

**Summary of Visioning Session**  
**Held in Dallas, TX following the 29<sup>th</sup> biennium in January 2007**

The Chair of ATFE for the 2005-2007 biennial period, Abigail Johnson, invited former Steering Committee Members and representatives from each of the ATFE caucuses to gather for a Visioning Session on January 21, 2007. Using a process designed to name what we celebrate, lament and hope, the session provided a space to name our experience and vision for theological field education in general, and specifically for the future of ATFE. The conversation and priorities that were set during that session have helped to guide the 2007-2009 Steering Committee discussions and decisions. Here is a brief summary of that session.

***We celebrate*** first and foremost ATFE's ethos of collegiality and generosity. This is evident in the way we share resources and our experience of field education amongst ourselves. ATFE's ecumenical structure is experienced as being both diverse and inclusive and our denominational and regional caucuses allow for focusing on specific issues. We celebrate the increasing intellectual vigor in field education in recent years. We celebrate the developing recognition of theological field education as an authentic theological discipline within many of our institutions as well as with our institutional partners, such as the various churches, the Association of Theological Schools (ATS), as well as the Association for Clinical Pastoral Education. (ACPE).

***We lament*** the high turnover in theological field education positions in general, as well as the length of time it takes for new field educators to discover and make connections with ATFE. We lament the under-valuing of theological field education in many of our institutions, especially during times of economic strain. We lament the lack of voice accorded to theological field education within our theological faculties. This lack is exacerbated by the lack of response from the Association of Theological Schools (ATS) to our requests to have a representative for theological field education on its regular accreditation teams.

***We hope*** to establish (in partnership with ATS) some kind of certification training, peer reviews of programs and manuals, as well as a process for evaluating theological field educators. We hope to reach out to schools and theological field educators who are not currently members of ATFE and that an ATFE team be available to consult with schools regarding field education. We hope that as theological field education does become more integrated into the theological curriculum, that it continue to be innovative. We hope that ATFE members engage in more research, grant writing and publishing.

***Now it's your turn:*** If you would like to respond to this summary or if there is anything that you would like to celebrate, lament and hope regarding theological field education and ATFE, we invite you to write us a note and leave it addressed to the Steering Committee at the registration desk. You can also attach it to your evaluation at the end of this 31<sup>st</sup> biennium. Your input is appreciated and will help guide the next biennial Steering Committee.

Thank you from the 2009-2011 ATFE Steering Committee