

**Minutes of the Members' Meeting of
The Society for the Study of Christian Spirituality**

Saturday, November 19, 2016, 9:00-11:30 a.m.

Convention Center-217 A (2nd Level – West)

San Antonio, Texas

Please send corrections to Anita Houck, Secretary, at ahouck@saintmarys.edu.

1. Introduction of new President: (Claire Wolfeich, President). Claire introduced Pieter G.R. de Villiers with great confidence and appreciation.
2. Approval of the Minutes of 2015 Meeting (Anita Houck, Secretary/Treasurer). Minutes were approved pending any corrections sent to Anita in the coming days.
3. Welcome of new members and international members (Pieter G.R. de Villiers). Several new members, as well as international members new to the AAR, introduced themselves and were welcomed by those in attendance.
4. Report on Friday events: Claire reported that the Friday afternoon sessions at the Oblate School of Theology were very successful. She warmly thanked Renata Furst and Barbara Quinn for their work planning the event. In the first session, "Community Organizing and the Spirituality of Undocumented Migrants in the Context of San Antonio, Texas," Jorge Montiel of C.O.P.S. Metro Alliance, with two of his colleagues who also immigrated to the U.S., presented and reflected on their stories. The second session, "The Spirituality of Hispanic Immigrants from a National Perspective," included Catholic and Protestant scholars: Socorro Castañeda-Liles, Oswald John Nira, and Ricardo L. Franco. Claire thanked Oblate and John Markey for their hospitality, including a beautiful reception, and Margaret Benefiel for chairing the sessions.
5. Report of the Editor of *Spiritus* (Steven Chase, Editor)
 - a. Print/electronic versions of *Spiritus*. New membership forms will be available on 7 December; these will include a print copy of the journal as a default, but members will be able to opt for only an electronic copy if they prefer. Steven thanked Pieter and others who worked with JHUP to offer electronic-only subscriptions for members in non-OECD (Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development) countries. The new issue of *Spiritus* has just been mailed.
 - b. Supplemental issues of *Spiritus*. For the first time, the journal will issue a supplement, without extra charge to members; other supplementary issues will be offered in the future. The issue, on Christian spirituality in global context, will be published in about two months. Steven asked members to keep an eye out for papers that seem appropriate for the journal and to send him the presenter's name and institution and the paper title. He also encouraged members to let Book Editor Timothy Robinson know of books that should be reviewed in the journal.
 - c. Pieter thanked Steven for all his work on the journal and introduced August Higgins, assistant for the journal. Pieter asked that members disseminate the news that we now offer the new non-OECD option: there's great interest in our work, and--especially with the strong U.S. dollar--this new rate should bring the journal within reach of many more individuals.
6. Report of the Nominations Committee: Pieter invited members to review the biographies of the candidates in the agenda. The committee came to these proposals after a long process of reflection and input from the Board.
 - a. The Committee proposed the following candidates, who were elected as a slate with no opposition:
 - i) Vice President/President-elect: Bernadette Flanagan (2016-2017)
 - ii) Two members to serve three-year terms as At-large Directors:
 - (1) Douglas S. Hardy (2016-2019)
 - (2) C. Vanessa White (2016-2019)
 - iii) Two members to serve on the Nominations Committee:

- (1) Thom Parrot-Sheffer (2016-2018, completing the term of Bernadette Flanagan), *in absentia*
- (2) Colleen Carpenter (2016-2019).

- b. Pieter thanked Claire Wolfeich, completing her term as President and assuming the position of Past President; Lisa Dahill, completing her term as Past President; Glen Scorgie and Barbara Quinn, completing their terms as At-large Directors; and Thomas McElligott, completing his term on the Nominations Committee. Continuing At-large Directors are Francis McAloon *in absentia* (Tom McElligott stood in for him as Liaison Member at the Editorial Board meeting) and Elizabeth Drescher (2014-2017); Lauren Winner and Gilberto Cavazos-González, both *in absentia* (2015-2018); and Glenn Young (calendar 2014-2017) and Margaret Benefiel (calendar 2015-2018), continuing as Co-Chairs of the AAR Christian Spirituality Group.
7. Report of the Secretary/Treasurer (Anita Houck). Referring to the Treasurer's report later in the agenda, Anita reported that the Society continues to be in solid financial shape. She thanked members for approving the 2011 dues increase, which has allowed us to offer the kind of AAR programming we've offered for several years, and for supporting the Society through their charitable contributions, which were especially generous this year. She noted with concern the continuing trend of declining membership in the U.S. but also increasing membership elsewhere. She encouraged non-OECD members to contact her if they have any difficulties subscribing, as the software is still being improved. She invited all members this year to consider giving the gift of *Spiritus*. JHUP will be glad to send gift acknowledgments, and anyone who would like to give a gift membership can contact Anita to start the process. Pieter thanked Anita.
8. Report of the Christian Spirituality Group (Glenn Young and Margaret Benefiel): Glenn noted our three sessions this year, including one honoring Sandra Schneiders, who will be the respondent. When it comes to annual programming, the Group continues to have an abundance of riches: only a small percentage of the fifty-plus submissions can be accepted each year. Average attendance at sessions is about 100, another very strong number. [At the Board meeting, Glenn noted that the group also submitted its five-year report this year, which entails a significant amount of work; Glenn and Margaret deserve thanks and congratulations.]
9. Planning for the 2017 AAR/SBL meeting in Boston: Margaret noted that the Society will be celebrating its 25th Anniversary.
 - a. Suggestions of possible topics: Margaret invited suggestions, noting that the members' meeting usually provides the strongest suggestions; the conversation will continue at the Board meeting. She invited further suggestions through email to her or Glenn, though the turn-around for the Call is short and suggestions should come in soon.
 - i) Voices out of silence: Based on Claire's Presidential address, the spirituality of evoking voice; pilgrimage as a metaphor for evoking speech, particularly of the silenced; voices of resistance (Lisa Dahill)
 - ii) 500th anniversary of the Reformation: spiritualities of the reformations (Philip Sheldrake)
 - iii) spiritualities of resistance and resilience; spirituality and economics, connecting to Claire's discussion of women negotiating lives as mothers and activists and the panel Friday (Elizabeth Drescher)
 - iv) Socorro Castañeda-Liles's paper on Friday on spirituality and lived religion as opposed to just texts (Michael O'Sullivan)
 - v) Panel examining shifts in the field of spirituality, perhaps over more than 25 years (Mary Frohlich)
 - vi) Thinking of the panel last night, insight, action and critical reflection—how they react and intersect (Vanessa White)
 - vii) Based on Claire's address, methodologies to enable self-implicating reflection and the ongoing question of the range of methodologies we employ for our research (Bernadette Flanagan)
 - b. Suggestions of possible experiential sessions for 2017 in Boston (Pieter)
 - i) Hymnody, as with the shape-note singing session in a previous convention in Boston (Wendy Wright)

- ii) Spirituality and acts of response to contemporary social situations, as with The Faith That Does Justice in San Diego, which puts people who are economically secure with those who are economically marginalized, using Catholic social teaching; this is just beginning in Boston (Barb Quinn)
 - iii) As with the canyon walk in San Diego, a walking trip of Boston, perhaps with a local guide (Doug Hardy); Vanessa echoed the recommendation of a walk, which could attend to art and the African-American Museum.
10. Report of the International Relations Committee (IRC) (Pieter and Claire)
- a. New dues structure for non-OECD countries: Members now pay \$15 for an electronic subscription and full membership. Pieter noted that there can be difficulties on registering.
 - b. New membership of the Committee: The IRC is discussing the need to include the many communities and locations that are still not represented in our Society. Pieter invited suggestions of names of people active in the discipline who might be interested in promoting the Society.
 - c. Networking opportunities: This is the main work of the IRC: to bring together institutions all over the world to share information through the SSCS. Ideally, we will be able to reduce duplication; connect those working in isolation; and publicize activities (courses, exchange programs), publications and dissertations, and the availability of experts in the field who could, for instance, serve as co-supervisors for graduate work. He invited those available to co-supervise to contact him. For instance, the 2017 conference in Zürich will include a session for graduate students in which they can hear from experts about cutting-edge research in the field.
 - d. The IRC's vision is open and broad, and still evolving; it was created just a year ago. So anything that can help connect people, while also promoting the activities of the Society, is welcome. Discussion will continue at the IRC meeting this afternoon at 1:30 and again at the Board meeting.
 - e. Michael O'Sullivan added that the supplementary issue grew out of the work of the IRC and suggested the blog on our website could be used for some of these purposes. Bernadette Flanagan noted that the SSCS Facebook page provides another opportunity to bring to a wider audience information about the internationalization that's happening; anyone can post once they become a member of the Facebook group. Margaret encouraged members to post; many non-members are active on the page, and posts of photos and comments about our sessions, for instance, could help raise awareness of our work. Elizabeth Drescher live-tweeted Friday's program and people did respond. It would be easy to connect the Facebook page to twitter; this could open up further conversations.
11. Report of the Emerging Scholars (George Faithful and Shannon McAllister, Co-Coordinators)
- a. George invited ES members to lunch at the beginning of Presidential address. The Group attempts to create community and to support people between graduate school and tenure. Unlike the SSCS Facebook page (which Carter Haynes said has 2,600 members), SSCS Emerging Scholars has a private Facebook page; established scholars are encouraged to join to help answer questions. Shannon reported the Group is gathering data on professors who might be willing to mentor dissertations in spirituality in various ways, in part as a way to introduce students to the SSCS. They have 600 names to reach out to and are about a third of the way to what they'd like to do. Shannon circulated a sign-up sheet for established scholars who might be willing to consider helping, as well as for any emerging scholars who would like to join the contact list. Pieter thanked Shannon and George for their wonderful work.
12. Report of items under consideration by the Board of Directors (Pieter)
- a. Invitation to organize regional SSCS meetings: In past Board meetings, the Board has expressed its support for regional gatherings, following the model of the College Theology Society. If anyone would like to take initiative to set up a local meeting, they should notify the Executive Committee (Pieter, Anita, and Bernadette); some financial support is available from the Society.
 - b. Future SSCS conferences

- i) Biennial Meeting in Kappel, Switzerland, June, 2017: The Call for Papers is open till 1 December. Pieter noted that the first meeting was at Notre Dame, Indiana in 2013; the second in 2015 in Johannesburg; and the third will be held in Kappel, outside Zürich. These meetings provide opportunities to connect with people who may not be present at our November meetings in the U.S. The initial response to the Call has been good, but we can accommodate more papers. Rebecca Giselbrecht is organizing a wonderful program that includes performances. She may also be able to secure some funding to provide financial support for younger scholars.
 - ii) Future meetings: Those interested in hosting a meeting should contact Pieter.
 - c. Possible income-linked dues structure: We now have two tiers of membership (for OECD and non-OECD countries), but the Board will consider a income-based model, like that used by the AAR and SBL
 - d. 25th anniversary of the Society: Pieter invited suggestions.
 - e. Founders' Circle Prize: This award, which recognizes the best essay submitted to the competition by a member of the Emerging Scholars, will be offered next year.
13. Suggestions of items for further discussion by the Board of Directors: None were offered.
14. Thanks: Pieter thanked everyone for attending and for their hard work. He said that Claire and Anita had been wonderful partners on the Executive Committee and he looked forward to working with Bernadette and the other new members of the Board.
15. Adjournment: The meeting adjourned just after 11:30.

Attendance: Friday events: 50 first session, 56 second session

Presidential address: 61

Respectfully submitted,

Anita Houck, Secretary/Treasurer

Nominee Biographies

For Vice President/President-Elect: **Bernadette Flanagan** PBVM (Ph.D. Milltown Institute, Dublin, IRELAND) has been Associate Professor of Spirituality and Director of Research at All Hallows College (Dublin City University). Before moving to All Hallows in 2008, she established MA and PhD programmes in Applied Spirituality in Milltown Institute, while also inaugurating a Department of Spirituality. Her publications include *Embracing Solitude: Women and New Monasticism* (Oregon: Wipf & Stock, 2013); "Quaestio Divina: Research as Spiritual Practice." *The Way: A Review of Christian Spirituality Published by British Jesuits* 53, no.4 (Oct 2014) 126 -136; "Applied Spirituality: Reflections of an Educator." *Spiritus: A Journal of Christian Spirituality* 11, no. 1. 38 – 50; "Women and Spirituality" In *The Bloomsbury Guide to Christian Spirituality*, eds. R. Woods & P. Tyler. London: Bloomsbury, 2012. 329 – 337; *Spiritual Capital: Spirituality in Practice in Christian Perspective*. England/USA: Ashgate, 2012 (Co-edited with Michael O'Sullivan SJ); "Christian Spirituality and the Mystical Tradition." In *Spirituality Across Disciplines*, ed. M. de Souza. Dodrecht: Springer, 2015 (forthcoming). She has addressed national and international conferences on various contemporary spirituality issues in the UK; USA; Switzerland; Belgium; Hungary; South Africa; Zambia and Czech Republic. In addition to extensive involvement in doctoral supervision and the development of research methodologies for studying spirituality, she has been taking organisational initiative to advance the academic study of spirituality in Europe. She has served the SSCS on the Board of Directors and the Nominations Committee.

For At-Large Positions on the Board of Directors (2016-2019):

Douglas S. Hardy (Ph.D., Boston University, 2000), Professor of Spiritual Formation at Nazarene Theological Seminary. Dr. Hardy is an ordained minister in the Church of the Nazarene where he served as a pastor prior to university and seminary teaching. He is a practicing spiritual director, with research interests in Wesleyan spirituality, spiritual formation, and the psychology of religion. Dr. Hardy has written articles and reviews for the *International Journal for the Psychology of Religion*, *Journal of Psychology and Theology*, *Journal of Psychology*

and *Christianity, Cross Currents, Wesleyan Theological Journal, Journal of Spiritual Formation and Soul Care, and Spiritus*, chapters in *Spiritual Formation, Counseling, and Psychotherapy* (Nova Science, 2003), *The Pastor's Guide to Spiritual Formation* (Beacon Hill, 2005), *Missio Dei* (Beacon Hill, 2011), and *Relational Theology* (Wipf & Stock, 2012); and two brief books, *Christian Disciplines: Creating Time & Space for God* (Beacon Hill, 2013) and *Prayer: Sharing Intimate Space with God*. (co-authored with Dean Blevins, Beacon Hill, 2015). He also serves as a member of the Editorial Review Panel for *Presence: An International Journal of Spiritual Direction*.

C. Vanessa White (D.Min, M.T.S., Catholic Theological Union, further postgraduate studies at Loyola University in Chicago and Xavier University of Louisiana) Assistant Professor of Spirituality and Ministry at Catholic Theological Union at Chicago (2008 - 2016), Program Director of the Master of Arts in Pastoral Studies and Master of Arts in Specialized Ministries at CTU (August 2016 - present) Director of the Augustus Tolton Pastoral Ministry Program (1998 - 2016). She also is a member of the faculty of Xavier University of Louisiana's Institute for Black Catholic Studies. Dr. White is a Secular Franciscan whose teaching experience focuses on practical applications of spirituality and ministry. Her research and special interests include spiritual formation, leadership development, intersections of health and spirituality, Black Spirituality and religious experience in context. She has published articles in *New Theology Review, The Bible Today, Horizons* as well as contributions to *U.S. Catholic, America, Dailytheology.org* and *CNN.org*.

For the Nominations Committee:

Colleen Mary Carpenter (2016-2019) (Ph.D., University of Chicago Divinity School, 2001) is the Sister Mona Riley Endowed Chair of the Humanities and Associate Professor of Theology at St. Catherine University in St. Paul, MN. Dr. Carpenter's work focuses on feminist engagement with the Roman Catholic theological tradition, with special attention to the role of the imagination in religious experience. Her current research is in eco-spirituality. She was chair of the 2015 College Theology Society annual conference and editor of its annual volume, *An Unexpected Wilderness: Christian Faith and the Earth*. She is author of *Redeeming the Story: Women, Suffering, and Christ* (2004) and has contributed essays to *The Way* (2009), *CrossCurrents* (2008), and several collections of eco-theology, including *Turning to the Heavens and the Earth: Theological Reflections on a Cosmological Conversion: Essays in Honor of Elizabeth Johnson* (2016).

Thom Parrott-Sheffer (2016-2018) (DMin., Church Divinity School of the Pacific, 2004), Presently pastor at Plainfield Congregational Church, UCC and a Spiritual Director. Dr. Parrott-Sheffer is an ordained minister in the United Church of Christ for the past 36 years, and a member of the Society for the Study of Christian Spirituality since 2004. He is a practicing spiritual director, retreat leader, and a member of the alumni board of the McCormick Seminary. As an Independent Scholar, his research interests are the role of play of spiritual formation, Kierkegaardian spirituality, and spiritual disciplines and ritual.

The Christian Spirituality Group of the AAR offers three sessions during the Annual Meeting:

- *Biblical Spirituality: Engaging Sandra Schneiders's The Revelatory Text* (Michael Glazier Books, 1999) (A20-122)
Sunday - 9:00 AM-11:30 AM: Grand Hyatt - Lone Star F (2nd Level)
- *Borderline Christian Spiritualities: Hybrid Pieties in the Borderlands*
Sunday, 1:00 PM-2:30 PM: Grand Hyatt - Republic B (4th Level) (Cosponsored with the World Christianity Group)
- *Spirituality and the Natural World* (A21-122)
Monday - 9:00 AM-11:30 AM: Convention Center 217-A (2nd Level - West)

○ **The SSCS International Relations Committee** meets today, 1:30-2:30 PM in the Hilton Palacio del Rio-La Corona (Mezzanine Level). For more information, please contact Pieter de Villiers, Chair.

Things like my bio, should be “the role of play in spirituality.”

And in the The Spiritus report I would change

“Steven asked members to keep an eye out for papers that seem appropriate for the journal and to send him the presenter’s name and institution and the paper title. He also encouraged members to let Book Editor Timothy Robinson know of books that should be reviewed in the journal.”

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removing the superfluous “and”

SSCS Financial Report
Fiscal Year 2016 (6/01/15-5/31/16)

	2015-2016	2013-2014
Opening balance: 6/01/15	13,614.44	\$7,911.48
<u>Income:</u>		
Dues	\$7,103.10	\$6,473.26
Contributions (tax deductible)	1,032.00	294.00
Credit Union dividends	0.65	0.68
Member dinner payments	1,425.00	
Total income:	\$8,528.75	\$6,998.94
<u>Society expenses:</u>		
Emerging Scholars	0	157.00
Annual Meeting 2015	\$4,285.85 ¹	1,088.00
Board of Directors' Dinner 2015	130.00 ²	
Annual Meeting 2016	0	170.00
Stipend (Web Editor)	500.00	500.00
Stipend (Secretary/Treasurer)	1,000.00	0
Founders' Circle Award	260.00	0
Illinois corporate filing	10.00	10.00
International Relations Committee	70.00	
Promotions Committee	70.00	51.97
Subtotal Society expenses:	\$6,325.85	\$3,312.11
<u>Spiritus expenses:</u>		
Stipend (Editor)	\$1,700.00 ³	\$500.00
Stipend (Book Editor)	625.00	\$500.00
Complimentary membership (Poetry Editor)	65.40	
Subtotal Spiritus expenses:	\$2,390.40	\$1,000.00
Total expenses	\$8,716.25	\$4,812.11
Net loss	\$187.50	\$2,186.83
Closing balance: 5/31/16	\$13,427.00	\$10,088.31

Membership (student members incl. in totals) [gratis subscriptions not incl. in totals] *US-Canada-Europe-other*

	2016	2015	2014	2013	2012	2011	2006
Individual							
US	302 (48) [5]	318 (50) [5]	380 (63) [6]	434 (83) [5]	381 (59) [5]	401 [13]	561 (59)
Canada	18 (4)	23 (9)	22 (6)	20 (2)	20 (5)	22	21 (3)
Europe	28 (2) [1]	24 (3) [1]	30 (6) [1]	35 (8) [1]	34 (6) [1]	31 [7]	33 (5)
Non-OECD	2						
Other	29 (3)	25 (3)	27 (3)	26 (2)	23 (4)	27	16 (1)

¹ This amount includes honoraria for Diana Hayes and Miroslav Volf and costs at Ebenezer's Horizon Campus.

² Directors who do not receive institutional funding are the Society's guests at the annual Board dinner.

³ The outgoing and incoming editors both received stipends during the transitional training period.

Total	384 (57) [6]	394 (65) [6]	462 (78) [7]	521 (95) [6]	458 (74) [6]	481 [20]	630 (68)
Institutional	88 <i>67-5-7-11</i>	106 <i>77-7-7-15</i>	106 <i>77-7-7-15</i>	111 <i>80-7-7-17</i>	114 <i>84 -7-8-15</i>	120 <i>88-6-9-17</i>	126

**Minutes of the Board of Directors Meeting of
The Society for the Study of Christian Spirituality**

Saturday, November 19, 2016, 2:45-4:45 PM.

Marriott Riverwalk-Bowie (2nd Level)

San Antonio, Texas

Present: Margaret Benefiel, Steven Chase, Elizabeth Drescher, George Faithful, Bernadette Flanagan, Doug Hardy, Shannon McAllister, Barb Quinn, Glen Scorgie, Pieter G. R. de Villiers, Claire Wolfeich, Glenn Young
Excused: Lauren Winner

Attempts to connect electronically with Gilberto Cavazos-González and Frank McAloon were unsuccessful.

1. Welcome of new members: Pieter G. R. de Villiers welcomed new At-large Directors Vanessa White and Doug Hardy and new Vice President/President-elect Bernadette Flanagan.
2. Pieter thanked members rotating off: At-large Directors Barbara Quinn and Glenn Scorgie and Past-President Lisa Dahill *in absentia*. He also welcomed Claire Wolfeich to her new role as Past President.
3. Reports
 - a. *Spiritus* (Steven Chase): Steven said that his report at the members' meeting covered the new developments for the journal.
 - b. Emerging Scholars (George Faithful and Shannon McAllister)
 - i) Lunch: Shannon and George reported that the lunch after the members' meeting was quite well attended, with many attending who were new to the Group.
 - ii) Membership: The Group currently has a roster of 21, with another 14 just added with whom they'll follow up. Graduate students from Oblate School of Theology provided a lively addition. The Group is discussing creating an online workshop on job searches and a c.v. database. About one-quarter of the new members are from Oblate, and ten are from different locations that aren't the usual feeder schools for the Society.
 - iii) Dues: Some new members are from non-OECD countries, but it's not yet been decided whether students would subscribe according to the country in which they study or the country from which they come.
 - iv) Bibliography: Shannon is compiling a bibliography of classic literature.
 - v) Mentorship database: There will be further discussion of what this would entail, but it will be an informal program that would require minimal commitment and would not duplicate (or challenge) the role of advisors. So far George and Shannon have contacted faculty in religion and theology departments, but they also plan to reach out to faculty in other fields (e.g., sociology) who might work in spirituality. Most of those on the Board should be willing to participate.
 - vi) Biennial conference: Pieter mentioned that the Kappel conference will include a slot for emerging scholars, including an early-morning session in which established scholars will provide mentoring. Rebecca Giselbrecht may be able to find funding for some emerging scholars.
 - vii) Membership definition: Elizabeth pointed out that the way in which "emerging scholars" is usually defined (graduate students and pre-tenure graduates) excludes contingent faculty who are not on tenure track. Anita recalled that sometimes the group has used language extending membership to those within a few years of graduate school (sometimes defined as about six); membership has never been dependent on age. Bernadette's students are often already professionals and they're now looking for guidance on publishing.
 - viii) Shannon thanked the group for their support.
4. Portfolios for Board members: Anita explained the various tasks that Board members are asked to contribute to: logistics for the Founders' Circle Prize (two), planning and managing Friday events and the

anniversary celebration (two-three), possibly participating in the International Relations Committee, and possibly planning biennial meetings.

5. Celebrating the Twenty-Fifth Anniversary of the Society in 2017

- a. Vision: Elizabeth hopes it will look not only backward but also forward. Glen suggested retrieval for the purpose of clarifying vision: decreasing U.S. subscription numbers are concerning and may be a vestige of an outdated academic model of guilds; this could be a moment of visioning. Pieter recalled Bernie's address on the future of spirituality. What do younger scholars see as the future of the discipline? Anita recalled that for our 20th in Chicago we hosted a panel with two senior, two mid-career, and two emerging scholars, all responding to Philip Endean's article; Ann Astell arranged for the event to be recorded, so this is available to members. Bernadette noted the emerging importance of "spirituality and. . ." and suggested having three speakers from those diverse fields, as well as three speakers from our own society; many scholars with interests compatible with ours don't know we exist, and we don't know their work. Elizabeth expressed concern about that spirituality has become canonical in some ways that can exclude much relevant work. Barb asked about how technology is shaping spiritual experience, and Vanessa asked specifically how it is affecting our teaching. Margaret suggested that Elizabeth and others she knows can be helpful on this topic. Elizabeth responded that there has always been technological change; the main question is how the Spirit is mediated. Vanessa responded that we need to be aware of how students learn, as Jesus was in his context. This led to a suggestion that we explore "re-mediating the Spirit." The current political situation suggests that the work we do is not irrelevant; all kinds of mediated representations amplify or silence aspects of religion and the spiritual.
- b. On- and off-site programming: Anita recalled that the history of Friday sessions, which go back about fifteen years, was to have members share their work with each other, since not all can present in Christian Spirituality Group sessions. Since then, we've moved beyond that model and have tended to go off-site, in part to experience the area and in part because we can't afford receptions at the convention site. Also, being in Boston will mean that many members won't be able to arrive in time for a Friday-afternoon session (1 in Boston is 9 on the West coast). However, it was agreed that experiential sessions are still important and we shouldn't simply offer conventional academic sessions on Friday. Vanessa said what attracted her to the Society was that it was both/and: the experiential events on Friday led to an address on Saturday followed by the AAR sessions, providing a good transition; other conferences just offer paper after paper. The combination better embodies what makes the Society distinctive. Noting her work with the Black Catholic Theological Symposium, she also pointed out that it's a major sacrifice to attend meetings for anyone on a limited institutional budget. Steven observed that an event that allowed movement would be more celebratory than academic presentation. Pieter concluded that there should be time for multiple sessions, so we don't have to choose one event. He also offered the support and consultation of the Board as a whole, which the planning committee should feel free to consult. European scholars who haven't been as involved in the Society may want to hear about its history and current developments.

6. Christian Spirituality Group sessions (Margaret Benefiel and Glenn Young)

- a. Report on 2016
 - i) The Sunday morning session on Sandra Schneiders had 57 attendees; the Sunday afternoon session on borderlands had 61. Papers and discussion were good at both. The AAR always asks about diversity, and our hybrid session had three immigrants reflecting on spirituality through different lenses. Doug noted that there was a great deal of conversation after that panel, and he appreciated Maeve's singing at the morning session.
 - ii) Glenn added to the report at the members' meeting that the Group just completed its five-year review, which is quite extensive. All markers were strong. Over the last year average attendance has been 97, which is phenomenal. Roughly 50 paper proposals come in every year, which is also a great response number; the acceptance rate is rather low, and that's considered a sign of a healthy group.

The group has also done well on collaboration: every year CSG co-sponsors a session, and for many years we also offered a quad-sponsored session, providing a fourth program (these are no longer allowed).

- b. Several other suggestions came in the business meeting of the Group. Usually six topics are listed on the Call. The group can offer two sessions, three if one is co-sponsored.
 - i) Steven suggested a session on the anniversary of the Reformation, which could be co-sponsored.
 - ii) Lisa Dahill and Steven are talking about prayer as political resistance for the Kappel conference, and it could be related to the Reformation as well as Lisa's work on Bonhoeffer.
 - iii) Vanessa suggested reflecting on where we may be a year from now, connecting to spiritualities of resistance and the sense of unease among students.
 - iv) Bernadette suggested coordination with Contemplative Studies; Margaret recalled we collaborated with them a few years ago.
 - v) The CSG began quite a bit later than the SSCS, so it would not be appropriate to devote a session to the SSCS anniversary.
 - c. Appointment of committee for 2017 proposals: The committee members' responsibility is to read and evaluate the proposals in a three-week period, starting with the submission deadline of 1 March. An online system is used for evaluations: committee members rank proposals between 1-5 and can add comments; then Glenn and Margaret select the proposals and craft the sessions. The work is short-term but considerable. The review committee is currently Frank, Gilberto, Lauren, and Elizabeth; one more person could be added if interested. This would not reduce the work for the members, since every member reviews every proposal. However, Elizabeth noted that there's a learning curve to being part of the committee, and committee members have to evaluate many proposals that aren't in their areas of expertise, so having more people does enhance the committee's collective wisdom and would be desirable.
7. Planning of SSCS Friday events for 2017 in Boston (Pieter)
- a. Experiential session
 - i) Sent in earlier from Bernadette: "A practical session on research methods that will be of assistance to all scholars who have a practice as spiritual director, prayer leader; meditation teacher such as experiencing being autoethnographic researchers of our own practice. A good resource in this field that I have used is: Heewon Chang: Autoethnography as method."
 - ii) Laura Everett of the Massachusetts Conference of Churches and its urban bike ministry, with an unofficial chaplaincy to those who have died in bike accidents (Elizabeth)
 - iii) Shannon suggested Walden Pond; Doug noted travel in the area would be too difficult on a Friday afternoon.
 - iv) Copley Square is in walking distance and includes Trinity Church, which might let us use their space and may have a fellowship hall meeting room.
 - v) The Library
 - vi) Old South Church
 - vii) Philip Sheldrake could be asked to explore the city and how it's constructed; Copley Square could be a microcosm of that.
 - viii) Lisa's suggestion of hymnody, which could be explored in sacred space
 - ix) Local ministries include a night ministry that provides liturgies, Common Cathedral, Godly Fools
 - x) Being in a space near the convention area, though perhaps getting outside a conventional church setting, would be good. Weather could be an issue.
 - xi) Getting to society's margins, even in a public space
 - xii) Harvard Square as a place that offers a cross-section of the city
 - xiii) For a meal, Haley House has a cafeteria that's open to everyone and allows diners to pay what they choose.

- b. Pedagogical session: Glenn suggested that we could have pedagogical reflection on the experiential session.
 - c. Appointment of Steering Committee: Doug, Elizabeth; Barb can do research on venues, and Pieter will consult on an evening anniversary session. It was decided not to separate out the afternoon and evening sessions but to have one committee that can create a more organic event for the day.
8. SCS Facebook page
- a. Current status: Bernadette, who has moderated the page with Margaret, recommended that we think of the Facebook page in an integrated way, assuring a flow of input, for instance, by coordinating to members' use of Twitter. Thom Parrott-Sheffer has been effective in managing spam. Anyone can join, but many people don't join SCS but just post their own material.
 - b. Proposal: Elizabeth's class is assigned to evaluate and make recommendations about the use of media by religious communities, and she'll assign the SCS as a case. Elizabeth will put the students in touch with Bernadette.
9. Founders' Circle Prize (Pieter)
- a. The prize is a biennial award, due to be presented in 2017. It is given to the best essay submitted by a member of the SCS's Emerging Scholars. The prize is \$150 plus a two-year membership.
 - b. Structure: A committee is needed to manage logistics for the Prize—deciding deadlines, arranging publicity, appointing a review committee of past Presidents of the Society, and awarding the prize. Ralph Keen, who chaired the committee last time, found that the structure needed much better definition. Our documents state, "the committee or its chair, in collaboration with the Secretary/Treasurer, will prepare announcements with deadlines."
 - c. Committee: Shannon is happy to be helpful. Anita will get in touch with Ralph Keen for a suggested schedule. Frank, Gilberto, Lauren, and Vanessa (who has experience with social media) could be asked to constitute the committee and to work with ES and the membership as a whole.
 - d. Prize for the biennial meeting: The Board agreed that an additional prize can be awarded for exceptional proposals to the biennial conference in Zürich.
10. Biennial meeting(s) (Pieter)
- a. Kappel meeting: Rebecca Giselbrecht has organized a good program incorporating cultural events. She needs us to choose a diverse program of presenters, especially young scholars and women, in order to apply for funding. The Board has previously suggested several names.
 - i) Steven will give a paper on creation and prayer, and Lisa Dahill could present a related perspective on ecology or present on prayer as political resistance.
 - ii) Other suggestions include the faculty at Durham (Bernadette) and the Social Science Research Council's project New Directions in Prayer (Elizabeth); several centers for studying spirituality have directors who could nominate speakers. Elizabeth noted that looking for experts on prayer may be difficult. Claire suggested we try to keep some flexibility while giving Rebecca enough information to proceed with funding applications.
 - iii) There was discussion of whether presenters needed to be SCS members, with a sense that this was probably not needed for keynote or plenary speakers.
 - iv) Glen suggested that, in the future, we think strategically about how to connect with scholars from other parts of the world rather than focusing on bringing North American scholars to venues abroad.
 - b. Organization of future biennial meetings: Pieter explained that the Executive Committee decided it made sense to have the Committee guide planning for the upcoming conference, with the President as chair and primary liaison to the member hosting the conference, and the incoming Vice-President joining the Committee when elected. We've learned a good deal this year, including that we need ample time to plan in the future; choosing keynote speakers should be on the Board agenda a year in

advance. Bernadette suggested using Zoom, which has proven very effective for international conversations.

11. International Relations Committee (IRC) / Promotions Committee
 - a. Virtual meetings: Pieter reported that the IRC had a long discussion yesterday, though they faced the problem of members' not being able to attend the AAR because they don't have funding. They decided to plan for virtual meetings in the future.
 - b. Leadership: Pieter will be vacating the chair of the IRC now that he is SSCS President. The group needs a liaison to the Board as well as a chair. When the IRC was created, the Vice-President of the Society was chosen as liaison between the Board and the committee, to provide high-level connection and continuity. Our documents need to be updated to include a consistent connection.
12. Possibility of income-linked dues structure for all countries: Pieter mentioned the SBL as a model to follow, but there was no time for discussion.
13. Future meetings of the AAR/SBL: 2017 Boston, Massachusetts, USA, November 18-21, 2017; 2018 Denver, Colorado, USA, November 17-20, 2018; 2019 San Diego, California, USA, November 23-26, 2019
14. Board dinner: 8:00 p.m. at Ácenar, 146 E. Houston Street (210) 222-2362 under Pieter de Villiers' name.
15. Pieter thanked Anita for all her work for the Society and presented her with a bottle of excellent South African wine.
16. The meeting adjourned about 4:45.

Action items

- 3.b.iii: Further discussion in the Board of the dues structure for graduate students from non-OECD countries
- 3.b.vii: Describing membership in the Emerging Scholars to more clearly include those not on tenure track
- 4: Following up with Gilberto, Lauren, and Frank about participating in Board tasks discussed today
- 5.d: Planning for Friday sessions by Elizabeth, Pieter, and Doug (Barb is willing to offer some insight on Boston). They may invite others to collaborate and take on responsibilities.
- 6.c: Further discussion of whether a fifth member should be added to the CSG Steering Committee, to add expertise to the group reviewing proposals
- 9.a: Definition of ES membership to clarify who can submit essays for the Founders' Circle Prize
- 9.c.: Following up with Ralph Keen to clarify the process for the Founders' Circle Prize
- 9.d.: Ascertaining whether any proposals from ES members merit an additional award and how much would be awarded
- 11.b. Updating job descriptions to be sure they're accurate; the Nominations Committee should provide accurate information to nominees