

the hearth URBANA THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY

www.urbana theological seminary.org

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Urbana Seminary will be ONLINE ONLY for FALL 2020

On June 26th, the Core Faculty of Urbana Seminary made the decision that all of our classes in the Fall Semester of 2020 would be offered online. The decision was made prayerfully, listening for the Lord's direction and wisdom. The resurgence of COVID-19 in so many places, and the uncertainty which this presents for schools returning to in-person instruction this Fall, pointed to this as the wise choice.

Our Lord calls us to love one another, and in that light we do not desire to be a cause for the spread of the virus. In addition, in order to focus on student success, it is best to plan a course for the entire semester either in-person or online. Rather than designing instruction for the classroom and then facing a mid-semester pivot online (as we were required to do in mid-March), the Seminary Faculty will design each class for the upcoming semester for online delivery. This allows us to uphold best practices in online course design and ensure that we maintain the highest quality of education, as is always the goal.

This does have the benefit that wherever you live, you can enroll! Whether you're in Chicago, Colorado, or Greenland, this is your chance to refresh your knowledge or get started on learning about God, the Bible, and Ministry skills. Come and join us, come and grow, come and deepen!

Go to page 3 to find out how to enroll this fall!

“...I imagined Zoom might be too artificial a means to really get the most out of a learning experience. I was delighted how effectively class (I've now taken three by Zoom) have worked out. No technical glitches, thanks to Kay on that point, and well managed class time, thanks to Professors on that point. Because I live 75 miles from UTS a 2 1/2 hour class would have been a 5 hour commitment. So I say....Zoom on!”

Leon Holschbach

Meet Our New Adjuncts

This year, Urbana Seminary is adding two new adjuncts whom we want you to get to know!



This summer, we were pleased to have local pastor Chi-Ying Wang teach an in-depth study of The Book of Ephesians! Before moving to Champaign in 2019, Chi-Ying taught the Beginning Greek sequence at Trinity (Deerfield, IL) beginning in 2008. Bringing to the table her expertise as a former software engineer, she participated in the design and implementation of the

online Beginning Greek courses for Trinity, and is the coauthor of the upcoming *Introduction to Biblical Greek Syntax and Linguistics Workbook*, which is the companion of a textbook for first-year Greek grammar. Born and raised in Taiwan, she also preached and taught extensively in Mandarin. For years she regularly preached at churches in Illinois, and she has taught intensive courses in Mandarin for various seminaries in the US, Taiwan, and Hong Kong. She is currently serving as visiting teaching minister at Champaign Chinese Christian Church.



Our other new adjunct, Anne Alexander, has been a missionary with OMF since 1981, and from 1981-2013, she taught Missions, Discipleship Training, Journalism, Precept Inductive Bible Studies, and Bible Storytelling for adults at Christian colleges, seminaries and churches around Taiwan. She recently earned her Doctorate of Intercultural

Studies from Biola, and still serves with OMF while also volunteering for BibleTelling, a ministry that focuses on retelling Bible stories. Anne is excited to share her experience and her storytelling abilities with us. When asked what else our students should know about her, she said:

“My heart is to please God and see His people fall in love with Him over & over again! When I was in OMF Orientation Course in Singapore in 1981, I suddenly realized I loved animals but not people, and that only God could change my heart. I asked, He answered, and I'm still awed by His love flowing through me. My dog Joey helped me reach out to Taiwan neighbors from 1986-1996. Now God has given me Dash, a darling 'Teddy Bear'. You'll probably get to see Dash, who regularly reminds me when I've been on the computer too long and he needs a cuddle. God knew before CoVid that I needed a therapy dog of my own!”

We welcome Chi-Ying and Anne on board, and we hope you get to know them both soon!

On our website, we have a blog of occasional thoughts from our faculty and staff. Here is one excerpt from *The Earth Is Still* by Jonathan King, our Director of Outreach, from March 21, 2020.

The Earth Is Still

While walking the streets of Champaign this morning, I stopped to listen.

Stillness.

I thought about how this unprecedented stillness isn't just here in our quaint university town in east central Illinois, but everywhere.

Yes, everywhere.

Okay, not every city, state, region or nation has mandated a lockdown like Illinois' governor did yesterday. But, COVID-19 – and the coronavirus – has placed much of the world at an unprecedented standstill. The pandemic is affecting every inhabited continent on the earth. Churches, schools, offices, restaurants, pubs, libraries, fitness centers, community centers, tourist attractions – tranquil with an unprecedented stillness (and anxiety for many). Where humans have ceased in their hustle and frenzy, the earth is enjoying an unexpected sabbath – a year of jubilee – if you will. (e.g. the waters of [Venice clearing up](#)).

Yes, we've had many pandemics, and many more lethal than this one, as well as wars, disasters and tropical storms that have taken many, many more lives and brought more havoc and destruction than this, but for a 21st century, hyper-connected, global community to be halted as we are presently witnessing is a marvel. And, yes, for much of the majority world and global South, this kind of felt vulnerability is nothing new. As I thought about this unparalleled moment in human history for our context and for much of the world, these words flooded my mind this morning:

"Be still and know that I am God, I will be exalted among the nations." (Psalm 46:10)

What might God be saying to us in this stillness? Are we listening? How is he moving among all nations to exalt his name? The Story which God is writing in human history – his ways, his movement – are beyond us, but I believe he is speaking to us in this unique moment. He speaks and summons the earth!

Hopefully, as we are being "stilled", we aren't *more* distracted than we were before this era of social distancing and quarantining. But, thanks to the internet, we just might be. In this stillness, let's do just that and actually *be still*...

The rest of Jonathan's piece can be found on our website blog page <https://www.urbanatheologicalseminary.org/the-earth-is-still/>

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From the President's Pen...

The last few months have been very different than anyone expected! At Urbana Seminary, the Faculty and Staff continue to regularly pray for God's intervention in the pandemic, both to stem the spread of the virus, and for the rapid formulation of effective vaccine and medications. Our hearts also ache to see resolution for the inequities and fault lines in our society that have been clarified in recent months, and courageous responses from followers of Jesus. For both comfort and encouragement, check out the series of blogs addressing the crisis in our world that the Seminary community began posting in the Spring Semester (See <https://www.urbanatheologicalseminary.org/blog/>).

In the midst of this time, however, we are also aware that God continues to sit on his throne as King and show his mercy and grace. He oversaw the sudden pivot that we made in mid-March. One week we were a school offering in-person instruction live in the classroom. The next week we were of necessity 100% online. We chose Zoom as our delivery platform (A "Thank you!" to our amazing IT expert, Kay Avila, for her guidance through this!). Zoom far exceeded expectations in creating a classroom where students felt comfortable and able to participate, along with maintaining the quality of our visual experience, whether in seeing each other on the screen or in the transfer of teaching media, such as PowerPoints, into the new Zoom-world where we suddenly found ourselves.

All the classes this Summer Session have been conducted online. Reports are that all are going quite well. Urbana Seminary Summer 2020 has been an unqualified success in the quality of instruction, the beginning of incorporation of new adjunct faculty, and availability to students far and wide. As you can read about elsewhere in this *Hearth*, all classes will be taught online this Fall Semester as well. I'm excited that even in these distressing times, we will both continue to introduce new adjunct faculty and some brand new courses. Thus I hope many of you who live at a distance from here will join those in this area in the delightful process of learning and growing together in classes starting August 24th!

“ I thought it [UTS] was going to be all about "learning a lot about God and then telling that to others." But no, it's all about learning to "love, know, and serve God." That's way better than being a Mr. Know-It-All! ”

**Tom Krawczyk, MAR Alumnus 2014
Campus pastor at a multi-site church in MI**

We invite you to go to our website blog page for thoughts from our faculty , staff and students!

The Earth is Still — Jonathan King

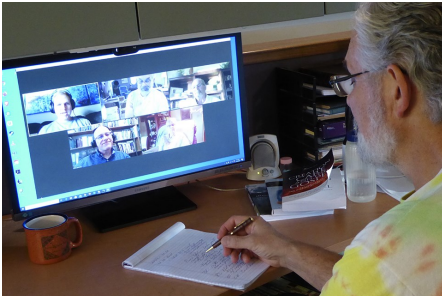
Finding a Place to Shelter: Father, Shelter Us! — Ken Cuffey

Creation, Covid-19, Natural Evil, and Hope — Todd Daly

What to Do Now — Margaret Schrock

Physical Touch and a Hopeful Future – Jubilate! — Peter Spychalla

Zoom classes at UTS!



Brian Chaille “Zooms” into Dr. Spychalla’s Creation Care class

This Spring our format for classes changed dramatically mid semester. So what is it like to attend class through Zoom? We asked a few students for their thoughts. Here are some of their responses:

I thought the zoom conferencing went really well. Dr. Green did a wonderful job using breakout, white board and lectures apart from the zoom time. It all fit together very well and I feel that it was a good method for learning. — Dee Hoiem

While there was a pleasant group comradery in our face to face meetings, I don’t feel like a lot of that was lost over Zoom — we still had informal and fun interactions before classes started and during breaks. We also still had the opportunity to pray together as well. Beyond that, doing class via Zoom from home was comfortable and convenient. I was able to set myself up at a desk in a quiet location with everything I needed for the class and enjoyed the experience very much. — Doug Mills

[With Zoom] it’s possible to message the professor individual questions when the student needs to have a question answered...It’s good in my opinion to keep learning going even if it means not being able to do things in person. I would not mind taking an online class this Fall. — Jessica Weaver

...online classes have notes and lectures that you can access anytime, anywhere, and at any pace. Students have the freedom and access to pause lectures, process the material, and take notes. If for some reason the student misses the class, they can watch the recording in the comfort of their own home. — David Hamilton

HOW DO I ENROLL FOR THIS FALL?

The process for enrolling in a class is straightforward:

- If you have taken classes with us before, simply log into your Populi account, click on the registration tab, choose whether you want to take the class for credit or as an auditor, pick your class (es), and don’t forget to save!
- If you have never taken a class with us before, e-mail mgreen@urbanatheologicalseminary.org, and Dr. Green will help you through the registration process.
- And a note to all our graduates . . . remember that you can sign up to audit as many courses as you would like for a special alumni rate. We desire to serve you by providing a highly accessible means of continuing your education, and also value your contributions in class. We love to see the relationships that can develop between those who have graduated and those currently in programs. Contact Dr. Green mgreen@urbanatheologicalseminary.org for more information.”

Remember that one of Urbana Seminary’s key values is making theological education accessible and affordable. Based on the generosity of donors, we have been able to maintain one of the absolute rock-bottom lowest tuition rates around, all while maintaining the highest quality of classroom instruction.

Be

joyful in hope.

patient in affliction.

faithful in prayer.

Share with the Lord’s people who are in need.

Practice hospitality.

Romans 12:12,13 (NIV)

. . . Faithful in prayer

Prayer doesn’t always come easy. As the pandemic continues, I find it harder to faithfully pray. At the beginning of this crisis prayer was my lifeline, a cry for help to the only One who could help. But now I notice a growing weariness. I am learning that prayer requires effort, intention, and discipline.

Even when it is hard, perhaps because it is hard, I sense God’s call to intercede for the entire world. I’ve both expanded the breadth and extended the length of my prayers. This is a time to pray for spiritual renewal, revival, and awakening. A time to plead for God’s mercy for the most vulnerable. A time to ask for strength for those on the front lines of the COVID battle. A time to pray for healing and comfort for those ill and who have lost loved ones. A time to pray for each other by name.

Through prayer I can impact places my feet will never tread, touch lives of people I will never meet, and influence situations far beyond my control. Prayer is not hindered by COVID-19, stay at home orders, or social distancing. Now it is time to understand that intercession is true service, ministry, and yes, sometimes hard work.

Paul’s directive calls me to continue steadfastly in prayer. I am to persist as the widow in Jesus’ parable remembering that “the prayers of the righteous are powerful and effective.” Now when I don’t know what else to pray, I begin to pray these verses, Romans 12:12, 13, for my Christian brothers and sisters around the world, for individuals I know and love, and even for myself.

Excerpted from UTS Blog post by Margaret Schrock *What to do Now*

Pray for Urbana Seminary

We treasure your prayers! Knowing that our “team” expresses their support through prayer means so much. At this point, here’s how you can focus your prayers for Urbana Seminary and the people of its community. Pray for:

- Safety and health for all involved in the Seminary—Faculty, Staff, Students, Board. And that we would consistently see how we are to love our neighbor in this time of stress in our culture.
- For the Fall classes—for a broad enrollment from many different places in the United States and around the globe, for effective design of online instruction for the courses, for those who learn, for those who teach.
- For Summer classes as they finish up.
- For wisdom in the decisions the Faculty and Board will need to keep making to address the new situations that keep unfolding.
- For our application for ongoing use of online instruction as a component of our curriculum once this crisis has receded—that this would gain favor and approval.

NEW CLASSES

This fall, we not only have a unique opportunity as all of our classes are going to be online, but besides our usual line up of excellent courses, we have three new classes!

Have you looked at all of the issues going on today and wondered if the Bible really has anything to say about it? It just so happens that in the eighth century BC, Israel was facing many of the same issues we face today. Dr. Cuffey's class *God's Call to Justice, Equity, and Hope: The Message & World of the 8th Century Prophets* will look at exactly how Jonah, Amos, Hosea, Micah, and Isaiah lived in times that were just as turbulent as ours, and how their writings and experiences can be applied to our world today.

What about current politics? What social processes have gotten us to the place we are right now? How should Christians engage in current politics? Should Christians engage in current politics? Dr. Mike McQueen's class, *Christian Civic Engagement and Witness*, will look at these questions with fresh eyes.

Also, this fall we are offering a class by a visiting professor, Anne Alexander! Her experience on the mission field as well as her work with a storytelling organization combine to make her class, *On Mission: Across the Street and Around the World*, one of the most unique and exciting classes we have offered in a long time. The class will use the stories of missionaries in books and on film, as well as the professor's own storytelling skills, to help us think about how we engage not only people on the other side of the world, but our own neighbors as we attempt to reach them for Christ.

Fall Course Schedule

Semester begins Monday, August 24

BIBLICAL STUDIES

BI 620 – 300 3 Hrs
God's Call to Justice, Equity, and Hope: The Message & World of the 8th Century Prophets
Dr. Kenneth Cuffey
Tuesdays 6:00 - 9:00 pm Online
Are you concerned with injustice and inequities in our world today? Did you know that the 8th century prophets of the Old Testament had a lot to say about inequality and divisions in society? The world and message of Jonah, Amos, Hosea, Micah, and Isaiah. Examination of their setting in a deeply divided society as a backdrop to the powerful messages God gave to each of them. Consideration of how this parallels our day and age, and how a follower of Jesus should respond now to live prophetically and for justice.

BI 501 – 100 3 Hrs
Old Testament Survey
Dr. Kenneth Cuffey
Wednesdays 6:00 - 9:00 pm Online
How does the whole Old Testament fit together to tell the story of God's work to save us? An introduction to the Old Testament/Hebrew Bible within the context of the history of Israel and the ancient Near East.

CHRISTIAN HISTORY & THOUGHT

CH 501 – 100
History of World Christianity I: Early and Medieval
Dr. Joseph Thomas 3 Hrs
Thursdays 6:00 - 9:00 pm Online
How has God been at work through the church? A general historical survey of the Christian movement from its inception through the Medieval period up to the Protestant Reformation.

CT 501 – 100 3 Hrs
Theology I
Dr. Todd Daly
Mondays 6:00 - 9:00 pm Online
What do we believe? An overview of the Christian doctrines of revelation, scripture, God the Father, Christ the Son and the incarnation.

CT 510 – 100 3 Hrs
Christian Ethics
Dr. Todd Daly
Fridays 6:00 - 9:00 pm Every 4 weeks Online
Saturdays 9:00 am - 4:00 pm Every 4 weeks Online
How do God's people make the hard choices in life? An introduction to the principles and practice of Christian ethics that examines biblical and philosophical questions surrounding the establishment of ethics, and the role of scripture in ethical reflection and character formation as it relates to contemporary cultural issues and moral problems.

CT 740 – 300 3 Hrs
There and Back Again: The Work of J.R.R. Tolkien
Dr. Melody Green
Wednesdays 6:00 - 9:00 pm Online
How do Tolkien's stories communicate the Gospel of Christ? This class will read and discuss the works of J.R.R. Tolkien while paying attention not only to the Christian themes in Tolkien's work, but also to developing a Christian model for understanding and working with fiction.

PRACTICAL MINISTRY

PM 615 – 100 3 Hrs
Christian Civic Engagement and Witness
Dr. Michael McQueen
Mondays 6:00 - 9:00 pm Online
This class is intended to coincide with the 2020 Presidential Election and will enable the student to understand biblical foundations of government and historic and cultural trends in 21st century American society. *How will you make informed decisions concerning election year issues and create an environment for positive Christian witness?*

PM 760-600 3 Hrs
On Mission: Across the Street and Around the World
Dr. Anne Alexander
Tuesdays 6:00 - 9:00 pm Online
How can I learn to express God's love well? We're told that to understand others' lives and truly convey love to them, we should walk a mile in their shoes. How can we "do unto others as we would have them do unto us" in our increasingly multicultural world? We'll gain insight as we read about missionary lives, watch films about encounters with other cultures, explore the lives of those who have experienced them, and discuss the challenges of living 'on mission' wherever God takes us. This class will be stretching and fun!

FM 502 – 100 3 Hrs
Spiritual Formation and Discipleship
Dr. Peter Spychalla
Tuesdays 6:00 – 8:30 pm Online
How do we grow spiritually? An exploration of the dynamics of the spiritual life as well as the process of spiritual growth. This will lead to personal assessment of the student's character, temperament, gifts, and other traits relevant to ministry. Emphasis will be placed both on personal spiritual formation of the student as well as on guiding and counseling others to grow in Christ. Students will explore a scriptural approach to discipleship, as well as various spiritual disciplines, such as prayer, meditation, and reading of Scripture.



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