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# COMMITTEE & TASK FORCE REPORTS

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## Conference

*Denise McFarlin, Atla Conference Committee Staff Liaison*

### COMMITTEE MEMBERS

- Michael Bradford, Wayne State University, Co-Chair
- Jude Morrissey, Yale University Divinity School, Co-Chair
- Ezra Choe, Baylor University
- James Estes, Library of Congress
- Liz Leahy, Azusa Pacific University
- Michelle Spomer, Pittsburgh Theological Seminary
- Megan Welsh, Union College
- Gillian Harrison Cain, Atla, Director of Membership and Engagement
- Denise McFarlin, Atla Staff Liaison

### YEAR IN REVIEW

The Conference Committee welcomed a new member, Megan Welsh, this year. Michelle Spomer was appointed as our 2025 Local Host Committee Representative. The committee held a planning meeting via Zoom on October 3. We reviewed the Atla Annual 2024 post-conference survey during this meeting and began planning for Atla Annual 2025. We confirmed the proposal submission process, timeline, and draft conference schedule. The committee then completed further work via email, such as advertising the call for proposals to various listservs and rating proposal submissions. The

committee met again via Zoom over two half-days on January 29 & 31. During this winter meeting, we formally accepted proposals and drafted a detailed conference schedule. Leading up to the conference, committee members coordinated the memorial videos and organized the conference game night. During the conference, committee members hosted each session. The committee then met again after the conference for an in-depth session to debrief and discuss the future of Atla Annual with extensive ideas for next year.

### **ATLA ANNUAL 2025 IN REVIEW**

Atla Annual 2025 was held at the Omni William Penn Hotel in Pittsburgh, as well as virtually, June 18-21. The conference opened with plenary speaker Frank M. Yamada, Executive Director of The Association of Theological Schools. His talk, “Working at the Crossroads of the Great Transition in Theological Education: Serving Students Inside and Outside the Church’s Walls,” provided an excellent foundation for the subsequent conference presentations. For the closing plenary, Keith Webster, Dean of University Libraries at Carnegie Mellon, presented “Reimagining the Sacred Space: Libraries, Technology, and the Future of Theological Scholarship,” which gave us all much to consider. Overall, Atla Annual 2025 consisted of 35 concurrent sessions, three worship services, two post-conference workshops, and Atla’s annual association update and business meeting. These sessions provided engaging and innovative content that allowed attendees to learn and grow as professionals. The conference had multiple sessions on artificial intelligence, proving it to be a relevant subject yet again. Overall, the spirit of innovation, collaboration, and community on display at Atla Annual allows us to continue to face the challenges and opportunities that lie ahead for our libraries, our institutions, and our profession.

### **ATLA ANNUAL 2025: BY THE NUMBERS**

Whether in-person or online, our community of members and attendees is a hallmark of what makes Atla Annual such a great conference. This year’s conference included 197 attendees. In-person attendees accounted for 132 registrants and online attendees accounted for 65 registrants. Attending the conference in either modality for the first time were 42 individuals. We also had eight (8) international attendees, while ten (10) attendees joined

us from Canada. To keep the community spirit going, we had 40 participants at the Second Annual Game Night, which offered some friendly competition and camaraderie. After the conclusion of the conference, members gathered virtually over several weeks as six interest groups and seven denominational groups held their annual business meetings.