

A Word from the Chair

A great deal has been going on with respect to ATFE communications. I hired Rachel Sanchez as Communications Director. As you can see, she has chosen and implemented a new newsletter format. I have also been co-creating a new website with website designer Toban Penner, and it will be live very soon. These projects have taken a lot of work, but improved communications with members was a priority for this biennium, so it has been worth it. I am grateful to Rachel and Toban for their assistance and expertise.

In the course of editing the website, I paused to read some of the wealth of material we have on it, especially material from past proceedings of our biennial consultations. I happened to read P. Alice Rogers' address to the membership from January 2015 in Santa Fe. She offered several pieces of advice for the future that I found prescient, including this: "There is great potential in the use of the ATFE website, but as long as we keep limping along and passing it along to those with no expertise with websites, it will never reach its full potential. If ATFE does not have such ability among the membership, then we need to think seriously about securing someone who can provide continuity as they help with this resource." While we actually had quite a bit of expertise with websites among our members, we were continuing to pass along its care and maintenance from one busy person to another, and it didn't reach its potential. Now with the help of dedicated professionals I hope it will.

--Barbara Blodgett

Celebrations

The Steering Committee celebrates good news from two of our members: Tracy Hartman has been called to two ministry positions. She is now the Intentional Interim Pastor at Farmville Baptist Church in Farmville, VA, and is also the Director of the Cooperative Baptist Fellowship's Thriving in Ministry grant. Nick Works has completed his Doctor of Ministry project and will receive the degree this spring. The title of his project is "On the Road Again: Pilgrimage and Spiritual Formation in the 21st Century." Congratulations to both!

Continuing Education

Pitching your Projects: Contextualizing Grants

A Webinar for Grant Writing and Planning

Thursday May 14th at 11am - Noon Central Standard Time

A variety of grant opportunities exist to support projects and research in higher education, theological and ministerial education, religious institutions, and pastoral and community environments. Grants are contextual and particular in terms of their directives and expectations. This webinar explores a selection of opportunities with attention to the responsibilities and expectations of the potential grant writer, the granting agency, and grant selection committees.

If you have a grant idea and you would like some input from our presenter, please feel free to bring it up during the webinar. However, there is no need to have something already in your plans; this webinar will hopefully help you to dream.

Our guide is Carmen Nanko-Fernández

Carmen is Professor of Hispanic Theology and Ministry and the director of the Hispanic Theology and Ministry Program at Catholic Theological Union in Chicago. A Latin@theologian, Carmen has consulted and served in a variety of capacities for the following granting entities in theological education: Hispanic Theological Initiative (HTI), Forum for Theological Exploration (FTE), Wabash Center for Teaching and Learning in Theology and Religion, the Louisville Institute (LI).

To register, or for more information, please email Christina Zaker, Chair of the ATFE Research & Publications Committee at research@atfe.org. A webinar link will be provided upon registration.

This webinar is free to all ATFE members who are current on their 2020 dues. To pay your dues please link here: <http://atfe.org/membership1/why-join-atfe/>

Tampa 2021!

We are pleased to introduce you to Safety Harbor, city and hotel venue for the next gathering of ATFE January 26-29, 2021. The city of Safety Harbor is situated on the eastern side of the Pinellas County peninsula, on the western shore of Tampa Bay. It is located between the larger commercial centers in the region—Tampa, St. Petersburg, Clearwater, and Tarpon Springs. The city has been defined for much of its history by its natural mineral springs. The area was also home of the principal town of the Tocobaga people, an indigenous group that flourished in the area from about 900 CE through the seventeenth century, and is home to an important Tocobaga historical site.

The Safety Harbor Resort and Spa is located directly across from the main street of the city of Safety Harbor and is therefore within easy walking distance of restaurants, shopping, coffee shops, and a brewery. It is located on the mineral springs that were an important resource for indigenous inhabitants of the area and have continued to be a source of mineral water that is free to all.

ATFE's local arrangements committee chose Safety Harbor Resort and Spa because of its unique history and because it offers the feel of a restful, restorative retreat. We acknowledge the complexities attendant to gathering there. We hope that participants will at the same time let themselves be challenged by what it means to teach and learn in places where indigenous peoples have been displaced, and also let themselves be rejuvenated by time spent in a place that is rich in history, full of natural and architectural beauty, and enjoys plentiful sunshine.

Leading ATFE: A Call for Nominations

If you attended the 2019 biennial consultation in Asheville, you know that we had a discussion about ATFE's commitment to diversity in its leadership. One way to enact this commitment is to raise a call for leaders early and often. Therefore, although our current Steering Committee is only halfway through its term, we want to encourage everyone to start

thinking now about candidates for the 2021-2023 Steering Committee. (According to ATFE bylaws, the SC presents a slate of nominees for a vote of the membership at the biennial consultation.) We especially encourage nominations of persons who would bring various kinds of diversity to the SC.

Here's what would be expected of a Steering Committee member. The SC typically meets monthly by videoconference and generally spends the first year of the biennium following up on charges given to it by the membership, and the second year planning the next consultation. The committee also sponsors continuing education webinars, sets directions for ATFE in keeping with the mission, and shepherds the financial, legal, and governance business of the organization. It's not a small job, but it is an interesting one!

There are two subcommittees of the Steering Committee: the Research and Publications Committee and the Local Arrangements Committee. R&P is always open to new members and has traditionally nominated its own chair from within. LA arises spontaneously each biennium when a member or small group of members decides to propose a locale for the next consultation.

If you feel a call to become more involved in leading ATFE in one of these capacities, please contact me. –Barbara Blodgett, Chair (chair@atfe.org).

Equipping ATFE: A Call for Proposals

Now is the time to propose a breakout session for ATFE's 2021 biennial consultation. Breakout sessions take one of three forms: a *seminar* (presentation with q&a), *workshop* (active skill development), or *working group* (collaboration on a project). Potential session leaders should submit this form [\[link\]](#) to the Steering Committee. If your session is accepted, you will be asked to attend a videoconference, to refine your plans and swap support and advice with others, a month ahead of the consultation.

It's Time to Pay our 2020 Dues

<http://atfe.org/membership1/why-join-atfe/>

Membership dues rates remain as follows:

Institutional Membership: U.S. Members: \$150 U.S.

Institutional Membership: Canadian and other non-U.S. Members: \$130 U.S.

Individual Membership: \$110.00 U.S.

Hearing From Our Students

For many of us, January is a month for immersion trips. Here is one testimonial, written in the form of an erasure poem, about this sort of learning in the field, from Pittsburgh Theological Seminary student Hattie Taylor:

Today was an adventure. I thank God for little reptiles that roam the streets.

Challenged today with introvert/extrovert balance.

I am silent. Irritated.

Animals bring me back to joy.

I just don't know what to expect.

Talked with a group of youth today! Young lady wants to be a truck driver.

Older brother wants younger brother to go to college- younger brother shoots him an annoyed

glance. He is unsure.
I can and often listen.
I want to use my ears for Beth-El. But, I spoke today, too.
No one interrupted at evening devotion. I smiled.
Beth-El has a way of changing the lives of people for the better. High-tech gear, completely free for the farm workers! Volunteer work, amen!
Beth-El has a piece of my heart.
Serving the workers felt weird. We are in a position of privilege. But we rely on them for food.
Was this a spectacle? I resent that.
They appreciated lunch. I wish there was more I could do.
I wish more felt freedom to worship.
Real people can change a community.
I cry when I see the spirit moving.
All kinds of long-legged, long necked feathered friends.
It turns out, workers don't get days off. Sunday morning isn't practical.
The poor are so oppressed by the rich.
I handed out potato flakes. I liked that the people could tell me no.
Two dead creatures out of the bedroom with a plastic bag.
I had goat.
Unfortunately, it was all in Spanish.
Pesticides are killing the workers. It felt like different worlds.
About 8 alligators.
It's not always how I think of change.
The translator smiled.

The more things change . . .

It's always been hard to locate in one place the best articles, books, and reflections to resource our work. Over the years, field educators have periodically rounded up the literature on field education for one another; we still do this today and you can find a current bibliography on our website. Back in 1985, an annotated bibliography produced by John E. Haag, O.S.B., started with the following observation: "A study of the literature in theological field education can be characterized as scarcity in abundance. Amid the abundance of literature on theological education, the material on field education per se is quite scarce." Haag reviewed nineteen publications dating back to the 1920s. An excerpt from a 1932 dissertation addresses a tension that is still with us today: is field education paid work, or is it the subject matter of theological education?

In 1932 Frank C. Foster published the first doctoral dissertation in the area of theological field education, *Field Work and Its Relation to the Curriculum of Theological Seminaries*. This research ". . . attempts both to present the picture of supervised field work as conducted and to analyze the educational significance of outside student work" (34). Foster accents the educational nature rather than the customary remunerative nature of field work. His basic premise is that ". . . student participation in the practice of the profession is essential in the training of the ministry" (73). He opts for an entirely new point of view in training students for ministry. "A major factor in the advance of theological education will be the

degree to which the seminaries are willing and able to go toward a full realization of the now largely potential worth of this student work, through progressive efforts to integrate it with the subject-matter of theological education” (28).

--Frank C. Foster, *Field Work and Its Relation to the Curriculum of Theological Seminaries*, Diss. Columbia University (Johnson City, TN: Muse-Whitlock, 1932), quoted in John E. Haag, O.S.B., “Theological Field Education Literature: An Historical Review,” 1985.