

This resolution was adopted by the ALA Council on July 1, 2013

Resolution on Prayer in ALA Meetings

Whereas the U.S. Religious Landscape Survey Based on interviews with more than 35,000 American adults conducted by the Pew Forum on Religion & Public Life found that the American public is becoming more religiously diverse and that 5 percent of the population belong to faiths other than Christianity and that an additional 16 percent are unaffiliated with any particular faith (<http://religions.pewforum.org/>);

Whereas according to the Pew Forum on Religion & Public Life, there is a “rich body of research” that the proportions of people practicing any given religion have changed markedly in recent decades, and the proportion of the population that is not affiliated with any particular religion has increased significantly” (<http://religions.pewforum.org/pdf/report-religious-landscape-study-chapter-1.pdf>, pp. 17-18);

Whereas diversity is one of the key action areas of the American Library Association (ALA) (<http://www.ala.org/aboutala/>) and a fundamental value of the Association;

Whereas ALA’s 2015 Strategic Plan goals include promoting diversity (<http://www.ala.org/aboutala/missionhistory/plan>);

Whereas in its policy manual, ALA promotes cultural diversity and combating prejudice, stereotyping, and discrimination on the basis of religious background, among others (<http://www.ala.org/aboutala/governance/policymanual/updatedpolicymanual/section2/60diversity>); and

Whereas, public prayers give the implicit message of excluding those who do not share the beliefs and an implicit message that ALA sponsors or supports those beliefs; now therefore be it

Resolved, that the American Library Association adopt as policy, the following statement:

The American Library Association, as a secular institution in a country that is increasingly diverse religiously, refrains from having public prayers during its meetings. Moments of silence may be observed during meetings.

Adopted by the Council of the American Library Association
Monday, July 2, 2013
in Chicago, Illinois



Keith Michael Fiels
ALA Executive Director and Secretary of the ALA Council