

**73<sup>rd</sup> General Meeting**

ATHENS 2018

**74<sup>th</sup> General Meeting**

MARBURG 2019

Philipps

Universität  
Marburg

[Consultation  
on the Shape  
and Future of  
the Society](#)

# SNTS NEWSLETTER

## Athens 2018

The 73<sup>rd</sup> General Meeting of the Society took place at the National and Kapodistrian University of Athens, Greece (7-10 August). There were about 250 delegates. The Society is grateful to Prof. Christos Karakolis and his colleagues for collaborating to ensure the success of the meeting. A photographic album is available at: [snts2018.org/snts-2018-photograph-album](http://snts2018.org/snts-2018-photograph-album).

Prof. Jean Zumstein (Switzerland) was inducted as *President* of the Society and delivered his Presidential Address entitled, 'Mémoire, histoire et fiction dans la littérature johannique'.

Prof. John Kloppenborg (Canada) was elected *President* by the Society for the 2019 General Meeting in Marburg, Germany. He now serves on the Committee as *President-Elect*.

Prof. Margaret Mitchell (USA) was announced as the Committee's nominee to become *President* of the Society at the 2020 General Meeting in Rome, Italy. Her nomination will be confirmed at the 2019 General Meeting.

Main papers were delivered by Profs Helen Bond (UK), 'A Fitting End? Self-Denial and a Slave's Death in Mark's Life of Jesus'; Daniel Gerber (France), 'Écouter la première lettre de Paul aux Corinthiens aujourd'hui: quelques impressions, questions et hypothèses'; Eve-Marie Becker (Denmark), 'Das introspektive Ich des Paulus nach Philipper 1-3: Ein Entwurf'; and Harold Attridge (USA), 'Ambiguous Signs, an Anonymous Character; Unanswerable Riddles: The Role of the Unknown in Johannine Epistemology'.

This year's Presidential *Quaestio Disputata*, moderated by Bill Loader (Australia), engaged Profs Adela Collins (USA)/Judith Lieu (UK), Paul Foster (UK), Sandra Huebenthal (Germany) and Alan Kirk (USA) on the subject 'Does Study of Memory Contribute to a Better Understanding of the Jesus Tradition?'

Profs Judith Gundry (USA) and Tobias Nicklas (Germany) retired from the Committee. Prof. Knut Backhaus (Germany) was elected to serve on the Committee for a period of three years. An additional replacement will be nominated at the General Meeting in Marburg.

34 scholars were elected to membership of the Society: Dr Bartosz Adamczewski, Cardinal Stefan Wyszyński University Warsaw (Poland); Prof. Soham Al-Suadi, University of Rostock (Germany); Dr Alicia Batten, University of Waterloo (Canada); Dr Mary Ann Beavis, University of Saskatchewan (Canada); Prof. Francesco Bianchini, Pontificia Università Urbaniana (Italy); Dr Jeffrey Bingham, Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary (USA); Dr Thomas Blanton, Lutheran School of Theology at Chicago (USA); Prof. Gary Burge, Calvin Theological Seminary (USA); Dr Simon Buttica, University of Lausanne (Switzerland); Dr Constantine Campbell, Trinity Evangelical Divinity School (USA); Dr Stephen Chester, North Park University (USA); Dr Michael Cover, Marquette University (USA); Dr Brandon Crowe, Westminster Theological Seminary (USA); Dr Michal Beth Dinkler, Yale University Divinity School (USA); Prof. Predrag Dragutinovic, University of Belgrade (Serbia); Prof. Eva Ebel, Institut Unterstrass of the University of Education of Zurich (Switzerland); Dr Wolfgang Grünstäudl, University of Wuppertal (Germany); Dr Anni

Hentschel, Wolfgang-Von-Goethe-Universität Frankfurt am Main (Germany); Dr Martina Janßen, University of Göttingen (Germany); Prof. Marianne Bjelland Kartzow, University of Oslo (Norway); Dr Steven Kraftchick, Emory University (USA); Dr Michael Kruger, Reformed Theological Seminary, Charlotte, NC (USA); Dr Francisco Lozada, Brite Divinity School (USA); Prof. Teresa Morgan, University of Oxford (UK); Prof. B.J. Oropeza, Azusa Pacific University (USA); Prof. Benjamin Schliesser, University of Bern (Switzerland); Dr Scott Shauf, Gardner-Webb University (USA); Dr Hyeon Woo Shin, Chongsin University, Seoul (South Korea); Dr Christopher Skinner, Loyola University (USA); Prof. Michael Sommer, Universität Halle-Wittenberg (Germany); Dr Alexey Somov, Institute for Bible Translation (Russia); Dr Osvaldo Vena, Garrett Evangelical Theological Seminary (USA); Dr Cecilia Wassén, Uppsala University (Sweden); Prof. Mark Wilson, Stellenbosch University (South Africa).

The Society received news of the deaths of the following former members: Profs Tjitze Baarda (Aug 2017 – President in Montreal 2001); Dafydd Davies (Dec 2017); Andrie du Toit (Jul 2018 – President in Lund 2008); Joachim Gnllka (Jan 2018); John Hinnells (May 2018); Richard Jeske (Jul 2018); William Morrice (Mar 2017); David Peabody (Jun 2018); James Perkin (Dec 2017); Wolfgang Schrage (Oct 2017); Gerhard Sellin (Sep 2017); Douglas Templeton (Aug 2017); Alexander [Sandy] Wedderburn (Mar 2018).

The *Assistant Secretary for International Initiatives*, Prof. Bill Loader (Australia), reported on the work of the four Liaison Committees (Eastern European; African; Asia/Pacific; Latin America/Caribbean). The Society's international initiatives include promoting New Testament scholarship in areas beyond those where such research has traditionally been well represented within the Society, and to identify potential new members. Prof. Loader finishes his term as *Assistant Secretary for International Initiatives* at the end of 2018. He was elected to serve a second term of five years from 2019.

The *Treasurer*, Dr Kathy Ehrensperger (UK), presented the statement of accounts. Dr Ehrensperger finishes her term as *Treasurer* at the end of 2018. Prof. Paul Foster (UK) was

elected to serve as her successor for a term of five years from 2019.

The *Editor of New Testament Studies*, Prof. Francis Watson (UK), reported that 124 articles had been submitted to the Journal over the past year. 25 of these had been accepted for publication. Loveday Alexander (UK), Lutz Doering (Germany), Bernardo Estrada (Italy), Judith Hartenstein (Germany), Bruce Longenecker (USA) and Peter-Ben Smit (Netherlands) are due to retire from the Board at the end of 2018. To replace these members, the Editorial Board nominated, and the Society elected, the following members to serve (2019-21): Christoph Heil (Austria), Matthew Novenson (UK), Mikeal Parsons (USA), Catrin Williams (UK) and Arie Zwiep (Netherlands). The Society was reminded that Dr Simon Gathercole (UK) had been elected to succeed Prof. Watson as *Editor of the Journal* from January 2019.

The *Editor of the Monograph Series*, Prof. Eddie Adams (UK), reported that three monographs had been published in the previous 12 months, two volumes were in production, and contracts had been prepared for four further projects.

## Nomination of New Members

Members are warmly encouraged to nominate new candidates for membership of the Society. *The nomination of younger scholars (including colleagues or former students) and those of diverse backgrounds is especially encouraged.*

The document '[Nominations Application \(2019\)](#)' (available on the Society website) outlines both the criteria and procedure for nominating members. Nominations do need to be accompanied by a statement which makes a

## SUGGESTIONS FROM MEMBERS

The Committee, including its *Presidents* and *Officers*, are keen to receive suggestions for the following positions:

- Presidential nominee (one each year)
- Committee membership (two each year)
- Officers (as each term is concluded)
- Main Paper presenters (4 each year)

Details can be obtained from the *Secretary*

clear and detailed case for membership. All nominations must be received by 1<sup>st</sup> March. (Nominations will only be considered where both proposers have paid their annual subscription.) Those wishing to nominate candidates may first contact the *Assistant Secretary*, [Prof. Todd Still](#).

## Marburg 2019

The Society will meet next year at the Philipps-Universität Marburg, Germany, from Tuesday 30<sup>th</sup> July to Friday 2<sup>nd</sup> August, with optional excursions on Saturday 3<sup>rd</sup> August.

The *Local Organising Committee* is led by Profs Lukas Bormann and Angela Standhartinger. Further details will be included in the February-March newsletter and at the General Meeting website: [snts2019.jimdofree.com](http://snts2019.jimdofree.com).

*Main Papers*: the Presidential Address will be delivered by Prof. John Kloppenborg (Canada), and Main Papers by Profs Martin de Boer (Netherlands), Alain Gignac (Canada), Laura Nasrallah (USA) and Thomas Schmeller (Germany).

*Seminars*: there will be 19 seminars, including three new seminars (see the complete list below). The seminar programme will be finalised in February 2019, and published in the February-March newsletter. Conveners of seminars are reminded that this programme has to be submitted to the *Secretary* by 15<sup>th</sup> February, 2019. Members who would like to present a paper in one of the seminars should feel free to contact the appropriate conveners.

There will be a plenary panel discussion entitled: 'Bultmann and Demythologizing'.

*Offered Short Papers*: there will be 18 slots for Short Papers. Members wishing to offer a Short Paper of 25 minutes should send a proposal to the *Secretary*. Short Papers may be offered in English, German or French. Proposals received before 1<sup>st</sup> February will receive preference. The proposal should be accompanied by a short abstract or outline. New members are especially encouraged to take advantage of this opportunity to present their research. *Please note that members may as a rule deliver only one paper (of any kind) at a General Meeting.*

*Nomination of Guests*: members wishing to nominate a scholar to be a guest at a General Meeting must submit the name to the *Assistant Secretary*, [Prof. Todd Still](#). The invitation will come formally from the *President*, not from the member nominating the guest. No individual may be invited more than once in any four consecutive years; and, candidates for membership of the Society may not attend a General Meeting while they are being nominated for membership of the Society. (In order to avoid embarrassment, please ensure that your annual subscription is paid before proposing a guest invitation.) Guests are of two kinds:

1. *Personal guests* (as distinct from 'accompanying persons' such as partners or children). Any member attending a General Meeting may nominate a non-member to be invited to attend as a personal guest. This guest may participate fully in the academic programme, although not as a presenter. Members must indicate briefly to the *Assistant Secretary* how their guest would contribute to the proceedings. It is recommended that requests be submitted by 1<sup>st</sup> April, although later requests may be considered if there is additional capacity. These guests will be asked to pay an additional registration charge of ca. €15 in lieu of Membership subscriptions.
2. *Seminar guests*. Seminar conveners may nominate a non-member either to present a seminar paper or give a formal response to one. Only one guest is allowed to present a paper per seminar each year, which means that two of the three papers should be presented by members. Additional guests may, however, be nominated to give a response to one or more of the papers. Seminar leaders must indicate briefly the reasons for nominating the seminar guest to present or to respond to a paper. Requests to

## VENUES FOR FUTURE MEETINGS

Marburg: 30 July – 2 August, 2019

Rome: 28-31 July, 2020

Melbourne: July, 2021

The Committee is keen to receive offers to host a General Meeting in 2022 or 2023

Details can be obtained from the *Secretary*

invite a seminar guest must be received by the *Assistant Secretary* by 1<sup>st</sup> February.

*Financial Support for Members and Guests at the Marburg General Meeting:* members from the regions of the Society's international initiatives (Eastern Europe, Africa, Asia/Pacific and Latin America/Caribbean) may be eligible for sponsorship (financial support) from the International Fund to attend the General Meeting. Applications for sponsorship to attend are based on need and are to be submitted to the chair of the appropriate Liaison Committee with an accompanying rationale which makes the case for sponsorship. The chair then submits the applications to the *Assistant Secretary for International Initiatives*, Prof. Bill Loader, for approval.

Guests from these regions may also under certain circumstances be eligible for sponsorship. Such guests must be nominated by members (or the Liaison Committees) and are subject to the same procedure for acquiring an invitation that applies to other guests (see above). If an invitation is offered, the guest may apply for sponsorship (see above).

The Society normally sponsors up to twelve scholars per year. Applications for funding should be submitted by 1<sup>st</sup> December if possible. Requests received by this date should allow applicants to book cheaper flights and deal with possible visa issues in a timely manner.

## Current Seminars

1. 'Constructions of the Histories of Early Christianity' (Cilliers Breytenbach and Clare Rothschild) – terminates in 2020
2. 'The Greek of the New Testament' (Paul Danove, Jesús Peláez and James Voelz) – terminates in **2019**
3. 'Inhalte und Probleme einer neutestamentlichen Theologie' (Christof Landmesser and Mark Seifrid) – terminates in **2019**
4. 'The Johannine Writings' (Jörg Frey, Christina Hoegen-Rohls and Catrin Williams) – terminates in 2020
5. 'The Development of Early Christian Ethics within its Jewish and Greco-Roman Contexts' (Matthias Konradt and William Loader) – terminates in 2020
6. 'The Mission and Expansion of Earliest Christianity' (Eugene Eung-Chun Park, Paul Trebilco and Gosnell Yorke) – terminates in 2021
7. 'Hebrews' (Christian Eberhart and Wolfgang Kraus) – terminates in 2020
8. 'Social History and the New Testament' (Hermut Löhr, Markus Öhler and Anders Runesson) – terminates in 2022
9. 'Early Jewish Theologies and the New Testament' (Jens Herzer and Gerbern Oegema) – terminates in **2019**
10. 'Apocryphal Acts of the Apostles: Reassessment and Roads Forward' (Simon Buttica, Jens Schröter and Janet Spittler) – terminates in 2023
11. 'Papyrology, Epigraphy and the New Testament' (Peter Arzt-Grabner and James Harrison) – terminates in 2023
12. 'Reading Paul's Letters in Context: Theological and Social-Scientific

## Annual Membership Subscriptions

Members should pay their annual subscriptions online at:

[journals.cambridge.org/action/membershipServices/memServHome?name=SNTSHome](http://journals.cambridge.org/action/membershipServices/memServHome?name=SNTSHome)

For assistance, please contact the Cambridge University Press membership services team at:

[memberservices@cambridge.org](mailto:memberservices@cambridge.org)

or call either 1-845-353-7500 (US, Canada, Mexico);

or +44 (0)1223 326070 (Rest of World)

Members benefit from free online access to the entire digital archive of *New Testament Studies*.

Members may only nominate new members, or propose guests or new seminars, or present papers, or attend General Meetings if their subscription for the current year has been paid.

Please note that: 'A member whose subscription is more than two years overdue shall be deemed to have resigned membership.'

- Approaches' (William Campbell and Judith Gundry) – terminates in 2021
13. 'New Testament Textual Criticism' (Claire Clivaz, Hugh Houghton and Tommy Wasserman) – terminates in 2023
14. 'Memory, Narrative and Christology in the Synoptic Gospels' (Samuel Byrskog, David du Toit and Stephen Hultgren) – terminates in 2021
15. 'Philo and Early Christianity' (Per Jarle Bekken and Greg Sterling) – terminates in 2022
16. 'Acta Politica: The Book of Acts and the Political Culture of the Roman Empire' (Knut Backhaus, Carl Holladay and Daniel Marguerat) – terminates in 2021
17. 'Resurrection: New Methods and Approaches' (Shelly Matthews and Daniel Smith) – terminates in 2020
18. 'Reading Galatians in New Perspectives. Methods and Approaches' (Martin Meiser, Dieter Sänger and Korinna Zamfir) – terminates in 2021

19. 'The Phenomenon of Pseudepigraphy' (Christine Gerber and Adela Yarbro Collins) – terminates in 2021

*Members may apply to organise a new seminar. Details are available from the Secretary.*

## The Shape and Future of the Society

At the Athens 2018 General Meeting, Prof. Carl Holladay presented updates on the consultation regarding 'The Shape and Future of the Society'. This report, edited for the Newsletter, is appended below. Members are warmly invited to contribute to the ongoing consultation. The Committee is extremely grateful to Prof. Holladay and his Working Group for their thoughtful and energetic work on the consultation during the course of 2018. The Working Group, chaired by Prof. John Kloppenborg, will continue to refine options over the coming months, and the Committee will finalise and present its decisions at the General Meeting in Marburg (2019).

## Committee Members

### Trustees

*President and Committee Chair:* Prof. Jean Zumstein (Switzerland)

*Past President:* Prof. Michael Wolter (Germany)

*President-Elect:* Prof. John Kloppenborg (Canada)

### *Additional Members:*

2016-19	Prof. Dr Uta Poplutz (Germany)	Dr Risto Uro (Finland)
2017-20	Prof. Daniel Gerber (France)	Dr Korinna Zamfir (Romania)
2018-21	Prof. Knut Backhaus (Germany)	vacancy

The *Presidential Nominee* for 2020/21 is Prof. Margaret Mitchell (USA).

### Officers

*Secretary* (2016-20): Prof. Andrew Clarke (UK), [secretary@snts.international](mailto:secretary@snts.international)

*Assistant Secretary* (2016-20): Prof. Todd Still (USA), [todd\\_still@baylor.edu](mailto:todd_still@baylor.edu)

*Assistant Secretary for International Initiatives* (2019-23): Prof. William R.G. Loader (Australia), [w.loader@murdoch.edu.au](mailto:w.loader@murdoch.edu.au)

*Treasurer* (until December 2018): Dr Kathy Ehrensperger (UK), [k.ehrensperger@uwtsd.ac.uk](mailto:k.ehrensperger@uwtsd.ac.uk); (from January 2019) Prof. Paul Foster (UK), [paul.foster@ed.ac.uk](mailto:paul.foster@ed.ac.uk)

*Editor of the Journal (New Testament Studies)* (until December 2018): Prof. Francis Watson (UK), [francis.watson@durham.ac.uk](mailto:francis.watson@durham.ac.uk); (from January 2019) Dr Simon Gathercole (UK), [sjg1007@cam.ac.uk](mailto:sjg1007@cam.ac.uk)

*Editor of the SNTS Monograph Series* (2018-22): Prof. Edward Adams (UK), [e.adams@kcl.ac.uk](mailto:e.adams@kcl.ac.uk)

## Interim Report on the Consultation (Athens: 2018)

The Working Group consisted of: Prof. Carl Holladay (chair), Andrew Clarke, Judith Gundry, Christina Kreinecker, Bill Loader and Jean-Claude Loba-Mkole. The group's initial focus was on clarifying the mission of SNTS. The Society's constitutional aim is simply: "the furtherance of New Testament studies internationally."

To guide the group's discussion, three core values that have guided the Society since its inception were identified: (1) scholarship at an advanced level; (2) collegiality; (3) individual initiative; and (4) international scope combined with multilingual discourse. These values are reflected in the policies and procedures that govern the Society's decisions and practices. Awareness of these core values informed the group's discussion of specific issues and its resulting proposals for change.

Three main areas were discussed: (A) Membership; (B) General Meetings; and, (C) International Initiatives.

### A. Membership

Feedback from the 2017 Survey indicated a strong consensus that the Society's **high academic standards for membership should remain unchanged**. This reaffirms the core conviction that the Society exists to foster scholarship at an advanced level. However, the Survey and extensive discussions among members suggest that, as the Society moves forward, it should have a broader membership. Specifically:

- the median age of members should be lower;
- the proportion of women and ethnic minorities should be higher;
- the proportion of members from geographical regions beyond Western Europe and North America should be higher;
- there should be greater representation of theories, methodologies and themes that reflect the full breadth of current research related to the New Testament and Christian origins.

To achieve these goals, the group focused on two proposals: (1) to introduce a new category of 'Associate Membership', to which a person could be nominated at an earlier stage of their career, and over time, with additional publications, become a Full Member; and (2) to modify the current policies relating to academic Guests.

The relative merits of each proposal and their long-term implications for the Society were evaluated by the Committee, which concluded that a multi-pronged approach is needed in order to achieve the above goals.

First, members of the Society should continue to be encouraged to adopt **a pro-active policy of nominating new members**. It is imperative that current members identify new scholars, especially younger scholars and those of diverse backgrounds, mentor them as appropriate, and nominate them for membership.

Secondly, **the current academic guest policy should be less restrictive** and thus more effective as a mechanism for attracting new members to the Society – for example, a non-member might be a guest up to two times within a four-year period, and no more than three times within a ten-year period. Moreover, it was recommended that those who invite guests, especially as presenters or participants in Seminars, assess their interest and readiness to become members of the Society; and, when appropriate, take responsibility for nominating them for membership.

Thirdly, the Committee will **re-evaluate the current criteria for membership** to ensure that full credit is given to scholarly articles of high quality that have been published in collections of essays or in other forms such as digital publications, where they are clearly the equivalent of an article in a peer-reviewed journal of international standing.

Fourthly, recognizing the energy and enthusiasm that have arisen over the last two years pertaining to the possibility of Associate Membership, the Committee agreed that **specific models for Associate Membership and recommendations be brought to the Marburg General Meeting (2019)**.

### B. General Meetings

Discussion focused on four areas: (1) Main Papers and Short Papers; (2) Languages; (3) Seminars; and, (4) Considerations for Local Organizing Committees as they plan General Meetings.

#### (1) Main and Short Papers

Reflection on the overall structure of the Main and Short Papers suggested there should be more opportunities for members to read papers at the General Meeting. The Committee agreed there is good reason to move from the current format of four ninety-minute Main Papers to a **new format featuring**

**six sixty-minute invited Main Papers**; and that this revised structure be implemented at the General Meeting in Melbourne (2021). Such a change would also increase the possibility for greater diversity (gender, age, ethnic, geographical and topical) in the plenary sessions.

Recognizing the impact that such changes would have on the overall ethos and structure of the General Meeting, the Committee also agreed to **re-examine the process by which Main Paper presenters are identified, and find ways to solicit suggestions from the wider membership** that could then be forwarded to the Nominations sub-committee.

#### (2) Languages

The Working Group discussed both the current practice of having papers in English, German or French and the possibility of having papers read in other languages. It was recognized that, as the Society becomes more international in its membership, the number of languages in which members are fluent will increase, and that this will bring added pressure to provide opportunities for papers to be presented in more languages. The practical difficulties this might entail were explored over against the potential value of a member giving a paper in a language other than one of the three established languages. In keeping with the core value that the Society is not only international in scope but also multilingual in practice, the Committee concluded that it is advantageous to **retain our current practice of inviting papers in English, German or French**. Although English has become the de facto *lingua franca* of international discourse, it is not advisable to move toward a practice of having all papers in English.

#### (3) Seminars

Responses from the 2017 Members Survey and other feedback underscore the central importance of the Seminars as one of the most valuable components of each General Meeting's Academic Program. The Committee confirmed that **the current structure of the Seminars should be retained**. While the Seminars address a variety of topics relating to New Testament studies, the Committee is convinced that **additional Seminars are needed that actually reflect the full range of current research relating to the New Testament and Christian origins**. In order to achieve this members may need both to identify such topics and recruit Society members who might be encouraged to organize new Seminars that broaden the scope of topics regularly discussed at General Meetings.

The Working Group identified several issues for the Committee to consider each year:

- be more attentive to decisions about renewing Seminars;
- limit the overall period a Seminar might run, for example, a maximum renewal for only one five-year term;
- find a balance between traditional, perennial Seminars such as 'Textual Criticism' or 'The Language of the New Testament', and more occasional Seminars that pursue special topics;
- remind members that Seminar topics can extend beyond the New Testament canon;
- make Seminar papers available to the whole Society, either electronically or as a collection of distributed papers;
- explain to Society members, especially new members, how the Seminars function, how new Seminars are formed and how already existing Seminars are renewed.

#### (4) Considerations for Local Organizing Committees

From the Survey and other feedback, two issues relating to the General Meeting have been frequently mentioned: (1) the cost of attending, and (2) the desire for delegates to have greater freedom to select those elements of the General Meeting Program in which they wish to participate.

On the cost of attending, the Committee concluded that the actual cost of registration for members and accompanying persons tends to be broadly comparable with other conferences. Typically, different options for housing are available, ranging from inexpensive dormitory rooms, or other forms of university housing, to four- and five-star hotels. The major differential relates to travel costs, depending on where one lives in relation to the meeting location. On the whole, the Committee considered that **the costs of attending the General Meeting have not been excessive**, especially since the registration fee includes meals and all refreshments for the four-day period. Moreover, given the benefits members experience from the General Meeting, the financial costs represent reasonable value.

The Committee also recognized the complexity of these issues as they relate to particular locations, and to the work of each Local Organizing Committee (LOC). The *Secretary* works closely with LOCs as they plan their General Meeting, emphasizing the need to use conservative estimates of projected delegate attendance and to develop budgets that ensure against financial deficit. LOCs are encouraged to limit activities such as lavish dinners or expensive social events; although it should be noted that such events are sometimes subsidized, covered by sponsorship, or provided free of charge by the hosting institution. Furthermore, many delegates regard these events as an attractive, distinctive feature of the Society. It is recognized that decisions of this nature have to be made by the LOC, as it seeks to plan a Program that it considers to be both sustainable and attractive to delegates.

The Committee reaffirmed the strong social benefits of the current structure — four days of meetings, followed by the option of a Saturday excursion, and opportunities throughout for social interaction. It is felt that this overall experience distinguishes the SNTS General Meeting from other academic conferences such as SBL. This structure and ethos of the General Meeting are also an expression of our most cherished values — collegiality and social bonding — in which members, over time, can develop working relationships, even close friendships, with other members, sometimes resulting in substantial scholarly collaboration.

The desire for members to have greater autonomy in choosing to participate in only certain parts of the General Meeting, for example the refreshments but not the meals, is difficult to achieve, given the practice of using LOCs to organize General Meetings. Each year, the overall, local budget is reached through negotiations with the hosting university, along with a number of other institutions such as hotels and restaurants, and economies of scale can only be achieved through such negotiations. Given the way in which SBL Annual Meetings are organized, it makes sense for individuals to choose their own accommodation, to arrange for their own meals, and to decide what aspects of the locale to visit. However, this flexibility does not exist, nor is it likely to occur, in the current configuration of the SNTS General Meeting. **The Committee supported the current arrangement, which consists of a single, comprehensive registration package**, with some limited options relating to accommodation, tours and excursions. It is felt that, over time, increasing options for members to participate in selected parts of the General Meeting program would have a negative impact on the collegiality of the Society.

### *C. International Initiatives*

The Working Group discussed the crucial importance of the Society's International Initiatives as they are coordinated by the *Assistant Secretary for International Initiatives* and carried out by the four Regional Liaison Committees. The Committee agreed these **international initiatives have been effective in extending the Society's reach and influence** in different parts of the world. This confidence stems from recognizing that the Society, in its origin and development, has tended to be western European and North American in its membership and outlook, and that **conscious effort has been required**, especially since the 1990s, **to develop a more inclusive outlook and membership**. These efforts have also stemmed from the Society's recognition that important scholarly work relating to the New Testament occurs in many different parts of the world and that the Society needs to be pro-active in promoting such scholarship and in identifying younger New Testament scholars throughout the world, mentoring them in appropriate ways, and assisting them in becoming members of SNTS. The Society's position in this regard is succinctly: Do not exclude people from the Society who should be included.

However, the Committee recognized that some SNTS members may not fully comprehend the importance and scope of the work carried out under the auspices of the Regional Liaison Committees. Accordingly, reports on these initiatives at the General Meeting and in the Newsletters will continue. Members are reminded that the General Meeting is not the only public face of the Society, but that the Society is also visibly present in the various activities and meetings of the Regional Liaison Committees. **It is vital to maintain the practice of regional meetings, along with periodic pre-conference meetings** in which New Testament scholars from a particular region can present their work and subsequently attend that General Meeting.

The Committee also discussed some of the special challenges facing the Regional Liaison Committees, especially travel and other costs to enable members to participate in regional activities and conferences. The practice of organizing meetings of New Testament scholars in various parts of the world has gone well. Naturally, this is an important means of identifying and attracting scholars who might be members of SNTS. **The Society must find ways to fund these activities**, especially the travel expenses, of scholars in those areas in which our Regional Liaison Committees function.

### *Conclusion*

The Committee, along with other Society members, have worked hard over the last two years in responding to Judith Lieu's invitation in Montreal 2016 to reflect on the shape and future of the Society; to re-evaluate its purpose and envision its long-term future; and to think creatively about the policies, procedures, and structures that will enable the Society to fulfill its mission.

The responses and suggestions already received from many members have been deeply appreciated, and further feedback to this interim report is warmly invited. Members may contact John Kloppenborg (*President-Elect*; [john.kloppenborg@utoronto.ca](mailto:john.kloppenborg@utoronto.ca)), Andrew Clarke (*Secretary*; [secretary@snts.international](mailto:secretary@snts.international)), or any member of the SNTS Committee.

The SNTS Committee will conclude the Consultation at the Marburg (2019) General Meeting.