



ASSOCIATION
of CHRISTIAN
LIBRARIANS®

April 7, 2020

Grace and peace to you from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.

In these challenging days, I pray that the Association of Christian Librarians has been a source of meaningful professional resources, supportive relationships, and spiritual encouragement for each of you. Perhaps our most treasured opportunity to enjoy these central benefits of ACL is our annual conference each June, and we have been looking forward with great anticipation to gathering at Newman University. Following a thoughtful discussion about the ongoing national health situation, however, the Board of Directors voted on Monday to transition away from plans for a traditional in-person conference and toward plans for a virtual conference. In an effort to provide help and encouragement, the Board has determined that the June virtual conference event will be available to **all members** of the association at **no cost to attendees**.

The decision to move to a virtual conference format was driven by our determination to offer programming in a way that could reach and support as many of our members as possible. We see that the current health crisis is affecting different regions differently, and the financial ramifications of these events are affecting institutions differently, as well. Some institutions have initiated layoffs or furloughs, and many have withdrawn financial support for professional development or have prohibited travel. These challenges—combined with concerns about access to travel arrangements and potential restrictions regarding large gatherings—led the Board to agree that this extraordinary change is necessary. Anyone who has already submitted payment for the 2020 conference is entitled to a full refund of their payment; more information regarding refund options and processes will be forthcoming from the ACL home office.

We plan to build our June virtual event around some of the core pieces of the traditional conference, including our pre-conference and keynote speakers, a business meeting with updates on the state of the association, and greetings and devotional reflections to encourage your hearts. If by June the circumstances in your area allow it, we hope you'll be able to gather with nearby ACL colleagues to participate in the event together. We also hope to offer selected conference presentations on one or more occasions throughout the fall, depending on the suitability of presentations for online delivery and the availability of presenters.

We understand that this change in programming is very difficult for those who had hoped to attend the conference, those who have prepared workshops or presentations, and those who have been faithfully planning to welcome us at Newman University. We hope that extending the June programming freely to all who would like to participate demonstrates how earnestly we want to encourage you in your work and in your faith. As plans take shape in the coming weeks, you'll receive additional information about what to expect. In the meantime, thank you for your understanding and your prayers.

"The Lord gives strength to his people; the Lord blesses his people with peace." Psalm 29:11

Gratefully,

Denise D. Nelson, Ph.D.
President, Association of Christian Librarians