

Dear Members of the Midwest Region,

We are pleased to invite you to the 2017 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 10–12, 2017**, at Saint Mary's College in Notre Dame (South Bend), Indiana, and will mark the **100th Anniversary of the region's AOS chapter**. The region will also host the Student Religious Studies Conference (SRSC) on Friday, February 10.

The region has arranged for a block of hotel rooms at the **Hilton Garden Inn South Bend**, which is adjacent to the Saint Mary's campus. Please see the hotel information sheet at the Midwest Region's website (https://www.sbl-site.org/meetings/rm_midwest.aspx). The conference rate is available until January 20, and reservations must be placed by phone. Also, please see the Saint Mary's website for maps and transportation information (<https://www.saintmarys.edu/admission-aid/visit-campus/maps-directions>).

We invite you to **submit paper proposals for the regional meeting by Saturday, December 3, 2016**. (The SRSC has a different schedule for proposals than the regional meeting; see below.) Program decisions will be communicated no later than January 9, 2017. Please see the section descriptions document at the region's website for additional information on proposals and the various program units. Also, please note that paper proposals are submitted through an online form, available at <http://tinyurl.com/hqypj8r>. Please do not send paper proposals to section chairs. Normally papers are scheduled in thirty-minute time slots, ideally with twenty minutes of presentation and ten minutes of discussion.

Registration for the meeting will again be available online at the SBL region's website. **Registration should open in early December 2016 and will close the week before the conference.** The region offers regular registration for \$50, 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 2017 Meeting

The theme for the 2017 meeting is **“What Difference Does Time Make?”** The meeting will include the kinds of sessions familiar from previous years, but the scheduling of featured events will differ in several cases.

Program Units: The 2017 program includes twelve SBL sections along with the AOS/ASOR section. Please see the section descriptions document at the SBL region's website for more information.

Midwest SBL Regional Spotlight (Friday evening): This session, now in its sixth year, features a presentation and question-and-answer period with a prominent scholar from our region.

Our speaker this year is **Gabriele Boccaccini**, Professor of Second Temple Judaism and Early Rabbinic Literature at the University of Michigan and founding director of the Enoch Seminar.

Book Review Session (Saturday afternoon): The subject of the annual SBL book review session is *Gnosticism, Docetism, and the Judaisms of the First Century: The Search for the Wider Context of the Johannine Literature and Why It Matters* (Bloomsbury T&T Clark, 2015), by **Urban C. von Wahlde** (Loyola University Chicago). Everyone is welcome, and we especially invite attendees to read the book in advance of the meeting and join the discussion at the session.

Presidential Address (Saturday evening): AOS President **Wayne T. Pitard** (Professor, Department of Religion, and director of the Spurlock Museum, University of Illinois) will deliver the 2016 presidential address at the Saturday evening banquet.

Plenary Session (Sunday morning): The plenary session is organized by AOS on the conference theme “What Difference Does Time Make?” The regional AOS chapter’s centennial will also be commemorated at this time.

Other programs related to the regional meeting include the following:

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 3, 2016**.

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 deadline on December 3, 2016**.

Student Religious Studies Conference: The SRSC, now in its eleventh year, meets during the day on Friday, February 10, 2017, 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 18, 2017, and must include the complete paper.** The paper proposal link is <http://tinyurl.com/2017SRSC>, and an information poster is available at the region’s website. Please direct any SRSC questions to Jenny De Vivo, the SRSC 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
MWSBL.Regional.Coordinator@gmail.com