

SOUTHEASTERN PENNSYLVANIA THEOLOGICAL LIBRARY ASSOCIATION AMENDED BYLAWS

AS ADOPTED August 26, 2025

1.0. Membership

1.1. Criteria

1.1.1. Members shall be libraries of institutions that are engaged in theological education primarily at the graduate level and which are accredited or formally seeking accreditation by a recognized accrediting agency.

1.1.2. Such libraries shall have their own library facilities within the SEPTLA region with adequate collection and accessibility to support their academic programs and the interests of SEPTLA. There must be a demonstrated ongoing commitment to maintain the same.

1.2. Duties and Responsibilities of Members

1.2.1. Members shall demonstrate a commitment to the association's constitution and bylaws.

1.2.2. Members shall participate in those cooperative agreements that are adopted by a vote of the members.

1.2.3. Members shall remain current in the payment of annual dues of the association.

1.2.4. Members are expected to encourage their library staff to attend meetings of the association and be active participants involved in its activities.

1.2.5. Members shall have one officially designated voting representative to this association.

1.3. Admission, Resignation, and Withdrawal

1.3.1. A library may request membership by applying in writing to the President. The Executive Committee will review the request, conduct a site visit, and present a report of recommended actions to the Members. A library may be elected as a Member by a majority vote of the designated voting representatives participating in an announced vote of the association.

1.3.2. A Member may resign by written notice to the President.

1.3.3. A Member becomes inactive, thereby losing voting privilege in the association, by failure to pay dues within 90 days of the due date. An inactive Member becomes active upon payment of dues.

1.3.4. The Members may vote to withdraw membership from a Member for repeated failure to meet the duties and responsibilities of membership as defined in section 1.2. Membership may be withdrawn by a majority vote of the designated voting representatives participating in an announced vote of the association.

2.0. Finances

2.1. Annual dues will be set by vote of the membership. Each member institution shall submit payment to the Treasurer no later than October 30th of each fiscal year.

2.2. Other costs of cooperative endeavors and special endeavors may be levied from time to time in accord with agreements for the endeavor or by majority vote of the Member institutions.

2.3. The fiscal year of the association shall be July 1 to June 30.

3.0. Contributed Services

Officers of the association, chairs of committees and leaders of cooperative endeavors shall serve without remuneration.

4.0. Election of Officers

4.1. Elections shall be held annually at the Spring meeting.

4.2. Nominations are to be solicited from the staffs of the Member institutions by the Past President. Additional nominations may be submitted by the general membership from the floor at the Spring meeting.

4.3. If there are two or more candidates for an office, election shall be conducted by means of paper ballot. If there is only one candidate for an office, election may be by acclamation or voice vote.

4.4. A simple majority of persons present from Member institutions will be sufficient for election.

4.5. In the event of a tie, candidates will come forward for a brief question and answer time. After the question and answer time, a revote will occur. In the event of another tie, a revote will be taken until there is a simple majority winner.

5.0. Terms of Office

5.1. Officers shall serve a term of one year unless otherwise provided in these Bylaws.

5.2. Newly elected officers shall begin their term of service upon the adjournment of the Spring meeting.

5.3. The President and Secretary may stand for re-election for a consecutive second one-year term. If the President is re-elected for a second term, the Past President shall serve a second term.

5.4. The term of Treasurer shall be four years. The Treasurer may stand for reelection for one additional term.

5.5. Positions appointed by the Executive Committee shall begin their term of service upon adjournment of the meeting in which they are appointed.

5.6. Chairs of interest groups shall begin their term of service upon the adjournment of the meeting in which they are elected by the interest group.

5.7. Vacancies

5.7.1. In the case of incapacity or resignation of the President, the Past President shall fill the office until the next election. Lacking an incumbent, the Executive Committee shall fill the office until the next annual meeting.

5.7.2. Vacancies in any office shall be filled by appointment by the Executive Committee with the appointee to serve the remainder of the term.

5.7.3. Service by appointment shall not disqualify the appointee from eligibility for election to a full term in the next election.

5.7.4. Office held by a person no longer employed by a Member institution of the association shall be declared vacant at the time of separation from the institution.

6.0. Duties of Officers

6.1. President

6.1.1. The President shall call, prepare agendas for, and preside at all plenary meetings of the association.

6.1.2. The President shall thank the host institution and speaker(s) in writing.

6.1.3. The President shall call, prepare agendas for, and chair meetings of the Executive Committee.

6.1.4. The President shall serve as a member of the Executive Committee during the time of service as president and while in the capacity of immediate past president.

6.1.5. The President, with the assistance of the Executive Committee, shall schedule a review of official SEPTLA documents when the need arises.

6.1.6. The President, in consultation with the Executive Committee, shall determine the need for task forces.

6.1.7. The President shall be responsible for prompt response to inquiries made via the SEPTLA website or email mailing list.

6.1.8. The President shall send a welcome message to new library directors, including the SEPTLA bylaws and the direct-borrowing agreement for the signature of the new director.

6.2. Secretary

6.2.1. The Secretary shall record minutes of the general membership meetings of the association and shall forward them to the Executive Committee for editing and distribution to the membership, and to the Archivist for retention in the SEPTLA records.

6.2.2. The Secretary shall canvas the directors of member libraries for updates to the online SEPTLA Directory before the fall meeting each year. The Secretary shall ensure that the additions/corrections to the Directory are updated on the web page.

6.2.3. The Secretary shall serve as a member of the Executive Committee.

6.3. Treasurer

6.3.1. The Treasurer shall serve as the primary contact for the bank.

6.3.2. The Treasurer shall receive, steward and disburse any moneys of the association, maintain records of income and expense, and provide reports during each Executive Committee meeting and plenary business meeting.

6.3.3. The Treasurer shall serve as a member of the Executive Committee.

6.4. Past President

6.4.1. The Past President shall actively assist the President in the administration of the Executive Committee and the plenary business meetings. In the absence of or at the request of the President, the Past President shall chair meetings as needed.

6.4.2. The Past President shall take minutes of the Executive Committee meetings and shall forward them to the Executive Committee for editing, and then to the Archivist for retention in the SEPTLA records. Minutes shall be made available to Members upon request.

6.4.3. The Past President shall distribute a survey after each membership meeting, analyze the results, and share the findings with the Executive Committee.

6.4.4. The Past President shall solicit nominations for those offices to be filled in the annual elections.

6.4.5. The Past President shall solicit applications for the Atla annual conference scholarship.

6.5. Website Manager

6.5.1. The Website Manager shall be appointed by the Executive Committee.

6.5.2. The Website Manager is responsible for keeping the SEPTLA website current and managing the SEPTLA email mailing list.

6.6. Archivist

6.6.1. The Archivist shall be appointed by the Executive Committee.

6.6.2. The Archivist is responsible for keeping all the current and historical records of SEPTLA, both physical and digital.

6.7. Chair of the Continuing Education Committee

6.7.1. The Chair of the Continuing Education Committee shall be appointed by the Executive Committee.

6.7.2. The Chair of the Continuing Education Committee shall be responsible for leading the Continuing Education Committee meetings.

6.7.3. The Chair of the Continuing Education Committee is responsible for the submission of grant requests to subsidize continuing education.

6.8. Chairs of Interest Groups

6.8.1. Chairs of Interest Groups, as established by Section 8, shall be elected by the membership of the interest group.

6.8.2. Chairs of Interest Groups shall be responsible for leading Interest Group meetings.

6.9. Chairs of Task Forces

6.9.1. Chairs of Task Forces, as established by Section 9, shall be appointed by the Executive Committee.

6.9.2. Chairs of Task Forces shall be responsible for leading Task Force meetings.

7.0. Programs and Projects

7.1. Definition and Determination

7.1.1. The entire association or any group of libraries of the association may undertake projects which enhance services, cooperation, access or resources for those libraries.

7.1.2. To be recognized as an undertaking of the association, the endeavor must receive endorsement by affirmative majority vote at a regular meeting of the association.

7.2. Participation and Withdrawal

7.2.1. Most endeavors of the association are to be voluntarily undertaken by the members. Insofar as possible, different libraries will undertake various aspects of the work to minimize outlay of moneys or separate accounting.

7.2.2. For endeavors which require financial commitments to outside entities, institutions opting to participate in a particular endeavor shall be responsible for their fair share of costs as determined at the inception, or adjusted underway, even if they later choose to withdraw from the project.

7.2.3. Agreements may also be forged if one or more institutions undertake a program on behalf of the association that requires the outlay of moneys or staff support beyond the ability of the

institution to support. Such agreements, including projected costs, shall be made in writing and subscribed to by participating libraries prior to such undertakings.

7.3. Assessments

Assessments to participating libraries may be made by the project director(s) to cover expenses for programs adopted by the association and subscribed to by member libraries.

7.4. Penalties

At the discretion of and upon the action of the association, various penalties may be imposed upon libraries failing to meet obligations within specified times. Dependent on the severity of the problem, penalties may range from an additional financial charge to the removal of a library from a program or removal from membership in the association.

8.0. Interest Groups

8.1. The association may have interest groups focused on areas of interest in librarianship.

8.2. Upon petition by three or more members and approval by a majority of members voting at any plenary business session, new interest groups may be constituted.

8.3. Interest groups shall determine their own form of organization, but shall have a Chair. Elections will take place during the Fall meeting within the interest groups sessions and formally announced during the plenary business meeting that follows.

8.4. The Chair of each interest group shall serve on the Executive Committee.

9.0. Task Forces

9.1. The association may have task forces to manage projects of a limited duration. The duration of a task force may be flexible based on the need and nature of the project.

9.2. Upon discussion by the Executive Committee and approval by a majority of Executive Committee members, new task forces may be constituted and charged with a specific task.

9.3. Each task force shall have a Chair and members, all appointed by the Executive Committee. The number of members may vary based on the need and nature of the project.

9.4. The Chair of each task force shall serve on the Executive Committee for the duration of the task force's existence.

9.5. The Executive Committee shall disband a task force at the completion of its charge.

10.0. Committees

10.1. Executive Committee

10.1.1. There shall be an Executive Committee which is charged with long-range planning for the association and overseeing the fulfillment of the officers' duties.

10.1.2. The members of the Executive Committee are specified in the SEPTLA Constitution.

10.1.3. The President shall serve as Chair of the Executive Committee.

10.1.4. The President may invite other persons from the SEPTLA membership to attend Executive Committee meetings in an advisory capacity; such persons shall have voice but no vote.

10.1.5. The Executive Committee is responsible for appointing the following administrative officers: Chairs of Committees, Website Manager, Archivist, Chairs of Task Forces.

10.1.6. The Executive Committee may conduct business, including votes and appointments, by synchronous or asynchronous methods, including but not limited to in person meetings, teleconferences, videoconferences, group email threads, and web surveys.

10.2. Continuing Education Committee

10.2.1. There shall be a Continuing Education Committee charged with promoting the educational development of SEPTLA by organizing programming at each plenary meeting.

10.2.2. The Continuing Education Committee shall consist of a Chair and three individuals; the Chair may recommend individuals to the Executive Committee for appointment to a two-year renewable term on the Continuing Education Committee.

10.2.3. The Chair of the Continuing Education Committee is appointed by the Executive Committee for a two-year renewable term.

11.0. Rules of Order

Robert's Rules of Order, latest edition, shall serve as the guide for the conduct of business unless otherwise provided in the constitution and bylaws.

12.0. Amendments

These Bylaws may be amended by a two-thirds majority vote of the Members. Such amendments shall be distributed in writing to the Members, and the vote shall be conducted by email or other digital means, or at a duly called business meeting, with each Member having one vote.