

PASSPORT

magazine



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AT A GLANCE

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YOUTH QUAKE
FEBRUARY 17-19

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ABORIGINAL AWARENESS WEEK
MARCH 6-10

AAW is an opportunity to gain understanding and appreciation of Aboriginal history, culture, and the complexities Aboriginals face today. The week focuses on the need for reconciliation and the role we all play in it.

DAY OF PRAYER
MARCH 21

Our students pause from classes for a day to gather together and spend time in prayer and worship.

VOLLEYBALL CONFERENCES
FEBRUARY 23-25

Men's volleyball conferences at Red Deer College.

Women's volleyball conferences at Lakeland College in Lloydminster.

JV basketball home tournament Feb. 24 - 25

April

May

OPEN HOUSE
MARCH 25

A one-day event for prospective students and their parents to visit our campus.

CLASSICAL CONCERT
APRIL 2

*7pm at St. Andrew's United Church, Moose Jaw
\$10 Adult / \$8 Student*

COLLEGE AND SEMINARY COMMENCEMENT
APRIL 22

Join us in supporting the Briercrest College and Seminary graduates of 2017.

**MUSICAL THEATRE WORKSHOP
FINAL PERFORMANCE**
MARCH 24-25

*7pm in the Landing,
free admission.*

FINAL DANCE RECITAL
APRIL 8

*6pm in the Landing,
\$5 admission*




YOUTH QUAKE 2017

Weekend recap

More than 1200 youth flooded our campus for Youth Quake 2017! It was a fun-filled weekend packed with a diverse lineup of concerts, crazy activities, and lots of sessions that centred around this year's theme, Shine Through. We received lots of positive feedback and heard many stories of how God worked in people's lives this weekend. This year, in addition to the 10% increase in registrations, we saw a large number of students apply to Briercrest and many other students inquire. It was an exciting weekend and we're already looking forward to next year!

Check out the YQ17 highlight video here.





STATE OF THE ACADEMY ADDRESS

Greetings friends,

We have waded our way into 2017 and are trusting God to continue to do meaningful things in us and through us. As students, staff, and faculty, we gathered for chapel in January and I delivered my yearly “State of the Academy” address. I always seek to acknowledge our roots and yet find inspiration in the opportunities before us. This year is no different. We draw strength and confidence from the faithfulness of God. He has blessed and used Briercrest for 82 years on the Canadian landscape and in all kinds of global contexts. We thank God for all of you who continue to partner with us in Great Commission endeavors. But we also look to the future with all of its opportunities, challenges, and unknowns, knowing that God will continue to show Himself faithful.

In my address, my last theme pivoted around our spiritual passion. I offered a challenge to the institution and I now would challenge you too. Romans 12:11 reminds us to “Never be lacking in zeal, but keep your spiritual fervor, serving the Lord” (NIV). We at Briercrest continue to draw on God’s strength. We want to live loving, impactful, passionate lives of devotion. I trust you do too. Keep your spiritual fervor!

Partnering together to trust God for great things in 2017,

Michael

Watch the State of the Academy Address [here](#).





TELLING HARD STORIES

*Alumnus Les Sillars shares the story behind his recent book, *Intended for Evil*.*

ARTICLE BY: LES SILLARS

Images of political prisoners executed at Tuol Sleng, the infamous Khmer Rouge prison

The skulls were piled in layers three deep on each shelf, and the shelves rose one after the other almost to the ceiling of the tower. They faced out of the glass case, and many had cracks or holes where Khmer Rouge soldiers had bashed their victims' heads with hoe handles before dumping them into mass graves.

I was visiting Choeung Ek, memorial site for Cambodia's infamous "killing fields," just before Christmas of 2014. Between 1975 and 1979 Pol Pot's Communist regime murdered about 1.7 million people through execution, overwork, starvation, and disease in a doomed attempt to create an agrarian utopia. From inside the Buddhist stupa I could see the grassy depressions that had once held thousands of bodies, and chankiri trees against which soldiers had smashed infants.

I had been researching the Khmer Rouge regime for more than a year and knew roughly what to expect, but it was still ghastly. I was there to write about a survivor, a Cambodian Christian named Radha Manickam who had seen and endured awful things. To tell his story truly, I would have to describe gruesome deaths and cruelty barely imaginable. As a believer and a journalist, I had to ask myself, does telling this story glorify God?

My answer, then and now, is yes.

Manickam's story (*Intended for Evil: A Survivor's Story of Love, Faith, and Courage in the Cambodian Killing Fields*, Baker Books, 2016) ends well, but it would be worth telling no matter how it had turned out. The calling of the journalist is to help people see the world clearly, as it is. That means we find out what happened, try to understand what it means, and then tell the story.

Until the Second Coming, sin and pain and suffering will continue to be a part of the world God gave us. We need not wallow in the gory details, but neither can we ignore the violence and cruelty that characterizes so much human life. To grasp how God wants us to live here we must understand this world as it is; to "walk in the way of Your truth as we wait eagerly for You" (Isaiah 26:8), we need to come to grips with the reality of evil.

I never planned to be a journalist. I and Jennifer (Reimer) married in 1988 after our junior year at Briercreech, and we graduated in 1989. The most influential mentors in my life had been my coaches on the Clippers basketball team, Carl Hinderager and Stan Peters and so, hoping to become

a basketball coach myself, Jennifer and I packed up and headed to Dallas Theological Seminary in 1990, hoping eventually to teach and coach at a Bible college.

But after I graduated from DTS in 1993 with a ThM we realized that becoming a Bible college professor was perhaps more involved than I'd realized. I went back to my Alberta hometown with my wife and young son. I considered the pastorate but then applied at a weekly newsmagazine, the Alberta Report.

I knew little of and had less interest in politics, business, crime, society—the stuff of modern journalism. I never read newspapers and seldom watched TV news, but I needed a job right away and the magazine needed a reporter. They sent me to the Calgary bureau.

My first months with the magazine were, charitably speaking, a pretty steep learning curve. I made dumb mistakes, was hornswoggled by a stock promoter, and inadvertently insulted more than one source. But I survived (and my editor endured) largely because of practical skills acquired at DTS, like how to gather and arrange large amounts of information. Learning Hebrew and Greek taught me to think analytically about language.

I had always loved reading stories, but my Bible classes at DTS and Briercrest taught me to understand literary

structure and techniques. I recall devouring *The Art of Biblical Narrative* and then trying to apply the same principles to the stories of Samuel, Saul, and David. Knowing how narratives work made constructing news stories much, much easier.

Most importantly, my education at Briercrest and DTS reinforced my conviction that for interpreting contemporary events the Scriptures provide the only reliable basis: foundational truths about the nature of God, Man, sin, salvation, and the world. As a journalist I had a front-row seat to watch how those truths played out in society. I also saw the fallout when those biblical truths were bypassed or ignored. The Alberta Report tracked the advance of abortion on demand, gay rights, sex education in schools, and a host of other issues. In short, being a reporter introduced me to the idea that ideas have consequences—for everybody.

One day I asked a fellow reporter, a tall, cheerful guy named Shafer, why he left the pastorate for journalism. "I always wanted to be a reporter," he told me, "but when I was in high school, my pastor took me aside and said, 'God doesn't need journalists, He needs preachers!'" But Shafer realized after years in church ministry that God calls different people to different vocations, and that every society also needs people to show them what, truly, is going on.

That, I think, is one of the good works God prepared in advance for me to do.

In 1999 I left the Alberta Report to start graduate school at the University of Texas and join the staff of WORLD Magazine, and in 2002 I joined the faculty of Patrick Henry College in Virginia. Jennifer now works in the PHC library. I'd gone to seminary a decade before expecting to become a Bible college professor, and instead God gave me the ministry of preparing young Christians to tell true stories.

A PHC colleague put me in touch with Manickam in 2013. We spent hours and hours on the phone over the next year, and finally met in Phnom Penh. We visited Choeung Ek as part of a tour of Cambodia, and also saw the remains of the village where in 1978 he was forced to marry a woman named Samen. A month later they discovered they were

both Christians, two of perhaps a few hundred still alive in the country. They survived the Khmer Rouge and later moved to Seattle, where they raised their five children. Today Manickam ministers to churches in the U.S. and Cambodia.

Manickam has been angry with God at times, but he still believes that the Lord had a purpose in allowing Cambodia's genocide, and even the tragic losses in his own life. Could my faith stand such a battering? I pray so but, thankfully, for now my job is just to tell the story — and to help my students learn to tell the stories to which God has called them.

Click here for more information about Les' book, [Intended for Evil: A Survivor's Story of Love, Faith, and Courage in the Cambodian Killing Fields.](#)

*Right: Les Sillars (ThM 93, PhD 2004, University of Texas) has been a journalist for over 20 years and is Professor of Journalism at Patrick Henry College in Virginia. His writing has also appeared in *The Weekly Standard*, *the National Post*, and *Touchstone Magazine*.*



A close-up portrait of a man with a full brown beard and black-rimmed glasses. He is wearing large black over-ear headphones around his neck and a black zip-up hoodie with white stripes on the sleeves. He is looking off to the side with a slight smile. The background is a plain, light-colored wall.

WHERE **MARIO** MEETS THE **DRUMMER BOY**

student story: Andrew Young

ARTICLE BY: KARA HARMS

As a kid, Andrew Young put his parents' dictionary set to good use. While a makeshift drum kit wasn't the most conventional use for them, it was how Andrew discovered his passion for music. In doing so, he gave a slightly different meaning to the phrase "play on words." Over time, Andrew has found a unique way to combine his love of music with his interest in video games.

The Ontario native started composing music in his later teen years and has since written hundreds of songs in pursuit of his dream of composing music for video games.

"The idea came from mostly just playing a lot—playing the games. I'm kind of a nerdy guy anyway, playing the original Marios and Zeldas and stuff like that. You could probably recognize the Mario music if you heard it. That kind of thing shows that video game music actually has something to it," Andrew said.

Andrew recounts the first time he heard video game magazines and TV shows refer to the music and talk specifically about the composer.

"I'd never really thought about it before while playing the game and enjoying the music. It became real like, 'an actual person wrote this music. An actual team of people made this piece of interactive art'—like a piece of media and I could be a part of something like that and enjoy it," he said.

Being a part of something bigger than an individual assignment appeals to Andrew and the team aspect of creating video game music is a huge draw for him.

"I think being a part of a team of people is a lot more attractive to me than just being that solo artist in a bedroom trying to make it," he explained. "Especially in an orchestral-symphonic area, you need more people. There's not really too many bedroom composers that are doing symphonies and suites and stuff like that."

"It's a really cool challenge and basically it's the new venue for classical music because classical music has fallen out of popular music," Andrew continued. "The cinematic music is mostly becoming formulaic, blockbuster cinematic music. So the place you can go to kind of experiment is the smaller indie video games. They're slowly getting more recognition as "real music." There's a video game called Journey that came out in 2012 or 2013, and it's the first video game soundtrack to be nominated for a Grammy."

While Andrew initially started composing for fun, he's now being contracted to write music for gaming podcasts along with other advertising material, including some for Briercrest. Andrew shared how he first began composing for other people.

"There's an online podcast [about

gaming] that I was a fan of and it kind of inspired me to write a piece of music. So I wrote something small and sent it to them over Twitter and then they used it on the show,” he said. “At that point, that was a small audience—300-400 people watching. Now the show gets between 2000-9000 viewers, so inevitably in the viewers, there’s going to be someone who’s starting up their own show or doing their own podcast. They need a theme, so then they contact me and contract me for a tiny little thing because they’ve heard my music in the breaks. It’s how I made my living last summer. I just lived on writing music.”

One of Andrew’s fascinations with writing music is exploring different genres and combining ones that don’t normally fit together.

“Like last summer, I wanted to write a full sonata, but with Game Boys. So actually having sonata form proper, proper harmony, and proper resolutions, like an A-B-A section, but with Game Boy sounds. I think that’d be fun,” he said.

Andrew’s captivation with music goes back to his childhood where he started off playing drums.

“I think I might’ve seen a music video or something. I wanted to be like the rock drummer,” Andrew said, “So even for like 10 years, I had the long hair and big beard and all that stuff.”

After wearing out his parents’ dictionaries by drumming on them, he eventually upgraded to a real drum kit, which his parents let him buy with his paper route money.

“And then along with that, [I had] to take lessons,” he explained. “It all started from that and then I spent most of my time playing in church on worship teams and on chapel teams [at Briercrest].”

Growing up in a Christian home was the beginning of Andrew’s faith journey. But despite that, his faith was put to the test in high school.

“I started to get away from it a little bit during high school and like in the bands,” he explained. “I mentioned earlier that I was in a stoner rock band. All the stuff that is associated with that like the drinking, marijuana and whatever—that got tiresome with the people I was interacting with. [I asked myself], if I call myself a Christian, ‘Can I still be playing this rock music?’ and [concluded that] the answer is pretty much no.”

During that time, as Andrew was finishing up high school, he still wasn’t sure what he wanted to do or if he even wanted to go to school. After some encouragement from his parents and his brother, who had just returned from the Kaléo program, he reluctantly agreed to come to Briercrest for a tour in the summer.

“I came to see the music program,” Andrew said. “Just talking with Keith [Molberg]—I don’t know. He knew exactly what he was talking about and he showed me the [recording] studio and the [sound] boards around the school. I was already kind of interested in learning theory, but he was just explaining it in a way that was easy to understand and that just kind of made it feel like home.”

Now, four years later, Andrew continues to hone his craft by taking theory classes, playing music, and finding opportunities to keep writing.

“Part of what was really helpful with Keith, his particular grounding in Scripture, and [practices like] reading music-related scriptures before class [helped me learn] that it’s not wrong to want to be as skillful as you can be,” Andrew said. Asking [yourself], ‘Are you doing this for you or are you doing this for God?’ And it’s not wrong to want to

be the best at what you can possibly do. It’s just the intention of it.”

“I don’t intend to go into ministry at all,” he continued. “I want to write music for video games or film or whatever, but that doesn’t mean I can’t be a minister wherever I end up. Especially after school, I want to go to Montreal because that’s where a lot of video game studios are.”

“Hopefully through my time at Briercrest I’ve developed enough of a solid faith that I can kind of withstand [an environment that may be hostile to Christians] and not fall down to that—and just being in a studio of people that generally won’t be believers. So [I want to be] the best I can be as a musician and as a composer and as an engineer. [And I want to] interact with all the other composers, musicians, and engineers in a way that would both show Christ’s love and also the ability that I’ve cultivated here.”

Andrew Young is in his fourth year of BA Music. You can hear his work in Michael Pawelke’s 2016 Christmas message video or find more of his work at [SOUNDCLOUD.COM/DRUMURBOY](https://soundcloud.com/drumurboy)





Darren Gordon joined Briercrest's faculty in September 2016 and is the associate professor of applied linguistics and modern languages.

Can you tell us a little about yourself and your background?

I grew up mainly in western Washington. We moved around quite a bit when I was growing up. I have been married to Erin for 21 years. We have four children. Our oldest, Melinda (20), lives in California, working and going to school. Allison (16) is at CHS, Laura (14) is in grade eight at CES, and Anthony (11) is in grade five. I enjoy hiking and camping, working outside in the garden, reading, playing family games, and cooking, among other things.

What are you currently working on?

My most significant work right now is my dissertation for completing my doctorate. I am hoping to conduct the research part of the dissertation in April and May of this year, and then complete the analysis and narrative of the research results during the summer before my chair goes on sabbatical for the fall semester.

UP CLOSE AND CANDID

with Darren Gordon

INTERVIEW BY: KARA HARMS

What were you doing before you came to Briercrest and how did you end up here?

I was teaching at Simpson University in Redding, California. The story of how we ended up here is quite amazing actually. Last year was a very challenging year financially at Simpson. We were told in December (2015) to expect significant cuts. I was the division chair for Theology and Ministry and submitted a report on the progress of our intent to restructure the Cross-Cultural Studies program and in the four ministry programs. I submitted this report on January 4 and the only response I was given was to go restructure the entire Theology and Ministry Division to be two majors and to eliminate two or three professors. So at this point, Erin and I began to pray and to look to see where God might be leading us next. I had hoped to stay, since Erin was just into her second year at a new teaching position, teaching grade six, seven, and eight English. I was encouraged as we worked together as faculty to look for creative ways to cut the budget without losing faculty positions, and in March I received my contract for the following year. But in April, I was called into a meeting and was told that I had to eliminate two positions from our division. Back in January, when we first started praying and seeking God, I would keep up to date with open positions within the Council for Christian Colleges and Universities (CCCCU). I saw a position announced at Briercrest and discussed it briefly with Erin. We didn't give it a lot of consideration at the time though, because we had thought that if we had to move, we might as well look for something closer to family in Oregon and Washington. Well, when my position was eliminated in April, we began to look in more earnest where God was leading us. I submitted applications to many places but heard very little in response. Then in May, we realized that we needed to submit our plans entirely, being open to God moving us anywhere, even overseas again. We had lived for eight years in Indonesia, Thailand, and Laos, and declared together that we would move into a new season wherever it would be, not restricting God to our preferences. Erin mentioned that night that we should have applied to Briercrest, being open to moving

to such a place as Caronport, SK if we were willing to move to Thailand. The very next day, when I looked at the cccu.org site, I saw a reposting of the position at Briercrest. I emailed Erin and said, guess what? So I applied and it seemed that similar ways of God leading were also happening at Briercrest. They believed that the right person was not yet ready to apply when the first notice went out—which was true. The story continues, but I'll just say that we came to visit in May, expediting our passports, and discerned a confirmation that this is where God was leading our family. Since that time, there hasn't been a day of doubt in His leading us here.

When did you discover your love for languages and how did that develop?

*It is hard to point to one thing specifically. I took German in school, starting in grade seven and loved singing German songs in class. In high school, I read a book called, *Called to Die*, which doesn't sound like a book you would choose for inspiration. But it introduced me to the reality of many languages around the world and that many of them aren't written and don't have access to Scripture. I was fascinated by this and became interested in linguistics as a result. As I have learned more and more about the linguistic context of language communities around the world, I believe very passionately that learning languages is one means of expressing humility, love, and a desire to reconcile any past instances of aggression or domination, especially in the name of Christ. This is why, when I first came to Caronport, one of my hopes was to learn the Cree language. I was able to take a Cree class along with Erin at the Moose Jaw library during the fall and enjoyed the learning and the relationships immensely.*

Which languages do you know?

I have learned Bahasa Indonesia, Thai, and Lao, though I don't speak Bahasa Indonesia as much now since I haven't used it a lot since 2002. I am currently teaching Thai. I also learned some Tagalog (Philippines), some Manado Malay, Khamet, and Hmong. I have also been exposed a little to Sunda and the Minahasan languages of northern Sulawesi in Indonesia. I learned Greek in college and studied German when I was younger. As I mentioned, I have just started learning Cree and am excited to be able to learn more and hopefully become semi-fluent. It is hard to remain fluent in many languages unless you live in a multilingual context and are able to use them to varying degrees every day.

How have you seen God work through your passion for languages?

Language has great potential for building bridges when it is approached in humility, love, and desire for relationship. It can break down the concept of the "Other" as one

enters in to the process of knowing nothing, relying on someone else to help them with learning a new way of conceptualizing and communicating human experiences. When I began learning Khamet, a language yet to be written, it was evident that it had a tremendous impact on relationships with those that I would meet. No one ever learns their language—they are at the bottom of the linguistic, ethnic, and social hierarchy. There was a sense of value and esteem that was infused into my relationship with Khamet people, enabled in part by the power and prestige laid down, with what could have been an insistence to maintain a superior position in using only English, or even Thai or Lao.

How does learning languages fit within the context of reconciliation?

Language is one of the most visceral aspects of human existence. It is hard to imagine life and relationships without language. It is deeply involved and connected with our experiences and with the ways in which we interact with our world; which is another way of saying that language is inseparable from culture. However, languages, just like many other aspects of human relationships, become hierarchical. Certain languages assume positions of power and often this has led to language loss for languages on the opposite end of the power inequality. If I love my neighbor and desire their good, this means to me that I should really care about the things that are closest to them, particularly their language and culture. Coming from a position of power in the world with the privilege of being born into an English-speaking home, as well as being a white male—both are significant positions of power in the structure of this modern world. However, as a follower of Christ and following his example of kenosis I believe that one demonstration of relinquishing power and privilege and serving in humility is to recognize linguistic inequality and learn the language of my neighbor. I believe that this is one way that we can tangibly lay down our privilege, ask for forgiveness as appropriate, offer a space of embrace, and to both extend and receive grace that originates in Christ.

If Christ did not consider equality with God something to cling on to, but rather as something to relinquish for the sake of the world, then as a follow of Jesus I need to understand what it is that I cling to, especially those imbued with power and privilege, and relinquish them for the sake of others. I like to refer to this as a “strangering” process. What Christ did was take a position and a form which was not his own—he strangered himself. Rather than viewing the “Other” as a stranger, He Himself came as the stranger in order to de-stranger the world, reconciling the world to have restored relationship with our Creator. In a similar way, learning a language engages this process—we put ourselves in the position of the stranger and through relationship and the ability to communicate more and more in the language of the “Other” they no longer remain the “Other” but become “Thou” or “You” as friend.

ALUMNI CONNECTIONS

We'd love to reconnect with you! Join us for one of the following Alumni events in your area.

CALGARY

March 18 at 7 pm

WINNIPEG

April 8 at 10 am

WINKLER

April 8 at 7 pm

Come out to enjoy some great food and conversation. For more info or to RSVP for the event, contact alumni@briercrest.ca

HELP US STAY CONNECTED WITH YOU!

To update your contact information, email us at alumni@briercrest.ca

find out more online

BRIERCREST.CA