

2026 MIDWEST REGIONAL MEETING FOR BIBLICAL STUDIES

March 13–15, 2026

Saint Mary's College, Notre Dame (South Bend), Indiana

We are pleased to invite you to participate in the 2026 Midwest Regional Meeting for Biblical Studies. This conference is a cooperative initiative of the Chicago Society of Biblical Research (CSBR), the Catholic Biblical Association (CBA), and the Michigan Center for Early Christian Studies (MCECS). The meeting is scheduled for **Friday–Sunday, March 13–15, 2026**, at Saint Mary's College in Notre Dame (South Bend), Indiana. The Student Religious Studies Conference (SRSC) will occur in conjunction with the Midwest Regional Meeting on Friday, March 13. No society memberships are required to participate in this meeting.

See below for detailed descriptions of the conference sections accepting paper proposals. **All paper proposals must be submitted by January 9, 2026, through the online form at the [proposal submission link](#).**

The form system will generate an automated e-mail confirmation message when the proposal is submitted. Please contact Jeffrey Stackert (stackert@uchicago.edu) if you submit a proposal but do not receive a confirmation message.

Proposals include the paper title and a 100-word paragraph abstract. Abstracts will be printed in the conference program and for that reason may not exceed 100 words. **Papers that are accepted for the program will be scheduled in thirty-minute slots, ideally with twenty minutes for presentation and ten minutes for discussion.**

Email addresses for the section chairs are included with the section descriptions below. Please contact the appropriate chair if you have *questions* about the section and its program, but you should **submit all proposals through the online link**. Please contact the program coordinator if you are uncertain about the best section to which to submit your proposal.

A person may submit one proposal to present one paper, and the same paper may not be submitted to multiple sections. Usually, graduate students who present at the Midwest Regional Meeting should be enrolled in doctoral programs. Other students should see the information below about the Student Religious Studies Conference (SRSC). Student papers that cannot be included in the Midwest Regional Meeting program will be referred to the SRSC.

As noted above, all proposals for the Midwest Regional Meeting must be submitted by January 9, 2026. Program decisions will be communicated on or about February 1, 2026. Presenters must be registered for the Midwest Regional Meeting by February 15, 2026.

If you are a professor, please encourage your doctoral students to participate in the Midwest Regional Meeting. Please also encourage your students who are undergraduates through pre-dissertation doctoral students to participate in the **Student Religious Studies Conference (SRSC)** on Friday, March 13, 2026. The SRSC proposal deadline (with full paper) is February 7, 2026. Proposals may be submitted at the [SRSC proposal submission link](#).

The meeting has arranged for blocks of hotel rooms at the Hilton Garden Inn South Bend and the Inn at Saint Mary's, both of which are adjacent to the Saint Mary's College campus. The conference rate is available until **February 11, 2026**, and reservations must be placed by phone (Hilton Garden Inn:

574-232-7700; Inn at Saint Mary's: 574-232-4000). Please mention the "Midwest Regional Meeting for Biblical Studies." There are many additional hotel options available within a fifteen-minute drive of St. Mary's. For maps and transportation information, click <https://www.saintmarys.edu/admission-aid/visit-campus/maps-directions>.

Registration for the meeting is available online through Zeffy at the [registration link](#). Please note that any donation added during the registration process goes to Zeffy, not to the Midwest Regional Meeting, and is completely optional. Zeffy does not charge the Midwest Regional Meeting any fees of any sort for the registration module, and their own funding comes through donations. **Regular registration is available through February 15, 2026, and all presenters are required to be registered by this date.** Regular registration is \$60, retiree registration is \$30, student registration is \$25, and SRSC-only registration is \$15. Rates for spouse/partner attendees are also available in the registration process. We strongly encourage everyone to utilize the online registration option; a \$25 fee will be added for late/on-site registrations.

Some Highlights for the 2026 Meeting

Friday Evening Midwest Regional Spotlight

This session features a presentation and question-and-answer period with a prominent scholar from our region. Our speaker this year is **Jeremy M. Hutton**, Professor of Classical Hebrew Language and Biblical Literature at the University of Wisconsin-Madison and Editor-in-Chief of the leading journal *Vetus Testamentum*.

Sunday Morning Plenary Book Panel Session

The book panel will focus on the new volume, *Constructing Femininity in the Book of Jubilees* (Brill, 2025), by **Chontel Syfox**. Chontel Syfox is Assistant Professor in the Department of Classical and Ancient Near Eastern Studies at the University of Wisconsin–Madison.

Graduate Student Paper Awards

Graduate students who submit a proposal for the Midwest Regional Meeting are invited also to submit their paper for consideration for the Graduate Student Paper Award, which is sponsored by the Michigan Center for Early Christian Studies. Two prizes will be awarded—one for Hebrew Bible/Early Judaism and one for New Testament/Early Christianity. Winners will be recognized at the Friday evening regional spotlight session. **Papers in the form they are to be presented should be submitted by email to Jeffrey Stackert (stackert@uchicago.edu) no later than February 15, 2026.**

The Midwest Regional Meeting and the Student Religious Studies Conference offer wonderful opportunities to meet new colleagues, see old friends, try out research ideas, and enjoy a lively exchange in a supportive environment. All students, professors, and others interested in biblical studies and the study of the ancient world are welcome. Please feel free to contact us at the e-mail address below with any questions.

Sincerely,

Mark Lester & Jeffrey Stackert
Program Co-coordinators, Midwest Regional Meeting for Biblical Studies
mlester2011@gmail.com
stackert@uchicago.edu

Details for both programs are available at the Chicago Society of Biblical Research website (<https://chicagosbr.org>) and the Catholic Biblical Association website (<https://www.catholicbiblical.org>). For SRSC questions, please contact the SRSC coordinator, Lauren O'Connell (loconnell1@luc.edu).

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Midwest Regional Meeting Section Descriptions

APOCALYPTIC LITERATURE: This section invites presentations on Jewish and Christian apocalypses and related literature, both canonical and non-canonical, from the “dawn of Apocalyptic” through the early Christian church. We also encourage papers that deal with later appropriations of ancient texts (sort of “Reception History” of apocalyptic themes), including contemporary re-use of ancient Apocalyptic imagery and ideas. For questions, please contact Edmondo Lupieri (elupier@luc.edu), with “MWRMBS” as subject.

BIBLICAL GREEK LANGUAGE AND LINGUISTICS: Advances in linguistics continue to have relevance and implications for Biblical Greek studies. Likewise, given that biblical scholars work with ancient texts and languages, they are uniquely situated to offer insights to those in the field of linguistics and language study. As such, this session highlights studies focused on the linguistic dimensions and/or language-based features of Biblical Greek texts. Topics related to phonology, morphology, syntax, discourse, and pragmatics, among related topics, are welcome for submission. Please direct questions to Fredrick Long (fredrick.long@asburyseminary.edu) and/or James Sedlacek (sedlacekj@hotmail.com).

EARLY CHRISTIAN GOSPELS: The aim of this section is: (1) to encourage scholarly investigation of the NT and extra-canonical gospels; (2) to support scholars by providing an annual forum for critical discussion of their work; and (3) to promote discussion of a wide range of gospel topics for the benefit of all. One session in 2026 will discuss *Gospel Media* by Nicholas Elder (Eerdmans, 2024); respondents will be invited. We invite proposals for all other sessions. If you have any questions or concerns, please do not hesitate to contact D. Dale Walker (d.dale.walker@gmail.com) or Clare K. Rothschild (ckrothschild@gmail.com).

EARLY CHRISTIANITY: ACTS, APOSTOLIC FATHERS, AND PATRISTICS

The scope of this section includes the canonical Acts of the Apostles and the extra-canonical texts from the Apostolic Fathers through the third century CE. The session(s) this year will be general, so all topics will be considered. Please direct any questions to both co-chairs, Nancy Pardee (npardee@uchicago.edu) and Chris Shea (cshea@bsu.edu).

The Early Christianity: Acts, the Apostolic Fathers, and Patristics section and the Hebrews and Catholic Epistles section will also host a joint session with invited speakers on the recent book, *Within Judaism? Interpretive Trajectories in Judaism, Christianity, and Islam from the First to the Twenty-First Century* (Bloomsbury, 2023). Details will be forthcoming.

HEBREW BIBLE: This section welcomes individual paper proposals on any facet of the Hebrew Bible, including its composition, cultural context, language, genres, thematics, and history of interpretation. In addition, this year we are accepting proposals for themed panels. Panel proposals consist of two or three coordinated paper proposals that fit the theme of the panel. To propose a panel, please submit separate abstracts for each paper and email the section chairs with a short (2-4

sentence) description of the panel and list of included paper titles. For any inquiries, please contact Mark Lester (mlester2011@gmail.com) or Jeffrey Stackert (stackert@uchicago.edu).

HEBREWS AND CATHOLIC EPISTLES: The unit invites proposals on any topics related to Hebrews and the Catholic Epistles. Please contact Eric F. Mason (ericfmason@gmail.com) with any questions.

The Early Christianity: Acts, the Apostolic Fathers, and Patristics section and the Hebrews and Catholic Epistles section will also host a joint session with invited speakers on the recent book, *Within Judaism? Interpretive Trajectories in Judaism, Christianity, and Islam from the First to the Twenty-First Century* (Bloomsbury, 2023). Details will be forthcoming.

PAULINE LITERATURE: Proposals on any topic dealing with Paul or the Pauline letter corpus are welcome. For more information, please contact P. Richard Choi (choir@andrews.edu), Amy Krall (krall@hope.edu), Troy W. Martin (martin@sxu.edu), or Brian Yong Lee (blee18@luc.edu).

SECOND TEMPLE JUDAISM: This section seeks to explore the linguistic, poetic, intellectual, ritual, theological, and cultural breadth of Jewish literature and material culture during the Second Temple period. We invite papers for several open sessions on Jewish texts and material culture written and produced between the postexilic era and the early Roman imperial period. The section welcomes proposals that examine Jewish literature written in Hebrew and Aramaic, inclusive of postexilic biblical texts and the Dead Sea Scrolls, as well as Jewish thinkers writing in Greek. We also invite studies of material culture relevant for understanding Second Temple Judaism. For inquiries, please email Olivia Stewart Lester (ostewartlester@luc.edu) or Scott Harris (saharris@knox.edu).

On Sunday, March 15, we will host a Second Temple Judaism Seminar, with a pre-circulated paper, followed by a formal response and open discussion. All are welcome! For more information, please write to Scott Harris (saharris@knox.edu) or Olivia Stewart Lester (ostewartlester@luc.edu).

TEACHING THE BIBLE CREATIVELY: Teaching the Bible in an ever-changing educational landscape presents an on-going challenge, especially with the rise of AI. Creating engaging course content, active learning materials, and assignments that require creative writing is one important way to connect the Bible with the lives of our students and discourage the use of AI to generate coursework. We will accept papers with any topic. The goal of the section is to create shareable, practical ideas that can be adapted to many different types of classrooms and classroom dynamics. Please contact Lauren O'Connell (loconnell1@luc.edu) with any questions.