

anthem

FALL 2015 THE MAGAZINE OF AMBROSE UNIVERSITY

**Classroom.
Community.
Connection.**

Answering the world's call

AMBROSE





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INSIDE *anthem*

Classroom. Community. Connection. Answering the world's call

2 From the President

The vital connection between the classroom and community.

6 Mission: Canada

Alumni Thich and Alyssa Truong live missionally where God has planted them, reaching out to a diverse community that calls Canada home.

12 If walls could talk

Ambrose University History students help an Alberta town preserve stories that were almost washed away in a flood.

14 Inspired by the saving power of the Lord: a family's legacy

Through their passion, lives and deeds, the extended Hunt family is affirming, inspiring, and demonstrating how walking faithfully through doors God opens can save lives and transform communities.

18 Costa Rica becomes a classroom

Travel study immerses students in biodiversity, bringing lessons alive through the sights, sounds and smells of nature.

22 Seeing humanity at the top of the world

Volunteering at a prosthetic limb clinic in Bolivia opens alumnus Thomas Grenier to new perspectives.

24 In Memory: Dr. Al Cramer

A tribute to a beloved teacher, friend and mentor.

3 Campus News

8 Down Ancient Paths

10 Message from Advancement

25 Alumni News

28 Event Calendar

29 Final Word

Above: Recent Ambrose grad reaches out to students in Niger, West Africa. On the cover: 'Ministry by hanging out' — forging relationships with local residents.

(see story page 14).

Cover and inside front cover photos courtesy of Jen Schneider



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Classroom, community and connection

At Ambrose University, we believe in classrooms. We take these learning spaces very seriously: we have them in all sizes, accommodating smaller groups of fewer than 12, all the way up to larger venues that can seat more than 100 students. We stress the need, whenever possible, for lots of natural light — good lighting matters. We have smart classrooms that are high-tech wonders. And, through the course of the day, I find much joy in passing down the hallway and glancing through the glass window in the doors and seeing a professor with her class. For 75 minutes, it is sacred time: for stimulating lectures, engaging conversation and even debate. We believe in classrooms.

But at Ambrose we fully recognize that there is another venue or “space” that is equally essential for effective learning, the counterpart, or perhaps better put (to use a musical term) the counterpoint to the classroom: the field experience that connects the classroom to the community. This is learning that happens through internships, field trips and practica and, ideally, all our students get such an opportunity. It could be science students who walk a field as their biology prof helps them observe and make sense of what they see, ministry students who intern at a local church, behavioural science students who do their practica at a local homeless shelter, or history students on a guided walk through a European battlefield. With each experience, the connection to community grows stronger.

There is no substitute for the classroom. But the experience in the field, the connection with community, is just as valuable to learning — and to the actions and service of alumni once they leave Ambrose. Classrooms and communities need each other and, actually, inspire the other. As we move from the lecture hall to the field and back, there is an iterative quality to learning. We grow in understanding and wisdom, and in our ability to serve.

This issue of Anthem highlights some of the many ways Ambrose University students and alumni are growing their connection with community beyond the classroom. We hope you are just as inspired reading these stories as we are by sharing them.

Gordon T. Smith, PhD

*President
Professor of Systematic and Spiritual Theology*



There is no substitute for the classroom. But the experience in the field, the connection with community, is just as valuable to learning — and to the actions and service of alumni once they leave Ambrose.

Students thrive in a learning-centred environment. How does Ambrose measure up?

Institutional culture is a key factor in student success, and Ambrose University is one of more than 700 post-secondary institutions across North America to take part in an annual survey that sheds light on this critical element. The *National Survey of Student Engagement* shows how institutions measure up. The 2014 survey results confirm what Ambrose students and alumni have been saying all along: Ambrose University is a great environment in which to learn.

Here are a few highlights of how the University scored when compared to the Canadian institutions that took part in the survey:

- **90% of senior students (completing their fourth year) rated the overall experience at Ambrose as very positive** (Canada = 79%)
- **75% of Ambrose students enhanced their learning** by taking part in two or more “high-impact practices,” which include learning communities, community-based projects, internships, co-ops, field experiences, study abroad or culminating senior experiences (such as senior projects or theses), or by working with a faculty member on a research project (Canada = 52%)
- **Ambrose scored a 27.2 for interaction between senior students and faculty**, on a maximum 60-point scale (Canada = 18)
- **Ambrose scored a 47 for the quality of all senior students’ interactions while on campus**, on a maximum 60-point scale (Canada = 39.5)
- **Ambrose scored a 31.6 for a supportive environment**, on a maximum 60-point scale (Canada = 28)



Annual Research Conference spotlights poverty

The annual Ambrose Research Conference, this year entitled “Poverty: Causes, Impacts, and Solutions,” held on March 30, 2015, shone the light on student, faculty and alumni research and scholarly activity through a series of papers and posters. Students from the Faculties of Arts and Science and Theology took part, sharing their knowledge with the University community. The Conference aimed to generate a campus-wide discussion on all aspects of poverty, and to support Ambrose’s groundbreaking Canadian Poverty Institute.

The Institute, the first of its kind in Canada, will grow knowledge and educate people who work to address the critical issue of poverty nationwide. Ambrose’s leadership through the Institute is expected to help inform public policy and give people living in poverty hope for a better life. **Dr. John Rook (CNC 1969)**, Director of the Institute, was the Conference keynote speaker.



Top Lions take home the hardware

Athletes’ accomplishments are easy to see on the scoreboard, but it’s their character, ability, and contributions to court, pitch, and community that say the most. Ambrose University’s annual Athletics Awards Gala on March 29, 2015, celebrated some of the University’s best.

Connor Chau (men’s basketball) received the Mel Sylvester Athletic Leadership Award for leadership on and off court.

Caitlyn Blain (futsal) was named Female Athlete of the Year for helping to lead the Lions to a first-place regular-season finish and an ACAC championships bronze medal. Tragically, Caitlyn passed away shortly after receiving the award.

Mark Ingram (men’s volleyball) was named Male Athlete of the Year, recognizing professionalism and integrity that was an inspiration to teammates.

Team MVPs and MIPs (Most Inspirational Players) were also recognized:

Men’s basketball: **Connor Chau** (MVP) and **James Gripping** (MIP)

Women’s basketball: **Katie Nutini** (MVP) and **Marielle Saayman** (MIP)

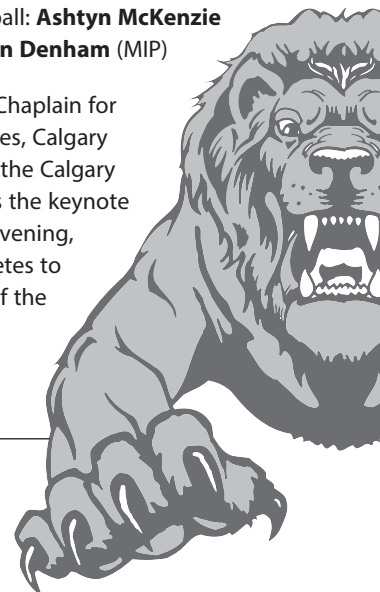
Men’s futsal: **Jason Schmidt** (MVP) and **Marty Marczak** (MIP)

Women’s futsal: **Kirsten Boda** (MVP) and **Sarah Collins** (MIP)

Men’s volleyball: **Mark Ingram** (MVP) and **Dylan Squires** (MIP)

Women’s volleyball: **Ashtyn McKenzie** (MVP) and **Jordan Denham** (MIP)

Rodd Sawatzky, Chaplain for the Calgary Flames, Calgary Stampeders and the Calgary Roughnecks, was the keynote speaker for the evening, challenging athletes to make the most of the gifts God has given them.





Charting a clear path for the future

Ambrose is a University with great potential for service to students and the community — and we are moving forward confidently. The new *Comprehensive Institutional Plan 2015–2018* details the University's strategic outlook and initiatives to grow institutional capacity. Over the next 5–6 years, Ambrose plans to sharpen its focus on teaching and learning in an academic culture that engages students and also explores new program avenues.

The first steps are already being taken in fall 2015, when more spaces in the BSc (Biology) and BEd (after degree) programs are opened, a new Diploma in Acting is launched and a Chaplaincy specialization in the Master of Arts – Leadership and Ministry degree is introduced.

Three specific goals are highlighted in the plan:

1. attention to teaching and learning, so Ambrose will be widely known for excellence in teaching and student achievement;
2. exploring new capacity to develop new programs as well as the physical spaces necessary to support them; and
3. refining systems and processes to further define and strengthen the institution's academic culture.

* Read the full plan and Ambrose University's vision for the future by visiting ambrose.edu and clicking on "about us".



Ambrose University integrates Christ-centred living, dynamic learning and vibrant faith. It enables students to contribute fully and to make a difference by:

- preparing global citizens through a world-wide network of individuals and agencies engaged in social justice, education and community economic development;
- enhancing access to education through investment in e-learning technology that increases flexible learning options;
- supporting learner mobility by taking part in province wide initiatives that ensure and recognize credit and program portability; and
- promoting lifelong learning through a range of program options, including Foundations for Ministry, which provides community-based professional development to workers in the religious sector.

A day to celebrate achievement: Graduation 2015

A grey and cool day didn't dim the bright smiles of grads, families, friends, and faculty at Commencement on April 25, 2015. More than 130 graduates crossed the stage to receive diplomas and hearty congratulations from President Gordon T. Smith.



This year, Ambrose celebrated the awarding of 96 Arts and Science degrees (including 25 Bachelor of Education after-degrees) and 40 degrees from the Faculty of Theology.

Graduation 2015

Undergraduate valedictorian **David Robertson (Bachelor of Arts – Christian Studies)** and Seminary valedictorian **Andreas Striefler (Master of Arts – Leadership and Ministry)** both addressed those in attendance with words of shared experience and inspiration. Dr. Bruce Hindmarsh of Regent College, Vancouver, was the Commencement speaker, reminding graduates that the high quality education they have received at Ambrose would carry them through life. He also spoke powerfully of the importance and value of Christian higher education to the future of the Church and to society.

Read highlights from Hindmarsh's words in *Final Word* on page 29.

Commencement address:
<https://ambrose.ensemblevideo.com/Watch/Zx94QmTj>

Full Graduation ceremony:
<https://ambrose.ensemblevideo.com/Watch/f5PNg9d6>

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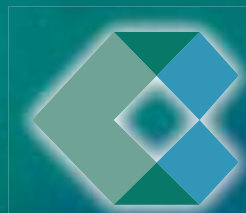
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MISSION CANADA

An Ambrose couple lives missionally where God has planted them, reaching out to a diverse community that calls Canada home.

After graduating from Ambrose University, **Thich Truong (Seminary – Master of Divinity 2012)** and **Alyssa (Buszowski) Truong (BA – Behavioural Science 2009; Seminary – Diploma Leadership and Ministry 2013)**, expected to embark on mission work overseas. Instead, they followed God’s path to an unexpected destination: Barrhaven, Ontario, south of Ottawa.

“Life happened,” says Thich, the Pastor at Emmanuel Alliance Church, with a laugh. “After intentionally thinking about where God was working and where we needed to be, we responded to the call to serve here.” That was two years ago. They continue to receive daily affirmation that they need to be intentional with where God has placed them, and Thich has shared their experience in a Global Missions Podcast, to inspire others to live missionally in Canada [see sidebar].

The community in which the Truongs live is ethnically, socially and economically diverse. It has many young families, many different languages are spoken and there are many different religions. People tend to stick to the neighbourhood, creating an intensely localized culture that has both pluses (a strong sense of community) and minuses (risk of polarization).



Thich and Alyssa Truong with their son Elliott

“The world has come to Canada,” says Truong, explaining that intercultural ministry is about reaching all cultures, wherever they may be. It comes naturally to him, he says, because of his background as the son of Vietnamese “boat people” and because of his time at Ambrose. “Seminary was the picture of what church should be. Men and women of all ages, cultures, stories and backgrounds coming together and living as a community.

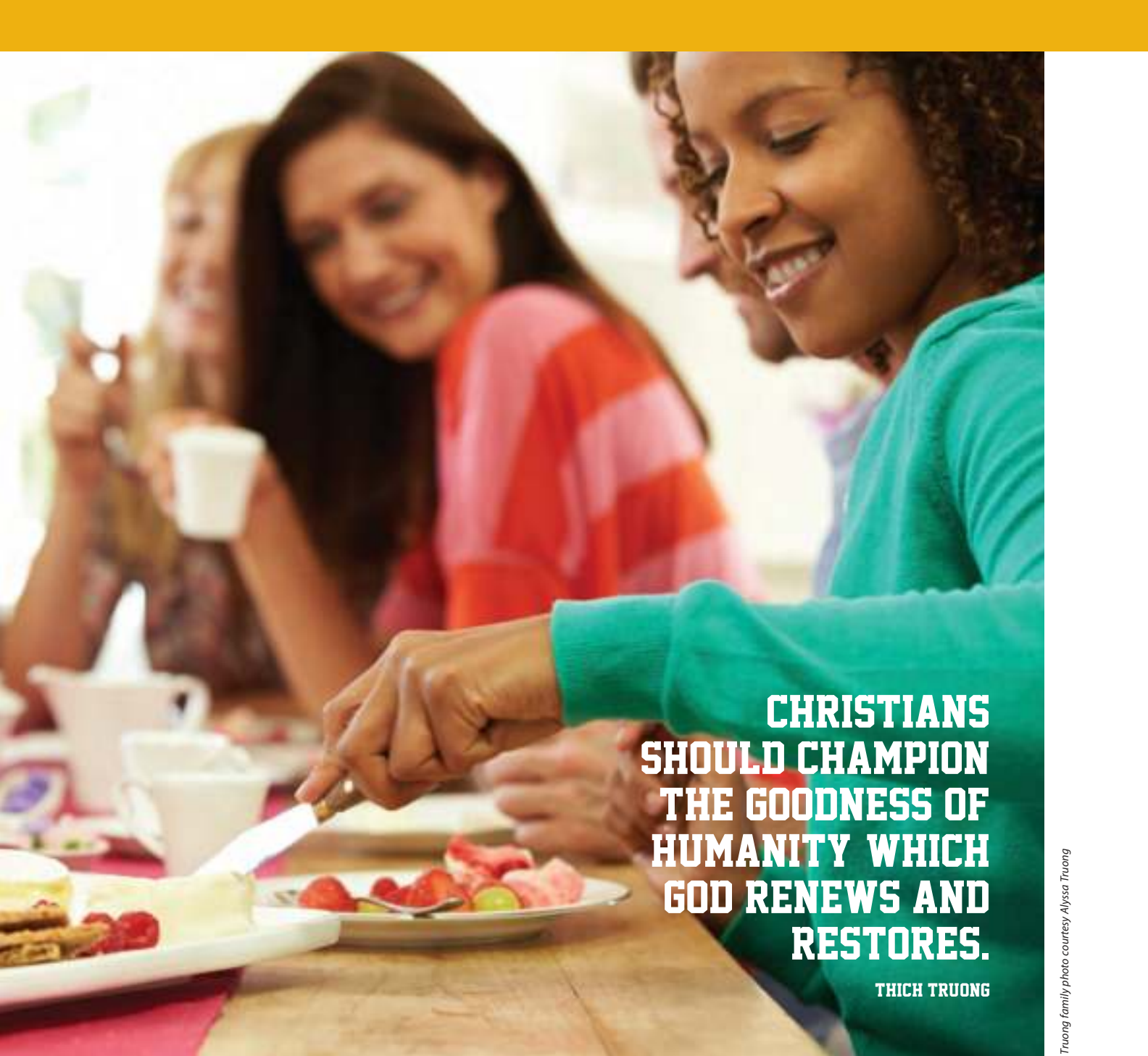
“Missions work and being implanted in a community is about restoring humanity,” he says. “Christians should champion the goodness of humanity, which God renews and restores.” The Truongs do so by making deeply personal connections with members of the community, making the most of a tool they, as millennials, use daily: social media.

His own family’s experience showed the importance of building relationships outside the church, which Truong says “is a natural thing



God has put into our hearts.” The family now actively takes part in the community gift economy, which brings people together to exchange unneeded items with neighbours, and frequently organizes play dates for children. “God has allowed social media to thrive for a reason,” he says, laughing. “You need to hear the heartbeats of what’s going on.”

And because sharing food is spiritual in many ways, the Truongs helped develop a meal-swap network, and its success is now replicated in networks city-wide. Within their immediate community, more than 100 people take part at various times, gathering in groups of 10–15 to create freezer



CHRISTIANS SHOULD CHAMPION THE GOODNESS OF HUMANITY WHICH GOD RENEWS AND RESTORES.

THICH TRUONG

Truong family photo courtesy Alyssa Truong

meals for each other. Recently, the Truongs opened the doors to their own home, welcoming neighbours who wanted to learn how to cook Vietnamese food.

"We're building life-giving relationships with our neighbours and responding to their needs," Truong says. "And sometimes that is as simple as sharing a bowl of pho.

"Having authentic and deep conversations with our neighbours around our dinner table offers spiritual direction. We would love for people to journey towards getting to know Jesus Christ." □

GOING GLOBAL The Jaffray Centre for Global Initiatives at Ambrose University is collaborating with SEND International on the new Global Missions Podcasts series to help churches and communities of faith across Canada understand new concepts and find new ways to engage across cultures.

"With globalization, borders today are porous," explains Charles Cook, Ambrose University Professor of Global Studies and Mission and Executive Director of the Jaffray Centre. "People can act locally and have a 'global' experience. With these podcasts, we're reaching beyond pastors to people in the pew, and to a younger generation, to create a place where you can go for inspiration if you're interested in international missions." The project fits the Jaffray Centre role as an "incubator" for new ideas and for bridging the divides among people. "We have to recognize that in a global world, we are all an 'other' to someone, somewhere." [Hear from Thich Truong and others at globalmissionspodcast.com.](http://globalmissionspodcast.com)





REPLACING WALLS WITH WHEELS

Since the dawn of time, humankind has been wondering about the unknown world and wandering into it. The quest continues today among those seeking a better understanding of the world, Christianity and their place in both.

**DOWN
ANCIENT
PATHS™**

Down Ancient Paths, an award-winning educational travel program offered by Ambrose University since 2000, has led hundreds of people on journeys of imagination, exploration, integration and transformation. It inspires participants — undergrad and Seminary students, alumni, members of the clergy and the general public — to open their eyes and minds to the history, theology, spirituality and geography of ancient Christianity by immersing them in places of profound meaning.

These journeys-of-a-lifetime were a lifetime in the making for Dr. Charles Nienkirchen, Professor of Christian History and Spirituality,

and the Down Ancient Paths Founder and Director. “These are not holidays,” he says, explaining that educational travel is for credit, personal enrichment and professional development. “Every student coming out of a post-secondary institution needs some degree of global consciousness. At a faith-based institution like Ambrose University, we want our students to have an understanding of the wellsprings of the Christian faith, and this invariably takes us to the Middle East.”

Delving into global Christian heritage is important at this time when “the tremendous contribution of Judeo-Christian heritage to world civilization is under appreciated,



Paths yet to TRAVEL

Down Ancient Paths is extending its global reach to include some of the oldest of the youngest Christian traditions. Among upcoming destinations are these journeys-of-a-lifetime.

FULLY BOOKED

**Magnificent Ethiopia:
Where the Ancient Christian
Voices Still Speak**
January 14–28, 2016

NEW!

**Milestones of Christian
Memory in Southern Spain:
From the Apostle Paul to
Christopher Columbus**
March 17–April 1, 2016

**Summer School in
the “Greater” Holy Land
(Jordan and Israel)**
May 1–June 3, 2016

NEW!

**And Christianity Came
to Tahiti: A South Pacific
Odyssey**
March 2017

**Visit the Down Ancient
Paths website for details
on these and other
educational travel
opportunities:
downancientpaths.com**

under studied, under taught and even under attack, especially in the western world.” But while a “militant form of multiculturalism” tends to erode appreciation for the Christian legacy, Nienkirchen says Down Ancient Paths aims to strengthen Christian consciousness through travel experience.

Travellers venture along the streets of Israel and Jordan, and see the sun rise from the Aegean Sea, crossing from Turkey to the Holy Island of Patmos. They walk in the footsteps of the Apostle Paul in Greece and of pilgrims in Italy. They go to the “Greater” Holy Land and the “Other” Holy Land (usually Turkey and surrounding countries). Their senses go into overdrive marvelling at the beauty of Turkey’s aptly named turquoise coast. In January, some will go to exotic Ethiopia. Past destinations have included India, China, Malta, Armenia, Egypt, Ireland and England, among others.

“Educational travel is a very effective way of taking the walls off the classroom,” says Nienkirchen, who expanded on that concept in May, delivering the closing address to a worldwide gathering of faith-based post-secondary institutions amid the illuminated ruins of Ephesus, Turkey.

(L) A colonnaded street in Laodicea, Syria. (R) A Roman road north of Antalya (the biblical Attalia), Turkey, walked by the Apostle Paul.

“If people come back with questions, if they are a bit confused, then they’ve had a good educational experience.”

The impact can be life-changing. Some people who’ve never had an interest in matters of faith acquire one. Some who’ve lost their sense of the value of faith reacquire it. Some delve deeper into what they’ve known. Some just discover things about Christianity that were completely off their radar screen.

“Never in the history of the world has there been a civilization that didn’t find its cohesion in some form of religious belief system,” Nienkirchen explains. “From a Christian perspective, we’re made in the image of God and are spiritual by nature. Down Ancient Paths helps people respond to the intrinsic spiritual nature of their being.”

He, too, continues to grow as student, pilgrim and professor. “I continue to get surprises,” he says. “Travel education as a whole confirms what I know, shows me what I don’t know and forces me to come to grips with the implications for what I don’t know, or what I thought I knew.” □

Is Ambrose still training people for **MINISTRY?**



As I am out talking with Pastors, supporting churches and many of our constituents, this is the question I am most frequently asked. The question comes in many forms, and the answer is always the same: yes, we most definitely are.

*by Wendy Lowe
Vice-President, Advancement*

MINISTRY

At Ambrose University, we're excited about a number of key initiatives that affirm our commitment to training pastors. **This academic year, faculty in our ministry preparation stream are engaged in a major revamp of how we prepare people for ministry.** We realize churches have changed and that ministry students certainly have changed — today, 55% of our Seminary students are working professionals, many coming from non-pastoral vocations into a later-in-life call to ministry.

The predicted new normal in the life of Generation Z students (those entering higher education now) will be 15 career changes over their lifetime. Undergraduate students thinking of ministry careers no longer see the School of Ministry as the only route to ministry preparation. Many choose the Bachelor of Arts –

Behavioural Science route, believing a broader understanding of psychology and sociology will be great preparation for their first ministry assignment, which is most often as youth pastor. Along with psychology, they are choosing courses in church history and biblical interpretation.

Next spring, we will host an evening for third- and fourth-year undergrad students from all faculties to talk about calling and pastoral ministry, and to profile the Seminary. A very large percentage of our students start their undergraduate studies knowing they will go on to get master's degrees, and we will invite them to do so at Ambrose.

Many churches today hire people with no formal ministry training to fill a wide variety of ministry roles. These individuals are asking for ministry training in non-conventional ways, and Ambrose is developing more intensive and online training opportunities. Providing flexible training options will be especially important to the growing number of students who — because of family and life responsibilities — cannot

300 students are enrolled in the School of Ministry (undergraduate programs) and Seminary (graduate students) in fall 2015.

Ministry training looks different today.... What hasn't changed is the passion of professors to teach the Bible, theology and pastoral practice in ways that equip a new generation of leaders for ministry.

take multiple years out to prepare for ministry, and those who face the reality of geographic distance from a ministry training institution.

Our faculty are continually at work consulting with churches about the needs of pastors in churches today. We very much want to collaborate with working ministerial practitioners in the design and approach of ministry preparation in the School of Ministry and the Seminary.

We are inviting pastoral leaders to join us in a new initiative that will be launched with our new website. Ambrose at Large will be an online resource for pastors, curating the best and most useful articles, ideas and research for ministers today.

We know pastors have limited time and we want to be a part of an ongoing dialogue by making relevant and useful information easily accessible. We want to continue to provide a mutual-learning community — even if a student graduated two or more decades ago.

Three of our professors and a colleague from another university will soon launch a nationwide research study on why some churches flourish. Learning what is working in these churches will help us develop tools and training for our students and also for pastors and church staff who have completed their formal education. We recognize that part of our learning needs to be focused on the innovation happening in churches of all sizes and denominations — leading practices that are enabling churches to defy the downward trends that have become the norm in Canada. We care greatly



about this initiative because we care about training pastors so they can lead flourishing churches.

Without reservation, training pastors is a core commitment of Ambrose University. We believe students training for ministry are well served by being embedded in a university, and the university is richer for being built around the Seminary and School of Ministry.

Ministry training looks different today, much in the same way that your church looks different than it did a decade ago (whoever thought about attending church online?). But what hasn't changed is people answering the call and committing to learning to be effective in their deep "yes" to God in pastoral ministry. What also hasn't

changed is the passion of professors to teach the Bible, theology and pastoral practice in ways that equip a new generation of leaders for ministry.

A sociologist who studies institutions can also help a ministry student understand ways to lead and influence a faith community to a place of flourishing. This is the gift of multidisciplinary training that happens when the Liberal Arts, School of Ministry and Seminary cross-pollinate. We are proud of more than 80 years of uninterrupted ministry training for pastors and are privileged to partner with you in making it happen. □

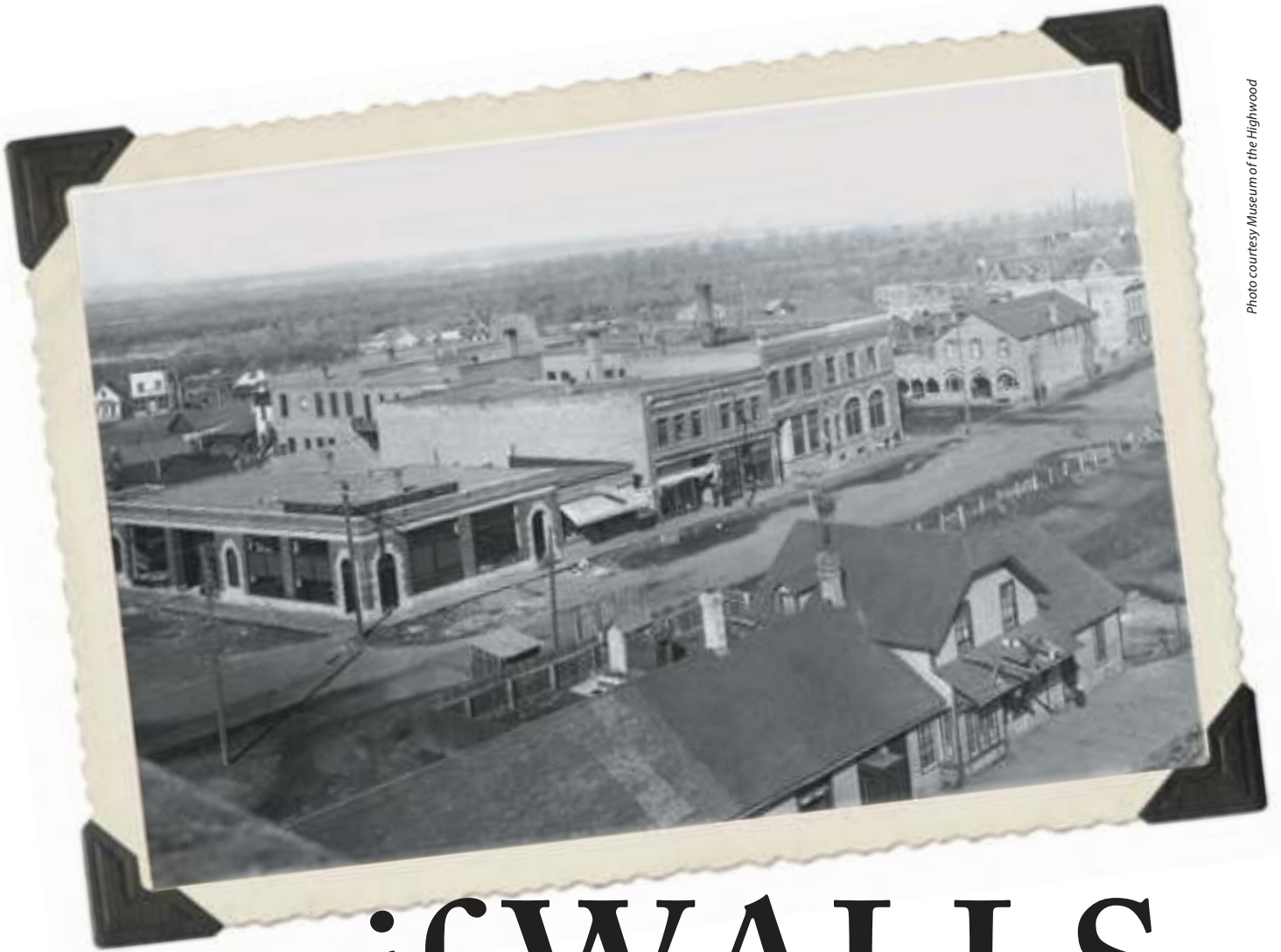


Photo courtesy Museum of the Highwood

if WALLS could TALK



A community's history is told in its people and places. Ambrose University students are helping one Alberta town preserve its remarkable story.

The pretty white Robertson house on Fifth Street starred in *Superman III*. Former Canadian Prime Minister Joe Clark grew up in the small house just off Macleod Trail. The Wallace place up the street? It couldn't be saved after the 2013 flood and was torn down this spring.

In High River, Alta., every heritage building is another chapter in the community's 115-year story. But with the inevitable march of time, some of those buildings — and the memories they evoke — are being lost. An exciting new project initiated by Ambrose University aims to stop the clock and help preserve the town's rich history.

An exciting new project initiated by Ambrose University aims to stop the clock and help preserve the town's rich history.

Starting this fall, third-year History students will take part in Placing Memory in High River's Built Environment, a community-based participatory oral history project funded in part through the Alberta Historical Resources Foundation.

They'll work closely with the Museum of the Highwood and community volunteers to identify 10–15 buildings or significant places in High River, interview 30–40 people and gather anywhere from 90–150 hours of oral history, connecting with residents to draw out memories before they are lost to time.

"Memory often lives in places," explains Dr. Kyle Jantzen, Professor of History, who lives in High River and chairs the town's Heritage

Advisory Board. "As physical spaces disappear, as places become spaces, what happens to the memories? We want to capture those memories and house them, so they can be recalled long after the physical structures are gone."

The 7–10 students expected to take part will have an outstanding hands-on, in-community opportunity to learn and to serve while "doing" history. As they add to their knowledge and skills, and get a real sense of what a future career in history may hold, they'll build a valuable resource for future generations by replenishing High River's collection of oral histories, all of which were destroyed in the flood. They'll share what they hear through public lectures and likely in print and online.

At the project's end, they'll take part in a "history harvest," which is probably best described as an *Antiques Roadshow*-styled event to gather stories around particular artifacts.

"Historians have tended to connect with documents in the past because they are objective artifacts," says Dr. Ken Draper, Professor of History and Interim Vice-President for Academic Affairs. "But that is being questioned and oral history is becoming a way to understand meaning in a way that isn't possible from documents themselves. With this project, we want to honour the local knowledge and find ways to bring it out, capture it and bring it into the academic discussion."

In the stories the students capture will lie insights into the community's identity. "If you think of how a family works, it is shared experiences that define and shape

you," Kyle Jantzen says. "It is no different in a community. An event like the flood of 2013, for example, had a deep and traumatic impact. In 20 or 30 years, people will tell stories about this time and those memories will shape our understanding of High River as a community."

Projects like this, which enable students to get out and see how history functions in the life of a community, augment students' learning and add a spark to what they're studying.

"They're going to see that a historian isn't a passive recorder of the past, but rather, when we do history we're the ones who help make sense of the past. In this project, our students will get a massive dose of that reality."

The project, it could be said, is making history of its own, while opening the door for future Ambrose University students who will have the opportunity to be involved in similar projects in other communities. □

'Memory often lives in places. As physical spaces disappear ... what happens to the memories?'

Dr. Kyle Jantzen





Garth Hunt shares scriptures from the Living Bible with Mother Teresa.

Forty years ago this April, Garth Hunt (CBI 1954) was in one of the most dangerous places in the world for Christians: Saigon, as the city fell to the North Vietnamese army (Viet Cong). This past spring, he and his wife Betty (CBI 1954) were in one of the most joyous: at Ambrose University celebrating the graduation of their granddaughter, Jen Schneider (Bachelor of Ministry – Intercultural Studies 2015), who has spent more than two years in Niger, West Africa, with The Christian and Missionary Alliance (C&MA).

Through their passion, lives and deeds, the extended Hunt family is affirming and inspiring, demonstrating how walking faithfully through doors God opens can literally save lives and transform communities.

Inspired by the saving power of the Lord: a family's enduring legacy...

Inspired and guided by God

By God's providence, I went to rescue a Bible and ended up getting 1,700 people out of danger.

Garth Hunt

Of their time overseas, Garth, Betty (who sadly passed into the Lord's arms in May 2015) and Jen all believe they were where they were meant to be at the time they were meant to be there. "It's been affirmation of God's hand and we can see His sovereignty," says Jen. "We can see God at work in this."

Garth's conversion to Christ began with a life-threatening car accident and a promise to God to "be a better boy" in the future. The aspiring professional hockey player — he had been recruited by the Detroit Red Wings' farm team — suffered career-ending torn knee ligaments and reached a turning point in his life. Enrolling at the Canadian Bible Institute, he met Betty, and the

two would be partners in life and faith for more than 60 years.

The Hunts served three terms as missionaries to Vietnam during 16 years, with their five children attending boarding school in Malaysia. Garth realized his place was to engage with the military hospital, where conditions were best described as appalling. He became the hospital Chaplain and, through sheer determination, secured essential medical equipment. He also worked with local teams to translate the Bible into Vietnamese, believing "Christian life cannot be sustained apart from the word of God."

continued on next page >

Inspired by the saving power of the Lord: a family's enduring legacy...

continued from previous page



A

Garth's work at the hospital impressed senior government and military leaders, and earned their trust — repaid years later through a miracle of God when, amidst fear and turmoil, Garth helped save 1,700 Vietnamese pastors, military officers, doctors and government leaders by helping them escape to freedom on U.S. military aircraft.

Garth himself was on the last plane to leave Saigon just before the Communist North Vietnamese entered Saigon and took over the country.

By this time, the Hunts had already been forced to leave the country for their own safety. Unbeknownst to Betty, Garth, fearing that countless hours of Bible translation would be lost, caught one of the last Air China passenger flights into the Saigon to retrieve the work. He arrived to discover others had already taken it out of the country — and saw the grave danger Vietnamese Christians were in. He knew then that God had been working in the background to prepare him to do something amazing. Tapping into his network, Garth secured visas for people desperate to leave. Leaders were fleeing in droves and one handed him the official stamp needed to authorize exit visas, saying "you're a trustworthy man" and, with it, the power to help people escape.

"By God's providence," Garth says, "I went to rescue a Bible and ended up getting 1,700 people out of danger."



B



C



D

Returning to Canada, the Lord opened new doors of ministry for Garth and Betty. Betty started on a Bible teaching ministry at the couple's Peace Portal Alliance Church in Surrey, B.C., which she carried for 35 years. Garth began working with Dr. Kenneth Taylor, translator of the Living Bible, and **Dr. Kenneth McVety (WCBI 1948)** to translate and produce contemporary translations of the Bible in more than 100 languages. Living Bibles of Canada grew into WorldServe Ministries, and Garth had the privilege of providing leadership for WorldServe Canada for 30 years, retiring in 2006.

For the past nine years, Garth has volunteered with Dalit Freedom Network, offering "the untouchable children of India" hope and freedom through education and a biblical world view. To date, more than 107 schools have been established and 27,000 children sponsored.



E

- A President of Vietnam visiting wounded soldiers with Garth Hunt.
- B Offering support at military hospitals on the front line.
- C Jen Schneider cuddles a baby and shares a conversation with a Niger mom.
- D 'Ministry by hanging out' forged strong relationships with local residents in Niger, West Africa.
- E Jen Schneider leads a pregnancy class for mothers in Niger.
- F Betty Hunt visiting wounded soldiers.

Photos courtesy Jen Schneider



The ties that bind

Jen Schneider made an unexpected discovery on her journey to Niger. She travelled with C&MA apprentice Diane Nguyen, a Vietnamese Canadian, and learned the two had a shared heritage. Diane's grandparents came to Christ through Alliance missionaries in Vietnam — at the same time as Jen's grandparents were there as Alliance missionaries. "My grandfather church planted with Diane's great uncle; they were ministry partners in Saigon. In Niger, Diane and I ministered, worked and lived together for two years."

friendship and by learning about culture and the Tamajeq language. We were keen to find the strings in people's hearts that Jesus could pull, and to learn what would draw them to Christ's heart."

She spent time in people's homes, held mothers' babies, took people to health clinics, helped prepare and share meals and talked under starlight skies, getting to know people, laugh and enjoy life.

"The first year, I felt almost helpless because I was learning so much. But Jesus is good to take care of us when we follow where He takes us. It was a year of learning to love people well; desiring to really understand and see the beauty in another culture and to learn how to communicate in a way that's loving to that culture."

What she learned and the impact it has had on her life is likely a spiritual gift and a journey her grandparents would easily understand.

"Loving God and loving people, that is the highest we can aspire to. Learning to understand the world from a different perspective alters our world view, value system and way of thinking. ...I'm not fully sure what God has planned for me in the future, but I'm excited to lean into whatever it is. He'll show me my next steps." □

Proclaiming His power to a new generation

'Jesus is good to take care of us when we follow where He takes us. It was a year of learning to love people well ... learn[ing] how to communicate in a way that's loving to that culture.'

Jen Schneider

Jen Schneider carries the torch handed to her by her grandparents. "I'm a planner and a dreamer with God," she says, "and feel that God, through my grandparents, my exposure to missions and my time in Niger, has me walking a path that will enable me to reach the poor and the voiceless."

Inspired to take a mission trip to India because of her grandfather's involvement with the Dalit Freedom Network, Jen's eyes were opened and "my heart was broken" when she saw glaring social injustice. "It stirred something in me; it was a marker point in growing my heart for the nations."

Community development and ministry in Niger, her first longer-term mission,

took her outside her comfort zone. She helped with a girls' tailoring school in her first year, working with young unmarried women four days a week. Skills training was augmented with microfinance, math, French and life skills lessons, including discussions about pregnancy and nutrition, and using stories from Scripture to share moral lessons in a culture where polygamy is practiced widely. Her second year focused less on teaching and more on work in a library study centre.

"There was also lots of 'ministry by hanging out,'" Jen says with a laugh, explaining the many ways of forging relationships. "We ministered through

A scenic view of a volcano in Costa Rica, with hikers in the foreground. The volcano is partially obscured by clouds and is the central focus of the image. The hikers are seen from behind, walking on a rocky path through a lush green forest. The text "COSTA RICA BECOMES A CLASSROOM" is overlaid in large white letters across the center of the image.

COSTA RICA BECOMES A CLASSROOM



**YOU CAN READ ABOUT
BIODIVERSITY IN A TEXTBOOK.
OR, AS SOME AMBROSE UNIVERSITY
STUDENTS DISCOVER, YOU CAN
IMMERSE YOURSELF IN IT AND
TAKE LEARNING TO A WHOLE
NEW LEVEL.**

There's nothing like waking up to the ear-splitting hollering of howler monkeys to tell you you're not in Calgary. Unless it's the humidity that makes it feel like +50 and leaves you dripping wet and fighting to breathe. Or maybe those bugs the size of your palm ...

Last spring, more than 30 Ambrose University students travelled to Costa Rica for two weeks, travelling and learning throughout the country, surrounded by their subject material and the myriad sounds, sights, smells and sensations that brought their lessons to life. The ecological study tour, which is organized every two years by Dr. Carol Gibbons Kroeker, Chair of the Biology program, enables students to augment their knowledge about ecological diversity by experiencing it firsthand.

"You can read about biodiversity in a textbook, but when you actually experience it, see the amazing things that are around you, it takes your knowledge deeper and changes your perspective," says Janelle Perry, a Bachelor of Science – Biology student who enters her second year at Ambrose this fall. "It makes you realize how much you learn in class and how valuable it is. It will inspire me to change how I store information so I can apply my knowledge when I'm in different places in the future."

Costa Rica's size belies a vast ecological richness that is relatively accessible in a short period of time. From April 27–May 5, two groups of Ambrose students were led by local guides and buses became rolling classrooms as they learned about the ecology through which they were travelling. Students ascended hilly terrain to the Arenal volcano, struggled to breathe in cloud forests, were immersed in the intense humidity of the verdant Selve Verde rain forest and felt the warm sand between their toes when they walked along the beach.

continued on next page >

COSTA RICA BECOMES A CLASSROOM

continued from previous page



'Travel study really opens the doors to seeing how marvelous this world is.'

Janelle Perry

Photos clockwise from top left:

Zippering through the treetops, Janelle Perry got a bird's-eye view of the rain forest.

Rafting down a rainforest river was a trip highlight for Janelle Perry (centre) and Samantha Hancock (right).

Samantha Hancock shares a refreshing break with fellow Ambrose University student Rebecca Leist.

Hiking through the rain forest was an almost-daily adventure for students in Costa Rica.

Because hiking is the ideal way to see different species, they hiked at least twice a day every day, and also completed two papers. They saw habitat, where frogs (which come out in droves after a rain) live and hide, and observed other wildlife including sloths, monkeys and tapirs. They went birdwatching. Not only did they learn about local plants like mangrove trees, which are found almost everywhere in Costa Rica, they saw how and where they grow in the estuaries.

Students also got a glimpse into the daily life of Costa Ricans by going into markets and stores to see how local people shopped, and spent time



Photos courtesy Janelle Perry, Samantha Hancock and Carol Gibbons-Kroeker



volunteering at a school, where they interacted with the children and helped out by painting a fence around the school's play area.

But this isn't to say there weren't any fun breaks. In addition to a little beach and swimming time, some students went ziplining through the treetops and all took a raft ride on a fast-moving rain forest river. "Honestly, it's one of the best things I'll ever do in life," says Samantha Hancock, a Bachelor of Arts – Behavioural Science student who's going into her third year, who had never taken part in travel study before. "It was so cool just getting outside

North America and our ways, and seeing and being in nature. I see home differently now that I've been to Costa Rica. I see beauty here, too. I look at nature more carefully, and find myself looking for flowers and leaves that really stand out."

She also notices sounds differently, commenting on the noise and bustle of Calgary. "Here, it's busy and loud. There, we didn't have a lot of social media connection. Night was quiet and the only noise was nature. Here, it's hard to get that kind of quiet, especially in the city.

"Before this experience, I hadn't thought of taking more ecology courses, but now I am going to. I'm more in tune with nature now. And I definitely want to travel more in the future, to go somewhere where I can have this kind of experience again."

"Travel study really opens the doors to seeing how marvelous this world is," Perry says. Hancock, who twice took a hike up from the beach and stopped at a look-out to soak in the beauty around her, concurs: "It was amazing. To be up there, in the quiet, and surrounded by God's creation." □

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- Health sciences
- Kinesiology
- Ecology
- General biology



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biochemistry kinesiology
genetics cellular biology
human physiology
organic chemistry
algebra **human anatomy**
bioethics marine biology
microbiology



Seeing humanity at the top of the world

The altitude in La Paz, Bolivia, literally takes your breath away. The city intimidates and excites. People welcome you. Their perseverance inspires and humbles. And somewhere along the way, you realize you're not the same person you were when you got here.





Thomas Grenier (Bachelor of Science – Biology 2013) didn't have a set plan when he left Canada for South America in January 2014. Nine months later, arriving in Bolivia via Argentina, Chile, Ecuador and Peru, he learned that letting the spirit guide him would take him right where he needed to be: volunteering at a prosthetic limb clinic.

Centro de Miembros Artificiales is a grassroots, Bolivian-run, self-sustaining clinic located in a little house in the Sopocachi neighbourhood of central La Paz. It transforms lives by fitting people with free prosthetic limbs that enable them to take steps back into society. The

need for limbs is great. Recent civil war, a mining industry with lax safety standards, little access to health services to manage chronic disease like diabetes and the harsh reality of living in the poorest country in South America all contribute to the large number of people, many of them young, needing prostheses.

“La Paz is a very poor city, so most people don't think they can access a prosthetic limb,” says Grenier. “They think it's something extraordinarily Western or expensive.” The Clinic makes the impossible possible, however, and Grenier, who hopes to go to medical school in the future, spent anywhere from 3–10 hours a day on site. He helped make fundraising

videos to secure donations to pay for the limbs, and had the privilege of offering rehabilitation and physical therapy to help people use their new limbs. Teaching exercises, for example, helped people learn how to walk again, or built muscles for balance or to complete simple tasks.

“A limb can be truly lifesaving,” Grenier says. “Bolivia is a very traditional and conservative nation, and a man is most likely to be the family wage earner. For him, a limb is essential for earning a living. For a woman, losing a limb can prevent her from finding a husband. For everyone, it can mean living on the street — in a city with few supports for any kind of disability.”

His experiences at the Clinic brought the physical and emotional intensity of the entire 11-month journey into focus. “I found myself pushed and stretched, and there were moments when I was overwhelmed entirely by the situation,” he says. “But people were extraordinarily generous to an obvious ‘gringo,’ and you see yourself grow and prevail in spite of how you feel. It was humbling and inspiring at the same time, and reaffirmed my view of humanity.”

Living in local communities and being welcomed into people's homes delivered a powerful lesson. “I've learned what it means to be a moral person instead of a glorifying person. And I've learned that when I contribute to a community in a better way, I also contribute to my own sense of self.” □

Photos from top to bottom:

Conditions in Bolivia's mines are horrific and many miners lose limbs. Thomas took a gift of dynamite and blasting caps, bought from a corner store, on one of his visits to a mine.

The Clinic relies on donations, primarily from North America, to provide free prosthetic limbs to residents.

Thomas worked extensively with a patient who was severely burned in a mining accident. Prosthetic arms and legs, and six months of rehab, restored his life.

Thomas Grenier and some of the Clinic's passionate workers.

A child learns to walk after being fitted with a prosthetic leg.

It was humbling and inspiring at the same time, and reaffirmed my view of humanity.

Thomas Grenier

Remembering a guiding light: Dr. Al Cramer

The legacy of a beloved
professor lives through
today's Seminary

by *Miriam Charter*



“ Dr. Cramer had an unusual gift of helping those of us who studied with him “live into” history — making the heroes of the faith come alive among us.

On March 14, 2015, Dr. Al Cramer was finally released from the ravages of Alzheimer's and a remarkable teacher, friend and colleague joined that great cloud of witnesses who encourage us to run with perseverance the race that has been set before us. With Dr. Cramer's passing, we lost a guiding light and a profoundly humble man to whom we owe a debt of gratitude. His legacy lives in the Ambrose University Seminary's current vitality, which can be traced to his selfless dedication to its welfare.

A professor of church history and Old Testament at Canadian Theological College (which later became Canadian Theological Seminary), Dr. Cramer served as Dean from 1979–84. Under his leadership, the Seminary achieved functional independence from Canadian Bible College and also became an associate member in the Association of Theological Schools.

I worked closely with Dr. Cramer in the early '80s, and his vision for our fledgling Seminary was infectious. He burned the midnight oil most evenings; the light in his office usually still on when students left the library at closing time. Few of us fully understood the sacrifice Dr. Cramer and his family made during the school term, but we well understand the impact he had on our lives.

Upon Dr. Cramer's death, CTS alumni around the world reached out to share memories. Many called him their “absolute favourite prof” or referred to his “witty” and “fun-loving” classroom demeanour. He is lovingly remembered as an outstanding teacher and for his wit, humour, mastery of his discipline and deep care for students.

“He infused us with a love of church history that has lasted for more than 40 years,” said one former student. “He pulled work out of me,” said another, recalling his demands for the highest possible quality of work. You could often hear a roar of laughter coming from his classroom.

Dr. Cramer not only taught effortlessly and without notes, but also demonstrated insightful care for his students and an ability to see beyond the moment to future possibilities. Every Christmas, he would send a handwritten letter to Seminary graduates living abroad. Many alumni mentioned these letters with gratitude. Dr. Cramer prayed for and was intensely proud of his students. He was keenly interested in news about the alumni, faculty, and staff of CBC/CTS. He prayed that our schools would prosper, and they did. For decades, he poured himself into his students and the Seminary, and those efforts will be appreciated by countless generations. We remember with fondness his leadership, humour and heart.

Dr. Cramer was living in Wheaton, Ill., at the time of his passing. He is survived by his wife of 63 years, Josie, and daughters Evangeline and Ramona and their families. Memorial gifts may be directed to The Gideons International. www.gideons.org.

Notable achievements

Dr. Alice Chen (CTS Master of Arts – Religion 2000) celebrates several milestones in 2015: graduating from CTS 15 years ago, serving with Shanxi Evergreen Services for 20 years and with TEAM for 25 years, and graduating from medical school 30 years ago. Living and working in Shanxi, China, she says “I feel deeply honoured to be able to use all that I have learned and experienced to serve Him and people here in a meaningful and authentic way.”



With Evergreen, Alice helps advance the organization’s public benefit work, including medicine and public health, agriculture, education, orphan care, family services, business incubation and consulting. In June, she began a Counselling practicum in Beijing through Palo Alto University in Beijing and says she is enjoying doing more counseling and mental health education.

Rebecca Frankish (BHS 2009) is the Project Assistant with SEND International of Canada and Producer of the Global Missions Podcast [see related story on pages 6–7]. After graduation, Rebecca spent two years in Niger, West Africa, completing the Alliance’s Global Missions Apprenticeship Program, and then earned her Master’s of International Development from Eastern University in Philadelphia.



Rebecca was an adjunct professor at Ambrose University, teaching Introduction to International Development, while also working for the Centre for Affordable Water and Sanitation Technologies. During this time, she met and married her husband, Ian Frankish, a Resident

in Paediatrics at Victoria Hospital in London, Ont., where the couple now lives. In addition to the podcast, Rebecca coaches SEND workers in community development initiatives and also leads a women’s ESL conversation circles program at West London Alliance Church. The couple’s long-term goals are to return to Africa to do medical missions and community development.

Derek Geerlof (Seminary Master of Arts – Biblical/Theological Studies 2013)



recently had “Augustine and Pentecostals: Building a hermeneutical bridge between past and present experience” published in *Pneuma Journal*. He continues to work on his PhD in the Divinity School at Regent University in Virginia, where he was awarded a full scholarship.

Derek is an adjunct professor in Ambrose University’s Faculty of Theology and a member of First Alliance Church. You can read more about Derek’s story, which was published online in December 2014, at ambrose.edu/news.

Linda Weisenburger (CNC Bachelor of Theology 1966) worked with Wycliffe Bible Translators in Papua, New Guinea for more than 30 years. She is now retired and lives in Kamloops.

Dr. Stephen Wile (CBC Bachelor of Religion Education 1978) was named CEO of The Mustard Seed in Calgary on February 2, 2015. Prior to his appointment, he was President and Chief Executive Officer for WorldServe Ministries Canada, and has also served as Deputy Executive Director of Samaritan’s Purse – Canada and the Billy Graham Evangelistic



Association of Canada. Steve served as a pastor for 12 years before moving into the corporate world as an organizational development and leadership consultant. Founded in 1984, The Mustard Seed is a Christian organization that builds community, grows hope and supports change for people who are experiencing poverty and homelessness.

Bundles of joy

Riley William Cunningham was born in Calgary on July 24, 2015, a beautiful son for Jonathan (Bret) and **Sharlene (Coulter) Cunningham (CNC Bachelor of Arts – Behavioural Science 2004)**. Riley is the grandson of **Dr. Riley (CNC 1970) and Karen (CNC 1970) Coulter**. Dr. Coulter is the Chancellor of Ambrose University. ▼



Mom and dad **Bob Straiton (NUC Bachelor of Arts – Christian Studies 2003)** and **Kristen (Bennett) Straiton (AUC/NUC Bachelor of Arts – Behavioural Science 2007)** are happy to announce the arrival of Callum George Straiton on April 5, 2015. ▼



In memory

We are saddened to hear of the passing of members of Ambrose University's large and extended family. Prayers and condolences are extended to family members, friends and colleagues who honour and treasure the memories of those who have gone into God's arms. To submit a memorial announcement, please visit ambrose.edu/anthem.

Caitlyn Blain (current student)

tragically passed away on August 19, 2015. A friend and classmate to many, she was a bright student and outstanding player on the Ambrose University futsal team who had a positive impact on the whole university community. To read tributes to Caitlyn, please visit ambrose.edu/news.



Betty (Sissons) Hunt (WCBI 1954)

passed into the presence of her Lord on May 31, 2015. Betty and **Garth (WCBI 1954)**, her husband of 62 years, spent three terms as missionaries to Vietnam from 1956–72 and, returning to Surrey, B.C., Betty carried on a Bible teaching ministry at Peace Portal Alliance Church for more than 35 years. Shortly before her passing, Betty had the opportunity to visit Ambrose University to celebrate the graduation of her granddaughter, **Jen Schneider (Bachelor of Ministry – Intercultural Studies 2015)**. Betty is survived by her son **David (CBC 1979)** (Linda) and daughters Donna (Morris), Lolly (Guy), Sandra (Carl) and Brenda (Steve) and their families. The Hunts and their granddaughter share their story with readers starting on *page 14* of this issue of Anthem.



Mel Olsen (CNC

1972) passed away on July 11, 2015, while serving at Lakeshore Bible Camp in St. Malo, Man. He will be sadly missed by his loving wife Connie; sons **Brent (NUC 1998)** and **Brad (NUC 2002)** and daughter-in-law Lela; brothers Malcolm (Carol) and **Dave (CNC 1971)** (Judy); sisters Glenna (Glen) Bowden and **Esther (CNC 1968)** (Ed) Morgan; and many nieces and nephews. He was predeceased by his first wife, **Joanell (CNC 1972)**. Mel's passion was his faith in God and love for others, continually giving of himself to the people and places where he found himself. Much of Mel's life was spent serving and volunteering in his Church and through Christian camps. His bright smile and quick humour left a mark on all he met. Donations in Mel's honour are gratefully received by Lakeshore Bible Camp (214 Henderson Hwy, Winnipeg, Manitoba R2L 1L9).



Andrew Sabo (WCBI 1948) passed away peacefully on July 16, 2015, in Edmonton. Andrew is survived by his loving wife **Gertie (Lutz) (WCBI 1954)**, son David (Marlene), grandchildren Marlis and Robert, sisters Emma, Helen, Margie and Martha (Walter), and many nieces and nephews. He was predeceased by his wife Margaret, son Glenn and daughter Heather. Memorial donations are gratefully accepted by Ambrose University or Haven Ministries.



Lifelong learning begins today

Register now for Seminary evening and modular courses starting January 2016

SEMINARY

Share your update! To submit your life event (family news, career news, class reunion, etc.) for publication in a future issue of anthem, visit ambrose.edu/anthem to access the online form.

43 years

A long-time friend embarks on a new journey

Velma Warnock (CBC Bachelor of Religious Education 1974) has always had a sense of what she needed to do in life, and the confidence to move forward with it. These days, she has a little more time to be deliberate in finding new ways to use her gifts and abilities — and to just be in the moment, read, walk and help others involved with Foothills Alliance Church.

After 43 years, starting with Canadian Bible College in Regina and lastly at Ambrose University, Velma retired in August, closing one chapter of her life's story and opening another. "God puts you somewhere and you stay until He directs otherwise," she says, "and it was the right time for me to retire."

Velma followed in the footsteps of her father, George (Ernest to close friends and family) Warnock, who in 1942 was the first student accepted into Western Canadian Bible Institute. After completing her degree, she landed a job in CBC's kitchen, worked in the finance office in various roles and then began assisting with planned giving (where many donors became friends). Most recently she was Financial Aid Coordinator, overseeing the distribution of more than \$500,000 in financial aid and student awards every year. Velma played a key role in the physical consolidation of CBC, Canadian Theological Seminary and Nazarene University College into what is now Ambrose University, working closely with the Vice-President, Operations, as the new institution established itself in downtown Calgary in 2003. Her planning and organizing skills came to the fore again in 2008, when Ambrose moved to its current campus.

The evolution in the University's environment, practices and even the student body has echoed the changes in society. Long gone are the days when boys and girls were required to sit on opposite sides of the chapel, in assigned seats, for their daily services. So, too, is the requirement that girls wear skirts at mealtimes (slacks were permitted in residence), which were served and shared "family style." She remembers, with fondness, faculty like Dr. Albert Cramer. "I struggled a bit in school, but the way he taught, I could more easily remember things."

Today's students, she says, may have greater freedoms, but they may also face also greater challenges. "More students today are pursuing vocations other than professional ministry in order serve Christ in locations where trained clergy don't have the same access as someone trained in education or business, for example. Things have changed, and we as a faith community have to embrace it if we want to touch our world with the message of Christ."

"It's really quite special to see how God uses Ambrose students in unique ways to make a difference in our world for Christ."



Photo: HelloLuv Photography

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AMBROSE

EVENT *calendar*

All events take place at Ambrose University unless otherwise noted

2015



Visit ambrose.edu for a full event calendar and event details

In honour Remembrance Day

Wednesday, Nov. 11, 2015

Ambrose University students, alumni and staff join with the entire community to pay tribute to those who served to defend freedom, dignity and humanity.

Opening doors at Open House

November 13–14, 2015

11 a.m.–3 p.m.

both days

Do you know someone who might be interested in undergraduate or Seminary study at Ambrose University? Invite them to attend Open House to meet students and faculty, and see for themselves what the University and the Calgary area have to offer! For more info, visit ambrose.edu/openhouse2015.

The Lions are ready to roar!

Volleyball Home Opener

Friday, Oct. 16, 2015

4 p.m.



The fall season opens with men's and women's ACAC-league action. Let's make home-court advantage a loud one. See you in the Ambrose gym!



Basketball Home Opener

Saturday, Oct. 24, 2015

6 p.m.

The fall season of ACAC hoops play is underway! Cheer on the men's and women's teams in the Ambrose gym.



Musical interludes

For further info. and tickets (as noted), contact bdebruyn@ambrose.edu



One Night One Choir One Orchestra Five Composers

Friday, Nov. 6, 2015

7:30 p.m.

St. Stephen's Anglican Church
1121 – 14 Avenue S.W.

Tickets \$10

Grace and Community

Ambrose Community Singers
and Grace Presbyterian Choir

Sunday, Nov. 8, 2015

7:30 p.m.

Grace Presbyterian Church
1009 – 15 Avenue S.W.

Peace on Earth

Celebrate the Season with the
Ambrose Music Department

Saturday, Dec. 5, 2015

7 p.m.

Ambrose University
Tickets \$10 (\$15 at the door)

Jazz Night

Featuring Ambrose Jazz combos
and band

Tuesday, Dec. 8, 2015

7:30 p.m.

Ambrose University
Airhart Theatre

Come near to Christ

by Dr. Bruce Hindmarsh



“ This is the charge I want to leave you with today on this, your graduation day, from Ambrose University and Seminary. Today, and every day now as you leave this place, this is what you are to do: come near to Christ.

More than 130 Ambrose University baccalaureate and Seminary graduates joined with friends, families and faculty members on Saturday, April 25, 2015, to celebrate Convocation. Dr. Bruce Hindmarsh, the James M. Houston Professor of Spiritual Theology at Regent College in Vancouver, delivered the Graduation Address. Following are highlights from his charge to the Class of 2015.

“So many people think of their academic credentials as very personal flotation devices for life, a certification that will keep them from drowning economically, a degree that will float their career, a device that will inflate their social status. ... But in my charge to you today, graduates, I want to change the metaphor [and] ... talk to you not about life jackets but about stones, big dressed stones like for a temple.

“When we think about what Christian education is all about, we must subordinate all of these instrumental goals — money, career and status — to one ultimate goal and one goal only: that we might somehow approach love and come very near to Jesus Christ Himself.

“Academic work, the work of the ministry can have a deadening effect when it becomes a matter of mere activity. We become spiritually lifeless, as cold as stone, if we lose our vital connection, our nearness to Christ as our living stone.

“Christ is not only the living stone. He is the chosen stone.... In our pluralist post-modern world, you will be tempted in the years ahead to build your life around other good things, but only this stone is chosen.

“Christ is a precious stone. ...As we draw near to Christ, we not only reckon it to be true that Jesus is God’s chosen, but we order our affections here. Christ is the cornerstone and the capstone of all. In the architecture of your life, Christ is the cornerstone ... and so you must measure your life by Christ in the years ahead.

“As we all together think about the ... living temple that is centred upon the living stone, Jesus Christ, may I speak a word about the importance of sharing and the very practical work of building Christian institutions of higher education such as this very important Ambrose University? Canada and the Canadian church would be impoverished without these places.

“So, may I issue a second charge? ...Let us all support Christian higher education generously and sacrificially. This is a path on which our young people may come to Jesus Christ. Let’s do the work of a generation and fully fund Ambrose University and places like it.

“Christ deserves the best of our minds and hearts. There is endless treasure here to turn into coin in the work of a university like this. The lives of young women and men are transformed forever and for good through their experience of Christian higher education.

“Deep scholarship and deep devotion belong together for the good of the church and the good of the world. Education is a path on which we come to Jesus Christ, Lord of heart, Lord of soul, Lord of our minds, Lord of our strength. Let us all, each of us, keep coming to Jesus Christ and building our lives and our institutions on Him.” □

You can hear Dr. Hindmarsh’s full address at <https://ambrose.ensemblevideo.com/Watch/Zx94QmTj>

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AMBROSE
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HOPEN HOUSE

Open House Weekend
November 13-14, 2015

Come tour the Ambrose
campus, meet professors and
students, and learn more about
our community and programs.

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