

anthem

WINTER 2018 THE MAGAZINE OF AMBROSE UNIVERSITY

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through travel
study

The arts of worship | Peering into the divide | A new sport kicks off

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“ You can’t Google an experience. You need to go there.

Dr. Darren Dyck

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Published two times per year, *Anthem* informs, educates, inspires and engages its audience of alumni and supporters by telling the story of the accomplishments and contributions of alumni, students, faculty, staff and supporters of Ambrose University.



The point is counterpoint

We often use a word at Ambrose University that we have borrowed from our musician friends: *counterpoint*.

Counterpoint speaks of two voices that, while unique and independent, are nevertheless interdependent. Independent and interdependent at the same time. More specifically, when they sing together, they create depth and grace through harmony.

We use this word more broadly at Ambrose. We often think of the counterpoint among our academic programs. In one sense, they are independent. Each program, whether biology or business or education, stands alone — independent — with its own curriculum and learning outcomes. They are never just this; they are also *interdependent*. Each learns from and with the others. They flourish only when they are in harmony with one another.

This edition of *Anthem* shows this relationship quite beautifully. Articles offer reflections on biology and the arts and, perspectives from our appreciation of Indigenous approaches to learning. We also hear from alumni as we launch our new outdoor soccer program. When you read the biology article and also how the arts can enrich worship, you can appreciate that the arts and worship do not happen in isolation from the natural sciences. This is especially obvious on the Ambrose campus, because those who study biology are in classes just down the hall from ministry students who are preparing to lead worship and bring the ministry of the Word for congregations. Biology at Ambrose University, is taught in counterpoint to the arts and the ministry programs. Together, along with all our programs and our athletic opportunities, we have — not always, but most of the time! — an exquisite harmony.

Ambrose is not just a collection of programs; it is a set of programs — voices, one might say. While each is distinct and unique in its own right, together they function in counterpoint with everything offered at this university in a harmonious whole, reflecting our mission and vision for Christian higher education.

Ambrose faculty get this. They know they teach within a discipline that is an integral part of a university that fosters a profound sense of purpose — where each student is encouraged to discern their vocation, before God and for the sake of the kingdom of God.

Counterpoint only happens if there is a commitment, together, to the identity of the university.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "G. T. Smith".

Gordon T. Smith, PhD

President
Professor of Systematic and Spiritual Theology



Academic programs ... learn from and with the others. They flourish only when they are in harmony with one another.

Transformative school leadership

Ambrose's new leadership certificate program, Foundations of Leadership and the Principalship, offers a leadership journey toward the accreditation necessary for becoming Alberta school principals. Classes start in 2019. Find out more at ambrose.edu/education-department.

For the latest news and information, visit ambrose.edu/news

Sharing the light

Given the state of today's global affairs, most people would probably agree that more honesty, integrity, character, selflessness, kindness, faith and goodness would go a long way toward improving lives and communities. At Ambrose these virtues are woven into community life and academic programs. Through the new and timely "Be the Light" campaign the University will shine them far and wide. Ambrose students develop a sense of belonging, a higher purpose and a better-shaped view of the world that comes from a deep appreciation of God's purposes. They graduate prepared to lead, communicate, overcome adversity, inspire, spread kindness and impart wisdom. They are people with a greater capacity to make meaningful and lasting contributions to the well-being of their employers, churches, families and communities. They are ready to "Be the Light."

#BETHELIGHT



Sharing stories to spark vibrant conversations

Church leaders from communities across Canada gathered at Ambrose University on Nov. 26, 2018, to gain

valuable, practical insights into a priority close to their hearts: ensuring their churches are doing all they can to thrive. Shared Stories: Promising Practices in Canadian Congregations, presented by the University's Flourishing Congregations Institute, was a first-of-its-kind national ecumenical event. This free-of-charge day was a prime opportunity to learn from others across the theological continuum and to capitalize on what has been gleaned from the first phase of the FCI's groundbreaking national survey research. For more information, visit the FCI website, flourishingcongregations.org.



Welcoming a new Vice-President

Richard Deschenes took the reins as Ambrose's Vice-President, Advancement on June 18, 2018. His portfolio comprises the University's external relations, marketing, communications, alumni relations and fundraising initiatives. He brings extensive experience in development, including extended periods with Red Deer College and the University of Lethbridge. He also worked for the RESOLVE campaign before moving to The Mustard Seed, where he served as the Chief Development Officer until coming to Ambrose. Deschenes is a graduate of Briercrest and Trinity Western University. He and his wife, Marnie, have three children, and the family worships at RockPointe Church in Bears paw.



Finding light in the darkness

The Fall 2017 issue of *Anthem* shared Hannah (Truong) Temple's (CBC Bachelor of Arts – Religion and Christian Studies '01) family story, a remarkable tale of resilience, courage and gratitude. In 1980, Central Baptist Church in Victoria, B.C. ignored controversy to sponsor the family's desperate flight to freedom from Vietnam. The family is "paying forward" that incredible gift from God by establishing the New Canadian Bursary at Ambrose University. The endowed bursary, which will exist in perpetuity, is intended to help newcomers to Canada overcome financial obstacles to post-secondary education, so they can chart their own journeys of success. To date, \$47,000 of the \$50,000 goal has been raised from a wide community of support. Temple says *Anthem* contributed to that success by publishing the family's story and photographs. The article has also provided artistic inspiration. Sangeeta Wylie, a B.C. playwright, is now actively developing a new play, based on the Truong's experiences, called *The Boat People*. "I believe with all my heart that this story should be shared, as it propagates what is good in this world: the human spirit and the ability to overcome negative forces," says Wylie.



Loving God, loving the Earth

Ambrose's Spiritual Emphasis Days speaker, Belden Lane, a Presbyterian minister and Professor Emeritus of Theological Studies at Saint Louis University, shared highlights of his forthcoming book, *The Great Conversation: Nature and the Care of the Soul*, on Oct. 2, 2018. In the face of climate change, species loss and vast environmental destruction, the ability to stand in the flow of the great conversation of all creatures and the Earth can feel utterly lost to the human race. But Lane suggests that it can and must be recovered, not only for the sake of endangered species and the well-being of at-risk communities, but for the survival of the world itself. His book is a multi-faceted treatise on a spiritually-centred environmentalism, with a belief in the power of the natural world to act as teacher at the core. In a series of personal anecdotes, Lane pairs his own experiences in the wild with the writings of saints and sages from a wide range of religious traditions. "We are surrounded by a world that talks, but we don't listen. We are part of a community engaged in a vast conversation, but we deny our role in it," he writes.



Remembering and resiliency on Orange Shirt Day

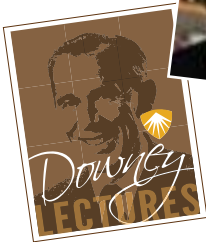
In 1973, six-year-old Phyllis Jack was excited to leave the Dog Creek reserve in B.C. to attend the Mission school. Her grandmother found the money to buy her a shiny new orange shirt for the occasion. But when Phyllis's clothing, including her new shirt, was stripped from her at the residential school, so was her sense of dignity and self worth. The orange shirt has become a poignant symbol of the harm the residential school system inflicted on children's self-esteem and well-being. September 30 is annual Orange Shirt Day, timed to coincide with students' typical return to school. It is an opportunity to affirm a shared belief that everyone matters, and to set the stage for anti-racism and anti-bullying initiatives for the coming school year. Students across the country, including those at Ambrose, wore orange shirts to remember survivors of residential schools and their resiliency.



Re-thinking sin and redemption

At this year's Downey Lectureship, which took place on Oct. 17–18, Dr. Sarah Coakley, Norris-Hulse Professor of Divinity at Cambridge University, presented two lectures on the theme of "Re-Thinking Sin and Redemption in a Disordered World: Desire and Its Transformations." The lectures were entitled: "Sin and Desire: Reconsidering the Mystery of the Fall" and "Desire and its Transformations: Contemplative Darkness Overcomes the Darkness of Sin." In them, Dr. Coakley focused on deepening understanding and confronting the darkness of sin, sexism and racism present in the contemporary "commodifications of desire." She drew on the forthcoming second volume of her systematic theology, which includes a fresh consideration of the meaning of Genesis 3.

The Downey Endowment at Ambrose University funds the annual lectureship and assists future M.Div. students. The endowment and the lecture series is named in honour of Murray W. Downey, a founding member of the faculty of Canadian Bible College.



Downey

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What shall we name the baby? How Ambrose became Ambrose

*by Sandy Ayer, with contributions
from George Durance, Diane Ayer
and Elly Wick*

A decade ago, our new post-secondary institution **needed a name that would proudly be its public face** for years to come

Imagine you're having a bad dream: you're a cheerleader at a must-win game for the AUC/NUC United against their arch-rivals Briercrest, and you have to get the fans to spell out "Alliance University College (slash) Nazarene University College" in its entirety by the end of half-time or United will lose. "Give me an A!", you shout, and the fans are with you at first. But by the time you come to the "Z," the crowd has lost interest, the teams are back on the floor and it's too late to cheer the squad on to victory.

Meanwhile, off the court and back in the real world, the Naming Committee has been leading the AUC/NUC community in a months-long attempt to find not only a "cheerable" name for their school, but one that will express Toronto Missionary Training School, Calgary Bible Institute, Canadian Bible Institute (Toronto), Great West Bible Institute, Alberta School of Evangelism, Northern Bible College, Canadian Nazarene College, Canadian Bible Institute (Regina), Western Canadian Bible Institute, Canadian Bible College, Canadian Bible College/Canadian Theological College, Canadian Bible College/Canadian Theological Seminary, (Canadian) Nazarene University College, Canadian International College/Canadian Theological Seminary, Alliance University College/Canadian Theological Seminary, and Alliance University College/(Canadian) Nazarene University College/Canadian Theological Seminary. To add to the challenge, the new name also must be one which:

- can be easily pronounced and accurately spelled
- has no negative associations

- can't be abbreviated in an objectionable way
- will leave us at the top of an alphabetical list, and
- is not particularly associated with one denomination, yet likely to be appreciated by those with denominational priorities.

It's now April 2006. The deadline for suggesting names has passed, and the Naming Committee, despite all its hard work, has only Dominion, Westridge, McDougall and Bryant to show for its efforts — none of which is a strong contender. The board meetings to decide on a name are just a few days away. AUC president George Durance, who's deliberately kept a low profile during the discussions, now feels compelled to make a contribution.

Durance takes a historian's approach: What have we overlooked? Maybe the name we need is the name of a person, one that will open conversations among all three main branches of Christendom as well as with our evangelical heritage. Whoever is chosen will need to pre-date the East-West split in the church in 1054. Then why not a name from the patristic period? Augustine, Jerome and others come to mind, but Ambrose (c. 340-397) stands out because his life testifies to the new school's core vision. Ambrose:

- was not aligned with a particular branch of Christendom
- was theologically orthodox
- evidenced a wholehearted commitment to Christ
- loved music and was a theologian, a pastor and a politician
- spoke to the church and to the marketplace, and

- cared for the poor and identified with them, and stood for truth as he understood it, regardless of personal risk and sacrifice.

Durance asks the Naming Committee to consider his suggestion. They think it's the best proposal yet, and give the community a few days to respond with their comments. Most of the responses are positive, and so they submit the name to the boards of AUC and NUC. Again, the response is favorable: both boards select "Ambrose University College" as the new name for new AUC/NUC school at their April meetings. (At about the same time, the athletics teams were named the "Lions.")

The University's name proves more appropriate by the day. Ambrose still speaks prophetically through his life and ties the university into a long tradition of excellence, support for the arts, learning across the disciplines, and reverence for theology as the fountainhead for understanding ourselves and the world.

"So, give us an A ... !!"



2018 marks the 10 year anniversary of our campus in southwest Calgary



...THE ARTS OF WORSHIP

The cultural language
of the arts has the
potential help deepen
conversations and
enrich worship

Think about worship for a moment and the art that is part of it. What comes to mind? Choirs and some sacred hymns? Pipe organ, piano or guitar music? Stained glass windows?

Over the years, some arts, and music in particular, have been defined as “Christian” and woven into the fabric of church worship. Other forms of art have been ignored or, worse, demonized. Val Lieske, Associate Director of Ambrose Arts, Ambrose University’s newly formed Fine Arts Department, and an Arts Chaplain for the Calgary arts community, believes it’s time to open the doors to a wider variety of arts, to welcome more artists — and to expand the “rules” that arguably constrain worship itself.

“There is a cultural language to worship, as we listen to God and speak to God,” she says. “We all learn, communicate and worship differently, yet we have tended to say ‘worship is this.’”

But I worship through story, through art, and I worship in many different places and at different times. I feel that my Christianity is called into question if I want to do something that is not part of the established rules.”

She acknowledges that art can be challenging and even uncomfortable for some, but believes a variety of art forms, such as the spoken word, video, theatre and dance, can be thought-provoking when done well. “When you see something wonderful, you know you are in the presence of God,” Lieske says. “It doesn’t have to be big, lavish, or have a large budget, but it should be good quality.”

What might that look like? It could be a creative reading of scripture, perhaps incorporating a variety of voices and people of different ages. It could be music performed by an established instrumental ensemble. It could be interpretive dance or a short film. It could be whatever people imagine it to be.

“The arts are a great gateway for connecting emotion to content, for getting people to respond emotionally,” Lieske says. She sees its impact every year as the founder and Artistic Director of Fire Exit Theatre. The company was formed 17 years ago to tell stories that mattered but were too “churchy” for the world and too “worldly” for the church.

“We are not ‘safe’ for the whole family; we are not children’s theatre,” she says. “Much like the Bible, we often tell stories that are not suitable for all ages. Our stories can be challenging and even dark. But how do we talk about the light if we never show the dark? Do we truly realize that Jesus died a horrible death to save a wretch like me? Our stories are not always happy, but they are hopeful.


“We want to challenge and change people, to challenge what they think. We make people laugh and cry, and get them angry. We do whatever we can to generate a conversation that hopefully goes to a deeper level.

“But we are definitely people of hope. We will never leave anyone feeling like there is no hope.”

Lieske says the company, and the experiences it creates, is worship, albeit outside the traditional definitions. “I’m sad that my art is not seen as a valid form of worship and, therefore, is not incorporated into church services more regularly,” she says, noting that countless others feel the same way.

And this is where she sees opportunities for churches to incorporate more of the arts and, by doing so, welcome more people who create art. “Churches can be part of creating culture, instead of condemning or boycotting what they don’t like,” she says.

“It’s often said that when you have the answers, you write a book, when you have questions, you write a play. Churches shouldn’t be uncomfortable with questions that don’t have answers. They should be creating the conversations — and the arts can be the language, the vocabulary, that enables people to do that.” □



**“WHEN YOU
SEE SOMETHING
WONDERFUL, YOU
KNOW YOU ARE IN
THE PRESENCE
OF GOD.”**

Photo by tyler hendy from Pexels



HOW DO
WE SHOW

WHAT WE
KNOW?

**EXPLORING
CURRICULUM AND
DEEPENING UNDERSTANDING OF INDIGENOUS
WAYS OF KNOWING — THROUGH THE
UNIVERSAL LANGUAGE OF ART**

*The work of Alex Janvier, including **Morning Star**, which is featured prominently in the Canadian Museum of History in Ottawa, was the inspiration for students and faculty on Arts Program Day in 2017.*



“ Taking part in Arts Program Day enables students to start to develop an authentic understanding of Indigenous history and cultural practice. This is imperative for every person in Canada, and certainly for every teacher.

Every fall, Ambrose University’s Education Department hosts Arts Program Day. This hands-on day enables students and faculty to work alongside professional artists to explore curriculum and community through a universal language: art.

“The arts are and always have been a way to explore the world, an emotional and social exploration that just can’t be done in any other way,” explains Dr. Sherry Martens, Associate Dean of Education, who has fostered the development and awareness of the connections between the arts and education throughout her professional career. “The creation of art isn’t the end product of what we do, but rather is part of the process of learning.”

In 2017, the work of acclaimed, award-winning Alberta Indigenous artist Alex Janvier, who began to paint while in residential school, inspired students and faculty to speak meaningfully about Indigenous history, culture and ways of knowing.

Visual artist Chester Lees and musicians Walter MacDonald White Bear and Samantha Whelan were the on-site artists. Together, they guided students through music, drumming and painting activities that reflected Janvier’s techniques and use of colour and the circular theme of his works. By the end of the day, each student had created a work based on their own thinking.

“We weren’t doing an art project,” Martens emphasizes. “One of the goals of Alberta Education is to prepare creative critical thinkers. For young students to learn these skills in their schools, their teachers must already have them. Incorporating art into our B.Ed. students’ learning allows us to explore curriculum in a different way.”

The intentional focus on Indigenous art reflects Ambrose’s commitment to respond to the Truth and Reconciliation Commission’s calls to action. “We are on Blackfoot territory, and Walter shares and speaks about the place from which he comes,” Martens says. “It helps our students learn that First Nations across Canada are uniquely different, that these diverse peoples have distinct voices, cultures, dialects and practices.

“Taking part in Arts Program Day enables students to start to develop an authentic understanding of Indigenous history and cultural practice,” she says. “They are also exposed to the beginnings of their own journeys toward reconciliation. This is imperative for every person in Canada, and certainly for every teacher.

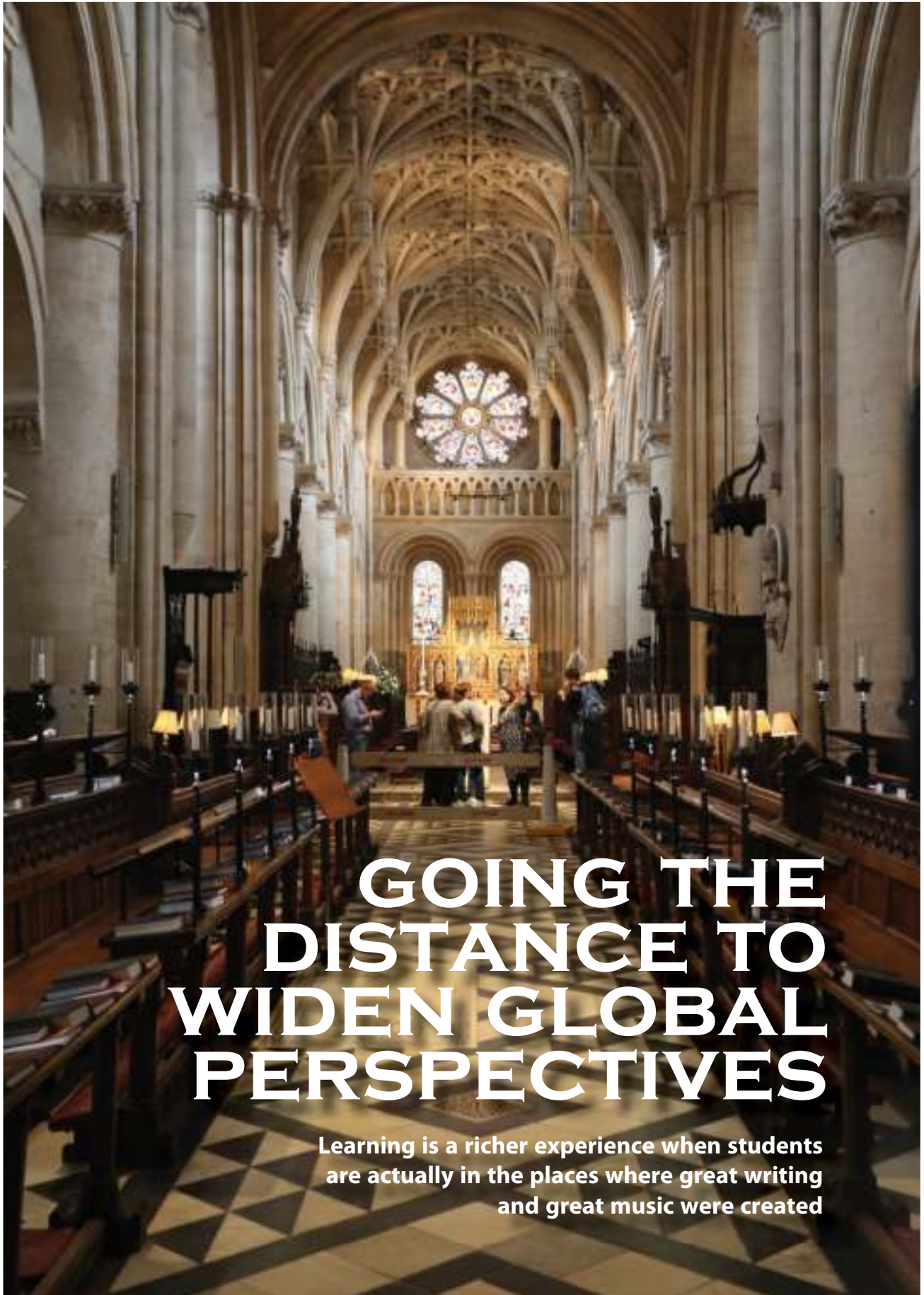
“When we open the curriculum through art, this social and emotional language, we have another way to think. We have another way of knowing. We see the world differently. We are moved to understand.” □



Dr. Sherry Martens has been keenly interested in the intersection of the arts and education for more than 20 years. Her teaching career spans K-12 and has focused on the fine and performing arts and the humanities. This past July, she and colleague Dr. Cassandra Dam, who teaches at Alberta College of Art and Design, shared their perspectives on “Showing our Knowing in Post-secondary Contexts” at the Arts in Society Conference in Vancouver.

Place-based, land-based education

Two grants from Alberta Education are enabling Ambrose Bachelor of Education students and faculty to meet the new provincial teaching standards by deepening their understanding of Indigenous learning and knowledge. The Ambrose Education Department is expanding its relationship with Elders and knowledge keepers to further explore place- and land-based learning. In the future, there is potential for students to go onto the land to work with the Elders where they live.



GOING THE DISTANCE TO WIDEN GLOBAL PERSPECTIVES

Learning is a richer experience when students are actually in the places where great writing and great music were created

It couldn't have been more symbolic if it had been planned.

Only a few days into a literary travel study to the U.K., a group of Ambrose University students was in London attending a performance at the replica of Shakespeare's Globe Theatre. To their surprise, a second Ambrose group, on a choral music study tour, was also there. Meeting at a place called the Globe was fitting for two groups that had travelled overseas to expand and enrich their world knowledge and perspectives.

Nine students took part in the Literary Landscapes course and 13 choral students took part in the Music Educational Travel Study tour, both of which involved trips to the U.K. from April 29–May 13, 2018. Campus Alberta Grants for International Learning supported student participation.

"You can't Google an experience. You need to go there," says Dr. Darren Dyck, Assistant Professor of English, along with colleague Dr. Jonathan Goossen, Associate Professor of English. "We're so young in North America that you need to go to a place where the architecture speaks of thousands of years of history in order to better connect to all forms of cultural expression."

Don Quantz, Professor of Music, who led the music group, concurs. "If we don't travel to other parts of the world, we can develop a centrism here, thinking that the world revolves around us."

"No matter what technology we use, and how innovative we are in the classroom, a classroom

here is still a classroom here. Actually being in a different space and living the experience, getting beyond the familiar, is a powerful and emotional way to learn."

For the English students, visiting places where authors like Milton, Shakespeare and Dickens wrote resulted in a deeper understanding of how time and place are integral to great literary works. "It is easy to forget the setting, or see it only as background," Dyck notes, "but it actually makes things happen. It is the context in which people think, speak and act."

Getting "up close and personal" with that environment — whether seeing people going about their day-to-day lives next to a Roman wall in Chester, visiting Jane Austen's house in the country, having behind-the-scenes access to St. Paul's Cathedral or sitting the café where Lewis and Tolkien drank tea and told stories — rewarded and challenged students.

"The world is complicated and beautiful, but also can be offensive," Dyck says. "The students encountered all of it because it was >

THE STUDENTS' THOUGHTS

LONDON IS LIKE A BOOK THAT HOLDS THOUSANDS OF STORIES INSIDE IT, AND THE MORE YOU LOOK, THE MORE YOU SEE.

ONE CANNOT ADEQUATELY EXPRESS THE FEELINGS THAT THE OLD RUINS [OF TINTERN ABBEY] GAVE ME, THE MAGIC, THE MYSTERY AND STRANGE, BARE, ANCIENT GRANDEUR!

THERE ARE NO WORDS TO EXPLAIN HOW THIS EXPERIENCE CHANGED ME.



(Page 12): The interior of Christ Church, Oxford, visited by the choral music students.

(Page 13 left to right): The main entrance to St. Paul's Cathedral, a masterpiece by renowned architect Sir Christopher Wren, in London; the dome of St. Paul's, one of the city's most beautiful landmarks; the choral music students with Don Quantz (far right) at Llay Community Church of the Nazarene in Wales, where they presented a concert.

impossible to shut themselves off from the things around them.”

Being in the moment, appreciating the place in which they were listening to and making music, and connecting to people was central to the music students’ experience. They attended choir performances in England and Wales, often in old churches. The sounds, lighting, smells and even the feel of these places delivered a multi-sensory experience of what music was like centuries ago.

In gaining a greater appreciation of the visual, acoustical and spatial challenges of singing in large reverberant spaces, students expanded their understanding of choral techniques and concepts, thereby developing their skills as musicians.

They also had the opportunity to perform a wide repertoire of choral music on a number of occasions, including a concert for an enthralled group of more than 300 students and teachers at an elementary

school in Wales. These performances deepened the understanding of what it means to be part of a touring ensemble in various acoustical and liturgical settings, complete with all the group dynamics, stress, fatigue, weather and other factors that influence performance.

“Travel study like this enables students to have moments of connection,” Quantz says. “Music touches people’s lives, and the trip ultimately wasn’t only about the music, it was about the relationships with other people.”

At the end of the day — whether time was spent in a cemetery listening to the profoundly moving reverberations of a Gregorian chant, walking on worn cobblestones or being a “groundling” at the Globe Theatre — the students who took part in last spring’s international travel study came away with lessons that can only be learned by going there.

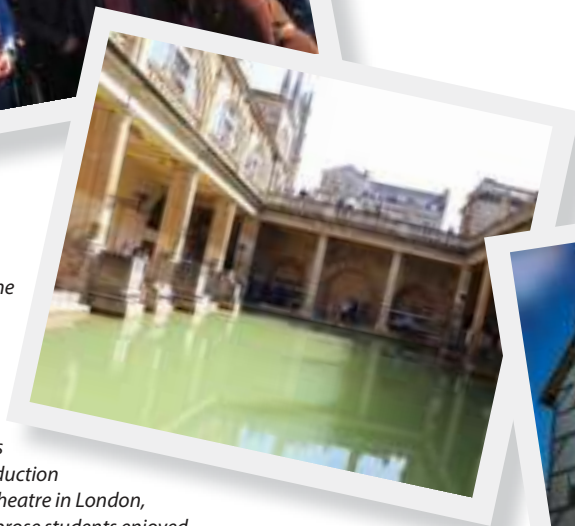
“These trips are timely and timeless at the same time,” Quantz notes. “They allow students to widen their view.”
Dyck agrees: “Travel study gives you a new world to know and gives you a new self to know.” □

Dr. Darren Dyck shares some additional thoughts on the Literary Landscapes travel study tour online

Visit the Ambrose website, ambrose.edu/england-past-stands, or the English program’s Facebook page facebook.com/englishatambrose for more.



The last song the choir sang on the 2018 tour was a poignant moment for Don Quantz. After leading some 20 such trips over the years, he has retired from Ambrose and is now Professor Emeritus. “I place great value on these tours and am a firm believer in international experiences,” he says of leading travels to Europe, Costa Rica and elsewhere. “I am so proud of the students. They were always so eager, so co-operative, so willing to care about people. It’s been absolutely beautiful.”



(Left to right): Some of the English students on the literary travel study tour, with London Bridge as their backdrop; one of many Roman baths in Bath, England, which the choral music students visited; the faithful reproduction of Shakespeare’s Globe Theatre in London, where two groups of Ambrose students enjoyed a performance as “groundlings”.

LONDON CALLING

An Ambrose alum heads across the pond to confirm she's found the right path in life

When you're asked if you want to fly to London, all expenses paid, to interview with eight different schools for potential full-time teaching jobs (all with your own class), "yes" is pretty much the only answer you can give.

And that's exactly how **Courtney Davies** (B.Ed. '17) found herself in one of the world's biggest cities, taking part in a multi-interview job fair, touring four schools — and receiving three job offers, one of which she accepted.



This fall, she began her second year of teaching "year 5" (similar to Grade 6) at Cowley St. Laurence Church of England Primary School, on the outskirts of London. With the first-year challenges of coming to grips with a different curriculum and a new school system now out of the way, she's looking forward to immersing herself in everything she loves about teaching.

"I've wanted to live in Europe since I was young, and I've wanted to be a teacher for my whole life," Davies says. Prayer and self-reflection led her to her life's work. "I took my time deciding what I wanted to do because I wanted to be sure about it. I feel like I was created to be a teacher and love every part of it."

"Kids are kids. They're so honest. They have no filters; they're just themselves. They get excited, they do dumb things, they're impulsive, they make mistakes, they're real."

To be able to guide and shape these young minds hinges on Davies's ability to build good, positive relationships with her students. "It's a fine balance. You don't want to be so focused on students liking you that you can't guide them, but students need to know that whatever you do, you still love and care for them."

Teaching all subjects to a diverse class — including British and foreign-born students, and many ethnicities and religious backgrounds — in a Christian public school requires all the knowledge and skills Davies honed at Ambrose. It's a challenge she relishes. "I fell in love with teaching elementary students at Ambrose," she says. "And now it's a perfect fit for me to be teaching upper-elementary students."

"I feel like everything I've done has helped lead me to this place and to teaching. It's perfectly suited to my personality, and I don't see myself making any changes in the near future." □

spotlight



**THE
END IS
NEAR**

Signs of the times?

It's hard to avoid the noise. Seemingly every headline, business report, politician's speech or elected officials decision adds to the collective sense that everything is going horribly wrong. Adding to the deepening gloom are dire warnings of impending doom. What do we make of it all? Is calamity and ruin in the offing? Or are all these signs simply going to be blips on human civilization's historical radar?



Dr. Ryan Wilkinson, Assistant Professor of History at Ambrose University, is well qualified to put the spotlight on these questions. He specializes in the complex story of the fall of the Roman Empire during late antiquity, and is keenly interested in understanding how and why societies sometimes fall apart, or at least appear to do so. He looks to the past to help us understand our complicated present.

In his classic science-fiction novel, *Foundation*, Isaac Asimov imagined a fictional discipline called psychohistory, a mix of statistics, sociology and history capable of predicting the future. In *Foundation*, this "science" indicates that a vast Galactic Empire will collapse soon into a 30,000-year Dark Age. In response, an outpost of scholars — a kind of futuristic monastery for nerds — forms to guide humanity through the coming anarchy.

That echo of ancient Christian monasticism, a movement that first became prominent in late Roman society, is no coincidence. Asimov envisioned *Foundation* after reading

Edward Gibbon's *Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire*. Something about Rome's past fall often makes people imagine similar trouble in the future. When people learn that my scholarly specialty is the history of Rome's imperial collapse, they frequently ask me about our society's future: "Do you see any parallels?" I've heard this question from the Left and from the Right, from Christians and from non-Christians. Despite their differences, people asking this question often share an assumption that we are in some way a lot like ancient Rome, and that we are headed for the same kind of "decline and fall." >

“ In our day, bitterly divided political opinions and angry voices on the Left and Right increasingly threaten the mundane, cooperative work needed to maintain a stable and free society in the long run. What if we’re experiencing not the end of our civilization, but a transition to a new and much less pleasant version of it? ”

But are we headed for the same outcome as ancient Rome?

My answers can be complicated. History does not predict the future, not just because historians look toward the past, but also because no serious scholar believes that history inevitably repeats itself. Historians avoid the kind of fixed models on which something like Asimov’s psychohistory would depend. On the other hand, history is full of recurring patterns. Because history doesn’t simply repeat itself, we can’t announce which pattern will prevail next; but we can speak in detail about what happened in past situations that were similar to our own. This allows historians to comment with some authority on the range of futures that seem likely, even if we can’t forecast accurately among them.

Back to that big question: Are we re-living something like Rome’s fall?

Well, it’s worth noting that processes like the “fall of Rome” are more common than many might think. From the banks of the ancient Indus River and the shores of the Late Bronze Age Aegean to the Southern Maya Lowlands in the 9th century AD, history is crowded with examples of what some might label “the end of a civilization,” or what specialists might describe as collapses in social-political complexity, along with major population loss. Either way, what we call civilization is fragile.

Catastrophe has been common throughout human experience.

It can occur with little warning. In AD 395, when Emperor Theodosius I died, the Roman world looked strong and prosperous (and was becoming a “Christian society”). Only 12 years later, invasion and civil wars had



thrown the Empire into turmoil. In 410, Rome was sacked. Less than a century after Theodosius’ death, the Western Empire was gone, replaced by a patchwork of barbarian kingdoms.

Trouble can appear very suddenly (remember, it only took six years for the Black Death to kill off half of 14th century Europe). Many scholars believe that highly complex societies — societies like ours — are particularly vulnerable to unexpected ripple effects from systemic crises. So breakdown could be just around the corner, and there might not be any warning signs.

On the other hand, sometimes trouble involves not sudden catastrophe, but slow decline. For example, 17th century Spain was the mightiest power in Europe, until its glory waned. But it took time; Spain suffered not cataclysm, but a long retreat from dominance and prosperity. In still other examples, renewal followed crisis. If collapse is normal, so is long-term recovery. So who knows what the future holds! History offers examples that range from the heroically resilient to the tragically catastrophic. Our own future remains unpredictable.

Why, then, do some observers so confidently compare our times to the fall of the Roman Empire? Take, for example, Rod Dreher’s controversial 2017 book, *The Benedict Option*, which calls Christians to “embrace exile from mainstream culture and construct a resilient counterculture.” In an interview last year, Dreher summarized his book’s message (emphasis added):

“I believe that we are on the edge of and in fact within the collapse of Western civilization. It’s a very comfortable collapse because we’re rich; but it is collapsing, nonetheless, *in the same way that the Roman civilization collapsed in the West in the 5th century*. I believe that Christians now have got to realize that we’re

living in a post-Christian civilization and take measures to build a kind of ark for ourselves with which to ride out the dark ages, to hold onto our faith, and tender the faith for such a time as light returns and civilization wants to hear the gospel again.”

This is not the place for a detailed discussion of Dreher’s ideas; however, he equates the fall of Rome with our own society’s undeniable turn away from public Christianity, thus suggesting that Roman collapse was a *cultural* problem.

In reality, a cultural comparison between late Rome and our society breaks down.

Whereas the emergence of today’s post-Christian society has involved cultural changes, Rome’s fall primarily involved political, military, economic and demographic factors (made worse by a changing climate and disease). To be sure, late Roman society did experience cultural change — but ironically, it became *more* Christian. The dominant standards of public, government-sanctioned morality were more explicitly Christian when the Empire fell than they had ever been before. In fact, the last educated pagans in the Roman world blamed the rise of the new faith, Christianity, for the political disasters they saw happening around them! Rather than a neat parallel for the modern West’s turn from public Christianity, late Roman society experienced exactly the opposite shift — and then fell.

Even if the comparison is inaccurate, Roman collapse somehow retains its appeal as an analogy for modern cultural critics. Why? Of the possible reasons, I find one particularly concerning.

There is something seductive about the idea of catastrophe.

Literary scholars who study post-apocalyptic fiction, for example, have noted that the genre sometimes portrays society’s disintegration as a necessary prelude to the victory of traditional values — as if widespread destruction would allow us finally to get things right in a simpler world.

That attitude is not limited to fiction. In recent years, some archaeologists have stressed the ways collapsing states make room for new, liberated societies. There is certainly some truth to that, but collapse often involves widespread, prolonged suffering — the kind of suffering that makes “starting over” a costly proposition. Glumly accepting that the “fall of civilization” is inevitable may tempt us to abandon our responsibilities to the age in which we actually live, even when fulfilling those duties might do much to keep society healthier and more stable.

I’m not sure that our times do evoke the fall of Empire.

I’ve felt for many years that North American cultural, political and social realities more closely match the earlier end of Rome’s republic — an era of polarized opinions, weaponized inequalities, a pervasive erosion of civic norms and political violence that led to centuries of authoritarianism. In our day, bitterly divided political opinions and angry voices on the Left and Right increasingly threaten the mundane, cooperative work needed to maintain a stable and free society in the long run. What if we’re experiencing not the end of our civilization, but a transition to a new and much less pleasant version of it? That scenario seems at least as plausible to me as the apocalyptic one, and it calls for a response of equal courage.

Although we can’t predict the future, our actions will help shape it — for better or for worse.

The stakes are high. We must not only fight for what we believe is best for society, we also need to work with people of all kinds to maintain what is *necessary* — a project that requires more than shouting slogans or condemning those who disagree. In my classes at Ambrose University, I teach students that standing up for their convictions is compatible with listening respectfully to those who see things differently, and that empathy for others will help my students make better decisions. Complex, troubled times need compassion, self-control and wisdom — values that any Christian should embrace.

To a world in which chaos is common, Christianity offers hope. Our actions have consequences, but God’s love remains present through the darkest of times. History, in God’s hands, is moving toward a decisive end to suffering. Yet that promise, coupled with the call to love our neighbours, offers no excuse for fatalist apathy. Neither does it command us to labour alone, or in vain.

States crumble. Empires fall. But in the end, Christianity promises, death and chaos will lie in ruins; life, peace, and justice will prevail. □

*Dr. Ryan Wilkinson’s comments in this issue of **Anthem** are adapted from a presentation made earlier this year as part of an Ambrose Research Conference plenary panel.*



PEERING INTO THE DIVIDE

UNDERSTANDING COMPLEX
INTERACTIONS AT THE
MOLECULAR LEVEL TO ADVANCE
SCIENCE AND, ULTIMATELY, HEALTH

“ We can do a lot of basic or clinical research, but we need new generations of thinkers who are able to understand, use and innovate the big data and cutting-edge techniques. It’s important to have both worlds. ”

Dr. Chris Wang’s research centres on small cells, but he focuses on the big picture: ensuring that coming generations can use this knowledge to make a positive difference in the world. Wang, Assistant Professor of Biology, joined Ambrose University in 2017. “I am here by God’s grace,” he says, marvelling that someone born with such bad vision that he needed eye surgery and a lens implant can now look intently at things that can’t be seen with the naked eye.

What he’s looking at is cell division, and what he’s trying to understand how stem cells maintain the proper balance between self-renewal (proliferation) and differentiation (creating many types of cells). Too much of the former leads to uncontrolled cell growth and tumours. Too much of the latter and there is no ability to repair damaged tissue and organs. “My research focuses on the ‘switch,’ and the molecular mechanism that governs it,” he explains, “looking at what causes stem cells to divide only into stem cells or into other specific kinds of cells. This is a very, very fine balance.” He uses the germ line of free-living nematodes, *Caenorhabditis elegans*, and human tissue culture cells as models.



Wang is part of a team of researchers that has published in several high-tier, high-impact publications. This contributed to the Canadian Institutes of Health Research awarding the group a \$700,000 grant over five years (CIHR grants are highly competitive and the success rate of applications in early 2018 was below eight percent).

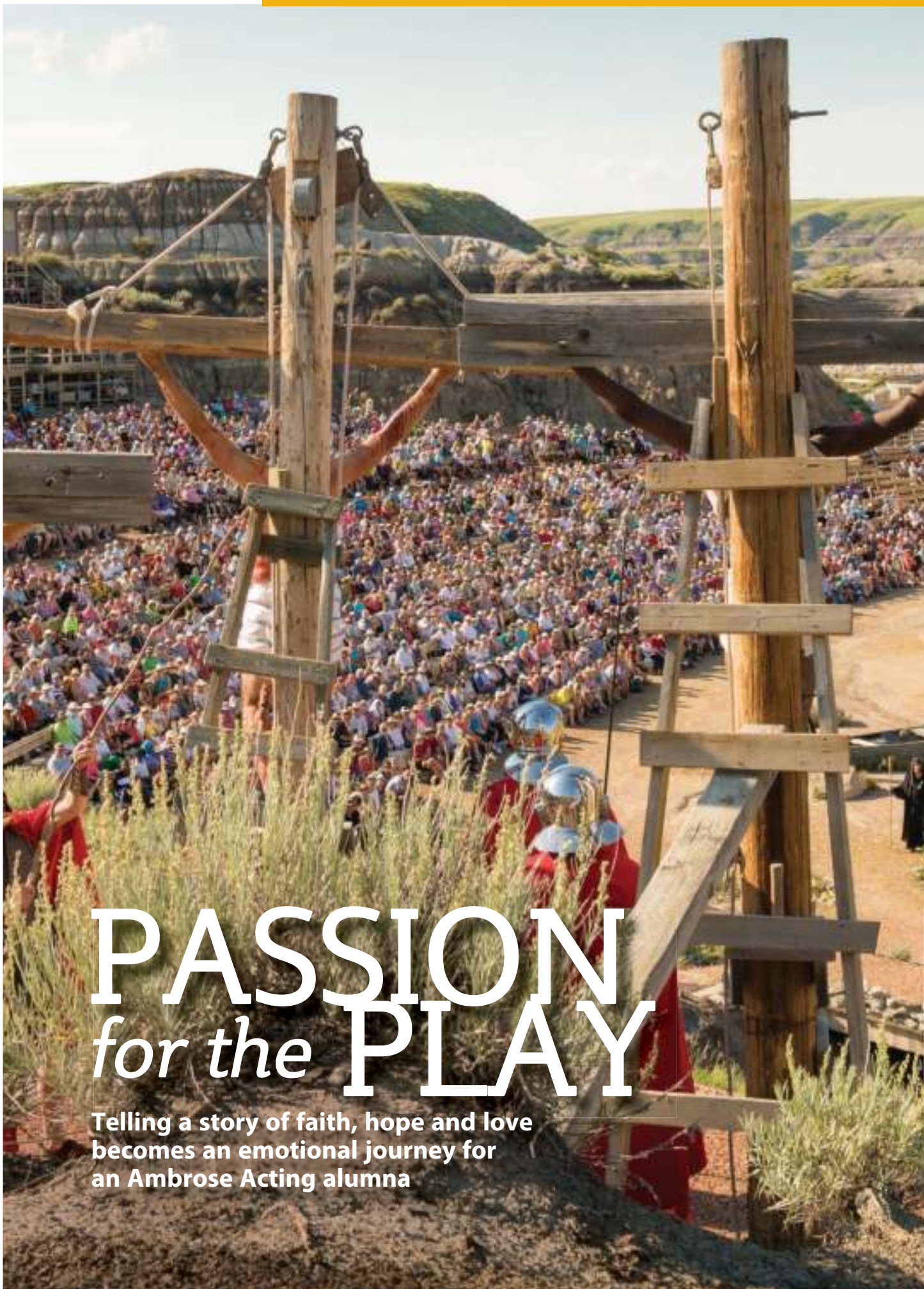
Wang acknowledges, however, that he’s now building on his research legacy by transitioning away from the research itself to concentrate more on mobilizing it through teaching. “We can do a lot of basic or clinical research, but we need new generations of thinkers who are able to understand, use and innovate the big data and cutting-edge techniques,” Wang says. “It’s important to have both worlds.”

“The medical science field is at a turning point, and is moving away from something that is passive to something that is active. A new field of ‘system medicine’ is emerging. Using new technology, molecular biology, even artificial intelligence and computing science, we are understanding more about the human genome and developing ways to personalize treatment — and to prevent or pre-treat disease or illness.”

He believes teaching is a critical means of opening minds to the potential and possibility that exists outside of medical schools. “The idea that only doctors can help people is fading,” he notes. “If you can understand how things work as a scientist, then you have the potential to help far more people than a single physician ever could.”

At Ambrose, Wang relishes the opportunity to connect with students in small classes and to engage in “personalized teaching,” which is similar to the evolving approach in precision medicine. “Cellular and molecular biology can be very intimidating for students,” he says. “It’s fulfilling to see students change as they value and understand the importance of molecular and cellular biology. It’s also fulfilling spiritually to see how God has created such small things, and to recognize that we spend our lives trying to understand just one small piece.

“We think we know so much, but knowing is an ongoing process, and we’re just at the very beginning of understanding how biological molecules interact and function. If I can inspire a student to become a scientist, to get them to see potential and possibility, if I can change one person’s life here, who knows what they will do in the future.” □



PASSION *for the* PLAY

Telling a story of faith, hope and love becomes an emotional journey for an Ambrose Acting alumna



There are some opportunities an actor just can't ignore.

Being part of a large ensemble cast, telling an epic story and performing every summer weekend on Canada's largest outdoor stage before an audience numbering more than 1,500, has to be one of them.

For Ambrose University's **Lindsay Carpenter** (Acting '18), participating in the 2018 Badlands Passion Play — a spectacular, award-winning portrayal of the life of Christ which has enthralled hundreds of thousands over the past 25 years — was one of the best experiences of her life.

"I was struggling a bit with my faith and everything that went along with that," she says of her decision to join the cast of hundreds. "The Passion Play seemed to be a perfect way for me to learn about God and the gospel, and to blend that with my passion for theatre."

Carpenter played several different characters, which proved to be physically challenging when she had to go backstage to run from one side of the large stage to the other to deliver her lines. No less challenging were the outdoor rehearsals, which were held regardless of rain, wind, sun, heat or smoke.

But all of that was surpassed by her own journey of faith, which started when one particular character resonated with her. "I was portraying a deaf girl who was healed by Jesus," she explains. "During my actor preparation, I decided to live the scene as Lindsay. I looked up at the man who played Jesus, and at that moment totally felt like the Holy Spirit could see inside me and was healing me. It was almost like a physical weight being lifted off my shoulders. It was very powerful, very emotional."

Because she had lived this scene so truthfully in rehearsal, she was able to draw on that experience each night to deliver an authentic performance. "I felt like I could just be present and remember the miracle that had happened to me — and people would see it," she says. Exposing her true self in this way contributed to the energy created between actors and audience, which enabled the story to come alive as everyone shared in the experience.

As the end of the 2018 season neared, Carpenter's own path was clear. "I knew there was no better time and no better place in which to be baptized," she says. "So many things at Ambrose and at the Passion Play led me to accept Christ. There was nowhere else I wanted to be baptized. "This whole experience was amazing on so many levels. I found exactly what I was looking for." □



(Left) Lindsay Carpenter is baptized in Drumheller, where the Badlands Passion Play is performed annually.

(Right) Barrett Hileman, Ambrose Chair of Arts and Director of Theatre, and writer of the 2018 Passion Play script, prays for Lindsay Carpenter.

Baptism photos courtesy Lindsay Carpenter

A 2,000-YEAR-OLD STORY TOLD WITH A MODERN VOICE

The Badlands Passion Play is rewritten every five years, each time taking inspiration from a different part of the Bible to ensure the performance remains fresh for audiences who return time and again. The 2018 script went where none had gone before: telling the story in musical theatre form.

Barrett Hileman, Chair of Arts and Director of Theatre at Ambrose, wrote the script and lyrics. Performers told the story through song, singing dialogue to one another.

Learn more about this innovative approach to the story — and why it is ideally suited to the large-scale outdoor venue in Drumheller — on the Ambrose news website, ambrose.edu/news.

A new sport **KICKS OFF** in the great outdoors



BRAD CRASSWELLER

Regina, Sask.
Canadian Bible College
Bachelor of Religious Education '92

Brad served as a youth pastor for seven years and church planter for six before launching a landscaping and gardening businesses. He is married to Sandy, who he met on a blind date (courtesy of his brother), and their four children are all involved in the family business.

"I learned that soccer is a team game and that life is better when you understand the concept of teamwork."



TIM MOORE

Calgary, Alta.
Canadian Bible College
Athletic Director and Coach, 1981-87

Tim led his teams to league, provincial and CCAA championships and was once named CCAA coach of the year. He is Associate Professor of Youth Ministry and Director of Field Education at Ambrose and enjoys being a soccer fan.

"The arena, pitch, ice and court is the largest platform an athlete will have to testify, in their conduct and character, that they are surrendered to the Lordship of Christ."



ROCHELLE EDWARDS

Calgary, Alta.
Ambrose University
Intercultural Studies (Beh. Science) '18

Rochelle is on an entrepreneurial track launching three different businesses: importing vanilla from Mexico, releasing an invented board game on Kickstarter and creating a travel blog.

"I learned valuable lessons about perseverance and determination while playing through injuries. Life is always going to throw curve balls. Taking time to heal and grow as a person and athlete allows you to be stronger in the long run."



MARK PETERS

North Vancouver, B.C.
Canadian Bible College
Bachelor of Arts (Hons.) '97

Mark is the Lead Pastor at North Shore Alliance, plays on a soccer team and has coached/run soccer camps for 10+ years. He uses life and leadership lessons — working toward a common goal, sacrifice, knowing one's role on the team, how to contribute — every day.

"In my final year, a group of guys, 'The Hooligans,' showed up at every game bare-chested, faces painted, hollering like half-crazed Europeans at a football match. Best fans ever!"



Photos courtesy Matt Boda, Brad Crassweller, Rochelle Edwards, Tim Moore, Kevin Nichol, Mark Peters, Mike Poettcker, Rhonda Wilson and Ambrose Athletics


On Friday, Sept. 28, 2018, the Ambrose Men's and Women's Soccer teams took the competition outside for their home-pitch season opener. Kicking off their inaugural year, the Lions now compete in Alberta Colleges Athletic Conference. To celebrate the occasion and Ambrose's 10th Anniversary, *Anthem* asked soccer alumni to share a few memories.



MIKE POETTCKER
 Cochrane, Alta.
 Canadian Bible College
 Bachelor of Theology '95

Mike is Pastor of Missional Discipleship at Cochrane Alliance Church. He played in an industrial league while living in Montreal, but since 2013 has only played the odd pick-up game. His very first college soccer game started awkwardly: He was yellow carded for running onto the field prematurely.

"Soccer taught me about failing and learning, pressing through adversity and how to work on a team"

MATT BODA
 Cochrane, Alta.
 Canadian Bible College
 Bachelor of Religious Education '84

Matt is the Pastor of Calgary's RockPointe Church. After years of coaching his kids and playing indoor soccer, has hung up his cleats. He recalls overnight trips to play against Kelsey Institute, staying at Westgate or Circle Drive Alliance, and playing late games of Four Square.

"I now work with a variety of Briercrest alums, and I love to tell them that I never lost in soccer to Briercrest"



RHONDA WILSON
 Manila, Philippines
 Canadian Bible College (Bachelor of Religious Education) '90; Canadian Theological Seminary Diploma in Missiology) '98; Ambrose Seminary (MA – Intercultural Ministries) '04

Rhonda is an International Peace Education Worker with the Christian and Missionary Alliance. She plays soccer for fun and cheers on the players at Faith Academy — in temperatures much warmer than those in Canada.

"Sometimes you need to use your head. The way to the goal is not always straight. Teamwork!! It's not only the keeper's fault if the team loses."



KEVIN NICHOL
 Hinton, Alta.
 Canadian Bible College
 Bachelor of Religious Education '85

Kevin is the Senior Pastor of Hinton Alliance, and no longer plays. He recalls fun road trips and one particularly memorable game in Winnipeg — as the team's goalkeeper, he made a crucial save on a penalty shot in a medal match.

"I made some lifelong friends in my soccer team years. Playing enabled me to coach my daughter's soccer teams both in Calgary and in New Zealand."




family&friends

Ambrose University is blessed to be part of a large, growing and vibrant community. Meet some of the many people within it — and share your own news with others by visiting ambrose.edu or emailing anthem@ambrose.edu.

Sandy Ayer, Director of Library Services, was a winner the 2018 The Word Awards for his poem, “Resurrection Breakfast,” in the Christian Poetry category. The poem was published in *Crux*. The Word Awards were established by The Word Guild to encourage the pursuit of excellence in the art, craft, practice and ministry of writing and help to raise the profile of Canadian writers who are Christian.



Derek (CBC 1993) and **Bonnie (Douglas) Burnett** (CBC 1990, CTS 1993) are members of the Northeastern Bible Seminary Thailand Team. The couple supports the organization’s efforts to help women and children



who are at risk. They also help people to earn a living, in part by encouraging sustainable local crafts.

Justin (CBC '93) and **Tammy (Sagert) Hettinga** (CBC '92) are privileged to be part of the Bible translation movement. Justin is the Americas Area Director for SIL International, a faith-based nonprofit serving communities worldwide as they build capacity for sustainable language development. He helps read translation projects in North, Central and South America, and in the Caribbean. Tammy served as Justin’s administrative assistant.



Stay in TOUCH!



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[youtube.com/ambroseuniversity](https://www.youtube.com/ambroseuniversity)



[@ambrose_uni](https://twitter.com/ambrose_uni)



[@ambrose_uni](https://www.instagram.com/ambrose_uni)

In Memoriam

Prayers and condolences are extended to friends and family who have passed away. Please submit your memorial announcements at ambrose.edu/anthem.

Neil Allenbrand

(NUC '76, CTS '80) went home to be with his Lord and Saviour on May 30, 2018, in Penticton, B.C. Neil pastored the Penticton Church of the Nazarene for 29 years and the Caroline Church of the Nazarene for more than eight years.



Karen Lynne Braun

went to the embrace of her Lord on Aug. 31, 2018, in Kelowna, B.C. The Karen Braun Legacy Fund has been created to continue the resources Karen developed for cultivating prayer.



Jordan Burpee

(CBC '01) entered heaven’s peace on July 10, 2018. Jordan was living his lifelong dream of being a pilot and was a Dash 8 Captain for Air Canada Jazz.





Bryanne Friesen (B.Mus. '16) married Kyle Young on Oct. 7, 2018. They are both currently finishing their Master of Arts in Applied Linguistics and Translation degrees at the Canada Institute of Linguistics in Langley, B.C. Lord willing, they hope to serve overseas in church planting and Bible translation with Pioneer Bible Translators.

Arnie and Elaine (Hunt) Seibel (both CNC 1966–68) celebrated their 50th wedding anniversary on Aug. 3, 2018. They say they are thankful for God's faithfulness and the love of their children, Leanne and Kevin, and their four grandchildren.

Tohru Inoue

(Ambrose Seminary '16) is a member of the worship team at a church in Nairobi, and is constantly reminded that the Lord provides just what people need — even if that is a couple of minutes of shuteye in a busy week, courtesy of his sermon.



ACAC debut

Ambrose Men's and Women's Outdoor Soccer teams made their home debut in ACAC (Alberta Colleges Athletic Conference) outdoor league play on September 18. Although a chilly evening, the Lions were supported by a large and vocal fan base which included alumni from the CBC and NBC who were honoured between the Men's and Women's games. (see page 24).



Alumni and friends

On September 30, Ambrose was pleased to host an Alumni and friends reception at the Mission Creek Alliance Church in Kelowna, BC. In attendance



were **Barrie and Linda Irvine** who graduated from the Canadian Theological Seminary in

2003 and 2007 respectively. The Irvine's were overjoyed to reconnect with their former classmates. After graduating, Barrie went on to pastor with the Christian and Missionary Alliance from which he has now retired. Barrie and Linda currently reside in Vernon, BC.

Are you interested in reconnecting with your former classmates?

Ambrose will be hosting a 10 year celebration on May 4, 2019.

Stay tuned for details.



Brenda (Epp) Jansen

(CBC '78) went to be with her Lord and Saviour on July 22, 2018. Brenda was the beloved daughter of alumni Ted and Louella Epp.



Glenn Outhouse

(CNC) passed away on Nov. 3, 2018, in New Westminster, B.C., at the age of 72, following a brief stay in hospital.



Don Posterski (CNC)

went to be with his Lord on June 13, 2018. Don lived out his ministry through an early pastorate in Edmonton, national leadership in Intersity Christian Fellowship, authoring books dealing with the role and status of the church in Canada, and directing the mission of World Vision in its global outreach.



Bernice (Bruneski)

Young (CBC '54) passed away on Dec. 31, 2017, at the age of 90. She and her husband, Henry, were missionaries to the Dani tribe in Netherlands New Guinea



(West Papua) for several years. An RN, Bernice was Director of Admitting at Vernon Jubilee Hospital, B.C., for 22 years.

A longtime faithful supporter of Ambrose, **Loreen Wilson** passed away on Nov. 13, 2018. The Ambrose community is very grateful for Loreen's continued support over many years. In 2015, Ambrose was pleased to name a residence after Loreen and her sister Doreen in recognition of their support and belief in the mission and vision of Ambrose University and its predecessor institutions, Canadian Bible College and Canadian Theological Seminary.



joinus!

Here are just some of the many events happening at Ambrose University in coming months.

Visit ambrose.edu/events for a complete listing and all the details.

All events take place at Ambrose University, unless otherwise noted.



coming events

Beautiful music

Gold, Frankincense, and Myrrh

December 7–8, 2018

The complete performance of Menotti's Amahl and the Night Visitors, with Haydn's Te Deum in C Major.

Tickets \$25 (adult);
\$20 (student, employee, senior)

A Celebration of Folk

March 3, 2019

Richmond Hill Baptist Church
Presented by the Ambrose University Singers

Tickets \$15 (adult);
\$10 (student, employee, senior)

Concerto Concert

March 8, 2019

First Church of the Nazarene
Featuring the Ambrose Orchestra and soloists

Tickets \$15 (adult);
\$10 (student, employee, senior)

> For details and tickets, visit ambrose.edu/arts

On stage

The Great Divorce

April 4–6, 2019

A Collective Creation, inspired by the C.S. Lewis book, written and performed by the 2018–19 Theatre students.

Movement Studio, Ambrose University

Tickets \$15 (adult);
\$10 (student, employee, senior)

Surge: An Ambrose Arts Fusion

April 12, 2019

Featuring dance, jazz, choir and musical theatre.

Gymnasium, Ambrose University

Tickets \$20 (adult);
\$15 (student, employee, senior)

> For details and tickets, visit ambrose.edu/arts

On court

ACAC Women's Volleyball Championships



February 20–23, 2019

Hosted by Ambrose University

> Details to be announced

Celebrate 10 years on campus



Family Event

Saturday, May 4, 2019

10 am - 2 pm

This family event will feature Ambrose alumni and award-winning musician Keith Kitchen.

> To register and for further information visit ambrose.edu/alumni

Winter 2019 semester important dates

New Student Orientation

January 2, 2019

Residence opens

January 2, 2019

First day of classes

January 3, 2019

Get to know Ambrose

Open House

February 13, 2019

4 - 7 pm

An opportunity for prospective students to see all that Ambrose has to offer.



Tending the light

by April Yamasaki

“Fan into flame the gift of God that is in you,” the apostle Paul urged Timothy. That was excellent advice for a young man growing into leadership in the early church, and excellent advice for all of us today. As we engage the church and the world around us, as we serve in our families and communities, whatever our work and vocation: Don’t try to be someone else. Don’t burn out on the expectations of others. Be the light that God created you to be.

For the most part, Paul’s letters to Timothy focus on Timothy’s work of preaching, teaching and leading the church. But along the way Paul also reminds Timothy of the heritage of faith received from his mother and grandmother. He advises him to choose other leaders to help him. He urges him to pray, read Scripture and draw strength from Jesus. Paul even tells Timothy to drink a little wine to help with his stomach problems and frequent bouts of illness.

Today we might call that self-care. Not self-indulgence or selfishness, but self-care as part of a healthy way of life, self-care that enables and empowers a life of service. Educator and life coach Eleanor Brown says, “Self-care isn’t selfish. You can’t serve from an empty vessel.” In *Let Your Life Speak: Listening for the Voice of Vocation*, Parker Palmer goes even further: “Self-care is never a selfish act — it is simply good stewardship of the only gift I have, the gift I was put on earth to offer others.”

In my own life, work and writing, I’ve been exploring self-care grounded in the words of Jesus to love God with all our heart, soul, mind and strength, and to love our neighbours as ourselves. While Jesus doesn’t elevate loving ourselves as a third great commandment, he certainly refers to it, and his words suggest a Christ-centred framework for self-care: to care for our heart (representing our total well-being), our soul (representing our spiritual well-being), our mind (representing our mental well-being) and our strength (representing our physical well-being).

I see elements of this in Jesus’ own practice. When he was tired, Jesus sat down to rest at the side of a well while his disciples went into town to get him some food. In the garden before his arrest, he asked his disciples to watch with him. Throughout his ministry, Jesus deliberately took time for solitude and prayer, and when his disciples were so busy they hardly had time to eat, he urged them to come away and rest.

For Jesus and his disciples, for Paul and Timothy, and for us today, self-care goes hand in hand with service and being engaged in the church and in the world. It’s a way of stewarding the gifts that God has given us so we can, in turn, offer them to others. It’s a way of tending the light that we’ve been given so it continues to burn bright. So be the light. Tend the light, by attending to heart, soul, mind and strength. □

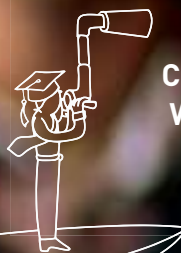
For Jesus and his disciples ... and for us today, self-care ... is a way of stewarding the gifts that God has given us so we can, in turn, offer them to others. It’s a way of tending the light that we’ve been given so it continues to burn bright. ”

April Yamasaki was a guest speaker at Shared Stories: Promising Practices in Canadian Congregations, a free-of-charge ecumenical national gathering presented by Ambrose University’s Flourishing Congregations Institute on Nov. 26, 2018. She is a pastor, writer and author of Sharing Faith Stories, Christ Is for Us, Sacred Pauses and other books on Christian living. Her latest book is Four Gifts: Seeking Self-care for Heart, Soul, Mind, and Strength, released by Herald Press in September 2018. Connect with her through aprilyamasaki.com and WhenYouWorkfortheChurch.com.



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