

Welcome!

We are pleased to welcome you to the 2025 ATS Vocational Retreat for Midcareer Faculty. We appreciate this opportunity to celebrate your vocation and to welcome you to your professional “second half.” In the ATS work with faculty, we emphasize the character of the vocation of the theological educator, beyond the confines of a narrow disciplinary field and look forward to hearing how you are journeying in this understanding.

In this season of your professional life, the pressures of attaining tenure and rank promotion are no longer the preoccupation they were in the first years of your journey as faculty, and you can now better attend to questions about the story you will eventually leave. Having reached a halfway point in your career, you are in the position to review and perhaps reshape your vocation as a theological educator. For some of you, this might mean taking on different leadership roles within your school; for others of you, it might take the shape of making an impact on broader publics in substantive ways, particularly those outside the academy.

To that end, we have taken the goals of this retreat and designed a set of experiences to help you soak up information about the larger context of your role and reflect on how this context relates to your understanding of vocation, both individual and collective:

- **Two framing conversations**—about the larger context of theological education and aspects of vocation, including its “underbelly.”
- **Three experiential workshops**—to provide you with opportunity to get your whole body involved in exploring vocation, including but also beyond the academic and rational.

The experiences will be about two hours but will feel short, so **come prepared**:

1. Read through Bonnie Miller-McLemore’s article on vocation for some background context. (emailed separately)
2. Bring an artifact that represents where you are on your journey with vocation.
3. For those who marked “visual/tactile art,” bring an additional print artifact that you don’t mind cutting up and leave luggage space for the return trip. For those who marked “contemplative photography,” read through the experiences of contemplative photography (also emailed separately).
4. On Saturday, wear comfortable clothes.

We invite you to come with open minds and hearts. Let the Spirit speak to you. May you receive.

Sincerely,

*Deborah H. C. Gin*  
*Director of Research and Faculty Development*  
*The Association of Theological Schools*