

## **Atlantic School of Theology Senate**

May 1, 2020 marked my last meeting as United Church representative for Maritime Conference and more recently, Region 15. It has been my privilege to serve the church in this way for the past six years. Representing the voice of leadership in pastoral ministry over that term, and bringing that voice to the discussion and decision making has been a point of pride for me. The senate oversees a wide variety of theological education opportunities for those preparing to lead in ministry and those in leadership already, who might like to keep current. During my time on senate, I also served on the honorary degree committee, which suggests and considers appropriate recipients of such an award. This was to be an exciting year!

What a year of transition it has been for all of us. The challenges presented to all organizations influenced much of the climax of the year at AST. While construction and reorganizing faculty offices and library resources, keeping up with academic and institutional standards were part of the work this year, adjusting to the realities of a global pandemic altered the best of plans. It was with great disappointment that the decision to cancel all events this spring was made. Parchments will be mailed, and graduates will wait until next year to walk across the stage with the class of 2021.

Other significant decisions are made at each meeting, including applications for tenure, faculty reviews, sabbatical requests, partnerships with other institutions and organizations, and celebrating successes within the institution.

With the health and safety of students and staff as top priority, the end of the winter term unfolded on line. Preparation for all the summer courses to be held on line is underway. Everyone is hoping that by the fall in person classes will be possible, but if not, the staff and faculty are well prepared to make another transition.

This year, in many ways was no different from others though, AST continues to be a leader on the stage of ecumenical relations, a respected partner and voice in ethics and theology and a plays a significant role is shaping leaders in a time of great change. The school takes great pride in its past while living into the challenges of our time.

I am grateful for having the opportunity to play some small part at this level of leadership.

Donna Tourneur