

Presbyterian and Reformed

James C. Pakala

PRESENT

- James Pakala, Covenant Theological Seminary, Convener
- Margaret Alkema, Canadian Reformed Theological Seminary
- Daniel Baek, Vancouver School of Theology
- Steve Crocco, Yale University
- Arnel Z. Faller, Silliman University
- Dan Flores, Western Theological Seminary
- Steve Jamieson, Covenant Theological Seminary
- Denise Pakala, Covenant Theological Seminary
- Christopher Richardson, Union Presbyterian Seminary
- Deanna Roberts, Union Theological – NYC at Columbia University
- Dora Rowe, Union Presbyterian Seminary
- Michelle Spomer, Pittsburgh Theological Seminary
- Sharon Taylor, retired; librarian and archivist at home congregation of Shadyside Presbyterian Church, Pittsburgh

ABSENT WITH NOTICE BUT PROVIDING AN INSTITUTIONAL NEWS REPORT VIA EMAIL

- Patrick Milas (New Brunswick Theological Seminary)

We met Thursday, June 13, 2019, from 5:00-6:00 pm in the Junior Ballroom C at the Sheraton Vancouver Wall Centre in Vancouver, BC. Jim Pakala chaired the meeting and Margaret Alkema took minutes.

James Pakala welcomed all who were present, either because they work at a Presbyterian or Reformed seminary or because they are committed to the Presbyterian/Reformed church and faith, and then opened the discussion by asking who makes decisions about physical space at the libraries where members work. For example, who decides what artwork will be hung, how storage space will be used, etc.?

Western Theological Seminary in Michigan has some say over what

is currently in the library space, but the building maintenance department controls items that are in shared spaces. Pittsburgh Theological Seminary completed a renovation and Michelle Spomer had lots of input in the design, construction, etc. She anticipates having input into any future changes that need to be made. There is much empty wall space and she said that they are thinking about this creatively, such as the possibility of a resident artist, etc. Christopher Richardson (Union Presbyterian) noted that at times committees make these decisions at Union. Steve Crocco (Yale) says there is a “wall committee” and while there have been many meetings, only two pieces of artwork are installed!

Members present who are currently not on the Presbyterian and Reformed denominational email discussion list were encouraged to sign up personally via the Atla members website. Please contact an Atla staff member to be added to the email list. The list is very inactive, so your email inbox will not overflow as a result.

All present were asked to provide a brief update on their institution or other professional activities they have been involved with.

Christopher Richardson, Union Presbyterian Seminary

Christopher was the ATS Self-study coordinator and the staff members in the library have also been busy with ATS work. The library installed compact shelving via someone who finds used shelving and installs it. Feel free to contact Christopher for more information. Union is also updating its website.

Dora Rowe, Union Presbyterian Seminary

The library received a grant to improve its makerspace. The library also offers many child-friendly resources (e.g., Lego), and this allows parents to study while their children are suitably and safely occupied. They have a podcasting studio set up now and can film Powerpoint presentations, etc. Some nice features are a large prompting screen. They have also a glass cutter.

Daniel Baek, Vancouver School of Theology

Daniel is the only librarian there and works with a library assistant, who is currently on sick leave. The enrollment has gone up to about 80 FTE. Daniel is looking at increasing the ebook collection.

Arnel Z. Faller, Silliman University

This was Arnel's first time attending the denominational meeting. He noted that the institution he is employed at has historic ties to the Presbyterian Church.

Dan Flores, Western Theological Seminary

Beardslee Library has now become the Cook Library. Cook Library is housed in a new building with less space than the previous location. A new addition to the library space is the café on the first floor. Dan is the new director and has been on the job in this role for approximately 30 days. The library staff are also looking at increasing their digital presence and foreign language resources.

Sharon Taylor is not currently employed at a library connected to an educational institution. She is the librarian at Shadyside Presbyterian Church and has been working many hours on the library and on the archives, which are being found in many nooks and crannies of the building. The problem is that the church has no space for the archives but some interesting items have been found, such as a collection of poetry by Milton. The church has never had a professional librarian before and Sharon is trying to renew the book collection.

Steve Crocco is here personally as a Presbyterian, but not representing a Presbyterian or Reformed seminary. He reported that Yale has a large endowment fund with a subject restriction, which Yale cannot spend because the funds are so large that there are not enough resources in that subject area to spend the money. Yale is continuing with its petition to the state to change the restrictions on the fund. Steve also reported that a staff member encountered an older patron in the library, and after striking up a conversation, the staff member realized that the patron had materials of significant interest for the library. All present were reminded to take an interest in all patrons and not to underestimate who might walk through the doors.

Deanna Roberts, Union Theological – NYC at Columbia University

Deanna is working on a getting an MLIS and determining how to be a librarian while maintaining ordination status in the Presbyterian Church (USA). There are still issues surrounding the amalgamation issues of Burke Library within Columbia University. Burke staff

serve Union Theological Seminary as well as patrons from the Jewish Theological Seminary, New York Theological Seminary, and of course Columbia University. They have just hired a sixth professional staff member to deal with the many patrons in their busy library.

Michelle Spomer, Pittsburgh Theological Seminary

The library has moved into its new library space and hosted a grand opening. There are some minor problems such as photocopiers not fitting into the niches built for them, but other than similarly minor and/or annoying issues, the library space is greatly appreciated. The special collections are not back in the building yet because the HVAC system for the special collections area is not working. The recording and media room can also be used to listen to media in the library. Patrons can record themselves for homiletics courses and other community uses. Another interesting item to note is that the new Pittsburgh Theological Seminary library has office and space built for an archivist, but the institution is not willing to hire an archivist. The year the library opened, the school also changed to the semester system and made changes to the curriculum, so changes were plentiful in one academic year. The school is also looking into replacing the server for Sierra because it is aging. All options are on the table, including changing the library's ILS.

Patrick Milas, New Brunswick Theological Seminary

Patrick was not present, but reported the following via email:

It has been an incredible year at the Sage Library. Since the last institutional report, there have been several staff transitions. Rev. James Brumm (Reformed) is the new Archivist. Dr. Patrick Milas (Episcopal) is the new Director of the Library. Mr. Gerone Lockhart (Reformed) is the new Collection Services Librarian. Ms. Laura Giacobbe (Roman Catholic) is the new Public Services Librarian. A new half-time position, Library Associate for Collection Services, has just been advertised. Please direct any interested parties to: <http://www.nbts.edu/employment-at-nbts/>. Review of applications will begin July 1, 2019.

Sage Library celebrates several accomplishments, including: an updated online catalog, updated print serials

program, a new Faculty and Alumni Monographs Book Reading/Signing series, a new monthly thematic book display program, an updated social media campaign, and new video tutorials about library services. Sage Library partnered with the NBTS Archives and members of the Reformed Church in America to host “The Dutch in Two Worlds Revisited: a Rare Books and Manuscripts Exhibition.”

Next year, NBTS Library staff will serve the Southeastern Pennsylvania Theological Library Association (SEPTLA) as officers—Patrick Milas (President) and Laura Giacobbe (Secretary). Two Reformed seminaries may host the next SEPLTA meetings, including Westminster Theological Seminary and NBTS.

James Pakala, Covenant Theological Seminary

James reported that Denise Pakala is retiring this summer on June 30th. She will continue to volunteer for special projects at the library and share her skills with the library. Libraries in some other states besides Missouri have joined or are interested in joining the MOBIUS consortium, so it continues to grow. Innovative’s Sierra and their INNReach system constitute the platform and courier service speeds sharing resources among over a half-dozen states. MOBIUS and Colorado’s Prospector consortium also have a special relationship and means of sharing.

Margaret Alkema, Canadian Reformed Theological Seminary

Margaret reported that the school had its largest ever enrollment of 25 students. The seminary is also preparing for a spring ATS visit and Margaret is coordinating the self-study process. Since she is a solo librarian, this is taking up some of the time otherwise devoted to library projects.