An Invisible Wall: The Relationship Between Congregational and Seminary Libraries in the United States[1]

by Rebecca Klemme Eliceiri

Abstract

Theological (seminary) and congregational libraries in the Christian and Jewish religious traditions have coexisted in some fashion since their beginnings. However, little research exists regarding the relationship between these related-but-distinct library types.

The present essay explores the relationship between these types of libraries, through a survey of their literatures and available statistics, considering their histories and contexts within the broader religious and library worlds, as well as their current relationship in light of their diverse religious institutions. The roles of these libraries will be examined regarding religious, theological, and information literacies as well as exploring their staffs, their staffs' training, funding, library hours, goals, objectives, and outcomes, particularly regarding the changing landscape of religious and theological education for both clergy and laypeople. The essay concludes with a consideration prospects in the religious library world in a congregational landscape that often cannot afford full-time, traditionally theologically educated clergy, much less paid congregational librarians.

Introduction

Religious libraries of all types throughout Judeo-Christian history have been important partners in the ongoing endeavor of personal and communal faith formation of clergy and laity alike. Theodore Wiener discusses the fundamental relationship between religion, education, and libraries:

> Every religion, in order to be understood by its committed adherents or by potential converts, requires the help of some kind of educational process to communicate its beliefs to them. This task of teaching religion may be carried out by the consecrated religious leader, by word of mouth and personal example in the early stages, as Moses and Jesus taught their disciples. When the revelations received by them are written down and become the sacred texts, we have the beginnings of libraries.[2]

Religious libraries have taken various forms throughout their histories in supporting their broader institutions' missions, and have had various kinds of relationships with other types of libraries. The present essay explores the relationship between congregational and seminary libraries in the United States, focusing in particular on their historical contexts, literatures, roles, and future collaborative potentials.

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[1] A note on terminology: while much literature discusses "theological" libraries, generally meaning seminary libraries, for greater clarity I use the terms seminary libraries to refer to overtly theological libraries in higher education, and congregational libraries to refer to synagogue, church, and parish libraries.

[2] Theodore Wiener, "History of Religion, Education and Libraries," in *Church and Synagogue Libraries*, ed. John F. Harvey (Lanham, MD: Scarecrow Press, 1980), 3.

Rebecca Klemme Eliceiri is Access Services Clerk at Webster University Library, Webster University, St. Louis, Missouri.

Historical Contexts of Congregational and Seminary Libraries

Lifelong integrated spiritual-intellectual learning in Judaism has a long history, as noted by Wiener:

> The purpose of this study [of sacred Judaic texts] was not purely intellectual. To know the law was to comprehend the revealed will of God. Even to study the tradition for its own sake was considered meritorious. Whenever people get together and occupy themselves with the Torah, it is thought that the Shekinah, "the Divine Presence," dwells among them.[3]

Jewish libraries, since their beginnings, have supported this worthy endeavor. As Christianity came into being, it remained close to its Judaic origins. Edward Farley explains, "The early Christian movement did not repudiate this tradition. It modeled its own congregations on the synagogue, proposed teachers for those congregations, and in one Gospel applied the term 'rabbi' to Jesus himself."[4] While the Church taught Jesus's message of salvation, early Christians also wanted to learn about Jesus's life to better emulate it, and were better able to do both of these things through early church libraries.

The first formal religious libraries in the United States had no reason not to assume a division between clergy and laity. These libraries began as constituent parts of colleges, such as that at Harvard (est. 1636), which began with a scant 100 volumes.[5] Seminaries followed in the next century, still with libraries that were unimpressive in size, such as New Brunswick (est. 1784), St. Mary's (est. 1791), Andover (est. 1807), and Princeton (est. 1812). Education for the role of librarian was not a high priority at that time, as Philip Dare notes: "None of the earliest librarians in these schools were trained."[6]

Also present in the early American religious library milieu were Sunday school and synagogue libraries. Sunday school libraries, which began in the United States in the 1820s, were described as "...an agent of social betterment, as well as a recruiting station for the church."[7] Synagogue libraries "…were designed to work closely with the synagogue religious schools and for recreational reading and studying for synagogue members."[8] Formal Jewish theological education and library establishment in the United States began later in the nineteenth century, with Hebrew Union College in 1875 and Jewish Theological Seminary in 1886.

Sunday school libraries were in decline at the same time that clergy education became more professionalized with the establishment of the Conference of Theological Seminaries and Colleges in the United States and Canada in 1918 (which later became the American Association of Theological Schools, then the Association of Theological Schools).[9] The Catholic Library Association was formed shortly thereafter, in 1921.[10] Seminary libraries were in the meantime coming into their own, particularly with the establishment of the American Theological Library Association in 1947.[11]

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[3] Ibid., 4.

[4] Edward Farley, "Can Church Education Be Theological Education?" *Theology Today* 42, no. 2 (July 1, 1985), 159.

[5] G. Paul Hamm, "A Look at the Past," in *A Broadening Conversation: Classical Readings in Theological Librarianship*, ed. Melody Layton McMahon and David R. Stewart (Lanham, MD: Scarecrow Press, 2006), 259.

[6] Philip M. Dare, "Theological Libraries," *Encyclopedia of Library History*, ed. Wayne A. Wiegand and Donald G. Davis (New York: Garland Publishing, Inc., 1994), 621.

[7] Frank Keller Walter, "A Poor but Respectable Relation: The Sunday School Library," *The Library Quarterly* 12, no. 3 (July 1942): 731.

[8] Isaiah Sonne and Naomi Steinberger, "Libraries," *Encyclopaedia Judaica*, ed. Michael Berenbaum and Fred Skolnik (Detroit: Macmillan Reference USA, 2007), Gale Virtual Reference Library, http://go.galegroup.com/ps/i.do?id=GALE%7CCX2587512465&v=2.1&u=imcpl1111&it=r&p=GVRL&sw=w., 783.

[9] G. Paul Hamm, "A Look at the Past," in *A Broadening Conversation: Classical Readings in Theological Librarianship*, ed. Melody Layton McMahon and David R. Stewart (Lanham, MD: Scarecrow Press, 2006), 257.

[10] A. R. Chwalek, "Catholic Library Association," *New Catholic Encyclopedia* (Detroit: Gale, 2003), Gale Virtual Reference Library, http://go.galegroup.com/ps/i.do?id=GALE%7CCX3407702165&v=2.1&u=morenetuomcolum&it=r&p=GVRL&sw=w.

[11] Elmer J. O'Brien and Betty A. O'Brien, "From Volunteerism to Corporate Professionalism: A Historical Sketch of the American Theological Library Association," in *The American Theological Library Association: Essays in Celebration of the First Fifty Years*, ed. M. Patrick Graham, Valerie R. Hotchkiss, and Kenneth E. Rowe (Evanston, IL: American Theological Library Association, 1996), 5.

Meanwhile, congregational libraries were beginning a resurgence that caught the attention of the broader library world, as evidenced by a September 1, 1962, *Library Journal* article, "Church Libraries: A Problem That Won't Go Away." The problem noted by author John Anderson was that as congregational library development increased, library professionals didn't know what to do with these libraries, implying that library professionals from the broader library world should assist them. Anderson entreated, "The motives for church libraries are good. Some concerted guidance from the profession would more nearly insure that these motives for more and better reading be guided into the most productive paths."[12] Fortunately for Anderson, John Harvey, then-dean of Drexel University's library school, took up the cause of congregational libraries by forming the Church and Synagogue Library Association in 1967, which expanded the work that local church library associations had been doing independently.[13] A year prior, two organizations, the Jewish Librarians Association and the Jewish Libraries Association, merged to form the Association of Jewish Libraries.[14]

Literatures of Congregational and Seminary Libraries

The literature of religious libraries provides interested parties with a great deal of helpful information on religious library praxis. Much of the literatures of congregational and seminary libraries are nurtured in their respective associations, with occasional overlap of intended audience. Literature covering both groups includes *Christian Library Journal*,[15] *Judaica Librarianship*,[16] *AJL News* (a newsletter) and *AJL Reviews*,[17] *AJL Conference Proceedings*,[18] *The Christian Librarian*,[19] and *Catholic Library World*.[20] Additionally, general library reference works such as the Encyclopedia of Library History and the Encyclopedia of Library and Information Science contain entries on many different types of religious libraries. Databases such as the *ATLA Religion Database*®,[21] *ATLASerials*®,[22] *ATLA Catholic Periodical and Literature Index*®,[23] and the *Christian Periodical Index*[24] cover a broad mix of scholarly and popular religious serials and monographs.

Seminary libraries also have a robust literature available. ATLA's annual *Summary of Proceedings* and the journals *Theological Librarianship*[25] and the *Journal of Religious and Theological Information*[26] provide current perspectives regarding topics of interest to seminary librarians. Books such as *A History of the American Theological Library Association*, *The American Theological Library Association: Essays in Celebration of the First Fifty Years*, and *A Broadening Conversation: Classic Readings in Theological Librarianship* provide informative essays and personal testimonies of ATLA members through the years. Harvey's book, *Scholarly Religious Libraries in North America: A Statistical Analysis*, rounds out these rich histories with the kind of statistical analysis that helps theological library staff contemplate the library's role in theological education as a whole.

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[12] John F. Anderson, "Church Libraries: A Problem That Won't Go Away," *Library Journal* 87, no. 15 (September 1, 1962), 2835.

[13] Dorothy J. Rodda, "The Church and Synagogue Library Association," in *Church and Synagogue Libraries*, ed. John F. Harvey (Metuchen, NJ: Scarecrow Press, 1980), 241.

[14] Association of Jewish Libraries, "About AJL," *Association of Jewish Libraries*, 2013, http://jewishlibraries.org/main/AboutAJL.aspx.

[15] http://www.christianlibraryj.org/

[16] http://ajlpublishing.org/jl/

[17] http://www.jewishlibraries.org/main/Publications/NewsReviews.aspx

[18] http://www.jewishlibraries.org/main/Events/PastConferences/ConferenceProceedings.aspx

[19] http://www.acl.org/index.cfm/publications/the-christian-librarian/

[20] http://www.cathla.org/catholic-library-world

[21] https://www.atla.com/products/catalog/pages/rdb-db.aspx

[22] http://www.ebscohost.com/academic/atla-religion-database-with-atlaserials

[23] http://www.ebscohost.com/academic/atla-catholic-periodical-and-literature-index

[24] http://www.acl.org/index.cfm/publications/christian-periodical-index/

[25] http://www.theolib.org

[26] http://www.tandfonline.com/toc/wrti20/current#.UpFMvyjrqPQ

Harvey identifies the dearth of adequate literature for congregational libraries.[27] Journals and magazines primarily focused on congregational libraries include *Congregational Libraries Today*,[28] *Libraries Alive*[29] (ceased publication as of the end of 2012), and *Church Libraries Journal*.[30] Some excellent books are available, such as *Church and Synagogue Libraries*, *Popular Religious Libraries in North America: A Statistical Analysis*, and a series of CSLA guides; however, much of this material is well over a decade old, and much of it only addresses library maintenance and procedures. Harvey argues that congregational librarianship needs more substantial literature addressing theory and policy.[31] It is also arguable that introducing congregational librarians to the literatures of library science and seminary librarianship would benefit congregational librarians, particularly in terms of introducing and integrating congregational libraries more into the worlds of religious librarianship and librarianship in general.

Accessing many of the resources listed above, particularly journal articles, is an ongoing issue for both congregational and seminary libraries. While many articles are available either online or are indexed in databases such as *ATLA Religion Database*®[32] and full-text in *ATLASerials*®,[33] LISTA,[34] the *Christian Periodicals Index*,[35] and other databases with full-text coverage, congregational librarians may not know of their existence or fully grasp their importance. Additionally, some association publications appear to be available only to association members, and are not indexed or available as full-text in any of the above databases. These circumstances do little to spread the good news of religious libraries of all types to people with an intellectual interest in religion. Surprisingly, however, many of the CSLA publications are indexed in the ERIC[36] education database, though their full-text access is at present unavailable due to privacy concerns regarding the ERIC database.[37]

Roles of and Current Relationship Between Congregational and Seminary Libraries

Religious libraries' foremost mission is generally to support the goals of biblical, theological, and religious literacy within their parent institutions and faith traditions. Each type of library has its own role, strengths, and challenges. Many factors influence the current relationship between seminary and congregational libraries, one of which is the division between "religious education" (education for laypeople) and "theological education" (education for clergy). Farley attributes this division to three things that have happened within post-Enlightenment religious life: the professionalization of theology, the expectation that laity faith formation happens mostly through regular worship attendance (rather than what he calls "ordered learning" — i.e., serious theological study), and a change in the meaning of education for laity.[38] One result of this division, as noted by Harvey, is that there is generally not a strong relationship between congregational and seminary librarians.[39]

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[27] John Harvey, "Introduction: The American Church and Synagogue Library World," in *Church and Synagogue Libraries*, ed. John F. Harvey (Lanham, MD: Scarecrow Press, 1980), xvii-xviii.

[28] http://cslainfo.org/?page_id=3644

[29] http://www.churchlibraries.org/

[30] http://www.eclalibraries.org/

[31] John Harvey, "Introduction: The American Church and Synagogue Library World," in *Church and Synagogue Libraries*, ed. John F. Harvey (Lanham, MD: Scarecrow Press, 1980), xvii-xviii.

[32] http://www.ebscohost.com/academic/atla-religion-database-with-atlaserials

[33] https://www.atla.com/products/catalog/pages/atlas.aspx

[34] http://www.ebscohost.com/academic/library-information-science-technology-abstracts-lista

[35] http://www.acl.org/index.cfm/publications/christian-periodical-index/

[36] http://eric.ed.gov/

[37] ERIC Institute of Education Sciences, "New and Notes: Status of ERIC's PDF Restoration Project," *ERIC*, 2013, http://eric.ed.gov/?note.

[38] Edward Farley, "Can Church Education Be Theological Education?" *Theology Today* 42, no. 2 (July 1, 1985): 166–171.

[39] John Harvey, "Introduction: The American Church and Synagogue Library World," in *Church and Synagogue Libraries*, ed. John F. Harvey (Metuchen, NJ: Scarecrow Press, 1980), xvi.

The division between religious and theological education is replicated in the associations representing these libraries.[40] Some of their library associations are separate, such as the American Theological Library Association[41] and the Church and Synagogue Library Association,[42] though the Association of Jewish Libraries[43] and Catholic Library Association[44] have divisions within them for different types of libraries, and the Association of Christian Librarians[45] and Evangelical Church Library Association[46] offer various membership types to different constituencies. There are formal cooperative database arrangements between ATLA and CLA,[47] but no comprehensive database packages from database aggregators exist for religious libraries that cover all available religious databases. Harvey also considers that it may be difficult for religious libraries of any sort to balance their shared interest in religion with denominational loyalty. "Such feelings of narrow differences negatively influence the religious library group's thinking and inhabit its recognition of its cohesiveness as a general body of religious professionals."[48]

The above library associations and those of related organizations provide structure for religious libraries regarding library standards and accreditation. Institutional and library accreditation plays a key role in ensuring library quality. Seminary libraries are largely defined by the Association of Theological Schools standards as part of the ATS accreditation process.[49] These standards mandate certain expectations and competencies in seminary libraries and their staffs, holding them accountable to a collectively agreed-upon level of intellectual rigor in terms of library materials, services, and ethos.

Standards for congregational libraries, while available, are less prevalent and uniform than those for seminary libraries. CSLA standards, available via the 1993 publication *Standards for Church and Synagogue Libraries*,[50] are neither comprehensive nor binding. Laura Berner Cohen notes the existence, benefits, and limits of the Association of Jewish Libraries' standards for library certification.[51] While the full standards are available only to members as part of the accreditation process,[52] the AJL's freely available presentation, "Accreditation: A Blueprint for Your Library's Future," provides interested parties with an overview of them.[53]

Another issue related to accreditation/certification is library staff education. Congregational librarians are many times disadvantaged regarding educational levels. Harvey states that ideally, congregational librarians should have the same education as seminary librarians, as well as specialized on-the-job training in religious education, but as of 1988, only

[40] Ron Chepesiuk's article "Keeping the Faith: Religion in the Professional Sense," *American Libraries* 30, no. 7 (August 1999), 48, provides a fairly good overview of these associations, though the Lutheran Church Library Association – later renamed as the National Church Library Association – disbanded as of December 2012.

[41] www.atla.com

[42] http://cslainfo.org/

[43] http://www.jewishlibraries.org/main/

[44] http://www.cathla.org/

[45] http://www.acl.org/

[46] http://www.eclalibraries.org/

[47] Don Haymes, "Pulling Together: The Collaborative Efforts of CLA and ATLA," *Catholic Library World* 63, no. 2 (October 1, 1991): 105-08, 110.

[48] John Frederick Harvey and Jo Ann Mourides, *Popular Religious Libraries in North America: A Statistical Examination* (Lanham, MD: Scarecrow Press, 1999), 22.

[49] http://www.ats.edu/accrediting/standards-and-notations

[50] Church and Synagogue Library Association, *Standards for Church and Synagogue Libraries: Guidelines for Measuring Effectiveness and Progress*, 2nd ed, CSLA Guide no. 6 (Portland, OR: Church and Synagogue Library Association, 1993).

[51] Laura Berner Cohen, "Synagogue Libraries: Making It on Their Own," *Special Libraries*, 1995, Academic OneFile.

[52] Association of Jewish Libraries, "Standards for Synagogue and Center Libraries," Association of Jewish Libraries, accessed December 8, 2013, http://www.jewishlibraries.org/main/Resources/AJLWiki/tabid/200/Default.aspx?topic=Standards+for+Synagogue+and+Center+Libraries.

[53] Helene Tuchman et al., "Accreditation: A Blueprint for Your Library's Future" (Teaneck, NJ: Accreditation Committee of the Association of Jewish Libraries – Synagogue, School, and Center Division, June 2001), http://www.jewishlibraries.org/main/Portals/0/AJL_Assets/documents/Publications/proceedings/proceedings2001/tuchman.pdf.

15 percent of congregational librarians held any kind of professional qualification.[54] "Church and synagogue library staff members are volunteers and usually lack library school training or even college degrees. This is essentially a part-time clerical occupation."[55] Without the expectation that congregational librarians will have extensive religious and library science education, educational opportunities for congregational librarians are neither standardized nor particularly rigorous. There is a congregational librarianship course sponsored by the CSLA,[56] though tuition appears to be more heavily subsidized for Southern Baptist Convention and other Baptist students than those of other denominations or faiths. Its subject matter, while important, is mostly of a practical and procedural nature and does not appear to engage its students in the type of higher level critical reflection that would elevate the discipline of congregational librarianship to an essential place within the congregation.

While there is more work to be done integrating the roles that theological and religious studies and library science play in the profession of seminary librarianship, educational opportunities and expectations for seminary librarians are generally far more rigorous than for congregational librarians. It is generally assumed that seminary librarians will have two master's degrees: one in theology or religious studies, and the other in library science. The Theological Librarianship course[57] in partnership with ATLA and the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign helps seminary and religious studies librarians reflect in an integrated way on seminary librarians' dual roles. This course would also be helpful for congregational librarians, as it encourages its students to critically reflect on all manner of things within the broader world of theology and religious studies librarianship.

On the whole, I conclude there is disturbingly little current relationship between congregational and seminary libraries. Such a relationship has great potential, were it nurtured systemically through things such as print and e-resource consortia open to all religious libraries, as well as shared educational opportunities. Most beneficial, though, is the gift we give our libraries, library users, and indeed, the whole people of God, when we open ourselves up to formal and informal relationship with other librarians in different types of religious libraries. The current relationship between congregational and seminary libraries, while weak, is also an invitation for greater collaboration.

Future Directions for the Relationship Between Congregational and Seminary Libraries

In considering an ideal relationship between congregational and seminary libraries, it is important to explore current library and educational trends, several of which are worth noting: the roles that wisdom, lifelong learning, critical thinking, and information literacy play (or ought to play) in religious and theological education. Additionally, the ever-increasing prominence of electronic tools and resources within libraries of all types also have implications for this relationship. Integrating most of these themes, Eric Nyrose explores the intersection of wisdom, critical thinking, and information literacy. "In many ways, what we teach about critical thinking in information literacy is similar to these principles of wisdom yet not recognized as such. This ancient wisdom would call for a comprehensive approach through which we communicate principles of wisdom, principles of critical thinking, in such a way that they integrate with all areas of life."[58]

Much has been said in recent library literature about information literacy, which has only recently made its way out of academic libraries into the intellectual life of educational institutions at large, and generally not yet into religious organizations and congregations. William Badke's book *Teaching Research Processes*, while focusing on the role of faculty

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[54] John Frederick Harvey and Jo Ann Mourides, *Popular Religious Libraries in North America: A Statistical Examination* (Lanham, MD.: Scarecrow Press, 1999), 230.

[55] John Harvey, "Introduction: The American Church and Synagogue Library World," in *Church and Synagogue Libraries*, ed. John F. Harvey (Metuchen, NJ: Scarecrow Press, 1980), viii.

[56] http://cslainfo.org/?page_id=3566

[57] https://www.atla.com/MEMBERS/DEVELOPMENT/Pages/UIUC.aspx

[58] Eric Nyrose, "Pursuing Wisdom: An Investigation of the Relationship Between Some Ancient Religious Concepts of Wisdom and Current Notions of Critical Thinking Within Information Literacy," *Journal of Religious & Theological Information* 8 (2009), 140.

in helping students develop solid research skills, also encourages academic librarians to use their gifts for teaching research processes. He strongly recommends that librarians advocate for information literacy in their educational institutions — with faculty, students, and anyone else they encounter.[59]

Badke's vision is certainly inspiring but primarily focuses on academic institutions. A similar vision for the religious library world has the potential to revolutionize that world. Clergy and laity alike need information literacy as a solid intellectual foundation on which to live out the search for answers to the deep questions that make life meaningful. While Badke discusses the faculty role in teaching research processes within academic institutions, there is an equal need for such instruction within religious congregations. Religious librarians of all types have a vital role to play as information literacy advocates. Information literacy may have begun in academic libraries but is destined for failure if it remains there exclusively.

Badke notes the importance of tailoring information literacy/research instruction to the discipline/environment in which it is taught. Robert Phillips addresses this need by using the ACRL "Information Literacy Competency Standards for Higher Education"[60] as a starting point, then observes the following particularities in theological education: "Theological education is itself a cluster of disciplines, each with its own ways of finding and using information."[61] He asks difficult questions such as, "In what ways does [theological education's value system] affect how one approaches information literacy? When does one reject well-reasoned arguments in light of authority? What are the implications of this approach when using information?"[62] When discussing information literacy for lifelong learning in a different article, he notes the implications of lifelong learning on information literacy behaviors. "Instead of knowing how to use a library catalog, [seminarians] need to know how to create one, based on their own personal collection of books, articles, clippings, and Internet bookmarks."[63] I would take Phillips's observations a step further and say that all people of faith need to have access to and learn the tools that enable them to thoughtfully study and reflect critically on their faith for lifelong learning.

Another important future priority in growing the relationship between congregational and seminary libraries is access for all religious libraries to the whole of religious and theological library literature, particularly to online databases. Much congregational library literature, including the CSLA quarterly magazine *Congregational Libraries Today*, is unavailable via databases (either full-text or indexed). ATLA and other religious database providers and aggregators need to provide database pricing for congregational library use. There is no time like the present for ATLA and other database providers to bring their databases into congregational life, to equip congregational librarians to help people learn how to use them and understand their importance as compared with the open web. Congregational and seminary library associations can also work together to create consortial access to databases and other materials (particularly electronic resources). While religious authorities wring their hands about how to empower laity and keep them actively involved in congregational life, why not start by equipping them with robust and rigorous religious information literacy education and helpful resources?

Religious libraries of all types and their staffs need to proactively position themselves as full educational partners in the lives of their broader institutions. In much the same manner that seminary librarians have sought greater institutional recognition such as faculty status and collaboration with faculty and administration, congregational librarians need to develop and act upon an awareness of their full potential. This may include seeking increased recognition (such as

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[59] William B. Badke, *Teaching Research Processes: The Faculty Role in the Development of Skilled Student Researchers* (Witney, UK: Chandos Publishing, 2012), 183-85.

[60] Association of College and Research Libraries, "Information Literacy Competency Standards for Higher Education," ACRL: Association of College & Research Libraries (A Division of the American Library Association), 2000, http://www.ala.org/acrl/standards/informationliteracycompetency.

[61] Robert Phillips, "Information Literacy Standards for Theological Education," *Journal of Religious & Theological Information* 7, no. 2 (2005), 7.

[62] Ibid., 7-8.

[63] Robert Phillips, "Bibliographic Instruction and Life-Long Learning," *Journal of Religious & Theological Information* 4, no. 1 (2001), 6.

paid positions), ordination/licensure, and greater collaboration with clergy, religious education staff, and congregational administration regarding information literacy and the intellectual life of the congregation.

Seminary librarians, congregational librarians, and their respective libraries have much to offer the worlds of religion and theology, and to each other. Theirs is a vital but heavily under-explored symbiotic relationship. They are jointly called to build up religious librarianship in such a way that promotes wisdom for all people of faith. This is a time for religious libraries of all types to boldly meet all believers with educational processes, resources, and information that is relevant to their lives, offers historical and theological truth, and provides them with spiritual sustenance. Such a mix of religious-intellectual riches will hopefully encourage all believers to live out their faith more fruitfully. The curiosity of God's people knows few bounds. Congregational and seminary libraries are best equipped to respond to such curiosity as partners on a journey toward a collective and greater wisdom.