

PROGRAM BOOK

THE MIDWEST REGIONAL MEETING FOR BIBLICAL STUDIES

Sponsored by

The Chicago Society of Biblical Research &
The Catholic Biblical Association of America
Saint Mary's College – Notre Dame, Indiana

March 14–16, 2025

THE 2025 MIDWEST REGIONAL MEETING FOR BIBLICAL STUDIES

Sponsored by

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The Catholic Biblical Association of America
Saint Mary's College – Notre Dame, Indiana

Friday, March 14

6:00–7:30 p.m. Registration Spes Unica

7:30–8:45 p.m. OPENING PLENARY SESSION Spes Unica 145

MIDWEST REGIONAL SPOTLIGHT

Jennie Grillo, University of Notre Dame

On Having a Body: Time and Divine Embodiment

Saturday, March 15

9:00–11:30 a.m. Registration Spes Unica

9:00–10:30 a.m. PAPER SESSION ONE

GREEK LANGUAGE AND LINGUISTICS (A)

Spes Unica 137

Chair: James E. Sedlacek, Israel Institute of Biblical Studies

Alan Bunning, Center for New Testament Restoration

Algorithmic Accidence for Greek Words

E. R. Kerkhof, Asbury Theological Seminary

Pedagogical Perks of Understanding and Applying a Discourse Pragmatics Model of Circumstantial Participles (DPCP)

Fredrick J. Long, Asbury Theological Seminary

Clausal Constructions and Construal across Ephesians

**EARLY CHRISTIANITY: ACTS,
APOSTOLIC FATHERS, AND PATRISTICS (A)**

Spes Unica 145

Chair: Nancy Pardee, Greenberg Center for Jewish Studies, University of Chicago

Qiaoqiao Chen, Asbury Theological Seminary

“What Kind of House Will You Build for Me?” The Cosmic Temple and Stephen the Exemplary Wisdom-Filled Temple Craftsman (Acts 7:2–53)

Chris Shea, Ball State University

Acts 10-12 and the Little Passion of Peter

Jonathan J. Hatter, Loyola University Chicago

Translating Away Enslavement in Acts: Erasing the Enslaved to Exonerate the Early Church

HEBREW BIBLE (A)

Spes Unica 135

Chair: Mark Lester, Loyola University Chicago

Jaeseok Heo, University of Chicago

Transjordan in the Pentateuch: Relocating Transjordan’s Centrality in the Pentateuchal Literary Tradition

Evan Lee, Asbury Theological Seminary

Where is D’s Judiciary? The Literary Relationship of the Asylum Legislation in Numbers and Deuteronomy

Michael Inyang, Asbury Theological Seminary

The Mosaic Covenant Tradition and the Origin and Function of Marriage Imagery in the Book of Hosea: A Closer Look at Deut 26:16–19 and Hos 2:16–25

HEBREWS AND CATHOLIC EPISTLES (A)

Spes Unica 239

Chair: Eric F. Mason, Saint Xavier University

David Tingley, Asbury Theological Seminary

Nautical Imagery as a Major Metaphor in the Deliberative Argument of Hebrews

Luke Kieser, Trinity Evangelical Divinity School

The Exegete of Hebrews and Theological Discourse

Nathaniel Szidik, OSB, Saint Meinrad Archabbey/Catholic University of America

An Analogical and Metaphorical Interpretation of the Heavenly Sanctuary in Hebrews

PAULINE LITERATURE (A)

Spes Unica 235

Chair: Sorin Sabou, Moody Bible Institute

Troy W. Martin, Saint Xavier University
Circumcision and the Galatian Controversy

Brian Yong Lee, Loyola University Chicago
Respondent

P. Richard Choi, Andrews University
Respondent

SECOND TEMPLE JUDAISM (A)

Spes Unica 140

Chair: Megan Wines, Loyola University Chicago

Nathan C. Johnson, University of Indianapolis
Scripts and Scriptures in Popular Messianic-Prophetic Movements

Joseph E. Samuel, Mishawaka, Indiana
What's Not to Like About the Story of Rebekah at the Well? Understanding Jubilees' Omission of the Tale

Julian Sieber, Loyola University Chicago
Land-Based Epistemologies Between First and Second Maccabees

10:30–11:00 a.m. Break

Spes Unica

11:00–12:00 a.m. PAPER SESSION TWO

APOCALYPTIC LITERATURE (A)

Spes Unica 235

Chair: Edmondo Lupieri, Loyola University Chicago

Megan Wines, Loyola University Chicago
One Like a Son of Man: The Shifting Masculinity of Apocalyptic Messiahs

Matthew T. Broeren, CSSp, Catholic Theological Union
Paul the Anti-Hero? Discerning the Image of the Apostle in the Coptic Apocalypse of Paul

GREEK LANGUAGE AND LINGUISTICS (B)

Spes Unica 137

Chair: Fredrick J. Long, Asbury Theological Seminary

Mara Reed, Asbury Theological Seminary

Bringing Back the Rhetorical Asyndeton: Asyndeton as a Prominence Feature in the Gospel of John

James E. Sedlacek, Israel Institute of Biblical Studies

Linguistic Options for ἐφ' ᾧ in Rom 5:12: Consideration of Preposition with Case

EARLY CHRISTIAN GOSPELS (A)

Spes Unica 239

Chair: Clare K. Rothschild, Lewis University/Stellenbosch University

Robert L. Craft, South Bend, Indiana

Luke's Bivalent Story of a Compassionate Samaritan (Luke 10:25-37)

Nathan Houstin, Loyola University Chicago

Daddy Trouble in Paradise: Joseph the Necessary Demiurgic Carpenter and Father in the Gospel of Philip

**EARLY CHRISTIANITY: ACTS,
APOSTOLIC FATHERS, AND PATRISTICS (B)**

Spes Unica 145

Chair: Paul Anthony Hartog, Faith Baptist Theological Seminary

David Tingley, Asbury Theological Seminary

Apathy and Irony through "Speech-in-Character" (prosopopoeia): Luke's use of Gamaliel in Acts 5:34-39

Lawrence Lahey, Clinton, Iowa

The Testimonium Flavianum in Greek, Latin, Arabic, and Syriac

HEBREW BIBLE (B)

Spes Unica 135

Chair: Allison Hurst, Oxford University Press

Mark Minster, Rose-Hulman Institute of Technology

The Centers of Psalm 145

Kenton F. Williams, Moody Bible Institute

Judges 13-16: Samson as Failed Archetypal King

SECOND TEMPLE JUDAISM (B)

Spes Unica 140

Chair: Brandon Roberts, Knox College

Olivia Stewart Lester, Loyola University Chicago

The Sibylline Oracles and Constructions of Ancient Judaism

Scott Harris, Knox College

Anthologies of Interest: How Historiography Shapes Second Temple Jewish Identity

12:00–2:00 p.m. Lunch (area restaurants)

Graduate Students Luncheon

Spes Unica 134

All graduate students are invited to a complimentary lunch and conversation.

Academic Service during Graduate School: A Strategic Conversation about Committees, Conferences, and other Co-Curricular Activities

Chair: Mark Lester, Loyola University Chicago

Panelists:

Madison Pierce, Western Theological Seminary

Jeffrey Stackert, University of Chicago

Megan Wines, Loyola University Chicago

2:00–3:30 p.m. PAPER SESSION THREE

EARLY CHRISTIAN GOSPELS (B)

Spes Unica 239

Chair: James McGrath, Butler University

Sam Cho, Loyola University Chicago

The Cosmic Jesus and Ritual Purity in Mark 5:25-34

Elizabeth Schick, STL, Marquette University

Drawing from the Well: Interpreting the Samaritan Woman of John 4

Nathaniel Szidik, OSB, Saint Meinrad Archabbey/Catholic University of America

The Fourth Gospel as a Call Narrative for Today's Real Reader

HEBREW BIBLE (C)**Spes Unica 135**

Chair: Jeffrey Stackert, University of Chicago

Chontel Syfox, University of Wisconsin-Madison

Eglon's Embodiment: Monstrosity, The Grotesque, and Abjection in Judges 3:12-30

Marshall A. Cunningham, University of Chicago

Theology of Place: Considering the Role of Priests in the Return Migration Movements Under Darius I

Joshua Huver, Wheaton College

*Legal Polyphony in Ruth: A Study of Legal Allusions in Dialogue***HEBREWS AND CATHOLIC EPISTLES (B)****Spes Unica 145**

Chair: Eric F. Mason, Saint Xavier University

Qiaoqiao Chen, Asbury Theological Seminary

Looking Forward to A Heavenly Homeland: Critical Spatial Analysis of the Pilgrimage Motif in the Epistle to the Hebrews

Bryan R. Dyer, Baker Academic/Calvin University

Jesus the Exemplar in Hebrews and the Significance of His Humanity

Eric F. Mason, Saint Xavier University

*Faith(fulness) and "Works" in Hebrews 4:10***PAULINE LITERATURE (B)****Spes Unica 137**

Chair: P. Richard Choi, Andrews University

Fredrick J. Long, Asbury Theological Seminary

Christus Princeps in Paul: The Development of the Counter-Imperial Gospel in the Pauline Epistles

Clare K. Rothschild, Lewis University/Stellenbosch University

The Cheese Stands Alone: An Overlooked Reading of 1 Cor 3:1-3

SECOND TEMPLE JUDAISM (C)

Spes Unica 140

Chair: Olivia Stewart Lester, Loyola University Chicago

Matthew Albanese, Union University

Septuagint Intertextuality and the Greek Pentateuch

Olegs Andrejevs, Loyola University Chicago

Should γένεσις be Transliterated? Philo Weighs In

Joshua T. King, Loyola University Chicago

Pride Cometh Before the Flood: The Problem with Having It Too Good

TEXTUAL CRITICISM AND PAPYROLOGY (A)

Spes Unica 235

Chair: Sylvie Raquel, Trinity International University

Gregory Hartzler-Miller, Independent Scholar

The Text and Syntax of Galatians 3:3-4

Alan Bunning, Center for New Testament Restoration

Semantical and Phonetical Word Variants

B.E. Bruning, Anderson University

“As the Lord commanded Moses”: The Form of the Earliest Recoverable Text of the Manufacture of the Mishkan (Exodus 35-39)

3:30–4:00 p.m.

Break

Spes Unica

4:00–5:15 p.m.

PLENARY PANEL

Spes Unica 145

Theological Interpretation of the Bible: The Catholic Context

Chair: Jeffrey Stackert, University of Chicago

Panelists:

Laurie Brink, Catholic Theological Union

Charles Hughes-Huff, Sacred Heart Seminary and School of Theology

Nathan Mastnjak, Notre Dame Seminary Graduate School of Theology

5:30–6:30 p.m. PAPER SESSION FOUR

APOCALYPTIC LITERATURE (B)

Spes Unica 235

Chair: Fabio Caruso, Loyola University Chicago

Stanislav Kondrat, Andrews University

The Temple Crux Interpretum in Rev 7:9-17 and Rev 21:22: A New Proposal

Bodhan Kuryliak, University of Zurich

The Meaning and Uses of Oxymorons in the Book of Revelation

**EARLY CHRISTIANITY: ACTS,
APOSTOLIC FATHERS, AND PATRISTICS (C)**

Spes Unica 239

Chair: Chris Shea, Ball State University

Nancy D. Pardee, University of Chicago Greenberg Center for Jewish Studies

The Text of the Apostolic Fathers in the Jerusalem Codex

Paul Anthony Hartog, Faith Baptist Theological Seminary

The Interaction of Faith and Knowledge in Clement of Alexandria's Epistemology

HEBREW BIBLE (D)

Spes Unica 135

Chair: Raleigh Heth, Purdue University

Shane Patrick Gormley, University of St. Thomas

Teaching Job with Kierkegaard: When Existential Philosophy Meets Discourse Analysis

Mark Lester, Loyola University Chicago

Teaching the Hebrew Bible in Special Collections

HEBREW BIBLE (E)

Spes Unica 137

Chair: Marshall A. Cunningham, University of Chicago

Nicholas J. Campbell, Louisville, Kentucky

Sarah: A Wife Ignored (Gen 15–16)

Peter Feinman, Institute of History, Archaeology, and Education

The Bible Among Ruins: Sodom, Israelite History and the Hebrew Bible

HEBREWS AND CATHOLIC EPISTLES (C)

Spes Unica 145

Chair: Eric F. Mason, Saint Xavier University

John D. Doss, Asbury Theological Seminary & Asbury University
TAM 5.1539 and 1 Peter: Two Ancient, Cultic Household Codes

Madison N. Pierce, Western Theological Seminary
“Relapsing, Reverting, or Rejecting? The Purpose of Hebrews and Early Judaism”

TEACHING THE BIBLE WITH POPULAR CULTURE (A)

Spes Unica 140

Chair: Teresa Calpino, Loyola University Chicago

Valentyna Kuryliak, Ukrainian Institute of Arts and Sciences, Kyiv Region, Ukraine
Cognitive-Behavioral Approaches in Teaching the Bible through Popular Culture

Nick Elder, University of Dubuque
The Word Made Binary: Advertising the Digital Bible

Sunday, March 16th

9:00–10:30 a.m. PAPER SESSION FIVE

EARLY CHRISTIAN GOSPELS (C)

Spes Unica 145

Chair: Clare K. Rothschild, Lewis University/Stellenbosch University

Sorin Sabou, Moody Bible Institute
John 19:38-42 in Medieval Exegesis with focus on an (alleged) dialogue between Calvin and Michelangelo

E. R. Kerkhof, Asbury Theological Seminary
The State of the Parables of the Kingdom (POK) And a Way Forward on the Horizon

HEBREW BIBLE (F)

Spes Unica 135

Chair: Chontel Syfox, University of Wisconsin-Madison

Kacie Klamm, University of Notre Dame
Joseph and Technical Dream Interpretation

Tom Suiter, Indiana University Bloomington
The Temple Gate as the Court of Divine Justice in Jeremiah 7 and 26

David N. DeJong, Hope College
Jeremiah 26-28 and the Criteria for True Prophecy in Deuteronomy 18:9–22

PAULINE LITERATURE (C)

Spes Unica 137

Chair: Brian Yong Lee, Loyola University Chicago

Ryan Quam, University of Notre Dame

Idol Meat in 1 Corinthians: Sarcasm and Inconsistency

Amy Whisenand Krall, Hope College

The Challenge of Romans 15: Unison Doxology & Diverse Particularity

SECOND TEMPLE JUDAISM (D)

Spes Unica 140

Chair: Scott Harris, Knox College

Second Temple Judaism Seminar

Patricia Ahearne-Kroll, University of Minnesota

Reconstructions Reconsidered: The Future of Pseudepigrapha Studies and the Case of Aseneth

This paper has been pre-circulated. Professor Ahearne-Kroll will give a brief introduction before the response and discussion.

Allison Hurst, Oxford University Press, respondent

Open discussion

10:30–11:00 a.m. Break

Spes Unica

11:00–12:15 p.m. BOOK REVIEW PANEL

Spes Unica 145

Chair: Mark Lester, Loyola University Chicago

James F. McGrath, *John of History, Baptist of Faith: The Quest for the Historical Baptizer*. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2024.

James F. McGrath, Butler University

Respondents:

Nathan C. Johnson, University of Indianapolis

Clare K. Rothschild, Lewis University/Stellenbosch University

ABSTRACTS

Matthew Albanese, Union University
Septuagint Intertextuality and the Greek Pentateuch

Most scholars accept that the Greek Pentateuch functioned generally as a ‘lexicon’ for later Septuagint translators. Yet some researchers demand more rigid criteria for evaluating such claims than others. In this paper I evaluate this topic in light of a discussion between Emanuel Tov and James Barr concerning the strange pairing of $\tau\alpha$ and $\gamma\acute{\omega}\rho\alpha\varsigma$ in Greek Isaiah 14:1 and whether or not it was directly influenced by the Greek Pentateuch. I seek to advance the discussion by offering a more nuanced view of this rendering by exploring the interplay between Septuagintal intertextuality and the Greek Pentateuch as ‘lexicon.’

Olegs Andrejevs, Loyola University Chicago
Should $\gamma\acute{\epsilon}\nu\epsilon\sigma\iota\varsigma$ be Transliterated? Philo Weighs In

Recent NT scholarship (e.g., Dale Allison; Chris Keith; Ulrich Luz; etc.) views the term $\gamma\acute{\epsilon}\nu\epsilon\sigma\iota\varsigma$ as so ambiguous that it should simply be transliterated rather than translated at Matthew 1:1. At least some scholars presuppose that an ancient Greek speaker would have had trouble distinguishing between the term’s possible nuances based on contextual cues alone. To test this claim, I categorize Philo of Alexandria’s 441 instances of $\gamma\acute{\epsilon}\nu\epsilon\sigma\iota\varsigma$, supplementing them with results from the LXX, Josephus, and Plutarch. It will be proposed that across 600+ examples contextual cueing consistently highlights a particular nuance in the term’s range.

Matthew T. Broeren, CSSp, Catholic Theological Union
Paul the Anti-Hero? Discerning the Image of the Apostle in the Coptic Apocalypse of Paul

The Coptic Apocalypse of Paul offers us with a fascinating look into Valentinian apocalyptic speculation. While much of contemporary research has focused on its provenance and Valentinian nature, less has been conducted on the precise character of Paul therein. Hence, in this paper, I will focus on the presentation of Paul in the Coptic Apocalypse of Paul, particularly noting how Paul subverts typical tropes associated with apocalyptic visionaries and thus becomes a Valentinian ‘anti-hero.’ This research hopes to contribute towards the broader enterprise of discerning the image and reception of Paul in Valentinianism.

B.E. Bruning, Anderson University
“As the Lord commanded Moses”: The Form of the Earliest Recoverable Text of the Manufacture of the Mishkan (Exodus 35-39)

Old Greek Exodus testifies that the earliest recoverable Hebrew text reports the manufacture of the mishkan in seven distinct sections, each framed by iterations or variations of the fulfillment formula, $\text{כִּאֲשֶׁר צִוָּה ה' אֶת מֹשֶׁה}$. (By contrast, the formula appears irregularly in the rearranged edition now extant in Hebrew.) The main purpose of the paper is to describe this organizational pattern more precisely as a textual feature, that is, as text critical data for comparison with successive editions. But it will also raise questions of literary form and compositional history for the Tabernacle Account that now runs throughout Exodus-Numbers.

Alan Bunning, Center for New Testament Restoration
Algorithmic Accidence for Greek Words

The average Greek student often becomes overwhelmed when confronted with an excessive number of declensions and conjugations to memorize. Because of this, rules are offered in some cases to help ease the task, but they are often incomplete. This presentation explores a new computer program that algorithmically declines and conjugates all word forms, while marking those that are exceptions to the rules. This was developed through an on-going iterative data-driven process, aspiring to achieve a minimalist set of rules explaining word formation. The ultimate goal is to help simplify the overall understanding of the processes involved in accidence.

Alan Bunning, Center for New Testament Restoration
Semantical and Phonetical Word Variants

Variant words in the New Testament have often been measured by character-level differences which has not been particularly helpful in understanding their significance in terms of meaning. This issue is compounded by the lack of consensus among linguists regarding the definition of what a word is. In this presentation, the implications of utilizing both semantical and phonetical definitions of word variants will be examined. Rationale is given for using the semantical word definition in particular for aligning variant readings with the early Bible translations.

Nicholas J. Campbell, Louisville, Kentucky
Sarah: A Wife Ignored (Gen 15–16)

In this paper, I explore the neglect of Sarah in Genesis 15–16. My goal is to show that the divine oracle neglects Sarah and Abraham then fails to acknowledge Sarah's emotional cues when she offers Hagar to Abraham. This neglect of Sarah and her emotional needs results in her anger at Abraham and aggression toward Hagar. I will read the text closely and analyze it from the psychological perspective of emotional cues and motives to show how Sarah's responses to Abraham and Hagar can be explained through Abraham's, and God's, neglect of her needs and desires.

Qiaoqiao Chen, Asbury Theological Seminary
Looking Forward to A Heavenly Homeland: Critical Spatial Analysis of the Pilgrimage Motif in the Epistle to the Hebrews

The pilgrimage motif in the epistle to the Hebrews has long been recognized, with the fundamental concept of anticipating a heavenly home, far apart from the earthly land. However, earlier studies have tended to disregard the present interaction between this world and the world to come. This paper seeks to refine the pilgrimage motif in Hebrews, employing critical spatial analysis to map the journey the audience is urged to embark upon. This paper concludes that the author of Hebrews envisions the audience as moving in a reciprocal flow between the heavenly and earthly spaces with ongoing cognitive and behavioral transformation.

Qiaoqiao Chen, Asbury Theological Seminary
“What Kind of House Will You Build for Me?” The Cosmic Temple and Stephen the Exemplary Wisdom-Filled Temple Craftsman (Acts 7:2–53)

Many interpretations have been offered to address the continuity and transcendence of the temple in Stephen’s speech (Acts 7:2–53). Nicholas J. Moore provides a refreshing perspective by highlighting the heavenly temple as a new cultic reality undergirding the universal mission. This paper seeks to refine Moore’s analysis by exploring the concepts of cosmic temple in the ancient Mesopotamian, Jewish, and Greco-Roman contexts. This paper concludes: 1) Heaven and earth together can constitute the cosmic temple; 2) Stephen, as an exemplary human agent filled with divine wisdom and Spirit, participated in reestablishing the entire cosmos as God’s dwelling place.

Sam Cho, Loyola University Chicago
The Cosmic Jesus and Ritual Purity in Mark 5:25-34

Scholars have either downplayed or dismissed the significance of ritual purity in the Markan narrative of the woman with the flow of blood. However, by examining Mark’s narrative devices, such as setting and characterization, I argue that Mark’s construction of Jesus and his relationship to the Levitical purity laws is clarified. Mark not only inextricably ties Jesus to ritual purity, but he also constructs Jesus as a cosmic figure through his encounters with diseased, ill, and demon-possessed bodies. From the introduction to the end, the Markan Jesus ushers in the Kingdom of God, cleansing the impurities of Satan’s kingdom.

Robert L. Craft, South Bend, Indiana
Luke’s Bivalent Story of a Compassionate Samaritan (Luke 10:25-37)

The parable of the compassionate Samaritan (Luke 10:25-37) is almost universally read as a self-evident, singular summons to the reader/hearer to act with neighborly compassion toward those he or she sees in need. This paper examines the language and rhetorical structure of the story, the similarity of its surprising conclusion to certain other Lukan parables in the travel narrative, and its place in the overall structure of the travel narrative. The results of the study suggest that Luke intended the parable to bear a bivalent message, a message to act in neighborly love, and a portrait of Jesus himself as such a compassionate neighbor to the antagonistic lawyer.

Marshall A. Cunningham, University of Chicago
Theology of Place: Considering the Role of Priests in the Return Migration Movements Under Darius I

I argue for the equal importance of both socio-economic and ideological concerns with regard to the participation of Judeo-Babylonians in a broader wave of return migration that occurred early in the reign of Darius I. Using comparative evidence from Bīt-Nērab and the Assyrian temple professionals of Uruk, I claim that priests played a critical role in the decision of some diasporic communities to migrate to their ancestral homeland. Return migration offered priests an opportunity to reinstitute “proper” worship of the gods they served while simultaneously providing them with improved political and economic opportunities in their ancestral homeland.

David N. DeJong, Hope College
Jeremiah 26-28 and the Criteria for True Prophecy in Deuteronomy 18:9-22

This paper proposes a hitherto unrecognized way in which the authors of Jer 26–28 respond to the prophet-law of Deut 18:9–22, namely, with the inclusion of temporal markers within prophetic oracles. Jeremiah’s prophecy of a seventy-year exile (25:11) contrasts sharply with Hananiah’s proclamation of one lasting two years (28:2–4). These temporal markers function as a scribal response to Deuteronomy’s verification principle, which requires readers to “wait and see” which prophet’s words are fulfilled. This serves to resolve ambiguity with respect to the criterion of fulfillment, and therefore underlines Jeremiah’s status as the authentic “prophet like Moses.”

John D. Doss, Asbury Theological Seminary & Asbury University
TAM 5.1539 and 1 Peter: Two Ancient, Cultic Household Codes

This paper is a comparative study of TAM 5.1539 and 1 Peter, especially the rule of the Philadelphian cult and the Petrine household code (2:11–3:12). Part one is a brief research history of TAM 5.1539 and its importance for NT studies. Part two identifies six areas of convergence and divergence between the Philadelphian and Petrine household codes, e.g., their common group designations, focus on ethical regulations, function of the deity, and practice of initiatory oaths. The comparative study enhances understanding of 1 Peter in its socio-religious context and raises questions on the nature of early Christianity in first-century Asia Minor.

Bryan R. Dyer, Baker Academic/Calvin University
Jesus the Exemplar in Hebrews and the Significance of His Humanity

This paper argues that 1) Jesus features in Hebrews as an exemplar of faithfulness in the face of death; and 2) the epistle’s emphasis on Jesus’ humanity is vitally important for this rhetorical device to “work” in the discourse. The list of exemplars of faith in Hebrews 11 builds to a climax in 12:1-3 by presenting Jesus as the supreme exemplar of faith. The author exhorts his audience to “look to” Jesus who “endured the cross, disregarding its shame” and “consider him who endured such hostility” (12:3). As ancient rhetoricians demonstrate, a successful use of exempla involves the author connecting the exemplar to the context of the audience. Therefore, I argue that the emphasis on Jesus’ humanity in Hebrews serves the author’s purpose of connecting him to the experience of the audience.

Nick Elder, University of Dubuque
The Word Made Binary: Advertising the Digital Bible

This presentation traces the history of advertising the digital Bible from the 1950s to today through five examples: (1) Nelson’s Complete Concordance (1957); (2) The Word Processor, the first Bible software for PCs (1982); (3) CDWord, a precursor to Logos Bible Software (1989); (4) Franklin Electronics Pocket Bible (1989); and (5) YouVersion’s Bible app, today’s most-downloaded smartphone Bible app. Each ad emphasizes the device’s “bookishness,” despite not being books. Analyzing these ads with students helps to reveal to them the complex media history of the Bible as a simultaneously bookish and non-bookish phenomenon.

Peter Feinman, Institute of History, Archaeology, and Education
The Bible Among Ruins: Sodom, Israelite History and the Hebrew Bible

“The Bible among ruins” is a phrase used by Dan Pioske in three connected books to examine the impact of physical ruins in the landscape in which Israel lived on its history and the writing Hebrew Bible. One ruin which he does not include in his study is Sodom, its location still a matter of debate. This paper will address the impact of the ruins of Sodom on the writing of the Hebrew Bible and Israelite history even though no Israelites lived among those ruins and Israel did not exist when Sodom was destroyed.

Shane Patrick Gormley, University of St. Thomas
Teaching Job with Kierkegaard: When Existential Philosophy Meets Discourse Analysis

Among the eighteen “Upbuilding Discourses” published between 1843 and 1844, Søren Kierkegaard devotes one to the resolute words of Job: “The Lord gave, and the Lord took away; blessed be the name of the Lord” (Job 1:21). With this paper I will demonstrate how Kierkegaard’s existential assumptions combine with a rich discourse analysis of Job’s story to produce an engaging model of reading for the classroom. Further, I will propose how an existential hermeneutic (generally) and Kierkegaard (in particular) have much to offer both interpretively and pedagogically as we seek to communicate the meaning and significance of biblical texts today.

Scott Harris, Knox College
Anthologies of Interest: How Historiography Shapes Second Temple Jewish Identity

Many Hellenistic Jewish authors writing during the Second Temple Period are preserved only in fragments. As if the fragmentary nature of the texts were not challenging enough, these fragments are also solely preserved in anthologies by Roman and Christian editors. In this paper, I focus on a different sort of anthology related to these fragments. Using the Fragments of Artapanus as an example, I argue that, beginning in the 19th century, the way scholars included these fragments in their own anthologies shaped perspectives on ancient Jewish identity. I will outline how different scholarly anthologies steered interpretation of Artapanus and cast the fragments as an outlier to a “normative” Hellenistic Judaism that is retrojected by the construction of these scholarly anthologies.

Paul Anthony Hartog, Faith Baptist Theological Seminary
The Interaction of Faith and Knowledge in Clement of Alexandria's Epistemology

This paper examines the interaction of faith and knowledge, as maintained by Clement of Alexandria. First, an infinite epistemological regress is not possible—one must inevitably begin with “first principles,” which are essentially incapable of demonstration. Second, an absolute suspension of belief is not feasible. Third, the deference of faith facilitates new knowledge acquisition, as when children trust the elementary instruction of their teachers. Finally, the attainment of linguistic and theological knowledge requires a trusting receptivity of oriented desire and incipient openness. The paper concludes by analyzing how Clement’s theological presuppositions modified the epistemology of the Greek philosophical tradition.

Gregory Hartzler-Miller, Independent Scholar
The Text and Syntax of Galatians 3:3-4

Rather than posing a question (“are you being perfected in the flesh?”), Paul may have used the infinitive (ἐπιτελεῖσθαι) within a syntax of encouragement: “now in the flesh, in order to be made perfect, you have suffered...” In his 2012 Duke dissertation, S. C. Carlson wrote: “Not included in the NA27 apparatus ...the infinitive ἐπιτελεῖσθαι would need compelling internal evidence to overturn the indicative ἐπιτελεῖσθε.” My paper explores the syntax of encouragement in Galatians 3:3-4 and its possible alignment with “the life I now live in the flesh” in Galatians 2:20 (cf. Phil. 1:6, 22; 3:10-15).

Jonathan J. Hatter, Loyola University Chicago
Translating Away Enslavement in Acts: Erasing the Enslaved to Exonerate the Early Church

The book of Acts has very few characters who are explicitly described as enslaved. Of those few characters, many have had their enslaved status erased by modern translators in an effort to exonerate the early believers (who appear in these texts as their enslavers). This paper will consider two cases, Rhoda and Eutychus, and will articulate why these characters should be understood as enslaved, how their enslavement has been masked in translation, and why properly identifying their status is important.

Jaeseok Heo, University of Chicago
Transjordan in the Pentateuch: Relocating Transjordan’s Centrality in the Pentateuchal Literary Tradition

The Pentateuch contains consistent narratives that highlight Transjordan as a significant setting and an inclusive space for settlement. This perspective is evident in the patriarchal stories and the exodus, culminating in the conquest of the Amorite kings and subsequent tribal settlements. Deuteronomy further amplifies the achievements in retrospection, elevating them to a commemorative status that establishes the foundation for covenant fulfillment. The stories encompassing Transjordan will be analyzed at the level of traditio-history, exploring how these elements become visible and are ultimately assimilated into the Pentateuch’s narrative arc, which rather centers on Cisjordan/Canaan as the sole promised reality.

Nathan Houstin, Loyola University Chicago
Daddy Trouble in Paradise: Joseph the Necessary Demiurgic Carpenter and Father in the Gospel of Philip

This paper stems from the observation that studies about the figure Joseph rarely mention the Gospel of Philip and vice versa. I argue that Joseph’s role in the Gospel of Philip entails demiurgic characteristics through his building of the cross, while also serving as Jesus’ biological father. Joseph is therefore a necessary figure for the creation and death of the human Jesus, ultimately allowing for the release of the spiritual Christ. This makes the Gospel of Philip a unique text in its positive depiction of Joseph who becomes an integral part of the work of the God of all things towards the return to the Gnostic pleroma.

Joshua Huver, Wheaton College
Legal Polyphony in Ruth: A Study of Legal Allusions in Dialogue

The book of Ruth's peculiar portrayal of legal practices has garnered much debate in biblical scholarship. Though Ruth assumes knowledge of and evokes technical language from various Torah laws, Ruth strangely challenges, circumvents, or combines laws. Scholars posit various explanations for these legal manipulations. However, few have considered the narrative dynamics of dialogue and point of view. In this paper, I utilize Mikhail Bakhtin's concept of narrative polyphony to examine three key dialogues in Ruth and their allusions to legal material, arguing that Ruth produces a dynamic dialogue on legal practice through tension and contrast between various point-of-views.

Michael Inyang, Asbury Theological Seminary
The Mosaic Covenant Tradition and the Origin and Function of Marriage Imagery in the Book of Hosea: A Closer Look at Deut 26:16–19 and Hos 2:16–25

This paper investigates connections between marriage imagery in the Mosaic covenant tradition and the book of Hosea with particular attention to Deut 26:16–19 and Hos 2:16–25. It argues that the covenant tradition serves as an implicit source of the marriage imagery that was later developed by Prophet Hosea. Hosea is among the later readers of some strata of the covenant tradition who viewed the covenant as marriage. Hosea drew from the Mosaic covenant tradition to develop the marriage imagery in which the question of Israel's renewal of its covenantal relationship with Yahweh takes the center stage.

Nathan C. Johnson, University of Indianapolis
Scripts and Scriptures in Popular Messianic-Prophetic Movements

Popular leaders in the late second Temple period styled themselves as messiahs and prophets, two offices from past. Yet the analogy runs deeper, as the actions and careers of these figures demonstrates. In this paper, I examine the "lived intertextuality" of these movements and their heroes. In so doing, a persistent pattern appears: messiahs modeled their careers on the upstart dynast David; prophets on the "prophet like Moses" of Deuteronomy 18. And the pattern is not a Josephan fiction, since his primarily Roman audience would be unlikely to catch the echoes of Israel's past. Instead, these popular leaders pressed into these roles as a durable means to win support and fuel the fight against their new Philistia or Egypt, Rome.

E. R. Kerkhof, Asbury Theological Seminary
Pedagogical Perks of Understanding and Applying a Discourse Pragmatics Model of Circumstantial Participles (DPCP)

At SBL '24 Fredrick Long and I presented on circumstantial participles in Matthew's Gospel. Part of our work highlighted the pedagogical benefits of using this model over adverbial. This paper expands our work with 3 goals. First, I introduce DPCP with prominent examples from throughout the NT and Matthew in order to demonstrate the ease of DPCP. Next, I present an updated pedagogical application that delineates plausible steps for utilizing DPCP in different levels of the Greek classroom. Third, I seek to highlight the importance of elements of verbal aspect, distinctions between circumstantial and adjectival participles, and information structure for translating Greek circumstantial participles.

E. R. Kerkhof, Asbury Theological Seminary

The State of the Parables of the Kingdom (POK) And a Way Forward on the Horizon

Interpreting parables appears early in the Tannaitic tradition. Medieval interpreters, Augustine, and Gregory the Great favored allegory. Jülicher (1963) rejected allegory, Kingsbury ('69) used a redaction-critical approach, and in '99, Mark Bailey published an 8-article series on interpretation and the POK. Recently, Lauri Thurén sought to crack the code of parables as early Jewish narratives appealing to reason and emotion (forthcoming, 2025). Much more work has been done, but interpretive approaches remain perplexingly diverse. I examine the state of research on POK interpretation and propose a path forward using philosophical hermeneutics, including Gadamer's fusion of horizons and Ricoeur's threefold mimesis.

Luke Kieser, Trinity Evangelical Divinity School

The Exegete of Hebrews and Theological Discourse

How theological discourse applies to God is of utmost importance to the exegete who handles language about God constantly in the text of Hebrews. Kathryn Tanner's book, *God and Creation in Christian Theology*, is especially relevant for explicating rules gathered from the history of Christian theology for understanding discourse about God's relation to creation. Examining the text of Hebrews, especially 11:3, confirms that the text of Hebrews pressures us to follow the rules of non-contrastive transcendence formulated by Tanner. Hebrews describes only God and the Son in a metaphysically superior way, placing even human agency under their providence.

Joshua T. King, Loyola University Chicago

Pride Cometh Before the Flood: The Problem with Having It Too Good

While many ancient Jewish and Christian authors counted pride among the sins that led to the Flood, a few argue that that pride was the result of the abundance that existed in the antediluvian age. The Pseudo-Clementine Homilies, for instance, contends that, because people did not experience suffering, they had no reason to appeal to God, and they began to deny Providence. A similar perspective appears in rabbinic literature. This paper explores the theme of pride as a contributing factor to the Flood in early Jewish and Christian literature and asks: Is it possible to have it too good?

Kacie Klamm, University of Notre Dame

Joseph and Technical Dream Interpretation

Joseph, a successful interpreter of dreams, insists that all interpretations "belong to God" (Gen 40:8). Thus Joseph stands against the Egyptian *ḥartummîm*, who seemingly depend on human skill instead of divine inspiration. However, a closer examination of Joseph's interpretations reveals a striking similarity to the learned techniques of the ancient Near Eastern diviner. By comparing the dream interpretations in Gen 40–41 with technical divination literature from Mesopotamia, I argue that Joseph employs the same hermeneutical techniques, namely word association and bilingualism, suggesting that Joseph should be situated amongst, not apart from, the professional diviners of the ancient Near East.

Stanislav Kondrat, Andrews University

The Temple Crux Interpretum in Rev 7:9-17 and Rev 21:22: A New Proposal

Despite established interrelations between Rev 7:9-17 and Rev 21-22, the temple worship in 7:15 creates crux interpretum. While Rev 7:15 describes the worship scene in God's temple, 21:22 states that the new earth has no temple. In this study, I overview eight proposed solutions and then offer my own based on linguistic and literary analyses. To remove tension, I argue for a grammatical, thematic, spatial, and temporal break in 7:15c, thus, separating the temple worship (7:9-15b) from the new earth references (7:15c-17). Revelation 7:9-17 then describes not one but three scenes placed in different timeframes and topographical locations.

Bodhan Kuryliak, University of Zurich

The Meaning and Uses of Oxymorons in the Book of Revelation

The book of Revelation contains various literary devices, among which the oxymoron remains one of the least studied. This article explores for the first time this figure of speech in the book of Revelation and provides a precise definition of 'oxymoron' as a unique combination of contradictory words whose literal meaning creates a paradoxical tension, enriching the textual meaning and provoking reflection. The study shows that many phrases previously called oxymorons are in fact other literary forms, such as paradoxes or metaphorical contrasts, where the tension arises from theological or symbolic opposition rather than from direct lexical contradiction.

Valentyna Kuryliak, Ukrainian Institute of Arts and Sciences, Kyiv Region, Ukraine

Cognitive-Behavioral Approaches in Teaching the Bible through Popular Culture

The use of cognitive-behavioral methods in teaching students at the theology faculty is an effective way to change negative thought patterns based on biblical lessons and values. This approach helps students consciously analyze their perceptions and behaviors, which contributes to a deeper understanding of the Bible in the context of personal transformation. By integrating elements of popular culture (such as movies, literature, and music), students can more deeply perceive biblical principles that become accessible and understandable in a modern context. These elements serve as a bridge between ancient texts and contemporary experiences, opening new perspectives for students. Cognitive-behavioral therapy effectively addresses internal conflicts, improves emotional well-being, and develops communication skills in relationships.

Lawrence Lahey, Clinton, Iowa

The Testimonium Flavianum in Greek, Latin, Arabic, and Syriac

The passage in Josephus, *Antiquities* 18.3.3 (63-64) about Jesus has naturally amassed a huge literature, both pro and con in regard to its genuineness. This presentation will review some of these issues concerning the standard Greek version. Then variants in Greek, Latin, Arabic, and Syriac that bear upon the authenticity will be examined. They include a statement by Origen, a quotation by Jerome, as well as the work by Shlomo Pines (1971) on an Arabic quotation and the recent work of Alice Whealey (2008) on the Syriac version. Time permitting, a brief treatment of the Old Slavonic version will be included.

Evan Lee, Asbury Theological Seminary

Where is D's Judiciary? The Literary Relationship of the Asylum Legislation in Numbers and Deuteronomy

This paper investigates the literary relationship between the asylum legislation in the Pentateuch. Although the relational dynamics of Exod 21:12–14, Num 35:9–34, Deut 19:1–13, and Josh 20:1–9 have long been the subject of much scholarly debate, this study exclusively examines the asylum traditions in Numbers and Deuteronomy. By investigating their stylistic and linguistic characteristics, it argues for the chronological precedence of the asylum tradition of Numbers over Deuteronomy. Additionally, it situates Deuteronomy's tradition within the broader framework of Pentateuchal legal tradition to reveal D's innovative strategies for adapting earlier priestly laws to its centralization agenda.

Mark Lester, Loyola University Chicago

Teaching the Hebrew Bible in Special Collections

In the spring of 2025, Loyola University Chicago's University Archives and Special Collections acquired a facsimile edition of MS Kennicott 1, the illuminated Spanish medieval Kennicott Bible now housed in the Bodleian Library. This presentation is a case study of how facsimiles, digital resources, and original printed books and manuscripts can be integrated into a hands-on library session as part of an Introduction to the Hebrew Bible course. It outlines planning goals, learning objectives, and assessments for the session; integrating the session into the wider course; and reflecting on what was achieved through the session.

Fredrick J. Long, Asbury Theological Seminary

Clausal Constructions and Construal across Ephesians

In this paper, I will survey every type of subordinating clause in Ephesians as part of my ongoing research on constructions, noting how such clauses construe meaning contextually and in relation to construction options. In doing this, I will first identify every "main" clause and show how subordinate clauses construe relations (verbs) circumstantially via verbal subordinate clauses and notions (nouns) via types of nominal-elaborative subordinate clauses. Regarding the latter, attention is paid to appositional constructions (which are not typically identified as clauses) to show how relative clauses "up the ante" of nominal elaboration by creating a more prominent subordinate clause.

Fredrick J. Long, Asbury Theological Seminary

Christus Princeps in Paul: The Development of the Counter-Imperial Gospel in the Pauline Epistles

Although debated whether or to what extent Paul acknowledges let alone resists Roman imperial pagan ideology, arguably in the Pauline epistles one discerns a continuous "counter-imperial" gospel. This paper tracks progressively the contours of this gospel by considering 1. Christ's crucifixion and yet subversive triumph over the rulers (1 Cor 2:6–8; 2 Cor 2:14–7:1; Col 2:15; cf. Eph 4:7–10); 2. their falseness (1 Cor 8:4–6) or even "demonization" (2 Cor 4:4; 6:15; 11:14; Eph 2:2); and 3. how God in Christ usurps their favored positions/titles—e.g., Lord, Father of fatherland, God's Son, Head, Savior, and First.

Troy W. Martin, Saint Xavier University
Circumcision and the Galatian Controversy (panel discussion)

This panel discussion will review and revisit the role of circumcision in the Galatian controversy. After describing the differing perspectives toward circumcision held by Jews and Gentiles, this panel will discuss whether the Galatians are eager to submit to circumcision and live under Jewish Law or whether they refuse circumcision and return to their paganism instead. Deciding this issue is crucial for reading Paul's Letter to the Galatians in its historical context.

Eric F. Mason, Saint Xavier University
Faith(fulness) and "Works" in Hebrews 4:10

The author of Hebrews 3:7–4:13 calls his audience to faithfulness by recounting the negative example of the Hebrew wilderness generation and then redefining the "rest" his audience should seek in terms of God's sabbath rest. Anyone who enters this rest may only do so after finishing one's "works" (4:10) as God did (Gen 2:2). Pasquale Basta has suggested that such "works" should be understood in contrast to the disobedience of the wilderness generation, such that "the emphasis is wholly on faith as a work." I explore his proposal and discuss how it fits the broader discussion in Hebrews.

Mark Minster, Rose-Hulman Institute of Technology
The Centers of Psalm 145

Like all other acrostics linked to David by superscription, Psalm 145 is imperfect, missing a verse for nun. This absence has been explained as an accident, an editor's decision or even authorial intention, as in Tractate Berakhot 4b, since what would allegedly have been written instead referred to Israel's falling. While imperfection is no failure, it opens questions about the work's structure: most importantly its chiastic center. Scholars have proposed competing models of the psalm's architecture, deducing themes from supposed stanza shapes and hidden words. For a psalm that says "all" seventeen times, undecidability may be its crowning virtue.

Nancy D. Pardee, University of Chicago Greenberg Center for Jewish Studies
The Text of the Apostolic Fathers in the Jerusalem Codex

Although the Jerusalem Codex (H54) is a manuscript of the eleventh century, it is a crucial witness to several of the texts included among the Apostolic Fathers. It is the only complete Greek text of 1 and 2 Clement, one of only two complete Greek witnesses for Barnabas, and the sole witness to what is perhaps the earliest version of the Didache. This paper will consider Lightfoot's claim that 1,2 Clement and Ignatius share similar textual revisions and whether these revisions extend to other texts of the codex and speak for their common origin.

Madison N. Pierce, Western Theological Seminary
“Relapsing, Reverting, or Rejecting? The Purpose of Hebrews and Early Judaism”

Why was Hebrews written? For some time, one prevailing view has been that the author wrote to dissuade the audience from a return to Judaism—the so-called “relapse theory”—which is based on several misconceptions about Jewish religion. But this view is based on misconceptions about the author’s relationship to early Judaism, the Law, and its rituals. This paper will survey various iterations of this view, provide alternative readings of texts cited by its proponents, and then synthesize those re-readings in service of a preliminary proposal on the purpose of Hebrews.

Ryan Quam, University of Notre Dame
Idol Meat in 1 Corinthians: Sarcasm and Inconsistency

Paul’s comments in his letter to the Corinthians about eating idol meat have often been noted for their apparent inconsistencies. This paper draws upon the recent work of Matthew Pawlak on sarcasm in Paul’s corpus and utilizes a holistic reading of 1 Cor 8-11:1 in the larger context of 1 Corinthians. I demonstrate that the apparent inconsistencies are the result of the sarcastic language that Paul is using rhetorically to reinforce the prohibition of knowingly eating idol meat while permitting the Corinthians to eat any meat they do not know to be idol meat.

Mara Reed, Asbury Theological Seminary
Bringing Back the Rhetorical Asyndeton: Asyndeton as a Prominence Feature in the Gospel of John

This paper argues for the presence of the rhetorical asyndeton in the Gospel of John. Older grammarians recognized the usage of asyndeton as an unexpected rhetorical device. The discovery of papyri with an increase of non-rhetorical asyndeta and a study of Aramaisms in John led grammarians and recent discourse analysts away from the rhetorical asyndeton; however, this was an overcorrection. By excluding forms of asyndeton most likely overproduced due to Aramaic influence, we can distill the remaining rhetorical asyndeton as prominence features utilized at key thematic points in the narrative to increase excitement and express emotion.

Clare K. Rothschild, Lewis University/Stellenbosch University
The Cheese Stands Alone: An Overlooked Reading of 1 Cor 3:1-3

Among both Greeks and Romans, cheese has a long, august history. In Homer’s *Odyssey* the Cyclops produces and stores cheese. Epicurus requests cheese which, when added to bread and water, he describes as a veritable feast. In the Bible, Jesse instructs David to bring “ten cheeses” to the commander of the camp (1 Sam 17:18). Job, in his despair, refers to his life as cheese (10:10). Yet, if dictionaries, encyclopedia entries, and commentaries can be trusted, the *communis opinio* concerning the canonical New Testament is that it contains no reference to cheese. This essay questions this widespread assumption.

Sorin Sabou, Moody Bible Institute

John 19:38-42 in Medieval Exegesis with focus on an (alleged) dialogue between Calvin and Michelangelo

Calvin's exegesis of John 19:38-42 focuses on the important point of the heroic magnanimity of Joseph and Nicodemus who placed themselves in a state of warfare with their own nation. Calvin says that we need to learn from their example about what we owe to Christ. Calvin identifies those who deny Christ by hypocrisy using the example of Nicodemus. The false Nicodemites who keep their faith concealed, deny that they are disciples of Christ. If this Nicodemite reading of John 19 has some relevance to how Michelangelo reads and sculpts the gospel event in the Florentine Pieta, then he wants to be remembered as Joseph/Nicodemus who was a secret disciple, but not anymore; now he inserts himself into the biblical narrative as one humble man who presents and protects the sacrifice of Christ to the world, as this is supported by Mary his mother, and Mary Magdalene. This hermeneutic of identification shows deep mystical devotion by becoming a character in the biblical event, constituting thus a statement of witness.

Joseph E. Samuel, Mishawaka, Indiana

What's Not to Like About the Story of Rebekah at the Well? Understanding Jubilees' Omission of the Tale

The story of Rebekah at the well in Genesis 24 is conspicuously absent from Jubilees, the lengthy Second Temple rewriting of Genesis 1 – Exodus 19 (ca. 150 BCE). Scholars have posited that Jubilees' author bypassed the tale either because he considered it mushy, or because it makes it seem as though Rebekah had a chance encounter with Abraham's servant. In my opinion, Jubilees' author bypassed the story because it did not fit within his carefully crafted portrayal of Abraham's exemplary faithfulness, which itself was part of a larger agenda to emphasize the irrevocability of God's covenant with Israel.

Elizabeth Schick, STL, Marquette University

Drawing from the Well: Interpreting the Samaritan Woman of John 4

Many interpreters believe the Samaritan woman has a morally questionable background and that her coming to belief in Jesus as Messiah involves a conversion from her "immoral" and "promiscuous" lifestyle. Others understand her merely as a symbol of all Samaritans, with the men representing their various religious cults. But some scholars have suggested that she is a widow, perhaps trapped within the levirate system. This paper argues that the woman should be interpreted firstly as an individual and a five-time widow, whose marital history, like that of Hosea, symbolically represents the religious infidelity of the Samaritan people to YHWH.

James E. Sedlacek, Israel Institute of Biblical Studies

Linguistic Options for ἐφ' ᾧ in Rom 5:12: Consideration of Preposition with Case

This paper analyzes the linguistic options for translating the phrase ἐφ' ᾧ in Rom 5:12 and indicates their theological implications. This is a much-debated passage found in debates on "original sin." This paper next uses the general usage of the dative case, along with historical uses of this fuller expression with its preposition to arrive at the meaning of "on the basis of which" for this context. Implications of this fresh understanding are next applied to idea of "original sin."

Chris Shea, Ball State University
Acts 10-12 and the Little Passion of Peter

This paper will examine the relationship between the reporting of events surrounding the death of Jesus in Luke and the reporting of events surrounding the last appearance of Peter in Acts 10-12. Many have commented on the correspondences elsewhere between the actions/speeches of Jesus (especially as laid out in Luke) and the actions/speeches of his epigoni in Acts. This paper will argue that, with so many telling examples already, we are justified in looking for “little passions” throughout all the extant Acts. The *aristeia* (a useful term from Homeric studies) of chief disciple Peter is an excellent case in point.

Julian Sieber, Loyola University Chicago
Land-Based Epistemologies Between First and Second Maccabees

Among the many well-established differences between 1 and 2 Maccabees, their representations of land are conspicuous, with seventy-five occurrences of *gē* versus ten, respectively. While scholars have rightly focused on the texts’ land politics, potential ecotheological implications are obscured by modern/Western assumptions of land as empty, homogenous space. Building on Malka Simkovich’s argument that 2 Maccabees stresses Greek concepts of time and temple, de-emphasizing Jerusalem, this essay incorporates indigenous land-based epistemologies wherein land, environment, and communal/religious identities are interconnected in sharply non-Western ways, arguing that 1/2 Maccabees represent divergent portrayals of the animacy and theological significance of ancestral Judean land.

Olivia Stewart Lester, Loyola University Chicago
The Sibylline Oracles and Constructions of Ancient Judaism

This paper will trace the history of scholarship on the early Sibylline Oracles as a way of mapping shifting attitudes towards ancient Judaism (as well as scholarly instances of anti-Judaism). We will examine early modern scholarly associations between Jewish writers and forgery within debates over sibylline authenticity; Protestant denigration of the Sibylline Oracles within “Hellenistic Judaism” in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries; scholarly recuperations of Diaspora Judaism in the mid-20th century, but also attempts to reify Judaism contra Christianity; and recent appraisals of Sibylline Oracles as instances of Jewish literary creativity.

Tom Suiter, Indiana University Bloomington
The Temple Gate as the Court of Divine Justice in Jeremiah 7 and 26

In the ancient Near East, the city gate was the place of the legal assembly where elders gathered to adjudicate cases—the unofficial courthouse of its day and a space defined by the concept of the distribution of justice. In Jeremiah, the gate is also described as the main place of prophetic activity. Thus, I will explore the intersection between prophecy and divine litigation by analyzing the setting of the Temple gate in Jeremiah’s “Temple Sermon” (chs. 7 and 28), exploring Jeremiah’s role as YHWH’s legal representative in Judah’s court, and the subsequent rhetorical effect intended for his listeners.

Chontel Syfox, University of Wisconsin-Madison
Eglon's Embodiment: Monstrosity, The Grotesque, and Abjection in Judges 3:12-30

This paper examines the focus on bodies and embodiment in the story of Eglon and Ehud. Beginning with insights from Fat Studies, it interrogates the extent to which the biases of modern interpreters concerning body size have influenced readings suggesting that the story pokes fun at Eglon's weight. Instead, the paper argues that Eglon's body, which defies the distinct categories (human/animal, man/woman, organic/inorganic, pure/impure) that organized the symbolic world of ancient Israel, may be understood as monstrous and grotesque. It signifies the social disorder and resulting abjection that arises from the kinds of admixture against which the Torah argues.

Nathaniel Szidik, OSB, Saint Meinrad Archabbey/Catholic University of America
An Analogical and Metaphorical Interpretation of the Heavenly Sanctuary in Hebrews

Hebrews describes two different temples, an earthly one and a heavenly one. How these two temples relate has been heavily debated. In a recent article, Nicholas Moore suggests interpreting the heavenly sanctuary in Second Temple literature on a spectrum. His proposal raises a question. Are analogical or metaphorical interpretations of the heavenly temple mutually exclusive? I argue that such interpretations are not mutually exclusive in Hebrews. The author of Hebrews may envision a real temple building as heaven to emphasize the difference between earthly sacrifices and Christ's heavenly sacrifice. This perspective bridges analogical and metaphorical interpretations in one text.

Nathaniel Szidik, OSB, Saint Meinrad Archabbey/Catholic University of America
The Fourth Gospel as a Call Narrative for Today's Real Reader

The Fourth Gospel breaks the boundary of the page, calling us to believe in Jesus. Exploring the relationship between the implied reader in the text and today's reader of the text, we might ask how this Gospel calls us to believe. Although this Gospel does not rely on Habel's narrow form of an Old Testament call narrative, the functions of this form remain throughout the entire Gospel, confronting us with the divine, commissioning us to believe, and reassuring us of this call with multiple signs. As a result, the functions of this call to believe emphasize the Gospel's unified purpose.

David Tingley, Asbury Theological Seminary
Apathy and Irony through "Speech-in-Character" (prosopopeia): Luke's use of Gamaliel in Acts 5:34-39

Despite the impulse of Christian interpreters to view Gamaliel as an intentional ally in his deliberative speech to the Sanhedrin in Acts 5:34-39, this paper uses the literary and rhetorical concepts of dramatic irony and speech-in-character (*prosopopeia*) to argue that Gamaliel is presented as an apathetic and ironic supporter of the Jesus movement in Acts. While advocating for a more reasonable approach to the believers than the rest of the angry council is ready to carry out, Gamaliel ultimately misses the point of the apostles' proclamation of the gospel in Acts 5:29-32.

David Tingley, Asbury Theological Seminary
Nautical Imagery as a Major Metaphor in the Deliberative Argument of Hebrews

Using Michael W. Martin and Jason A. Whitlark's ancient rhetorical outline of Hebrews (*Inventing Hebrews: Design and Purpose in Ancient Rhetoric*, 2018) as a framework, this paper identifies nautical imagery in Hebrews at key portions of its deliberative argument. This suggests that a sailing metaphor, located at the beginning (2:1), middle (6:19–20), and end (13:9) of the sermon, is crucial to its persuasive strategy. Whatever the provenance and sociocultural situation of the original audience of Hebrews may have been, the author of Hebrews expected such nautical imagery to effectively encourage perseverance in new covenant faithfulness.

Amy Whisenand Krall, Hope College
The Challenge of Romans 15: Unison Doxology & Diverse Particularity

At the end of Romans, Paul mentions music-making—specifically singing—by citing Psalm 18:49 (17:50 LXX) in Rom 15:9. This reference to music-making reveals the doxological telos of a community which Paul admonishes to “welcome one another” (Rom 15:7) in light of divisions between “Strong” and “Weak” (Rom 14-15). Paul stresses that his audience's purpose is to worship God together—without erasure of particularity. Attention to this psalmic reference in 15:9, together with a possible musical reference in 15:6, allows the audience to hear an affirmation of particularity rather than a move toward conformity.

Kenton F. Williams, Moody Bible Institute
Judges 13-16: Samson as Failed Archetypal King

The narrative of Samson (Judg 13-16) occupies a prominent place within the book of Judges. Settled between the failed kingship of Abimelech in Judges 9, and several narratives which highlighted the absence of kingship within Israel at the time (Judg 17:6, 18:1, 21:25), it seems to foreshadow the possibility of Samson as an ideal king. As a possessor of extraordinary strength, a lion-killer, and dispenser of wisdom, Samson would parallel well the ideology of kingship within the broader ancient Near East. This paper examines Samson in light of these ideals, along with his ultimate failure, within the broader narrative of the book of Judges.

Megan Wines, Loyola University Chicago
One Like a Son of Man: The Shifting Masculinity of Apocalyptic Messiahs

From the appearance of the Son of Man in Daniel through the shifting interpretation of the Messiah as Jesus Christ in light of the early Christian movement, the Messiah is a distinctive element of many apocalypses' eschatological vision. This chapter will incorporate masculinity and performance lenses as it looks at the function of the Messiah in apocalypses. It will read the Messiah specifically as a male figure, tracing the shift from the expectation of an all-powerful militant messiah to apocalypses that have to grapple with a broken messiah in the wake of the life and death of Jesus.

NOTES

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Olivia Stewart Lester	D. Dale Walker
Fredrik Long	Archie T. Wright
Edmondo Lupieri	
Troy W. Martin	

2026 meeting information will be posted when available at the CSBR website (<https://chicagosbr.org/midwest-biblical-studies-regional-meeting/>).

CAMPUS INFORMATION

Campus Security: Dial 5000 from any campus phone or 574-284-5000

Free Wi-Fi: Select the network "Guest." No password is needed. Eduroam is also available.

Parking: Please use the Science Parking Lot (immediately adjacent to Spes Unica).

SELECTED AREA RESTAURANTS

All addresses are South Bend

ESC = Eddy Street Commons; HGI = Hilton Garden Inn South Bend)

Arby's
52920 St Rte 933
574-277-3300

Ichiban Golden Dragon
1733 South Bend
574-272-8888

Perkins
423 St Rte 933
574-272-0655

Barbici Italian Street
Food (ESC)
1233 N. Eddy Street
574-251-1330

Jimmy John's
52931 St Rte 933
574-855-1470

Rocco's Pizza
537 N. St. Louis
574-233-2464

Bistro 933 (HGI)
53995 St Rte 933
574-323-2471

King Gyros
501 St Rte 933
574-272-0608

Starbucks
52991 St Rte 933
574-271-1337

Bob Evans
204 St Rte 933
574-272-6737

Little Caesars Pizza
52931 St Rte 933
574-855-4009

Steak and Shake
52965 St Rte 933
574-271-9412

Brother's (ESC)
1234 N. Eddy #125
574-287-2767

McCalister's (ESC)
1130 E Angela #102
574-232-8560

Subway
52803 St Rte 933
574-277-1024

Café at the Overlook
54721 Burdette St.
574-271-3727

O'Rourke's Public
House (ESC)
1044 E. Angela #103
574-251-0355

Taco Bell
231 St Rte 933
574-272-2387

Fazoli's
52770 St Rte 933
574-277-4008

Papa John's Pizza
1827 South Bend
574-271-1177

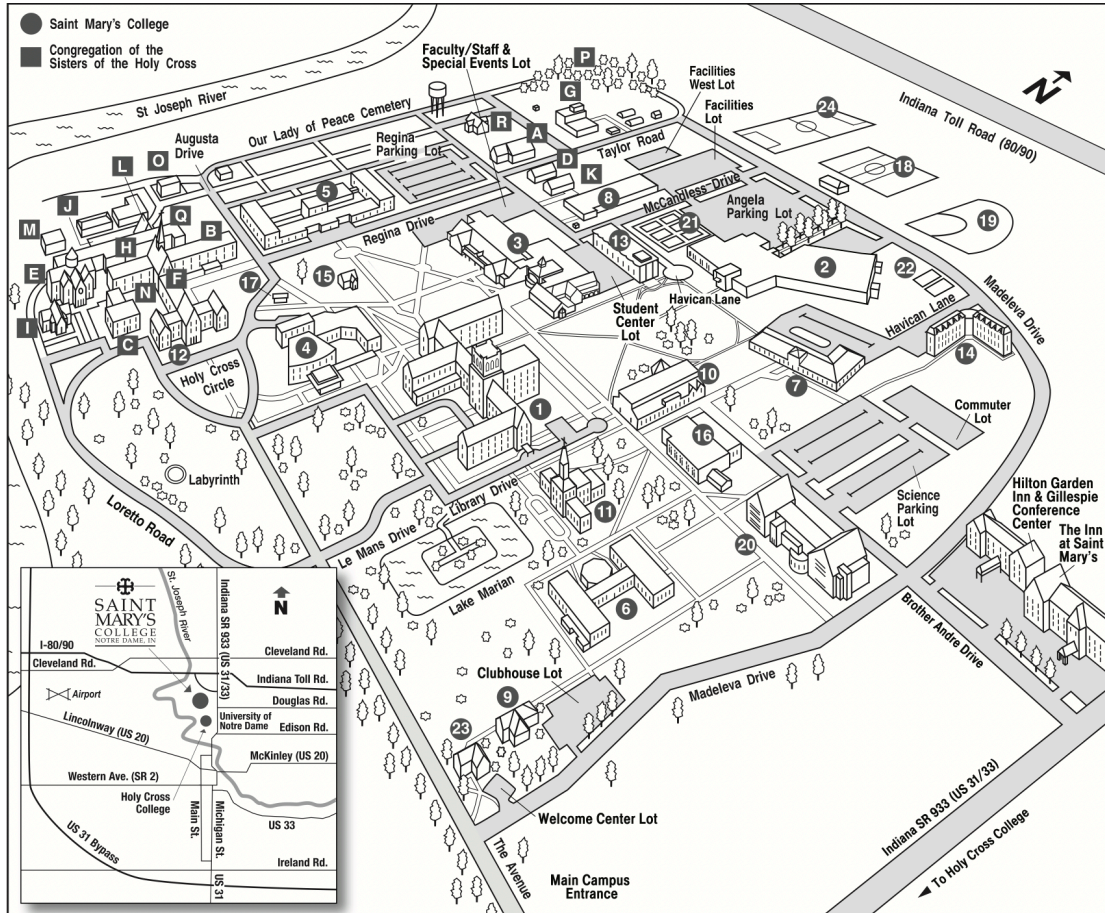
Taphouse on the Edge
1803 South Bend
574-247-9293

Five Guys (ESC)
1233 N. Eddy Street
574-234-1800

Wendy's
320 St Rte 933
574-271-0166

Yats (ESC)
103 N. Eddy Street
574-855-120

St. Mary's College Campus Map



Note: Spes Unica is building 20 on this map (lower right). The Science Parking Lot is adjacent to it.