

THE BTS MEMORY PROJECT

COLLECTING AND SHARING THE STORIES AND VOICES OF THE BANGOR THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY COMMUNITY

GENERAL INSTRUCTIONS

Below is a set of instructions for participating in The BTS Memory Project. (You will also find more specific **Recording Instructions** for the device of your choice, as well as **Suggested Questions** and **Troubleshooting** sections.)

1. **Choose a Story**
2. **Prepare Recording Equipment**
3. **Pick a Location**
4. **Test the Equipment**
5. **Record Your Story**
6. **Wrap It Up and Send!**

1. Choose a Story

Begin by determining what your narrative. What would you like to talk about: a former professor? A fellow student or a mentor? A class that proved particularly memorable? A theological issue that you feel is especially important right now? Give some thought to the unique angles and viewpoints that you bring to story. Why does it resonate with you? What makes you uniquely positioned to tell it? When picking a story to tell, reflect upon why you think it is worth sharing in the present and why it is worth preserving for the future.

If you are having trouble thinking of a topic, refer to the **Suggested Questions** section.

For example:

- What are some of the most important lessons you learned in seminary?
- What is your favorite memory of BTS?
- What life experiences or interpersonal relationships have shaped your ministry or vocation the most?

2. Prepare Recording Equipment

Your recording equipment can be as simple as a mobile phone, a tablet, or a computer. Most of these devices come preloaded with audio recording software, but if your device does not there are several options available online for free. (See **Recording Instructions** for more information.)

If you don't have access to any recording equipment, perhaps you might be able to borrow some from a friend or family member. Whatever recording equipment you choose, it is important to practice with it before your interview begins.

3. Pick a Location

Choose the quietest place possible, at a time when interruptions will be minimal. Turn off the TV and radio and anything else making noise. Close your eyes, pause, and listen

carefully for any other preventable ambient noise—buzzing overhead lights, wobbly fans, ticking clocks, etc.

Location Tips:

- A carpeted room is better than hardwood floors
- Kitchens have noisy appliances and reflective surfaces
- Be mindful of the fact that the microphone may pick up sounds of you fidgeting or clearing your throat

4. Test the Equipment

Before you begin telling your story, set up your equipment and ensure you can operate it. That way, once you really get going you will remain focused and you won't have to stop and start over.

Next, decide where to place yourself and the recording device. If using a mobile phone, tablet, or computer, place the device no more than 2 feet away from your mouth. Press record, and then speak your name, the date, and your location. Stop recording, rewind, and listen to the sample to determine that everything is working properly. (If not, it's time to troubleshoot. See **Troubleshooting.**)

Equipment Tips:

- If possible, wear headphones when recording to help you concentrate
- Use a microphone if possible (held about 7 inches from your mouth)
- Be gentle and quiet in your movements to minimize rumbling noises

5. Record Your Story

Begin by stating your name, age, the date, and the location of the interview. For example, "My name is Jane Joyce. I'm forty-two years old. The date is February 14, 2015, and I'm in my living room in Bangor, Maine."

Then roll with it! Tell your story, complete with your reflections about it. But remember: **your recording should only be 3-4 minutes.**

Story-telling Tips:

- Speak naturally and remain relaxed
- Don't change your volume too quickly or too greatly
- Trust your instincts and avoid being overly critical of yourself
- Have fun!

6. Wrap It Up and Send!

Before you switch off the recorder, try to lead your listeners to some sort of natural conclusion; try not to end too abruptly. Offer some insight into why you think the story you've just told is important or meaningful. Talk about what you learned from the events and/or people in your narrative. Remember: you've just taken your listeners on a spoken expedition of sorts. It's important to wrap up the journey in a way that makes sense and ties everything together.

When you are finished, hit STOP on your recording device.

How you save the file will vary depending on your recording device, so be sure to refer to the instructions for your device in the **Recording Instructions** section. Generally, on a mobile phone or tablet, once the file is saved you should be given the option of sharing it. If your recording is smaller than 25 MB, you can simply email it to stories@thebtscenter.org. However, if your recording is larger than 25 MB, please request further assistance via **email**.

On a desktop or laptop computer, you should navigate to the file using Finder or Windows Explorer and attaching the file to your email. (Again, please see the **Recording Instructions** section for more information.)

Congratulations, you're done! Leave the rest to us, and as soon as your story is online we will send you an email to let you know. Thank you for your participation!