

**Minutes of the Members' Meeting of
The Society for the Study of Christian Spirituality**
Saturday, November 17, 2018, 10:30-11:30 a.m.
Centennial Ballroom C, Hyatt Regency Convention Center
Denver, Colorado

The meeting convened at 10:39 a.m.

1. Introduction of new President: Bernadette Flanagan, President, introduced Glen Scorgie.
2. Approval of the Minutes of the 2017 Meeting: Minutes, circulated on the website and at today's session, were approved unanimously, pending any corrections sent to Anita Houck in the coming days.
3. Welcome: Glen welcomed international members and new members of the Society.
4. Report on Friday Events
 - a. Glen reported that many members participated in the Society dinner at Maggiano's [52, including guests].
 - b. Glen reviewed the evening plenary, "Christian Spirituality, Mental Health, and Psychology: Conversations and Collaborations across Disciplines," in which Steven Sandage of Boston University introduced recent work on the interpersonal dynamics and dispositions that make for effective collaborative engagements, acknowledging the potential anxieties and struggles, as well as the spiritual dimensions, of these collaborations. Glen thanked Claire Wolfeich and Carter Haynes for excellent responses and Diana Villegas for chairing the session.
 - c. The afternoon session was a summit of Board members and several Past Presidents, who gathered to think about the future of the Society, especially as many founders move toward retirement and a new generation of scholars is emerging.
5. Recognition of 2018 Founders' Circle Prize Winner: Shannon M. McAlister, Chair of the Prize Committee, reported a record number of submissions (25) for this year's contest, the first open to non-members. The winner is Leonard McMahon, who is pursuing a doctorate at Graduate Theological Union, for his essay "John Woolman and the Practice of Truth," which examines Woolman's practice of truth-telling in resistance to slavery; he will present the paper this afternoon. There were also a number of other excellent submissions, and the judges recognized three with honorable mention: Elizabeth Anderson for "Spiritual Discernment in a Deceptive World: Wisdom of Jacob of Serugh"; Paul Blankenship for "Wounds of Love: Homelessness, Suffering and Christian Spirituality "; and Ricardo Franco for "Spirituality and Border-Crossing: Cassian and Anzaldúa on Prayer, the Spiritual Journey and Spiritual Discernment" (*in absentia*).
6. Report of the Secretary/Treasurer (see Treasurer's Report on p. 5): Anita noted that while our U.S. membership is declining, membership in other areas is more stable. Our finances are strong, thanks to the members who supported our increase in dues; those who gave donations when renewing (these helped support the first-ever presentation of the Founders' Circle Prize at the AAR); and Elizabeth Drescher's work to secure a generous \$3,000 grant from the BTS Center, which funded our excellent programming last year. While AAR expenses are high (\$400 for a short session), all this support has allowed us to offer excellent programming during the meeting. Anita encouraged members to give the gift of *Spiritus* to colleagues and students. Glen thanked her and acknowledged her promotion to the Joyce McMahon Hank Aquinas Chair in Catholic Theology at Saint Mary's College.
7. Report of the Nominations Committee: Speaking for the Committee (Glen Scorgie, Colleen Carpenter, and Thom Parrott-Sheffer), Glen invited nominations from the floor and presented the Committee's candidates.
 - i) Vice President/President-elect: Timothy Robinson was elected unanimously to serve 2018-2019.

- ii) Secretary/Treasurer: Glen noted that Anita has asked to retire, but is standing for election for a one-year term while the Board considers restructuring Board offices. She was elected unanimously to serve 2018-2019.
 - iii) Two members to serve three-year terms as At-large Directors
 - (1) Celia Kourie was elected unanimously to serve 2018-2021.
 - (2) Carter Haynes was elected unanimously to serve 2018-2021.
 - iv) Two persons to serve on the Nominations Committee
 - (1) Eric Cain was elected unanimously to serve 2018-2021.
 - (2) Thom Parrott-Sheffer: Thom has agreed to complete the term of Colleen Carpenter, who needed to step down; this will be his third year on the Committee. Thom was elected unanimously to serve 2018-2019.
- b. Glen thanked members rotating off the Board: Bernadette Flanagan, who completes her term as President and assumes the position of Past President; Pieter G. R. de Villiers, who completes his term as Past President; and Gilberto Cavazos-González and Lauren Winner, who complete their terms as At-large Directors.
- c. Continuing members of the Board include At-large Directors Douglas Hardy and C. Vanessa White (2016-2019); Diana Ventura and Diana Villegas (2017-2020); Steven Chase, Editor of *Spiritus* (2015-2020); and *Spiritus* Liaison member Francis McAloon (2015-2019).
8. Report of the Editor of *Spiritus*. Steven Chase, Editor, acknowledged his walk up to the podium as a pilgrimage and looked forward to publishing Bernadette's fine address in *Spiritus*. The journal is also in sound financial shape, in part thanks to saving money on images and having support from Oblate School of Theology for copy-editing. The journal will have a presence at the Rome meeting and will consider a supplemental issue coming from it. He embraced Annie Ng's phrase that the journal develops "academic affections."
9. Report of the International Relations Committee: Diana Villegas, Chair of the Committee, reported that the main activity of the committee this year has been to plan for the conference in Rome. Bernadette led a very inclusive process of seeking a location for the biennial conference, and she invited all members of the IRC to participate in Zoom meetings; those meetings, a new method for the Society, led to the decision to create a partnership with another organization, the Forum for the Professors of Spirituality in Italy. Rome has twelve programs in either universities or seminaries that award doctorates in spirituality, with students from all over the world (up to 50 doctoral students study there each year, in addition to students doing Master's degrees and licentiates); thus Rome will provide a very global venue for the conference. The Roman programs focus on "spiritual theology," while the SSCS focuses on "Christian spirituality," so the conference will focus on methodology; Bernadette's address exemplifies the kind of new thinking on methodology that the conference will explore. The Call for Papers is open through the beginning of January and can be found through the conference website. Speakers will include Tim Geoffrion from Myanmar, and other speakers may come from Korea, Australia, and New Zealand.
10. Report of the Emerging Scholars Group: Shannon McAllister, Coordinator, reported that the Society's Constitution gives the group a few tasks: organizing the annual lunch, facilitating communication among members, and assisting with the process of awarding the Founders' Circle Prize. The most popular is the lunch, which included 20 scholars last year. The current roster stands at 37; three years ago, there was no roster, so she and George Faithful built that from scratch. The Group has used Facebook and emails to communicate. The group also contributed to the planning of the Friday evening event on spirituality and mental health, and was involved in the Founders' Circle Prize, with Shannon serving as Chair. The group has also compiled a list of 500 institutions the Society could reach out to in hopes of connecting with their graduate students. After three years of service, Shannon has now received tenure at Fordham (there was much rejoicing in the room), and former Co-coordinator George Faithful has moved on to new obligations.

Based on the nomination of George and Shannon, Kyle Schenkewitz and Rachel Wheeler have been appointed as new Co-coordinators and will attend the Board meeting Sunday.

11. Report of items under consideration by the Board of Directors: Glen noted that the previous three reports indicate the hard work being done very faithfully in the Society.
 - a. The Summit considered the Society's identity, main goals, most important activities, and organization. We are still what we were initially envisioned to be: a community of scholars who are better for working together. This dynamic must be essentially personal and relational; the structures are there to serve that. Glen encouraged keeping that personal element alive. Among the ideas considered were
 - i) Meeting more regularly and finding other innovative and inclusive ways to present scholarship, create scholarly conversations, sustain year-round relationships, and provide resources in meaningful, helpful ways
 - ii) Being intentional about nurturing the next generation to succeed current tenured professors
 - iii) Giving more specific portfolios to members of the Board, so At-large positions may instead become positions dedicated to particular tasks
 - iv) Dividing the role of the Secretary/Treasurer to make it more sustainable
 - v) Thinking more concretely about communications so that members can be present to each other in creative, accessible ways.
12. Meeting of the SSCS in November 2019: Glen suggested members contact Board members, especially Vice-President Tim Robinson, with ideas. We hope to make the events as meaningful and accessible as possible.
13. Suggestions of items for further consideration by the Board of Directors: Glen invited members to pass on their suggestions to Board members.
 - a. Michael O'Sullivan suggested that the Society be renamed "the International Society for the Study of Christian Spirituality"; though the Society will remain English-speaking, the name would be more inclusive and reflective of who we've become in past years.
 - b. Susan Rakoczy suggested remembering the work in spirituality being done in Africa.
 - c. Tim Geoffrion asked if there has been any analysis of why we've lost so many members; Glen responded that there has been no empirical research on this.
 - d. Ineda P. Adesanya asked if a sister organization exists that focuses on spirituality more broadly and not explicitly Christian spirituality. Steven noted that the Institute for Christian Spirituality offers academic programs and, while not a society, offers a good deal of programming. Glen noted that the Society should undertake to help Emerging scholars in particular make such connections.
14. Announcements: Glen encouraged giving gifts of *Spiritus*. He also invited older members to join the lunch for the Emerging Scholars, to be held after this meeting. After lunch, Leonard's paper will be presented. Many members are involved in the Christian Spirituality Unit of the AAR, and Glen encouraged members to be present especially at the Business Meeting, where new leadership is discerned. The Oblate school is also offering a social this evening, and they will be publishing the new issue of their journal *Offerings* soon, after a hiatus.
15. Adjournment: The meeting adjourned at 11:37 a.m.

Attendance: Address: 68 Meeting: 59 Friday dinner: 52 Friday session: 49 + speaker

Nominee Biographies

For Vice President/President-Elect (2018-2019):

Timothy Robinson is the Alberta and Harold Lunger Associate Professor of Spiritual Resources and Disciplines at Brite Divinity School, Texas Christian University, where he also directs the Doctor of Ministry program. He also serves as Affiliate Faculty at the Institute for the Study of Contemporary Spirituality at Oblate School of Theology in San Antonio, TX. He holds a Ph.D. in Christian spirituality from the Graduate Theological Union in Berkeley, CA. His publications include the book *The Reverend Edward Taylor's Sacramental Meditations on the*

Song of Songs: The Erotic Devotion of an American Puritan and the co-edited volume (with Ray Maria McNamara, RSM) *Spirit and Nature: The Study of Christian Spirituality at a Time of Ecological Urgency*. He is currently at work editing the *Brill Companion to the Song of Songs in Christian Spirituality* (due out in 2020) and *Howard Thurman: Sermons on the Mystics*. Besides ecospiritualities and the reception history of Song of Songs, his research interests include mysticism, the spirituality of Howard Thurman, the history of spiritual direction, and environmental justice. He has served the SCS as a board member, as co-chair of the AAR's Christian spirituality program unit for two terms, as coordinator of the Emerging Scholars Initiative, and on the editorial board of *Spiritus*. He is currently the book review editor of *Spiritus*.

For At-Large Positions on the Board of Directors (2018-2021):

Celia Kourie is Professor Emerita at UNISA (University of South Africa); Research Fellow at UFS (University of the Free State) and Visiting Professor at St Augustine College (Johannesburg, the only Catholic university in SA). Born and educated in England, she spent eight years as a sister in a religious congregation, before undertaking tertiary studies, completing a BA Hons (1st class) in Religious Studies at Lancaster University, UK, in 1975. Celia emigrated from the UK to South Africa in 1976; and worked for 2 years as a lay chaplain at Pretoria University, before taking up a post in New Testament at UNISA in 1978. She obtained a MTh in New Testament in 1980; and a DTh in Religious Studies in 1990. Her doctoral thesis, entitled '*Elizabeth Catez of Dijon (1880-1906): An Interpretation of her Mysticism*', combined a theoretical study of the phenomenon of mysticism with an investigation of the mystical thought of Elisabeth. In 2000, Celia instituted the DTh and MTh degrees in Christian Spirituality, and the BTh Hons in 2001 at UNISA.. Her research interests include, inter alia, Spirituality and the University; Christian mysticism, particularly Meister Eckhart, Ruusbroec, and John of the Cross; Eastern mysticism; biblical spirituality; and mysticism, spirituality and science. Her major interest is in the field of Inter-Spirituality, and she has been involved for many years in this field in South Africa, not only academically, but also as an active member in an Inter-Spiritual Centre, Sediba (the 'Source) close to Johannesburg. In addition, she has taught at Tao Fong Shan, a Christian center in Hong Kong; and has had research links with Christ University, Bangalore, India. Current projects include the value of John of the Cross for today; the contribution of Abhishiktanada; a mystical reading of scripture, and the value of Inter-Spirituality for contemporary society. Celia is the secretary of Spirasa (Spirituality Association of South Africa). She lives in Pretoria, SA, and is married with two sons.

Carter Haynes is Executive Director of behavioral health services for Dignity Health, a ministry founded by the Sisters of Mercy and offering holistic hospital and clinic-based care to patients in the Western United States. He holds a B.A. and M.A in psychology, an M.A in organizational studies, and a Ph.D. human development. Carter has published in the areas of missionary perseverance, religious fundamentalism research, clinical supervision of counselors, holistic human development, and the religious and psychological significance of happiness and well being. He has taught psychology at a faith-based university and is a licensed psychotherapist in private practice. His research interests include the interdisciplinary study of psychology, sociology, philosophy, and spirituality. Carter's latest publication, "Identity, Transcendence and The True Self: Insights from Psychology and Contemplative Spirituality," appeared in *HTS Theological Studies*.

For the Nominations Committee:

Eric Cain (2018-2021) is Director of the Cothran Center for Vocational Reflection at Furman University in Greenville, South Carolina. He uses his academic training and work experience as an educator and minister to walk with people in exploring their sense of calling in the world. Eric has helped organize and lead many pilgrimages, service-learning experiences, summer theology programs, and retreats. He enjoys developing resources that support individuals and groups in their discernment process. Eric is an ordained Baptist minister and he helps provide leadership for the Clergy Affiliate Information & Resource Network (CAIRN) of the

Alliance of Baptists. He has served on the Convening Table for Christian Education, Ecumenical Faith Formation, & Leadership Development of the National Council of Churches and as a board member of the Greenville (SC) Interfaith Forum. Eric completed his M.A.Ed. at Wake Forest University and his M.Div. at McAfee School of Theology, Mercer University.

Thom Parrott-Sheffer (2018-2019) (DMin., Church Divinity School of the Pacific, 1998) Presently retired from the active ministry, Thom currently enjoys the increased time afforded him to pursue independent scholarship and work as a Spiritual Director. Dr. Parrott-Sheffer is an ordained minister in the United Church of Christ for the past 38 years, and a member of the Society for the Study of Christian Spirituality since 1998. 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.

Other Events at the AAR/SBL

Founders' Circle Prize Presentation (P17-203)

Saturday 17 November, 2:00-3:00 p.m., Torrey's Room, Lobby Level of the Crowne Plaza Downtown, 1450 Glenarm Pl. All are welcome! Please invite your colleagues.

Social hosted by the Oblate School of Theology's Institute for the Study of Contemporary Spirituality

Saturday 17 November, 6:30 to 8:00 p.m., Denver Ballroom 4 of the Hilton City Center

Being God's people: Spiritual practices in anxious times

Sunday 18 November, 6:30-8:00 p.m., Central Presbyterian Church, 1660 Sherman Street

Conversation and reception with Lauren Winner (Director At-large) and editors of *The Christian Century*

Sessions of the Christian Spirituality Unit of the AAR

Christian Spiritual Classics and Trauma, Evil, and Illness; with Business Meeting (A17-308)

Saturday 17 November, 3:30-5:00 p.m., Convention Center, Mile High 4B (Lower Level)

Christian Spirituality and Suffering (A18-308)

Sunday 18 November, 3:30-5:00 p.m., Convention Center, Mile High 4B (Lower Level)

Eco-Reformation (Cascade Books, 2016): Toward the Next 500 Years (A19-209)

Monday 19 November, 1:00-3:00 p.m., Convention Center, Room 203 (Street Level)

The Spirituality of the Psalms (A19-309)

Monday 19 November, 3:30-5:00 p.m., Convention Center, Mile High 4A (Lower Level)

SSCS Financial Report
Fiscal Year 2018 (June 1, 2017 to May 31, 2018)

Opening balance: 6/01/17		\$16,294.88
<u>Income:</u>		
Dues		5,851.68
Contributions (tax deductible)		360.00
Credit Union dividends		3.22
BTS Center Donation		3,000.00
Dinner payments		811.22
	Total income:	\$10,026.12
<u>Society expenses:</u>		
Emerging Scholars		459.00
Annual Meeting 2017		\$1,075.00
Annual Meeting 2016		200.00
Kappel Meeting		40.00
Stipend (Web Editor)		500.00
Stipend (Secretary/Treasurer)		1,000.00
Illinois corporate filing		10.00
International Relations Committee		40.00
Office expenses		35.78
IRS corporation fee		275.00
	Subtotal Society expenses:	\$6,278.74
<u>Spiritus expenses:</u>		
Stipend (Editor)		\$1,000.00
Stipend (Book Editor)		500.00
Membership fee (Poetry Editor)		\$65.40
	Subtotal Spiritus expenses:	\$1,564.40
	Total expenses	\$7,844.14
	Net gain	\$2,181.98
Closing balance: 5/31/18		\$18,473.64

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

	2018	2017	2016	2015	2014	2013	2012	2011	2006
Individual									
US	249 (42) [8]	303 (44) [7]	302 (48) [5]	318 (50) [5]	380 (63) [6]	434 (83) [5]	381 (59) [5]	401 [13]	561 (59)
Canada	10 (1)	14 (3)	18 (4)	23 (9)	22 (6)	20 (2)	20 (5)	22	21 (3)
Europe	26 (2) [1]	32 (1) [1]	28 (2) [1]	24 (3) [1]	30 (6) [1]	35 (8) [1]	34 (6) [1]	31 [7]	33 (5)
Non-OECD	3 (1 Europe, 2 Other)	6	2						

Other	23 (4)	35 (4)	29 (3)	25 (3)	27 (3)	26 (2)	23 (4)	27	16 (1)
Total	368	398 (52) [8]	384 (57) [6]	394 (65) [6]	462 (78) [7]	521 (95) [6]	458 (74) [6]	481 [20]	630 (68)
Institutional	75 <i>53-4-7-11</i>	84 <i>64-5-6-7</i>	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**
Sunday, November 18, 2018, 1:00 pm to 3:00 pm
Convention Center, Room 707 (Street Level)
Denver, Colorado

Attending: Steven Chase, Bernadette Flanagan, Doug Hardy, Carter Haynes, Anita Houck, Celia Kourie, Shannon McAlister, Frank McAloon, Timothy Robinson, Glen Scorgie, Kyle Schenkewitz, Diana Villegas, Rachel Wheeler, Lauren Winner

Excused: Gilberto Cavazos-González, Diana Ventura, C. Vanessa White, Pieter G. R. de Villiers

The meeting convened at 1:13 p.m.

1. Welcome of new members: Glen Scorgie, President, welcomed new At-large Directors Celia Kourie and Carter Haynes; and new Vice-President/President-elect Timothy Robinson, who called for an investigation into reports of massive voter fraud.
2. Thanks to members rotating off: Glen thanked At-large Directors Gilberto Cavazos-González *in absentia*, who has been very involved in planning the Rome conference; and Lauren Winner, who was very helpful in this year's Founders' Circle Prize process. He also thanked Past-President Pieter G. R. de Villiers for the faithful contributions and international awareness he has brought to the Board; and President Bernadette Flanagan, who now takes on the role of Past President, and who was thanked for her excellent address and congratulated on her new book, *The Routledge International Handbook of Spirituality in Society and the Professions*.
3. Appointment of Coordinator(s) for Emerging Scholars Group: Shannon McAlister reported that she and the other Co-coordinator, George Faithful, discerned and nominated two new leaders for the Group: Rachel Wheeler, who teaches spirituality at the University of Portland; and Kyle Schenkewitz, who teaches broadly in religion, peace and justice, and philosophy. Both have interests in asceticism. Glen noted that our documents should be revised to clarify the relationship between the Board and Group.
4. Reports
 - a. Emerging Scholars Group (ESG)
 - i) Shannon McAlister noted strengths of the Group: the connections and friendships made, and discussion of the literature produced by the Society (e.g., on methodology), and the social elements of the lunch and dinner. The Group provides a scholarly home and sense of community for young scholars in the midst of the AAR.
 - ii) Rachel explained that she and Kyle would like to reach out to the scholars on the roster to learn about their interests and needs, and to put them in contact with other scholars (emerging or senior) in their geographical region. They would be interested in sponsoring the Founders' Circle Prize more often. Kyle sees the function of the Society as to create relationships that endure throughout a career; the Facebook page could be a way to promote this, but other modes like Slack could be useful as well. Ideally, the Group would cultivate contributing members for future years.
 - iii) For the last few years, attendance at the lunch was 20; this year, it was 29. Last year, we didn't ascertain how many attendees were Society members. This year, no list of attendees was collected.
 - iv) Reviewing the Founders' Circle Prize process this year, Lauren Winner recommended that one or two people be put in charge of the process in the future; perhaps one Board member and one ES coordinator could oversee the logistics. The work isn't overly burdensome if the process is clear. Shannon found it helpful to individually email everyone on the roster. The Prize poster also went out

to everyone in the Society to disseminate, so that the context it wasn't limited to ES members. The contest can be seen as a way to invite new members, rather than making membership a barrier to participating.

- v) Shannon was enthusiastically thanked for her generous and excellent work for the Group.
- b. *Spiritus*: Steven Chase explained that items being considered include international visibility, connections with Emerging Scholars, and getting the journal to those who aren't members. He's working with JHUP to set up a system for purchasing individual copies.
 - i) Anita raised the possibility of promoting gift memberships. We had an uptick of membership when JHUP offered a book promotion; could the Society subsidize gift renewals? Could we give individual issues?
 - ii) As noted in the Treasurer's report, we have very few non-OECD members; why?
 - iii) Tim gave a gift subscription and found that the renewal notice came to him rather than the recipient. *Action: Anita will follow up with JHUP.* [This is JHUP's practice. They are looking into easier ways to give gift subscriptions.]
 - iv) Celia asked about the review process for the journal. Steven explained that submissions are read blindly by two reviewers, who rate articles on a five-level scale, from clear rejection to print without revision; authors who are encouraged to submit revisions do receive reviewers' comments. There is discussion of doing away with blind review, since reviewers are in the field of the author and can sometimes be identified simply by their expertise.
 - v) Celia noted that *Studies in Spirituality* publishes helpful book reviews and asked whether book reviews could be disseminated through a database; she would be happy to help with this. Steven noted that *Studies in Spirituality* has significant resources not available to *Spiritus*. Bernadette also commended the significant service provided by the reviews from Titus Brandsma. Glen asked whether such reviews might be helpful to Emerging Scholars.
 - vi) Glen commended the journal's excellence and Steven's fine work, and supported the idea of making the journal more widely available. He also thanked Steven for supporting advertisements related to the Society, such as the notice on the Rome conference; Steven noted that there is cost for such advertisements, but it's quite small.
 - vii) Kyle asked about library access; Steven noted that the journal is available through Project MUSE and can be purchased through Johns Hopkins.
- c. International Relations Committee (IRC): Diana Villegas reported that the Committee met Saturday and discussed several issues.
 - i) Membership: It defined the Committee's size as 8-10 members. They welcomed a new member, Tim Geoffrion, who works six months a year in Myanmar (Burma), and is the only person in the country promoting a spirituality program. Diana has had conversations with potential members in Korea, New Zealand, and Australia. Two members of the Committee are stepping down, and two new members, from Australia and Korea, will be invited to join. The Korean member will be starting a group and is optimistic about interest and resources.
 - ii) The Committee will also convene twice a year via Zoom, given the difficulties of travel.
 - iii) The Committee discussed the length of members' terms (3 or 4 years) and the possibility of renewing terms. This will be finalized in the next Zoom meeting, in late winter or spring.
 - iv) All members will be invited to write up significant areas of research or publications from their part of the world that can be read in English. Tim, as Book Review Editor of *Spiritus*, would like to include one or two reviews of books that may not even be in English, to let subscribers know what's going on; he invited suggestions from IRC members. *Action: Tim and Diana will continue the discussion.*
 - v) Steven also invited suggestions of any work that might be good to publish in *Spiritus*.

- vi) As noted at the Summit, there's a range of views on internationalization in the Society. She's invited those with distinctive perspectives to write them down to contribute to the discussion.
 - vii) She reiterated that the conference in Rome will be very economically priced; members can send inquiries on housing to spiritualitatis2019@ gmail.com.
 - viii) Glen thanked Diana for her energy and also expressed gratitude for Gilberto's contributions, including fundraising.
 - ix) Glen pointed to the documents attached to the agendas (below), explaining that the Society wants to encourage both the autonomy of the Committee in making decisions about issues such as term limits, and ongoing communication with the Board. He also noted that, in promoting internationalization, the Society's purpose is to build relationships with international partners. This will preserve the energy and resources of the Society, as well as allow us to be engaged and interactive in an egalitarian way with other scholarly societies. He asked whether the IRC overall would agree with the document; Diana responded that many would, though there is a diversity of view. An important point to decide is whether there will be regular international meetings, how often that will happen, and who has responsibility for planning. Bernadette noted that the document should mention international scholarly networks; the more we can work with such networks already in place, the better. For instance, she thanked the Center with whom we're collaborating in Rome, which has contributed great resources in order to make scholarly exchange possible. Celia noted that the conference in Johannesburg used a similar model; the organization was provided by SPIRASA, and the collaboration went very smoothly. Celia concluded that the Society doesn't need to have "international" in its name, because it's already international. Glen summarized that we seem comfortable in our North American identity; Doug responded that there may actually be more diversity in views than was apparent at the Summit.
 - x) Steven moved that the IRC be at the forefront of locating international venues for conferences and planning the conferences. The Committee was very active in that process this year, but the process has not been formalized. Diana pointed out that because we'd be partnering with other societies, the other societies would collaborate in creating the programs. The motion was withdrawn in order to have fuller conversation. *Action: Over the coming year, we'll clarify the responsibilities of the IRC in the process for planning future conferences.*
 - xi) Glen concluded that it's important to promote both communication and autonomy for ES, IRC, and *Spiritus*.
5. Review of Board Summit. Over the coming year, we'll be in process to make some changes, some of which will affect the Constitution; a plan will be presented to the membership next year.
6. SSCS Organizational Change Proposals
- a. Restructuring of Secretary/Treasurer Position. Glen noted the importance of this role in the Society, and observed that Anita has taken on responsibilities not explicitly in her job description. Making the role more sustainable will be helpful in transitioning to a new Secretary/Treasurer. Possible restructuring could be possible through identifying portfolios for Board members that would allow a more equal distribution of labor. For instance, it would be helpful to identify leaders for event planning and communications. It was also helpful that, in Diana, the Chair of the IRC was also an At-large Director; it would be desirable to make the IRC Chair a permanent part of the Board *ex officio*. There's also a quick learning curve for the President, who then cycles off after one year in that position. We could examine other models like the AAR's; ask the Past President to be a more active contributor, rather than a consultant; or increase terms to two years for VP and two years for President. In considering options, we don't want to be a small society with an oversize administration.
 - b. Anita observed that the job description of the Secretary/Treasurer position isn't inappropriate; however, job descriptions of the President and Vice President aren't adequate and don't reflect the Society's new

- initiatives. She expressed concern for adding more administrative positions for a shrinking society and in particular for adding more stipended positions, given that our finances may not always support that.
- c. Anita observed that adding the Past President to the Executive Committee is an easy change to propose at the next members' meeting; as a change to the Constitution, it could be implemented only by an in-person or mail vote of the membership. Changing term limits would also entail a change to the Constitution but might suffice to address many current concerns. The IRC taking over conventions would be a great help in making the Executive Committee's work more sustainable. *Action: Tim and Glen will consider how to revise the job descriptions.*
 - d. Bernadette observed that the Executive is currently a notional concept without the necessary clear structure. Members need to meet regularly rather than working through email. The Executive could, for instance, meet during the AAR, as well as in regular Zoom conversations, as was very effective in planning the Rome conference. Anita noted that Zoom scheduling can be difficult, especially across time zones.
 - e. The Vice-President and President elected already were not expecting to have longer terms, and they shouldn't be required to serve them if the Constitution is changed. We have informally included Pieter in work this year, but Past Presidents have not generally expected to be active on the Board.
 - f. Defined responsibilities for Board positions should be clarified soon. Celia offered to participate in IRC activities as a way for her to contribute.
 - g. Glen reiterated the importance of communications. Carter recommended we find an Emerging Scholar who can take that on as a task, as part of their contribution or as an intern. Someone on the Board would need to supervise that person.
7. Succession Plan for Secretary/Treasurer Position. This needs to be a priority in the coming year to ensure some overlap and training.
 8. Possible 2018-2019 Survey of SSCS Membership
 - a. Glen commended Doug and his assistant, Isaac Petty, for the work they did on the pre-Summit survey. The plan had been to solicit views of the membership. Tim suggested that, given that we've already established an ambitious agenda for the year, this may not be helpful, and compiling results would entail a significant amount of work. Steven suggested that having some time to process the Summit findings would be helpful. The consensus was that we discuss the findings and survey at a mid-year virtual meeting.
 9. Planning Group for Friday Session in San Diego (Nov. 22): The tradition has been for a couple Board members to help design the event on Friday, ideally in collaboration with a local representative who knows the local resources. Glen is willing to be the local resource. Anita proposed dinner at a locavore, fair-trade restaurant that can seat 66 but doesn't have ample space for a program; the topic could be spirituality of food. Anita and Doug will be part of the planning team, with Anita taking the lead; Anita said it would be ideal to include an ES member. *Action: Rachel and Kyle will poll ES members to find see if anyone would be willing to be part of the planning team.*
 10. Format for Board Deliberations throughout 2018-2019
 - a. Doug asked about a Zoom meeting for the entire Board midyear. Tim agreed that could be a good model to try; more meetings than that seems like too big an increase at this point.
 11. Future AAR meetings (for noting)
 - a. 2019 San Diego (Nov. 23-26)
 - b. 2020 Boston (Nov. 21-24)
 - c. 2021 San Antonio (Nov. 20-23)
 12. Glen thanked everyone for their contributions.
 13. Adjournment: The meeting adjourned at approximately 3:06 p.m.

Attendance at Friday plenary: 49 + speaker

THE INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS COMMITTEE (IRC)

See SSCS Policies Manual (section 10.4):

- ii. Membership: The Committee will be composed of members representing the geographic diversity of the Society. Initially, members were appointed by the Board of Directors; once the Committee was established, members were invited by the Chair after consultation with the Board or Executive Committee.
- iii. Term: Members are normally appointed for a (renewable?) four-year term.
- iv. Leadership: The Committee is led by a Chair, who is determined by the members of the Committee. The Chair is appointed for a three-year term, which may extend her term on the Committee. The Chair may be a current member of the Board of Directors but is not otherwise a voting member of the Board. The Chair reports to the Members' Meeting and the Board of Directors during the annual meeting. One member of the Board of Directors will serve as Liaison to the Committee; this person may be, but does not need to be, an official member of the Committee, and may Chair the Committee. The Liaison attends the Committee meeting.
- v. Meeting: The Committee normally meets during the AAR/SBL annual meeting, ideally before the meeting of the Board of Directors; and during biennial SSCS conferences. Additional meetings may be called by the Chair. Minutes of the IRC's meeting should be provided to the Board of Directors.

In 2013, Vice President/President Elect Bernard McGinn presented a well-argued proposal to form an IRC. Acknowledging the value to the members of the SSCS of an expanded and deepened global engagement, the Board established such a Committee to further this goal.

It was clear from the beginning that the SSCS does not aspire to become an international organization. Nor has its aim been to "plant the SSCS flag" around the globe in any colonizing way. Rather, the SSCS aims through its IRC to widen the geographic scope of its scholarly conversations about Christian spirituality, in a mutually respectful manner, to the reciprocal enrichment of all who might chose to participate.

From its beginning, then, the IRC has been intentionally cultivating relationships with scholars outside of North America, encouraging their active participation in the SSCS, proposing solutions to certain obstacles (financial and otherwise) limiting their involvement in the Society, and advocating for opportunities for their voices to be heard.

At the same time, the IRC seeks to stay abreast of international developments in the study of Christian spirituality by identifying contextually significant issues, various centers for the study of Christian spirituality, scholars active in the field, and important works published elsewhere in the world. In doing so, and by reporting on its discoveries as it keeps its ear to the ground, the IRC serves as a vital bridge between the largely North American SSCS and the wider world of spirituality scholarship.

From time to time, the IRC becomes aware of proposed conferences and events in international contexts with which it might be beneficial for the SSCS and its members to participate. It exceeds the resources of the SSCS to organize international conferences of its own. However, it is feasible (and presumably also more appropriate) to cooperate in such endeavors from time to time with international partners. These have nothing directly to do with earlier expectations that the SSCS should organize biennial conferences to supplement its annual gatherings at the AAR.

Initially, the IRC was designed to comply with the current bylaws that require at least two Board Directors to sit on any committee of the Board. It was also resolved that one of the two Directors should also be a member of the Executive Committee. After prior consultation with the Executive Committee, the Chair has been at liberty to recruit additional members who represent the geographic diversity of the Society. Currently, the Chair does not have to be a Board member, but is expected to report to both the Annual Members' Meeting and the meeting of the Board of Directors.

Two developments have increased the need to clarify the mandate and relationship of the IRC to the larger SSCS Board of Directors. The first is the IRC's recent very promising initiatives to co-sponsor a conference with another organization in Rome that is equally committed to the study of Christian spirituality. There is a general consensus that the IRC should have the freedom to engage in such co-sponsoring activities without excessive oversight or micro-management by the SSCS Board. At the same time, the IRC must obtain Board approval for any and all its major commitments, particularly those that involve programming, calendar dates, or potential financial liabilities, or that might have possible impact on the reputation of the Society. The Board of Directors does not envision that the IRC should assume primary responsibility for organizing conferences in international settings.

The second development is that events since 2013 have confirmed the wisdom of an SSCS commitment to international engagement. For the purposes of signaling that this is indeed an SSCS priority, and of streamlining the administration of the IRC, it may be a good idea now that the Chair of the IRC become an elected position on the Board of Directors. Lest the size of the Board of Directors thereby becomes excessive, it might make the most sense to replace one of the Member-at-large positions to be vacated next year with the position of Chair of the IRC. No additional Board member would then need to sit on the IRC, except for a single representative of the Executive Committee as currently required.

If the Board is open to such a recommendation, we shall proceed to craft one for your future consideration and approval, prior to the next Annual Meeting of the SSCS in San Diego (2019).

Glen G. Scorgie
13 November 2018