



# ATLA NEWSLETTER

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This is the PDF version of the ATLA *Newsletter*. Please visit the ATLA *Newsletter* ([newsletter.atla.com](http://newsletter.atla.com)) for the latest content.

## From the President Commitment to Try Again



*Submitted by Kelly Campbell, ATLA President*

While I was reflecting about the October Board meeting, I picked up John Carver’s book, *Boards that Make a Difference*. This book is provided to all board members and is occasionally used to help the board move forward and reframe our role. As the

book fell open, I was drawn to three section titles: Perpetually redefine quality; View the past as inspiration, not impediment; and Pursue excellence rather than solving problems. Each title is easy to say, yet the ideas they represent are difficult to achieve, especially in institutions and associations.

Perpetually redefining quality is a task to be accomplished and a goal for which we should strive as ATLA moves into the future. What was ATLA’s quality when you were a new member? Has that definition of quality changed over the years? As Carver notes, “The definition of quality never stands still.” Therefore, our options are to quit the chase and accept the status quo or to continue to evolve our definition of quality.

Viewing the past as inspiration, not impediment, is more challenging, I believe, in our theological and religious context and culture. Carver states, “Continual improvement can be viewed as harsh treatment of tradition.” As ATLA’s board, members, and staff help the association seek continual improvement, some may view this forward motion as a harsh treatment of tradition. Personally, I really like Carver’s view that “traditions are a gift from the past, not a chain to the past. And traditions are not to be discarded but to be built upon.”

In the third section, Carver writes, “Commitment to excellence produces change that is more creative than reactive.” Creating ideas is totally different from just solving problems. As ATLA looks to the future, I hope we can commit to excellence that will produce the needed changes rather than being reactive to the changes that are already happening and will continue to occur.

## From Staff Leadership The Future of Theological Libraries Refrain



*Submitted by Brenda Bailey-Hainer, ATLA Executive Director*

As part of a research project, I’ve been reading through past issues of the *ATLA Newsletter*. Several articles that struck a chord with me have continuing relevance to the profession. One of them is from the [November 2004](#) issue, in which Louis Charles Willard wrote on the future

of theological libraries. He posited three defining areas for library issues: mission, collections, and buildings. Eleven years later, these issues still resonate but perhaps in a slightly different key.

Willard argues that the real mission of the library is not to collect resources but that instead “...the underlying mission of the library ... is to mediate between its constituency and the information resources that constituency needs” (p. 13). According to an ATS [“2015 State of the Industry”](#) webinar last September, the majority of students are still enrolled on the main campus, but the number of distance education programs has been steadily increasing (PowerPoint slide 19). How does a librarian continue to serve as the primary mediator when encounters with that constituency are less and less frequently face-to-face?

In Willard’s mind, the question of collections comes down to “what and in what format,” and the format is influenced by the need for both preservation and access. ACRL has released their [Environmental Scan 2015](#). This scan notes that collections and acquisitions functions have now been complicated by the increasing availability of e-books with widely varying licensing and purchasing models. Streaming media/video is also rising in importance. As a result technical services departments are now dealing with public performance rights, new authentication challenges for streaming services, and supporting the users’ discovery of these new formats (pp. 3-4).

Already in 2004, Willard noted that the purpose and design of buildings was already shifting. Now buildings are no longer being built as edifices to house an ever-increasing physical collection. Instead there are new challenges with trying to keep up with rapidly changing technological needs

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### Continued from From Staff Leadership

and to support an ever shifting array of services. The ACRL [Environmental Scan 2015](#) has a section on facilities, which describes a trend that recognizes the library as a place that goes beyond a storage facility for physical collections. Libraries may serve as a co-location point for academic support services like tutoring and writing centers, media production facilities, and collaboration spaces (pp. 16-17).

Willard concludes his article on the future of theological libraries: "If we persist in interpreting the role of the library and the librarian as resource and developer or worse, keeper, the consequence will be increased marginalization" (p. 14). As theological and religious studies librarians continue to ponder the future of libraries, this statement still provides the underlying chords to the melody of mission, collections, and buildings.

### Rick Rybak Leaves ATLA

Rick Rybak recently left ATLA's Business Development department for a regional sales manager position at EBSCO and he will be covering the Iowa, Kansas, and Missouri territory. Many ATLA members and customers might have worked with Rick at conferences or on the ATLA for ALUM or developing countries programs.

With his departure, please e-mail [products@atla.com](mailto:products@atla.com) for personal assistance with any inquiries.

### Professional Development Committee Meets

The Professional Development Committee met on October 29 in Denver, Colorado.

The committee is comprised of:

- Jennifer Ulrich, chair
- Martha Adkins
- Michael Bradford
- Wesley Custer
- James Estes
- Megan Welsh
- Gillian Harrison Cain, staff liaison

The Professional Development Committee determines the continuing education needs of members and provides appropriate opportunities for members to obtain this professional development outside the context of the Annual Conference.

[Learn more and join.](#)

### Join ATLA as an Individual or Student Member By January 1

ATLA Membership runs from September 1 to August 31. If you are considering joining ATLA as an Individual or Student member, or if your Individual or Student Membership has lapsed, we invite you to join your colleagues as an individual member of ATLA and enjoy the valuable benefits of individual membership including discounted conference registration and fine publications.

[Join](#), or [re-join](#), ATLA by January 1 to be eligible to receive Scholarship and Grant benefits, including Conference Travel Grants, and to vote in the upcoming election (Individual members only).

[Learn more about ATLA Individual and Student member benefits](#) and [join ATLA as an Individual or Student member today.](#)

### Welcome Iskandar Bcheiry, ATLA Metadata Analyst

We are excited to announce our new Metadata Analyst Iskandar Bcheiry.

Iskandar lives in Hanover Park and has been a resident of Illinois since 2007 when he began his second Master's degree at Lutheran School of Theology, Chicago (where he is currently concluding his second PhD). His dissertation is focused on the area of Christian Islamic relations. His previous degrees were awarded from the Oriental Pontifical Institute, Rome in Church History. He has translated many texts from Arabic and Syriac, teaches Arabic at LSTC, has catalogued Syriac manuscripts for the New York Public Library and works on historical research for the National Archives Center, Abu Dhabi.

Please join us in welcoming Iskandar to ATLA.

### Endowment Committee Meets in Chicago

The Endowment Committee met for their fall meeting in Chicago, Illinois, on November 4.

The Endowment Committee is comprised of:

- Dennis Swanson, chair
- Marti Alt
- Sharon Taylor
- Brenda Bailey-Hainer, staff liaison
- Marie Jacobsen, staff liaison

The committee informs the membership of the purpose of the Endowment Fund, the cultivation of donor relationships, and the solicitation of major gifts through planned (estate) gifts and other funding sources.

[Learn more and join.](#)

## Conference Committee Meets in Long Beach

The Conference Committee met in Long Beach, California, on October 27.

The Conference Committee is comprised of:

- Pat Graham, chair
- Miranda Bennett
- Suzanne Estelle-Holmer
- Robert Burgess
- Rebecca Mendelson
- Matthew Thiesen
- Paul Tippey
- Liz Leahy, 2016 local host committee representative
- Michelle Spomer, 2016 local host committee representative
- Gillian Harrison Cain, ex-officio
- Denise McFarlin, staff liaison

The committee is the strategic and long-range planning agent for the Association's Annual Conferences. This committee also identifies and responds to needs for continuing education of ATLA members at the Annual Conference.

[Learn more and join.](#)

## Theological Librarianship Editorial Board Meets

The *Theological Librarianship* Editorial Board met in Chicago, November 11-12, 2015.

The Editorial Board met to discuss, train, and plan for 2016.

Members of the Editorial Board are:

- Ronald W. Crown, Peer-Reviewed Articles Editor
- Miranda H. Bennett, Critical Reviews Editor
- Gary F. Daught, Columns Editor
- Suzanne Estelle-Holmer, Bibliographic Essays Editor
- David R. Stewart, Managing Editor

*Theological Librarianship* is an open access journal publishing essays, columns, critical reviews, bibliographic essays, and peer-reviewed articles on various aspects of theological librarianship and its contribution to theological education.

[Read the current issue.](#)

## Board of Directors Meet in Salt Lake City

*Submitted by Steve Perisho, Secretary, ATLA Board of Directors*

On Wednesday, October 15, the board spent the entire day devoted to strategic thinking, and above all the mega question, "What should the ATLA membership look like (be composed of) to reach the new vision and purpose?" The day-long discussion was informed by a number of documents, and facilitated, once again, by the Tecker consultant Paul Meyer.

On Saturday, October 17, the board accepted a consent agenda that included a finalization of the new timeline required by the concentration of voting in the month of January, and received and spoke into the Director of Member Programs' plans for making the broader membership aware of the new strategic plan. The board discussed both an ATLA membership market report on graduate-level religious studies programs prepared by staff and the 2015 "Community of Faith" survey conducted prior to and then presented at the 2015 Annual Conference. Next, the Bylaws Committee received high-level feedback on its preliminary suggestions for the upcoming Bylaws revision; and the board as a whole responded to a report from the Executive Director. The latter was followed by a discussion of the board's response to the September monitoring report, and the Governance Committee proposed a couple of additional revisions to the *ATLA Board Policy Manual*. More importantly, the board voted to evaluate the Executive Director on her achievement of the goals in the strategic plan (rather than the organizational ends) through 1 January 2017, the deadline it set itself for bringing the latter into line with the former.

The board chose to meet in Salt Lake City in order that it might take in a day at the [2015 World Parliament of Religions](#), and Thursday evening and all day Friday attended as many sessions as possible to sample the many, many different and extremely varied sessions on offer from across the spectrum of the traditional, new, and emergent world religions. The purpose of board attendance was to get a sense of what it might mean for ATLA to take seriously an aspect of its commitment to "hospitality, inclusion, and diversity" on its way to becoming "the hub of worldwide scholarly communication in theology and religion". The board's consensus at its collective reassembly and debrief on Saturday morning was that the Parliament had been a profitable learning experience.

In addition to trading stories about and observations on the Parliament, Saturday morning was spent reviewing the upcoming board slate, revising the procedure for the nomination of board officers, and appointing that nominating committee. In addition, the board instructed the Executive Director to contract with a consultant for the February board meeting as it will be focused on revision of the organizational ends with the 2017 deadline fast approaching.

## 2016 Board of Directors Candidate Statements

The Nominating Committee has named the following candidates for the four director positions to be filled on the Board for the term of 2016-2019.

The election will be conducted via electronic ballot from January 7 through February 1, 2016. Please note that this is a change from past practice — voting starts earlier and closes after approximately 3.5 weeks.

The candidates have been asked to make their statements [based on the following questions](#), which have been identified by the ATLA Board as providing an important window into their perspectives on Carver Policy Governance. These questions are taken from: Richard Stringham, “Does Your Electorate have the Information it Needs to Select the Best Candidates?”, *REALBoard Advisor*, vol. 19, No. 1, January 2014, pp. 8-9.

The candidates are (in randomized order by [www.random.org](http://www.random.org)):

- Jennifer Ulrich, Eastern Mennonite University, Harrisonburg, VA
- Brad Ost, Robert W. Woodruff Library, Atlanta University Center, Atlanta, GA
- Donna Wells, Southeastern Baptist Theological Seminary Library, Wake Forest, NC
- Christina Torbert, University of Mississippi Libraries, Oxford, MS
- Stephen Sweeney, St. John Vianney Seminary, Denver, CO
- David Mayo, Union Presbyterian Seminary – Charlotte Campus, Charlotte, NC

### Jennifer Ulrich

#### *Biography*

#### *Current Position*

Technical Services Librarian, Eastern Mennonite University

#### *Other Positions*

Reference Librarian, Tri-State University, Angola, IN (now Trine University)

Interim Library Director, Eastern Mennonite University

#### *Leadership Positions*

ATLA Education Committee

ATLA Professional Development Committee

#### *Outside of ATLA – Present service*

Secretary, Harrisonburg District Virginia Mennonite Conference

Board member – NewBridges Immigrant Resource Center  
Assistant Director – Patchwork Pantry (Director starting Jan. 2016)

Graduate Council, Eastern Mennonite University

Intellectual Life Committee, Eastern Mennonite University

Instructional Technology and Distance Learning Taskforce,  
Eastern Mennonite University

#### *Outside of ATLA – Past service*

Faculty Senate, Secretary – Eastern Mennonite University

#### *Candidate Statement*

I am excited about the possibility of serving on the ATLA board. I have appreciated the opportunities I have through ATLA for both professional development and service to the organization. It will be important to listen and observe well to the many voices that make up the ATLA membership. This diversity provides us such an opportunity to interact and learn from those who represent a variety of libraries and faith traditions. The challenge is to find ways that ATLA can support this diversity as it seeks to assist libraries and librarians who support theological education. As a librarian I find promoting a variety of voices in our collections leads to richer learning and understanding. As we look to the future of ATLA responding to the diverse voices will be important. I feel I am team player, I understand at times my own ideas may not be the ones approved but I will work to support decisions made by the board as a whole. I like working toward consensus on ways to operate as it brings everyone along in support. I have had opportunities to help work at strategic planning at my school and in other organizations. I think I would bring a good listening ear and my ability to work with people across different disciplines. I have been working in libraries for many years and feel I have the knowledge and energy to help shape the future of our profession and ATLA.

### Brad Ost

#### *Biography*

I am the Theology Librarian (official designation, but I also cover Philosophy) at the AUC, Woodruff Library located in Atlanta Georgia. I attend to students at Clark Atlanta University, Interdenominational Theological Center, Morehouse College and Spelman College.

Previously I was a Graduate Assistant Reference Librarian at Indiana University, Purdue University, Indianapolis (IUPUI), from 2006 through 2008. Before that I was a Reference Librarian at Reformed Theological Seminary, Charlotte, NC, from 2003 to 2005.

I was on the ATLA National Publications Committee in 2013. I was there for a three year term but ATLA disbanded the committee for consolidation purposes.

#### *Candidate Statement*

The ATLA is a unique organization. We are comprised of librarians providing resources and research consultations across a wide spectrum of belief structures. Added to that mix of faith structures is the continuum upon which our librarians stand. Some embrace the faith they provide help with while others love the work and subject but have no faith connection beyond that. The challenge is letting all these individuals know that our board is thoughtfully considering them. I work at an HBCU (Historically Black College and University) library.



Before my 7 years at Woodruff I had worked at majority institutions. Learning to be aware of the needs and concerns of my African American patrons has given me an opportunity to be more in sync with the needs of a diverse community. Hopefully this awareness and willingness to hear diverse voices will make me a more effective Board member. ”

Since I have been at Woodruff I have been intimately involved in collaborating on separate vision statements for both the library and the Interdenominational Theological Center. Added to that is the work I have twice participated in to develop the library’s 5 year strategic plan. All this work required forethought and patient collaboration. It was a time of stretching for everyone involved but the outcomes have been valuable. Hopefully, in my relationships, I have proven to be quick to listen and slow to speak. I want to insure that all voices are heard and that every effort is made to arrive at unanimous decisions in our efforts as often as possible.

Other than self monitoring and supervising smaller groups of employees I have never had such a large responsibility for oversight. I would bring patience, integrity and a collaborative spirit to the process.

As I have stated previously, my experience at an HBCU library has enabled me to be more intentionally aware of and sensitive to concerns of minority and under-represented peoples. I am thankful for this experience and believe it has made me a better librarian and person. If the groans are any indication others describing how I operate in groups would tell you I’m not as funny as I think I am. But I keep trying. As someone described it to me lately I am willing to let others contribute and share in responsibility, but am more than willing to come in and lead if others are reticent. I strive to share glory if there is any occasion for it. Rarely is any successful outcome due to the diligence and work of just one person.

## Donna Wells

### *Biography*

My current position at Southeastern is the first professional library position I have ever had. I started my career here in 2002, long after earning my MLS in 1989, and after 13 years of being a stay-at-home mother. I began as a cataloger, then Head Cataloger, Head of Technical Services, and now, Assistant Director. In ATLA I have been active in the Technical Services Interest Group, and currently serve on the steering committees as Secretary. I also lead the Baptist denominational group and have for many years. I have volunteered over the years in my Methodist church, specifically serving as both a member and as chairman of the Staff-Parish Relations Committee during a particularly divisive period of our history. More enjoyable was co-leading a Girl Scout Troop for 13 years, culminating in a Troop-wide Silver Award, and three of our five senior girls earning their Gold Award. Apropos of nothing, but key to understanding me, I am a dedicated tennis player and all-around sports fan.

### *Candidate Statement*

Theological shifts have occurred among ATLA’s membership over the years. This is not surprising, my own views continue to change and evolve as time passes. Certainly, diversity is a hot topic in our organization, as it is in many. ALTA’s focus on the past has been, not exclusively, but definitely predominantly, on Christianity. I think the overwhelming attendance in Denver at the Buddhist worship service shows a change in thinking. We are ready to be more diverse theologically. The Interfaith Panel of this past conference gave us a glimpse of how that could look. I believe I could help in this process.

I have been part of the professional decision-making processes of crafting a mission statement and looking at ILS and Discovery systems. What I have to offer is common sense, a plain-spoken manner, and a good sense of humor. One of my greatest strengths is the ability to seek areas of agreement. As the chair of my church’s SPRC I was able to navigate some very stormy seas using these qualities, as well as learning a great deal about group cohesiveness, open deliberation, and speaking with one voice. I have enjoyed being a member of ATLA for the past 10 years (my first conference was in 2006) and would gladly serve to help meet the organizations goals for religious diversity and growing the membership.

## Christina Torbert

### *Biography*

Christina is the Head of Continuing Resources and the Bibliographer for Philosophy and Religion at the J.D. Williams Library of the University of Mississippi. She has been at the university since 2004. Prior to Mississippi, Christina was the Serials and Acquisitions Librarian at JKM Library in Chicago for five years, after completing her MDiv at McCormick Theological Seminary and her MLIS at Dominican University. Christina first joined ATLA in 2000, and has served on the Steering Committee for the Technical Services Interest Group, the Education Committee, and the Professional Development Committee. She was a member of the most recent cohort of the Leaders of Tomorrow program. Christina has lead several roundtable discussions at conference on topics related to technical services.

In addition to ATLA, Christina is a member of NASIG, where she has served on the Evaluation Committee for three years and has presented at the annual conference. Christina is also a chapter advisor of Alpha Phi Omega, a national co-ed service fraternity, and she serves in many capacities at her local church, First Presbyterian (PCUSA) of Oxford, Mississippi. Christina is currently a member of the Session and is chairing the planning committee for a presbytery-wide lay training event.

### *Candidate Statement*

ATLA has a history of trying to represent its diversity on committees and in leadership, trying to balance geographic areas, positions in libraries, denominational affiliation, and institutional size. ATLA has worked at increasing ethnic

diversity, too. I believe that diversity is a strength, but diversity also brings tension between tradition and change. Hearing and acknowledging the broad opinions of the membership is a real challenge. The members place a great deal of trust in the processes of the board to believe that minority opinions are being heard and considered, even when the board must present a unified position. Acknowledging differences of opinion is a trait I try to cultivate. I hope that members who have served on committees with me will recognize that I carefully consider what others say and that I will ask a quiet person to express themselves to be sure that all opinions have been heard. I will reiterate a minority opinion, even if I don't agree with it, if I feel its point is being overlooked. I seek decisions that are just and best for the whole organization.

I prefer continuity and adjustment, even as the organization looks to the future. I feel my strength in planning is that I try to understand the context and reason for a change. What are the outside and the inside challenges that we need to consider? What are the strengths and the programs that the organization already has that can be built upon? My job experience has placed me in positions where I formulate departmental and library-wide goals, while also being responsible for the practical details to accomplish those goals. My committee work for the many organizations has exposed me to broader goal setting, but I still like to be hands-on in getting the work done. Serving on the ATLA Board would be a broadening experience in considering the larger ends of the organization and in monitoring the accomplishment of those goals.

## Stephen Sweeney

### *Biography*

#### *Current Position*

Director, Cardinal Stafford Library, Saint John Vianney Theological Seminary (2010-2015)

#### *Other Positions*

Reference & Acquisitions Librarian, Cardinal Stafford Library, St John Vianney Theological Seminary (2007-2010)

Access Services Assistant Supervisor, Dayton Memorial Library, Regis University (1999-2007)

Access and Network Services, multiple branches, Denver Public Library (2001-2003)

#### *Leadership Positions*

Saint John Vianney Theological Seminary (2007-present)

Webmaster (2011-present)

Academic Council (2007-present)

Library Committee Chair (2010-present)

Committee Chair for ATS Standard on Library (2011-2013)

American Theological Library Association (2008-present)

World Religions, World Christianity, and Emerging Technology Interest Groups (various between 2009-2016)

Conference, Diversity, and Local Host Committees (various between 2011-2015)

Mountain Plains Library Association (2007-present)

State Representative to Colorado (2013-2016)

Administration, Financial Review, Membership, Nominating, and Professional

Development Committees (various between 2010-2016)

Colorado Association of Libraries – a 501(c)(6) corporation (2005-present)

President (2011-2014)

Colorado Association of Special Libraries, President (2007-2010)

Conference Committee Chair (2008-2011)

Knights of Columbus – a 501(c)(8) fraternal benefit society (2010-present)

Grand Knight (2013-2015)

District Deputy (2015-2016)

Home of Denver – a 501(c)(2) property holding corporation (2011-present)

Recording Secretary (2011-2013)

President (2015-2016)

### *Candidate Statement*

The American Theological Library Association serves a wealth of diverse individuals and libraries, therefore it is incumbent on the Board to set the Core Values of hospitality, inclusion, and diversity, and especially to live them. From the breadth and depth of our religious traditions, our denominations, and our own lived expression of faith, the Board of Directors is in a unique position to be the standard bearer of these same Core Values. I have had the distinct pleasure and opportunity to experience these values while framing the conversation of the Diversity Committee as Chair. In the course of my service to ATLA in this way, we reconsidered the charge of the committee as well as the purpose of the scholarships awarded. In order for ATLA's member librarians to provide resources for scholarly research to our students, faculty, staff, and administrators, diversity must be held as vital to the future success of our association.

The board's job is to govern. In order to be successful at this task, the board must be willing to plan strategically. In my current position at Saint John Vianney Theological Seminary, I have had the opportunity to play an important role in the creation and execution of the current strategic plan (through 2019). As the Director of the Library, I have had the occasion to report the findings of assessments and other evaluation instruments for accrediting purposes as well as internal, future-oriented decisions. Between 2011-2014, I served in the Presidential positions of the Colorado Association of Libraries. Working with different library types to foster a common vision for libraries in Colorado required working sensitively with others, collaborating creatively, and recognizing my own bias in the conversations. In another capacity, I have served as President of a 501(c)(2) property-holding organization currently in the deliberative stages of determining the future of the present building. This has required the conversation, input, feedback, and collaboration of all 9 board members who do not all agree on what the future holds. Being able to stand behind the decision of the board even for the dissenting is critical for the future success of the organization. I have seen this in all of the leadership

capacities mentioned above, and would be humbled and honored to serve on the ATLA Board of Directors, if elected.

## David Mayo

### *Biography*

#### *Educational Background*

MLIS; University of North Carolina at Greensboro (UNCG), Greensboro, NC; M.Div. Duke University Divinity School, Durham NC; BS in Music Education, Florida State University, Tallahassee, FL.

#### *Professional Career*

2002-2012: Theological Librarian; 2012-present: Director of Library, Union Presbyterian Seminary—Charlotte; Previous Positions: Associate Minister and Minister of Music at various UMC churches.

#### *Professional Activities*

American Theological Library Association member (2002-present); Co-Chair Local Host Committee and served on the Education Committee for the 2013 ATLA Annual Conference in Charlotte, North Carolina; Published web-review “Hymnary.org—a comprehensive index of hymns & hymnals.” *Theological Librarianship* 5, no. 2 (2012); Co-Led Round Table on Best Practices for Small Theological Libraries at the 2011 ATLA Annual Conference in Chicago; 2011 Chair of the Carolinas Theological Library Consortium; Elected to American Theological Library Association ATLA Public Service Interest Group in 2006; Planned interest sessions for Annual ATLA Conferences in Philadelphia (2007), Ottawa (2008), and St. Louis (2009); Planned and presided over 2010 ATLA Annual Conference interest session on Great Underappreciated and Much Needed Works of Theological Reference; Presented and led a roundtable discussion group on Retention and Binding: What to Keep and How at 2005 ATLA Annual Conference in Austin, Texas; Published pathfinder/article “Lectionary and Music Resources for the Music Director” in the *Lectionary Aids 2006-2007, Year C* issue of *Call to Worship: Liturgy, Music, Preaching, and the Arts* a journal published by the Office of Theology and Worship of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.); Assisted in teaching semester course titled, “Information Literacy: Critical Skills for Navigating the World of Information;” Researched and presented Resources for the Online Pastor and Theological Student for Union-PSCE at Charlotte for 2002 Pastors Colloquy; Published article “Staff Ministry and the Connectional System: A Diaconal Point of View” in *Worship Arts*, a professional journal for members of The Fellowship of United Methodists in Music and Worship Arts; Led two sessions at a 2000 Southern Division Professional Convention in Orlando, Florida; Led an interest session at the 2000 State Professional Association in Greensboro, North Carolina.

### *Candidate Statement*

ATLA has been a significant part of my growth as a theological librarian. My development as a second career theological librarian has come from the conferences and learning opportunities sponsored by ATLA as well as through the ethos of an organization that fosters and sustains collegial relationships with other religious and theological librarians and libraries on the local, regional and national level. I have benefited greatly from the passion and knowledge of my friends and colleagues in ATLA. Our profession has also advanced greatly from ATLA's diligent gathering, organizing, and preserving of materials and scholarly resources in religion and theology. I would like to see this continue and for ATLA to explore, encourage, and even lead in open access opportunities for theological libraries. I welcome the opportunity to give back to this quality organization and be a part of the substantial and significant work that is being done for theological librarianship. Although closely connected to our institution's larger theological campus, I will be a voice for the smaller theological library and their particular perspective. As I look ahead, it becomes clear that ATLA has an even more important role to play in the future by not only continuing to provide avenues for networking and fostering our professional growth but ATLA can encourage greater diversity in our field, lead us to explore new models of providing quality library services, and continue to offer vital religious and theological resources in a new and changing environment. It would be an honor to be part of such a worthwhile organization that not only looks to the past for guidance but continues to look toward the future as well. It is my hope and aspiration that my leadership throughout the years as well as my willingness to move toward a bright and challenging future would be of benefit to this wonderful organization.

## Notes from the Road: ARL Fall Forum, Parliament of the World's Religions, and Charleston Conference

*Submitted by Gillian Harrison Cain, Director of Member Programs*

It feels like I've been everywhere this fall — Fort Worth, Long Beach, Indianapolis, Washington DC, Atlanta (two times!), Salt Lake City, Charleston, Hatfield — in addition to my normal hangouts of Denver and Chicago. Planes, trains, buses, taxis... I've used them all to get around in the past few months.

What has kept me on the road? Many wonderful opportunities to meet ATLA members and participate in unique learning opportunities. I've attended regional meetings (read more about what happened at [SWATLA](#), [SEPTLA](#), [SCATLA](#)), visited member libraries, participated in association meetings (read more about the meetings of the [Diversity Committee](#), [Conference Committee](#), [Professional Development Committee](#), [Theological Librarianship Editorial Board](#)), and attended several conferences.

It would be impossible for me to share all that I've experienced and learned, but here are a few highlights.

The **ARL Fall Forum 2015: Research Partnerships in Digital Scholarship for the Humanities and Social Sciences** featured a compelling lineup of speakers who discussed the changing landscape of scholarship in the humanities and social sciences, specifically emerging models, current projects and partnerships, and trends in digital scholarship. The Julia C. Blixrud Memorial Lecture was given by Tara McPherson, Associate Professor of Critical Studies, School of Cinematic Arts, University of Southern California, who discussed the need to “rethink the very forms and practices of scholarly production” and urged libraries to get involved early in the process of development of these projects and research to provide leadership and overcome separation between departments often inherent in academic institutions.

Attending the **Parliament of the World's Religions** was thought-provoking. One of the most memorable experiences for me was a session where the attendees participated in an activity called “Speed Faithing.” Led by an instructor and student from Utah State University, the exercise guided us through a structured methodology to facilitate one-on-one conversations about challenging topics. [Check out this brief video](#) (midway down the page on the left) captured by a reporter from the Salt Lake Tribune. Learn more about the experience of the Parliament from [Jayeon “Lucy” Chung and the Diversity Committee](#), [Brenda Bailey-Hainer](#), and [photos and videos took by me and board member Ellen Frost](#).

Maria Stanton, Margot Lyon and I attended the **Charleston Conference** in early November. A conference known for compelling keynotes, timely topics, and numerous networking opportunities, it was a busy few days for all of us. Margot presented alongside Kate Lawrence from EBSCO on “*Ethnographic Research in Academia: More than just shadowing customers*” and Maria and Margot shared updates on ATLA's products during the *Charleston Premiers*. Themes of the sessions I attended seemed to pick up on topics I'd heard at other conferences and meetings in the fall. During the panel discussion “*Mind the Gap: Find and Fix the Mismatches Between Faculty and Librarians*,” a faculty member on the panel remarked many faculty don't feel a connection to the person sending them ILL PDF's and that libraries need to find a way to incentivize interaction between the faculty and the library such as course redevelopment grants, or involving students in archives projects working with primary sources. *Library Journal* hosted a [pre-conference webinar](#) with some of the same speakers that can be viewed on demand. Reporting on a project regarding sharing and use of downloaded articles, Carol Tenopir remarked that “libraries are key in the sharing process” and usage of articles may be underestimated since many researchers download articles for future reference. [Read more about “The Secret Life of Articles” on the Charleston Conference blog](#).



## ATLA Hosts Booth and Receptions at 2015 AAR & SBL Annual Meetings

The Annual Meetings 2015, hosted by the American Academy of Religion and the Society of Biblical Literature, were held in Atlanta, GA, from November 21-25 and there were more than 10,000 total people in attendance.

ATLA hosted a booth in the exhibits hall where staff answered questions about ATLA offerings and ATLA member volunteers (Tracy Powell Iwaskow, Rebekah Bedard, Beth Perry, Kelly Campbell, Bo Adams, Sarah Bogue) staffed the “Ask a Librarian” booth hours.

In addition to many meetings with business and publishing partners, ATLA also hosted two receptions for members, customers, publishers and friends of ATLA. A special toast was offered by ATLA and Odyssey Networks in honor of the [announcement of the new content partnership](#).

## Call for Exhibitors at the 2016 ATLA Annual Conference

ATLA is pleased to welcome exhibitors to participate in the 2016 ATLA Annual Conference held in Long Beach, California, June 15-18. Exhibits will be available June 16-17.

The exhibit hall is an important part of the ATLA Annual Conference, providing opportunities for attendees to learn about the new products and services available to theological libraries.

Lock in the best exhibit rates by submitting the [Exhibitor Contract](#) by **January 15**.

Go to the [ATLA Exhibitor and Sponsor webpage](#) for more information.

We also invite our members to share the [Exhibitor Prospectus](#) with vendors and partners that may be interested in attending the 2016 ATLA Annual Conference.

## Call for Posters: 2016 ATLA Annual Conference

ATLA aims to offer many avenues for members to share interesting and creative projects. Therefore, ATLA invites [proposals for poster sessions](#) at the 2016 Annual Conference, June 15-18, Long Beach, California.

Scheduled in a 60-minute time slot, poster sessions are informal. The presenter(s) develops a poster and handouts which deliver useful information to the theological library community.

At the conference, ATLA will provide each poster presenter with a three-panel poster board, double-sided tape, push pins, and glue for their presentation.

Posters may address a potentially wide range of topics of interest to theological librarians, such as:

- Outreach initiatives
- Building digital collections
- Assessment
- Information literacy
- New library services
- Creative marketing
- New collaborative models
- Cooperative collection development
- Redesigned library space
- Professional development

This is an opportunity to try out new ideas and receive instant feedback from your ATLA colleagues. We sincerely hope you will consider [submitting a poster proposal](#) by Friday, January 29, 2016.

## Southwest Area Theological Library Association Fall Meeting

*Submitted by Kathryn Sullivan Bowld Music Library, Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary*

Southwest Area Theological Library Association (SWATLA) Fall Meeting met on the campus of Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary on Friday, October 2. Gillian Harrison Cain, ATLA Director of Member Programs, led an extensive discussion about the ATLA core purpose, core values, and strategic plan. ATLA's core purpose (as stated on the bookmarks Gillian distributed) is ATLA is the hub of worldwide scholarly communications in theology and religion, advancing the work of libraries and related information providers. Cain had the participants engaged with questions that included:

How do we serve as the hub?

What is meant by "scholarly communications"?

How do we preserve online learning, blogs, etc.?

Dr. Leo Day, Dean of the School of Church Music at SBTS, lead a brief mid-morning worship service with [inspirational music](#).

Following lunch, Kevin Hawkins, the Director for Academic Publishing Transformation for the University of North Texas Libraries, gave a presentation on open access monographic publishing. Currently two institutions are involved in open access monographic publishing: the University of Michigan (available at [maizebooks.org](http://maizebooks.org)) and the University of North Texas ([digital.library.unt.edu](http://digital.library.unt.edu) in the collection Eagle Editions.)

The fall business meeting was called to order by Marvin Hunn. Copies of the Bylaws were distributed.

- Proposal to grant exception to Bylaw # 1
  - Craig Kubic, as incoming president, was granted an exception to Bylaw #1 and will serve as president of SWATLA for a two year term in order to accomplish some long range goals and tasks for the organization. Charles Bellinger (Brite Divinity School, TCU) made a motion to suspend Bylaw #1 for one year. Members should consider whether this should be a permanent change to the Bylaws during the coming year. Steven Vanderhill (Redeemer Seminary, Dallas) seconded, and the motion passed.
- Due to the suspension of Bylaw #1 for one year, the members present proposed having a secretary rather than a vice-president who serves for one year while consideration is given to the Bylaws. Ellen Frost (Perkins School of Theology) will serve as secretary.
- Members present agreed that the group should continue to meet during the ATLA conference as stipulated in Bylaw # 3.

- The Ad Hoc Committee met following the COST meeting fall 2014 at George W. Truett Theological Seminary (Baylor University, Waco). The Committee feels they need a clearer charge. Related topics discussed during COST (and by the committee) include:
  - Collaborative collection development
  - Remote storage
  - Shared repository with access to each other's collection
  - ILL strategies for withdrawal of books – who keeps the last copy of an item in the region (instead of relying on Yale or Harvard)
- A brief period of Informal news/sharing concluded the meeting:
  - Regional groups can apply for grants for programs through the Professional Development Committee. The proposal needs to be submitted up to two months in advance; the maximum amount for a grant is \$1,000.
  - Charles Bellinger offered to host the fall SWATLA meeting in 2016. The library is newly renovated (opened October 1, 2015) so the program may include a presentation on library renovations and a tour of the new library space. The Divinity School graduate study room now has card swipe access so only graduate students are allowed into the room.
  - Ellen Frost asked about how to handle reporting purchased e-books in the ATS Statistics. Craig Kubic answered that if the titles are purchased, they should be reported as monographs owned since ATS has no other outlet for reported owned titles. Any usage for DDA materials should just be reported as the monetary amount spent for electronic resources.
  - SWBTS is expanding their archives and building a reproduction of the library of Adrian Rogers. They are leaving SIRSI and moving to MOBIUS/III.
  - Dallas Theological Seminary reached its highest headcount for library use this past year – 2,100 per semester. More than 50% of the DTS students are distance students this year, all of them online. As a result, DTS has a larger number of part-time students this year because most of the online students are

## Chicago Area Theological Library Association Fall Conference

*Submitted by Kathy Harty, President, CATLA*

On October 30, 2015, CATLA (Chicago Area Theological Library Association) held its fall conference in Westminster Hall, on the campus of Grace College & Seminary, in Winona Lake, Indiana.

The conference covered the topic of Scholarly Communication, in various forms.

The morning keynote speaker was Melody Layton McMahon of CTU, who outlined the concept of the “Librarian as Publisher.” Using the experience gained in taking up publication of the journal *New Theology Review*, she presented touchstones to be aware of, such as: software needs, workflow issues preservation needs (e.g., LOCKSS or DOIs), Creative Commons licenses, indexing, and marketing. Monographs are a new area of exploration. Open access with print-on-demand services is a new venue for scholarly communication. In addition to the issues involved in serials publishing, there are further demands on time and talent with monography publishing, such as proofreading and graphic design, as well as technical difficulties with the text itself. Finally, it is important to make a good case for mission-fit, monitor statistics and usage, look at monetary flow, and keep in mind overseas audiences (one may not have the ability to publish in multiple languages). We were reminded that the editorial side takes a lot of time, so be prepared for those workflow changes.

After lunch, Brenda Bailey-Hainer, Executive Director of ATLA, led a presentation and discussion of ATLA’s goals and core values. The smaller venue, and presence of several current or past board members, allowed for much more give and take from participants, allowing Brenda to gather ideas to present to the ATLA board.

There were two roundtable discussions: one focused on how the library could become a resource to institutions on open-access publishing questions, and the other on integrating open-access resources with discovery tools.

## Southern California Theological Library Association Fall Meeting

*Submitted by Anna Lois Kroll, Seminary Cataloging Librarian (and & ILLS), The Master’s Seminary Library*

A fall meeting of the Southern California ATLA (SCATLA) was held on October 26, 2015, at the Hyatt Regency in Long Beach where the next ATLA Conference will be held in June 2016. Among those in attendance were librarians from Azusa Pacific University, Biola University, Claremont School of Theology, Concordia University – Irvine, Fuller Theological Seminary, Golden Gate Baptist, Hebrew Union College, Hope International University, International Theological Seminary, Logos Evangelical Seminary, Loyola Marymount University, The Master’s Seminary, Pepperdine University, Point Loma Nazarene University, Southern California Seminary, the University of San Diego, and World Mission University. Special guests were Gillian Harrison Cain, ATLA’s Director of Member Programs, and Denise McFarlin, ATLA’s Meeting Specialist.

The main focus of the meeting was to discuss plans for the upcoming 2016 ATLA Conference, which SCATLA will be hosting. Among the topics of discussion were marketing ideas, how volunteers can help, sponsorships to help fund the conference, and best of all, planning activities for attendees. Since Southern California offers such a wide range of possibilities of places to see and things to do, both formal exertions and suggested outings for attendees to do on their own took up a good portion of the discussions. Attendees can check the [ATLA 2016 Conference event page on Facebook](#), a Pinterest board at [ATLA 2016 Long Beach](#), and use [#atla2016](#) and [@YourATLA](#) to find posts to help them plan their time during their stay in California.

The meeting dates and locations for the next two meetings were decided on. Next year’s secretary was elected, or more precisely, decided upon between the two nominees, since there was an even tie in the vote. A group photo was taken at the end of the meeting followed by lunch. In order to allow for more time to discuss the conference plans, institutional reports from SCATLA members were not presented during the meeting. Instead, members sent their reports to the secretary who organized them into a document to distribute via email after the meeting.

## The Future of Distance Education

*Submitted by Beth Perry, Swilley Library, Mercer University*

Distance education is a hot topic around my university and library and I suspect it very well may be around yours as well. McAfee School of Theology at Mercer University is looking at the possibility of beginning a Professional Master of Arts in Christian Ministry that would be completely online and aimed at nontraditional students already involved in ministry. These students may require more help learning to do research because libraries have changed so much since they were undergraduates, and there is the added challenge of doing this from a distance. If you have ever spent time on the phone trying to help someone who knows nothing about online databases find an article, you know what I mean.

My experience with distance students has been limited to DMin programs. To make sure our DMin students have access to resources, we developed an online form they use to request materials we own as well as those we do not, which we request through Interlibrary Loan. We scan and email articles and mail books. Overall, this system works pretty well. An online presence via a LibGuide and participation in orientation help students know I am there for assistance and how to contact me.

So how can I make sure students in this new online program have what they need from the library? What kind of instruction will I be able to give? How will I develop relationships with online students that foster quality user experiences? I think what I do for the DMin students applies; however, more will be needed for an online program. And that brings me to collaboration with faculty. This will be vital in order to be an effective librarian. Therefore, I have added reading about embedded librarianship to my list of things to do.

Last month I spent some time in the ATLA booth at the Atlanta AAR/SBL Meeting and learned about the robot they use so colleagues not living in Chicago can have a presence in the offices there. Perhaps we may use something like this to help distance students before too long. We need to continue putting our heads together to develop new ways of providing library services.

It is comforting to know that as the methods of education are changing, libraries and librarians can change also and remain relevant. While I enjoy getting to know students in person and think this experience is preferable, I know that I may need to get used to the idea of being a face on an iPad attached to a stick on wheels. The nice thing about that is I can have a book with me at the same time.

*What are your thoughts? Please share what your institution is doing in the comments below or email [newsletter@atla.com](mailto:newsletter@atla.com).*

## Linda Umoh Announces Retirement

Linda Umoh is retiring on December 31, 2015 from her position as Head of Cataloging at Bridwell Library, Perkins School of Theology. She has been a cataloger at Bridwell Library for over 31 years. Linda was the secretary/treasurer of the ATLA Methodist Librarians Fellowship for more years than she cares to count. She is looking forward to taking on the role of new grandmother in early 2016. Please join us in congratulating Linda on her retirement.

## ATLA Job Board

- John Bulow Campbell Library, Columbia Theological Seminary, Decatur, GA, is looking for an [Interim Archivist](#)
- Perkins School of Theology/Bridwell Library, Dallas, TX, is looking for a [Librarian \(2\) Cataloging and Metadata Librarian](#)
- Perkins School of Theology/Bridwell Library, Dallas, TX, is looking for a [Librarian 3 \(Rare Books and Manuscripts Librarian\)](#)
- Roling Memorial Library, Deerfield, IL, is looking for a [Collection Management Librarian](#)
- Sacred Heart Seminary and School of Theology, Hales Corners, WI, is looking for a [Director of Library and Academic Support Services](#)
- Toccoa Falls College, Toccoa, GA, is looking for a [Cataloging - Information Services Librarian](#)
- Vanderbilt University, Jean and Alexander Heard Library, Nashville, TN, is looking for a [Subject Liaison for Theology and Religion](#)

## Theology Cataloging Bulletin Available

The November 2015 issue of *Theology Cataloging Bulletin (TCB)*, a benefit of membership, is now available. [Please click here](#) to access this issue in the member restricted section of the ATLA website.

Section one of each issue lists new and changed subject headings and genre/form terms and section two lists new and changed classifications. Both are selected and compiled by Ann Heinrichs (Catholic Theological Union, Chicago, Illinois). Section three includes general information and is edited by Leslie Engelson (Murray State University, Murray, Kentucky).

The new "Testimony" feature found in section three is, "Creating MARC and MODS 3.5 Records for Burke's Syriac Manuscript Collection," submitted by Elizabeth Miraglia, Serials Specialist, Geisel Library, UC San Diego.

Thank you to the [Technical Services Interest Group \(TSIG\)](#) for their work on this publication.

[Click here to access the Member's Only publication.](#)



## Announcing Additions to ATLA Products – December 2015

The American Theological Library Association (ATLA) is pleased to announce the addition of titles to be available in upcoming updates of the *ATLA Religion Database®* (*ATLA RDB®*) and *ATLA Catholic Periodical and Literature Index* (*ATLA CPLI®*).

### New full-text titles in *ATLAS®*

- *Counseling et Spiritualité = Counselling and Spirituality*, by Peeters Publishers
- *Zeitschrift für Religions- und Geistesgeschichte*, by Brill

### New indexing titles in *ATLA RDB®*

- *The Bonhoeffer Legacy*, by ATF Theology
- *Journal of Holy Land and Palestinian Studies*, by Edinburgh University Press
- *Journal of the Order of Buddhist Contemplatives*, by Order of Buddhist Contemplatives
- *Oracula*, by Grupo Oracula de Pesquisa, Programa do Pós-Graduação em Ciências da Religião, Universidade Metodista de São Paulo
- *Revista Ciências da Religião*, by Universidade Presbiteriana Mackenzie
- *International Journal of Sino-Western Studies*, by Nordic Forum of Sino-Western Studies

### New indexing titles in *ATLA CPLI®*

- *The Innes Review*, on behalf of the Scottish Catholic Historical Association by Edinburgh University Press
- *Oikonomia*, by Angelicum University Press

[Read the full press release here.](#)

## ATLA and Odyssey Networks Announce Content Partnership

The American Theological Library Association (ATLA) is pleased to announce a new partnership with Odyssey Networks. Through this new partnership, users of the *ATLA Religion Database®* will be able to find links to selected key videos from [Odyssey's ON Scripture – The Bible™](#), a multimedia resource for clergy, lay leaders and anyone interested in exploring the relationship between the Bible and our lives today.

Maria Stanton, Director of Production at ATLA commented, “We are thrilled to announce this partnership with Odyssey Networks. By including the links to the short-form videos in our premier database, we continue to expand our breadth and depth of trusted non-print resources.”

Nick Stuart, President of Odyssey Networks added “The idea of being able to bring this dynamic video and text resource that shines the insights of Scripture onto the main news issues of the day to thousands more people through partnership with ATLA is so exciting. ATLA’s authority and reputation made them the perfect partner to provide a new way for people to get this dynamic combination of video and top biblical scholarship.”

[Read the full press release here.](#)