

2023

# SOCIETY REPORT

Society of Biblical Literature

## WELCOME FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

A section of the scientific community links the COVID-19 pandemic with the current climate crisis. Whether nonspecialists agree, these two “natural” events presented and continue to present some of the more pressing challenges to our Society. This year’s report represents our attempts to recover from the dislocations of the pandemic and to dream of new ways forward in the future. Make no doubt about it, we are at the place where the work to imagine the Society in a new landscape needs to pick up steam. While much of what we present here may not reflect that urgency, be sure that these issues remain critical.

The Society Report truly reflects several diversities in the Society. First, SBL staff participates actively in contributing details, writing, ideas, conversation, data, editing, proofreading, and so much more to accomplish this final finished product. Second, as far as possible we try to feature voices and stories that highlight innovative projects. We invite you to travel to the Minneapolis area to connect with Juan Hernández’s work. Third, we are always proud to feature our accomplishments. These are stories of the small successes in innovation. This year we share with you the first Global Virtual Meeting and the completion of the *SBL Study Bible*. Fourth, the report also contains the usual administrative essential to planning and careful strategic work. I encourage you to rest a moment with the In Memoriam page (see also [here](#)) to engage the stories of members who died in the last year and to hear of their scholarship, teaching, and service to encourage you for the years ahead. Equally, celebrate the achievements of awardees who point us in the direction of emerging scholarship. And of course, we record here the transitions in leadership.

As members of this Society, you belong to several other communities where you feel the movements

that are changing the lives of people as well as life in the academic world. These shifting sands may impact us in arbitrary ways and not at the same time. That the same fate awaits us all that they will impact the Society requires greater collaboration and a renewed sense that we are all in this together. My deep appreciation to all our volunteers and donors who continue to demonstrate their devotion to the Society and the necessity for each one of us to support this work to ensure that we achieve our mission.

Sincerely,

Steed Vernyl Davidson  
Executive Director



## YOUR SOCIETY OF BIBLICAL LITERATURE

SBL was one of the first learned societies formed in the U.S., and it is now one of the largest and most international among its peer fields and disciplines. SBL is nearly 150 years old, and it fosters biblical scholarship around the world.

You have witnessed firsthand SBL's vitality and relevance, whether through its commitment to international scholarship via the International Cooperation Initiative, its diversity of programs such as the Global Virtual Meeting, or its contribution to the public understanding of the Bible with innovations such as BibleOdyssey.org.

We are now approaching a major milestone—SBL's 150th anniversary in 2030. That date is not far off. We need your help ensuring that SBL will thrive in its commitments and contributions to fostering biblical scholarship across disciplinary and geographical boundaries not only now but also in the future. Will you join us in this commitment?

Your work lives on in the next generation of scholars, and SBL helps extend your legacy and contribution. With this in mind, please consider joining SBL's Legacy Makers, a planned giving guild of SBL, by leaving a portion of your estate or assets to SBL's ongoing mission. Regardless of your current capacity to give to the SBL, joining the Legacy Makers is a way to make a contribution to the organization as part of your estate planning, enabling you to support future generations of biblical scholars, teachers, and researchers—and contribute as well to the public understanding of religious and culturally central texts as well as their traditions and receptions.

SBL has been your intellectual hub for many years, a community of people among whom you developed your scholarship, advanced in your career, and established lasting friendships. Given your importance to the SBL and SBL's importance to you, we hope you will become part of SBL's future.

To learn more about Legacy Makers and how you can participate, see <https://www.sbl-site.org/membership/legacymaker.aspx>.

**As SBL grows toward a significant milestone,  
please help secure the path by joining SBL's Legacy Makers.**

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# SBL MISSION AND STRATEGIC VISION STATEMENTS

During 2022, members of the SBL Council (SBL's Board of Directors) approved a revision to the Society's Mission Statement and Strategic Vision Statement.

## Mission Statement:

Foster Academic Scholarship in biblical studies and cognate areas across global boundaries

## 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 by:

- ♦ Advancing the academic study of biblical texts and their contexts, of interpretation of the Bibles and their many traditions and contexts, as well as comparative studies that focus on other culturally-central texts
- ♦ Promoting broad, open academic cooperation and critical perspectives within and among fields of study and across global boundaries
- ♦ Collaborating with relevant educational institutions, including colleges, universities, and institutions of theological and religious education, as well as other appropriate organizations, to support academic biblical scholarship and teaching
- ♦ Facilitating the production and dissemination of new knowledge in the relevant areas by, e.g., organizing scholarly conferences, webinars, and publishing scholarship in print and online
- ♦ Developing resources for diverse audiences in multiple languages, including students and general publics across global boundaries

## Core Values:

Inclusivity	Transparency
Equity	Accountability
Diversity	Critical Inquiry
Scholarly Integrity	Openness to Change

2023 Council Members	
Christian Brady	Hugh Rowland Page Jr., Chair
Stephanie Buckhanon Crowder	Jeremy Punt
Steed Vernyl Davidson, Executive Director (ex officio)	Dalit Rom-Shiloni
Kristin De Troyer	Tammi J. Schneider
Musa Dube, President	C. L. Seow
Tamara Cohn Eskenazi, Vice-President	Juan Manuel Tebes
Joseph Lam	Alice Yafeh-Deigh
Laura S. Nasrallah	

The Society of Biblical Literature is the oldest and largest learned society devoted to the critical investigation of the Bible. The Society's membership comprises over 6,700 members who represent 92 countries. With the help of more than 1,000 volunteers, SBL has been supporting scholarly research and fostering the public understanding of the Bible and its influence since 1880. The Society offers a number of resources that aid in the accomplishment of SBL's mission. Resources include publication opportunities with SBL Press, access to webinars and fonts, and the ability to find job opportunities via the Employment Services website. SBL also generates annual reports such as the Jobs Report, the Member Profile Report, and the Society Report to provide members with statistics concerning SBL membership and the demographics of the guild. Some major categories of member benefits include:



### Meetings

SBL offers its members and affiliates space for networking and scholarly ideation through a system of dynamic meetings. These congresses are purposed to satisfy the varying needs of Society members. The Global Virtual Meeting provides opportunities for scholars across the world to share cutting-edge research, engage in professional development, and connect with members far and wide in the context of an all-digital platform. The International Meeting highlights the increasingly global nature of biblical studies and showcases the particular contributions of its host institution. The Annual Meeting gives members the chance to participate in the largest gathering of scholars in the guild, with over 1,200 academic sessions and an exhibit hall with one of the world's largest collection of books in biblical studies. Through SBL congresses, members can remain current with prevalent approaches to biblical texts and develop relationships with scholars in their research area(s).

### Awards

The Society offers yearly opportunities to apply for or receive nominations for awards that honor accomplishments and/or support research and development.

- ◆ A. R. Pete Diamond Award for Integrative Scholarship
- ◆ Paul J. Achtemeier Award for New Testament Scholarship
- ◆ David Noel Freedman Award for Excellence and Creativity in Biblical Scholarship
- ◆ SBL–De Gruyter Prize for Biblical Studies and Reception History
- ◆ Status of Women in the Profession Committee Mentor Award
- ◆ The Underrepresented Racial and Ethnic Minorities in the Profession Committee's Outstanding Mentor Award
- ◆ Bernadette J. Brooten Award for Scholarship in Gender, Sexuality, and Embodiment
- ◆ The Richards Award for Public Scholarship
- ◆ The Daniel Tran Foskett Hudgins Memorial Student Travel Award
- ◆ International Travel Award

# ABOUT THE SBL

## Publications

The Society publishes a variety of resources that impact the guild. SBL Press invites members to submit proposals for books or the *Journal of Biblical Literature*, the flagship journal in biblical studies. SBL members have online access to the entire history of *JBL* articles as a part of their membership. Members can likewise access all of the reviews published in the *Review of Biblical Literature* and volunteer to write reviews of recently published books. SBL also sponsors the open-access journal *TC: A Journal of Biblical Textual Criticism*. Another publication of SBL Press, the Bible Odyssey website, provides resources for the public's understanding of biblical studies and tools for teaching biblical studies in secondary and undergraduate settings. For members in underresourced countries, SBL's website provides access to a large number of full-text books, including many SBL Press titles, via the International Cooperation Initiative books page.

## SBL Central

SBL Central is a resource hub developed to increase both the discoverability and accessibility of writings for scholars across the globe, including unaffiliated researchers and adjunct faculty. SBL members can access electronic entries of the *Review of Biblical Literature* on SBL Central. SBL Central also hosts abstracts for Annual Meeting presentations and even full-text papers for presenters who wish to share them. Finally, SBL Central offers members book publication alerts in their areas of interest and article notifications when participating journals publish a new issue.

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Besides these many tangible benefits of membership, SBL offers many other benefits that are no less important, if less concrete. The Society is the oldest academic organization dedicated to biblical scholarship. Membership in the Society allows you to be counted as a colleague with your peers in the guild. It is an important professional credential. SBL spent over a year preparing an in-depth member profile survey. With this aggregated information, we can assist departments and institutions in creating new positions or making the case for keeping faculty positions open. With this data we can approach funding agencies to develop programs and services that strengthen the field and give new opportunities to biblical scholars. Through the member survey, we can better see trends, respond to them, and more effectively allocate SBL resources to help define and shape worldwide biblical scholarship.



## INTERVIEW WITH SBL EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR STEED VERNYL DAVIDSON



On 24 June 2023, Steed Vernyl Davidson began his tenure as the SBL's Executive Director. A native of Trinidad and Tobago, Steed received his undergraduate education at the University of the West Indies, holds a Diploma of Ministerial Studies from the United Theological College of the West Indies, received master's degrees from the University of the West Indies (MA) and Boston University (S.T.M.), and completed his PhD in Hebrew Bible at Union Theological Seminary, New York. He has authored *Empire and Exile: Postcolonial Readings of the Book of Jeremiah* (Bloomsbury, 2011) and *Writing/Reading the Bible in Postcolonial Perspective* (Brill, 2017) and coedited several additional volumes. He has also been an active and engaged SBL volunteer as General Editor of the Semeia Studies book series and as cochair of the steering committees for the Annual Meeting's Reading/Writing Jeremiah program unit and the International Meeting's Bible and Empire unit. To help members get to know Steed better, we asked if he would agree to a brief interview. Thankfully, he did.

◆ **What experiences in your personal or professional life shape and influence your leadership of SBL?**

I lean heavily into my identity as someone from the Caribbean. For the purposes of this conversation, that means at least three things: I am easy-going, critical, and collaborative. In the Caribbean we face the reality of the world and know that things are terrible. We can fix some things. And the rest, we simply learn to live with them. This realistic vision helps me determine what things I need to lose sleep over (sadly, there are quite a lot) and what is not worth the effort. In other words, I use and manage critical resources strategically. The legacies of colonialism, slavery, and indentureship give us a revolutionary outlook to critique power and the misuse of power. In leadership, I think it is important to be self-reflective. That awareness means a willingness to critique even my own use of power and to be sensitive to the ways my leadership can impact others. As island people, we know what it means to be collaborative. We must live in harmony with the sea and the land. We need to find ways to integrate the various cultural and religious influences that frame the societies we have become. We simply know what it means to collaborate across difference because survival requires it.

◆ **In what ways has SBL made a difference in your professional and personal development?**

I think like most members I look forward to the Annual Meeting. The meeting was time to expand my professional network and to generate new knowledge and ideas for research projects. SBL opened a world for me of colleagues from different parts of the world that has expanded the way I think about humanity and the possibilities for a better world. I would not be the same person without these friends and relationships. My sense that the Bible was a useful source for research and study has been confirmed through SBL. I say this because through these professional interactions I can see even more the profound impact of the Bible in the lives of people in different parts of the world. Much of my work has been to look at the Bible's use in colonization, a historical focus. However, those histories have opened my eyes to legacies, and these legacies appear in daily lives in harmful and useful ways.

◆ **What do you regard as the primary role or purpose of a learned society in the twenty-first century?**

Jokingly, I would say that learned societies exist for the purpose of reducing the thing called "celebrity academic," if there is such a thing. A society consists of its parts, of its members, and is held together by

individuals whose value exists only in relation to others. Knowledge construction is a shared endeavor. We share that with our contemporary colleagues as well as with previous generations. And if we produce new knowledge well, we will share this work with future generations. As individual scholars, we might come to brilliant insights on our own, but they really take root when we work in a learned society with others dedicated to the joint vision to share this knowledge with the world.

◆ **Within the broader world of learned societies (i.e., ACLS), what would you like SBL to be known and admired for?**

The complexity of SBL confuses my colleagues in ACLS. I think that is a good thing. To exist in such a complex organization with the competing and conflicting diversities is refreshing. This is our world. And if SBL provides a space that seems to be disappearing in our modern life where we get to work with someone else who doesn't share some of our presumptions, that is a wonderful thing. Preserving that experience for our members, and sharing it as a gift to the world, is a worthwhile investment of the resources it takes to keep such a complex organization functioning.

◆ **What impact would you like the Society to make in the lives of its members? within the broader community?**

In an age where support for the humanities continues to decline, SBL has a vital role to remind members of the worth of their scholarship. An expansive view of *Bible* and other related texts is an important step in sustaining the value of the work that our members do in these times. There are forces within our nations that are convinced that the study of the humanities is a luxury. To the extent we capitulate to those forces, we impoverish our communities and future generations of the insights contained in ancient texts and the communities over the years that have engaged and refined those ideas. Of course, SBL's role is not simply to function as the gatekeeper to prevent the hordes from tearing down buildings that have stood for years. Instead, SBL must help members envisage new avenues for scholarship. These are not simply new and trendy ways to teach but relevant engagement with contemporary concerns. That form of engagement at times requires abandoning old verities to embrace new realities. Innovation in these times should not be a luxury of only technology and science. Our work in the humanities, and in biblical studies in particular, must demonstrate that our work matters in a world that faces pressing problems such as the climate crisis and bewildering changes such as those presented by artificial intelligence.



◆ **What are the main external challenges that SBL faces during the next five to ten years? What are the primary internal challenges the Society will face?**

As can already be apparent, global finance as it rears its head in the form of the climate crisis stands as one of the major challenges before SBL and the world. I put the two together because we have not achieved the level of wealth generated in the world without doing damage to the planet. Because income is unevenly distributed, SBL members will increasingly live on the lower end of the income scale. Shrinking financial resources in an age where travel is disrupted by extreme weather and wars loom in our near future, if not in our present. Those realities will force us to realign the Society so it can bequeath needed resources to another generation to figure out how to maintain this work while trying to simply survive on a warming planet. And if we can transfer resources to the future to ensure the continuity of the Society, then we are lucky.

◆ **How do you want to address those external and internal challenges?**

The time to face those challenges is now. There are already efforts to shore up SBL finances to withstand some of the economic shocks that will come with the retirement of this next generation. In various countries, the generation nearing retirement possesses some of the greatest sources of wealth in the modern world. We need to encourage our members to leave some of that wealth behind for SBL and its future. Like several organizations, SBL tends to privilege seniority, experience, wealth, and so on. That means younger members do not have a clear voice in shaping the organization. I think it important to intentionally correct for that bias to enable younger persons to gain a stronger and more secure place in the Society sooner so that they can future-proof the Society.

◆ **When you contemplate SBL's future, what excites you most? What frightens you most?**

I still believe that there are great possibilities that can come from SBL. Even as the ancient world recedes in the background with every year, we still see how the wisdom of the ages can teach us important lessons, if we pay attention to them. Then there is also the exciting work to deepen interdisciplinarity as a feature of biblical studies. The scholars of the future will not be experts on a small area of a subdiscipline in biblical studies. Instead, they will embrace broader knowledges and work in coordination with scholars from different fields. The thing that excites me is the same thing that frightens me. We can miss the opportunity to advance these and other important innovations. I fear that we don't realize the potential for the good work but instead get distracted by small squabbles or more pressing concerns of survival. I feel enthusiastic when I think of how we can expand a modicum of the interesting work that our members are already doing.

◆ **Finally, if your resume were a piece of music, what genre would it be and why?**

That is easy. Jazz, because it is improvisational. I wish that I could be a jazz player of some sort. I am attracted to the innovation upon a theme, transformation of a tradition, generating the new out of the old.

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## TAMARA COHN ESKENAZI, 2024 SBL PRESIDENT

Society members, meet Professor Tamara Eskenazi, the 2024 President of the SBL. She is The Effie Wise Ochs Professor Emerita of Biblical Literature and History, Hebrew Union College–Jewish Institute of Religion.

### Beginnings

Tamara's first formal encounter with the Bible took place when she was in her early thirties, in a University of Denver class on "The Old Testament." As a widowed mother of two who had now married David Eskenazi, she found herself a parent of five children instead of two. She felt a responsibility to resume her college education to be a wise mother.



She had dropped out of college years before but had been introduced in the interim to the rich formative texts of various traditions: Taoism, Buddhism, Hinduism, and, thanks to the influence of Gandhi, also the work of Tolstoy. She needed a certain kind of wisdom and enrolled as a philosophy major.

The class on the Old Testament was scheduled at a convenient time slot to allow Tamara to be home when the kids left for school and to be back before they returned home. It was then that she first discovered the enormous scope of the Hebrew Bible and its intriguing and often-astonishing words and ideas. She also quickly became aware of how much the biblical stories and histories had already shaped her life, without her knowledge. The figures in the Bible populated her imagination since childhood as well as her daily life. The songs she sang came from the Bible, as did her very language, Hebrew.

The landscape she traversed was imbued with biblical stories that she had heard all her life. Mount Carmel on which she lived was the site (she had been told) where Elijah confronted the prophets of

Baal. The River Kishon flowing nearby was where Deborah and Barak fought Sisera. The beautiful Jezreel Valley, where her relatives lived, was haunted by the ghosts of Jezebel, Josiah, and many others. She found herself rooted in a long, living line of stories reaching back millennia.

From that point Tamara's curiosity and sense of discovery led her to finish a BA in Philosophy and Religious Studies (1976) and an MA in Religious Studies (1979). She and her kids would do their homework together. Next she enrolled in the joint PhD program at the University of Denver and Iliff School of Theology for a degree in Biblical Interpretation. She received her PhD in 1986, a year before her daughter got hers in physics. In 1986, she joined the Judaic Faculty at the University of Denver and also became Director of its Institute for Interfaith Studies.

In 1990, when invited to join the faculty of Hebrew Union College–Jewish Institute of Religion (HUC–JIR), she became the first woman to serve as a tenure-track professor for rabbinic students. Founded in 1875, HUC–JIR had ordained women rabbis beginning in 1973, but Tamara in 1990 was the first woman to join the rabbinical school faculty. In 2013, Tamara was ordained as a rabbi.

To return to Tamara's earliest beginning: born in Haifa, the major port city in Israel, she entered a world torn by war (World War II). Her early memories include bombers overhead and the steady flow of emaciated refugees from Europe descending from their boats with eyes filled with pain and hope. But these memories were accompanied by the awareness that idealism shapes peoples' hopes and dreams.

## **SBL: The Bible and Humanities Role in the Public Square**

Tamara strongly believes that scholars and the Bible have an important role to play in the public square. She is especially interested in working with SBL members on how to respond to the world at large in times of crises.

- ◆ What roles do scholars have?
- ◆ Does the fact that the Bible has been an influential library of books place special responsibilities upon biblical scholars? What are they?
- ◆ How does our work contribute to the common good aside from the distinctive religious applications in Judaism and Christianity?
- ◆ What roles should SBL itself undertake or avoid?

Tamara joined SBL in 1981 and has been active in regional, national, and international ways. She cofounded several program units, such as the Literature and History of the Persian Period, which is still active, and the Art of Biblical Commentary, which is not. She has served in diverse ways, including on Council and the Program Committee, as well as being an editor, not just in SBL. She was also a regional president.

While viewing her scholarship as a sacred calling, Tamara has been consistently involved in social action. She was part of the leadership of the Institute for the Study of Nonviolence (1969–1971), cofounded The Jewish Women Resource Center in Denver (1984), and continues to explore ways to bridge the world of scholarship with the lived realities of communities through leadership in multifaith community organizing.

Fostering a climate of genuine listening, of hermeneutical and existential interactions shaped by curiosity about the Other, is extremely important to her. She is therefore especially committed to SBL's innovative Global Virtual Meeting. It puts into place SBL's long-time commitment to diversity, equity, and inclusion, thus making new forms of dialogue possible, and opening the doors to contribution from those unable to join the face-to-face Annual and International MEETINGS.

## **SBL: Defined by Scholarship *and* Pushed to the Public Square**

The focus of Tamara's scholarly work remains "the literature and history of the Persian period," with special emphasis on Ezra-Nehemiah. Her first book set forth a model for interpreting Ezra-Nehemiah that still serves as a starting point for many studies. Some of her work has been published in German, Spanish, Hebrew, Italian, and Swedish.

Her accomplishment as a scholar led to her being chosen as editor of the groundbreaking volume, *The Torah: A Women's Commentary* (2008). This book, which won the prestigious Book of the Year Award by the National Jewish Book Council, showcases the work of one hundred women scholars of the Bible, rabbinics, and other related disciplines, along with over one hundred women poets.

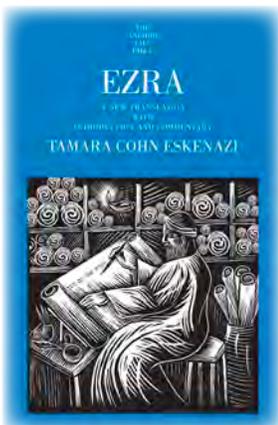
The 1,400-page tome is organized according to the Jewish reading of the Torah. Each week's reading is commented upon by two biblical scholars, an expert in rabbinic literature, a clergy person, or an academic reflecting on the reading's contemporary relevance, and complemented by poems challenging or expanding the messages of the biblical texts.

Tamara observes, "One of the most important aspects of this commentary is the process of its creation. It was initiated by the Women of Reform Judaism, who sought to sponsor a serious Torah commentary sensitive to the lives of contemporary Jewish women." Tamara and other scholars helped craft a vision as to what such a commentary should and could do. That vision grew and developed thanks to the energy and enthusiasm of its effective editorial board. Rabbi Hara Person, then managing director of the Union for Reform Judaism Press, proved to be important. The rapport of the entire team was exceptional and inspiring. It shows the breadth and depth that working together can achieve.

Rabbi Andrea Weiss, PhD, joined Tamara as editor. Andrea (then a colleague and now provost of HUC-JIR) had been a brilliant student in Tamara's first class at HUC-JIR. Tamara and Andrea working together was fulfilling the blessings of transmission "from generation to generation." *The Torah: A Women's Commentary* demonstrates the way first-rate scholarship can address thoughtful, inquisitive readers who seek to learn more about the Bible, as well as women and the Bible.

Tamara's scholarly focus on the postexilic period, especially Ezra-Nehemiah, emerged because of her initial work on the redaction of the Book of the Twelve. Persuaded that she needed to understand the wider culture within which the decisive stitching of earlier material was done, she turned to Ezra-Nehemiah. The rationale was that the society that produced the Book of the Twelve as we know it was roughly contemporaneous with Ezra-Nehemiah.

She therefore regarded Ezra-Nehemiah scholarship a prerequisite of studying the Book of the Twelve. Ezra-Nehemiah, after all, is the premier biblical source dealing with this period and place. While not expecting the history to be necessarily reliable, it seemed—and continues to seem—common sense that the attitudes and worldviews expressed in Ezra-Nehemiah belonged in the same religious and cultural world of the final redactors of the Book of the Twelve. Soon, the complexity and richness of Ezra-Nehemiah itself came to be a central preoccupation. Under the inspiration of the teachings of her mentor and teacher, Kent H. Richards, she wrote her influential essay, "The Structure of Ezra-Nehemiah and the Unity of the Book," which was chosen for *The Best in Theology* (1986).



Her influential book *In an Age of Prose: A Literary Approach to Ezra-Nehemiah* came next, followed by numerous related articles and edited books. In 1986, when she first completed her manuscript, little was written in scholarly sources about the period. But the pendulum swung, propelling Persian period studies to the fore, especially when the implications of pentateuchal studies pointed in that direction. The exponential growth in knowledge, research, and analysis of the period continues to engage her attention. Her *Ezra: A New Translation and Commentary*, was published by the Anchor Yale Bible in July 2023, with a volume on Nehemiah to follow.

Tamara's interest in Ezra-Nehemiah is, among other things, also an extension of her interest in communities. Ezra-Nehemiah is a work that focuses on rebuilding community after devastation. As she shows in her works on Ezra-Nehemiah, its narrative is structured so as to empower a people to take responsibility for reconstruction.

Understanding the Persian period and developments in the biblical world of the time requires engagement with the surrounding cultures. Tamara finds the Greek sources of the period especially relevant to the Bible. Writers such as Herodotus and Xenophon help us understand how writers of history in the fifth and fourth centuries BCE understood their work. However, it is the Elephantine documents that have been a particular focus as the best source for understanding the world of Ezra-Nehemiah and other biblical writings. Mining the fullness of such material and its implications for biblical studies is a current and continuing interest.

## A Final Word of Thanks

Tamara credits family, friends, and colleagues with the support she has been given. In particular, her late husbands, David Eskenazi and William (Bill) Whedbee, were significant in her coming to where she is now. “I had been a high school dropout with a smattering of college education when I met and married David. Thanks to his encouragement, I was able to go back to school and discover at a mature age my vocation. Tamara is a mother of five and grandmother of five, all of them and their spouses are beautiful people of whom she is very proud.

Finally, Tamara thanks SBL members literally around the globe who have elected her. “SBL has been my intellectual home and source of inspiration for decades. It is a privilege to belong to it and now to have the opportunity to serve.”

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## THE BIBLE, ACCESSIBILITY, AND THE ACADEMY: JUAN HERNÁNDEZ JR.

As a member-based organization, the Society strives not only to support scholarship that centers the critical investigation of biblical texts but to nurture public understanding of the Bible. SBL is unable to meet this goal without the work of our members. Society members, meet Dr. Juan Hernández Jr., Professor of Biblical Studies at Bethel University. Juan plays a central role in an initiative that brings collegiate-level Bible courses in Spanish to the public.

Juan started his tenure at Bethel University in 2006. His focus for the first ten years was exclusively on teaching, research, and writing. Hispanic Heritage Month 2015 slightly shifted this for him. A group of Hispanic pastors requested a seminar for Spanish-speaking pastors who lived in the Twin Cities. Juan consented and obligated himself to one seminar that was scheduled in the spring of 2016. The mission was clear. For a small stipend, Juan was to deliver a 3.5-hour seminar on the Bible in Spanish to around thirty pastors. As registration opened and the event drew nearer, the size of the seminar grew significantly. The number of registrants surpassed the predetermined estimate and attracted 140 people. With each registrant paying \$25, the event that was estimated to bring in \$750 actually grossed \$3,500. With his PowerPoints, natural charisma, and jokes, Juan stunned the audience with a lecture in Spanish on Pauline thanksgivings. The hunger of the registrants was clear: they asked questions during breaks and requested to return to the seminar after lunch when the seminar was scheduled to conclude. The group demonstrated interest in learning Biblical Greek and other topics related to the academic study of the Bible. Juan agreed to deliver a second seminar in the fall and eventually agreed to offer three seminars annually. As of today, he has delivered three seminars annually for the past eight years. Each seminar has met the forty-person minimum established by the institution with a regular attendance of 60–120 people, so there has not been need to cancel any of the scheduled seminars. The past twenty-four seminars have continued to attract Hispanic pastors, along with their families and parishioners. These seminars are diverse, as Juan teaches men, women, and children. He is educating pastors and parishioners from various Christian denominations (many identify as Pentecostal or charismatic, although Catholics have also attended), immigrants, and persons who hail from a variety of Latin American countries.



When asked about the perception of Pentecostal and/or charismatic pastors to the academic study of the Bible, Juan identified his Pentecostal upbringing, charismatic nature, and comedic teaching method as central to his approach of “flattening and undermining assumptions” that are attached to anti-intellectualism and anti-academia. He uses his inside knowledge to demonstrate that, if they claim to believe the Bible is “God’s word, there could be nothing more spiritual than investing in the Word.” He explained:

The irony is that I’m very Pentecostal in my delivery, but I’m delivering academics. If you’re charismatic and you speak the same language, not just the language of Spanish, but the language of Pentecostalism, it’s kind of a cognitive

dissonance because “he sounds like me, but he’s not saying the things I usually say.” That brings a lot to the table that resonates with these folks, so you garner their trust.



Bethel University has benefited greatly by this audience. These Spanish-speaking seminars have inadvertently become a recruitment tool for Hispanic residents in the Twin Cities. Registrants “started to see the hospitality of the event as a welcoming and embracing place for their families.” In time, Juan started to see registrants who had attended his seminar when they were thirteen and fourteen years old enroll as students at Bethel.

Eventually, with Juan’s guidance, Bethel established a credited system for Spanish speakers to enroll in university courses. Juan offered a fully accredited, university-level introduction to biblical Greek course in Spanish for all who were interested. In

the first rendition of the biblical Greek course, twenty-four people registered to learn Greek in Spanish. Of the twenty-four, twelve were able to provide records affirming receipt of a high school diploma or its equivalent. Juan was able to successfully get these students through two years of learning biblical Greek.

In 2021, Juan submitted a proposal for another accredited course. He offered a three-credit introduction to the Bible course in Spanish. The course was added to Bethel’s catalog for community registrants and matriculating students alike. This increased the diversity of Juan’s courses. As a result of the credited course, non-Hispanic Spanish majors were able to take a Bible course in Spanish as an acceptable elective for their major. The first offering boasted seventeen registrants from ages seventeen to eighty-three and included high school dual enrollment students, pastors, laypersons, and matriculating Bethel University students. Today, the course continues to attract degree-seeking and non-degree-seeking students.

Juan’s courses have garnered quite a bit of attention. Members and churches within the community have supported this cause by donating to a fund that pays for the introduction to the Bible course for non-degree-seeking pastors who register.

This initiative at Bethel University continues to demonstrate how biblical scholarship can be meaningful to those outside of the professional guild and can be employed to serve communities outside of the academic community. It serves three types of audiences: (1) documented and undocumented Spanish-speaking immigrants who may lack the educational background necessary to enroll in college courses; (2) non-degree-seeking persons who have high school diplomas and qualify to take collegiate-level courses; and (3) Latinx children within the Twin Cities community who have been exposed to Bethel by attending the seminars with their parents. Attendees have displayed a growing interest in biblical scholarship, which has prompted Bethel to meet the demand by offering additional programs to obtain biblical education in Spanish. Further, Bethel University has experienced an increase in diversity among its student body and its leadership. Bethel recently elected its first Hispanic pastor to the Board of Trustees.



When asked how this model can be replicated in other institutions, Juan offered the following suggestions.

1. Invest time, energy, and money into the communities you want to welcome into your student body.
2. Hire professionals who are experts in a given field and insiders of the communities you want to attract. In respect to diversity, institutions should be sure not to make the diversity a person shares their specialty. Allow the experts to be valid in their identity as academic professionals. Their diverse characteristics simply connects them to a larger community.

3. Be strategic about the infrastructure you want to establish with your initiatives and add proper funding. Juan's seminars impact areas outside of teaching. They have an impact on admissions, marketing, and student life.

The Society expresses its gratitude for Juan Hernández's willingness to discuss the work he is doing at Bethel University. We hope that this is one of many models committed to the fostering and accessibility of biblical scholarship to the public.

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## REMEMBERING GAY L. BYRON

Gay L. Byron, who had a distinguished career as a Professor of New Testament and Early Christianity, died unexpectedly 6 December 2023. Gay volunteered her service to the Society of Biblical Literature (SBL) for thirty years. Her contributions were exemplary. She wrote in her essay "My Society of Biblical Literature Journey: Service, Scholarship, and Staying Connected to the Call," in *Women and the Society of Biblical Literature* (2019), that the SBL provided the framework for her professional exploration of graduate studies while a graduate student and was instrumental in showcasing her scholarship on the rhetorical significance of Egyptians, Ethiopians, and Blacks for understanding race and ethnic discourses in early Christian writings. Over her academic career, Gay served the guild at every level.

Her service began when she was a doctoral student at Union Theological Seminary in the City of New York in the early 1990s. Gay was present at the inception of the SBL's Underrepresented Racial and Ethnic Minorities in the Profession Committee (CUREMP), when her dissertation advisor and mentor at Union Seminary, Vincent Wimbush, was nominated to serve as its first chair. As Wimbush's research assistant, she was privileged to help prepare documents and attend some of the meetings of the fledgling committee dedicated to advancing the representation of racial and ethnic minorities in biblical professions. Gay benefited from being mentored and nurtured as a future scholar by noted racial and ethnic minorities on the committee, most of whom she later collaborated with in symposia, publications, and other projects.

Gay was appointed to serve on the Status of Women in the Profession Committee (1994–1996) as a student member, where she advocated for women student concerns, and CUREMP (2005–2010), where she encouraged and mentored a new generation of women and underrepresented racial and ethnic minorities in biblical studies during her two terms. Gay was elected to serve on the SBL Council (2014–2019), where she helped to determine general policies and program initiatives. During this period, she was also appointed a member of the Finance/Audit/Investment Committee (2016–2018).

In addition to serving on the above-mentioned SBL committees, Gay was a volunteer on the Ideological Criticism Steering Committee (2000–2006), serving as cochair for four years. She was particularly pleased that the Ideological Criticism section and the African American Biblical Hermeneutics section, which frequently cosponsored joint sessions, offered her the space to present papers on her research on the appropriation of ethnic identities in New Testament writings and receive feedback from students and peers.

Gay was appointed a member of the Semeia Studies book series editorial board (2011–2013) and served a second term (2014–2016), where she had the opportunity to advance scholarship focused on womanist biblical interpretation as the board editor for *Scripturalizing Revelation: An African American Postcolonial Reading of Empire*, by Lynne St. Clair Darden (2015), and *Womanist Interpretations of the Bible: Expanding the Discourse*, coedited by Gay and Vanessa Lovelace (2016). In response to the murder of George Floyd in 2020, the Council constituted the Black Scholars Matter Task Force (2020–2022), where Gay was appointed a member. A major outcome of the task force's work was the virtual two-part #BlackScholarsMatter Symposium held in August 2020. The participants' presentations were collected and edited as *Black Scholars Matter: Visions, Struggles, and Hopes in Africana Biblical Studies* (2022), coedited by Gay and Hugh Page. Gay contributed an essay titled "Contemplative Collegiality: Caring for the Souls of Black Biblical Scholars."



In addition to serving on steering committees and editorial boards, Gay, in consultation with former SBL Executive Director, John Kutsko, cochaired and organized a “biblical studies think tank” to consider the future of biblical studies in the context of theological education to be held at Yale Divinity School, June 2020.

A well-respected scholar, Gay was frequently invited to contribute her research to SBL Press, including “On Being a Black Biblical Scholar—and So Much More: A Reflection” in the edited volume *Remapping Biblical Studies: CUREMP at Thirty* (2023), “My Society of Biblical Literature Journey: Service, Scholarship, and Staying Connected to the ‘Call,’” in *Women and the Society of Biblical Literature* (2019), and “Ancient Ethiopia and the New Testament: Ethnic (Con)texts and Racialized (Sub)texts,” in *They Were All Together in One Place? Toward Minority Biblical Criticism* (2009).

Gay’s involvement in the SBL through service and scholarship provided her a path to stay connected to her call to ministry, the commitment that initially drew her to pursue biblical studies. The challenges she faced being a Black woman in SBL did not diminish her dedication to the guild, and it will be forever indebted to her service.

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## THE 2023 GLOBAL VIRTUAL MEETING

For the first time ever, SBL planned and hosted a Global Virtual Meeting (GVM) in 2023. As a meeting designed from the ground up for a virtual environment, it offered experiences, opportunities, presentation formats, and accessibility that are not possible in an in-person meeting. Designed to emphasize the possibilities of both live and asynchronous participation, the GVM explored new modes of participation that differ from those of past SBL meetings.

### Genesis of the GVM

The lessons of the virtual meetings necessitated by the COVID-19 pandemic highlighted the ways in which virtual meetings could accomplish certain goals. In-person meetings create special opportunities for inter-



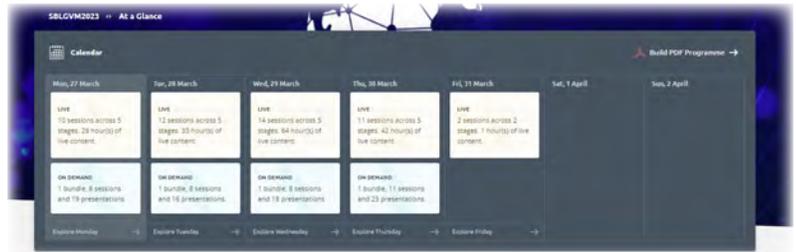
action, but they also privilege specific geographic locations as well as those who have the means or support to travel to those locations. The costs of travel and lodging have long created a barrier to regular participation in SBL meetings, especially for members who live outside of North America. Of course, a virtual format does not solve all of these problems, and it even introduces difficulties unique to the format. Yet at a time when over a third of SBL’s membership now lives outside of the United States, a meeting format not restricted by the challenges of global travel has become a clear necessity. The Virtual Annual Meeting of 2020 and

the dual-format 2021 Annual Meeting showed some of the promise of virtual meetings, but they were also adaptations of in-person meetings. For the GVM, SBL sought to start from scratch, building a meeting specifically for a virtual environment. In August of 2022, Ex Ordo was selected as the platform that would support the meeting, and the task of planning began in earnest.

### Planning and Proposals

Proposals for the Virtual Meeting took on a slightly different format than the other SBL meetings. Like the first years of the International Meeting, the GVM did not begin with program units. Rather, it opened with a general call for proposals related to any topic in biblical studies and related disciplines.

The proposals could take two primary forms: an individual/poster presentation or a preplanned session. Individual proposals that were accepted for presentation would also be expected to upload some type of documentation to accompany the abstract. This could include a digital poster, an electronic presentation file, a full-text paper, or even a prerecorded video of the presentation. Once accepted, individual proposals would be grouped together for presentation in session based on topic and presenter time zone and availability.



Preplanned sessions allowed any member to make a proposal for a packaged session plan. Proposals of this type were also encouraged to upload digital materials before their live session. For all types of proposals, creativity and exploration of the digital modality were encouraged.

## New Registration Structure

Registration for the Global Virtual Meeting opened on 17 February, and it notably featured a different type of rate schedule. Instead of a fee based on membership category that increased as the meeting drew closer, the registration followed an income-based model. Rates started as low as USD 20 and increased up to USD 140 based on the selected income level of the registrant. This model was an attempt to lower the barrier of entry for the meeting, especially for students, early-career researchers, and researchers around the globe for whom the financial challenges of an in-person meeting often prove prohibitive.

## Putting the Meeting Together

As time came to put together the accepted presentations and sessions into a complete schedule, some of the challenges of a virtual meeting again became clear. The meeting was facilitated by staff based primarily in Atlanta, Georgia, USA (US Eastern Time), but participants joined from time zones across the world. Every effort was made for presenters to be able to present in a reasonable local time for them, though this was not possible in every instance. The result was a schedule with sessions spread out across a wide array of start times. For attendees, this meant that at least some sessions would occur during the main part of the day, even if others happened at inconvenient times. For meeting staff, this led to some late nights and very early mornings, with sessions ending as late as 12:30 a.m. and starting as early as 5:00 a.m. (and many cups of coffee in between).

Another feature of the schedule was that the number of concurrent sessions was intentionally kept to a minimum. While there were occasions where four or five sessions were taking place, the plan was to try to have, whenever possible, only two or three simultaneous sessions. The thinking here was to offer some choice to attendees but to try to avoid the overwhelming sense of needing to jump back and forth between sessions.

A schedule such as this is also an attempt to acknowledge and allow for another critical difference of a virtual meeting from an in-person: a virtual meeting is often much less of an intrusion in the life of a presenter or attendee. For an in-person meeting, most attendees can devote most of their days to the activities of the meeting: attending session, connecting and reconnecting with colleagues, looking through books in the exhibit hall, even exploring the city hosting the meeting. A virtual

### State of the Field: New Testament Studies

ORGANISED BY

Tai-siong Benny Liew  
College of the Holy Cross

RECORDING



meeting can come to wherever one has a device and an internet connection, so it is not nearly as all-consuming on one's time. Often the life responsibilities of presenters and attendees that are put on hold to travel for an in-person meeting continue unabated during a virtual one.

The live portion of the 2023 Global Virtual Meeting started on Monday, 27 March, at 8:00 a.m. EDT with two poster sessions. Soon after another four sessions took place, and the meeting was off to the races. Over the next four days, a total of forty-nine sessions took place. During this time, sixty-one individual papers were presented, four networking sessions gave members a more informal time to interact, and twenty-two preplanned sessions explored their topics. The latter category included book-review sessions, state-of-the-field discussions, professional development, and sessions focused on research tools and new books from sponsors Atla and De Gruyter. Across the four days, a total of 169 hours of live sessions took place. In total, 371 members from forty countries took part in the meeting.

Thirty-six of the forty-nine sessions were available as recordings within twenty-four hours of the live session, and attendees continued to have access to those recordings for the next two months. During this period the conversations feature was also available. Documents and video files also continued to be available. By the end of the live sessions, thirty-two digital posters, thirty-two slideshows, forty-five full-text papers, and thirty-seven prerecorded videos had been uploaded by presenters.

### Looking toward the Future

As the inaugural meeting of this type, the 2023 Global Virtual Meeting marked a new era for SBL to provide opportunities to its members across the globe. Yet this was not a one-year affair. The planning for the 2024 Global Virtual Meeting, to be held 1–4 April, is well underway. Beyond 2024, SBL is looking for ways to continue to improve the meeting and provide better access for members. Rather than a mere supplement to existing offerings, SBL sees the Global Virtual Meeting as a critical partner with the Annual Meeting and the International Meeting that provides its own unique opportunities to participate, present, and network. We look forward to the new directions it will take us as a Society seeking to foster biblical scholarship throughout the world.

## THANKS TO BENNY LIEW

Special thanks and acknowledgment are due in 2023 to Tat-siong Benny Liew. Benny assumed the role of Interim Executive Director following John Kustko's departure in December of 2022 and served in this capacity through June of 2023. Benny made sure that SBL did not miss a beat, as demonstrated by the breadth of the projects and programming in this Society Report. His tenure included the first Global Virtual Meeting, where Benny played an active role in developing programming for that meeting and seeing to its successful launch. Benny likewise helped make sure that the 2023 International Meeting in Pretoria, South Africa, was a tremendous success. We are grateful for his steady leadership and his guidance during this period of transition.

### Review of *The Brahmin and His Bible: Ram Mohun Roy's Precepts of Jesus 200 Years On* by R.S. Sugirtharajah

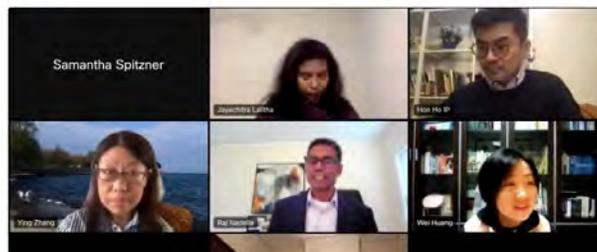
#### ORGANISED BY

Wei Huang  
Shanghai University

#### DESCRIPTION

Scholars from different parts of the world gather to review R.S. Sugirtharajah's book on Ram Mohun Roy's reading and use of the Bible, and to discuss the implications of Sugirtharajah's arguments.

#### RECORDING



## THE SBL STUDY BIBLE

In 2015, SBL began working on an update to the Society's flagship study Bible, the *HarperCollins Study Bible (HCSB)*. At the time, the second edition of the *HCSB* was approaching its tenth anniversary and was in need not only of minor updates but of a complete revision for a twenty-first-century audience. With a deadline of presenting the proposal to HarperOne at the 2015 Annual Meeting in Atlanta, SBL Press staff dove into the development process by doing what scholars do best: research. With an undergraduate audience in mind, the team set out to develop an affordable, engaging study Bible that would replace expensive textbooks.

In the new study Bible, now rebranded as the *SBL Study Bible (SBLSB)*, students can expect to find the same types of information from book to book as in previous edition. The *SBLSB* also includes the translation of the New Revised Standard Version Updated Edition (NRSVue), the most up-to-date academic translation of the Bible, which itself reflects the collective efforts of SBL members. The translation of each biblical book is accompanied by a new introduction that includes sections on the book's name and canonical context; authorship and date; ancient and cultural context; literary structure, genre, and context; and distinctive features. Subject and history essays throughout the *SBLSB* cover the relevant divisions of the canon, genres of literature, culture, and religion from the ancient Near East to the Roman Empire. Within the biblical texts, sidebars appear approximately every ten chapters to supplement the introductions with deeper coverage of historical issues, interfaith readings of shared traditions, reception history, and viewpoints focused on contextual readings. Many of these sidebars are drawn from Bible Odyssey, SBL's public-facing resource (<https://www.bibleodyssey.org/>). Together, the *SBLSB* and Bible Odyssey bring solid scholarship from SBL members to a wider, general audience searching for diverse perspectives on the biblical texts.

With regard to maps, the *SBLSB* adopted a different approach from previous editions by choosing to include two-color maps within context rather than full-color topographical maps at the end of the Bible, which require students to flip back and forth to find information. Where the *HCSB* only included line drawings, the *SBLSB* uses images of archaeological remains to bring the text to life and art to represent how biblical texts have been interpreted throughout history. The *SBLSB* also includes tables and timelines in addition to photos, so students have a range of tools at their fingertips.

The result of this multiyear endeavor, which was developed and managed by Heather McMurray and Nicole Tilford, along with John F. Kutsko and Bob Buller, is a study Bible that will take students through their introductory courses into upper-level classes. Please join us in thanking the many SBL members who contributed their time, effort, and expertise to make the *SBL Study Bible* possible.

### General Editors

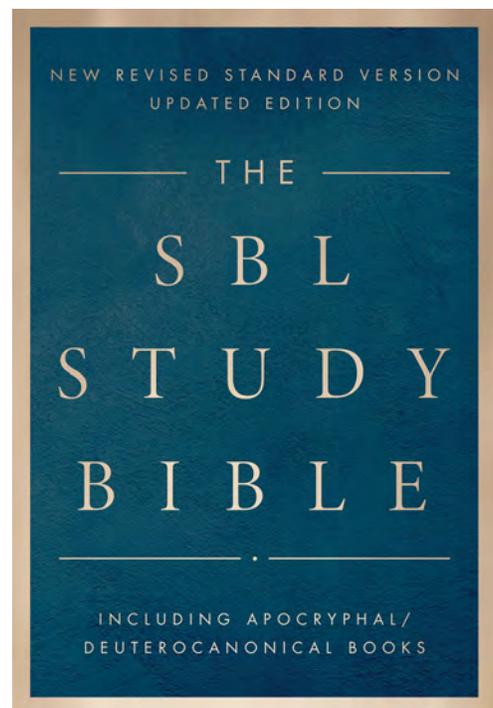
Steven L. McKenzie  
Kristin De Troyer  
F. Scott Spencer

### Associate Editors

Dexter E. Callender Jr.  
Corrine Carvalho  
Matthew Goff  
Sarah Sheckman  
Shively T. J. Smith

### Subject Essay Authors

Eric D. Barreto, *The Roman Empire*  
Dexter E. Callender Jr., *Introduction to the Pentateuch*  
Corrine Carvalho, *Introduction to the Prophetic Books*  
Katharine J. Dell, *Introduction to the Old Testament/Hebrew Bible*



Matthew Goff, *Introduction to the Apocryphal/Deuterocanonical Books*  
 Kristine Henriksen Garroay, *The Ancient Near East*  
 Elaine T. James, *Introduction to the Poetic and Wisdom Books*  
 Chris Keith, *The Historical Jesus*  
 Steven L. McKenzie, *Introduction to the Historical Books*  
 Jocelyn McWhirter, *Introduction to the Bible*  
 Judith H. Newman, *The Hellenistic World*  
 Shively T. J. Smith, *Introduction to the New Testament Letters and Apocalypse*  
 F. Scott Spencer, *Introduction to the New Testament, Introduction to the Gospels and Acts*

### Book Introduction Authors

Sean A. Adams, <i>Baruch, Letter of Jeremiah</i>	Sonja G. Anderson, <i>2 Peter, Jude</i>
Bill T. Arnold, <i>Deuteronomy</i>	Joel S. Baden, <i>Leviticus</i>
Alicia J. Batten, <i>James</i>	Carol M. Bechtel, <i>Esther</i>
Alice Ogden Bellis, <i>Proverbs</i>	Francis Borchardt, <i>1 Maccabees</i>
Sherri Brown, <i>John</i>	Randall Chesnutt, <i>Prayer of Manasseh</i>
Stephen L. Cook, <i>Hosea</i>	Jeremy Corley, <i>Sirach</i>
Jerome Creach, <i>Joshua</i>	Andrew R. Davis, <i>Micah</i>
Stacy Davis, <i>Malachi</i>	David A. deSilva, <i>4 Maccabees</i>
Marieke Dhont, <i>Additions to Daniel</i>	Michal Beth Dinkler, <i>Luke</i>
Robert Doran, <i>2 Maccabees</i>	Peter Dubovský, <i>Nahum</i>
Cynthia Edenburg, <i>Judges</i>	Göran Eidevall, <i>Amos</i>
Angela Roskop Erisman, <i>Numbers</i>	David E. Fredrickson, <i>Philippians</i>
Paula Fredriksen, <i>Romans</i>	Deirdre N. Fulton, <i>1 Esdras</i>
Tova Ganzel, <i>Ezekiel</i>	Andrew T. Glicksman, <i>Wisdom of Solomon</i>
Matthew Goff, <i>3 Maccabees</i>	John Goldingay, <i>Psalms</i>
Patrick Gray, <i>Hebrews</i>	Nijay K. Gupta, <i>1 and 2 Thessalonians</i>
Martien A. Halvorson-Taylor, <i>Song of Songs</i>	J. Albert Harrill, <i>Ephesians</i>
Shuichi Hasegawa, <i>1 and 2 Kings</i>	Gina Hens-Piazza, <i>Lamentations</i>
Karina Martin Hogan, <i>2 Esdras</i>	Denise Dombkowski Hopkins, <i>Judith</i>
Lynn R. Huber, <i>Revelation</i>	Scott C. Jones, <i>Job</i>
Louis C. Jonker, <i>1 and 2 Chronicles</i>	John Kaltner, <i>Jonah</i>
Brad E. Kelle, <i>Jeremiah</i>	Melody D. Knowles, <i>Ezra, Nehemiah</i>
Alice L. Laffey†, <i>Ruth</i>	Mahri Leonard-Fleckman, <i>1 and 2 Samuel</i>
Davina C. Lopez, <i>Galatians</i>	Francis M. Macatangay, <i>Tobit</i>
Joseph A. Marchal, <i>1 Corinthians</i>	Amy C. Merrill Willis, <i>Daniel</i>
Alicia D. Myers, <i>1 John, 2 John, 3 John</i>	Janette H. Ok, <i>1 Peter</i>
Hugh R. Page Jr., <i>Isaiah</i>	Angela N. Parker, <i>1 and 2 Timothy, Titus</i>
Michael Peppard, <i>Mark</i>	Mark Allan Powell, <i>Matthew</i>
Emerson B. Powery, <i>Philemon</i>	Paul R. Raabe, <i>Obadiah</i>
Thomas Römer, <i>Exodus</i>	Ruth Scoralick, <i>Psalms 151</i>
Matthew L. Skinner, <i>Acts</i>	Naomi Steinberg, <i>Genesis</i>
Meredith J. Stone, <i>Greek Esther</i>	Jerry L. Sumney, <i>Colossians</i>
Lena-Sofia Tiemeyer, <i>Zechariah</i>	Ronald L. Troxel, <i>Joel</i>
David S. Vanderhooft, <i>Habakkuk</i>	Jaime L. Waters, <i>Haggai</i>
L. L. Welborn, <i>2 Corinthians</i>	Nicholas R. Werse, <i>Zephaniah</i>
Lisa M. Wolfe, <i>Ecclesiastes</i>	

## Sidebar Authors

- David H. Aaron, *Complaint Traditions*  
 Sonja Ammann, *Gender in the Letter of Jeremiah*  
 Randall C. Bailey, *Hidden Impact of War*  
 Ibolya Balla, *Eve in Ben Sira*  
 Katell Berthelot, *Forced Circumcision*  
 Helen K. Bond, *Messiah Figures*  
 Lisa Bowens, *African American Pauline Hermeneutics*  
 Marian Broida, *Medicine in the Bible*  
 Rosemary Canavan, *Magic and Miracles*  
 Stephen C. Carlson, *No Room in the Inn?*  
 Cynthia R. Chapman, *Barrenness*  
 L. Juliana Claassens, *Way of the Lord*  
 Stephen L. Cook, *Resurrection*  
 Jamie Davies, *Antichrist*  
 Shawna Dolansky, *The Shema, Sheol*  
 Frances Flannery, *666*  
 Cristina Garcia-Alfonso, *Rahab from a Cuban Perspective*  
 Michael J. Gilmour, *Tobit's Dog*  
 Leonard Greenspoon, *Jerusalem*  
 Jennifer Grillo, *Memory*  
 Rebecca Poe Hays, *Pilgrimage of the Nations*  
 Meghan Henning, *Disability*  
 David G. Horrell, *Was Corinth a Den of Iniquity?*  
 Cameron B. R. Howard, *The Authority of the Written Word*  
 Mignon R. Jacobs, *Divorce*  
 Eric Jarrard, *Exodus Motif*  
 Kirsty L. Jones, *Samson's Blindness*  
 John Kaltner, *Joseph in the Qur'an*  
 Robert S. Kawashima, *Leprosy*  
 HyeRan Kim-Cragg, *Forced Migration*  
 Jennifer Knust, *Slaves of Christ*  
 Mariam Kovalishyn, *Rich and Poor*  
 Timothy Langille, *Pesher Habakkuk*  
 Jeffrey Leonard, *Torah and the Psalms*  
 Nicola Denzey Lewis, *Christian Martyrdom*  
 Tod Linafelt, *What Happens on the Threshing Floor?*  
 Herbert R. Marbury, *Justifying Slavery*  
 Daniel O. McClellan, *Names of God*  
 Christine Mitchell, *Gender in Chronicles*  
 Kelly J. Murphy, *Idealized Men*  
 Lorenzo Nigro, *Jericho*  
 Carolyn Osiek, *The Household Unit*  
 Todd Penner, *Paul and Roman Citizenship*  
 Adam Porter, *Satan*  
 Jennifer A. Quigley, *Works and Welfare*  
 Richard Allington, *The Crusades*  
 Paul Anderson, *The Johannine Community*  
 Cynthia Baker, *The Emergence of Judaism*  
 Alicia J. Batten, *The Glory of Crucifixion*  
 Mark E. Biddle, *The Curse of Ham*  
 Catherine Bonesho, *Jewish Festivals*  
 Brennan Breed, *The Masoretic Text and the Dead Sea Scrolls*  
 Nuria Calduch-Benages, *Polygamy in Ben Sira*  
 Holly J. Carey, *Spiritual Warfare*  
 Corrine Carvalho, *Adulterous Jerusalem*  
 Paul Cizek, *Zerubbabel as a Davidic Hero*  
 Sarah Cook, *BCE and CE*  
 C. L. Crouch, *Forced Migration*  
 Lorenzo DiTommaso, *Apocalyptic Thought after Revelation*  
 Emran El-Badawi, *Jesus in the Qur'an*  
 Wil Gafney, *Black – Beautiful*  
 Susanne Gillmayr-Bucher, *Solomon's Wisdom*  
 Deena Grant, *Drinking God's Wrath*  
 Edward L. Greenstein, *In the Beginning*  
 J. Albert Harrill, *The Physics of Destruction*  
 Chris Heard, *Chapters and Verses, Versification*  
 Joel M. Hoffman, *Did Isaiah Predict a Virgin Birth?*  
 Walter Houston, *Jerusalem versus Gerizim*  
 Lynn R. Huber, *LGBTQIA+ Interpretations*  
 Naomi Janowitz, *Martyrdom in Early Judaism*  
 Jaeyoung Jeon, *Levites*  
 Jennifer T. Kaalund, *Heroes of Faith*  
 Sun-Ah Kang, *A Korean Perspective*  
 Tony Keddie, *The Origin of Money*  
 John S. Kloppenborg, *Early Christ Groups*  
 Aaron Koller, *Purim*  
 David T. Lamb, *Changing Names*  
 Alan Lenzi, *Divine Secrets*  
 Hanne Løland Levinson, *The Gender of God*  
 Yii-Jan Lin, *Women Leaders*  
 Stuart Macwilliam, *The Marriage Metaphor*  
 Andrew M. Mbuvi, *Noncanonical Texts*  
 Maria Metzler, *Ark of the Covenant*  
 Teresa Morgan, *Faith*  
 Alicia D. Myers, *Childhood in the Greco-Roman World*  
 James D. Nogalski, *Day of the Lord*  
 Laurie Pearce, *Babylonian Invasions*  
 Donald C. Polaski, *Fiction in a Time of Persecution*  
 Cosmin Pricop, *Reception of the Three Jews*  
 Cat Quine, *Jezebel*



### 2023 Global Virtual Meeting

The past year saw the inaugural 2023 Global Virtual Meeting. This new initiative sought to explore the possibilities of a meeting in digital spaces. The live portion of the meeting took place from 27 March through 31 March and included forty-nine sessions, including twenty-two preplanned sessions. The meeting also included sixty-one individual presentations in the poster sessions and four networking sessions. Be sure to see pages 14–16 in this Society Report for more about the new Global Virtual Meeting.

### 2023 International Meeting

The 2023 International Meeting was held in Pretoria, South Africa, on 3–7 July. The second time that the meeting has been held on the African continent, this was a vibrant meeting hosted at the University of Pretoria. We are deeply grateful to the Faculty of Theology and Religion for hosting this conference and for sponsoring many wonderful sessions organized by the local planning committee. Particular thanks are due to the members of the local planning committee: Alphonso Groenewald, Sias Meyer, Ananda Geyser-Fouche, Dirk Human, and Mphumezi Hombana. The meeting attendance was roughly 350. The meeting was host to sixty-six sessions, which included 270 papers as well as many panel discussions and presentations. Three sessions also included remote participants, made possible by a grant from the Luce Foundation. A particular highlight was a lunchtime conversation session that featured a dialogue between Musa Dube, the 2023 SBL President, and Steed Vernyl Davidson, SBL's Executive Director.

### 2023 Annual Meeting

The 2023 Annual Meeting returned to San Antonio, Texas. The program included 455 SBL sessions, plus an additional 68 hosted by SBL affiliates. Over 1,800 people participated by reading 1,652 papers, participating in panel discussions and reviews, hosting meeting and social gatherings, and presiding over the many sessions. A robust exhibit hall one again showcased the latest in scholarship, with over 120 exhibitors participating. Musa Dube delivered the 2023 Presidential Address, which will be published in the *Journal of Biblical Literature*.




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## SBL AWARDS

### The Committee on Underrepresented Racial and Ethnic Minorities in the Profession 2023 Outstanding Mentor Award

**Hugh R. Page Jr.** is Professor of Theology and Africana Studies at the University of Notre Dame, where he also serves as Vice President for Institutional Transformation and Advisor to the President. He holds a PhD in Near Eastern Languages and Civilizations from Harvard University. His research interests include early Hebrew poetry, Africana biblical interpretation, the role of mysticism and esotericism in Anglican and Africana spiritualities, and the Blues aesthetic as theological and hermeneutical paradigm. He is author of *Israel's Poetry of Resistance: Africana Perspectives on Early Hebrew Verse* (Fortress, 2013); general editor of *The Africana Bible: Reading Israel's Scriptures from Africa and the African Diaspora* (Augsburg Fortress, 2010); and coeditor of the Fortress Commentary on the Old Testament and Apocrypha (Fortress, 2014), *Esotericism in African American Religious Experience: "There is a Mystery" ...* (Brill, 2015), and *Black Scholars Matter: Visions Struggles and Hopes in Africana Biblical Studies* (SBL Press, 2022).

**Seung Ai Yang** is Associate Professor Emerita of New Testament at Chicago Theological Seminary, where she taught from 2007 until 2020. She earned her PhD from the University of Chicago, and her areas of scholarly interest include Synoptic Gospels, Second Temple Judaism, women and the “Other” in the Bible, Asian American biblical hermeneutics, and postcolonial criticism. As a Catholic feminist biblical scholar, she believes that a proper use of multiple interpretive methods and lenses will lead readers to hear the essential biblical call for justice and peace. Yang played a crucial role in founding the Korean Biblical Colloquium and Asian and Asian-American Hermeneutics program units. Serving on SBL’s CUREMP (1996–1999) and Status of Women in the Profession Committee (2010–2017), and the Association of Theological School’s Committee on Race and Ethnicity (2000–2006), she has been dedicated to raising racial/ethnic minority students and scholars in the discipline. Yang was a lead editor for *Wisdom Commentary on the Bible* and coedited volumes such as *Off the Menu: Asian and Asian North American Women’s Theology and Religion* (2007) and *T&T Clark Handbook to Asian American Biblical Hermeneutics* (2019).

#### **The 2023 Status of Women in the Profession Mentor Award**

**Candida Moss** is the Edward Cadbury Professor of Theology at the University of Birmingham. Her research interests include the history and representation of martyrdom, ideas about the resurrection of the body, disability studies, and enslaved literate workers and the making of early Christian literature. The award-winning author of seven books, including *Ancient Christian Martyrdom and Divine Bodies: Resurrecting Perfection in the New Testament and Early Christianity*, she also does public facing scholarship as a columnist for *The Daily Beast* and Papal News Contributor for CBS News. She is a founding member of the Disabilities and Accessibility Task Force.

**Elaine Goh Wei Fun** is a lecturer in Old Testament Studies and the Dean of Studies in Seminari Theoloji Malaysia (STM). She earned a Doctor of Theology from South East Asia Graduate School of Theology/ATE-SEA Theological Union, and her main area of research is in Old Testament studies, specializing in wisdom literature. She recently authored the monograph *Cross-Textual Reading of Ecclesiastes and the Analects* (Pickwick, 2019). Her published essays include “She Is More Bitter Than Death”: Reading Ecclesiastes 7:23–8:1 as an Asian Chinese,” in *Reading Ecclesiastes from Asia and Pacifica* (SBL Press, 2020), and “Even if (God Does) Not, We Will Not,” in *From Malaysia to the Ends of the Earth: Southeast Asian and Diasporic Contributions to Biblical and Theological Studies* (Claremont Press, 2021).

#### **A. R. Pete Diamond Award for Integrative Scholarship**

**Sarah Parkhouse** received the award for her paper “Perpetua: Which Amphitheatre, and Why Does it Matter?” Sarah is a British Academy Postdoctoral Fellow at the University of Manchester. Her current research focuses on the interaction between space, landscape, objects, and texts in early Christianity, and she is working on two long-term projects: (1) Coptic Literature, Lived Religion, and the Egyptian Landscape; and (2) Amphitheatres, Space, and Religious Practices. Her past research focused on the diversity of literature within early Christianity, and she has published a monograph on dialogue gospels, with a focus on the Gospel of Mary (Cambridge University Press, 2019). She received her PhD from the University of Durham in 2017.

#### **Bernadette J. Brooten Award for Scholarship in Gender, Sexuality, and Embodiment**

**Jon-Paul Lapeña** was awarded for his paper “The Hemorrhaging Woman Embodies Violence: Reading Gendered Health Barriers in Mark 5:26.” Jon-Paul is a doctoral student in Religious Studies in the Early Mediterranean and West Asian Religions program at Yale University. He studies the New Testament and early Christianity, broadly on the topic of healing and health practices in the ancient Mediterranean. Jon-Paul is specifically interested in testing whether modern categories of addiction provide useful frameworks for critically engaging ancient medical, philosophical, and religious discourses around substance abuse.

## AWARDS

### Daniel Tran Foskett Hudgins Memorial Student Travel Award

**Shih-En Kuo**, also known as Andy, grew up in rural Taiwan. During his college years, he received a calling for full-time ministry, which led him to complete a Master of Divinity at China Evangelical Seminary in Taipei. Motivated by his deep passion for the Old Testament and his vision for future theological education, he attended Gordon-Conwell Theological Seminary and earned a Master of Theology. In 2019, he arrived at Wycliffe College at the University of Toronto with his entire family, continuing his studies in the Old Testament and achieving doctoral candidacy last year.

### David Noel Freedman Award for Excellence and Creativity in Hebrew Bible Scholarship

**Rachel Frish** was awarded for her paper entitled, “Resuscitating ‘Wisdom Literature.’” Rachel Frish is a postdoctoral fellow at the Hebrew University of Jerusalem, a research fellow at the Kogod Research Center for Contemporary Jewish Thought at Shalom Hartman Institute, and a former postdoctoral fellow at Yale University (2021–2023). Her main research interests include the prophetic and wisdom traditions, focusing on their intersections, interactions, and development through antiquity. Her dissertation, “Wisdom Sayings in Jeremiah and Their Rhetorical Function” (Bar-Ilan University, 2021) is currently being prepared for publication. In her second book project, she offers a comprehensive comparative study of the biblical and postbiblical treatment of the question of the source of wisdom. This project involves delineating the spectrum of epistemological approaches during these periods, tracing their development, and evaluating their enduring influence on Jewish tradition. The project was awarded an Ephraim E. Urbach grant from the Memorial Foundation for Jewish Culture.



Hugh R. Page Jr.



Seung Ai Yang



Candida Moss



Elaine Goh Wei Fun



Sarah Parkhouse



Jon-Paul Lapeña



Shih-En Kuo



Rachel Frish

### De Gruyter Prize for Biblical Studies and Reception History

**Rachel Wilkowski** was awarded in the category of Material and Visual Culture and Reception of the Bible for her paper “Snakes on a Page: Visual Receptions of the Eden Serpent throughout the History of Western Art and Their Survivals in Modern Children’s Bibles.” Rachel is a PhD candidate at Trinity College Dublin in the School of Religion and Loyola Institute under the supervision of Dr. David Shepherd. Her PhD dissertation analyzes adaptations of Genesis 1–3 in select Protestant, Catholic, and Jewish children’s Bibles from 1980 to present, with an emphasis on the correspondence of the children’s Bibles to their respective interpretive traditions. Her PhD research is supported in part by funding from the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada. Rachel’s main research interests include Old Testament/Hebrew Bible (Hep-tateuch), reception history (particularly in formal interpretive traditions and visual arts), hermeneutics/interpretation, children’s Bibles, and geography as a literary-interpretive feature.

### Paul J. Achtemeier Award for New Testament Scholarship

**Kyu Seop Kim** was awarded for his paper “The Concept of *διαθήκη* in Galatians 3:15–18.” Kyu Seop Kim has been teaching at Asian Center for Theological Studies and Mission, South Korea, since 2018. He earned a PhD from the University of Aberdeen in 2016. In 2019, he published a book with Brill entitled *The Firstborn Son in Ancient Judaism and Early Christianity: A Study of Primogeniture and Christology*. His second book, *Not Simply for Forgiveness of Sins: Re-visioning Covenant in Hebrews*, explores the relationship between the promised land and Jesus’s heavenly cult in Hebrews and is currently under review. He is in the process of writing his third monograph, focusing on the covenant and the inheritance in Paul’s undisputed letters and the Epistle of Barnabas.



Rachel Wilkowski



Kyu Seop Kim



Brian Donnelly-Lewis



Christine Trotter



Kristofer Phan Coffman



Daniel McClellan

### Regional Scholar Awards

**Brian Donnelly-Lewis** was awarded for a presentation entitled “A Manual for the Tabernacle” in the Pacific Coast Region. Brian Donnelly-Lewis is a PhD candidate in the department of Near Eastern Languages and Cultures at the University of California, Los Angeles, and a 2022–2023 Educational and Cultural Affairs Research Fellow at the W. F. Albright Institute of Archaeological Research in Jerusalem. His dissertation explores the Egyptian background of writing technology and practice in the ancient southern Levant, focusing on the Proto-Canaanite and Hebrew epigraphs from the end of the second millennium through the first half of the first millennium BCE and their relationship to hieratic writing from the end of the Late Bronze Age. He has published articles in *JBL*, *BASOR*, *Semitica*, and the *Journal for Semitics* on topics ranging from the epigraphy of the Khirbet Qeiyafa ostrakon to the morphology of Rabbinic Hebrew. He is a member of the Society of Biblical Literature, the American Society of Overseas Research, and the American Oriental Society.

**Christine Trotter** was awarded for a presentation entitled “Consolatory Rhetoric in 1 Thessalonians 4:9–12” in the Eastern Great Lakes Region. Trotter is a postdoctoral Teaching Fellow at the University of Chicago, where she completed her PhD in Biblical Studies. Her forthcoming monograph, *Hellenistic Jews and Consolatory Rhetoric: 2 Maccabees, Wisdom of Solomon, 1 Thessalonians, and Hebrews*, elucidates how Hellenistic Jewish writers attempted to comfort and encourage those living in the midst of and in the wake of religious persecution and violence. While past scholarship has explored this question primarily in terms of the rise of Jewish apocalypticism and the related development of afterlife beliefs, her book takes a new and more comprehensive approach by investigating how Hellenistic Jewish authors engaged with ancient consolatory rhetoric, that is, the means of persuasion intended to move a suffering person out of grief and into joy. Trotter’s other research interests include women in early Judaism and Christianity, ecological hermeneutics, and disability in biblical literature.

**Kristofer Phan Coffman** was awarded for a presentation entitled “Really Just a Cephas: Paul’s Use of Cephas as Insider Ethnic Insult” in the Upper Midwest Region. Coffman holds a tenure-eligible New Testament faculty position at Luther Seminary, St. Paul. Coffman completed his PhD in Classical and Near Eastern Religions and Culture at the University of Minnesota and is the first person of Cambodian descent to receive a PhD in biblical studies. He is the author of the book chapter “Christmas Cookies from Cambodia: The Bible and Race in America” in *Dialogues On: Race* (Sparkhouse) and has academic articles on topics ranging from Norwegian-American Lutheran history to biblical interpretation and translation. In addition to his academic work, he has a keen interest in food and farming. Coffman has written popular articles on responsible consumption and agriculture, translates recipes for the award-winning new Nordic chef Mikkel Karstad, and served as copyeditor and translation consultant on the forthcoming cookbook *SAOY: The Forgotten Flavors of Royal Cambodian Home Cuisine*, by Chef Rotanak Ros.

### Richards Award for Public Scholarship

**Daniel McClellan** is an independent scholar of the Bible and religion and an honorary fellow at the University of Birmingham’s Cadbury Centre for the Public Understanding of Religion. He received his PhD in 2020 from the University of Exeter, and a revised version of his dissertation—entitled *YHWH’s Divine Images: A Cognitive Approach*—was published in 2022 in the SBL Press open-access Ancient Near East Monograph series. In an effort to increase public access to the academic study of the Bible and religion and combat the spread of misinformation about the same, Daniel teaches regular online classes, cohosts the popular Data over Dogma Podcast with his friend Dan Beecher, and goes by @maklelan on TikTok, Instagram, YouTube, and X (Twitter), where he confronts misinformation, shares the state of the field, and responds to questions about the Bible and religion.

### International Travel Awards

The SBL International Travel Awards offer opportunities to current SBL members outside North America to attend the Annual or International Meeting, to participate in the program, to enhance their professional development, and to build their network with fellow scholars. These grants help facilitate the work of Program Units and the International Cooperation

Initiative (ICI). These grants are intended to support underrepresented and underresourced scholars. As such, preference will be given to women, people of historically underrepresented ethnicities, and members from ICI-qualifying countries. A key criterion is an applicant's demonstrable financial need. The International Travel Awards defray transportation, hotel accommodations, and other expenses incurred for the Annual or International Meeting.

**The 2023 SBL International Travel Recipients are:**

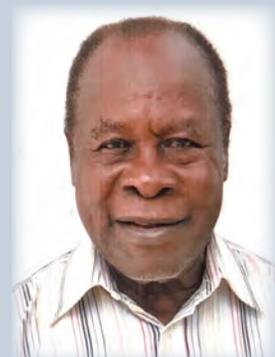
- ◆ Adewale Joshua Adalakun
- ◆ Makalofi Paea 'i Fangatongo Kakala
- ◆ Chris Ukachukwu Manus
- ◆ Lathabo Molopyane
- ◆ Gideon Sam Simeon Paulraj
- ◆ Philip Puthuparambil Sam



**Adewale Joshua  
Adalakunlaun**



**Makalofi Paea  
'i Fangatongo Kakala**



**Chris  
Ukachukwu Manus**



**Lathabo Molopyane**



**Gideon Sam  
Simeon Paulraj**



**Philip  
Puthuparambil Sam**

During 2023, SBL Press celebrated the publication of the *SBL Study Bible (SBLSB)*, the fruit of seven years of planning and effort by SBL Press staff and hundreds of SBL members (see page 17 above). The *SBLSB* debuted and was featured at the SBL Press Annual Meeting book booth, where attendees picked up preordered copies and purchased additional hardcover and paperback copies brought to San Antonio for sale. Interest in the *SBLSB* ran so high that we sold through our entire inventory by the end of the second day.

In addition to the *SBL Study Bible*, SBL Press conducted its usual business of publishing serials, books, and online resources (see the following sections). Over the course of the year, SBL Press published thirty-two books or annuals totaling 12,510 pages across nineteen different series. In addition, our three serial publications—*Journal of Biblical Literature*, *Review of Biblical Literature*, and *TC: A Journal of Biblical Textual Criticism*—generated nearly 3,000 additional pages of scholarly resources. Finally, Bible Odyssey website published thirty-three new articles, bringing its total to 805 articles overall, and attracted over 1.1 million readers during the last nine months of 2023 (see the full report below).

## SERIAL PUBLICATIONS

### *Journal of Biblical Literature*

For *JBL*, 2023 was a year of settling in after several consecutive years of transition. While 2022 saw a whole new editorial team take shape, the team remained consistent throughout 2023. General Editor Susan Hylen was assisted by three Associate Editors covering all subject areas of the discipline: Eric D. Barreto, Hindy Najman, and Stacy Davis.

The *JBL* editorial team and staff together shepherded nearly two hundred manuscripts through the peer-review process and published thirty-six articles. Thirteen of these articles had female authors, and fourteen had authors based outside the USA. The September issue was perhaps the first ever *JBL* issue with a majority of female authors (five of nine articles). Total submissions to the journal over the calendar year also rose above two hundred for the first time since the significant reduction experienced in 2020 as scholars around the world negotiated a global crisis.

As the flagship journal in the field, *JBL* strives to represent the full range of methods and interests pursued by scholars of biblical studies and cognate disciplines around the globe. This year's volume featured articles embracing a wide variety of critical approaches, including trauma studies, disability, interrogations of gender and ethnicity, linguistics, material culture, ethics, sociology, philology, and historical criticism, while analyzing the full scope of Israelite, Jewish, and Christian literature in antiquity. Highlights of such diversity of method and subject matter include "Tracing Bathsheba's Metamorphosis through the Lens of Trauma and Recovery" (Brent Nessler); "Not Seeing, Unseeing, and Blind: Disentangling Disability from Adjacent Topoi in the Hebrew Bible" (Eric J. Harvey); "Re-remembering Hagar: Reading the Σάρξ in Galatians with Hortense Spillers" (Haley Gabrielle); "Exotica and the Ethiopian of Acts 8:26–40: Toward a Different Fabula" (Margaret Aymer); "Darkness or Blackness? A Semantic Study of חשך (Joel 3:4)" (Lourdes García Ureña); "Toilets and Toilet Humor in the Story of Eglon's Murder by Ehud (Judges 3:15–26)" (Jodi Magness); "The Field Belonging to Boaz: Creating Kinship through Land, Labor, Food, and Feeding" (Cynthia R. Chapman); "Resurrecting Amulets and Ostraca within New Testament Textual Criticism" (Gregory S. Paulson and Brice C. Jones); and "Rethinking John and 'the Synagogue' in Light of Expulsion from Public Assemblies in Antiquity" (Wally V. Cirafesi).

These are just a few examples, and as always we invite all members to take full advantage of the online *JBL* archive at the Scholarly Publishing Collective, where SBL members and *JBL* institutional subscribers continue to have access to the full range of *JBL* content, from volume 1 to the most recent issues. Members can read *JBL* by logging in on the [SBL website](#).

### *Review of Biblical Literature*

During 2023, *RBL* published 411 new reviews, bringing the total number of reviews published since the beginning of *RBL* through the end of the year to 11,950. This year's output included papers presented in a 2022 Annual Meeting review session held for Bernard M. Levinson and Robert P. Ericksen, eds., *The Betrayal of the Humanities: The University during the Third Reich* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2022). In addition, *RBL* incorporated twenty-three reviews originally published in *TC: A Journal of Biblical Textual Criticism* into the *RBL* collection.

Reviewers in 2023 hailed from twenty-nine different countries: Australia, Austria, Belgium, Brazil, Canada, Colombia, Denmark, Ethiopia, Finland, Germany, India, Israel, Italy, Madagascar, Malawi, Malaysia, Montenegro, the Netherlands, New Zealand, Norway, Poland, Russia, South Africa, South Korea, Sweden, Switzerland, the United Kingdom, United Arab Emirates, and the United States. This year approximately 44 percent of *RBL* reviews were authored by scholars outside of the United States, the same percentage reported for the last three years. In terms of gender distribution, 24.3 percent of our reviewers were female and 75.7 percent male; this distribution is an improvement over last year and tracks reasonably closely to the Society's gender distribution of 24.8 percent female, 75.1 male, and 0.1 transgender.

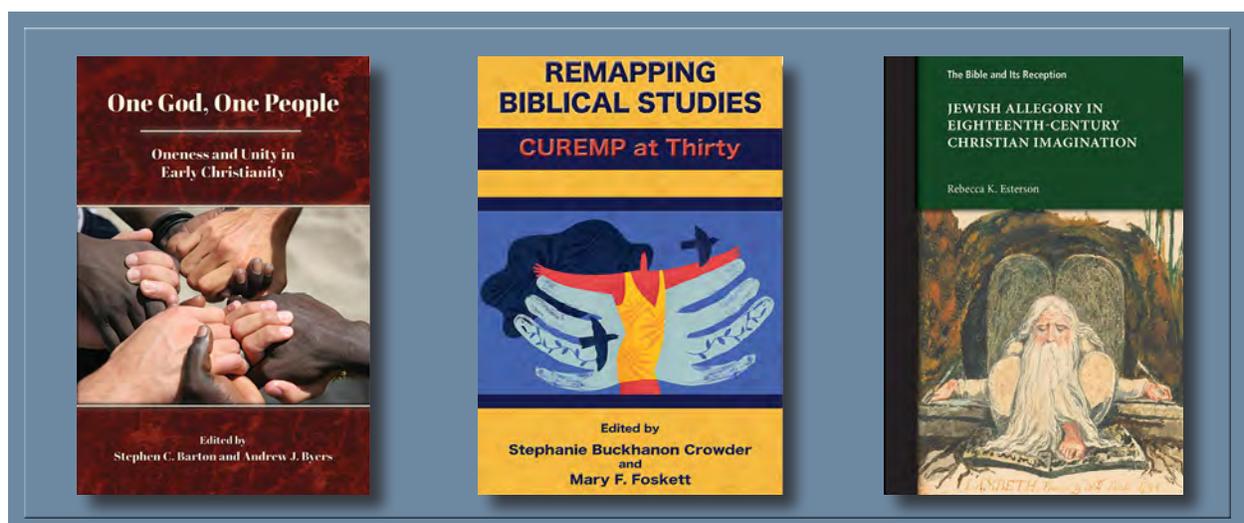
### *TC: A Journal of Biblical Textual Criticism*

In addition to two open-access book series, SBL Press publishes *TC: A Journal of Biblical Textual Criticism*, an open-access journal devoted to text-critical discussions of Jewish and Christian scriptures. The journal has been publishing full-length articles, short notes, project reports, and book reviews since 1996. This year, the journal published six articles, five book reviews, and a special feature on the value of commentaries and cantenae for the textual study of the New Testament. The volume can be freely accessed on the journal's homepage (<http://jbtc.org>).

## 2023 BOOK AND ANNUAL PUBLICATIONS

- ◆ Alicia J. Batten, ed., *Review of Biblical Literature*, 2023
- ◆ Sean A. Adams and Zanne Domoney-Lyttle, *Philo of Alexandria Scripture Index* (Studia Philonica Monographs)
- ◆ Sara Ahbel-Rappe, Danielle A. Layne, and Crystal Addey, eds., *Soul Matters: Plato and Platonists on the Nature of the Soul* (Writings from the Greco-Roman World Supplement Series)
- ◆ Carol Bakhos and Gerhard Langer, eds., *Jewish Middle Ages* (Bible and Women)
- ◆ Stephen C. Barton and Andrew J. Byers, eds., *One God, One People: Oneness and Unity in Early Christianity* (Resources for Biblical Study)
- ◆ Richard J. Bautch and Jean-François Racine, eds., *Dreams and Visions in the Bible and Related Literature* (Semeia Studies)
- ◆ Shelley L. Birdsong, J. Cornelis de Vos, and Hyun Chul Paul Kim, eds., *Reading Gender in Judges: An Intertextual Approach* (Resources for Biblical Study)
- ◆ Blessing Onoriode Boloje, *Reading Micah in Nigeria: Ethics, Wealth, and Corruption* (International Voices in Biblical Studies)
- ◆ Stephanie Buckhanon Crowder and Mary F. Foskett, eds., *Remapping Biblical Studies: CUREMP at Thirty* (Biblical Scholarship in North America)
- ◆ Sophie Démare-Lafont, Daniel E. Fleming, Cécile Michel, Brigitte Lion, Bertrand Lafont, Ignacio Márquez Rowe, Francis Joannès, Dominique Charpin, Pierre Villard, *Judicial Decisions in the Ancient Near East* (Writings from the Ancient World)
- ◆ Lorenzo DiTommaso and Matthew Goff, eds., *Reimagining Apocalypticism: Apocalyptic Literature in the Dead Sea Scrolls and Related Writings* (Early Judaism and Its Literature)
- ◆ Rebecca K. Esterson, *Jewish Allegory in Eighteenth-Century Christian Imagination* (Bible and Its Reception)
- ◆ Christopher J. Fresch, *Discourse Markers in Early Koine Greek: Cognitive-Functional Analysis and LXX Translation Technique* (Septuagint and Cognate Studies)

- ◆ Christian Frevel, *History of Ancient Israel* (Archaeology and Biblical Studies)
- ◆ Caroline Johnson Hodge, Timothy A. Joseph, and Tat-siong Benny Liew, eds., *Divided Worlds? Challenges in Classics and New Testament Studies* (Semeia Studies)
- ◆ Dong Hyeon Jeong, *Embracing the Nonhuman in the Gospel of Mark* (Semeia Studies)
- ◆ Young Bok Kim, *Hebrew Forms of Address: A Sociolinguistic Analysis* (Ancient Near East Monographs)
- ◆ Mason D. Lancaster, *Hosea's God: A Metaphorical Theology* (Ancient Israel and Its Literature)
- ◆ Janine E. Luttick, *Jairus's Daughter and the Female Body in Mark* (Early Christianity and Its Literature)
- ◆ Madipoane Masenya (Ngwan'a Mphahlele), Marta Høyland Lavik, Ntozakhe Simon Cezula, and Tina Dykesteen Nilsen, eds., *Context Matters: Old Testament Essays from Africa and beyond Honoring Knut Holter* (International Voices in Biblical Studies)
- ◆ Ruth Christa Mathieson, *Matthew's Parable of the Royal Wedding Feast: A Sociorhetorical Interpretation* (Emory Studies in Early Christianity)
- ◆ Mikeal C. Parsons and Robin M. Jensen, eds., *Early Christians and Their Art* (Emory Studies in Early Christianity)
- ◆ Raymond F. Person Jr., *Scribal Memory and Word Selection: Text Criticism of the Hebrew Bible* (Text-Critical Studies)
- ◆ David T. Runia and Gregory E. Sterling, eds., *Studia Philonica Annual XXXV, 2023: Studies in Hellenistic Judaism* (Studia Philonica Annual)
- ◆ Konrad Schmid, *Scribes of the Torah: The Formation of the Pentateuch in Its Literary and Historical Context* (Ancient Israel and Its Literature)
- ◆ Omer Sergi, *Two Houses of Israel: State Formation and the Origins of Pan-Israelite Identity* (Archaeology and Biblical Studies)
- ◆ Tina M. Sherman, *Plant Metaphors in Prophetic Condemnations of Israel and Judah* (Ancient Israel and Its Literature)
- ◆ Shively T. J. Smith, *Interpreting 2 Peter through African American Women's Moral Writings* (Early Christianity and Its Literature)
- ◆ Marvin A. Sweeney, *Visions of the Holy: Studies in Biblical Theology and Literature* (Resources for Biblical Study)
- ◆ Nicole L. Tilford and Kelly J. Murphy, eds., *Biblical Themes in Science Fiction* (Bible and Its Reception)
- ◆ David Toshio Tsumura, *Vertical Grammar of Parallelism in Biblical Hebrew* (Ancient Israel and Its Literature)
- ◆ Aren M. Wilson-Wright, *Jeremiah's Egypt: Prophetic Reflections on the Saite Period* (Ancient Near East Monographs)



## SBL CENTRAL

During the first years after the launch of [SBL Central](#) in 2018, we continued adding functionality to make it an essential online resource for biblical scholars, starting with SBL conference paper abstracts and all reviews published in *Review of Biblical Literature*. In 2021 and 2022, we launched features that help biblical scholars keep up with current research in the field: notifications when new books are added in members' preselected subjects of interest and alerts when new issues are released by the leading journals in biblical studies.

In 2023 our focus was on continuing to refine the platform through software development on the back end and increasing participation of both publishers and members. At the Annual Meeting in San Antonio, we offered live demonstrations and instructional sessions on using SBL Central, and we also distributed flyers to encourage members to set up their new book notifications.

The development of SBL Central was supported by the Henry Luce Foundation, Atla, and eight publishers: Baker Academic, Baylor University Press, Bloomsbury Publishing, Brill Publishers, De Gruyter, Mohr Siebeck, Penn State University Press, Westminster John Knox Press, and Wipf & Stock Publishers. Since we launched SBL Central, more and more publishers have been taking advantage of this opportunity to engage with their readership. All these publishers see SBL Central as a valuable marketing opportunity and pay a nominal fee per title listed to help sustain this resource. To encourage more publishers to participate in and see the benefits of SBL Central, we waive the fee on all books included in a publisher's first submission.

Since launching the book notification service in early 2021, the following publishers have listed new books on SBL Central:

African Sun Media	ATF Press
Baker Academic	Baylor University Press
Bloomsbury/T&T Clark	Brill Publishers
Brown Judaic Studies	Cambridge University Press
Corpus Biblicum Catalanicum	De Gruyter
Droz	Eerdmans
Eisenbrauns	Equinox
Fortress Press	Foundation for Pentecostal Scholarship
German Bible Society	GlossaHouse
Gorgias	Hendrickson
Indiana University Press	James Clarke
Jewish Publication Society	Kohlhammer
Langham Partnership	Mohr Siebeck
Oxford University Press	PALNI
Peeters	Pennsylvania State University Press
Pitchstone	Routledge
Saint Paul Seminary Press	SBL Press
Sheffield Phoenix Press	Westminster John Knox
Wipf & Stock	

## BIBLE ODYSSEY

Bible Odyssey is a public-facing resource whose purpose is to increase the accessibility of the academic study of the Bible. Since its launch in 2014, the website has attracted a broad audience, including students, educators, and the general public. With its publication of short articles, videos, maps, and timelines, Bible Odyssey is increasingly becoming a primary resource in K–12 and university classrooms.

In 2023, Bible Odyssey also began a new partnership with the Biblical Time Machine, a podcast by Dave Roos and Helen Bond. Each week, Dave and Helen introduce listeners to the history of the people, places, and events of the Hebrew Bible/Old Testament, New Testament, and related literature. The podcast frequently features guest appearances by SBL members, who have spoken on such topics as God’s monsters, childhood in the ancient Near East, and bathroom procedures in ancient Israel. Selected episodes are featured on the Bible Odyssey website.

## ARTICLES

Bible Odyssey currently provides access to a broad-ranging collection of 805 articles, 33 of which were published in 2023.

Hebrew Bible/Old Testament	13
New Testament	13
Extracanonical/Other	7

## 2023 Published Articles

Alexander the Great	The Anthem in Reformation England
Apollos	The Bible and Myth
The Bible in Colonial America	The Bible and the US Constitution
Did Jesus Have Brothers and Sisters?	Divine Council
Esau	Ethnicity and Sexuality in Proverbs
Ezekiel	Jefferson’s Bible
Laodicea	Lydia
Melchizedek	Noah
Oholah and Oholibah (Ezek 23)	Parable of the Prodigal Son (Luke 15:11–32)
Profane (Word Study)	Pseudepigraphy
The Queen of Heaven in the Hebrew Bible	Render unto Caesar (Mark 12:13–17)
Sacred (Word Study)	Salome, Daughter of Herodias
Sexual Immorality (Word Study)	Sexuality in Paul’s Letters
Shiloh	Skin Disease and Social Exclusion
The Strange Woman of Proverbs	Ugarit
What Did Early Christians Think Jesus Looked Like?	What Does Archaeology Tell Us about the New Testament?
What Is an Apocalypse?	



## RESOURCES

Bible Odyssey offers a variety of resources for the Hebrew Bible, Deuterocanonical, and New Testament texts, including articles, maps, videos, and timelines. The following table lists the most-consulted resource of each type in 2023. (On 1 April 2023, Bible Odyssey switched to a new and more accurate analytics tool. The data in this document reports activity on the site from this date through 31 December 2023. The data therefore reflects only partial activity for the year, but the new system will provide more accurate data moving forward.)

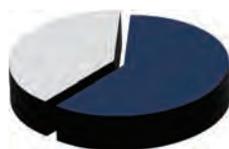
Most Popular Resource	
<b>Articles</b>	“The Crucifixion of Jesus and the Jews” (34,167 views)
<b>Maps</b>	“Israel and Judah” (7,752 views)
<b>Timeline</b>	“The History of the English Bible” (1,431 views)
<b>Video</b>	“Why the Romans Crucified Jesus” (3,479 views)

## CONTRIBUTORS

Bible Odyssey is committed to advancing the representation of persons of diverse genders, ethnicities, nationalities, and institutional appointments. Of 2023’s thirty-eight authors (authors of multiple pieces are counted separately for each article), 61 percent identify as women, 66 percent were new authors, and 24 percent live outside of the United States.

### 2023 Authors by Gender

23 women  
15 men



### 2023 Authors by Location

2023’s authors represent a number of countries, including Australia (1), Canada (6), Sweden (1), Switzerland (1), and the United States (29)

### 2023 Authors by Institution

Bible Odyssey authors work at a variety of institutions, including US public universities (3), US private universities (23), universities outside North America (8), and other (3).

### 2023 New versus Repeat Authors

25 new authors  
13 repeat authors



READERS

From 1 April to 31 December 2023, readers from around the world generated 1,160,092 Bible Odyssey page views. The ten countries with the most visitors are listed in the table below.

	Country	Visitors	Percentage of Total Visitors
1	United States	425,801	63.90
2	United Kingdom	28,184	4.23
3	Canada	22,850	3.43
4	Australia	20,250	3.04
5	India	18,159	2.73
6	Philippines	15,179	2.28
7	Nigeria	12,263	1.84
8	South Africa	11,178	1.68
9	Kenya	6,210	0.93
10	Netherlands	5,263	0.79

2023 HIGHLIGHTS

In 2023, Bible Odyssey migrated to WordPress and underwent a thorough redesign. The new site features a more modern aesthetic and improved navigation. Readers can now browse articles by such themes as daily life, literature and the arts, race and ethnicity, and sexuality and gender. The site also gathers select articles into curated reading collections, which help readers discover articles on more narrow topics, such as the Jewish holy days, creation, and the Bible and US history.

BIBLE ODYSSEY

[Browse](#) [Reference Tools](#) [About Us](#)



What Did Early Christians Think Jesus Looked Like?

[Robin M. Jensen](#)

While the New Testament gospels are mostly silent on Jesus’s physical appearance, other early Christian texts and artworks offer varying portrayals on how Jesus looked.



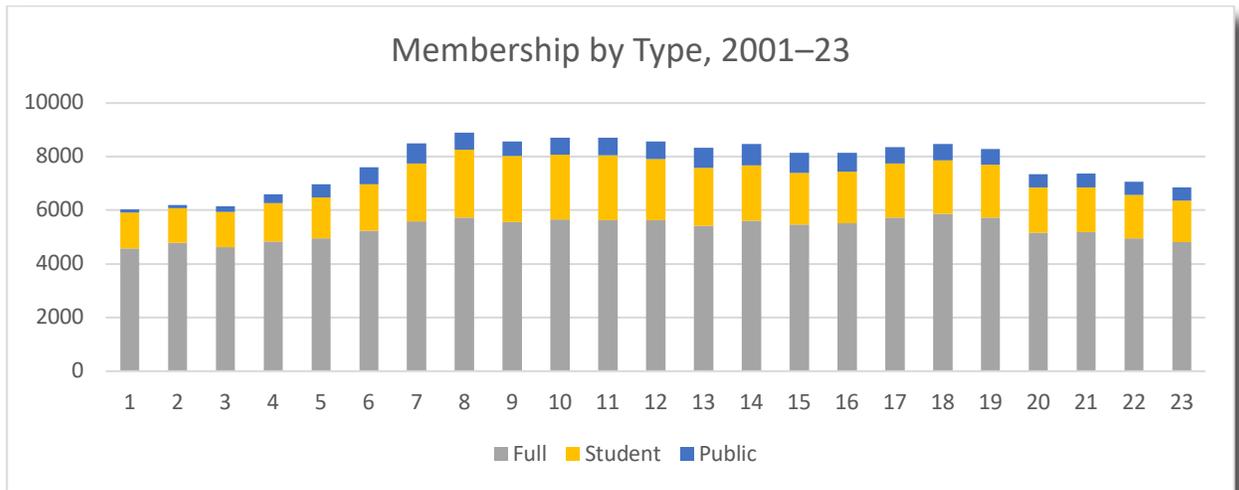
EXPLORE TOPICS

- Beliefs & Practices
- Biblical Figures
- Daily Life
- Health & Disabilities
- History & Events
- History of Interpretation
- Law & Order
- Literature & the Arts
- Manuscripts & Translations
- Methods of Interpretation
- Places
- Race & Ethnicity
- Sexuality & Gender
- Themes & Passages

[BROWSE ALL TOPICS](#)

MEMBERSHIP REPORT

Total membership in 2023 was 6,844, a decline of about 3 percent from 2022.



The largest membership category is full membership, at 4,865 (71%); there are 1,552 (22%) student members and 487 public members (7%). The proportion of membership types was the same as in 2022.

The percentage of members living outside the United States is 33 percent, 1 percent less than 2022. While this is down from 2020’s all-time high of 36 percent, it is considerably higher than the 21 percent in 2001.

Members currently reside in 92 countries, which is two fewer than in 2022. The United States is home to 67 percent of SBL members. About 5 percent of members reside in the United Kingdom or Canada. Other countries with large numbers of members include Germany (4%), Australia (3%), Israel (2%), South Africa (2%), Italy (1%), the Netherlands (1%), Switzerland (1%), Norway (1%), Sweden (1%), Japan (1%), France (1%), Belgium (1%), and the Republic of Korea (1%).

YEAR IN REVIEW



ICI Countries and SBL Membership

= countries where members reside

SBL currently has 399 members that reside in 62 different countries that are a part of the International Cooperation Initiative (ICI). South Africa, Poland, Brazil, the Philippines, India, Czechia, China, Indonesia, Argentina, Ghana, and Romania are the ICI countries with the highest numbers of members.

# MEMBERSHIP

## Where SBL Members Reside

Country	Members	Country	Members	Country	Members
Argentina	10	Grenada	1	Peru	6
Australia	178	Guatemala	1	Philippines	18
Austria	30	Honduras	1	Poland	24
Barbados	1	Hong Kong	25	Portugal	5
Belgium	37	Hungary	6	Republic of Korea	36
Bolivia	1	Iceland	2	Romania	10
Bosnia and Herzegovina	2	India	16	Russian Federation	5
Botswana	2	Indonesia	11	Rwanda	1
Brazil	21	Ireland	17	Samoa	3
Bulgaria	3	Israel	117	Serbia	2
Burkina Faso	1	Italy	80	Singapore	11
Cambodia	1	Jamaica	2	Slovakia	7
Canada	322	Japan	37	South Africa	105
Chile	2	Kenya	8	Spain	22
China	12	Lebanon	3	Sri Lanka	2
Colombia	8	Liberia	1	Sweden	43
Costa Rica	1	Luxembourg	1	Switzerland	66
Croatia	1	Malaysia	6	Taiwan	6
Curaçao	1	Malta	3	Tanzania	1
Czech Republic	13	Mexico	4	Thailand	1
Denmark	32	Montenegro	1	Tonga	3
Dominican Republic	1	Myanmar (Burma)	3	Trinidad & Tobago	1
Ecuador	1	Netherlands	77	Turkey	2
Egypt	3	New Zealand	23	Uganda	7
Estonia	4	Nicaragua	1	Ukraine	3
Ethiopia	8	Nigeria	8	United Arab Emirates	2
Finland	27	Norway	47	United Kingdom	337
France	37	Pakistan	1	United States	4,546
Germany	255	Palestinian Territory	1	Zambia	3
Ghana	10	Papua New Guinea	4	Zimbabwe	1
Greece	9	Paraguay	1		

## STATEMENTS OF FINANCIAL POSITION 30 JUNE 2023 AND 2022

	<u>FY 2023</u>	<u>FY 2022</u>
<b>ASSETS</b>		
Cash and cash equivalents	\$1,684,791	\$1,906,964
Marketable securities	5,865,492	5,235,758
Accounts receivable	233,274	209,930
Unconditional promises to give	—	16,245
Prepaid expenses and other assets	159,465	133,162
Book inventories, net of valuation reserve	54,103	79,390
Furniture and equipment, net of accumulated depreciation	24,517	4,679
Capitalized software, net of accumulated amortization	691,351	775,177
Net share of Luce Center assets	<u>2,040,856</u>	<u>1,953,482</u>
<b>Total Assets</b>	<b><u>\$10,753,849</u></b>	<b><u>\$10,314,787</u></b>
<b>LIABILITIES AND NET ASSETS</b>		
Liabilities		
Accounts payable	\$ 288,009	\$ 314,528
Deferred revenue		
Memberships and subscriptions	550,673	521,924
Annual meetings	907,756	881,508
Other	<u>123,491</u>	<u>136,127</u>
Total deferred revenues	<u>1,581,920</u>	<u>1,539,559</u>
Total liabilities	<u>1,869,929</u>	<u>1,854,087</u>
Net Assets		
Without donor restrictions		
Undesignated	640,722	938,705
Designated by Board for operating reserve	5,564,031	4,903,397
Invested in Luce Center	<u>952,143</u>	<u>1,053,737</u>
	7,156,896	6,895,839
With donor restrictions	<u>1,727,024</u>	<u>1,564,861</u>
Total net assets	<u>8,883,920</u>	<u>8,460,700</u>
<b>Total Liabilities and Net Assets</b>	<b><u>\$10,753,849</u></b>	<b><u>\$10,314,787</u></b>

**Comments:**

1. Market rebounds helped create an increase in net assets for FY2023. The increase in net assets was \$423,220.
2. SBL staff continue to manage operations within Budget. FY2023 revenues were under budget by \$307,893, while expenses were under budget by \$144,015, resulting in an operational net decrease under budget by \$163,878.

# FINANCES

## STATEMENTS OF ACTIVITIES AND CHANGES IN NET ASSETS FOR THE YEARS ENDED 30 JUNE 2023 AND 2022

	<u>FY 2023</u>	<u>FY 2022</u>
<b>REVENUES AND GAINS</b>		
Congresses		
Congresses	\$1,310,247	\$ 841,972
Grant revenue	30,580	—
Membership		
Membership fees	624,820	601,140
Marketing	38,740	47,900
Professions		
Career center	58,883	78,278
Contract income	21,273	—
Fonts	1,250	2,200
Press		
Book sales	432,859	440,938
Subscriptions	178,551	260,718
Royalties	123,974	134,373
Marketing	25,502	32,396
Permissions	19,554	36,502
Membership fees	110,262	106,084
Contract income	15,000	215,000
Book processing fees	19,100	12,900
Fee income	7,970	12,436
Contributions—PPP forgiveness	—	286,961
Regional meetings revenue	—	12,740
Development and fundraising	52,213	136,590
Investment income (loss), net	834,097	(1,127,547)
Rental income, net	56,698	60,374
Loss on disposal of fixed assets	—	(460)
<b>Total revenues and gains</b>	<b>3,961,573</b>	<b>2,191,495</b>
<b>EXPENSES</b>		
Program expenses		
Congresses	1,152,340	960,676
Membership	220,285	209,109
Professions	418,816	344,977
Press	1,528,229	1,473,655
Regional meetings	9,123	29,210
Research and Technology	35,773	42,794
<b>Total program expenses</b>	<b>3,364,566</b>	<b>3,060,421</b>
Development and fundraising	8,524	9,241
General and administration	165,263	158,998
<b>Total expenses</b>	<b>3,538,353</b>	<b>3,228,660</b>
<b>Increase (Decrease) in Net Assets</b>	<b>423,220</b>	<b>(1,037,165)</b>
<b>Net Assets at Beginning of Year</b>	<b>8,460,700</b>	<b>9,497,865</b>
<b>Net Assets at End of Year</b>	<b>\$8,883,920</b>	<b>\$8,460,700</b>

## BUDGET 2023–2024

Revenues	
Administration	\$ 217,300
Congresses	1,323,600
Development	70,000
Membership	748,250
Professions	112,209
Press	980,400
<b>Total Revenue</b>	<b>3,451,759</b>
Expenses	
Administration	166,495
Congresses	1,299,527
Development	9,040
Membership	191,038
Professions	369,421
Press	1,448,406
Technology	45,211
<b>Total Expense</b>	<b>3,529,138</b>
Net budget deficit before amortization	(77,379)
Amortization (noncash expense)	271,683
<b>Net budget deficit</b>	<b>\$ (349,062)</b>

The financial information summarized here was derived from the Society's audited financial statements. The independent auditor's report by Mauldin & Jenkins, dated December 6, 2023, states that the financial statements present fairly the financial position of the Society. Please see the full audit report at the SBL website.

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