

Dear Members of the Midwest Region,

We are pleased to invite you to the 2016 Annual Meeting of the Midwest Region of the Society of Biblical Literature, the Middle West Branch of the American Oriental Society, and the American Schools of Oriental Research-Midwest. The meeting is scheduled for **Friday-Sunday, February 5–7, 2016**, at Olivet Nazarene University in Bourbonnais, Illinois. Please see the region's website (http://www.sbl-site.org/meetings/rm_midwest.aspx) for hotel information and the Olivet Nazarene University website for maps (<http://www.olivet.edu/campus-map/pdf>). The region also hosts the Student Religious Studies Conference (SRSC), scheduled for Friday, February 5.

The officers of the societies invite you to **submit paper proposals for the region meeting by Monday, December 7, 2015**. (The SRSC has a different schedule for proposals than the regional meeting; see below.) Program decisions will be communicated no later than January 9, 2016. Please see the section descriptions document at the region's website for information on proposals and section descriptions. Also, please note that paper proposals are submitted through an online form, available at <http://goo.gl/forms/2VxwBtgkWC>. Please do not send paper proposals to section chairs.

Registration will again be available online at the region's website (see link above). **Registration should open in mid-December 2015 and close three days before the conference.** The region offers regular registration for \$45, student registration for \$25, and SRSC-only registration for \$15. Rates for the presidential banquet and spouse/partner attendees are also available in the registration process. We strongly encourage everyone to utilize the online registration option; a \$10 fee will be added for late (on-site) registrations.

Theme and Schedule Highlights for the 2016 Meeting

Plenary Session: The theme for the meeting is “**Hellenism and the Septuagint**,” and the Friday evening plenary session is organized by SBL. Speakers for this session include **David A. deSilva** (Ashland Theological Seminary) and **Troy W. Martin** (Saint Xavier University).

80th Anniversary of the Midwest Region SBL: We will celebrate this important milestone for our region, the first and oldest region in the SBL, and will be joined by national SBL executive director **John F. Kutsko** for this occasion.

Midwest SBL Regional Spotlight: This Saturday afternoon session, now in its fifth year, features a presentation and question-and-answer period with a prominent scholar from our region. Our speaker this year is **Margaret M. Mitchell**, the Shailer Mathews Professor of New Testament and Early Christian Literature at the University of Chicago Divinity School.

Presidential Address: SBL President **P. Richard Choi** (Andrews University) will deliver the 2016 presidential address at the Saturday evening banquet.

Book Review Session: The subject of the annual SBL book review session is *A Prophet Like Moses: Prophecy, Law, and Israelite Religion* (Oxford University Press, 2014), by **Jeffrey**

Stackert (University of Chicago Divinity School). Everyone is welcome, and we especially invite attendees to read the book in advance of the meeting and join the discussion at this Sunday morning session.

Program Units: The 2016 program includes twelve SBL sections along with the AOS/ASOR section. Please see the section descriptions document at the region's website for more information.

Midwest SBL Graduate Student Paper Competition: Up to two prizes of \$300 each will be awarded for outstanding papers by doctoral students, typically one for a paper in Hebrew Scriptures/Ancient Near Eastern Studies and another for a paper in New Testament/Christian Origins. See the region's website for additional information. Entries must be received by **December 1, 2015**.

Midwest SBL Regional Scholar Award: This program honors outstanding early career scholars who are at least ABD but no more than four years past receipt of the Ph.D. A candidate selected by the region receives a prize of \$400 and advances for consideration as a national SBL honoree for the following year. See the region's website for additional information. Please note that various application materials are due at different times, with **the first deadlines scheduled for December 7, 2015**.

Student Religious Studies Conference: The SRSC, now in its tenth year, meets during the day (beginning at 10 a.m.) on Friday, February 5, 2016, and concludes before the opening session of the regional meeting that evening. The conference provides an excellent opportunity for students to present their work and network with people from other institutions and program levels. Please encourage your students (undergraduate through pre-dissertation doctoral) to attend and especially to present papers at this conference on topics spanning Hebrew Bible/Old Testament, New Testament, Second Temple and rabbinic Judaism, patristics and early Christianity, theology, historical studies, and comparative religions. **Proposals are due by January 9, 2016, and must include the complete paper.** The paper proposal form and an information poster are available at the region's website. Please direct any SRSC questions to the coordinator at Midwest.SBL.SRSC@gmail.com.

The joint annual meeting offers a wonderful opportunity to meet new colleagues, see old friends, try out research ideas, and enjoy a lively exchange in a friendly environment. All students, professors, and others interested in biblical studies and study of the ancient world are welcome. Please feel free to contact me at the email address below with any questions.

Sincerely,

Eric F. Mason
Regional Coordinator, Midwest Region SBL
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