

AST NEWS

SPRING 2022

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Message from our Acting President



Grace and peace to you from Atlantic School of Theology. As I write this message, we are reeling from the invasion of Ukraine and the human suffering it has caused. Our hearts are with all who are fleeing or staying behind. At the same time, the pandemic continues, and so much of our life and times continue to be in flux. The omicron wave of the COVID-19 pandemic is changing everything once

again. Students continue to study and serve in a variety of settings, including many online classes. Theological education continues to develop and evolve as we think about who we are, whose we are, and what we are all about. Society around us keeps asking the Big Questions of meaning and purpose.

Continued on page 4 . . .

Renovations at AST

Atlantic School of Theology is proud to be a caring community and thank our donors for your continued and faithful support of our University during a year filled with challenges and uncertainties.

The donations received contributed to the improvement of the physical structure of our campus in 2021 and the purchase of new electronic equipment.

New Computers

During 2021, AST completed a needs assessment of our IT infrastructure and established a plan to update hardware to meet the needs of remote working and teaching. In response to the challenges of COVID, all our staff and faculty are now capable of transitioning between remote and on campus service and course delivery. To date, AST has purchased 5 laptops, 3 desktops, all with VPN remote accessibility and 3 cell phones to support those in contact with our students and community. In 2022, the intent is to upgrade the Library's public access computers, ensuring we are current and security compliant.

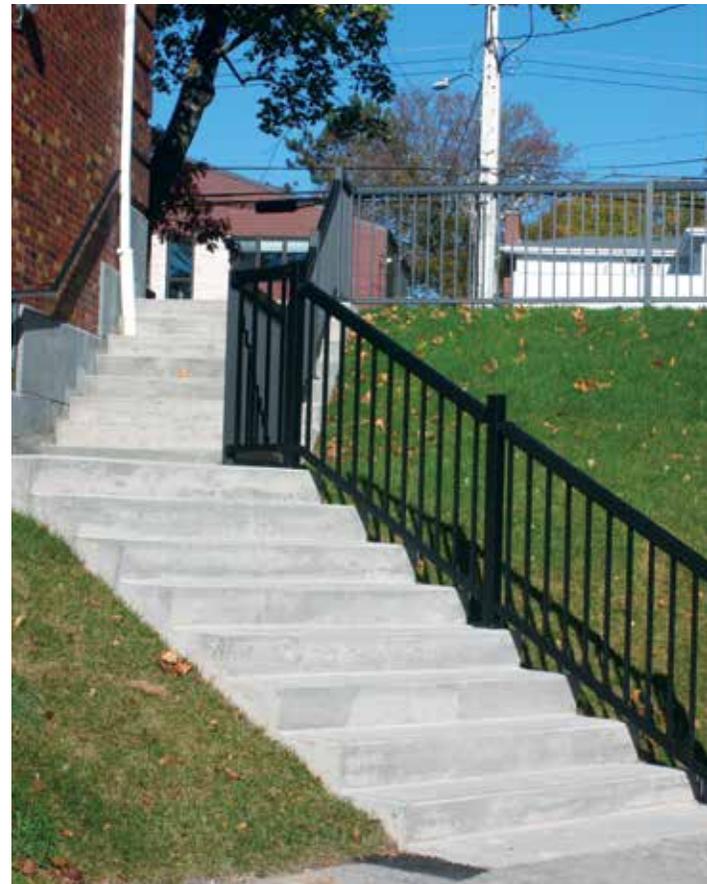
AST Residence

Last year, AST residence front doors were replaced with new doors made of oak and hand-crafted to resemble the original doors. The main entrance door of the building has a security lock system operated by key cards and an automatic operator, making it easier for people to access the building.

Continued on page 2 . . .



New cement steps and safety rails between the Residence and 1898 Buildings



Inside

Continuing Education	2
Turning Ourselves Inside Out.....	2
Does Ecumenical Education Matter?	2
Steer into the Storm.....	3
Dr. Helga Mills Portrait	3
Tenure Track Faculty Appointments	4
New Faces on Campus	4

Continuing Education

Learn something new!

Spirituality in the Writing of L.M. Montgomery

Instructor: Dr. Brenton Dickieson
Method: Online | Asynchronous *
Dates: May 2 to May 25, 2022

* log in and participate at the time and the day that suits you best – no “live” sessions

The Diversity of Christian Worship

Instructor: Rev. Dr. Frank Emanuel
Method: Online via Zoom (Live)
Time: Mondays at 7:30 pm ADT
Dates: May 30 to June 27, 2022

Visit our website for the latest in continuing education offerings
astheology.ns.ca/con-ed

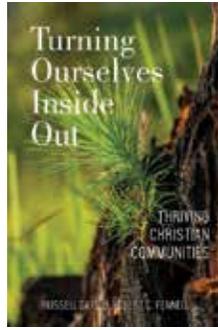
Does Ecumenical Theological Education Matter?

If you received our newsletter, chances are good that it matters to you. You are probably already aware of AST’s mission to shape effective and faithful ordained and lay leaders and understanding among communities of faith. You may even be a faithful AST supporter, for which we are extremely grateful. But have you thought ahead to the distant future? Where will future generations of church leaders get their education?

We are very fortunate at AST to have a group of people who have committed their future support by remembering AST in their estate planning. You, too, can help AST to continue serving the church and society long after you have gone by joining our Legacy Circle. With guidance from independent legal and financial experts, planned giving can offer certain tax advantages and benefits to your estate. It can also help you to designate your support to areas that are of particular interest to you. By remembering AST in your estate planning, you can make a difference in this world.

For more information about planning a gift to AST, we invite you to complete the enclosed reply card or contact the following:
Linda Moxsom-Skinner, CAO
lmoxsomskinner@astheology.ns.ca
902-414-5553

Turning Ourselves Inside Out: Thriving Christian Communities



This is a new book from Fortress Press written by AST Academic Dean, Rev. Dr. Rob Fennell, and Rev. Dr. Russ Daye, who has lectured at AST and is the new Lead Minister of Bloor Street United Church in Toronto.

The book reveals the results of their six-year research endeavour, the Thriving Christian Communities Project. Their research was funded by the United Church of Canada Foundation’s Rowntree Scholarship and housed at AST.

Fennell and Daye were curious about what can be learned from congregations

and parishes in which exciting new life, hope, and mission are underway. They interviewed local faith communities across Canada and on the west coast of the US, exploring the stories and experiences of lay people and ministers in places where good things are erupting, even when prospects looked difficult and challenging.

The authors discovered that amid great upheaval, Christ is giving us a new church, and this book offers readers a firsthand glimpse of it. Turning Ourselves Inside Out isn’t an “off the shelf” program or model. It invites readers to listen to others’ experiences and then dig deep into their own and get down to the business of dreaming God’s dream and making it real, right where they are.

Leaders of congregations, and all who care about what God is up to in the world, will find these stories to be sources of hope and courage, as God renews and revives God’s people. The book is available from Fortress Press, or through local booksellers.

Do we have your contact information?

- We love to hear from you!
- Make sure you don’t miss our latest news and events.
- Keep your contact information current by sending us your email and address changes.
- Email us at advancement@astheology.ns.ca or write to us:
Advancement Office
Atlantic School of Theology
660 Francklyn Street, Halifax, NS B3H 3B5

Renovations Cont'd

AST Residence Cont'd

One apartment in the residence building has a new kitchen to best attend to our residents’ needs, and the shower areas in one of the common washrooms on the 1st floor are in the renovation process.

Also, the stairs between the AST residence and the 1898 building were replaced to meet current code requirements.

St. Columba Chapel

St. Columba Chapel has new accessible door openers, and, currently, the washroom on the main floor of the building is being renovated to be an accessible washroom. Those renovations are part of AST’s commitment to being a more accessible university and eliminating ability barriers to people on our campus.



Chapel sacristy will include a new and accessible washroom

Steer into the Storm Dynamic Psychotherapy for Preaching in Anxious Times

Words in a Time of Crisis.” This was the theme of the 2020 conference of Societas Homiletica, an international academy of teachers and researchers of homiletics. Instead of meeting in Budapest, as the society had originally planned, they hosted an online conference that spoke directly to the task of preaching during the COVID-19 pandemic.

For a few years, Dr. Dave Csinos and Dr. Jody Clarke had been working together in the pastoral theology department at AST. So when the call for papers was announced, both thought that they had something to say to the topic—together! And so they logged into Zoom one morning in

August of 2020 and offered a presentation that married Jody’s work in psychotherapy and Dave’s insights surrounding homiletics.

The result was a preliminary proposal for how the principles of dynamic psychotherapy might be married with conversational approaches to preaching in order to see what wisdom would be born as to how pastoral leaders can preach the gospel amidst catastrophes like the COVID-19 pandemic.

Thanks to encouragement and insightful comments from colleagues at the conference, Dave and Jody have turned the presentation into an article that was recently published in *International Journal of Homiletics*, the academic periodical of Societas Homiletica. If you are a preacher and you want to preach hope in the midst of crisis, this article will help you do just that!

The article is available online:

<https://ul.qucosa.de/api/qucosa%3A75825/attachment/ATT-0/>



New front entry
system for the
Residence Building



New accessible
door openers
for the chapel



Dr. Helga Mills Portrait Placed in Presidents’ Gallery

Visitors to the AST Library in the last several years may have come across the portrait gallery of past presidents on the second floor. Those who paid close attention would have noticed a gap in time between presidents and may have wondered about that period. It turns out the gallery was missing the only woman to have served in that role: Dr. Helga Mills. In honour of International Women’s Day 2021, the AST Board of Governors, led by then-chair Mike Foster, wanted to correct the omission. Since events could not be held on campus due to Covid-19, a portrait of Helga was unveiled at the board’s Annual General Meeting in June 2021, and it now hangs in the gallery along with other past presidents.

Dr. Helga Mills served as Interim Principal at AST in 2004. During the brief time she was in office, she left a permanent mark on the university as the sixth of nine serving presidents and the first woman to hold the position. Following her six-month interim term, she was appointed to the AST Board of Governors as a Pine Hill Divinity Hall representative, serving for two three-year terms. Helga along with her husband, the late Rev. Dr. Robert (Bob) Mills, continued to support AST well into her twilight years, both monetarily and by serving on various committees and lending an extra hand wherever she could. In 2011, she received an honorary Doctor of Divinity degree in recognition of her significant accomplishments and enthusiastic work on behalf of the university and the community. Sadly, Helga passed away in November 2019, but her mark on this institution lives on.

New Faces on Campus



Kiran Anumalla
Comptroller



Lydia Hood
Recruitment Coordinator
AST MA (2015)

Tenure-Track Faculty Appointments



The Rev. Dr. Susan
MacAlpine-Gillis
Assistant Professor
Pastoral Theology



The Rev. Dr.
Andrew O'Neill
Assistant Professor
Pastoral Theology



Dr. Evangeline
Kozitza Dean
Assistant Professor
Biblical Studies

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Mark your calendars! Convocation Day is May 14, 2022

Message from our Acting President *Cont'd*

At the end of 2021, Rev. Canon Neale Bennet retired as President of AST. Please join me in thanking Neale for his six and half years of faithful service to AST. We wish him and his family well in the next chapter.

The Board of Governors has temporarily appointed me as Acting President until an Interim President can be found to serve AST for about a year. Please pray for the search committee as it seeks diligently and faithfully for this next servant-leader of AST.

On several occasions in the last few months, I have spoken with alumni/ae, students, staff, faculty, Senate and Board members who have used the phrase, "our school" when referring to AST. This warms my heart. All that AST has been, is, and will be, happens as a result of the shared efforts, prayers, and hard work of this broad community. I am grateful that so

many think of our little university by the sea as "our school." That's as it should be.

My thoughts these days are also with our wider community of colleagues, neighbours, churches, universities, colleges, and friends. This COVID era has been hard on many of us, bringing stresses and strains that challenge us in profound ways. I pray that your grounding in faith and your sense of mission and purpose will sustain and encourage you.

As I wrote in a previous edition of this newsletter, "mission is the foundation of what we are all about, and mission is the direction in which we sail the ship. We trust God to guide and empower that mission . . . Our role is to remain faithful to the task God has given us and to look to the future with hope and confidence . . . We work together with courage and determination—not because we are

invincible, but because we are led by a servant Lord whose self-giving love is the source of his transforming power."

I still believe this. I am encouraged by God's faithful presence and guiding hand. I thank you, and thank God for you, in our shared mission to be "our school," serving the world around us with grace and courage. Our prayers join with yours for peace in our time and the renewal of hope.

—THE REV. DR. ROB FENNELL

P.S. Please join me and include a donation to AST within your charitable giving plans for 2022!

www.astheology.ns.ca

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of THEOLOGY