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# Conference

Erica Durham, Committee Chair

## COMMITTEE MEMBERS

- Erica Durham, Columbia Theological Seminary, Chair
- Cindy Aalders, Regent College
- Miranda Bennett, University of South Carolina
- Robert Burgess, Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary
- Gerone Lockhart, New Brunswick Theological Seminary
- Robert Roethemeyer, Concordia Theological Seminary
- Christopher Spilker, Sacred Heart Major Seminary
- Paul Tippey, Asbury Theological Seminary
- Megan Welsh, University of Colorado Boulder
- Gillian Harrison Cain, Atla Director of Member Programs

## REPORT ON ATLA ANNUAL 2019

I welcome you to the traditional, ancestral, unceded lands of the han̓q̓əmin̓əm̓-speaking Musqueam people.

–Alec Dan

The conference opened with a generous welcome from Alec Dan, one of Musqueam's Knowledge Keepers. It drew our attention to the pride and ownership that First Nations people have for their culture and the loving care with which they welcome visitors to it (Metro Vancouver is home to **eleven** [First Nations](#)).

Situated in the heart of downtown Vancouver, the Sheraton Wall Centre afforded conference attendees a central location with **dozens** of options for dining, **nine** water taxi docks, sunset views from **seven** beaches, short walks to **one** famous library, and the joys of **240** shops and businesses on Granville Island.

Over **thirty** adventurous theological librarians traveled to the University of British Columbia for a pre-conference excursion. Over **200** conference attendees delighted in the arrival of snacks each day (chicken and waffles!!) at the exhibit hall where **twenty-**

**five** exhibitors showered attendees with new products and cool swag (Brill brought the perforated notebooks again!!!). Attendees from **fifteen** countries attended **fifty-five** concurrent sessions and pre-conference workshops.

[Three plenary speakers](#) for the conference gave practical and relevant lectures related to the Organizational Ends and Core Values of Atla. The topics addressed were: Open Access (widest possible access to relevant information and ideas), Accelerating Allyship (hospitality, inclusion, and diversity), and Evolving Faith Traditions (growth in wisdom). Ask a colleague who attended the conference to share the four definitions of Indigenization!

Especially meaningful to me this year were the **four** memorials and the recognition of **ten** retiring members. I was thankful to be reminded of the diversity of paths our members have taken, spanning decades of faithful service to the field of theological librarianship.

The **two** “business” meetings were quite good! Executive Director Brenda Bailey-Hainer recognized the dedicated work of the Atla staff and reported on the excellent fiscal numbers (**lots** of them). Outgoing president Jenny Bartholomew gave a heartfelt overview of the hard work of the Board during the re-branding process. The commitment of the **twelve** board members to the Association is evident (at least to me). Gentle and hopeful, the words outgoing President Bartholomew offered should be **counted** as one of the best presidential addresses in recent history.

The Inaugural [Atla International Theological Librarian Leadership Institute](#) took place at the conference this year. The leadership team provided a week of seminars, conference attendance, and library tours sharing best practices in theological librarianship with **three** librarians from around the world who were seeking training in theological librarianship.

A huge thank you to the **nine** members of the Conference Committee, the **two** new committee members, and the **two** outgoing members. We will be hard at work planning for the [74th Annual Conference \(2020\)](#) in Detroit, Michigan (**48226**)! You can **count** on it!



**2019–2020 COMMITTEE:** [front, left to right] Cindy Aalders, Gerone Lockhart, Miranda Bennett; [rear, left to right] Megan Welsh, Erica Durham, Chris Spilker, Robert Roethemeyer, Robert Burgess; [not pictured] Paul Tippey