

Open Letter to the AETH Community Celebrating the Results of the 2026 Summer Pastoral Educational Incentive Program (ARRIBA EN ESPAÑOL)

August 20, 2026

Dear Pastoral Leaders, AETH Members, and AETH Community:

Last June, AETH launched a new initiative: the **2026 Summer Pastoral Educational Incentive Program**, born from a simple yet profound conviction: when we invest in the formation of our pastoral leaders, we also strengthen our churches, our communities, and the future of Hispanic faith.

Today, through this open letter, we return to you to share and celebrate the results of this initiative and how the response exceeded our expectations.

An Investment Already Bearing Fruit

Following the completion of the evaluation process, AETH will award more than \$115,000 in micro-incentives through this program to support the ongoing formation of more than **145 Hispanic pastors and pastoral leaders** serving approximately **101 local congregations** across the United States, Puerto Rico, and Canada.

These resources will support more than **91 individuals and more than 20 pastoral couples** through theological and ministerial formation experiences, including continuing education, formal studies, certifications, conferences, books, equipment, and ministry resources, writing, research, and other learning opportunities that strengthen pastoral leadership beyond this summer.

In addition, we will accompany more than **eight group pastoral formation micro-initiatives** that will transform these resources into Bible studies, leadership development, prayer and intercession initiatives, mentoring experiences, and other projects that strengthen discipleship, their communities, and the congregational life of local churches.

When Formation Multiplies

This confirms something fundamental for AETH: the formation of a leader never ends with the leader alone. When a pastor receives tools to grow, an entire congregation can grow alongside them. When a congregation is strengthened, the surrounding community is strengthened as well. That is why this program is much more than a financial incentive: it is an investment in Hispanic pastoral leadership, and in the communities our leaders faithfully serve.

We extend our deepest gratitude to the donors who supported this initiative and to every person who submitted an application, shared a formation need, and trusted AETH as part of their ministerial growth journey. This experience has allowed us to discover new possibilities for accompanying our pastoral leaders in ways that are more accessible, contextualized, and community-centered.



This Is Only the Beginning

The results of this first program encourage us to continue imagining new ways to accompany those who, day after day, sustain the life of our churches, Bible institutes, and communities. We believe that theological education is not a luxury. It is a tool for pastoral care, congregational strengthening, and community transformation.

Behind every number is a person, a calling, a congregation, and a community. And behind each of them, we see an opportunity for the Church to continue growing in wisdom, hope, and mission. We continue to believe that forming leaders is strengthening the Church. And strengthening the Church is contributing to the transformation of our communities.

Thank you for your trust and for walking alongside AETH!

With respect and hope,



Rev. Dr. Jessica Lugo, MDiv, MBA
Executive Director

Association for Hispanic Theological Education (AETH)

#somosAETH

