



**The Society of Biblical Literature  
Annual Business Meeting Agenda  
18 November 2012, 7:30 – 8:30 a.m.  
McCormick Place Center West 474-B, Chicago  
John Dominic Crossan, presiding**

- I. Opening Remarks and Welcome
- II. Approval of Minutes and Agenda
- III. Necrology (please stand if you are able)
- IV. Reports
  - a. Society Report and Executive Director Report
  - b. Nominating Committee Report and Election (Nominating Committee Chair)
  - c. Council Report (Council Chair)
- v. Closing Remarks and Adjournment

*(Next SBL Annual Business Meeting: 18 November 2013, Baltimore, Maryland)*



**SOCIETY OF BIBLICAL LITERATURE  
ANNUAL BUSINESS MEETING MINUTES  
19 November 2011  
San Francisco  
Moscone Convention Center – Room 3003**

- I. Opening Remarks and Welcome. Carol Newsom, SBL President, called the meeting to order and welcomed members.
- II. The 2010 Annual Business Meeting minutes were presented for approval. *Unanimously approved.*
- III. Necrology. Members were asked to stand as they are able for the reading of member names whose deaths had been reported to SBL since the previous Annual Business Meeting.
- IV. Reports

A. Society Report and Executive Director Report

John Kutsko thanked the Society for the privilege of serving as Executive Director.

The 2011 Society Report was distributed and has been posted to the SBL website. The report reflects the soundness of the organization and its accomplishments for the year.

In April 2011, SBL received an NEH grant for the Bible Odyssey interactive website project, which will launch in 2013. John expressed special thanks to Kent Richards, Moira Bucciarelli, Missy Colee, Sharon Johnson, and the Bible Odyssey Advisory Board for their work on this project.

The ED Report also included the following:

- Finance: the unqualified opinion (or clean audit) for July 2010 July 2011, and the positive budget. This was a positive financial year with gains in such areas as investments, Congresses, and Publications.
- Membership: remains steady at around 8700.
- Publications: books sales have seen a 24% increase. The first day of books sales at the 2011 AM was the highest since 2005. We have expanded our list of digital content. SBL is partnering with BiblioVault, and book titles will soon be available in digital format.
- Congresses: as of Saturday, there were 10,500 registrants attending the Annual Meeting. These numbers surpass the 2007 San Diego (concurrent) meeting.

B. Nominating Report

John Strong reported on the 2012 Nominations.

## Council

Mary Foskett	1 <sup>st</sup> Term	2012-2014
Steven Friesen	1 <sup>st</sup> Term	2012-2014
Francisco Lozada	2 <sup>nd</sup> Term	2012-2014
Adele Reinhartz	2 <sup>nd</sup> Term	2012-2014
John Strong	2 <sup>nd</sup> Term	2012-2014
Carol Meyers	Vice-President	2012

Carol Newsom asked for motion to vote on second-term and new Council members. Slate vote – ***approved unanimously.***

Carol moved to approve Carol Meyers as Vice-President. ***Approved unanimously.***

The following committee members are either renewing for a 2<sup>nd</sup> Term or beginning their 1<sup>st</sup> Term. These were approved by Council during the 2010 spring and fall meetings.

## Committees

Council	John Dominic Crossan	President	2012
	Carol Meyers	Vice-President	2012
	Christine M. Thomas	Secretary	2012
	John Strong	Chair	2012
Nominating Development	Elizabeth Struthers Malbon	1 <sup>st</sup> Term	2012-2015
	Carol Bakhos	1 <sup>st</sup> Term	2012-2014
	Randall Webber	1 <sup>st</sup> Term	2012-2014
Finance	Katherine Doob Sakenfeld	2 <sup>nd</sup> Term	2012-2014
	Brian Blount	2 <sup>nd</sup> Term	2012-2014
AM Program	Paul Joyce	1 <sup>st</sup> Term	2012-2014
Research/Pubs	Gale Yee	1 <sup>st</sup> Term	2012-2014
	James Nogalski	2 <sup>nd</sup> Term	2012-2014
Underrepresented	Uriah Kim	1 <sup>st</sup> Term	2012-2014
	Shanell Smith	1 <sup>st</sup> Term	2012-2014
Career Dev Comm	David Eastman	1 <sup>st</sup> Term	2012-2014
	Margaret Odell	1 <sup>st</sup> Term	2012-2014
SBL Delegate to ACLS	Kent Harold Richards	single Term	2012-2015

## C. Council Report

Bruce Birch read a Council Statement that followed up on the 2010 Council Statement. This statement along with the Mission Statement, Strategic Vision Statement, and Core Values was also distributed and it will be posted on the SBL website. Comments from the membership are welcome. (The text of that statement is appended to these minutes.)

## V. Closing

Heather McKay expressed her sincere gratitude for Carol Newsome's exemplary presentation in London at the International Meeting, where she also read during a service at Temple Church. She exhibited poise and grace among some of London's top dignitaries and grandly represented the SBL.

The next Annual Business Meeting will be Sunday, November 18, 2012, in Chicago. The meeting was adjourned.

**A Statement from the Council of the Society of Biblical Literature**  
**November 2011**

At the SBL Annual Business Meeting a year ago, Council reported to you on its response to a vigorous discussion on the nature and identity of our Society that began in the summer of 2010. We welcomed that discussion and the opportunities it afforded to clarify SBL's mission, membership, and policies. We reported on a number of initial actions taken by Council to address issues raised. However, we realized that some matters were more complex and far reaching. Although discussion had begun on these, we pledged to continue that discussion and invited further communication from any of our members. We have included time on the agenda of each meeting of Council during 2011 for further deliberation on the issues identified in our report to you last year. Many of our SBL standing committees have also worked to clarify matters of policy and procedure related to the issues raised. We believe the result has been a very fruitful year of work bringing needed clarity to a number of areas affecting our identity as a learned society and the policies that guide our work together.

In this report we highlight significant actions taken by your SBL Council supported by the work of many of our standing committees and the work of SBL's extraordinary staff.

1. Council engaged in a lengthy discussion of the SBL Mission Statement, Strategic Vision Statement, and Core Values. This discussion was informed by the wider conversation of last year among SBL members and by direct communications to Council from some members. We took the following actions:

- We are not recommending any change to the three-word Mission Statement of the SBL, "Foster Biblical Scholarship." This brief statement is a part of our Constitution and requires a considerable process to make any changes. More to the point, we believe we are well served by such a succinct and clear Mission Statement. Most of the suggested changes represent efforts to clarify various ways in which that Mission can or should be understood. We believe such clarifications are more appropriate in the Society's Strategic Vision Statement and Core Values.
- Council did make some significant changes to the SBL Strategic Vision Statement and Core Values. These revisions are made available at this Business Meeting and will be posted on the website. Noteworthy is the opening paragraph of the Vision Statement that SBL is "devoted to the critical investigation of the Bible from a variety of academic perspectives." The first bullet notes our commitment to "academic study" and the fourth bullet affirms a "variety of critical perspectives." A revised listing of Core Values now includes "Critical Inquiry" as a core value. Alongside this clear commitment to academic and critical inquiry and scholarship is an equally strong commitment of the Society to be broadly inclusive of diverse perspectives and contexts within which biblical scholarship is pursued. Both Vision Statement and Core Values reaffirm an atmosphere in all SBL forums of respect for diversity, professional conduct, and collaborative ways of working together. We believe that these revised statements of mission, vision and core values set the standard under which the work of the Society can go forward in the manner appropriate to the work of a learned society.

2. We reported a year ago that the Program Committee had already begun a major comprehensive review of the policies and procedures that guide the program units of our Annual and International Meetings. That work is nearly complete, and the results will be seen in a new Handbook for the Annual Meeting Program Committee and a Handbook for Program Unit Chairs. Processes and criteria for proposing and approving program units (initial and renewal) are clarified and reorganized. There is now a clearer process by which the work of the Program Committee is brought to Council for oversight.

Other issues addressed include the makeup of steering committees, responsibilities of presidors to oversee appropriate discussion and guidelines for appropriate papers and presenters. These Handbooks will be made available on the SBL website.

3. There has been some concern over participating multiple times on the program. Council's action of a year ago is reaffirmed and stands:

- *Full members of SBL are limited to participate in no more than two regular sessions as a presenter, panelist, or respondent. Appearances on Affiliate programs do not count towards this total. SBL committee and business sessions do not count towards this total.*

The guidelines for student participation in the Annual Meeting are slightly modified from those announced last year:

- *All first-time presenters (full and student members of SBL) must submit the paper to-be-read to the program unit chair(s) during the call for papers period.*
- *Student members of SBL may participate in two sessions as presidor, panelist, or respondent but are limited to only one paper presentation.*

4. SBL Council has adopted a new policy statement related to Affiliate Organizations. This document, available on the SBL website, details a process of initial application and periodic review and renewal for such Affiliate Organizations with Council now involved in approving such relationships. Of particular interest to members may be the criteria adopted for eligibility to become an Affiliate Organization:

*To be eligible, an organization should have the following characteristics:*

- *Act in a manner consistent with SBL's Strategic Vision Statement and Core Values.*
- *Be independent, not-for-profit, formally organized, and at least three years old.*
- *Have a national or international constituency.*
- *Have a majority of members who are professional scholars or teachers.*
- *Profess a mission consistent with the Society's mission to "foster biblical scholarship."*
- *Support scholarly analysis and open discussion.*

5. While we believe that Council has been faithful to address the range of issues that were immediately placed before us, we understand that concern for the identity, practices and policies of the Society of Biblical Literature with its great diversity of members and programs must be an ongoing matter. To that end, Council has agreed to regularly devote time at each of its meetings to strategic planning and review. In particular, our strategic vision statement and core values will be subject to ongoing review. As always, we welcome communications from any of our members drawing our attention to matters of concern.

The members of the SBL Council would like to express thanks to all members who have participated in this important discussion. We have made every effort to take your concerns seriously and address them comprehensively. We hope we have your confidence that we will continue to do so.

Respectfully submitted,

Cheryl B. Anderson  
Bruce C. Birch, Chair of Council  
John Dominic Crossan, Vice-President  
Philip F. Esler

Jeffrey K. Kuan  
Archie Chi-Chung Lee  
Francisco Lozada  
Carol Newsom, President  
Adele Reinhartz  
Daniel Schowalter  
Fernando Segovia  
John T. Strong  
Christine M. Thomas, Secretary  
Gerald O. West



MISSION STATEMENT  
STRATEGIC VISION STATEMENT  
CORE VALUES

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**Mission Statement:**

Foster Biblical Scholarship

**Strategic Vision Statement:**

Founded in 1880, the Society of Biblical Literature is the oldest and largest learned society devoted to the critical investigation of the Bible from a variety of academic disciplines.\* As an international organization, the Society offers its members opportunities for mutual support, intellectual growth, and professional development through the following:

- Advancing academic study of biblical texts and their contexts as well as of the traditions and contexts of biblical interpretation
- Collaborating with educational institutions and other appropriate organizations to support biblical scholarship and teaching
- Developing resources for diverse audiences, including students, religious communities, and the general public
- Facilitating broad and open discussion from a variety of critical perspectives
- Organizing congresses for scholarly exchange
- Publishing biblical scholarship
- Promoting cooperation across global boundaries

**Core Values:**

Accountability	Openness to Change
Collaboration	Professionalism
Collegiality	Respect for Diversity
Critical Inquiry	Scholarly Integrity
Inclusivity	Tolerance

\*SBL has been a member of the American Council of Learned Societies since 1929.



Necrology Report\*  
2012 Annual Business Meeting  
(please stand if you are able)

Eugene E. Carpenter  
Frank M. Cross, Jr.  
Frederick W. Danker  
Hans Engler  
Walter Harrelson  
Wilfred Lambert  
J.P. Louw  
Abraham J. Malherbe  
Marvin Meyer  
Joseph Plevnik  
Jane D. Schaberg  
Charles Siburt  
Justin S. Ukpong  
David B. Weisberg  
Walter Wink

\*Report reflects November 2011 – October 2012



**Executive Director's Report: John F. Kutsko**  
**2012 Annual Business Meeting**  
**7:30 am – 8:30 am, 18 November 2012**  
**Chicago, Illinois**

Good morning. Thank you for attending SBL's Annual Business Meeting.

Hard copies of the Society Report are available here at the Business Meeting. The Report is also available online. You will receive a link to the Report in the next SBL Newsletter. In that newsletter, too, will be a link to the 2011-2012 Audit. Both are located on SBL's About Us page.

The following comments are summaries of information, developments, and initiatives by staff department, beginning with Finance.

**Finance**

The audit conducted by the independent auditor, Smith and Howard, for the dates July 2011 through June 2012, reported an unqualified opinion (or clean audit) on our financial statements. Any changes in SBL's net assets and its cash flows ended in conformity with generally accepted accounting principles in the United States. This audit was reviewed by the Finance Committee and the SBL Council.

We are pleased to report that SBL has a positive cash-flow surplus for the third consecutive year. SBL's Net Assets increased this year \$295,893. This was achieved through SBL staff building from the ground up a positive budget with a Net Operating Reserve (now at \$33,000), without drawing down investment income, while re-implementing travel grants, with four awarded this year.

You will see the Statement of Financial Position on p. 34 of the Society Report. That Statement, sometimes called a Balance Sheet, shows the organization's net worth. On this Statement, SBL's total assets and liabilities increased \$496,040 over prior year.

On p. 35, you will find the Statement of Activities and Changes in Net Assets, which shows the incoming revenue against outgoing expenses for that twelve-month period. That Statement shows an increase in net assets of \$295,893. Prior year's increase in net assets was \$424,397 which might lead you to believe current year's increase compared to prior year is down. This is not the case if "noncash" investments are removed from the equation. The Increase in Net Assets in 2012 of approximately \$296,000 minus \$30,000 investments leaves an increase of \$266,000 for 2012. For prior year, \$424,000 minus \$262,000 investments leaves an increase of \$162,000 for 2011.

In plain English, SBL's cash increased nearly \$300,000, and our net worth increased nearly \$500,000, from 2011 through 2012.

These increased assets will enable us to plan ahead and further improve services to members. For example, we have been preparing to invest further in the publishing program, improving technology to streamline the editorial process of *JBL*, enhancing and expanding resources available in *RBL*, and redesigning a website that is sagging under the weight of content.

Once we have evaluated all the needs of SBL and its cash-flow, we will put the surplus to work in SBL's investment portfolio. Growing that portfolio will provide interest that will sustain long-term services to members.

## **Congresses**

As of yesterday total registrations for the 2012 Annual Meeting are 10,587. That is about even with last year's registration of 10, 513. Current SBL registrations alone equal 4,472. That is an increase of 243 or almost 6% over same time last year. We further expect additional onsite registrations today.

We continue to see increases in attendance at the Annual Meeting. Increasingly, too, attendance is tied to participation in the program, which appears to be linked to institutional travel funding. The hefty program book is a testimony to the active participation of our members as well the increasing diversity of methods and approaches in biblical studies. You can see this play out, and you can do the math, using the Facts and Figures page that staff compiled this year on SBL's About Us page, which includes meeting attendance and program units over the last ten years.

The International Meeting in Amsterdam was a great success, and the University of Amsterdam was an outstanding host. 892 members attended, making it second only to last year in London. We are looking forward to our 2013 International Meeting in St. Andrews, Scotland, next year, and we are very grateful to our on-site colleagues there who are making this possible. This year, too, saw arrangements for a 2015 International Meeting in Buenos Aires and for a 2016 meeting in Korea.

Back to the Annual Meeting, it seems evident that members and exhibitors alike support the renewed concurrent convention arrangement with the American Academy of Religion, now in its second year. The concurrent meetings will reduce strain on travel budgets for everyone: students and faculty, search committees and institutions, and publishers and other resource providers in the exhibit hall. We have some short-term strains, however, and I ask you to bear with us, here in

Chicago and next year in Baltimore. We had to accommodate both organizations back into cities that are not as suitable or spacious as we'd like. Next year, we will be using practically every hotel in the Baltimore. This year, we had to use shuttles and have what feels like two locations: days at the Convention Center and nights in the downtown loop. The shuttles accommodate us, but I am sure most every member will find this, at some point, inconvenient. We are very sorry for that.

I also hope you have had a chance to try the second iteration of our Meeting App, which can be used on Apple and Android phones and tablets, or with any web browser. It is innovative, convenient, and green.

## **Membership**

The Society membership remains steady at about 8,700, which is over 30 percent more than it was in 2001. In the last ten years all categories of membership have risen steadily, but this is most especially the case for student and international membership. Non-US membership has doubled in the last decade. And student membership has risen 65% since 2004.

## **Publications**

SBL is a member of the American Association of University Presses. SBL Publications, including books, journals, and reference works, is not only a strong publishing program, but it provides an essential service, as peer-reviewed publishing becomes increasingly important as a factor for members' tenure and promotion. You can see the growth of that program on SBL's Facts and Figures page, and we are happy to report that net book sales revenue exceeded prior year sales by over \$34,500, or 8.2 percent--compared to a 5.4 percent increase the prior year:

\$455,370 for FY2012 versus \$420,859 for FY2011. This is the fourth year in a row that net book sales revenue has increased. While many academic and university presses struggled to limit their revenue losses and reduce their commitment to monographs, SBL's net sales revenue this year is the highest total in its history. Thanks to the efforts of SBL authors and editors, as well as the support of SBL members who both buy SBL books and assign them as classroom resources, we expect this positive trend to continue through the current fiscal year and beyond.

*JBL* smoothly transitioned this year from excellent leadership to excellent leadership—from Jim VanderKam to Adele Reinhartz. The high quality of the journal, already widely recognized by scholars and libraries around the world, secured for *JBL* a new honor in 2012: Project MUSE chose *JBL* as one of only four journals to be added to the Standard Collection on account of its high MUSE score and high-quality content.

SBL publication's e-book strategy is now fully underway, and *Publishers Weekly*, the publishing industry's leading professional magazine, reported on SBL's digital initiative in an October 2012 issue. Our books will be available through PDFs and selectively in reflowable formats for handheld devices.

## **Professions**

A few words now about what we describe as Professional services.

The Student Advisory Board's student-focused newsletter, *Dialogos*, launched with a first issue in January 2012.

I am very pleased to announce that the German Bible Society is providing on the SBL website free access for members to the upper text of four biblical text-critical editions: Biblia Hebraica

Stuttgartensia, Rahlfs Septuagint, the Vulgate, and the Greek New Testament. Initially, these texts will be available as downloadable PDFs, using the SBL Unicode fonts. We plan to add other formats in the future. This is a great service to SBL. You can look forward to our announcing this page going live in the next few months.

The NEH funded Bible Odyssey website is well underway. The web site has been developed. Content—articles, videos, maps, interactives--is being assigned, received, and edited. We are planning for the Bible Odyssey launch in 2013.

I want to report on four developments in the International Cooperation Initiative (ICI), an initiative that provides resources to scholars in under-resourced areas of the world. First, the ICI Liaison Network was set up to communicate to ICI scholars, students, and members the resources and opportunities available to them. SBL member Tim Langille has volunteered to get this network up and running. Second, SBL's online and truly open access book series published Christo Lombaard's *The Old Testament and Christian Spirituality: Theoretical and Practical Essays from a South African Perspective*. Prof. Lombaard has been chosen to receive the 2013 Krister Stendahl Medal in Biblical Studies by the Graduate Theological Foundation. The award "formally recognizes Lombaard's contribution to the deepening understanding of the relationship between the Jewish scriptures and Christian spirituality, particularly as reflected" in the new book published by SBL. I hasten to add that this is a peer-reviewed digital publication, and it has won this recognition. Third, at the request of ICI members, we started the first of what we hope will become an increasing service at the Annual and International Meetings. We will Skype and record select program unit sessions to a classroom in an ICI country. This year, we had resources for two sessions: The Future of Biblical Studies: Trends, Possibilities, and Problems (it was skyped yesterday to a classroom in China), and Hebrew Bible, History, and Archaeology (it will

be skyped Monday to Poland). Fourth, the online books initiative offers digital books for free to members in ICI countries. We have asked publishers to join us in this, and we have over three hundred titles now available. This year Wiley-Blackwell joined the program and generously added resources. Furthermore, ICI members met in Amsterdam this year and requested especially introductory textbooks. They gave us a list of titles. So far, we approached two publishers on this list—Fortress Press and Westminster John Knox—and both have already agreed to provide their titles. Please thank these and all the publishers providing a generous and forward thinking service to members.

I want to alert you to an important report SBL produced for its members this year: Job Advertisement Data 2001-2011. The report, available online, surveys the past decade with an eye toward identifying key and important trends, the “new normals,” so to speak, that members especially students and junior faculty are facing, and that we must help address as an organization. This baseline data will facilitate annual updating and long-term analysis.

In addition to this new, annually updated report, there is a new list of profile questions we will ask each SBL member to update yearly, when renewing membership, so that we can better understand the professional context, interests, and needs of our members. A letter to members in December will encourage, implore, even beg members to complete these questions and review them every year. This data, too, will provide an invaluable way to understand the disciplines in SBL, the scholars who practice them, how the field is changing, and what we can do to foster biblical scholarship.

In the spring, SBL was awarded a \$140,000 grant from the Henry Luce Foundation, the foundation who funded the headquarters of SBL and AAR in Atlanta. This grant supports

scholars of the Quran to come together and explore the need to form an independent learned society for Qur'anic studies. The initiative has received overwhelming positive support and response. Media attention has included the *New York Times*, the *Washington Post*, the *Chronicle of Higher Education*, *Inside Higher Education*, and the *Christina Science Monitor*, whose editor invited an op-ed piece which published in September. I owe personal thanks to many for this initiative. Foremost on the list, after the Henry Luce Foundation and SBL Council are the codirectors of the steering committee: Gabriel Said Reynolds and Emran El Badawi. Gabriel and Emran have written an open letter of thanks to SBL. It is in the Society Report and on the initiative's website. You can follow developments of the International Qur'anic Studies Association on [iqsaweb.org](http://iqsaweb.org) [spell]. The first in-person planning session of the IQSA steering committee will be today and tomorrow, and we look forward to IQSA's presence as an ongoing Affiliate organization at the Annual, Regional, and the International Meetings.

That is a summary of the year with a glance ahead. The Society Report has much more detail. Members do this work together. But please also don't forget to thank the SBL staff, especially this year. Would the SBL staff who are here please stand up? And please don't hesitate to let me know your concerns and suggestions.





The Society of Biblical Literature  
 Nominating Committee Report  
 18 November 2012; Chicago, Illinois

**Action Item #1: Slate of Nominees to be Voted on by SBL Membership**

<i>SBL Council:</i>			
	<b>Term</b>	<b>Period</b>	<b>Comments: Nominated by Council</b>
<b><u>New Members of Council:</u></b>			
Gregory E. Sterling	1	2013–2015	
<b><u>Renewal of Service on Council:</u></b>			
Philip F. Esler	2	2013–2015	
Archie Chi-Chung Lee	2	2013–2015	
Christine M. Thomas	2	2013–2015	

**Action Item #2: Vice-President Nominee to be Voted on by SBL Membership**

<i>Vice-President of SBL:</i>			
	<b>Term</b>	<b>Period</b>	<b>Comments: Nominated by Council</b>
Fernando F. Segovia	Vice-President	2013	To serve as President in 2014



The Society of Biblical Literature  
Nominating Committee Report  
18 November 2012; Chicago, Illinois

**Information Item #1: Council Officers; New and Renewed Committee Appointments**  
**January 1, 2013 to December 31, 2013**

**Council Officers for 2013:**

Carol Meyers	President
Fernando F. Segovia	Vice-President [pending approval of previous action item]
Christine M. Thomas	Secretary
John Strong	Chair

**Nominating Committee:**

Marc Brettler	1 <sup>st</sup> Term	2013 – 2016
Caroline Vander Stichele	1 <sup>st</sup> Term	2013 – 2016

**Finance Committee:**

Philip F. Esler	2 <sup>nd</sup> Term	2013 – 2015
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**Annual Meeting Program Committee:**

Anselm Hagedorn	1 <sup>st</sup> Term	2013 – 2015
Erin Runions	1 <sup>st</sup> Term	2013 – 2015

**International Meeting Program Committee**

Tobias Nicklas	1 <sup>st</sup> Term	2013 - 2015
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**Research and Publications Committee:**

Jorunn Økland	2 <sup>nd</sup> Term	2013 – 2015
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**Status of Women in the Profession Committee**

April DeConick	1 <sup>st</sup> Term	2013 – 2015
Susanne Scholz	1 <sup>st</sup> Term	2013 – 2015

**Committee on Underrepresented Racial and Ethnic Minorities in the Profession:**

Frank Yamada	2 <sup>nd</sup> Term	2013 – 2015
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**Career Development Committee**

Ellen White	2 <sup>nd</sup> Term	2013 – 2015
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**Regional Coordinator Chair**

P. Richard Choi	1 <sup>st</sup> Term	2013 – 2015
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**The Society of Biblical Literature  
Nominating Committee Report  
18 November 2012; Chicago, Illinois**

**Information Item #2: Program Units  
January 1, 2013 to December 31, 2013**

**New Program Units**

**Spring 2012—Approved**

1. Bible and Emotion Consultation
2. Inventing Christianity Consultation
3. Jewish-Christian Dialogue and Sacred Texts Consultation
4. Meals in the HB/OT and its World Consultation
5. Metacriticism of Biblical Scholarship Consultation
6. Mind, Society, and Religion in the Biblical World Section
7. Paul and Judaism Consultation

**Renewals**

**Spring 2012—Approved**

1. Feminist Hermeneutics Section

**Fall 2012—Approved**

1. Bible and Cultural Studies
2. Construction of Christian Identities
3. Disputed Paulines
4. Ecological Hermeneutics
5. Gender, Sexuality, and the Bible
6. Healthcare and Disability in the Ancient World
7. Islands, Islanders, and Scriptures
8. Jesus Traditions, Gospels, and Negotiating the Roman Imperial World
9. John's Apocalypse and Cultural Contexts Ancient and Modern
10. Literature and History of the Persian Period
11. Metaphor Theory and Biblical Texts
12. Minoritized Criticism and Biblical Interpretation
13. Papyrology and Early Christian Backgrounds
14. Religious Competition in Late Antiquity
15. Sensory Perception in the Bible and Early Judaism and Christianity
16. Use, Influence, and Impact of the Bible
17. Warfare in Ancient Israel
18. Writing/Reading Jeremiah



**The Society of Biblical Literature  
Nominating Committee Report  
18 November 2012; Chicago, Illinois**

**Information Item #3:  
Editors and Editorial Boards  
January 1, 2013 to December 31, 2013**

**JBL Editorial Board**

**Third Term**

David Barr  
Elizabeth Struthers Malbon

**Second Term**

Colleen Conway  
Mary Rose D'Angelo  
Bert Harrill  
Paul Joyce  
Carolyn Sharp  
David Tsumura

**First Term**

Georg Fischer  
Jennifer Knust  
Jean-Pierre Ruiz  
Erin Runions

**NEW SERIES EDITORS**

Text-Critical Studies: TBD

WAW Supplements: Amélie Kuhrt

**Council Report: John Strong, Chair**  
**2012 Annual Business Meeting**  
**7:30 am – 8:30 am, 18 November 2012**  
**Chicago, Illinois**

Good morning colleagues!

A few minutes ago, you heard from John Kutsko, SBL's Executive Director, about all of the good work that has been going on this year to foster Biblical scholarship. All of it is exciting, but what strikes me is how diversified and international we are becoming. The International Meeting is growing; the Quran Initiative is taking off; the International Cooperative Initiative (ICI) is expanding. All of these things, as well as the other work of the Society, point to a vibrant, growing Society that is carrying out its role of fostering Biblical scholarship in the global community in the 21<sup>st</sup> century.

My role today is to update the SBL membership on another topic that has taken up much of SBL Council's attention this year, the ongoing labor dispute between the Hyatt Hotel and the UniteHere labor union.

First, let me state up front that SBL is concerned with issues of justice. One need only take a cursory glance through our program book, and one will see SBL members wrestling with issues of justice in their Biblical scholarship, and in so doing, fulfilling our primary service of carrying on open conversations on ethics. Beyond these conversations, our members act on these issues through their personal choices. The individuals who make up the SBL Council, and John Kutsko, our Executive Director as well, are also counted among those SBL members, whose scholarship explores how the Biblical texts call us to justice. In our role as council members, we continue to seek to be ethical in the decisions and policies we make for the Society, in order to provide a safe haven for open conversations. Let there be no mistake that SBL Council, John

Kutsko, and the SBL Staff, want to see the hotel workers who have served us so well during this conference receive fair living wages, be protected in a healthy environment, and make for themselves and their families a satisfying, enjoyable life through the benefits of their employment.

With that affirmation, I must also reiterate what has been stated in our correspondence with SBL members throughout this past year. Specifically, John Kutsko, the SBL Staff, and the Council are limited by federal and state laws to operate for the benefit of SBL members in the achievement of SBL's stated mission: to foster Biblical scholarship. It would be both unethical and illegal if we were to appropriate SBL members' dues and fees for any cause other than fostering Biblical scholarship. Simply stated, SBL members have freely paid dues to SBL from the money their labor has earned in order to foster Biblical scholarship in their own work. Clearly, if SBL Council were to behave inappropriately with members' dues and fees, if, for example, we spent their assets on political campaigns or luxury items, we would be breaking an ethical and legal trust. Bear in mind as well, our members are diverse in countless ways—religiously, ethnically, politically, and in the types of ethical causes in which they invest their money, talents and energy. Accordingly, there is no ethical litmus test that our members must pass, nor should there be, if our mission is to provide a safe haven for open conversations.

Applying this ethic and these legal constraints to the present labor dispute, SBL Council has recognized that it must remain faithful to and focused upon its mission to foster Biblical scholarship. Out of faithfulness to this ethic, SBL Council has operated unanimously from the very beginning of the year, even before registration was open, to consistently follow four policies:

- We will inform members of any labor disputes, and allow them to follow their consciences in their choice of hotel.

I want to add to this, by way of clarification, that SBL signs contracts having done due diligence, and we sign in good faith. We do not sign with hotels that have a record of mistreatment of or conflict with their workers. In order to gain the best savings for our members, however, we sign contracts five to seven years into the future, which means that during the period of time from when a contract is signed to when the Annual Meeting is held, labor contracts with our hotels will expire and new ones will have to be negotiated. Inevitably, disputes will occur. When this happens, we will let our members know, and allow them to choose a hotel which is not in dispute with its workers.

- In light of this first point, when there is a dispute between workers and a hotel, SBL has and will continue to negotiate with the hotels to lower attrition rates in regard to the number of hotel rooms, food, and other services. This is done knowing that a certain number of our members will choose not to stay at a hotel in which there is a dispute, and so, by lowering attrition rates, SBL will not incur any penalties caused by lower usage.
- In consideration of our members' ethical commitments and choices, we will limit the meeting space in hotels involved labor disputes.
- Fourth, as stated above, SBL has negotiated its current contracts in good faith, and we will keep our word. We will honor our signed contracts.

Not to honor our contracts, I hasten to add, would result in major penalties, totaling to hundreds of thousands of dollars, and paid to the very hotels being targeted by the boycott, in this instance, the Hyatt. For SBL, these penalties would place the organization in a precarious financial situation. Moreover, the integrity of the

organization would be ruined. What hotel would sign a contract with us if we had a history of renegeing on contracts that were signed in good faith? Such actions, if taken, would constitute inappropriate behavior on the part of Council, a dereliction of duty on the part of the organization's trustees.

With this in mind, in October SBL Council passed a motion making the above stated points Society policy, guiding SBL's operations.

This past year, there has been tension between SBL Council and the AAR Board on this issue. Still, SBL Council is committed to meeting with AAR, and we continue to work to make the joint Annual Meeting a success for all of our members. Together with AAR, we have signed joint contracts extending through 2021. In an effort to strengthen this joint effort, in June, sub-committees of the two governing bodies met in a special summit, the outcome of which was congenial and positive, with hope for more, closer collaborations. SBL recognizes that it serves our members best when it serves them together with AAR.

While the labor dispute has been challenging for SBL Council, for John Kutsko, and for SBL Staff, we recognize that our problems in this regard are really only "collateral damage," and individual workers struggle daily to secure for themselves and their family a living wage, a healthy work environment, and a satisfying life. The SBL Council, in its efforts to establish sound venues for open conversations that foster Biblical scholarship, knows that the texts we study and the papers we write call for justice.

I look forward to seeing you all again next year in Baltimore, and let us all hope that 12 months from now, the world will be a more just place for all.