

THE ASBURY THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY

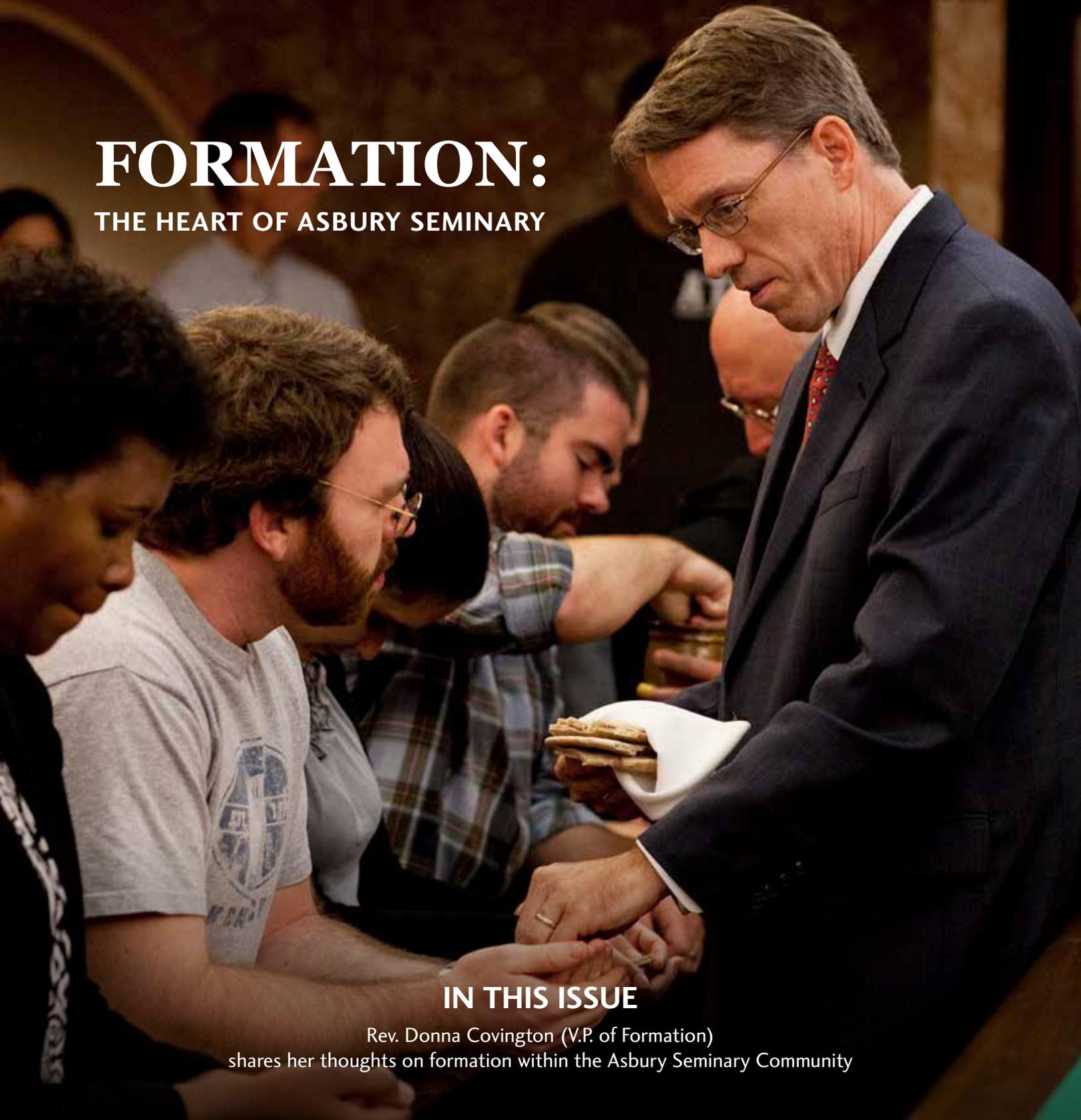
HERALD

Vol. 132 no. 2 Fall 2018

FORMATION: THE HEART OF ASBURY SEMINARY

IN THIS ISSUE

Rev. Donna Covington (V.P. of Formation)
shares her thoughts on formation within the Asbury Seminary Community





A community called to prepare *theologically educated, sanctified, Spirit-filled* men and women to *evangelize* and to spread *scriptural holiness throughout the world* through the *love* of Jesus Christ, in the *power* of the Holy Spirit, and to the *glory* of God the Father.

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ASBURY THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY
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The Asbury Herald is published in electronic format (asbury.to/herald) to reduce paper consumption and increase access. Please visit this site to learn how to access the electronic version on your Apple or Kindle device.

POSTMASTER:

Please send address changes to
The Asbury Herald, Asbury Theological Seminary
204 N. Lexington Ave. Wilmore, KY 40390-1199.

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FORMATION: THE HEART OF ASBURY SEMINARY



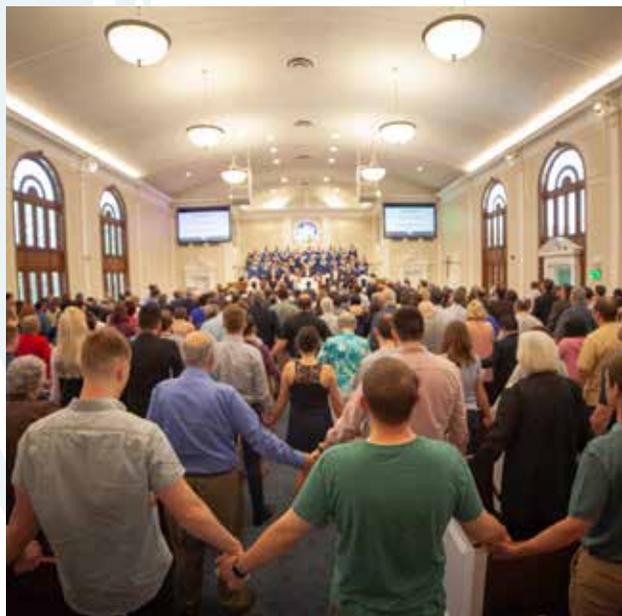
One of the most enduring phrases which is used to describe what it is like to be a student is the phrase, “the Asbury experience.” It is a phrase which is not easy to define, but it is clearly used to refer to the perennial commitment at Asbury to bring formation to both the mind *and* the heart. John Wesley had a profound understanding of the relationship between academic learning and spiritual formation. He understood that these classic themes of “head” and “heart” were not, in the end, two different things which must be kept in balance or tension with the other. Rather, they were really, as we would say, “two sides of one coin,” each nourishing the other and enhancing the whole. Our heart must be “formed” to love God, but our head must also be “formed” to think rightly about God and the world. Wesley’s metaphor was that of marriage which, through the mystery of covenant, makes two people “one flesh.” Wesley called the coming together of “head” and “heart” the great “nuptial embrace.” Asbury Theological Seminary aspires to be one of the leaders in demonstrating our commitment to nurture both the head and the heart of our over 1,700 students as they prepare for a life of Christian ministry.

This issue is dedicated to exploring the theme of formation as seen in the lives of our students and graduates who encircle the globe.

Scripture, tradition and experience teach us that spiritual formation can emerge in a “crisis” moment of divine intervention, or it can emerge as the fruit of a long and arduous process. It can take place in times of solitude in the presence of God, or in the presence of the church with those who stand beside us to hold us accountable and to speak God’s word, wisdom, grace and power into our lives. Yet, whether it comes like a lightning bolt when we least expect it, or through almost unspeakable agony and a

painfully slow process, it is always God’s gracious work in our lives. Spiritual formation is fundamentally a journey into God’s heart, which is, ultimately, a joyful journey. But, sometimes the process of getting our lives into alignment with God’s heart can involve the painful stripping away of the ugly scales of sin and death.

This edition of the *Herald* gives a few glimpses of those who are being formed to love God with their heart and their mind. Our tradition calls this the process of “entire sanctification.” In the contemporary church this process is often called “spiritual formation.” It is this commitment to formation as we grow in our sanctification which has always been at the “heart” of Asbury Seminary. I also hope that this edition of the *Herald* gives you a few glimpses into the deeper work of God in your own life, because we are all on this journey together. For truly our story is really just a part of His greater, grander story which finds us all joyfully captured in that great net of Jesus Christ.



A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Timothy C. Tennent". The signature is fluid and cursive.

Dr. Timothy C. Tennent
President, Professor of World Christianity



Vision on Formation

by

Rev. Donna Covington

Vice President of Formation at Asbury Theological Seminary.

Spiritual formation is a life-long sanctification journey each of us takes to become more like Jesus. We open our hearts, minds and spirits to know and understand God more deeply. But formation can't happen without authentic community. Our vision for our students, whether online, in Memphis, Tulsa, Orlando, or Kentucky, is to help them find rhythms, relationships and spiritual practices that will sustain them through a lifetime of ministry. As already mentioned in the 2023 strategic plan, the Seminary is committed to personal and community formation through holiness, community, residential renaissance, a global alumni center, healing and spiritual formation, and creation care. Through course work, chapels, Wesleyan "bands," and other formational events, we are preparing students to live and serve authentically.

Our transformation to become more like Jesus is the

work of the Holy Spirit, but we want to ensure that there are environments and opportunities to be equipped and formed as a whole person while at Asbury Seminary. Students attend Asbury Seminary to get a theological education and be prepared to serve where God is leading them. They are transformed in many ways, but the primary way is in the classroom, where our faculty teach and mentor students. As our 2023 strategic plan states, we desire that "our curriculum and pedagogical methods, content and structures will fuse academic and formational values in the 'nuptial embrace' which Wesley envisioned."

Asbury Seminary seeks to address pastoral burnout in ministry and other vocational areas by incorporating sustaining formational practices into the curriculum. As part of their course work, students are invited to engage self-selected goals in areas such as prayer, journaling, Scripture reading, service, and even exercise.

Chapel services at Asbury Seminary are also a place to grow and encounter God individually and in community. Estes Chapel is in use nearly every day, with regular chapel services and special events such as presidential inaugurations, fall academic opening convocations, faculty installations, staff commissioning services, and the annual Christmas candle-lighting service of music and worship.

Chapel services integrate classroom lessons with transformative worship. Guest speakers, faculty members and students share Biblically rich messages from the pulpit, bringing new life into the worshipping, global community. Estes Chapel is both a classroom and a laboratory

We want to ensure that there are environments and opportunities to be equipped and formed as a whole person while at Asbury Seminary.

as students preach and lead worship here. We plan to implement chapel, or a place for worshipping together as a community, across all our sites and campuses and encourage those who can't attend chapel in Estes Chapel, to watch via live stream.

Formation is about who we are becoming together – how we live life together. Our Father desires for us to live in authentic community and relationship with others. Our transformation never happens alone, or in isolation. God uses others to help transform us, and we in turn are part of each other's journey. We desire to see every person in our Asbury community doing life together in Wesleyan "bands." For me, formation is all about relationship—my personal relationship with God, my relationships in community, and how I serve others in my community.

We also hope to create places for students to serve, even as they learn. We desire for our students to join us in formation not only on campus, but also in communities and local congregations where they can use their gifts and talents to serve the local body of Christ. God has blessed us with nearly 11,000 alumni serving God around the world in churches, mission fields, trash dumps, inner cities, national parks, universities, coffee houses, businesses, and community gardens, to name a

few. We want to continue providing opportunities and environments for students and alumni to commune and grow with God individually, live in authentic community, and to serve others.

As the new Vice President of Formation, I am excited and grateful to work on a cross-functional, cross-institutional team of students, faculty and staff to implement the Seminary's vision and commitment to theological education, spiritual formation and Christian discipleship. Asbury for life!

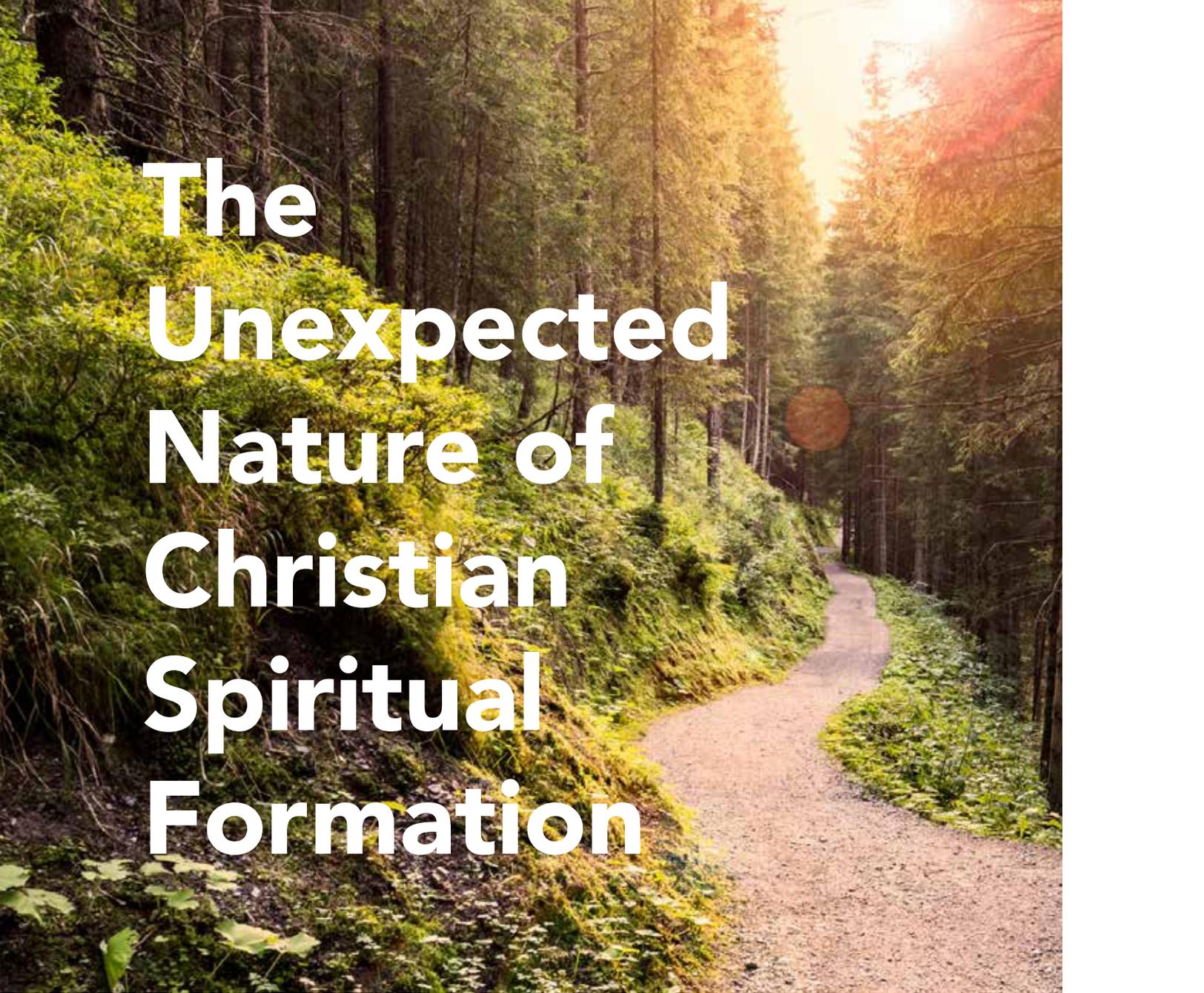
**FROM THE 2023 STRATEGIC PLAN:
CORE VALUE NO. 3**

***Asbury Seminary will be committed to
personal and community formation.***

Asbury Seminary is a worshipping community of formation and learning. We acknowledge the need for, and indeed, the crucial relationship between, academic and spiritual formation. Our campuses should be rich environments for spiritual development, global community, sacrificial service, catechesis, and holiness, to the end that Asbury Seminary might propel a 21st-century renewed emphasis and deeper understanding of holiness. If students do not graduate holy and Spirit-filled, then we have not fulfilled our mission. To this end, we must extend formation opportunities to all our faculty, staff, and students.



Rev. Donna Covington is a highly accomplished senior leader in corporate and higher education with a heart for ministry. Most recently, she served as Dean of the College of Business at Delaware State University. Rev. Covington is a mother to three children and grandmother to three beautiful girls.



The Unexpected Nature of Christian Spiritual Formation

Michael C. Voigts, Ph.D.

Associate Professor of Spiritual Formation

The parishioner sitting before me was frustrated. “I’ve tried and tried to follow God. I read my Bible every day. I pray every morning. I volunteer with the youth. I rarely miss worship. The more I try to be faithful to Christ, the further away from Him I feel.”

I leaned forward and looked into his eyes. “Maybe you’re trying to do too much for God. What are you allowing God to do for you?”

My dear Christian brother had a common

misunderstanding of spiritual formation, in which he thought it was his responsibility to stay close to God by engaging in the Means of Grace. A healthy view of spiritual formation is to focus on God’s perfect faithfulness instead of striving to be faithful to God. That’s the unexpected grace of Christian spiritual formation: It’s not about engaging in the Means of Grace in order to become a faithful disciple, but to respond as a faithful disciple by engaging in the Means of Grace.

To be spiritually formed is to live a life of vulnerability.



When we invite God to form us, God reveals to us who we really are as God created us.

It's about having a heart that is malleable in the hands of God. A vulnerable life is being willing to allow the Holy Spirit to transform us. When we invite God to form us, God reveals to us who we really are as God created us. This produces fruit in our lives which equips us for missiological living. Growth in Christ through the Means of Grace is not self-improvement. Being spiritually formed by God is surrendering ourselves to God so God can transform us by the power of the Holy Spirit. The truth is, if we do not allow God to form us, the secular society around us will.

In Exodus 3:14, God introduced Himself to Moses not as "I do what I do," but "I am who I am." Since Genesis 1:26 states that we're created in the *imago Dei* (the image of God), and if God introduced himself to Moses as "I Am," then who we are is more important than what we do. All we do in the name of the Triune God must first begin with the person God created us to be. John Wesley's life is a classic example of this. Before his conversion experience at a Bible study on Aldersgate Street in London, Wesley's tireless efforts to please God drove him to exhausted despair. It wasn't until he allowed the transforming work of the Holy Spirit into the depths of his soul that he fully comprehended the extent of God's love for him. From this began the worldwide Methodist movement.

From the earliest days of the Christian faith, leaders in the early Church focused on the importance of self-

understanding as a means to Christlikeness. When we know who we are as God created us and not how the world sees us, God's Spirit guides us to live as Christ's disciples. Spiritual Formation courses at Asbury Seminary provide theological and spiritual foundations for students to help them understand who they are in Christ so they'll be better equipped to lead others into Holy-Spirit-led lives. After all, when women and men in ministry understand they are more than their descriptive ministry labels, the fire of the Holy Spirit can become unleashed in them, burning brightly with the saving and sanctifying message of the Gospel.

It's difficult to give up control. Yet when we allow God to form us rather than trying to form ourselves, we can grow to understand the beautiful complexity of God's grace - and we can live as the faithful, holy people God calls us to be. This is the essence of Christian spiritual formation.



Before coming to Asbury Seminary, Dr. Michael Voigts spent 24 years in pastoral ministry. He is interested in personal and community spiritual direction and in finding connections between spiritual traditions in the global church. He is the author of Letters of Ascent: Spiritual Direction in the Letters of Bernard of Clairvaux.



FACULTY HIGHLIGHT: DR. VIRGINIA TODD HOLEMAN

Professor of Counseling

When Virginia “Toddy” Holeman was five years old, she wanted to be either a cowgirl or a teacher. As an adult, she decided to pursue a career in education. Throughout her life, she’s worked in churches as a Director of Christian Education, in clinics as a licensed counselor, and now as the Professor of Counseling and Chair of the Counseling and Pastoral Care Department at Asbury Theological Seminary.

“God is the best recycler ever,” Dr. Holeman said. “When I came to Asbury Seminary to teach, all my past experiences were brought into play.”

While working as a Christian educator she encountered families experiencing crises that were out of her skill set. Finding her toolkit lacking, she earned her master’s degree in counseling.

After practicing counseling for a few years, she returned to school for her Ph.D., fully intending to return to full-time clinic work. Then God rekindled her love for teaching.

“I realized I could stay and counsel and do good work, or I could consider teaching and impact the next generation,” she said.

Dr. Holeman describes her journey to become a professor at Asbury Seminary as a miracle. She attended a national level conference for continuing education. By chance, she and Dr. Fred Van Tatenhove, then Professor of Pastoral Care and Counseling and Chair of the Counseling and Pastoral Care Department at Asbury Seminary, sat next to each other.

“We got to talking and eventually that lead to them sending me information about the position and hiring me,” Dr. Holeman said.

Each semester, she teaches courses within the mental health and marriage and family counseling degree programs. Her goal is to help students find the resonance between counseling and theology, using the E. Stanley Jones approach that all truth is God’s truth.

“The last time I checked, the Holy Spirit didn’t need informed consent to

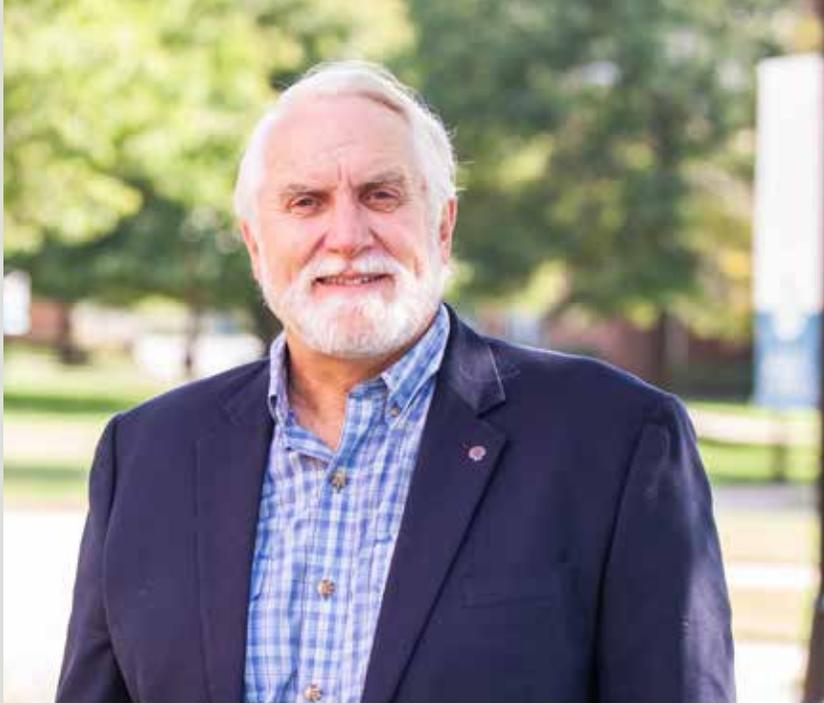
show up,” Dr. Holeman said. “Even though I, as the therapist, may not be able to name Jesus, because I believe all truth is God’s truth, helping people take one more step towards health offers the Holy Spirit an opportunity to work in that person’s life.”

Asbury Seminary’s clinical mental health counseling program is accredited by The Council for Accreditation of Counseling and Related Educational Programs (CACREP) and graduates must pass licensure exams to work as professional counselors. As such, the training Asbury Seminary counseling students receive is equivalent with university training, with the addition of theology courses.

“I want our graduates to be able to think Christianly, even if they can’t overtly look up a Scripture during a counseling session,” Dr. Holeman said. “I want our graduates to comport themselves in loving ways toward their clients within the ethical standards of their professional license, so that the love of Christ shines through them.”

In addition to the M.A. in Mental Health Counseling, Asbury Seminary also offers an M.A. in Marriage and Family Counseling and an M.A. in Pastoral Counseling. The counseling degree programs are offered on both the Kentucky and Florida Dunnam campuses.

Dr. Virginia Todd Holeman is the Professor of Counseling and Chair of the Counseling and Pastoral Care Department. Dr. Holeman’s research interests include interpersonal forgiveness, repentance and reconciliation, counselor education and supervision, and integration of theology and counseling. She is the author of Reconcilable Differences: Hope and Healing for Troubled Marriages, Inside the Leader’s Head (a family systems perspective on church leadership), and Theology for Better Counseling.



FACULTY HIGHLIGHT: DR. JAMES R. THOBABEN

Dean of the School of Theology and Formation

Since the early 2000s, Dr. James Thobaben has walked historic pilgrimage routes, such as Camino Primitivo, El Santuario de Chimayó, and most recently, Crough Patrick in Ireland and to Bad Wilsnack in Germany, but he has been on a pilgrimage his whole life. From his college days until now, Dr. Thobaben has been seeking to know more of God through the spiritual disciplines of scripture reading, prayer, fasting, and yes, walking pilgrimages.

Dr. Thobaben began his personal pilgrimage as a pre-med, biology major. Intellectually, he knew that Christianity made as much sense as any religion, but it wasn't personal until one evening in the science building hallway. Here, like the Apostle Paul, he encountered God through intense light and sound, yet neither blinding nor deafening – more an utterly overwhelming awareness of the Person of God.

"I came to the conclusion that I had erroneously separated the idea of God as a caring God and God as Lord of the individual," he said. "[In that moment,] those two merged."

Pilgrimages, whether literal or in your spiritual life, aren't quests for self-definition or discovery.

"The point of every pilgrimage, finally, is to arrive," he noted.

Instead, they model Hebrews 12:1-2, which encourages us to get rid of the things that hold us back, live in a community of believers, fix our eyes on Jesus, and keep pressing toward the goal of Heaven.

"It's supposed to be that way with your life, mine, too," he said. "You're supposed to be getting somewhere. You're supposed to be able to look at where you've been, where you are and where you're going, and you should be able to discern that you are more Christ-like today than you were yesterday and that you will be more Christ-like tomorrow than you are today."

After graduating with a religion and biology degree, he enrolled in Yale Divinity School. He added a public health degree during his final year of

seminary and pastored in rural Ohio for a few years prior to pursuing a Ph.D. from Emory University. Before coming to Asbury Seminary, Dr. Thobaben worked as the Vice President for Ethics and Research at Mississippi Methodist Rehabilitation Center. He was also a visiting Ethics Scholar at the University of Missouri's Molecular Biology Program.

"I left my job [in 1995] because of the impact Asbury Seminary was having in America and in global church history," he said.

Dr. Thobaben teaches classes on Christian ethics, theological aesthetics, rural community, morality, and healthcare ethics. In the summer of 2019, Dr. Thobaben and Dr. Chris Johnson plan to offer a class that invites students to walk the pilgrimage to Lindisfarne, one of the places from which Christianity was reintroduced to northern England. Students will also walk a small section of the pilgrimage into Canterbury, England.

"It's an extraordinary thing to kneel where someone has knelt for a thousand years," he said. "It's an extraordinary thing to be someplace, not where the high festivals occurred, but where believers who were poor, marginal, broken, came to Christ. It's an amazing thing to do that and understand that they were pilgrims through life. I'm a pilgrim through life, and we can make a true connection through this cloud of witnesses."

Dr. Thobaben is the Dean of the School of Theology and Formation and Professor of Bioethics and Social Ethics. He pastors Mt. Zion United Methodist Church in Mercer County, Ky., and is the author of Healthcare Ethics: A Comprehensive Christian Resource. He and his wife, Marcelyn, have two grown children.

ALUMNI HIGHLIGHT: LINDSEY RUNYAN

MASTER OF DIVINITY (2018)

Pastor of Community and Spiritual Formation at
Evergreen Church, Ann Arbor, Michigan.



Lindsey Runyan seeks God in the daily rhythms and spaces of life. While a student at Asbury Seminary, she spent 10 months as part of the St. Anselm Community in England learning the priorities of prayer, evangelism and reconciliation. Now, as the Pastor of Community and Spiritual Formation at Evergreen Church, she helps others grow to know more about themselves in Christ.

Evergreen Church, pastored by Asbury Seminary graduate Derik Heumann, seeks to build the church around discipleship and community. The Evergreen vision is “to be a people who gather and scatter living out the hope of Jesus.” The church gathers one to two times per week to learn to be everyday missionaries where they live and work, but then scatters to live out the daily rhythms of Christ.

“Formation is a journey,” Lindsey said. “I want to meet people where they’re at and to challenge and encourage them in their walk with Christ.”

Lindsey oversees the curriculum and the Wesleyan bands, encouraging people to gather and equipping them to live Christ-like lives after they leave.

“We’re different because of the way we approach worship,” Lindsey said. “We engage in three streams of worship that incorporate and embody the sacramental, evangelical and charismatic expressions. We incorporate intentional discipleship with sending people out because they go hand-in-hand.”

When Lindsey was an undergrad student at Texas A&M, she never thought of planting a church. Instead, she dreamed of being a neurosurgeon. During her final year of undergrad, she discerned that she was becoming too competitive and worshipping school too much.

“I discerned that I should set this dream aside and see if the Lord would resurrect this dream another time,” Lindsey said. “Either way, God wastes nothing that we do.”

After graduating from Texas A&M in 2012, she interned at the Wesley Foundation. Her boss and Asbury Seminary

alumnus, Max Mertz, encouraged her to come to the Seminary to grow in community and be transformed as a whole person. Lindsey prayed, applied and was accepted.

During the fall semester of her second year, the depth and tradition of church history stole her heart.

“It started with a passion for a church history class where I had the opportunity to explore the ancient traditions of the church, the heroes and heresies, the Popes and the Church Fathers,” Lindsey said. “They all leapt off the page and into my heart. I fell in love with the Church and everything it stood for. Then I fell in love with monasticism and the courageous men and women who could deny themselves so much; they abandoned everything they knew and simply followed Christ.”

In 2015, Lindsey joined the Community of St. Anselm, led by the Archbishop of Canterbury, Justin Welby, in London, England, for 10 months to share life, study, serve and pray within a community of 16 other young adults from around the world. Lindsey was part of the first Community of St. Anselm. Since then, Asbury Seminary has had one student join the community each year, including Michael Lindsay, Esther Kwang, and M’Kenna Gillespie.

Through her experience, she learned what unity in Christ looks like and to see time as a gift from God.

“In our culture today, time is a resource because it’s taken, made, or used,” Lindsey said. “I’m trying to live my life in God’s time.”

Lindsey attends Eucharist, participates in morning and evening prayer and sets aside time to rest in silence with the Lord. She’s also part of a Wesleyan band that started meeting while she was at Asbury Seminary.

“The sacraments are important because my faith needs something to touch,” she said. “[Participating in the sacraments] is a way for me to stop and slow down, receive the Word and respond to the Lord in a tangible way and receive the mystery of Christ.”

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STUDENT HIGHLIGHT: MAMI TSUTADA

MASTER OF DIVINITY AND
M.A. IN FAMILY COUNSELING (2022)

Mami Tsutada can say with the psalmist David that she has a beautiful inheritance. As a sixth-generation Japanese Christian, she came to Asbury Seminary to be equipped as a pastor if that was where God was leading, but she discovered his heart for broken families. Today, she's pursuing both a Master of Divinity and an M.A. in Family Counseling to help other families pass down the blessing of faith.

"Blessings are for a thousand generations, but curses are for two to three," Mami said. "I want to focus on building firm Christian families because I don't want to be the only sixth-generation Christian."

Growing up a preacher's kid, Mami witnessed both the hard work that pastors put in each week and their children's apathy toward faith. She often saw Christian parents working in the church, while their kids were studying for finals. She watched many of her friends from Christian families hate church and struggle with their faith.

"One of the reasons why I'm interested in family ministry comes from my heritage," she said. "[When I was younger,] I wasn't aware of this blessing of handed-down faith. As I grew older, I realized how hard it is to succeed in faith, especially in Japan."

Her great-grandfather, David Tsugio Tsutada, known as "the John Wesley of Japan," went to prison for two years during World War II for refusing to worship the emperor. While he was in jail, the Lord gave him the vision to start Immanuel General Mission and Immanuel Bible Training College.

Mami accepted Jesus when she was three years old.

After eating lychee, a sticky, Asian fruit, her parents told her to wash her fingers. She didn't, but said she did. Her parents took that moment to introduce her to Jesus. Together, they looked at why human beings were sinful and that Jesus had died to cleanse us from sins.

In middle and high school, her family moved to the Philippines so her father could pursue an M.Div. at Asia Pacific Nazarene Theological Seminary. In the mission school, Mami experienced tension and hatred from other Asians because she was Japanese.

Mami never thought about leaving the faith, but was angry at God as she struggled to find friends in the early years of high school. She and her parents began to pray for just one friend. The next Sunday, God gave her a Korean friend.

"God showed me how I was categorizing them, too, when there were really nice people among them," she said.

At Asbury Seminary, Mami attends a young adult group at All Nations United Methodist Church, made up of Hispanic, African, French, American and Korean people. She's also part of Pray for Asia at Asbury Seminary that meets once a week. Students from Korea, China, Taiwan and Japan gather together for healing from past hurts and scars and to lift the unsolved personal and national frustrations to God.

"We started last year," Mami said. "Sometimes it's only me, and sometimes it's 10 people, but we have a heart for our Asian brothers and sisters and to remember what's happening right now."

Although Mami isn't sure where God is leading in the future, she's committed to serving the people of Japan.

"They have good standards and morals, so people don't see them as people in need," Mami said. "[For me,] attempting something big is changing the idea of what family in Japan looks like. I'm not sure what that looks like right now, but there are millions of possibilities. It just takes faith."

STUDENT HIGHLIGHT: A.J. ROBINSON

MASTER OF DIVINITY (2021)



A.J. Robinson raps with a refreshing perspective that resonates with listeners. Using a keyboard and recording equipment left to him by his uncle, A.J. started writing lyrics and making beats at 15. Now he uses his love for rap music as a way to illustrate the gospel to help people understand what Jesus is all about.

Using an old iPhone and the GarageBand App, A.J. records songs filled with emotion and truth. He believes that worship takes many forms and isn't always found with a choir and a sermon.

"Maybe music is the only glimpse of church that they ever get to see," he said. "It's important to be adaptable and flexible in the way we communicate the word of God."

Whether talking about his grandmother's stroke in "Whenever Life Hits," or something he's learning in his journey with Christ, as in "New Meaning," A.J.'s lyrics are transparent.

One of his most recent songs "Fractured Lens," written during finals week his senior year of college, reflects on his journey from the guilt and shame he experienced when he was "impulsively doing things just to benefit his own sake," to the freedom he has experienced since meeting Jesus at age 20 and being baptized.

"Wow! I'm clean now," he said. "I had come before the Lord saying, 'I don't have the cleanest record, but, God, I'm willing to trust you'. [I felt like] I should still feel a sense of guilt like I'm a horrible person, but that was literally washed away clean."

In his lyrics he talks about being choked by insecurities, self-pity and living a life without purpose. But his words give hope when he says:

"Because I'm broken inside, as much as I try to hide,

I can't deny these burdens with tears swelling up in my eyes. / Yes, I cry about the negative things; I should die. / But He gave me a second chance at reliving my life."

After meeting Jesus, A.J. felt free to be himself without worrying about maintaining a certain image or even worrying about making songs that people would listen to. Before meeting Christ, A.J. explained that he constantly lived by the opinions of others.

"[Before] I could die by their rejection, but now I know where my identity lies, and it doesn't lie in the hands of other people," he said.

Whether playing in bars or for his friends, audiences identify with A.J.'s lyrics. On April 24, 2018, A.J. was the first person in Asbury Seminary's history to rap in McKenna Chapel. One night after playing a set at Al's Bar in Lexington, Ky., a woman started a conversation with him, telling him his music was preaching.

"Worship isn't limited to one form and neither is preaching," A.J. said. "It can be a form of preaching because as Christians we're called to meet people where they are. If rap music will reach people, I would love to be in that position."

A.J. has dreamed of being a professional rapper since high school. Now he has a unique opportunity to use rap to draw attention to God. In April, A.J. traveled to Southern California to compete in the House of Vans Music Showcase, a series of sessions for unsigned artists. One artist is selected to open at a headline show at the House of Vans locations in either Chicago or Brooklyn.

Although A.J. didn't win the competition, the exposure led to greater opportunities. He has shows scheduled throughout the fall and has already played at Campbellsville University, Western Kentucky University and Lindsey Wilson College.

Certainty in an uncertain world.

Today more than ever, people need reliability, certainty, and accountability when planning for their financial future. We are all looking for ways to invest that are stable, solid, and firm. For many of us, it means a return to classic financial values and enduring ideals. One of these values is the **charitable gift annuity (CGA)**.*

*A CGA is a simple agreement between you and Asbury Theological Seminary, where you agree to donate a sum of money to the Seminary. In return, we agree to pay you a fixed dollar amount every year for as long as you live.

To learn more about charitable gift annuities
visit asbury.to/leavealegacy.

leavealegacy@asburyseminary.edu | 859.858.2305

IRA Rollover

If you are 70½ or older you may be interested in a way to lower the income and taxes from your IRA withdrawals while helping Asbury Seminary. Some benefits of an IRA rollover:

- Avoid taxes on transfers of up to \$100,000 from your IRA
- Satisfy your required minimum distribution for the year
- Reduce your taxable income, even if you do not itemize deductions
- Make a gift that is not subject to the 50% deduction limits on charitable gifts
- Help further the work and mission of the Kingdom

FROM THE ARCHIVES:

Originally published in the April 1967 edition of the Asbury Herald.

Wholeness is the Will of God

By Frank Bateman Stanger

Recently, I met a leader of one of the evangelical denominations who, in the course of our conversation remarked: "I read all that you write about healing, but I must confess that I still don't accept your basic premise, at least not as far as this life is concerned."

What is my basic premise in regard to the Church's ministry of healing? It is this: God wills wholeness for every person. I do not believe that God wills sin or sickness or accident or affliction. Rather I believe that God wills that every person be whole in every aspect of his being and that such wholeness in body, in mind and in soul be harmonized in a total personal-ity wholeness.

In her book, *The Lord is Our Healer*, Emily Gardiner Neal emphatically declares that disease does not emanate from God but from Satan; and that there is no incurable disease in God's sight.

Dr. Paul Tournier, noted Swiss physician, in his latest book, *The Person Reborn* (every person interested in the Church's ministry of healing ought to read this significant volume), while admitting that disease can be fruitful declares: "It can also destroy all man's values, and as a doctor I shall not cease to try and snatch its victims from it."

Let me share in a summary manner the reasons why I believe that God wills wholeness for every person.

1. *God's purpose for his creatures as expressed in the original relation is seen to be that of wholeness. The original creation was perfect. The Scriptures tell us that God said it was "good, very good." The way that God created man originally must have been the way He wanted him to be always. Thus, any lack of wholeness in man is the result of man's sin rather than the purpose of God.*

2. *The Old Testament prophets had insights into God's purposeful wholeness. At times in the Old Testament writings the terms "salvation" and "health" are used almost interchangeably.*

3. *The perfect health of Jesus Christ, the Incarnate Son of God, is a revelation of "the glory of humanity" expressed through the possibility of wholeness. Even though Jesus was tempted and tried, there is no*

record of his being sick. Certainly one purpose of the Incarnation is to reveal "the glory of humanity," a revelation of what humanity could have been if sin had not entered.

4. *Think also of the healing ministry of Jesus. In the Gospels there are records of at least 26 healing miracles that Jesus performed upon individuals. There are five other references to His healing ministry in respect to "a great multitude," "many people," and "others."*

In medical classification that has been made of the healing miracles of Jesus, it has been pointed out that He healed the following known ailments: fever, malaria, leprosy, congenital blindness, Parkinson's disease, nephritis, epilepsy, deafness, blindness, crippledness, and insanity. And certainly Jesus must have encountered also such conditions as neuroses that are associated with such symptoms as fear, anxiety, insomnia, nervousness, palpitation, heart disorder, indigestion, excitement, and depression.

When Jesus sent forth His disciples, He instructed them, among other things, to heal the sick. "And when He had called unto Him His twelve disciples, He gave them power against unclean spirits, to cast them out, and to heal all manner of sickness and all manner of disease." Jesus commanded them, "And as ye go, preach, saying the kingdom of heaven is at hand. Heal the sick, cleanse the lepers, raise the dead, cast out devils: freely ye have received, freely give." (Matthew 10:1,5,7,8)

5. *The Divine Commission to the Church reveals God's will that men should be whole. As we have already noted, Jesus commissioned His disciples to teach and preach and heal. Those who followed them in the early Christian church carried on the same kind of ministry. William Barclay, eminent New Testament scholar, writes: "Preaching, teaching, healing—that was the threefold pattern of the ministry of Jesus. Healing was an inseparable part of His work and of the pattern of the work of His apostles."*

The gift of healing was one of the gifts of the Holy Spirit imparted to the Early Church. Was this mere mockery, or was it rather a charismatic confirmation of the Divine intention that men should be whole? Students of Apostolic and post-Apostolic times affirm that the Early Church had a regular ministry of healing.

6. *Are we willing to write off the significant influences of the Church's ministry of healing through the centuries as outside the will of God? What about hospitals under Christian auspices? What about medical missions? What about deeply committed medical researchers and practicing physicians? What about miracles of healing through the centuries? What about the phenomenal rise of the Church's ministry of healing in our day?*

It would appear to me that a person's faith and prayers for healing, that a Church's ministry of healing, begins with the basic conviction that God wills wholeness for the individual. Unless God wills wholeness, what right do we have to seek it for ourselves or others?

News & Events

Enrollment at Asbury Seminary Grows for Fifth Consecutive Year

Asbury Theological Seminary announced five consecutive years of enrollment growth with students from around the world seeking to become “theologically educated, sanctified, Spirit-filled men and women.” Asbury Seminary officially welcomed more than 500 new students for the fall semester of 2018 for a total enrollment of 1,710 students.

Zondervan and Seedbed Sign New Publishing Partnership Agreement

Asbury Theological Seminary announced a new publishing partnership between Zondervan and Seedbed, the Seminary’s twenty-first century movement and one of the Seminary’s media platforms, whose mission is to gather, connect, and resource the people of God to sow for a great awakening. Seedbed’s growing reputation within the Wesleyan tradition, paired with the publishing reach and experience of Zondervan, will produce a co-publishing program poised to bring Wesleyan authors and content to the broader market.

Asbury Seminary’s Master of Arts in Mental Health Counseling Accredited

The Council for Accreditation of Counseling and Related Educational Programs (CACREP), a specialized accrediting body recognized by the Council for Higher Education Accreditation (CHEA), has extended until 2024 accreditation to the following programs in the Counseling Department at Asbury Theological Seminary: M.A. in Mental Health Counseling.

Asbury Theological Seminary Welcomes New Trustees

Asbury Theological Seminary welcomed four new members to the Board of Trustees, including Rurel Ausley, Dale Locke, Ken Werlein, and Helen Rhea Stumbo. The Board of Trustees serves Asbury Seminary by helping to shape and oversee its overarching policies.

Dr. Maria Russell Kenney—New Assistant Professor of Christian Ethics



Asbury Theological Seminary welcomed Dr. Maria Russell Kenney as the Assistant Professor of Christian Ethics within the School of Theology and Formation. Prior to this appointment, Dr. Kenney served as an Adjunct Professor of Christian Ethics at Asbury Theological Seminary. Dr. Kenney received her Ph.D. in theology and

ethics from Durham University, Durham, England, in January 2017, having previously earned her M.Div. from Asbury Theological Seminary in 2002 and attending Texas Tech for undergraduate studies in cellular biology.

Dr. Timothy C. Tennent Elected Board Member of the Association of Theological Schools

The Association of Theological Schools elected Dr. Timothy C. Tennent to its board on June 21, 2018, for a three-year term. The Association of Theological Schools promotes the improvement and enhancement of theological schools to benefit both secular and faith-based communities.

Asbury Theological Seminary Partners with Messiah College to Offer Two New Master of Education Degree Tracks

Beginning Fall 2018, Asbury Theological Seminary is collaborating with Messiah College to offer two new online Master of Education degree tracks in Christian Education and Intercultural Studies. Through the collaboration, Asbury Seminary students can now earn a graduate certificate in TESOL or Exceptional Children and Youth online from Messiah College.

HUNDREDFOLD INITIATIVES

FUNDRAISING UPDATE*



CAMPAIGN FUND: Supporting strategic impact where needed most

Goal: \$15,400,000

Actual: **\$13,029,620**



CHURCH PLANTING: Equipping 1000 church planters

Goal: \$5,000,000

Actual: **\$3,425,714**



ENHANCING ESTES CHAPEL: Improving the heart of our Wilmore campus

Goal: \$1,500,000

Actual: **\$1,568,791**



ENDOWING CHAIR OF THEOLOGY: Confirming commitment to urban ministries at Florida Dunnam Campus

Goal: \$2,500,000

Actual: **\$339,245**



ENRICHING HISPANIC AND GLOBAL PROGRAMS: Developing concentrated master's programs to serve growing populations

Goal: \$1,000,000

Actual: **\$1,382,550**



GROWING SCHOLARSHIPS: Liberating students from debt to sow where God leads

Goal: \$40,000,000

Actual: **\$26,069,173**



SUPPORTING SEEDBED: Resourcing clergy and laity around the world

Goal: \$2,000,000

Actual: **\$2,956,667**



DEFERRED GIFTS: Providing gifts in the future through estate planning and life income plans

Goal: \$32,600,000

Actual: **\$38,795,118**

*As of 10/31/18



ASBURY *theological*
SEMINARY

THE WHOLE BIBLE FOR THE WHOLE WORLD

A Campaign for Renewal and Revival

HUNDREDFOLD



Introducing The Van Tatenhove Center for Counseling

A CONVERSATION WITH DR. STEPHEN STRATTON AND DR. RUSSELL HALL

What is The Van Tatenhove Center for Counseling?

The Van Tatenhove Center for Counseling offers discreet and convenient access for the campus community to receive mental health and career counseling and consultation. Advanced student-counselors, completing field-placement training and just months away from beginning their professional counseling careers, provide counseling services free of charge to currently enrolled Asbury Seminary students and their immediate families. Student counselors are currently supervised by the Department of Counseling and Pastoral Care's faculty, who are licensed mental health professionals.

The new counseling center, currently being piloted in academic offices of the Department of Counseling and Pastoral Care, operates in the evenings when classes are no longer in session. Counseling services provided address a broad range of student needs, including:

- *Depression and anxiety-based issues*
- *Stress management*
- *Relationship struggles*
- *Grief and loss*
- *Marriage/Family struggles*
- *Prepare-Enrich assessment*
- *Calling and Career discernment*
- *Spiritual issues in the context of mental health needs*

The Seminary's counseling center is growing too! Plans are underway for the counseling center to have refurbished and dedicated space, extended hours, expanded services, and eventually reach not only the Seminary community, but also families and individuals in the Bluegrass Region.

Why is counseling important to Asbury Seminary?

In general, counseling is a process that empowers people to discover alternative problem-solving routes that can lead to a healthier life.

But at Asbury Seminary, our counselor training program take this perspective a few steps further. Counseling is more than a professional way to empower the reaching of goals. Counseling provides opportunity to live out faith and calling in a way that reflects and renews the image of Christ through the counseling relationship.

How will a counseling degree from Asbury Seminary prepare me to serve?

Counselor education at Asbury Seminary emphasizes the care and dignity of the whole person (spiritual, emotional and physical). Those who seek counseling services from graduates of the Department of Counseling and Pastoral Care will find a professional who has trained to integrate theology, spiritual formation, and counseling practice.

The Van Tatenhove Center for Counseling provides an important environment for student-counselors to go beyond the classroom -- to practice this integration of science and Christian theology that they will take into the professional world.

What is the vision for the future?

We believe the new Van Tatenhove Center for Counseling will become an integral part of the Seminary community that will provide the best care for people in need. In the future, the Van Tatenhove Center for Counseling will be positioned to build bridges to churches, missionaries, alumni, and the larger Bluegrass community to provide affordable, professional counseling services.

JOIN US FOR WORSHIP, WHEREVER YOU ARE IN THE WORLD.

Watch Asbury Seminary Chapel LIVE online every week, Tuesday-Thursdays beginning at 11 a.m. EST!



The livestream can be viewed at
[ASBURY.TO/LIVE](https://www.asbury.edu/ASBURY.TO/LIVE)



Please join President Timothy C. Tennent as he shares the Asbury Seminary vision in your area. Tennent Tours are well under way, so mark your calendar now! At each of his stops, Dr. Tennent is honored to be speaking at various Saturday evening and Sunday morning services.

2019 Dates:

February 17, 2019 / Lakeridge UMC / Lubbock, TX

March 10, 2019 / First UMC / Hendersonville, TN

April 7, 2019 / First UMC / Tulsa, OK

For event schedule, reservations, and information, please contact Major Events by phone, 877.PRAY.ATS (772.9287) or email, major.events@asburyseminary.edu.



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The
Seedbed
Daily Text

+
THE
ADVENT
MISSION
by OMAR RIKABI

A new Advent resource from Seedbed

For many of us, Advent is the launching pad to Christmas morning; a twenty-four-day countdown to stockings and presents. We don't think about Advent as first being about the second coming. After all, it's been two millennia since Christ was born, crucified, rose from the dead, ascended into heaven, and sent the Holy Spirit. And for two thousand years, we've been living somewhere between forgetting about or fretting over his return.

Jesus' silent-night arrival in the manger is the first part of that mission. His trumpet-blasting arrival in the clouds is the last part. Taking the two seasons together, Omar Rikabi shows how preparing for this kind of Advent before we celebrate Christmas is how we get in on God's rescue mission. **Learn more at seedbed.com/adventmission today!**

