

**Member
Reflections
on the work
of ITF**



2021-2022

What is your biggest takeaway from the experience of serving on iTF?

How the ITF mirrored the larger community in so many ways, in its interpersonal dynamics, concerns, hopes, etc.

How hard it is to build a community of trust, at the micro and macro level.

That this is a community that seeks security and fears the risks of change.

CTS has a lot of work to do over a long term related to issues of equity, diversity, and inclusion.

conflict--it is healthy!

Yes!

This is hard work collectively, interpersonally, and individually. This kind of work requires reflection and intentional awareness at each of these levels.

The many layers of organizational life and how they intersect to create conflict.

I changed my perspective about

How much my own internal "stuff" gets weaved into my participation here. And how much internal work needs to be done alongside this.

How this work cannot get accomplished quickly and how resistant individuals are to deep structural change.

The depth of pain surrounding issues of EDI.

Concern for the apparent level of distrust that exists between admin, faculty and staff, and the student body.

How others feel about the Presbyterian denomination.

The breadth of the divergence of views about CTS, its history its present, and its future

How justice is often in the eye of the beholder

I am more aware
of _____.

The variety of starting
points that each of us
have. The deep
complexity of all that
is going on within us
individually and
collectively.

The need for
breadth of
understanding
regarding of the
potential purpose
and identity of CTS

The absolute
necessity for the
people facilitating,
leading, partnering in
the change to be
involved in a process
like this.

How diverse seminary
constituencies (faculty,
staff, students, alums,
trustees) can
experience the same
reality in such
different way.

The obstacle of my
own fear of failure
at this work--and
the corresponding
need for risk and
vulnerability

How
unconscious bias
works in well-
intentioned
people.

The amount of
lingering pain in our
institution's
members.

I was surprised about
_____.

How the hard work in these conversations sparked feelings of frustration and anger in me.

How hard it was to keep students fully engaged as members of the ITF.

The depth of feeling about Columbia Seminary.

The disconnect between the Board, administration, faculty, staff and students.

The fearfulness of some staff to speak up regarding their perspectives and experiences.

The frustration of Black members of ITF having to be in a role of educating white members.

The depth of perception of "Presbyterian" as a problematic facet of our identity.

I would like to learn more about _____.

Nurturing relationships and deepening trust in the midst of diverse backgrounds.

I need to learn more about how to build trust within institutions

How new seminary leadership will continue to embrace repairing the breach.

Reducing "white blindness", especially in the arenas of organizational justice.

Effectively using the levels of justice to frame/address/discuss the need for change.

How to prevent some of the problematic patterns we've discussed in the future.

Ways to have a larger community discussion about developing identity and a common sense of mission

I am thankful for

_____.

That we trusted
God more than we
trusted ourselves
and each other.

The hope and
potential of
better days
ahead.

The vulnerability
it took everyone
to participate in
this process.

The struggle!

The commitment of
all to stay in the
conversation, no
matter how fearful
or difficult.

That our
frustrations did
not cause us to
walk away from
the work.