejai Beulah grew up invited her to speak from the pulpit at a special online service honoring graduates. As she prepared for the service, it struck her that her 18-year-old self might be surprised to take the moment in.

“I left there 19 years ago, and I wanted to be a lawyer,” Beulah said. “I’ve always felt a sense of call to ministry, but I never necessarily wanted to be a pastor, or even a preacher.” Over the intervening years – including her time at MTSO as a student, staff member and instructor – she has built a ministry on the foundation of her passion for history. What’s more, she has discovered in recent years that she enjoys preaching after all.

In December 2019, MTSO President Jay Rundell announced Beulah’s appointment as assistant professor of history, ethics, and Black church and African diaspora studies, effective July 1 of this year. She has served as MTSO’s coordinator of partnerships and the Black Church and African Diaspora Specialization since 2017 and has taught as an adjunct professor since 2015.

“Tejai has been part of this community through varied roles, from student to staff member to elected faculty member,” said MTSO President Jay Rundell. “Her character and intellectual curiosity have been consistent throughout.”

Beulah studied English, history, and gender and diversity studies at Xavier University before earning a master’s degree in African and African American studies from Ohio State University. Shortly after finishing her Ohio State degree, she lost her grandmother, Ellen Young, a largely self-taught Baptist preacher. Going through the papers her grandmother left behind, Beulah said, “We learned that Grandma was very smart. She always talked about not doing very well in high school, but I mean, sis could exegete a scripture passage.”

“At the time, I was working at a debt-collection agency, and it was horrible. And I just decided, ‘You know what? My grandmother never had the opportunity to go to seminary. And so I’m going to go to seminary just to see what happens.’ And what happened was that I rediscovered my profound love for history.”

Classes taught by MTSO Professor of Church History Diane Lobody and former instructor Patrick Clayborn energized Beulah and helped her envision a vocational path forward: “Diane Lobody was very helpful at tapping into a hidden dream of mine to do the work of a historian but also figure out how to do it in a way that allowed me to not only teach but to be, for lack of a better word, pastoral. I knew after she and I had done some work together that I want to go on to do the Ph.D. in American religious history.”



**Striving to “keep that community atmosphere” ✱**  
*Especially during a pandemic, Beulah sees room for a pastoral role in her classes*

Beulah earned her doctoral degree with distinction from Drew Theological School in 2018. Her dissertation was “Soul Salvation, Social Liberation: Race and Evangelical Christianity in the Black Power Era, 1968-1979.” Several years ago, while completing her comprehensive exams, Beulah approached MTSO and offered to teach classes within the Black Church and African Diaspora Studies specialization of the M.Div. degree program. Her adjunct work evolved into a staff position coordinating that specialization and the school’s institutional partnerships. Through one of those partnerships, she taught a well-received course, “Race, Religion and Nation: From Black Power to Black Lives Matter,” at the National Underground Railroad Freedom Center in Cincinnati.

Over the spring and summer of this year, as deaths of African-Americans at the hands of police led to fresh demands for an end to systemic racism, Beulah observed some responses with a certain bemusement. “I’m chuckling right now,” she said. “I mean, keep Aunt Jemima on the syrup. That’s not going to change policy. That’s not going to change laws. It’s not going to change hearts and minds about race.”

“We need to be able to expand learning experiences around social movements so that we can better equip people with

Continues on page 14

# Teaching homiletics within challenging contexts

## After two years as postdoctoral scholar, Kyle Brooks joins the MTSO faculty

As he watched the funeral of George Floyd, whose death under the knee of a Minneapolis police officer spurred a new era of racial reckoning in America, Kyle Brooks reflected on many things. One of those things – perhaps not the most significant – concerned the presence of Rev. Al Sharpton, who was invited to deliver a eulogy.

As a scholar and homiletician, Brooks was reminded of the doctoral work he has done at Vanderbilt University, where his dissertation examines the role of black clergymen such as Sharpton, Martin Luther King Jr. and Jesse Jackson in social political movements. “Not to discount the value of or particular uses of charismatic leadership – or the sort of selective ways that one’s rhetoric can be useful for galvanizing people,” he said. “But ultimately, I see those as ways of immediately gathering and structuring, but not the mechanisms by which we ultimately do the kind of hard groundwork of social change.”

“I think there are some flaws to that kind of formative process that in so many ways end up equating leadership with a certain kind of masculine embodiment and performance. And so what gets ignored, say, in the March on Washington, which provides us the major, iconic moment of King’s career, is you’ve got a whole host of women involved in the making of that event and the structuring of that event who aren’t mentioned.”

“I’m trying to argue for how we can imagine new models and paradigms that aren’t so tightly tethered to this idea of celebrity. You don’t have to be famous to be an effective leader. You don’t have to be an icon to be an influence. And I think if we get that, it’s a healthier way to think about

sustainable forms of social change and transformation.”

Brooks’ doctoral work at Vanderbilt builds on a B.A. in molecular, cellular and developmental biology, and an M.A. in urban education studies, both from Yale University, and an M.Div. from Yale Divinity School. In July, following a two-year postdoctoral fellowship at MTSO through the Louisville Institute, he began an appointment as assistant professor of homiletics, worship, and Black church and African diasporic studies.

“During Kyle’s fellowship, we understood it was our responsibility to create a space for him to learn and grow,” said MTSO President Jay Rundell. “Over those two years, we realized how much Kyle has been teaching and stretching us.”

Brooks vividly recalls his first visit to MTSO in March 2018: “I remember feeling a sense of clear purpose, and I thought, ‘MTSO is a place that knows who it is and why it’s doing what it does.’”

“As a person who tends to be very introverted, a life in close community is a sort of new thing for me,” he said. “Living on campus the last couple years has been really great in the sense of, ‘Hey, I can walk to my office, and I can wave to folks and see people.’”

Introvert or not, Brooks realized in March of this year, when in-person classes ceased at MTSO, that he needed to rethink how he taught his homiletics students.

“The entire crisis has been forcing me to adapt and to say, ‘You must become a different kind of teacher in a moment where different types of needs are presenting



**“A life in close community is a sort of new thing for me”** \* Brooks has enjoyed living on the campus where he teaches

themselves. And some of it’s going to be trial and error.”

Layered over the challenge of pandemic teaching this fall is the broader recognition of systemic racism. Brooks knows his students, like many practicing pastors, struggle over approaching social justice with parishioners who have widely varying experiences and viewpoints.

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## Tejai Beulah

From page 12

information that will help them to see what worked, what didn't work and how we pull that work into what we're doing now," she said. Toward that end, she invited MTSO students and others to join her in a "Radical Readers" virtual book club. One recent selection was *Medical Apartheid: The Dark History of Medical Experimentation on Black Americans* by Harriet Washington, which Beulah chose to "help readers think about our obligations to the poor, children, prisoners and other vulnerable communities as conversations around COVID-19 and vaccinations begin to happen."

In addition to her work at MTSO, Beulah was invited to join others in founding the Freedom Church of the Poor, a new initiative of Union Theological Seminary's Kairos Center for Religions, Rights, and Social Justice. She said the group's original plan was to read the Bible in person with individuals in poor communities and talk with them about interpreting scripture "in light of what's happening in their

lives." When that ran headlong into the coronavirus pandemic, the project moved to weekly Facebook videos, with services beginning in April.

**"In the classroom I'll say, 'Hey, I need you to center down and really think about why you are here. Are you in the ministry that you really want to be in? Are you doing the work that you really want to do?'"**

On the fourth Sunday of each month, Beulah has been preaching at the virtual gathering, sharing space with leaders such as Liz Theoharis, co-chair of the Poor People's Campaign: A National Call for Moral Revival. "It is really interesting to be preaching regularly, which is not something that I anticipated for myself," she said. "I find that I appreciate this work more than I thought that I would."

COVID-19 has forced Beulah to adapt within her day job, too, of course. Like all of MTSO's faculty and students, she saw her work shift online abruptly in mid-March.

"I think the most important thing about what has happened with the pandemic is that it has forced me to be OK with over-preparation, because you miss the organic stuff that happens in class," she said. "Trying to keep that community atmosphere is the most challenging part."

Beulah wants to be sure, whether in person or online, that she continues to both teach students and help them, as she was helped, to discern a sense of vocational direction.

"I'll say, 'Hey, I need you to center down and really think about why you are here. Are you in the ministry that you really want to be in? Are you doing the work that you really want to do?' So it gives me an opportunity to not only just do the work of a historian or do the work of a scholar, but it's also an extension of ministry, I think." ✱

## Kyle Brooks

From page 13

"I realize they come from various backgrounds and serve in different contexts," he said. "And so in some ways the kinds of conversations we have in class would be very difficult – perhaps nigh impossible – ones to have in certain settings that they might operate in."

"But what I say at the very least is that you have to know yourself well, and I do push them: 'Hey, let's put some concrete and specific language to our theologies, to our ethical values and principles, so that we can then be very clear about not just what we're called to do but to whom and to what we're called to respond.'"

Brooks is serving a unique parish of sorts during the current academic year, as he takes on leadership of the students, faculty and staff who coordinate MTSO's

Tuesday chapel services. "I'm really excited about that," he said. "I know that's a unique challenge in times where we are socially distancing and figuring out how to be together when we can't always be together physically. But if you want to ask me what a call is, I think it's that you're invited into a space of challenge to which you will now respond."

**Brooks vividly recalls his first visit to MTSO in March 2018: "I remember feeling a sense of clear purpose, and I thought, 'MTSO is a place that knows who it is and why it's doing what it does.'"**

Chapel on a seminary campus reminds him of trips during his youth to Detroit's North American International Auto Show,

where he was drawn to the concept cars – "these projections into the future."

"On one hand, yeah, there are the tried and true models. There are things that are a part of our long histories and traditions and liturgical rituals. It's good to remind people, this is why we do what we do, and here's why it's important and why it's perennial – and at the same time have the room and the space to try out some new concepts. I like to strike a mixture and not be so disorienting that people feel detached or disconnected but to help people stretch in a way that feels invigorating and enlightening."

It's safe to say Brooks feels invigorated and affirmed by his appointment to the faculty: "MTSO has felt like a place where not only can I set down some roots but I'm also valued and appreciated. I'm not just a cog in the machine, but I'm a person that people know, with a name and a journey and a story." ✱



# Beyond the classroom

## Faculty activities 2018-19



**Tejai Beulah**  
Assistant Professor  
of History, Ethics,  
and Black Church  
and African Diaspora  
Studies

### Professional and guild meetings

American Academy of Religion, San Diego, November 2019.

### Academic lectures and presentations

“Black Christian Intellectuals? Reimagining 20th Century Black Women’s Work,” MTSO Scholarship Competition, February 2020.

### Church and popular presentations

“Howard Thurman’s Footprints of a Dream: How to Fellowship with All Peoples,” Ohio Council of Churches’ 100th anniversary conference, MTSO, Sept. 6, 2019.

### Preaching

MTSO chapel service, Feb. 4, 2020.

Preached virtually on multiple occasions for Facebook’s Freedom Church of the Poor, part of the Reading the Bible with the Poor group, sponsored by the Kairos Center of Union Theological Seminary and the National Poor People’s Campaign, Spring 2020.

Presenter for graduation service, New Bethel Baptist Church, Youngstown, June 14, 2020.



**Valerie Bridgeman**  
Dean  
Vice President  
for Academic Affairs

### Publications

“Interpreting the Bible in the Age of #BlackLivesMatter: The Gideon Story and Scholarly Commitments,” 311-325, in *Second Wave Intertextuality and the Hebrew Bible*, Atlanta: SBL Press, 2019.

### Academic lectures and presentations

“Christian Preaching,” presented during

Unitarian Universalist conference on Being a UU Student in Christian Seminaries, July 8, 2019.

Presented four lectures at Anderson University School of Theology & Christian Ministry: “The Body Speaks: Embodied Complaint in the Book of Job,” “‘Because I’m the Deity’ and Other Unsatisfactory Answers in the Book of Job,” “The Book of Job on Communal Trauma and Suffering,” and “The Book of Job on Creation and Why We Should Care about Planet Earth,” Oct. 21, 2019.

“Womanist Tribe Rising and Coalition Building in the Guild,” presented in joint session of Women in the Biblical World and Feminist Hermeneutics of the Bible at the Society of Biblical Literature Annual Meeting, San Diego, Nov. 26, 2019.

### Professional and guild meetings

American Academy of Religion/Society of Biblical Literature Annual Meetings, San Diego. Elected to the Women in the Profession Committee, Society of Biblical Literature, November 2019.

### Church and popular presentations

“Seminary for the 21st Century,” at The Fellowship of Affirming Ministries, Atlantic City, July 16, 2019.

### Preaching

New Salem Baptist Church, Columbus, Oct. 13, 2019.

Princeton University Chapel, Princeton, New Jersey, Dec. 6, 2019.

Academy of Homiletics, New Brunswick, New York, Dec. 8, 2019.

### Other activities

Day of Return Pilgrimage and Study Tour, Ghana, July 24-Aug. 6, 2019.

Convener and Panel presider, Ohio Council of Churches’ 100th anniversary conference, MTSO, Sept. 6, 2019.

Dean of Seminarians, National Council of Churches Christian Unity Gathering, Hampton, Virginia, Oct. 13-16, 2019.



**Kyle Brooks**  
Assistant Professor  
of Homiletics,  
Worship, and Black  
Church and African  
Diasporic Studies

### Publications

“The Sound of Celebration: Digital Interventions in the Black Church Whooping Tradition,” *Fire!!!* Vol. 6, No. 1, Theorizing the Digital Black Church, Spring 2020.

“Conclusion: Our Pedagogical Task” in “Short Takes: Teaching in Times of Crisis: Practices and Promises of Liberative Pedagogies,” *Journal of Feminist Studies in Religion* Vol. 36, No. 1, 2020.

### Academic lectures and presentations

“Teaching in Times of Crisis: Practices and Promises of Liberative Pedagogies,” American Academy of Religion Annual Meeting, San Diego, Nov. 23, 2019.

### Church and popular presentations

Panelist, “In the Beginning Was the Word: Understanding the Intersection of Rhetoric, Race, and Religion,” African American Public Address Pre-Conference at National Communication Association, Baltimore, Nov. 13, 2019.



**Paul Burnam**  
Director of the  
Dickhaut Library

### Publications

“Everett Tilson: Pioneer in the Condemnation of White Privilege,” *Ohio History*, 127 (2020).

Continues

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**Jeffrey Jaynes,**  
**Professor in the**  
**Warner Chair of**  
**Church History**  
**Director of the Doctor**  
**of Ministry Program**

**Publications**

Review of Maciej Ptaszyński's *Beruf und Berufung: Die evangelische Geistlichkeit und die Konfessionsbildung in den Herzogtümern Pommern, 1560-1618 in Sixteenth Century Journal*, Summer 2019.

**Academic lectures and presentations**

"Beyond 'Cut and Paste': Johannes Bugenhagen and Contextual Reform in the Hansa Cities," at Sixteenth Century Studies, St. Louis, October 2019.

**Professional and guild meetings**

Sixteenth Century Studies, St. Louis, October 2019.

**Preaching**

Rose Run Presbyterian Church, New Albany, Sept. 15, 2019.

Boulevard Presbyterian Church, Grandview Heights, Oct. 13, 2019.



**Paul Kim**  
**Professor of Hebrew**  
**Bible in the Williams**  
**Chair of Biblical**  
**Studies**

**Publications**

"Ruth vis-à-vis Esther: Reading Intertextually Ruth the 'Widow' and Esther the 'Orphan' as Diasporic 'Immigrants,'" in *The Korean Journal of Old Testament Studies* 74 (2019).

"Fun in the Pun in Deciphering Isaiah," essays in honor of Tai-il Wang, *Canon and Culture: A Journal of Biblical Interpretation in Context* 13 (2019).

Review of Jongkyung Lee's *A Redactional Study of the Book of Isaiah 13-23 in Oxford Theology and Religion Monographs in Biblica* 100 (2019).

Review of Shawn Zelig Aster, *Reflections of Empire in Isaiah 1-39: Responses to Assyrian Ideology*, Atlanta: Society of Biblical Literature

Press, 2017, in *Biblical Interpretation* 28 (2020).

**Academic lectures and presentations**

"Were There (or Can There Be) 'Good' Slave-Owners? An Intertextual Dialogue among Genesis 21, Exodus 21, and Deuteronomy 15," Society of Biblical Literature Annual Meeting, San Diego, November 2019.

"E Pluribus Unum: Finding Intertextual Threads That Unite the Book of Isaiah," Society of Biblical Literature International Meeting, Rome, Italy, July 3, 2019.

"Ruth vis-à-vis Esther: Reading Intertextually, Exploring Diaspora Hermeneutics," keynote address at 111th Conference of the Korean Society of the Old Testament Studies, Daejeon, Korea, Sept. 20, 2019.

**Professional and guild meetings**

Society of Biblical Literature International Meeting, Rome, Italy, July 1-5, 2019.

111th Conference of the Korean Society of the Old Testament Studies, Daejeon, Korea, Sept. 20, 2019.

Society of Biblical Literature Annual Meeting, San Diego, Nov. 21-26, 2019.

**Church and popular presentations**

"Intertextuality: Its Method and Praxis," Seoul Christian University, Seoul, Korea, Sept. 22, 2019.

**Preaching**

"Kingdom of God," Indianola Presbyterian Church, Columbus, Aug. 11, 2019.

"Hall of Faith," Condit Presbyterian Church, Condit, Aug. 18, 2019.

Mt. Vernon First Presbyterian Church, Mt. Vernon, Oct. 6, 2019.

"Baby Boomers, Millennials, Gen X, Y, Z," Condit Presbyterian Church, Jan. 5, 2020.

"What Are Most Important," Korean Presbyterian Church of Columbus, Columbus, Feb. 16, 2020.



**Sarah Lancaster**  
**Professor in the**  
**Werner Chair of**  
**Theology**

**Academic lectures and presentations**

"Sin and Duty: Methodists, Moravians, and

Antinomianism," Manchester Wesley Research Centre, American Academy of Religion Annual Meeting, San Diego, November 2019.

"John Wesley's Interaction with the Moravians in England," seminar at Nazarene Theological College, Didsbury, England (via Zoom), March 28, 2020.

**Professional and guild meetings**

Post Way Forward Gathering of United Methodist Scholars, Lovers Lane United Methodist Church, Dallas, Aug. 7-8, 2019.

American Academy of Religion Annual Meeting, San Diego, Nov. 22-26, 2019.

**Church and popular presentations**

"Not Giving Up on the Authority of Scripture," Post Way Forward Gathering of United Methodist Scholars, Dallas, Aug. 7-8, 2019.

"Ecumenism and the Disinherited Reconsidering Mission" Ohio Council of Churches' 100th anniversary conference, MTSO, Sept. 6, 2019.

"Making Sense of the Bible: Inspiration and Inerrancy," Moebius Group, Church of the Messiah, Westerville, Feb. 20, 2020.

"But the Bible Says It's Wrong," A Place to Be Group, Church of the Messiah, Westerville.



**Elaine**  
**Nogueira-Godsey**  
**Assistant Professor**  
**of Theology, Ecology**  
**and Race**

**Publications**

"Towards a Decological Praxis" in *Horizontes Decoloniales* 1 (2019).

"Tangible Actions Toward Solidarity: An Ecofeminist Analysis of Women's Participation in Food Justice," with Kelsey Ryan-Simkins, in *Valuing Lives, Healing Earth*, Louvain, Belgium: Peeters Publishers, forthcoming.

"Por uma Práxis Decológica" In *Religião, Gênero, Violências e Direitos Humanos*, Vitória, Brazil: Editora Unida, 2019.

"Beyond God the Mother and God the Father" in *The Immanent Frame*, June 2019.

"The Joy of Working Groups" in *The International Society for the Study of Religion, Nature and Culture*, 2019.

"Recognizing and Coming to Terms with 'Dominant-Subordinated' Relationships" in

*The Future of "Science and Religion": Beyond "Religion" and "Science,"* 2019.

Assistant editor, *Journal for the Study of Religion, Nature and Culture*, 2016-present.

### Academic lectures and presentations

"Women's Participation in Food Justice: Developing Transnational Solidarity," with Kelsey Ryan-Simkins, MTSO, Sept. 24, 2019.

"Creating and Expanding Public Spheres and Climate Change," American Academy of Religion/Society of Biblical Literature Women's Caucus, American Academy of Religion, San Diego, Nov. 23, 2019.

"Recognizing and Coming to Terms with 'Dominant-Subordinated' Relationships," International Society for Science and Religion, American Academy of Religion, San Diego, Nov. 24, 2019.

"Connecting Theology, Ecology and Race: A Conversation on Environmental Justice," Furman University, Greenville, South Carolina, March 26, 2020.

### Professional and guild meetings

Wabash Workshop for Early Career Theological School Faculty, Wabash College, Crawfordsville, Indiana, July 15-20, 2019.

American Academy of Religion Annual Meeting in San Diego, November 2019.

Pre-conference meeting of the International Society for the Study of Religion, Nature and Culture, American Academy of Religion, San Diego, Nov. 22, 2019.

Pre-conference meeting of the Feminist Liberation Theologians Network, American Academy of Religion, San Diego, Nov. 22, 2019.

Religions and Ecology Unit luncheon, American Academy of Religion, San Diego, Nov. 22, 2019.

### Other activities

MTSO delegation to Borderlinks, Tucson, Arizona, Aug. 14-20, 2019.

Wage Theft Clinic, Central Ohio Worker Center, Oct. 5, 2019.

"Peer Mentoring Clusters" Wabash Center grant, with Swasti Bhattacharyya and Verna Marina Ehret, 2019-2020.

Treasurer, International Society for the Study of Religion, Nature and Culture, 2019-2022.

Co-chair, American Academy of Religion/Society of Biblical Literature Women's Caucus, 2020-2022.

Steering committee, Latina/o, Religion, Culture and Society Unit, American Academy of Religion/Society of Biblical Literature, 2020-2022.



**Dr. Paul D. Numrich**

**Professor in the Snowden Chair for the Study of Religion and Interreligious Relations**

### Publications

"Epilogue: Understanding a Decentralised Social Movement" in *The Interfaith Movement: Mobilising Religious Diversity in the 21st Century*, London: Routledge, 2019.

### Academic lectures and presentations

"Worldview Competency in Health Care," Spiritual Care Grand Rounds, Wexner Medical Center, Columbus.

### Professional and guild meetings

"Faith Leaders Workshop," Grady Memorial Hospital, Delaware.

"Ethics for the Set-Apart Ministry: Advanced Course," Greenville.

### Church and popular presentations

Panel moderator, "Civility in an Era of Hostility: An Interfaith Perspective," Interfaith Association of Central Ohio, Columbus.

### Other activities

Consulted with Chicago History Museum on Chicago Sacred project.

Annual Kristallnacht Commemoration, Bexley.



**Fulgence Nyengele**

**Professor of Pastoral Care and Counseling in the Chryst Chair in Pastoral Theology**

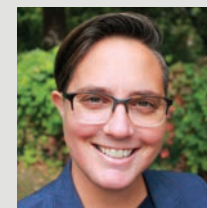
**Director of the Master of Arts in Counseling Ministries Program**

### Publications

*Développement et Croissance du Méthodisme Uni en RD Congo: Origines, Défis, et Possibilités* (Development and Expansion of United

## MTSO welcomes Louisville Institute postdoctoral scholar

MTSO has appointed Kathryn Common visiting assistant professor of practical theology and a Louisville Institute



**Kathryn Common**

postdoctoral scholar for the 2020-21 and

2021-22 academic years. She began her work at MTSO Sept. 30.

The Louisville Institute, funded by the Religion Division of Lilly Endowment, is providing Common's salary, benefits and travel expenses.

Common is completing her Ph.D. at Boston University School of Theology. She holds a Master of Arts in Theological Research degree from Andover Newton Theological School and a Bachelor of Fine Arts in Visual Communication Design from Kent State University.

Common's teaching experience at BU includes coordinating a "Religion and Conflict Transformation" course and serving as instructor of "Design Thinking for Leadership," a seminar for faith and nonprofit leaders.

"I am grateful for the support of the Louisville Institute and for the addition of this outstanding new colleague," said MTSO President Jay Rundell.

Common is the second Louisville Institute postdoctoral scholar to teach at MTSO. Kyle Brooks began a two-year fellowship in the fall of 2018 and was subsequently appointed to MTSO's faculty as assistant professor of homiletics, worship, and Black church and African diasporic studies in July.

Continues

from previous page

Methodism in DR Congo: Origins, Challenges, and Possibilities), Nashville: General Board of Higher Education and Ministry, 2020.

**Professional and guild meetings**

“Decolonial and Postcolonial Relational Engagement with Borders and Hybrid Identities,” 35th Anniversary of the Society for Pastoral Theology, San Diego, June 2020.

**Church and popular presentations**

Taught “Pastoral Counseling and Congregational Care” course at the Burundi Conference Course of Study Program, Burundi Conference of the United Methodist Church, Bujumbura, Burundi, Feb. 8-15, 2020.



**Joon-Sik Park**

**Professor in the E. Stanley Jones Chair of World Evangelism**

**Director of Course of Study School of Ohio**

**Publications**

Contributing editor for *International Bulletin of Mission Research*.

Editorial Board of *Theology of Mission* (Journal of the Korean Society of Missiology).

**Professional and guild meetings**

Course of Study Directors Meeting, Dallas, Oct. 29-30, 2019.

American Society of Missiology Board of Directors Retreat, Chicago, Dec. 6-7, 2019.

**Church and popular presentations**

“Renewal and Recommitment,” Mansfield Korean United Methodist Church, Mansfield, Aug. 11, 2019.

“Facing God,” Dayton Korean United Methodist Church, Dayton, Aug. 25, 2019.

“The Missional Call of the Church,” Korean Church of Columbus English Ministry, Columbus, Oct. 13, 2019.

“Seeking God’s Reign and Righteousness,” Amen Methodist Church, Seoul, Korea, Jan. 12, 2020.



**Susan Ritchie**

**Fully Affiliated Faculty, Theology**  
**Director of Unitarian Universalist House of Studies**

**Academic lectures and presentations**

“Myths of the Underground Railroad: Formerly Enslaved Persons and the Universalists of Girard, Pennsylvania,” Universalist Convocation, October 2019.

**Professional and guild meetings**

UU Ministers Association, Central East Regional Group, September 2019.

UUMA Cluster monthly meetings.

**Church and popular presentations**

“History of Lay Ministry in Unitarian Universalism,” UU General Assembly, June 2019.

“The Victorian (Cult)ure of Death,” Greenlawn Cemetery Association, October 2019.

“Complexities of Interdependence: The Unitarian Universalist Response to Albert Schweitzer,” Interfaith Association of Central Ohio, October 2019.

“Life and Ethics of Albert Schweitzer,” Interfaith Association of Central Ohio Conference, October 2019.

“World Religions in Eight Sessions,” presented for inmates through the Horizon Prison Initiative, Ohio Reformatory for Women, fall 2019.

“What Strange Love Is This?” at Historic Reunification of the Cleveland UU Congregations, Cleveland, September 2019.

Sermons as minister of the North Unitarian Universalist Congregation in Lewis Center, Ohio.

**Other activities**

Organized the first-ever Convocation for UU Students at Non-UU Theological Schools, July 2019.

Horizon Prison Initiative Board Member, UU Society for Community Ministry.



**Ryan Schellenberg**

**Associate Professor of New Testament**

**Academic lectures and presentations**

“The Prisoner of Jesus Christ’ and ‘The New Socrates’: Imprisonment and Authority in the Roman World,” Society of Biblical Literature Annual Meeting, San Diego, Nov. 25, 2019.

Response to Troy Martin, “Ἀγαπητοὶ Ἀδελφοί (“Beloved Siblings”): Septuagintal Terms of Endearment in Early Christian Literature,” Atlanta New Testament Colloquium, June 1, 2020.

Book review panelist, *Ancient Rhetoric and the New Testament: The Influence of Elementary Greek Composition* by Mikeal C. Parsons and Michael Wade Martin, Society of Biblical Literature Annual Meeting, San Diego, Nov. 24, 2019.

**Church and popular presentations**

“Ancient Christian Resources for Confronting Mass Incarceration,” Ohio Council of Churches’ 100th anniversary conference, MTSO, Sept. 6, 2019.

“Paul, Prison, and the Justice of God,” Annual Mennonite Bible Study Series, Mountain Lake, Minnesota, Jan. 10-12, 2020.

**Preaching**

MTSO chapel, Sept. 24, 2019.



**Timothy Van Meter**

**Associate Professor in the Alford Chair of Christian Education and Youth Ministry**

**Coordinator of Ecological Initiatives**

**Academic lectures and presentations**

“Ecological Engagement in Theological Institutions,” American Academy of Religion, Nov. 2, 2019.

“Cultivating Hope, Courage, and Vision at the End of it All,” keynote address at Los Angeles Symposium on Ecologically Responsible Theological Education, Brandeis-Bardin campus of the American Jewish University, Simi Valley, California, Nov. 4, 2019.

“Cultivating Hope, Courage and Vision,” keynote address at Chicago Symposium on Ecologically Responsible Theological Education, Lutheran School of Theology at Chicago, Dec. 6, 2019.

### Professional and guild meetings

Association for Advancement of Sustainability in Higher Education, Spokane, Washington, Oct. 27-30, 2019.

American Academy of Religion Annual Meeting, San Diego, Nov. 22-26, 2019.

### Church and popular presentations

“Climate Change and Faith,” General Board of Higher Education and Ministry of the United Methodist Church, July 11-14, 2019.

“Creation Care Imperatives for the Local Church,” State of Ohio United Church of Christ Conference, Westerville, Sept. 28, 2019.

United Methodist Church Indiana Creation Care Conference, Fort Wayne, Oct. 19, 2019.

### Other activities

Attended Climate Underground Regenerative Agriculture Conference at Al Gore’s Caney Fork Farm, Carthage, Tennessee, Oct. 13 and 14, 2019.

Planned and led Luce-funded conferences at American Jewish University, Simi Valley,

California (November 2019) and Lutheran School of Theology at Chicago (December 2019).

Board chair, Ohio Interfaith Power and Light. Treasurer, Hispanic Summer Program.



### Robin Knowles Wallace

Professor in the Taylor Endowed Chair of Worship and Music

### Publications

Editor, *The Hymn: A Journal of Congregational Song*, Hymn Society in the U.S. and Canada, Summer 2019, Autumn 2019 and Winter 2020.

“Hymnic Anniversaries 2020” in *The Hymn* 70:3:37, Summer 2019.

“Annual Conference Report 2019” in *The Hymn* 70:4:35, Autumn 2019.

Review of *Rooted and Rising: Voices of Courage in a Time of Climate Crisis* by Leah D. Schade and Margaret Bullitt-Jonas, in *Interpretation*, forthcoming.

### Professional and guild meetings

The Hymn Society in the United States and

Canada, Richardson, Texas, July 14-18, 2019.

Editorial Advisory Board Annual Meeting, The Hymn Society of the United States and Canada, July 14, 2019.

The Hymn Society of Great Britain and Ireland, Canterbury, England, July 23-25, 2019.

### Preaching

Eucharist service, Hymn Society of Great Britain and Ireland, Canterbury, U.K., July 24, 2019. Subsequently published as the editorial in the *Hymn Society of Great Britain and Ireland Bulletin* 301, Volume 22, No. 8, Autumn 2019.

Grace United Church of Christ, Lancaster, Aug. 18, 2019.

St. Michael’s United Church of Christ, Baltimore, Ohio, Sept. 1, 2019

### Other activities

Served on Department for Church and Authorized Ministry for the Central Southeast Ohio Association of the United Church of Christ, 2019.

Interviewed about the Triduum with MTSO alum Andy Burns, Church of the Saviour, Westerville, April 6, 2020.

Discussion with MTSO alum Cordelia Burpee, Congregational Church of South Hero, South Hero, Vermont, May 31, 2020.

Participated and sang with Space for Peace, out of the University of Winchester, Winchester, U.K., June 1 and 15, 2020.

## EMERITUS PASSAGE

### Bill Casto, 1942-2020

William Harper Casto Jr., emeritus professor of church administration, died Jan. 3, 2020. He served on the MTSO faculty from 1975 to 1997.

Casto was a graduate of Upper Arlington High School and received a B.S. and Ph.D. from the Ohio State University College of Education. He earned a Master of Divinity degree from MTSO in 1968 and was ordained in the United Methodist Church.

Much of Casto’s education and professional career centered on live theatre production and teaching. At MTSO, he taught church leadership, urban ministry, field education and



worship leadership. He also spent time in campus ministry at the University of Virginia, Ohio Wesleyan

University, Kent State University and Ohio State. Advocating for marginalized people and social justice was a major focus of his life, especially in retirement.

He is survived by his wife, Jennifer Casto; children Shelly (Kevin Fish), Trevor and Dana (Shelley Coleman Casto); five grandchildren; brother Michael (Sally Casto); and two nephews.

A celebration of Casto’s life was held Jan. 9 at Worthington United Methodist Church.



### Yvonne Zimmerman

Associate Academic Dean

Associate Professor of Christian Ethics

### Academic lectures and presentations

“Reducing Harm, Practicing Faith and Building Relationships: Lessons on Collaborating Across Religious Differences,” keynote address for the Rights, Dignity and Religion: Responding to Modern Slavery Conference, University of Sheffield, Sheffield, U.K. Jan. 24, 2020.

### Professional and guild meetings

American Academy of Religion Annual Meeting, San Diego, November 2019.

Women Advancing in Leadership, Association of Theological Schools. Pittsburgh, Oct. 23-25, 2019.

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Thomas Kiracofe

Continues

**IN MEMORIAM**

We have learned of the deaths of the following alumni and friends of the school since the publication of last year's magazine. We mourn their passing and give thanks for the many ways they contributed to MTSO.

Rev. H. Devon Allen '68  
Rev. Theron E. Bailey '63  
W. T. Beckett  
Ronald E. Benson

Merrill Braymer  
William F. Brion  
Rev. Susan E. Brown '06  
Elizabeth Burge  
Anthony Carmichael  
Dr. William H. Casto Jr. '68  
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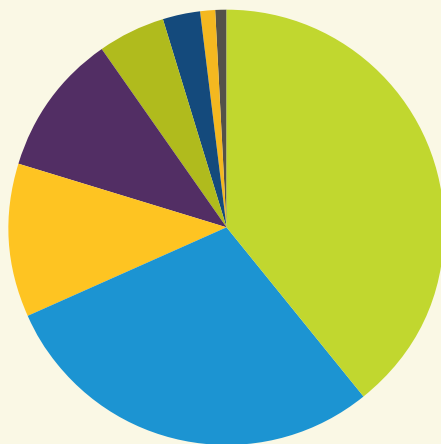
# Financial information

In the fiscal year ending June 30, 2020, Methodist Theological School in Ohio had revenues of \$7,426,323 and expenditures of \$7,424,333.

## Revenue and expenditures for Fiscal Year 2019-20 (unaudited)

### Revenues

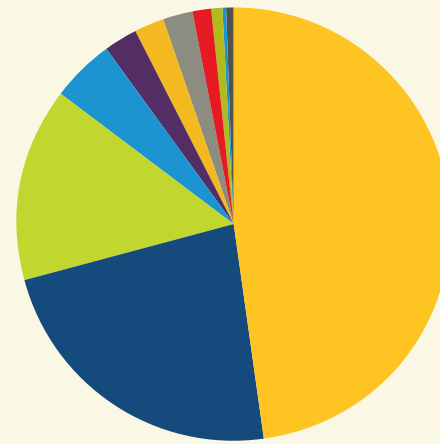
MTSO relied primarily on two sources of income: endowment earnings (39.3 percent of total revenue) and tuition and fees (29.3 percent). Combined gift revenue accounted for 8.7 percent of total revenues.



	Revenue	Percent of total
Endowment	\$2,915,010	39.3%
Tuition and fees	\$2,175,199	29.3%
Other programs and services	\$843,977	11.4%
Ministerial Education Fund	\$769,486	10.4%
Release of restricted gifts	\$366,920	4.9%
Methesco Fund gifts	\$215,076	2.9%
Federal work study	\$77,989	1.0%
Student aid gifts	\$62,666	0.8%
<b>Total revenue</b>	<b>\$7,426,323</b>	<b>100%</b>

### Expenditures

Compensation of faculty and staff accounted for 48 percent of the MTSO operating budget, followed by student financial aid (22.9 percent) and other programs and services (14.6 percent), which include such items as the Course of Study School of Ohio.



	Expenditures	Percent of total
Compensation and benefits	\$3,566,484	48.0%
Financial aid	\$1,699,678	22.9%
Other programs and services	\$1,084,424	14.6%
Plant maintenance	\$337,324	4.5%
General administration	\$182,414	2.5%
Academic support	\$169,704	2.3%
Business administration	\$168,777	2.3%
Information systems	\$100,090	1.3%
Enrollment	\$63,144	0.9%
Institutional advancement	\$26,574	0.4%
Instruction	\$25,720	0.3%
<b>Total expenditures</b>	<b>\$7,424,333</b>	<b>100%</b>

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