

From the Desk of Our Executive Director

Dear AETH Community,

It is with deep gratitude and renewed anticipation that I share with you a new edition of our quarterly newsletter, ECOS. We continue to joyfully celebrate **35 years of AETH**, giving thanks for the history that has brought us to this moment while, at the same time, **looking toward the horizons that God continues to open before us.**

As this newsletter is published, we are less than three weeks away from gathering in Decatur, Georgia, for our **18th Biennial Gathering: “Raíces y Horizontes”** (Roots and Horizons). And how beautiful it is to arrive at this gathering not only celebrating who we have been, but also recognizing all that God is doing among us as we prepare with hope for what lies ahead.

In this edition of ECOS, **we celebrate our Hispanic identity** and, in a very special way, the **Hispanic leadership that continues to grow, serve, and transform** our churches, communities, and institutions. We share testimonies, program updates, and new experiences that we have been building with you and for you, because every AETH initiative has as its horizon the strengthening of theological formation and leadership within our community.

As we shared with our active membership in our recent report, we continue to faithfully embrace the movements of God for AETH. We do so with our feet firmly grounded in our history, with responsibility for the present, and with anticipation and hope for the future. **Roots that sustain us. Horizons that call us.**

I invite you to take a few minutes to read this edition of ECOS and **stay up to date with all that is happening at AETH: the progress, opportunities, voices, and initiatives** we are developing in service to our Hispanic community and to **excellence in theological education.**

Thank you for walking with us, for believing in this mission, and above all, for being part of what we continue to build together. **#WeAreAETH**

With gratitude,

Rev. Dr. Jesssica Lugo

Executive Director of AETH
Association for Hispanic
Theological Education



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AETH
Association for Hispanic Theological Education

Free Webinar Grant Writing!

Learn how to write effective proposals and turn your vision into reality.

Date: November 19, 2026

Choose your time: 1:00 PM EST (Spanish) and 3:00 PM EST (English)

Topic: From Vision to Impact: How to Write Effective Proposals

Who should attend: Bible Institutes, Churches and Parachurch Ministries

Know more: [aeth.org](#) | [#WeAreAETH](#)



AETH | 35th ANNIVERSARY

Bible Institutes Retreat

FREE REGISTRATION

This is a one-day spiritual self-care retreat designed to focus on your spiritual health and renewal amid the demands of ministry and administration. It's specifically intended for Institute directors and leaders, meeting at Emory Candler's 19th Theology Library, sponsor of the 35th Digital Library.

GUEST PRESENTERS:

- Dr. Harold Wright
- Rev. Dr. David G. Hays
- Rev. Dr. Elizabeth G. Hays
- Rev. Dr. Robert C. Hays

LOCAL TIME: 9AM-5PM | **WEDNESDAY** OCTOBER 14, 2026
Location: Candler School of Theology

AETH Registration for the retreat and the Biennial are separate from one another.

Know more: [aeth.org](#) | [#WeAreAETH](#)



AETH | 35th ANNIVERSARY

Biennial 2026

Roots and Horizons

October 15-17 2026
Columbia Theological Seminary
Decatur, GA

REGISTER TODAY

HYBRID EVENT

Early Bird Registration:

Know more: [aeth.org](#) | [#WeAreAETH](#)





Celebrating Who We Are:

Hispanic Leadership and the Power of Collaboration

A reflection from our Executive Director for Hispanic Heritage Month

Rev. Dr. Jessica Lugo Meléndez, MBA, MDiv

Each year, Hispanic Heritage Month offers us an opportunity to celebrate our history, our cultures, our languages, and the countless ways Hispanic communities have contributed to society. But celebrating our heritage can also be an invitation to look toward the future and ask: What gifts and capacities are we called to bring to the world we share? For me, one of those capacities is collaboration. What many call today innovative, we've been doing for a lifetime.

Hispanic leadership has been shaped, to a great extent, in spaces of encounter: between cultures, languages, generations, traditions, and diverse social realities. Many Hispanic people, like you and I, have learned to live in that "in-between," translating not only words, but also experiences, expectations, and ways of understanding the world. What may once have been perceived as tension or complexity can become an extraordinary capacity: connecting worlds without having to erase their differences.

This reality is particularly meaningful when we speak about the leadership of Latina women. We, as Latinas, have learned to integrate multiple dimensions of our identity and vocation: family and profession, community and organization, tradition and innovation, relational sensitivity and strategic vision. Our capacity does not lie in choosing between these dimensions, but in recognizing how they can strengthen one another.

Yet this capacity should not be understood as an obligation to assume every responsibility or to constantly adapt ourselves to spaces that were not designed for our participation. Authentic collaboration does not mean that one person does everything, nor that a community must constantly prove its value. To collaborate means sharing gifts, authority, knowledge, and responsibility in order to create something that no one could build alone.

“To collaborate means sharing gifts, authority, knowledge, and responsibility in order to create something that no one could build alone.”

Here we find one of the greatest contributions that the Hispanic community can offer society as a whole. Our experiences have taught us that relationships matter, that family can be a source of resilience, that generations can learn from one another, and that community can become a network of care, creativity, and opportunity. Furthermore, speaking more than one language and navigating more than one culture can expand, rather than limit, the way we see the world.

Therefore, Hispanic leadership should not be defined solely by our ability to overcome obstacles. It can also be recognized through our capacity to build bridges, cultivate relationships, share resources, create opportunities, and expand our collective imagination.

For this reason, during Hispanic Heritage Month, we do not only celebrate where we come from. We celebrate what we are called to contribute. We celebrate the women and men who lead in our churches, schools, seminaries, community organizations, academic institutions, governments, and families. I especially celebrate Latinas who, through multiple spaces and vocations, continue to expand our understanding of what it means to lead.

And I celebrate a truth that can benefit society as a whole: when we learn to collaborate from within our differences, our differences cease to be barriers and become capacities for the common good of both the Church and society.

Our heritage is not merely something we have received. It is also a gift we have to share.

INVESTING IN EDUCATION IS SOWING THE FUTURE

“My sincere and heartfelt gratitude to AETH for the incentive and support they have so generously provided, allowing me to continue in my doctoral program.

I receive this assistance with a deeply grateful heart, recognizing that it represents far more than financial support. To me, it signifies encouragement, trust, and an investment in my academic and ministerial formation. Continuing on this doctoral journey requires effort, dedication, sacrifice, and perseverance. Finding organizations like AETH, which believe in the preparation and development of those of us who serve God and our communities, is truly a blessing.

Thank you for contributing in such a meaningful way to this stage of my formation. Your generosity encourages me to continue moving forward and reminds me that all knowledge and every opportunity we receive become even more valuable when we place them at the service of others.

My hope is that this investment may be multiplied through my life, my ministry, my teaching, and my service to the communities God allows me to reach.

AETH, thank you so much for believing in me, supporting me, and investing in my doctoral preparation. I receive this incentive with profound gratitude and with a commitment to continue preparing myself to serve with even greater excellence.

May God richly bless AETH, its leaders, and every person who makes it possible for this type of assistance to reach those of us who continue striving to grow and prepare ourselves to serve more effectively. ”



María L. Ruano

ROOTS AND HORIZONS: A NEW INITIATIVE TO STRENGTHEN HISPANIC THEOLOGICAL EDUCATION

The Association for Hispanic Theological Education (AETH) continues to expand its commitment to the formation of those who teach and serve in the diverse spaces of theological education. As part of this commitment, AETH is developing **Roots and Horizons**, a new initiative aimed at emerging faculty from Bible Institutes, seminaries, and universities. **Its purpose is to contribute to the development of faculty with pedagogical and cultural competencies and theological depth to form leaders prepared to serve the church and the community.** The initiative is made possible through a grant from the Wabash Center for Teaching and Learning in Theology and Religion.

Roots and Horizons emerges within a context of significant demographic and cultural changes. The growth and diversity of Hispanic communities present challenges and opportunities for theological education and require rigorous and contextual formation, accompanied by relevant teaching practices.

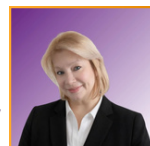
One of its distinctive aspects will be mutual learning among faculty from different spaces of formation. The initiative seeks to build bridges among those who teach in Bible Institutes, seminaries, and universities, fostering the exchange of knowledge and experiences from diverse educational and ministerial contexts.

The initiative includes areas such as culturally responsive teaching, active learning, the integration of technology, critical thinking, and theological reflection, while also recognizing the importance of teaching in multicultural and multigenerational environments.

As part of its development, **AETH will hold a consultation and listening session with faculty members on November 17 and 18, 2026.** This space will provide an opportunity to learn about their experiences, challenges, and needs and to incorporate their voices into the development of the initiative.

Looking ahead to 2027, **Roots and Horizons is beginning to take shape.** Faithful to our roots and looking toward new horizons, we move forward with anticipation for what is to come.

LITZA RIVERA
Associate Director for Formation,
Academics and Resources





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How to Write Effective Proposals



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Parachurches Ministries

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**FREE
REGISTRATION**

Bible Institutes Retreat

This is a one-day **spiritual self-care retreat** designed to focus on your spiritual health and renewal amid the demands of ministry and administrative life. **It's specifically intended for institute directors and librarians, courtesy of Emory-Candler's Pitts Theology Library, sponsor of the Pitts Digital Library.**

GUEST PRESENTERS:



Dr. Harold Segura



Rev. Deborah Ortiz



Rev. Dr. Elizabeth Conde Frazier



Rev. Marcos Canales



LOCAL TIME
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La Mesa Academy
for Theological Studies

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#WeAreAETH

We Preach: The Living Word, One Voice on Mission



On August 21 and 22, AETH's Compelling Preaching and the Mid-Atlantic Region of the Church of God (COGMAR) held Predicamos: Palabra viva, una voz en misión in Baltimore, Maryland. More than **190 people** participated in **two days of teaching, dialogue, and practice**, exploring how to proclaim Scripture faithfully to the biblical text while remaining sensitive to the realities of their communities.



The voices of those who participated reflect the richness of the experience. Regarding Dr. Jessica Lugo's teaching, one participant wrote: **"What we learned from Minister Lugo is that there are many ways we can develop a sermon, even from an unexpected word."** Another participant, reflecting on Dr. Litza Rivera's workshop, appreciated the use of real-life cases and the call to use the Word **"to heal and not to cause further harm."** One participant also recalled the five steps shared by Dr. Oscar Merlo for studying and listening to what Scripture says.



The event received an overall evaluation score of 4.54 out of 5. Beyond that rating, **participants described the event as practical and highly applicable to their churches, ministries, and communities.** The statement that the event would influence the way they serve, lead, or make decisions received the same score. Their comments give meaning to these results: they expressed a desire to study the text more faithfully, prepare their messages more carefully, and preach a Word that accompanies and heals.



COGMAR Bishop, Rev. José Febus, thanked AETH for investing in the region's leaders and expressed his conviction that Predicamos achieved its purpose. He also reaffirmed the commitment to continue creating spaces for collaboration: **"We are in God's time to continue working together!"**

Oscar Merlo
Compelling Preaching & NISHPLAC Consultant



35 Years of AETH's Legacy: A Legacy That Continues

This year, AETH celebrates **35 years of service to Hispanic theological education**. It is a history built alongside leaders, institutions, churches, and partners who share the desire to serve and prepare others to respond to the needs of our communities.

This legacy continues to be written through stories such as that of Maria Lizeth Ruano, who received support from AETH through the "Summer Pastoral Incentive" program to continue her doctoral studies:

"To me, it means support, trust, and an investment in my academic and ministerial formation. My hope is that this investment may be multiplied through my life, my ministry, my teaching, and my service to the communities."
- María Ruano

Her testimony reminds us of something simple but important: when we support one person's formation, we are also sowing into the lives of the people and communities that will be impacted through their service.

Help Us Continue This Legacy

Your donation makes it possible for AETH to continue supporting, equipping, and creating opportunities for leaders and institutions. We invite you to continue being part of this story through your contribution.

What we sow today will continue to impact future generations.

JOIN THE MISSION

Your support allows us to continue equipping and accompanying leaders to transform communities.



**SCAN THE QR
CODE AND
DONATE TODAY**

SHAILA MUÑOZ
Growth and Fundraising Consultant



35 Years Sowing Roots and Building Horizons

In 1991, visionary men and women established a **network that promotes and strengthens theological education and its impact on the lives of individuals, churches, and communities in Hispanic contexts**. From our roots, verticality and service to our communities have shaped AETH's excellence and commitment to the people we serve.

The Roots and Horizons Biennial Gathering is a space that seeks to **honor our roots**, reflecting from the perspectives of Academia, Church, and Community on the challenges and opportunities that will expand our horizons and allow us to continue fulfilling the mission. To this end, **more than 20 experts** will explore and analyze, together with participants, the crossroads from which we serve and develop ideas to keep moving forward.

Join us for the Biennial Gathering either online from a distance or on the campus of Columbia Theological Seminary to engage in conversations from the crossroads, honoring our roots and exploring new horizons. Don't miss this enriching opportunity from **October 15-17, 2026**.



The banner features a gradient background from orange to purple. On the left, it displays the AETH logo, a 35th anniversary logo, and the text 'Biennial 2026 Roots and Horizons'. Below this, it states 'October 15-17 2026' and 'Columbia Theological Seminary Decatur, GA'. On the right, it says 'REGISTER TODAY HYBRID EVENT' in large, bold letters. Below this, it says 'Early Bird Registration:' next to a QR code. At the bottom left, it says 'Learn More' followed by social media icons and 'aeth.org'. At the bottom right, it says '#SomosAETH'.

JEREMY VILLOCH
Program and Grants Administrative Support
Services and Biennial Assistant



Conoce los *recursos* de la Bienal 2026



ORADORES PRINCIPALES:



PROF. ANA M. CEPERO
ACADEMIA



DR. DANIEL RIQUEARTE
IGLESIA



PROF. JEFFREY BAMACA
COMUNIDAD

PREDICADOR INVITADO:



DR. VICTOR ALOYO
PREDICADOR

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DR. JUSTO GONZALEZ



DR. LESLIE DIAZ



REV. LORI TAPIA



REV. MARCOS CANALES



DR. OCTAVIO ESQUEDA



DR. PETER RIOS



DR. PHILIP DEARBORN



DR. RICHARD SERRANO

Participa de nuestra Bienal y se parte de la encrucijada entre la Academia, Iglesia y Comunidad donde aprendemos y somos transformados.

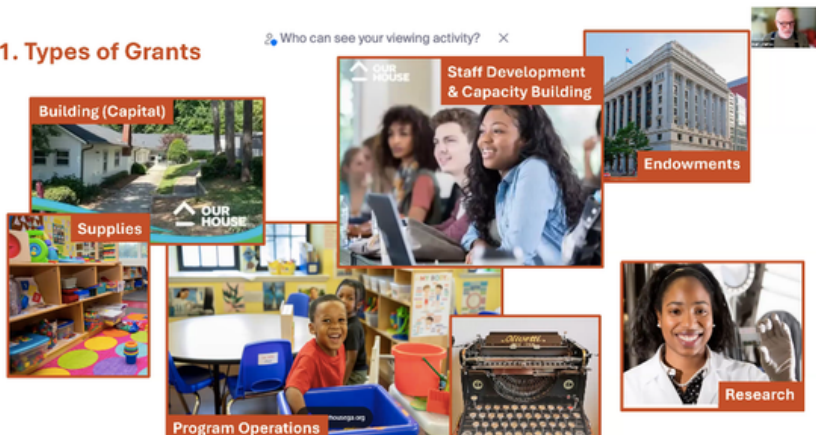
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#SomosAETH

Cultivating Leaders, Strengthening Communities

Young Líderes continues to grow as a space for formation, connection, and support for a new generation of Latino leaders. Through a variety of initiatives, gatherings, and learning opportunities, the program seeks to support emerging leaders as they develop their gifts, explore their calling, and discover new ways to serve their churches and communities.

1. Types of Grants



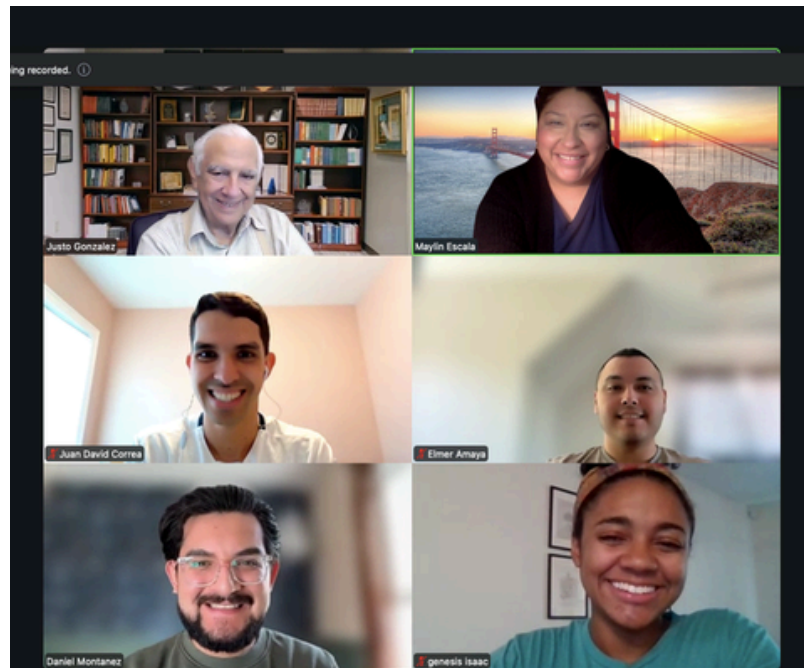
From Ideas to Opportunities: Building New Capacities

One of Young Líderes' recent initiatives was a proposal writing workshop designed to provide participants with practical tools to develop their ideas and turn them into purposeful projects with the potential for impact.

Giving Space to New Voices

The Young Líderes Writing Cohort continues to support participants in the development of their projects and in strengthening their voices as writers and leaders.

This process recognizes that the experiences, questions, and perspectives of our emerging leaders are also part of the theological conversation. Through spaces of support, reflection, and collaboration, participants have the opportunity to develop their ideas and share them with broader communities.



MAYLIN ESCALA
Young Líderes and Digital Media Consultant

Building Community Beyond an Event

The heart of Young Líderes is not found only in individual workshops or gatherings. It is found in the relationships that are built through them.

Every conversation, learning experience, and shared moment creates new opportunities to connect leaders from different churches, institutions, cities, and contexts. It also opens spaces for intergenerational dialogue, recognizing the value of listening both to the wisdom of those who have walked the path before us and to the questions and perspectives of those who are beginning to forge new paths.



As we approach AETH's Biennial, the Center has been busy preparing for this gathering while also seeking new ways to expand and strengthen our work. To begin, we are pleased to announce that there are now **more than 500 documents** available in our **digital collection**. We invite you to visit the González Center website and explore these works from the collections of Drs. Justo and Catherine González. Our team has also been working diligently to improve our website and make it more user-friendly, accessible, and welcoming to everyone who visits. **To visit our website, you can use this link <https://gonzalezcenter.org/>.**

Secondly, the Center has had the privilege of **hosting several events and gatherings**. Recently, we welcomed the new cohort of students from **La Mesa Academy for a conversation with Drs. Justo and Catherine González**. These opportunities to gather and engage in dialogue are an important part of the Center's mission. We also had the honor of welcoming the Antioquía team, which met at the Center. **Creating opportunities like these is one of the things we value most** about our partnerships with organizations committed to advancing Hispanic theological education and contributing to the life of the church.

The Center continues to expand its collection while developing new ideas and initiatives to make our resources and work more accessible to everyone. If you would like to learn more about the Center or collaborate with us in this work, **we invite you to become a Friend of the Center**. Friends of the Center are individuals who financially support our work and encourage us through their ideas and participation. **Visit the Friends of the Center page (<https://gonzalezcenter.org/friends-of-the-center>)** to learn more about how you can get involved and, if possible, make a donation. **Your support allows us to continue preserving these important resources, expanding our collection, and making the Center a place where Hispanic theological education and contributions to the life of the church can continue to flourish.**

SUPPORT THE CENTER'S MISSION

Scan the QR code to learn more.



SOPHIA PORTER
Specialist of the "Friends of the Center" Program
Justo & Catherine González Resource Center



Antioquia Continues Its Transformation Toward the Accelerator

As previously announced, the Antioquia initiative is evolving into the **Antioquia Theological Accelerator**, or, as Dr. Jessica Lugo, Executive Director of AETH, has informally called it, “Antioquia 2.0.” The expansion of this initiative **will focus on supporting Bible Institutes in the United States and Puerto Rico** in areas such as **leadership development, the digital transition in teaching and the classroom, and collaborative research**, among others.

To ensure that the Antioquia Theological Accelerator reflects the needs and future vision of the communities served by AETH’s Bible Institutes, AETH organized a two-day **“listening session”** at the Justo & Catherine González Resource Center in Decatur, GA. Organized by Dr. Jessica Lugo, the event brought together **leaders from academia, the Church, and the Latino community** from across the United States for deep and meaningful conversations about the needs of the community and how the Antioquia Theological Accelerator can address them. These conversations are expected to form the foundation of a **clear and concrete action plan** that will shape the Accelerator. The two-day event had a significant impact on both the development of the Accelerator and the participants. As Dr. Omar Palafox, professor at Abilene Christian University (Abilene, TX), stated, “This was not simply a planning process or an institutional exercise. For me, it became a time of discernment, a moment to pay attention to what God may be doing among us and to remember why I entered the work of theological education in the first place.”

In the coming months, Dr. Lugo will reveal the form and scope of the Antioquia Theological Accelerator. **Stay tuned for more information.**



DANNY ROMÁN
Consultant for

Antioquia and Accelerator



Pastoral Gatherings 2026: Toward a Pastoral Theology of Tenderness

The 2026 Pastoral Gatherings, held under the theme “Toward a Pastoral Theology of Tenderness” and featuring Dr. Harold Segura, had a significant impact on participants. **Dr. Segura shared a vision of Pastoral Theology defined by God’s tenderness, one that shapes every aspect of pastoral ministry** in the Latino Church in the United States and throughout Latin America. He challenged participants to see tenderness as something that emerges from within the individual as God works in the world, and as a demonstration of obedience to God’s command to love our neighbor. Dr. Segura explained that our view of God, that is, how we understand God, affects every aspect of our theologically informed work. Therefore, **a pastoral theology rooted in tenderness will shape our public theology, our pastoral care, our preaching and teaching, and our interactions with others both inside and outside the Church.** Participants were challenged to reflect on how different styles of pastoral leadership are shaped by distinct theological frameworks and how some of those frameworks can cause trauma within churches and the broader community. They took part in a variety of activities to discuss ideas and engage with Dr. Segura, including role-playing scenarios involving pastoral interactions within the Church and with members of the surrounding community. These activities helped participants engage with the concepts shared by Dr. Segura, internalize the ideas, and apply them to real-world situations. These gatherings brought together participants from Puerto Rico, California, and New York, while also engaging people from other states and cities across the United States.



ENCRUCIJADAS

EN LOS CAMINOS DE LA FE

Nueva serie de libros del
Dr. Justo L. González



PRE- ORDENA TUS LIBROS



Oferta disponible solo
en la Bienal AETH

Serie completa:
4 libros por \$65
Precio regular \$80

Libros individuales:
\$17 c/u
Precio regular \$20



Thank you!



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HOUSE OF
STUDIES**



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Editorial CLIE



**BAPTIST WOMEN
IN MINISTRY**

