



Donor Impact Report 2026



ATLANTIC SCHOOL
of THEOLOGY

FROM THE PRESIDENT

Dear Friends,

Thank you for the many ways you supported AST this past year. Your generosity continues to make a real and lasting difference in the lives of our students and in the communities they will go on to serve.

Because of you, AST students were able to pursue their calling, gaining the practical skills they need for ministry and leadership. You'll meet some of them in this report: their stories are a glimpse of the thoughtful, compassionate leadership our world needs.

As I reflect on the past year, I'm encouraged by the ways our community continues to show up for our students. That same spirit is shaping what comes next.

We are beginning new work in partnership with other theological schools to develop an Ecumenical Shared Ministries Training (ESMT) program at AST, supported by a generous grant from the Lilly Endowment Inc. This initiative responds to a reality many congregations are facing: dwindling attendance and lack of resources to keep their faith communities strong. ESMT opens the door to sharing those resources between faith communities in creative ways—from common gathering spaces to joint programs to collaborative ministry—while honouring the distinctiveness of each congregation and faith tradition. We also look forward to the continued development of programs for lay Roman Catholic leaders and Anglican postulants, equipping them to serve with traditional wisdom and the adaptability needed in a changing church.

We are grateful not only for what you've given, but for the trust you place in us. We carry that trust with us as we look ahead to 2027 and beyond.

Peace,



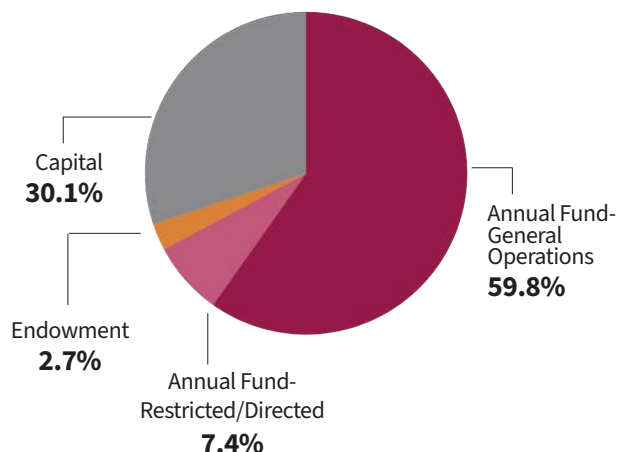
Rev. Dr. Heather McCance
University President



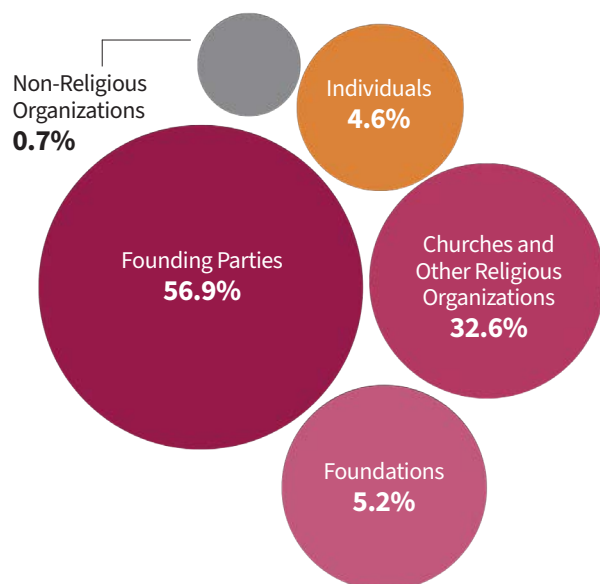
WHAT DOES YOUR GIFT DO?

Several current AST students report that they could not pursue their education without affordable tuition and financial aid. **Your gift allows them to answer the call.**

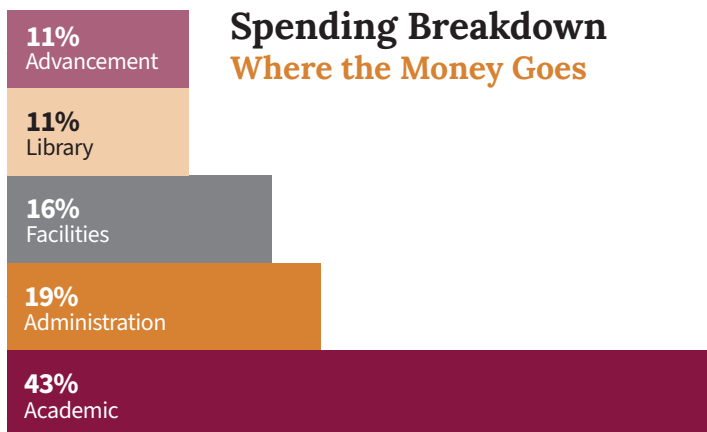
Contributed Revenue by Type



Source of Contributed Revenue Who our Donors are



Spending Breakdown Where the Money Goes



Did you know?

Tuition and residence/facilities rental fees only cover about a quarter of AST's annual expenses. The remainder is covered by the Province of Nova Scotia, our

Founding Parties, income from endowed funds, and donor contributions.

You help us provide cost of living relief for students.

The AST residence remains the least expensive university-owned housing in Halifax.



And look at that view!

But these are just the numbers. Let's meet the real people for whom you make a difference!

DONORS MAKE IT HAPPEN

Foundation gifts have a **big impact** at AST. We use your investment wisely to develop up-to-the-minute programming that prepares students for real-life ministry challenges, no matter where their path takes them. One example is the ongoing support from the **Patrick Power Foundation**, which has empowered AST educators to design programming tailored to the needs of Roman Catholic churches. **The Diploma in the New Evangelization** is one such program, but plans are also under way to make programs for Catholic lay leaders even better!



Dr. David Deane

Associate Professor of Theology
Incoming Academic Dean

“

AST provides an ecumenical setting where Catholic lay leaders engage deeply with the Church's rich intellectual tradition while navigating real-world complexities. By fostering rigorous theological reflection alongside diverse peers, we form leaders equipped to bring the Gospel to today's world with conviction and compassion.

”

The Bachelor of Theology (BTh) program is also popular amongst current and future Roman Catholic lay leaders. Half of AST's current BTh students are Roman Catholic.

STUDENT TESTIMONIES

“

We are deeply grateful to the Patrick Power Fund. With three children, this support makes our studies possible. It bridges the gap between unfunded undergraduate formation and CAF [Canadian Armed Forces]-funded graduate chaplaincy training while we still continue to serve. Your generosity helps form our family in faith and service, an investment that truly multiplies in our faith and military communities.

”



Jennifer Deaton

BTh '26

Nathen Deaton

BTh Student

Patrick Power Foundation Scholarship
for BTh students from the Roman Catholic
Archdiocese of Halifax-Yarmouth

MEETING STUDENTS

Where They Are



"The Summer Distance Master of Divinity marries academic with practical pastoral realities. Raising a family, while studying, I needed to work. This program enabled that, and scholarships from generous donors made answering God's call feasible."

Sonja van de Hoef-Fraser

pictured with her husband and sons
MDiv '26 (Summer Distance)

"I am getting the best of both worlds. I love being able to access campus, taking advantage of chapel, and setting up meetings with faculty, all about two hours' drive from home. If the weather is

poor, I log on at home. I don't have to worry about the drive.

I would encourage anyone within driving distance to come to AST. The encouragement you receive from faculty and students and the sense of community it builds are invaluable."

Sam Graham

MDiv Student (Hybrid)



AST provides a hybrid learning environment to allow students like Sam and Sonya to stay with their families and congregations as much as possible while they study.

Building family and congregational connections is also at the heart of one of our other programs, the Diploma in Intergenerational Faith Formation



Rev. Dr. David Csinos

Associate Professor of Practical Theology
Director, Diploma in Intergenerational
Faith Formation

"Bringing the generations together in worship and community life has been a breath of fresh air for faith communities that find themselves needing to adapt in a changing world. The Diploma in Intergenerational Faith Formation equips and inspires leaders to experiment with all-age ministry so that everyone in the church can grow in their faith."

STUDENT TESTIMONIES

“

AST Bursaries are the lifeline that has helped (and is helping) me navigate the challenges of fulfilling my call to ministry. They are heaven sent.

Michael Moneke
MDiv Student

Emmanuel Anglican Church Bursary



SUPERVISED MINISTRY

AST's Ministry Action Plan (MAP) placements help our Master of Divinity and Bachelor of Theology students apply their knowledge right away. Through on-the-ground placements, either with experienced ministers or leading a congregation under supervision, students are able to practise with feedback.

I was drawn to AST through personal calling and the encouragement of friends. Over my first two years of MDiv study, I have been deeply grateful and blessed for joining this community that supports and inspires me to grow in faith, knowledge, and ministry.



Ruibiao Li
MDiv Student

I have found the real-world experience I've gained at AST to be an incredible tool. Sermons I write for preaching courses can be used in my field placement. I can help with community outreach at my congregation and then discuss it in class the very same day. Our field experiences shape our learning as much as the learning shapes our field experience.



Nic Hartmann
MDiv Student



Rev. Dr. Kyle Wagner
MAP Instructor

“There is great value in field education programs for ministry. MAP grounds ministry training in real contexts, integrating good theology with practice. Students learn pastoral skills, leadership, and ethical discernment while receiving formative feedback. It is important that they grow in self-awareness, their vocational identity, and prayer practice. For students, I believe that it is important to discover how faith is lived amid complexity, relationships, and to develop leadership qualities within diverse communities and settings today.”

CHAPLAINCY & CAREGIVING

Through practical coursework and supervised ministry, students preparing for clinical pastoral care learn to accompany people through life's most difficult moments. They develop and apply highly effective skills for helping individuals cope with trauma, guilt, crisis, illness, dying, and death. Pastoral care students at AST learn to serve as invaluable guides during times of extreme uncertainty.



Becky Coholan
Hospital Chaplaincy
MA Student

"What led me to consider chaplaincy are the various opportunities that I experienced as a young adult in the church, being shown unconditional love and active listening from pastoral leaders in my life. I hope to use these experiences, to listen to clients, to sit with people in their times of struggle and uncertainty and strive to bring comfort. I wish to provide the same support and compassion through ministry to others as I experienced. I hope to provide a presence and attend to the needs of others, reflect and share the love of God that I was shown from faithful ministry opportunities."

"My time at Atlantic School of Theology has made me more aware of my presence while at work and the effect of a positive attitude towards anything the day might throw at me. I have been more aware of my body language and the ways to subtly communicate. But I have to emphasize how much AST has taught me the importance of an active and willing presence."



Laura MacDonald
In-Home Care Provider
MDiv Student



Rev. Canon Dr. Jody Clarke
Professor of Pastoral Theology
Clinical Pastoral Education

"Steer towards the storm."



Ibukun Olomodosi
University Musician

CONTINUING EDUCATION



Award-winning author **Rev. Dr. Matthew Anderson**, this year's **MacKinnon Lecturer**, explored the unlikely kinship of Leonard Cohen and St. Paul with a hybrid public audience.



In this year's **Nicholson Lecture Series**, **Dr. Sarah Han** explored how proclamation can spark gospel imagination, cultivate compassion, and equip communities to notice God's presence in everyday life.



This year's **MacKinnon-Pollock Lecture** featured **Dr. Wing Yi Wong**, who explored how trauma-informed preaching can name what haunts our communities, and how we can cultivate hope, healing, and ethical agency in a wounded world.

Coming Soon!

New continuing education offerings are on the way! AST is surveying faith communities to develop relevant and timely learning opportunities. Contact Lydia Hood at lydia.hood@astheology.ns.ca for more details.



Our thanks to **Pine Hill Divinity Hall** for keeping our continuing education programming financially accessible

Looking Ahead



Inspired?

You can participate! Anyone can sign up for continuing education events and courses - you do not need to be enrolled in a degree program.



In May 2026, AST will welcome **Dr. Gloria Woodland** for the **2026 Hayes Symposium**. Drawing from her extensive work and experience in spiritual care and chaplaincy, Dr. Woodland will guide participants through thoughtful, pastoral, and practical approaches for supporting ministering individuals impacted by a person's decision to pursue medical assistance in dying.

This workshop is supported by the **Hayes Centre for Pastoral Care and Theology endowment fund**.

AST CONNECTS



Help us spread the word!

Going to a conference or visiting a new faith community? Visit the Advancement Office (in the lower level of the St. Columba Chapel) or reach out to us before your trip! There are also several ways to help with AST's mission in your own church.

- **WEAR:** Grab one of our conversation-starting AST buttons to wear at your event
- **SHARE:** Take some promotional materials (digital or hard copy) to share with people you meet
- **PAIR:** We can help you match your church with an AST faculty and/or staff member, who can bring in-person information sessions and/or guest speaking right to your congregation
- **PRAYER:** Ask your congregation to keep AST faculty, staff, and students in their prayers

Did you know?

Wildlife on AST campus includes bluejays, ravens, chipmunks, jellyfish (in the Northwest Arm), and a beautiful family of deer who often make appearances at the Chapel, Library, and President's Lodge windows.



Have you
seen our
new
website?



Check out our new monthly
digital newsletter -
AST Connect

Scan to
sign up!



ALUMNI DO GREAT THINGS

Rev. Alison Etter Memorial Fund Grant



Rev. Alison Etter
(MDiv '11)

Rev. Alison Etter, part of AST's community of alumni, was a beautiful person who radiated love. She showed great spirit, wisdom, creativity, and compassion in her ministry and in her life. She was a builder of communities, a reformer of systems, a lifelong learner, and a pilgrim. Alison was a person of deep solidarity and a loyal friend.

The Rev. Alison Etter Memorial Fund was established by Alison's family at AST. The fund provides annual grants to AST alumni whose work reflects Alison's values and spirit. It has grown thanks to the generosity of friends, organizations, and people who have been impacted by Alison.

2026 Awardees

Rev. Dr. Shepherd Munikwa (MA '17)
Dieppe, N.B.

Bonita Slunder (Certificate in Stewardship '25)
Prescott, O.N.

Rev. Dr. Lisa Waites (MA '12)
Calgary, A.B.



We were honoured to welcome **Patrick Cassidy** (AST Associate '25) back to campus in March. Patrick led a continuing education workshop on caregiving for family members as they age. It was an afternoon of deep vulnerability and practical wisdom for our online and in-person community.

Featured Alumni

Pine Hill Class of 1966

Pine Hill, Holy Heart, and King's alumni are an important part of the AST family! In December, we connected with the Pine Hill Class of '66, who celebrate their 60th anniversary this year. The class sponsored the star on top of the AST Christmas tree in memory of their departed classmates.





The Hon. Dr. Mayann Francis **Faith in Action Award**

Faith in Action. That is the simple yet powerful premise behind The Hon. Dr. Mayann Francis Faith in Action Award. This award recognizes individuals across Atlantic Canada whose religious commitments have been translated into tangible, positive change, significantly benefiting the wider community and improving the quality of life for those they serve.

The Hon. Dr. Mayann Francis

Former Lieutenant Governor of Nova Scotia

Former AST Board Chair

Certificate in Theological Studies '03, Honourary Doctor of Divinity '18

2026 Awardees

Pennies and Sparrows is a special place. With operations based out of **Stone Church** in Saint John, N.B., this community care organization seeks to serve the downtown core of Saint John with a drop-in program, adult English language classes for newcomers, summer day camps for newcomer children, a cooking class, a seniors' social group, and more such relationship-focused programs.

"Most recently, we watched as one of our staff members (Jennifer) held a guest at our drop-in program tightly in her arms, hugging her for ten minutes straight as if she were a small, hurting child,. I knew that, for at least a few minutes on a Thursday afternoon, our guest—a woman to whom the world had been unspeakably cruel—felt safe, loved, and valued. I'm convinced that Jesus himself was involved in that hug."

—Rev. Terence Chandra

Revs. Jasmine and Terrence Chandra

Pennies and Sparrows

Saint John, N.B.



DONOR TESTIMONIES

Pleasant Valley Memorial Church funds one of many bursaries that directly alleviate financial challenges for students. Although the church was deconsecrated in the 1980s, a dedicated historic preservation board has kept the building (and its legacy) strong. AST is grateful for bursary donors like Pleasant Valley Memorial Church, whose investment helps grow future leaders.

“Following significant contributions [to our historic building] from two sisters, we felt it was fitting to direct funds toward ministerial students at AST. Our hope is that this bursary will alleviate financial barriers for those in the program and inspire others to answer the call to ministry.”

Arnold G. Smith, Chair
Pleasant Valley Memorial Church Board
Pleasant Valley, P.E.

FACULTY TESTIMONIES

“Atlantic School of Theology is a collective: it is people. We were formed to enact the higher education mission of three large Christian communities in Atlantic Canada. Since that founding vision became a reality in the 1970s, we have faithfully persevered in good times and hard times. We remain dedicated to staying true to that original ‘DNA’ of our educational mission. Our reach now criss-crosses Canada and includes students from many other countries and denominations. This ecumenical, national, and international scope is deeply enriching for all of us. I have been blessed to serve with AST since 2006, joining countless students, faculty, staff members, Board and Senate members, volunteers, community and church folks of all kinds. Please join me in being part of this inspired collective! Giving—in whatever ways are possible for you—is a deep joy and a nourishing spiritual practice, and it drives our mission onward into the future.”



Rev. Dr. Rob Fennell
Professor of Historical
and Systematic Theology

GIVING OPPORTUNITIES

Donate Today!

- ✓ Mail a cheque
- ✓ Donate online
- ✓ Call us
- ✓ Visit us in person



If you would like to discuss planned giving, donation of securities, or non-cash gifts, please reach out to AST's Manager of Philanthropy, Jennifer Hartmann.

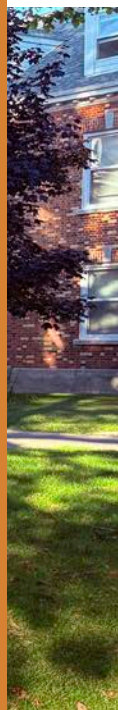
How can I name a bursary or lecture series?

Endowed funds are gifts that keep giving! Each year, a portion of investment earnings are delivered to AST to fund operations, bursaries, lecture series, and more.

Endowing a gift provides lasting support for AST's mission and allows us to plan confidently, respond to emerging needs, and sustain excellence over time.

AST also has several endowed funds that are open for donations of any amount.

- Rev. Alison Etter Memorial Fund
- The Hon. Mayann Francis Faith in Action Award
- AST Bursary Fund (General)
- Archbishop Hayes Centre for Pastoral Care and Theology Endowment Fund



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FOUNDING PARTIES

United Church of Canada

Pine Hill Divinity Hall

Roman Catholic Church

Archdiocese of Halifax-Yarmouth

Anglican Church of Canada

Diocese of Fredericton

Diocese of Nova Scotia and Prince
Edward Island

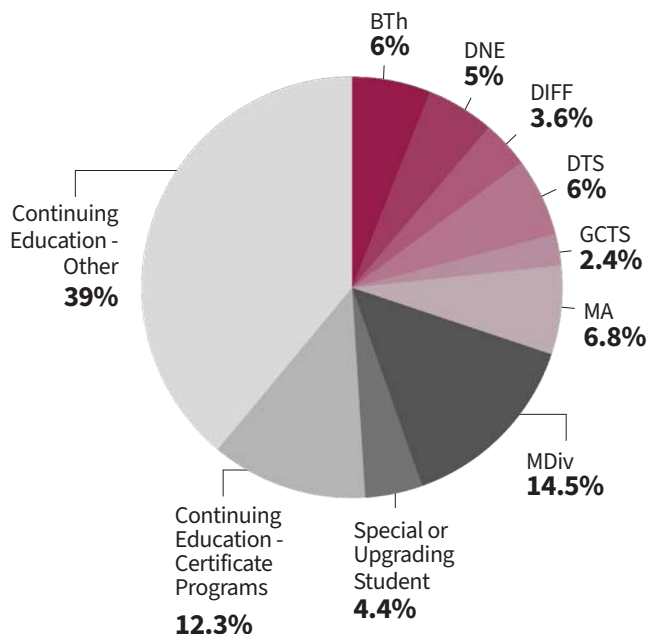
University of King's College

LOOK AT US GROW

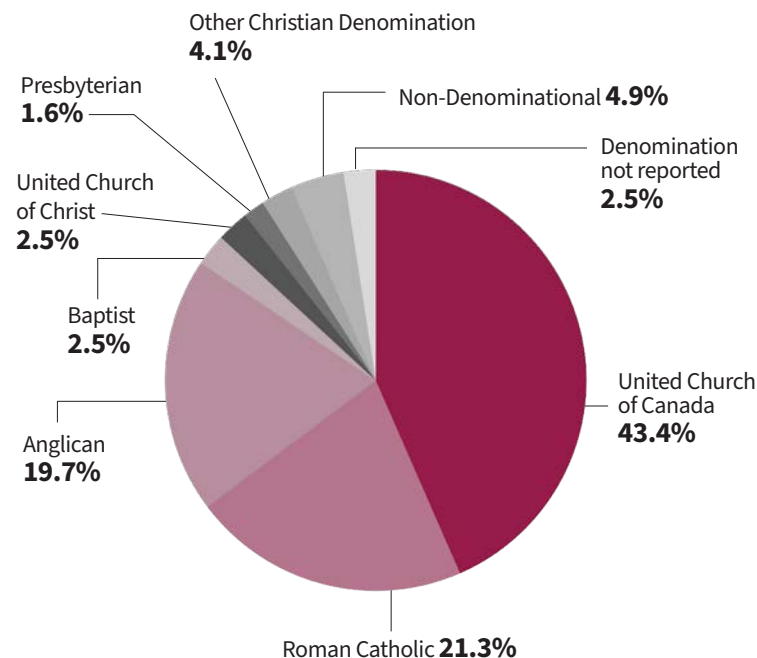
AST Registered Students, 2025-26



Percentage enrolled in each program of study



Percentage of students in each denomination



\$206,500

in donor-funded bursaries, scholarships, and grants awarded by AST in 2025-26



29

current students who are candidates for ministry in the United Church of Canada



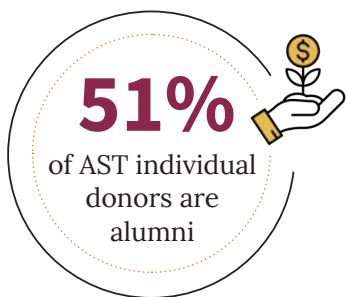
100

Roman Catholic students have graduated with the Diploma in the New Evangelization since its inception



80%

of graduates who are seeking work have a position in their chosen field within six months of graduation



countries represented
by current students,
staff, and faculty



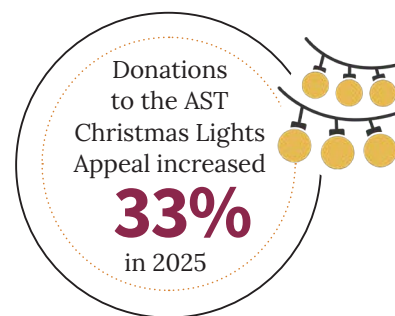
55

years of ecumenical education
since Pine Hill Divinity Hall
(United Church of Canada),
King's College Seminary
(Anglican Church of Canada),
and Holy Heart Seminary
(Roman Catholic Church) joined
forces to become AST

3:1
graduate student-faculty ratio



5:1
overall student-faculty ratio



70%
of faculty are
ordained priests
or ministers



Value of long-term
investments increased

84%

since 2016, thanks to
generous donors who gave
during the Shaping Leaders
Campaign



60

Parishes and faith
communities give to AST
annually - thank you!

Thank you!

We are all grateful for the opportunity to get to know you and share all that AST has to offer. If you have any questions or suggestions, please never hesitate to reach out.



Thank you for being a part of the AST community!

Blessings,
The AST Advancement Team



Jennifer Anandanayagam
Communications



Jennifer Hartmann
Philanthropy



Lydia Hood
Recruitment

*“And do not forget to do good and to share with others,
for with such sacrifices God is pleased.” – Hebrews 13:16*



Questions about giving and impact?

AST Advancement Office | 660 Francklyn St. | Halifax, NS B3H 3B5

(782) 321-0548 | giving@asttheology.ns.ca

St. Columba Chapel | Lower Level



AST is located in Mi'kma'ki, the ancestral and
unceded territory of the Mi'kmaq Peoples