

Dear Members of the Midwest Region of the Society of Biblical Literature,

We are pleased to invite you to the 2014 Joint 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 7-9, 2014**, at Olivet Nazarene University in Bourbonnais, Illinois (see [maps](#) and [hotel information](#)). The region also hosts the Student Religious Studies Conference (SRSC), scheduled for Friday, February 7. Please see more information on the SRSC below.

The officers of the societies invite you to **submit paper proposals by December 10, 2013**. Program decisions will be communicated by January 10, 2014. Please click [here](#) for information on SBL proposals and section descriptions. If any links in this letter are not operable, please see the Midwest Region website at http://www.sbl-site.org/meetings/rm_midwest.aspx.

Please send AOS/ASOR paper proposals to JoAnn Scurlock (r-beal@uchicago.edu).

Registration will again be available online at the region's website (see link above). **Registration will open on December 10, 2013, and will close on January 28, 2014**. A \$10 fee will be added for late registrations after January 28, so please choose the online option.

Theme and Schedule Highlights for the 2014 Meeting

Plenary Session: The theme for the meeting is “**Empire**,” and the plenary session is organized by SBL. Speakers include **Winston Persaud** (Wartburg Theological Seminary), **Ruben Munoz Larrondo** (Andrews University), and **J. Albert Harrill** (Ohio State University).

Midwest SBL Regional Spotlight: This Saturday afternoon session, now in its third year, features a presentation and question-and-answer period with a prominent scholar from our region. This year **Hans Dieter Betz**, the Shailer Mathews Professor Emeritus of New Testament at the University of Chicago Divinity School, will speak on the literary genre of Paul's letter to the Philippians. This is a preview of his forthcoming book titled *Studies on Paul's Letter to the Philippians*.

Book Review Session: The subject of our annual book review session is *The Phoenician Diaspora: Epigraphic and Historical Studies* (Eisenbrauns, 2012), by **Philip C. Schmitz** (Eastern Michigan University). Everyone is welcome, but we especially invite you to read the book in advance of the meeting and join the discussion at this Sunday morning session.

Program Units: The 2014 program includes twelve SBL sections plus the AOS/ASOR section. Click [here](#) for descriptions of all twelve SBL sections.

Presidential Address: SBL President **Ann Fritschel** (Wartburg Theological Seminary) will speak at the Saturday evening banquet.

Student Member Professional Development Luncheon: Graduate students are invited to gather for lunch Saturday to discuss how to prepare for the biblical studies job market. Topics may include prospective employer expectations, composing and organizing application materials, and strategies for interviewing well. Contact [Eric Vanden Eykel](#) for more information.

Women Scholars and Students Luncheon: All women scholars, teachers, and students are invited for an opportunity to meet one another and consider ways to expand women's participation in the Midwest Region. This Saturday luncheon will include discussion of the future direction of the Gender, Sexuality, and Post-modern Biblical Methodologies section. Contact [Ann Fritschel](#) for more information.

Graduate Student Paper Competition: Up to two prizes of \$300 each will be awarded for outstanding papers by graduate students, typically one for a paper in Hebrew Scriptures/Ancient Near Eastern Studies and another for a paper in New Testament/Christian Origins. Click [here](#) for additional information and the application form. Entries must be received by **December 1, 2013**.

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. The candidate selected by the region will receive a prize of \$400 and advances for consideration as a national honoree for the following year. Click [here](#) for information on the Regional Scholar program. Please note that various application materials are due at different times, with **the first deadline scheduled for December 1, 2013**.

Student Religious Studies Conference: The SRSC, now in its eighth year, meets during the day (beginning at 10 a.m.) on Friday, February 7, 2014, 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 10, 2014, and must include the complete paper.** The [paper proposal form](#) and an [information poster](#) are available at the region's website. Please contact [Jeremy Miselbrook](#) with any questions.

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
MWSBL.Regional.Coordinator@gmail.com