

## News Release

February 15, 2010

For Immediate Release

# Atlantic School of Theology Announces May 2010 Convocation Honorees

Halifax, NS – During Convocation ceremonies on May 1, 2010, Atlantic School of Theology (AST) will award honorary degrees to two outstanding individuals in recognition of their significant accomplishments. The following people will receive a **Doctor of Divinity, *honoris causa***:

### David Adams Richards

A Canadian writer whose work includes novels, stage plays, screenplays, non-fiction, and poetry, David Adams Richards was born in Newcastle, New Brunswick; he now resides in Fredericton with his wife Peggy and his sons Anton and John. He attended St. Thomas University in Fredericton and has held writer-in-residences at various universities and colleges in Canada, including Mount Allison University and the University of New Brunswick. He has won numerous awards for his work, including the Giller Prize for his novel *Mercy Among the Children* (2000), the Commonwealth Award for his novel *The Friends of Meager Fortune* (2007), the Governor General's Award (non-fiction) for *Lines on the Water* (1998), the Governor General's Award (fiction) for his novel *Nights Below Station Street* (1998), and two Gemini awards for scriptwriting. Throughout his writing, his work has addressed important religious themes. His most recent work of non-fiction, *God Is, My search for Faith in a Secular World*, was published in fall 2009. Mr. Richards received the Order of New Brunswick in 2005 and was awarded the Order of Canada in December 2009. He holds several honorary degrees: a Doctor of Laws from Mount Allison University, a Doctor of Letters from the University of New Brunswick, and a Doctor of Laws from St. Thomas University, his alma mater.

### Marion Pardy

The Very Rev. Dr. Marion Pardy grew up in Gander, Newfoundland, and currently resides in St. John's. She is a graduate of the Centre for Christian Studies. She also holds BA, BA (Honours) and MA degrees from York University, as well as a DMin degree from Boston University School of Theology. She also holds an honorary Doctor of Laws degree from Memorial University of Newfoundland. Dr. Pardy served The United Church of Canada in various conferences across the country and in the General Council office. In 1990, she was called to Gower Street United Church in St. John's and remained there until she was elected 37<sup>th</sup> Moderator of The United Church of Canada in August 2000, a post she held for three years. She was the first Moderator from Newfoundland/Labrador Conference to be elected while serving in the conference. As Moderator, Dr. Pardy's travels took her to every conference in the church, including Bermuda; she also travelled to the Philippines, Hong Kong, and the Middle East. Upon completion of her term as Moderator, Dr. Pardy "officially" retired. She is the current President of the St. John's and Area Council of Churches and serves on the General Council Committee on Finance. In addition to this valued work, Dr. Pardy devotes her passion for peace and justice to the Stella Burry Community Services and Bridges to Hope mission and service projects. She is also a Director of the Religious Social Action Coalition in St. John's, an inter-faith group of Jews, Muslims, Hindus, Christians, and others formed to eliminate poverty. Dr. Pardy continues to be very committed to the theology and practices of The United Church of Canada.

In addition to the above-noted honorary degrees, AST will install the honor of **Associate** on the following individual in recognition of her extraordinary commitment and support to Atlantic School of Theology:

**Marilyn Sweet**

A native of Halifax, Marilyn Sweet now resides in Falmouth, Nova Scotia. She holds a BA from Dalhousie University and an MDiv degree from Atlantic School of Theology. In addition, she completed post-graduate studies in liturgical law at St. Paul University, University of Ottawa. Ms. Sweet served as Vice-Chair and Chair of the AST Board of Governors from 2002 to 2008. She is currently the Director of Programs and Liturgy Director for the Roman Catholic Archdiocese of Halifax and has worked in youth ministry, catechetics, adult faith formation, and communications. She teaches in Koinonia, the Adult Faith Development Program for the Archdiocese of Halifax that is held at AST. She served for several years as a member of the National Council for Liturgy, Canadian Conference of Catholic Bishops, and as a member of the Advisory Committee on Adult Faith Development for the National Office of Religious Education, Canadian Conference of Catholic Bishops (CCCC). She is the principal writer of the CCCC document *Youth at Worship* (1999) and the author of *Preparing to Celebrate with Youth* (1997).

The general public and the media are welcome to attend AST's convocation exercises, which will take place on Saturday, May 1, at 11:00 a.m. in The Cathedral Church of All Saints, 1340 Tower Road, Halifax, Nova Scotia. David Adams Richards will deliver the convocation address.

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**Dawn Robertson**

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