

# Faith Today



FAITH TODAY  
25<sup>TH</sup>  
ANNIVERSARY

To Connect, Equip and Inform Evangelical Christians in Canada

## From ABCs to PhDs

### A Day in the Life of Five Christian Students

- **Making a Difference –**  
Wisdom From School Presidents
- **Chaplains and Christian Groups –**  
Support for Christian Students on  
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- **Are Public Perceptions Accurate**  
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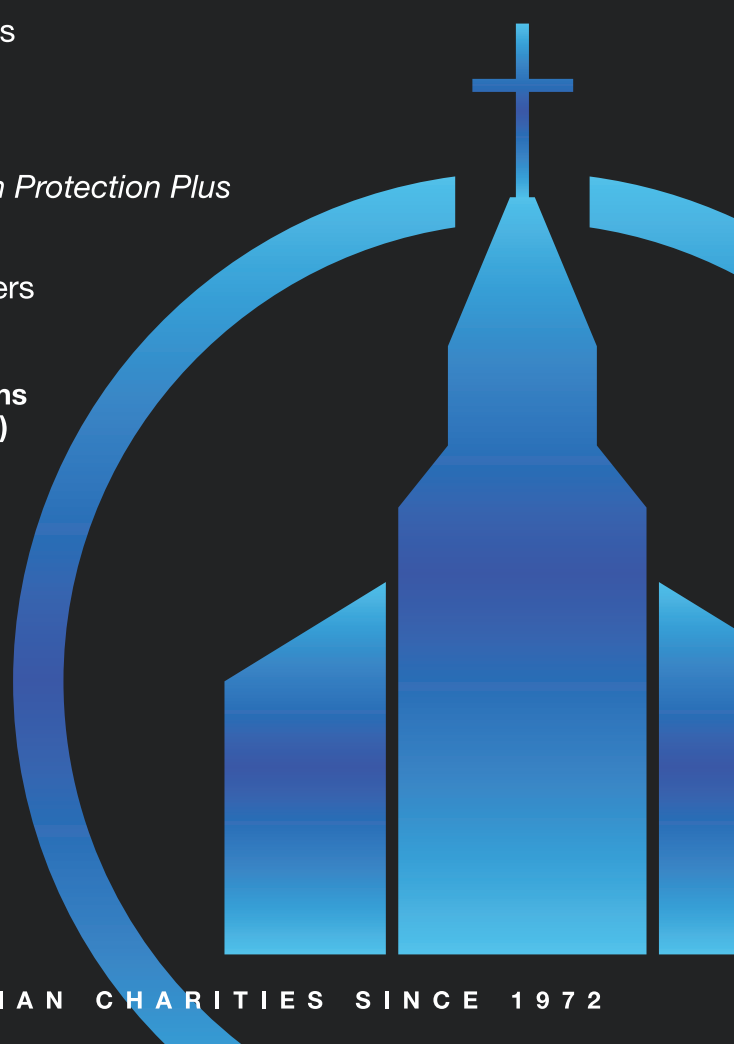
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**Distribution Manager:** Gina Waugh

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Karen Stiller

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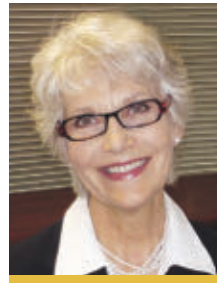
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## Campus Christians

By Gail Reid

### It's a new day for Christians wanting to attend college or university



In Canada we are privileged to have many excellent colleges and universities that provide teaching from a Christian perspective. There are also vigorous Christian ministries on secular campuses. All believe God's call is for excellence and seek to encourage and practise it.

In fact, in the annual *Globe and Mail* Report Card, students ranked four of our Christian universities with A to A+ scores in all areas under consideration.

So what is unique about Christian higher education? In the cover story "From ABCs to PhDs," you will read about a day in the lives of several students in various programs and from different locations. Many of the experiences are common to secular and Christian schools: the intellectual challenge, the need for self-discipline, the importance of relationships and the aspirations for the future. But you will also find the spiritual: lives rooted in prayer, relationships that uphold, courses built on Christian principles, opportunities for ministry and decisions based on divine calling. These young men and women are encouraged to listen for God's leading, to pray for God's empowerment and to serve God's call.

Among the dozens of Christian post-secondary schools, 35 of them – all affiliates of The Evangelical Fellowship of Canada – are working together in Christian Higher Education Canada (CHEC).

If you are considering college or university, you may find it helpful to read "Colleges and Universities Make a Difference" – a collection of anecdotes from the CHEC school presidents (even more are available at [www.faithtoday.ca](http://www.faithtoday.ca)). The

presidents highlight how their different institutions are making a unique and positive contribution. You will be struck by their joint commitment to encouraging a passion for God, a commitment to excellence and a common desire to serve their communities.

Choosing the right school can be difficult. The new CHEC website, [www.checusout.ca](http://www.checusout.ca), allows visitors to sort through more than 30 different schools by province and by program.

As Evangelicals we believe in God's personal call. Not every believer is called to attend a Christian college or university. Some are called to secular universities and find fellowship within Christian ministries on campus. Such ministries play an important role for both Christians and those seeking spiritual guidance in one of the most challenging times of their lives. They provide a place to question, belong and grow, as Stephanie Douglas explains in "Campus Ministries Offer Lots to Students."

There was a time when many of us thought church work was the best career for serving God. But today we see a new education landscape with evangelical students seeking to integrate their faith with many areas of study. EFC president Bruce J. Clemenger covers this shift in his column, "Discipling the Mind." As Clemenger says, "It is in this promotion and facilitation of an integrated faith that institutions of higher Christian learning are significant contributors." ■

*Gail Reid is managing editor of Faith Today and director of communications for The Evangelical Fellowship of Canada.*

## The Shack

Re: *Why is a Christian Novel...* (Nov/Dec 2008)

Along with 3.8 million others, I purchased and read *The Shack* (a couple of times). On first reading I was caught up in the intrigue and tragedy of the story – until the “Papa note.” Why this implausible injection into what began as a plausible story? Then the trip to the shack – what transpired was weird. If the car accident had happened first or if Mack had actually fallen asleep and dreamed a dream – then OK! But the mixture of the potentially possible with the mind-bending improbable was an initial turn-off.

On further reading I did discover more poignantly truths about healing, forgiveness, love, etc. But the impersonations of the Trinity and the depiction of what I gather was to represent the afterlife in heaven with the Lord was a significant departure from biblical accounts. Is there a subtle attempt to promote New Age philosophy or heretical theology? I don’t believe so.

On the whole, I believe the book’s implied positive biblical concepts will outweigh the potential confusion from Young’s far-out depiction of the Godhead. *The Shack* is a novel. Take it for what it’s worth. Just be sure your faith and comprehension of God and the hereafter are firmly grounded in God’s Word.

ROBERT TAUBER  
Saskatoon, Sask.

### Contact Faith Today

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**Correction:** N. J. Lindquist is no longer executive director of The Word Guild, as mistakenly noted in our Nov/Dec issue. She stepped down in January 2008.

I did not read the book and from the interview by Karen Stiller I would not want to. My Saviour is not to be made fun of or treated lightly. The writer does not answer questions in the interview in a way that indicates he is a born-again Christian and fellowshiping with other Christians. I do not appreciate *Faith Today* and The Evangelical Fellowship of Canada taking a book like *The Shack* so lightly and casually.

ANNE ENS  
Codette, Sask.

This weekend I finally gave in to recommendations of missionary colleagues and my wife and read *The Shack*. Actually I quite enjoyed it. Much of its understanding of God may be speculative but I did not find it unsound – and much of it rings true.

My qualm is how it casts God going to such virtually all-revealing lengths. Already I find myself wishing God would write me a note. Or, better yet, manifest Himself in some unexpected persona, preparing wonderful meals for us to share while He gently fills me in on all I’m not supposed to see fully yet. Or that Jesus would take me for a walk on water. Or that the Holy Spirit would colour my world. (Now I may be getting facetious.)

So I’d better stop and talk to Pops – I mean pray.

CHRIS STEVENSON  
Hamilton, Ont.

I’m very thankful for your work for the Lord and His kingdom. I’m disappointed in your promotion of *The Shack*.

JEAN RITCHIE  
Calgary, Alta.

I enjoyed Karen Stiller’s interview with Paul Young. I’ve heard lots about *The Shack* from people in our congregation, most of it good. The comments come with a “pregnant pause,” a kind of won-



dering what it means and what might come next. After reading your Nov/Dec issue, I see why. Young has introduced us to a God beyond our constructs – be they in the form of a cathedral or a shack.

DAYNA MAZZUCA  
Edmonton, Alta.

## Worship and Retail

Re: *Reinventing the Christian Bookstore* (Nov/Dec 2008)

Thank you for a series of superb articles concerning the trials and trepidations of Christian bookselling.

Although I applaud the ingenuity of the House of James in mixing Christian music at a retail centre and making it a place where youth are attracted and can be ministered to, what in essence is happening is that the House of James is becoming a church.

Christian bookselling stores have long played a major role in outreach and the strengthening of faith, but what the House of James appears to be doing blurs the lines between retail and community. Christian community based on consumerism reinforces the unconscious conviction of many youths that the faith, like anything else, is something to be consumed rather than being committed to.

A challenge not mentioned in the articles is that the youth of our Christian circles are becoming less bookish. Part of this has to do with the massive explosion of multimedia temptations that are more immediately gratifying and definitely time consuming.

As a professor in a theological college, I have had problems getting students who have paid for a course to read textbooks. I have a hard time convincing some of my students that having access to information is not the same as actually knowing it.

The Christian community needs to reconsider the mindset of “the cheapest is always better” and to be careful that we do not start mixing for-profit and wor-



ship. The bottom line is not always that which is spiritually best.

DAN HARDOCK  
Calgary, Alta.

We at the Canadian Bible Society were a little disappointed at being left out of recent articles about the fate of the Christian retail trade. The many fruits of our 200-year history include a wholesale distribution network and a national chain of 15 retail bookstores from coast to coast.

It's premature to sound the death knell of the trade. While we join in regretting the recent closure of a dozen evangelical bookstores and a respected distributor, they were a very small subset of a much larger market. As the premier Canadian distributor of Bibles in more than 100 different languages and several dozen English translations, the Canadian Bible Society supplies more than 430 other retail customers across Canada who are still open for business.

Hunger for the Word of God and for solid related resources in Roman Catholic, mainline and secular markets is at an all-time high. But the product selection on the shelves of most evangelical bookstores in Canada completely ignores these segments of the population. Focusing beyond committed evangelical Protestants makes good business sense and more importantly, is a missional response to an incredible ministry opportunity. Third- or fourth-generation Evangelicals can easily surf the Web to find their next Bible or commentary but, for the unchurched seeker, the presence of an effective local Christian retailer is of vital importance – such “customers” need some hand holding.

People never went to a bookstore to buy a book; they went to find advice. But many Christian stores have diversified in such a way as to minimize Bibles, commentaries and deeply knowledgeable staff. Secular and online competitors will continue to cherry pick the top of the bestsellers market but they will

**Appointed:** John Denbok of Collingwood, Ont., as international president of I.N. Network. He succeeds Mel Newth who is retiring after 20 years.



John Denbok

Denbok, a former businessman, has led the Canadian arm of I.N. Network for seven years and will now focus on global development of the ministry, which is active in evangelism, discipleship and community development in 38 countries. I.N. Network facilitates partnerships between national ministries in the developing world with Christians and churches in the developed world.

**Appointed:** Dan Baetz of Ottawa as director of FEBInternational, the cross-cultural agency of The Fellowship of Evangelical Baptist Churches in Canada (FEBC). Baetz has pastored Baptist and Alliance churches in Ottawa and Quebec. He also helps train Arab pastors through a ministry in Africa and Europe. FEB International and partners serve in 20 countries worldwide in addition to serving the 485 FEBC congregations.



Dan Baetz

**Appointed:** Jim Hnatiuk of Halifax as leader of the Christian Heritage Party

of Canada. Hnatiuk, deputy leader since 2004, succeeds Ron Gray, who led this national political party for 13 years. Hnatiuk served 25 years in the navy and now operates the largest hunting, fishing and taxidermy business in Nova Scotia.

**Renamed:** Cardus is the new name for the organization formerly known as the Work Research Foundation. Cardus is a public policy think-tank based in Hamilton, Ont., that focuses on integrating biblical principles in business, economics and culture.

**Resigned:** Tristan Emmanuel as president and director of Equipping Christians in the Public Square for personal reasons. Emmanuel founded the ECP Centre, based in Jordan Station, Ont., a few years ago as a Christian advocacy organization that “defends the freedom for Christian thought, speech and expression.”

**Awarded:** Toronto Argonauts' quarterback Kerry Joseph with the Gord Barwell Award, presented to a CFL player each year who exhibits exemplary Christian conduct and leadership on and off the field. CFL chaplains from the group Athletes in Action nominate players for the award.

**Appointed:** Glen Shepherd as president of Health Partners International of Canada. He succeeds John Kelsall, who retires after 15 years. This medical aid agency, based in Pointe-Claire, Que., and Mississauga, Ont., works with industrial donors and government to provide medical supplies around the world.

never have trained ministry-minded staff who can offer a listening ear and good advice to a reader seeking spiritual direction. Nor will mainstream stores go out of their way to promote solid Christian literature that is often too offensive for a secular market.

In partnership with the church and front-line ministries, Christian bookstores need to play a vital role in engaging increasingly secular Canadians with the Bible in the language of each individual's heart, in the right format (whether a black

hardcover pew Bible or a new digital audio stick). At CBS our business model now uses funds generated by profitable retail distribution of English and French Scripture products in major cities to fund our ministry distribution to prisoners, immigrants, Canadian military personnel, those who are blind, Canada's First Nations peoples and countless Canadians in need in hundreds of isolated communities.

JOEL COPPIETERS

Director, CBS Product Development  
Montreal, Que.

**W**hat brings teenagers in black clothes and makeup together with seniors who wouldn't know an emo from a goth? Guitars, of course.

Since 2006, Christian-based guitar clubs in Red Deer and Fort McMurray, Alta., called Guitar Church, have offered 10-week sessions and conferences where beginners to advanced players of all ages and musical interests can develop guitar skills.

Guitar Church students learn at their own pace with encouragement from other guitarists as well as lessons in music theory, chords, scales, modes, arpeggios, song writing, guitar gear, tones, effects and worship skills.

The idea came to founder Tom Cameron while coaching a group of young people for a worship team at his church. He saw the value of such a program for

PHOTO: TOM CAMERON

# Rocking It at Guitar Church



ministry and became passionate about equipping a new generation of worship musicians.

At the same time, the program functions as an outreach ministry, attracting and welcoming non-churchgoers.

At annual conferences, Guitar Church hosts well-known musicians who are Christians. At the 2009 conference, guitarists Glenn Kaiser and Caleb Quaye will share their testimonies as well as talents in concerts and workshops. At previous conferences, a number of participants have given their lives to Christ.

While Cameron had expected this program would appeal to youth, he has been surprised that interest is intergenerational, sometimes within the same family. He tells of a man and his teenage daughter who say Guitar Church

Students take a break at the Guitar Church Christmas recital.

finally gave them common ground.

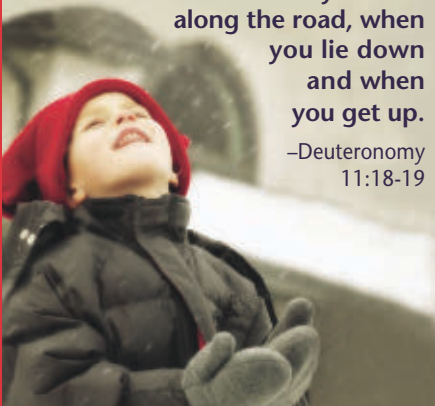
To date the program has attracted some 400 participants from age 10 to over 70.

Guitar Church was designed as a church-run ministry. Cameron's church, Living Stones Church in Red Deer has been supportive from the program's inception, while McMurray Gospel Assembly in Fort McMurray now also offers it.

Cameron, who has franchised the program, hopes other churches will launch groups as a form of outreach. Word is also spreading as Guitar Church clinicians teach at major worship conferences such as Breakforth Canada and the Canadian Gospel

**Fix these words of mine  
in your hearts and minds ...  
Teach them to your children,  
talking about them when you  
sit at home and when you walk  
along the road, when  
you lie down  
and when  
you get up.**

—Deuteronomy  
11:18-19



WWW.DESIGNPICS.COM

Music Association awards conference.

"It's amazing to watch youth play heavy metal in full regalia beside seniors who play country gospel. Everyone en-

joys one another's company, respecting their diversity. Guitar Church has offered a way to reach people through this common interest." ❏

—SUSAN FISH

## A Big Heart ♥ for Small Churches

Rev. Dr. Christine O'Reilly says the best thing she's done in her 21 years as a minister is to wash dishes at church dinners.

"No one is an island," says the co-author of *Where 20 or 30 Are Gathered* (Alban Institute, 2006). "This is particularly true in a small community."

Currently ministering at Knox Presbyterian in Thedford and Watford, Ont., O'Reilly is a graduate of the University of Toronto, Knox College in Toronto and Austin Presbyterian Theological Seminary in Texas. Her focus in ministry and study is rural and small church ministry as well as dealing with congregations and clergy in crisis.

Church, says O'Reilly, is not a spectator sport. She believes in "incarnational ministry" that for her means playing on local sports leagues, watching curling with congregational members and paying attention to photos on fireplace mantles.

"I may be playing softball but I'm still the minister – which simply means having integrity about who I am as a Christian person."

While she believes strongly in the value of small churches, O'Reilly is concerned about their future due to the effects of rural poverty.

With geographical and financial factors not providing for full-time ministers in rural locations, churches are being forced to close or amalgamate. Underqualified, overworked lay personnel are taking the place of educated ministers.

Respected widely for her expertise, O'Reilly was asked to report on rural poverty to Canada's Standing Senate

Committee on Agriculture and Forestry in 2007. She requested that the Senate's plan to address the problem acknowledge the extraordinary contribution made by both lay and ordained people.

"Hometown leaders need support, encouragement and assistance to be part of the answer to rural poverty," she stated. "They need to be included in decisions, programs and implementation strat-



Christine O'Reilly

egies since they have both intimate knowledge of local concerns and the trust of local residents." Rural churches are a crucial "part of the fabric of community life," offering "space for meetings, shelter in crisis," places to mark the transitions of life and "much-needed assistance to local communities."

Each of O'Reilly's ministerial charges helps to alleviate rural poverty by providing a church benevolent fund, assisting families with hydro bills and groceries, providing transportation to medical appointments in nearby urban centres and mentoring local students.

Ultimately, O'Reilly believes small churches matter because their heads aren't too big.

"They don't offer all the bells and whistles but, on Sunday mornings where you find little congregations, you'll find people gathered for worship who, in their small way, are saying to the world 'Worshipping God matters,'" she says.

"Without our rural churches, without the values they express and beliefs they live out, Canada would be an impoverished place." ❏

—EMILY WIERENGA

## Church Earns International Award

What began in 2003 as a seedling ministry to people in poverty has recently won international praise. An awards program ([www.courageousleadershipaward.com](http://www.courageousleadershipaward.com)) that honours churches engaged in the fight against AIDS gave special recognition to Yorkview Community Church of Newmarket, Ont., for its outstanding work in Nakyessa, Uganda.

Yorkview, the first Canadian church to receive such an award, had an application that stood out, says Lisa Hartman, one of the judges and executive director of the awards.

"It was a classic David and Goliath story. You look at a problem like AIDS and it takes your breath away it's so massive. Then a little church like this with only 95 people directs large resources to the problem." Judges were struck by the high level of participation. "In a lot of churches, it's a small percentage who get involved. [But at Yorkview] this ministry is part of the church DNA."

With fewer than 100 adults, Yorkview manages to support the education and care of 600 orphans in Nakyessa as well as medical care for people in two other communities. Since 2003, Yorkview has built and funded a medical clinic with a nurse practitioner, provided an ambulance, beds and other medical supplies (including \$70,000 worth of vaccines), organized the purchase of equipment and the training of locals to drill a donated well, purchased a \$35,000 income-generating brick-making machine, built a playground, a school, dormitories and a library, planted a four-acre garden that includes a 400-tree orchard, and funded a first-for-Uganda milk-goat project.

Of course, not all the funding or expertise came from within the congregation. One member, a medical doctor, convinced associates to donate baby scales and vaccines. Others have enlisted non-church friends to donate expertise. Now groups like the Newmarket Rotary Club and local schools are also getting involved.

Pastor Kevin Fleetwood says the work in Nakyessa began with one couple whose lives were turned upside down as they discovered that Jesus was interested in people in poverty and they should be too. The vision spread and now "there's a no-nonsense approach within the congregation. AIDS is a huge problem, and we will do something about it." Others who want to help can visit [www.yorkview.net](http://www.yorkview.net). ❏

—STEPHANIE DOUGLAS

# Laundry Unfolds Life Skills



Homeless centre provides work at linen facility. Inset (l-r): Dion Oxford and Monte Solberg, Minister of Citizenship and Immigration Canada.

**A** new program initiated by The Salvation Army Gateway Centre in Toronto is helping men clean up their lives – and their linens. “The concept arose out of a concern that we were not helping our guys find meaningful work for meaningful pay,” says Dion Oxford, director and founder of Gateway, a shelter and drop-in cen-

tre for adults in the downtown core of Toronto.

The Salvation Army operates five shelters in the Toronto area, including Gateway. Every year the shelters spend \$325,000 on laundry, a fact Oxford uncovered in 2001. He began to wonder why Gateway couldn’t open its own industrial laundry business, hiring men in

the shelter to run it.

“I believe all people need a home, a job and a friend,” says Oxford. “We at Gateway have been good at providing a home and a friend but not the job part. We see it as part of our Christian mission

## Singer Helps Widows in Sri Lanka

**W**hen Saskatchewan vocalist Jodi Faith was asked the question “What have you done for a widow or orphan lately?” she responded, “Show me a widow or orphan and I’ll help them.”

A month later, when performing her country gospel songs in Bridgewater, N.S., she was drawn to a display of hand-beaded jewelry. Attached to each piece was a tag stating, “When you buy this you help rebuild my life after the tsunami took my husband.”

Faith soon discovered Work For Widows ([www.workforwidows.com](http://www.workforwidows.com)), a humanitarian project founded by Pamela Porodo, that offers Sri Lankan widows a second chance at life. With no social standing and no means of support, some had turned to suicide as a way out. Through the foundation many are now receiving a living allowance plus the training and materials to create handmade jewelry to sell.

Faith realized that by partnering with them she could present their stories during her concerts and help sell the jewelry. She has now taken on the role as their international ambassador.

to help folks find work so they can find meaning.”

After seven years of raising awareness and financial support, Oxford's vision became reality when the new Gateway linen facility opened in February 2008.

“Seeing the facility in operation was like looking at the Promised Land for me – a dream come true,” says 38-year-old Oxford.

The program hires four participants at a time for six-month periods and includes training in laundry, life skills and financial literacy as well as one-on-one job coaching. Graduates are offered full-time unionized jobs at a local linen company, K-Bro Linen.

Since opening, the facility has assumed linen contracts for three Salvation Army shelters as well as a funeral home. Three participants have graduated.

Oxford is quick to admit they've had their share of challenges, particularly with staffing. “The men are in captivity to the streets and have found some comfort there in the familiarity of it all. When we offer them a way out, they become scared and turn back to their captivity where they have no hopes that can be dashed.”

Nevertheless, with time and patience, Gateway is proving it not only wants to provide shelter but also a way of bearing life's heavy loads – laundry included.

“All the headaches and heartaches were worth it – I'd do it all over again,” says Oxford. “If the gospel is good news, then a job for someone who is unemployed is good news indeed.”

—EMILY WIERENGA

## Filmmaker Releases DVD on Satire

Veteran film editor and sound designer Murray Stiller's new documentary *Nailin' It to the Church* answers the question, When does religious satire stop being funny and start being mean?

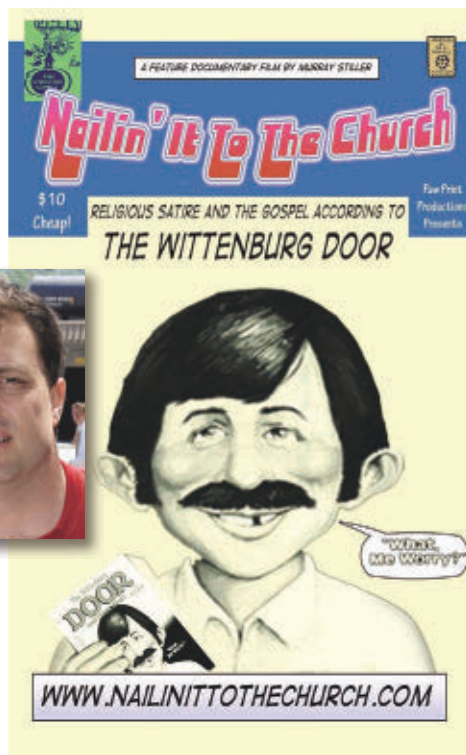
The documentary ([www.nailintothethechurch.com](http://www.nailintothethechurch.com)) began as Stiller's Regent College master's degree thesis until he was told the idea of a biting, religious satire was too cynical and mean.

“Why not do a documentary about why religious satire is cynical and mean,” Stiller asked himself – and the project was born.

Stiller's research led from the origins of the Greek and Roman satirists to gentle, self-reflective satirists like Garrison Keillor (*Prairie Home Companion*) and Stuart McLean (CBC's *Vinyl Café*) and harsh, biting satirists like Bill Maher (*Politically Incorrect* and *Real Time With Bill Maher*) and the late George Carlin.

It also eventually led to *The Wittenburg Door*, a magazine both loved and hated for its satire of the Christian community.

“The people at *The Wittenburg Door* were the first I thought of. As the kid of a youth minister [his father, Brian Stiller, is now president of Tyndale University College and Seminary] and grandson of a Pentecostal preacher, *The Wittenburg Door* was



Anything from televangelists to the prosperity gospel is fair game on Murray Stiller's new DVD.

regularly found in the stack of reading material under our coffee table. I read it right alongside my *MAD* magazine,” recalls Stiller.

The film, like *The Door* (which shut down in 2007), uses satire to critique televangelists, politically motivated Christians, megachurches and the prosperity gospel movement. It also looks at who can and can't satirize the Church, along with what should or shouldn't be a target of satire.

—ROBERT WHITE

“The most interesting part,” she says, “is that, because WFW is strictly a humanitarian aid foundation, Jodi Faith, gospel singer, performs among Muslim, Buddhist and Hindu communities. She goes places where she would never have been invited to sing. Relationships are being built outside the faith community.”

Faith's own testimony also builds bridges. Caught in a violent first marriage, she fled for her life with three young children. At her lowest ebb she chose to believe that as long as she had breath God wasn't finished with her. Now remarried, she travels the country with husband Bob Faith, a former school administrator,

sharing God's love through song and story. In the past four years they have logged more than 100,000 kilometres.

The Faiths believe the family of God will be held accountable for the spiritual climate of Canada and they are committed to joining with others to reach the nation for Christ. In 2009 they begin the Destiny Tour, where they hope to engage numerous Canadian communities in concerts, activate local artists, energize and equip believers and most importantly gather in a harvest of new believers. More details at [www.jodifaith.com](http://www.jodifaith.com).

—IRIS MUNCHINSKY

# Discipling the Mind

By Bruce J. Clemenger



Christian higher education helps us bear witness to the full implications of our faith in all areas of life

What a difference a generation makes. There has been tremendous growth in Christian higher education in Canada since the 1960s. Consider the number of institutions and facilities, the academic quality of the teaching and the range of programs.

There are now four affiliates of The Evangelical Fellowship of Canada (EFC) that belong to the Association of Universities and Colleges of Canada (AUCC), the most recent addition being Canadian Mennonite University. I expect a fifth, Tyndale University College, may well be next. The other three scored very well in a recent assessment by AUCC students of their universities. In the “very small” category, The King’s University College, Redeemer University College and Trinity Western University all ranked in the top five in most areas from teaching to facilities. Their only low marks were for campus pubs – not surprising since they don’t have pubs. It’s amazing what others consider to be an important factor in the provision of higher education.

Evangelicals have invested heavily in higher education and have contributed to the development of the evangelical mind. The desire is to equip students for ministry, whether for pastors, church leaders or laypeople seeking to integrate their faith with their area of study, be it art or economics or their profession. It is in this promotion and facilitation of an integrated faith that institutions of higher Christian learning are significant contributors.

Integral faith emanates from the affirmation and commitment that Jesus is Lord, that our faith involves a renewing of the mind and that all things are to be reconciled to Christ. Integral faith rejects the presumption that faith and religious devotion can be separated from other activities of life – for example, that belief in God’s transcendence and revelation should have no bearing on how we think about economics or politics. While our faith denies the possibility of a compartmentalized religion, our western culture continues to

reinforce a divide between personal and social, public and private, sacred and secular.

Our faith instructs us that, if Jesus is not Lord of an area of our life, then something or someone else is. Our western culture tells us there are areas of life that are “a-religious” or religiously neutral, that we can separate facts from values and faith from reason, and that when we step out of our churches and enter the public square we need to ensure our religious identity does not infringe on our ability to adopt a secular stance and behave as secularists want us to behave – like them.

We can anticipate continued questions about whether an integrated faith is socially acceptable. The EFC is participating in a Canada Revenue Agency consultation about the meaning of “advancement of religion.” This is the term under which all religious charities in Canada are granted charitable status. But what is included in advancing religion? While most agree that preaching and conducting worship services would qualify, what about caring for the vulnerable people around us: the foreigner, the widow, the orphan and the poor? In an evangelical understanding of the gospel and following the example of Jesus, caring for others is an act of service to God and an act of worship – it is how we demonstrate love for God and neighbour.

Restricting religious observance to what transpires Sunday morning in a church is a truncated understanding of religion and foreign to a biblical understanding of faith and discipleship. It is a secular understanding of religion that is not shared by the other major faith traditions.

Integral faith is one of the five characteristics of evangelicalism that the EFC has included in its mission statement. In an increasingly secularized society, where a narrow and shallow understanding of religion is being promulgated on various fronts, our challenge is to bear witness to the full implications of our faith. Christian higher education is a critical component of this shared task.

The increased capacity of our institutions of higher learning is a testimony both of the passion of educators and the commitment of so many who have shared the vision of renewed minds. It is demanding work that requires patience, but that too is part of discipleship. ■

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*Bruce J. Clemenger is the president of The Evangelical Fellowship of Canada. Read more columns at [www.evangelicalfellowship.ca/clemenger](http://www.evangelicalfellowship.ca/clemenger).*



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## Comments on Financial Crisis

The current worldwide financial turmoil is “evidence of what happens when too many are captivated by greed and put their faith in ... a system animated by the maximization of wealth. Many legitimately feel betrayed,” according to a statement by the general assembly of the World Evangelical Alliance (WEA), of which The Evangelical Fellowship of Canada (EFC) is a member.

Complete statements from the assembly can be read at [www.ga08.org](http://www.ga08.org). The WEA held the assembly, the first in seven years, in Thailand Oct. 25-30. Conference host was Geoff Tunnicliffe, the EFC’s director of global initiatives and the WEA’s international director.

Alongside evangelical leaders from more than 100 nations were Bruce J. Clemenger, EFC president; Bill Winger, EFC vice-president of operations, who serves as the WEA chief financial officer; and EFC staff Kathy Brooker, who serves as the WEA bookkeeper.

For more on these  
and other stories visit  
[www.evangelicalfellowship.ca](http://www.evangelicalfellowship.ca)

## Presidents Day 2008

More than 80 leaders of the denominations, ministry organizations and educational institutions affiliated with the EFC met Oct. 23. They interacted with the ministry themes and issues being addressed by the EFC, including incarnational church, missional church, next generation, poverty/homelessness and the environment.

Rick Hiemstra, project manager of the EFC Centre for Research on Canadian Evangelicalism, presented data related to the impact of immigration on evangelicalism in Canada. EFC vice-president Don Hutchinson (general legal counsel and director of the Centre for Faith and Public Life) provided background to the religious freedom cases currently in Canadian courts.

## Director Moves to EFC Affiliate

David A. Macfarlane has resigned as the EFC’s director of national initiatives in order to take on the newly created position of director of national initiatives for the Billy Graham Evangelistic Association of Canada, an EFC affiliate.

Macfarlane has been part of the EFC leadership team since 2003, when he joined to champion Celebration 2005, a nation-wide movement that encourages congregations to work together to impact their neighbourhoods with the love of Jesus. Celebration has been held each year since (next dates are May 31 to June 14, 2009). Macfarlane’s involvement with the EFC stretches from the 1980s when he was involved with EFC initiatives promoting evangelism and discipleship.

## New Marriage and Family Network

A new EFC-related network aims to help churches maximize their support of marriages and families. The Canadian Marriage and Family Network (CMFN) was initially formed in

2006 following a summit on the state of marriage and family education in Canada and on the Church’s role in it.

The network now has its own website, [www.cmfn.ca](http://www.cmfn.ca), and a leader, Greg McCombs of Calgary. One of its latest initiatives is working with Sony Pictures to provide a church-based release of the movie *Fireproof* in Canada. This is a pro-marriage, faith-based movie that is having a profound impact on individual marriages and local church marriage ministries in the United States. CMFN is also involved with the Faith@Home movement, which champions the role of churches in equipping the home to be the primary place where faith is nurtured.


Ultimately, the mission of CMFN is to “inspire and equip churches in Canada to transform marriages and families one congregation at a time.” CMFN, operating on the EFC’s administrative and communications platform, will assist partner congregations, with their community service and outreach initiatives and also churches at the national level.

## Discussing Law and Religion

EFC lawyers Don Hutchinson and Faye Sonier met with representatives of the Canada Revenue Agency in November. The CRA is developing guidelines for registered charities under the Advancement of Religion category of charitable activity. Read the EFC’s written presentation at [www.evangelicalfellowship.ca/issues](http://www.evangelicalfellowship.ca/issues).

Hutchinson and Sonier also attended the global convocation of Advocates International (AI) in Washington, D.C., in October. More than 1,000 Christian lawyers, judges, professors and law students from 106 countries organized to work together on matters of religious freedom, defending family life, promoting a culture of life in the face of unprecedented autonomous choice and more. AI recently entered into an agreement on these issues with the World Evangelical Alliance, of which the EFC is a member.

## What Happened to Christian Canada?

*Church & Faith Trends*, a publication of the EFC’s Centre for Research on Canadian Evangelicalism, asked a panel of four distinguished Canadian scholars to offer their responses to this question. Read their responses online at [www.churchandfaithtrends.ca](http://www.churchandfaithtrends.ca). 

### Coming Events

Details at [www.evangelicalfellowship.ca/EFCevents](http://www.evangelicalfellowship.ca/EFCevents) or call 905-479-5885

- **Street Level.** A national conference on homelessness and working with street-involved youth and adults. Ottawa, March 25-29
- **Cross the Street evangelism conference.** Tools for engaging your community and growing a church. Calgary, May 1-2

## Speakers Address Economy and Ecology

The current economic downturn could have the benefit of forcing us to consume less and reflect on our style of living, according to Preston Manning, head of the Manning Centre for Building Democracy.

At a recent forum in Calgary he asked the Christian audience whether we “only [cut back] when we’re forced by economic circumstance or is it something we should be building into our lifestyle?”

Manning was one of three speakers on “Energy, Environment and Faith” at the Nov. 17 event at Rocky Mountain College. Also on hand were speakers from the two Vancouver organizations that sponsored the event, economist and theologian Paul Williams of Regent College and ecologist Markku Kostamo of A Rocha, a Christian conservation organization.

In his presentation Manning said Christians could serve as peacemakers between those with competing visions on energy and the environment. “The mediator in the Christian view doesn’t remain aloof but is intimately identified with both sides: that is what incarnation is about.”

He also encouraged Christians to be involved in the media, the marketplace, politics and regulatory boards to effect change related to energy and the environment.

Williams, who heads the Regent College Marketplace Institute, argued that North Americans with high consumption habits are squandering God’s gift of non-renewable energy supplies.

“Despite all of the talk about energy conservation,” he said, “the only thing that has reduced the rate of oil con-

sumption has been very sharp increases in price.” Both consumers and producers need to stop relying on the State to act as their conscience before changing behaviour, he said. Christians in particular should set a collective example by “enjoying enough instead of pursuing constantly more things.”

Kostamo added that Christians should be driven by gratitude rather than guilt in their approach to the environment. “To live lightly and to steward creation well is just a normal part of our Christian discipleship. It’s not just some sort of fringe activity or fad,” he said.

He also expressed hope that Christians today would be in the forefront of protecting the environment, just as they took the lead in overturning the slave trade 200 years ago.

—TED WILCOX

### Canadian Youth Workers Encouraged

When a youth worker attends a four-day conference with nearly 1,000 other Canadian youth workers, it really drives home a sense that “you’re not doing this alone,” according to Morgan Roth and other participants at the second annual Canadian Youth Worker Conference, held in December in downtown Toronto.

That sense of support and community is a major reason why “a conference like this is important,” says Roth, a youth worker.

Attendees could choose from 75 seminars. Conference organizers in-

cluded CanadaFire, a Canadian ministry headed by Darian Kovacs that recently merged into the Billy Graham Evangelistic Association of Canada, and Youth Specialties, an American ministry that recently announced it has set up a new Canadian office headed by Marv Penner.

The event’s unusual theme, woven throughout with convincing ease, was that the job of a youth worker like the call of Christians-at-large, is nothing less than “seriously ridiculous.”

*The Shack’s* William P. Young, New Direction’s Brian Pengelly and Bridgeway Foundation’s Mark Petersen were among the speakers. Twenty-seven denominations and organizations, from

The Anglican Church of Canada to The Pentecostal Assemblies of Canada, participated. Many used the conference as the base for their national training.

“It’s important to have a national, multid denominational conference like this because you get a perspective you wouldn’t in your own community,” said Mark van Vliet, campus director at Every Nation Church in Vancouver. “Here you’re hanging out with peers from the East Coast and Central Canada, seeing in the flesh how God is moving all across the country.”

Talk of spiritual disciplines and radical living steeped the halls and seminars. The December setting opened the door to talk about the impending gift-giving

### New Anglican Province Proposed

Leaders of the Common Cause Partnership, a coalition of conservative Anglicans in Canada and the United States, released a draft constitution in December for a new Anglican province that they propose would be defined by theology rather than a geographic location.

The partnership represents 100,000 Anglicans who have

left The Anglican Church of Canada and the Episcopal Church in the United States. Their disaffiliation is in reaction against increasingly liberal decisions in their churches, including the ordination of an openly gay bishop and decisions towards the blessing of same-sex unions.

The provisional leader of the proposed new Anglican Church in North America is Bishop Robert Duncan, who led the diocese of Pittsburgh out of The Episcopal Church. The idea for the





PHOTO: DEREK JONESON

A four-day conference for youth workers drew close to 1,000 participants in Toronto.

season. The Advent Conspiracy, an international movement to restore the “scandal of Christmas by substituting compassion for consumption,” was suggested as a way to subvert a consumer Christmas.

“It is a rather strange idea that we celebrate the baby refugee [Jesus] by buying stuff,” said opening night speaker Shane Claiborne, author of *Irresistible Revolution* and founder of The Simple Way. “Young people are the ones who get this. They see the world we inherited from our parents,

which is fragile, and they don’t want it. They want to be dared to live differently.”

The event returns to Vancouver in 2009. —CHRISTINA CROOK

### Responding to Congo Crisis

Canadian agencies and churches are sending aid to deal with the humanitarian crisis in the Democratic Republic of Congo and are urging western governments to intervene in the situation.

A resurgence of violence that began

in August has displaced some 250,000 people in addition to the 1.2 million already uprooted since 1996. The long-term death toll may now be more than five million, plus some 40,000 rapes and thousands of children abducted to serve as soldiers.

Among Canadian groups working in the area are World Vision, Development and Peace, Mennonite Central Committee, Canadian Foodgrains Bank and The Pentecostal Assemblies of Canada.

Among those calling on the Canadian government to become more involved in the area are World Vision, Development and Peace, Kairos and The United Church of Canada.

Some fear the conflict could escalate as it did between 1996 and 2003, bringing in neighbouring countries such as Rwanda, Burundi, Uganda, Tanzania, Zambia and Angola.

—BILL FLEDDERUS / CANADIANCHRISTIANITY.COM

### Starfield Leads at Music Awards

The band Starfield won six of the 55 Covenant Awards handed out by Gospel Music Association Canada in October. Starfield’s third album, *I Will Go*, was reviewed in the Sep/Oct 2008 issue of *Faith Today*. The group is now based in Abbotsford, B.C.

The University of Toronto Gospel Choir won three awards, and artists winning two awards included Cheryl Bear, Amanda Falk, 4Given, Fresh I.E., God Rocks! Bible Toons, Manic Drive, Ali Matthews, Paulis Sanchez, Secret & Whisper and Zoë Theodorou.

More details at [www.gmacanada.ca](http://www.gmacanada.ca). —BILL FLEDDERUS

new province has the support of conservative archbishops from around the world, who will be meeting with their peers in Egypt in February.

The general secretary of the Common Cause Partnership is a Canadian, Canon Charlie Masters. Masters is also executive director of the Anglican Network in Canada, a group of churches that have left The Anglican Church of Canada and put themselves temporarily under the oversight of South American

Archbishop Gregory Venables.

The proposed constitution may pass a ratification vote as soon as the spring. Of the 11 groups involved in Common Cause, four have a presence in Canada: the Anglican Network in Canada, the Anglican Coalition in Canada, the Convocation of Anglicans in North America and the Reformed Episcopal Church.

—BILL FLEDDERUS / ANiC / *Anglican Journal*

# From ABCs to PhDs

Five College and University Students Reflect on a Typical Day Studying Business, Chemistry, Education and More



## A Day in the Life of a Business Student

*Christine Noorloos is a third-year business student at Redeemer University College in Ancaster, Ont. She shares a day in the life of being a business student at Redeemer.*

7:30 – Buzz. The alarm clock. Again! I take my time waking up and slowly roll out of bed. After the traditional bagel with peanut butter I review some of my notes and am off to class.

9:30 – The last class before the test. I'd better pay attention! That's the thing about accounting – even though it's an early morning class I have to be awake to understand what's going on. Today we are analyzing a case on when revenue re-

The Bible applies to all aspects of our lives. Christine Noorloos studies with her dorm mates. (l-r): Amy Skillicorn, Denise Kleefman, Heather Westra and Christine Noorloos (also far right).

cognition should occur in a business. We discuss when revenue should be recognized and where honesty and integrity come into the picture. I find it amazing to see how Christians can be a shining light in the workplace through the decisions we make. There are so many ways of creating loopholes in accounting, yet a Christian is called to be honest and act with integrity in all we do, even if we suffer under pressures from colleagues in following these principles.

10:45 – Back at my dorm. I read the *Time-Out* (daily



newsletter) and realize Coffee House is in one week. That might be fun to go to. I discuss plans for the weekend with Amy, one of my dorm mates. This reminds me to call my mom and tell her about my plans to come home this weekend.

11:00 – Do the routine email and Facebook check. Nothing too exciting there so I better get on to doing some homework. I have yet to prepare for the group meeting tonight!

12:30 – Back in class. This time it is operations management. I open my bag and realize I've brought the wrong textbook. Thankfully I am sitting by a friend who is willing to share. The professor is talking about going on a field trip in a few weeks. That should be fun! Though I am not a marketing student, I do enjoy the break of having a “non-accounting” class where it is mostly class discussion and lecture versus the large amount of question preparation for my accounting classes. We discussed just-in-time manufacturing, which

includes the concept of *kaizen* (a Japanese word for “continuous improvement”). The professor reminded us this is also a biblical principle. Philippians 3:12 and 2 Corinthians 13:11 call us to strive for perfection. I was once again reminded of the applicability of the Bible to all aspects of our lives. It even applies to manufacturing systems!

2:00 – After grabbing a chicken-caesar wrap from the cafeteria and checking my mail, I head to my dorm to say goodbye to Amy who is leaving early for the holiday weekend.

2:15 – Homework beckons once again. I am still preparing for that group project tonight. This is what happens when I procrastinate. The information I am getting is fairly

interesting though. It is amazing how many disclosure rules there are for an annual report.

3:30 – Accounting. This class is definitely a challenge for me. Today we are introduced to the calculation of diluted earnings per share, something I had never actually heard of before. That is the wonder of accounting for me, being introduced to so many new concepts and ideas while trying to understand the logic behind them. Sometimes, as I am discovering today, understanding this logic can be difficult. Fortunately, I have finished all the homework for this class as the professor has decided to collect a question for marking.

5:00 – Back at my dorm, I decide to finally start doing something I had also been putting off to the last minute: vacuuming the dorm.

6:30 – Once again it is time to do some homework. This time it's taxation. Taxation – just the word makes my brain hurt! First I have to try to understand what the Income Tax Act is saying and then I have to try to apply the multiple rules to try to solve the problems. I can't put it off any longer if I want any time free this weekend.

8:00 – I quickly walk to my business group meeting in the library. I left a little late but I am happy to see that not all of the other group members have arrived. Once everyone gets there, we head to a study room and start discussing how we should tackle the project. We choose to start to prepare a list of our criteria as we generate and discuss our ideas. Thankfully I finished preparing my notes for the meeting so I can contribute to the discussion.

The deadline for our annual report criteria is next week so we set out to get as much done as possible. After 2.5 hours of hard work we're almost finished.

11:00 – Back in the dorm. I recap with my roommate what happened in her day and make plans to get ready for bed. Tomorrow is a busy day and I definitely need to be more awake tomorrow morning than I was today!



## A Day in the Life of a Worship Arts Student

*Jamison Dick is in his fourth year of study in the worship arts program at Columbia Bible College in Abbotsford, B.C. He shares some of what he has learned.*

I walk across the wet parking lot of the Columbia campus, listening to the rain slither down the gym walls and onto

the sidewalk beside my path. Today's events have weathered me – to look back on a day and see how God has changed you from the first moment of waking to the first moment of sleep can be terrifying and wonderful all at the same time.

I woke up this morning to the sound of a bad country song playing. My roommates were awake and the kitchen was alive with the buzz of coffee and the work ahead. I left the apartment in a rush to make it to class. As I walked, I prayed: “What do You want me to hear today? What do You want to teach me today?”

Though I was still in a foggy haze of morning, the “aha!” moments that come along with philosophy of worship class woke me up for good. One of the big insights came when looking at the dualism that exists in the Church these days: the split between the sacred and the secular specifically. To realize that God exists in all things, even though some people want to compartmentalize God into their own parameters, was pretty impacting to me.

After class I made my way to the cafeteria for some coffee and then to “the big windows” (an area of campus that I have designated as the most beautiful and necessary part of life here) where I sat on a couch and overlooked the changing of the seasons outside. Jordan ran into me and we talked about the importance of “letting go.”

I shared how, when I was in Europe for the global semester last year, I went with the intention of being open to whatever God had to teach me. I hoped God would take control and steer me into some beautiful new directions. This is difficult for me and I continue to be a poster child for relativism. At that moment I realize how selfish and broken I am and, once again, I am brought to an immense thankfulness for God's grace.

I need those moments. They keep me focused.

My intentions in studying worship arts aren't necessarily for the obvious reasons. I'm still not sure if the vocation of a worship leader is where I'm being called. This gives me a different state of mind in my classes: I'm not necessarily looking at how what I'm learning can be applied in a traditional church setting (though I do realize the importance of that) but how what I'm learning can be applied in my day-to-day life. Or in other words, how I am worshipping God in my everyday actions.



Worship isn't an event, it's a relationship: Jamison Dick.

The afternoon escaped the day's frame in an instant and, before I knew it, I found myself at dusk, back at the big windows, writing. I thought back to the morning when I dialogued about the idea of letting go. I wrote in my notebook: “God, what do I need to let go of?” Nine o'clock rolled around and I made my way to the chapel for the school's Tuesday night worship service.

As they waited for the doors to open, the crowd outside buzzed in anticipation. I wonder if they realize God is also out here in the foyer?

I made small talk with Ryan, discussing whether or not this would be a good weekend to head into Vancouver. The doors to the chapel opened. The crowd flooded into the low-lit sanctuary, searching for places to sit. I meandered

through the centre aisle, saying my hellos as I saw those I know. Carla stopped me and asked if there are still people coming over to my place tonight. Erica asked me if I had the new Copeland record yet. Zach hugged me and told me we should get some coffee this week.

This community loves even the most broken and confused. And as I do this minimal socializing, I realize this worship gathering is more than just singing songs. Worship isn't an event; it's a relationship.

## A Day in the Life of an Education Student

*Andre Manseau is a second-year student in the education department of Atlantic Baptist University in Moncton, N.B.*

There really is no such thing as a typical day for any Atlantic Baptist University (ABU) education student. Each day presents us with opportunities to learn and new challenges to meet.

Prior to being accepted to the program, I had done a year's worth of supply teaching at my own high school. I learned a tremendous amount and, by the time I left, I was convinced I could easily teach a class. I had also at-

tended two different universities for my English degree. By the time my four years were up, I was thrilled. No longer would I be forced to cram my six-foot five-inch frame into uncomfortable seats and fight sleep while an eccentric professor pontificated. This is what I had also expected from the education program at ABU. I was so wrong.

A part of me definitely expected this program to be a means to an end rather than true training. What I didn't realize was that I didn't know much about teaching at all.

The program at ABU is difficult and there is a lot of work to be done. But for the first time in my academic career, I feel as though my work has a purpose. The work we are doing is always relevant and engaging. Gone are the days when teachers simply talked and students were forced to listen.

We have a faculty of teachers who care and make sure we are on the frontier of educational practices. Each teacher brings a different quality: Stewart West and his "never give up" positive attitude, Vince Ryan and his firm, fair and authoritative style, and Bryan Taylor's distinct tell-it-like-it-is nature.

ABU's education program is one that thinks outside the box. It is a carefully designed series of tests and challenges



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Andre Manseau: Gone are the days when teachers simply talked and students were forced to listen.

that force you to overcome one of the biggest hurdles a teacher may have: teaching the way they've been taught. I believe this is going to be a struggle for me for years to come, but I am completely aware of the habits that are ingrained in me. I have regularly caught myself thinking about some of my worst mistakes as a supply teacher.

One of the best ways a person can learn is by teaching others. Well over half of the learning done in our program is from our peers. We often split into groups with a topic that we have researched and teach it to one another in some form. This can be done through skits, plays, art activities and exercise – the possibilities are endless. Group projects allow students to work with different types of learners, manage their time and work as a team. And we learn to chunk material up while still maintaining a big picture. It's not uncommon at ABU to organize a group meeting to organize your group meetings.

The program teaches you to manage time and priorities well enough so that, by the end of the year, you can have

a well-oiled machine and do it in much less time. And when it becomes too overwhelming, you can still relax by taking part in any of ABU's enlightening chapels. I know my racing mind and pulse were often put at ease by some amazing people in chapel.

In my studies, I believe God is there for me, watching over me. God will not help me write my papers. God will not do my presentations for me. And God won't help me pass tests. God is there to provide support and peace of mind and to ease burdens through my personal dialogue with Him. Like a great teacher, God is my "guide on the side."

## A Day in the Life of a PhD Student

*Dorothy Hunse is in her fourth year of PhD studies at McMaster Divinity College in Hamilton,*

*Ont., in the area of ministry studies. Her particular interest is in church renewal and community formation. She shares what is at the heart of being a doctoral student.*

Being a doctoral student means I am a relatively solitary creature, spending great amounts of time in my room with my books, laptop and precious backup keys.

I tend to cover my desk (and floor and walls) with little bits (and sometimes big bits) of paper, the repositories of thoughts and questions I hope might one day develop into an article or perhaps even a book.

I can become obsessed about when to use a comma or a period in a bibliographic reference. And I will sometimes burst forth from my room and rush downstairs to my husband either to complain vigorously about an author's annoying ability to take 10 pages to say what could have been said in one paragraph or to enthusiastically recommend yet another book he has to read because it has been so transformative for me. (I actually gave two sets of friends a book on Luther's theology

of the Cross for Christmas one year. That pretty much says it all doesn't it!

I emerge at times to gather provisions and grab a conversation with my husband or a friend. I have been known to venture out into the world every so often in search of groceries or shampoo. I commune with other doctoral students. We are generally a friendly bunch and enjoy talking. And, yes, we even enjoy joking around when we're not (or perhaps especially when we are) stressing over an assignment that's due.

It is true, we are a bit of a strange bunch. Even stranger still, most doctoral students like that fact. But all in all we're not really that bad once you get to know us.

It is a strange experience being a doctoral student – well, crazy-making is more like it. I returned to doctoral studies after pastoring for seven years. I am predominantly an introvert by nature and sometimes found ministry quite taxing on this aspect of my temperament. Now the reverse is true: doctoral work is proving to be quite taxing to my extrovert side.



Learning to see yourself as an authority in your field while being reminded every day how little you actually know: Dorothy Hunse.

As doctoral students, you are continually invited by your professors (whom I have found to be infinitely patient, encouraging, helpful and challenging) to begin seeing yourself as an authority in your field while being reminded every day by everything you read how very little you actually know.

You long to change the ministry, change the Church and change the world with your ideas, while not being able to shake the concern that the production of yet another book might not be the best way to go about this. I find myself filled with awe and gratitude for the opportunity to devote myself to the study of theology while also wishing I could be happy doing something a little easier.

When I filled out my application for the program, I had to write a paragraph stating why I wanted to pursue doctoral studies. As I wrote, the awareness that this was the next step in my discipleship came pouring out of me. I knew deep down I was pursuing doctoral work not simply to

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Being able to concretely and tangibly see and use the science you are learning is addictive: Sara Regehr.

The flock of us then herd off to organic chemistry. As much as you initially

struggle to understand the complexity of the material, it is still a fascinating class. It's amazing how a combination of seemingly ordinary atoms (nothing special, just hydrogen and carbon and oxygen) can have such diverse properties and how it can make such a complex science. It makes you realize how complex creation really is and the limitations of our current knowledge.

After eating homemade pumpkin soup for lunch, it's off to polymer chemistry. The industrial processes we have come up with for processing different materials is astounding. There is an amazing amount of detail and creativity pres-

mix of people who engage in the funniest conversations. The stories that are swapped back and forth would make absolutely no sense to an outside observer.



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ent in the thought behind this technology.

After polymer is definitely my favourite part of the day: a four-hour organic chemistry lab. This is not only a practical exposure to chemistry but it is also so much fun.

There is the challenge of trying to figure out how to fix something when it goes wrong or when there is a unique variation on what is supposed to happen. There is much active problemsolving that requires you to be aware and think on your feet. Being in a lab is not always an exact science (no pun intended), and there is precision and thought that needs to be present, but things will happen that you cannot plan for.

Also, being able to concretely and tangibly see and use the science you are learning is addictive. I have access and opportunity to use technology

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that is straight from the textbooks I am reading.

There are so many firsts when you are in the lab. The other day I was able to run infrared spectroscopy for the first time. It's a simple procedure and yet the complexity of the results that you can get is astounding. The fact that you are able to run these tests on the results from your experiment and get concrete results makes it all seem more real and exciting.

Being in the lab is fun. The atmosphere is full of camaraderie and humour among all of us lab rats.

After the organic lab, I have about an hour before my carpool leaves. I take advantage of the time to work in the lab and start prepping for the upcoming first-year labs. That's another thing that is so cool about studying science: there is opportunity to use the knowledge and skills that you have ac-

quired and gain practical experience.

At 5:30 I finally come home after a full day. I am constantly amazed at how much you can fit into a 24-hour period. There is so much studying and recharging of your brain in those hours. I find I live day to day. I accomplish what I can and work as hard as I can.

The only real negative about picking something like chemistry to study is that it is definitely time-intensive. But it is something I love and that satisfies my innate curiosity to figure out how things work and to try and discover the complexities of God's creation.

That in a nutshell is why I love science. I love the discovery, the complexity and the sheer beauty that God has put into the smallest details of creation. From the symmetry of molecules to the diversity of one element, there is so much I can learn and discover in one typical day. ☐



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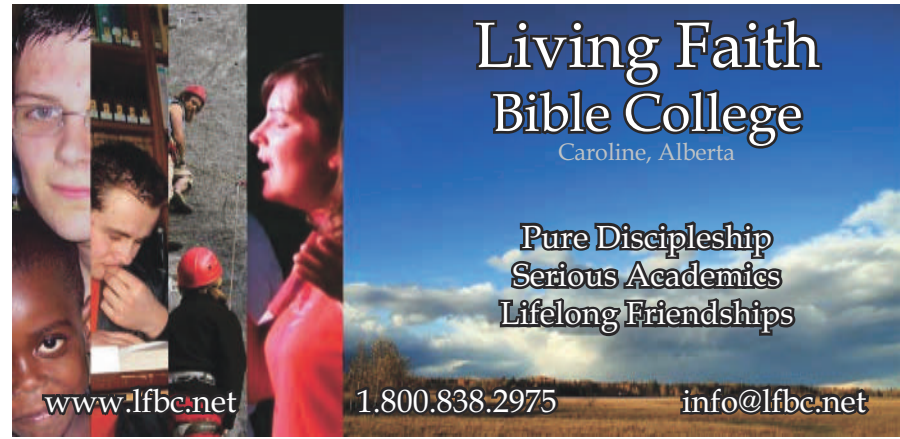


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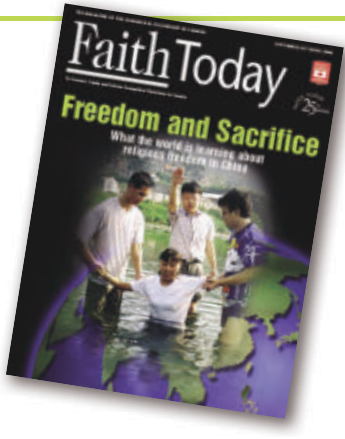
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# Colleges and Universities

*Faith Today* asked the presidents of colleges and universities affiliated with The Evangelical Fellowship of Canada to share a brief anecdote of an interaction with a student or parent that reminded them how their institution is making a unique, positive contribution to people's lives. All of these, including some more that didn't fit our pages, are online at [www.faithtoday.ca](http://www.faithtoday.ca).

## Puff Up or Build Up?

By Ron Fraser, president of Alberta Bible College

**K**nowledge puffs up, but love builds up," according to 1 Corinthians 8:1. I've been thinking about this as I reflect on the life of Steve Rehn. He died last September at age 33, but not before spending a decade in literacy work in Thailand and Africa.

Steve graduated from Alberta Bible College in 1997 with a Bachelor's of religious education in international studies. For about six years he and Nicki, his wife, taught people how to read in Cote d'Ivoire with Wycliffe Bible Translators. For

the last two summers he multiplied himself by teaching Africans to teach Africans to read. He just completed a Master's in language and literacy at Trinity Western University last April.

Steve wasn't a great student here where grades were concerned. But he received an award posthumously for his work at Trinity, proving once again that learning that makes a difference is premised on a sense of call, an openness to what means most before us.

In terms of openness, Steve shone.

How does openness arrive in our lives so that we learn in a way that actually serves and transforms the world? We can be open to interesting ideas and that's OK – except when we place knowledge at the centre of relationships that leaves them in ashes and us "puffy."

What makes us loving? We can find a clue in these words from Steve's blog: "The road calls me." Steve's footprints on that road will impact literally thousands of people for generations – all ultimately due to the clear call of the One before him, before whom he stood open, available and joyfully obedient.

The great challenge facing Christian higher education is the creation of space where openness to both God and people are live possibilities where "love builds up."

## Students Worth the Cost of Change

By George Durance, president of Ambrose University College

**M**y 10 years as president here have included a campus move, the addition of an arts and science faculty, a merger between the schools of The Christian and Missionary Alliance in Canada and The Church of the Nazarene Canada, a capital campaign, and the construction of and finally relocation to a new campus. These initiatives were all inspired by the belief in what Christian higher education can accomplish through the lives of transformed graduates.

Now that the institution is reshaped in a profound way, I can't help but wonder: Was it all worth it? Are we realizing the vision for which so much has been risked?

Last week one of our sociologists, Joel Thiessen, invited me to one of his senior seminar classes for an hour's discussion with the students. As we began, each student introduced him- or herself by name, year and program. Then, spontaneously, they went on to tell me what they wanted to do upon graduation.

What particularly impressed me was that all were planning to go somewhere and do something for the benefit of others and the glory of God. If they had dreams of personal wealth and status – of good luck and good fortune – they never mentioned it. They actually became animated and passionate about the transformational action they intended to pursue.

If these students are any indication, the cost of changing this institution was more than worthwhile.

## Stories the Lord Writes

By Dwayne Uglen, president of Briercrest College and Seminary

**I**t is our joy to see and participate in the good things that happen on our campus because of the gracious work of our Lord. He does some surprising and unexpected things.

Stephane came to Briercrest to become a pastor. In his third year in our pastoral program, he discovered he wasn't a pastor but he finished his degree. From there the Lord introduced a different plan. Today Stephane is a director of an information systems department, serving a Christian organization with the million-dollar software package he created with his degrees in



George Durance



Ron Fraser



Dwayne Uglen

# Making a Difference

pastoral ministry and leadership.

Donald has seen that the gospel of reconciliation can change homes and our nation. Shannon believes babies born in economically challenging circumstances still deserve to be warm and dressed. Suzanne is convinced that sport is a platform for ministry. Rod is certain that, as a McDonald's manager, he really is a youth pastor.

These are glimpses into the remarkable stories the Lord writes and in which He encourages us to play a part. It's all about becoming attentive life-learners who seek the kingdom of God in hope, respond to the gospel in faith and serve others in love.

## Education and Discipleship

By Gerald Gerbrandt, president of Canadian Mennonite University

"We are proud to call CMU our daughter's university."

That's what the parents of a Canadian Mennonite University student wrote to us this year. They went on to say: "We appreciate its emphasis on community life, its positive environment and its excellent academics. We have been impressed by her classroom experiences and opportunities for one-on-one interaction with the highly skilled and educated faculty."



Gerald Gerbrandt

Hearing a comment like that is very satisfying. But there was more. "We are also excited and encouraged by CMU's commitment as a Christian university," they wrote, adding that they also appreciate how it "provides many opportunities for students to live out their faith in everyday life. From retreats to small Bible study and prayer groups and chapels, God is invited into all aspects of university life."

When parents send children to a Christian university, they place a lot of trust in

the school not only to provide a quality education but also to help them grow as disciples of Christ. When I hear comments like this, I think I can say that I am proud of CMU, too.

## God Changing Lives

By Marvin Brubacher, president of Heritage College & Seminary

Approximately two years ago, after a chapel service, I met a family – Dad, Mom and six children – who had come to examine Heritage. They were looking for a place where their children could begin their post-secondary educational pursuits in a positive Christian environment.

Their eldest son, Dennis, enrolled the next year in a one-year certificate program. "I was not entirely convinced where I was heading," he recalls.

But after graduation, he now says "Heritage has been a great environment for me as I have contemplated what God wants for me, and the courses have deepened my walk with God." He says his best memory is the two hours he spent weekly with five other guys from his residence sharing requests and praying together.

God convinced Dennis that full-time ministry would be part of his future so he returned to study toward a degree and to serve as a residence assistant. This year he has become an influential leader, positively impacting others to become serious about their faith, including one of his younger brothers (who will join him at Heritage in January).

"To see the way God is changing lives here is an amazing thing," Dennis says.

After observing closely for 19 years as president, I agree.



Marvin Brubacher

## God Uses Passion

By Gordon Giesbrecht, president of Horizon College and Seminary

We want our students to "thirst for knowledge" and develop a "passion for God" so they can "make a difference" according to our current college theme.

I remembered that theme during an inspiring conversation with a senior student fresh off an internship at his home church. He reported how he had decided to connect with the community by playing road hockey with neighbourhood kids. Each week more guys showed up – in a sea of uncertainty, this was a place where they were comfortable, accepted, safe and loved. They eventually moved inside. Soon 20 youth became 40 and the group was split into junior and senior ages.

Our student was really stretched, having to learn to connect equally with both age groups through activities, fellowship and Bible study. Finally a female from the church – now in first year at our college – joined the leadership team, thus paving the way for young gals to attend.

These students are building bridges to their community. Youth are asking for – and reading – Bibles, and some parents contact the church for various needs. It is also exciting that these initiatives have increased the congregation's interest in reaching beyond its walls. The lead pastor summarizes: "God is doing some amazing things and it was just ... simple!"



Gordon Giesbrecht

## The Deeper Substance of Faith

By Stanley Porter, president of McMaster Divinity College

When you are trying to communicate in contemporary terms in a secular culture, the default is to be shallow and to skim the surface of is-

sues," says David Courey, a third-year PhD student who also pastors at Calvary Pentecostal Assembly in Cambridge, Ont.

"When ministering to a broad cross-section of people – the non-Christian, the explorer and those who are dragged to church, for example – the temptation is to speak to the lowest common denominator. We find ourselves defaulting to catchy

phrases and the latest fad in ministry, to 'pat' answers and 'knee-jerk' superficial reactions to the questions and concerns of parishioners."

But David finds the discipline of his studies gives him the opportunity to rethink his beliefs, his theology, his "usual retorts" and the deeper substance of faith. It gives him the opportunity to critique

what he thinks and why, and then be able to present it in a fuller, deeper way.

"When we are confronted every week in classes with the ideals and principles of the faith, rather than just the pragmatic issues of ministry, then we naturally go deeper in our own faith and in the way we do church."

"In ministry it's easy to substitute the quick fix and the easy laugh for what's thoughtful and true. Sometimes we forget what we signed up for as pastors. I didn't really want to be a stand-up comic; I wanted to make a difference. And in my program I am challenged every week to rethink how to remain a good communicator and to still say something that has substance and depth and will change people's lives."



Stanley Porter

### First-Rate Preparation to Change the World

By Jon Ohlhauser, president of Prairie Bible Institute

I sometimes wonder if Christian colleges don't get the recognition they deserve. Many assume the education is second-rate or that they are only for those going into full-time church work. When I hear this I tell them what our students are doing.

Last semester we had a first-year nursing student doing her practicum in a hospital. She was caring for a terminal patient and noticed a Bible on his bedside table.

When she asked if she could read from it he replied "No, that's not for me." The next day she asked if she could read some of her favourite verses to him. He agreed. When she finished he had tears running down his face and said, "That's what I need." She then led him to the Lord.

A graduate recently sent a slide show about work he is doing as a missionary



John Ohlhauser

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There are so many more stories to tell. Every day Prairie students are making a difference in the lives of people around the world. Not only is their education first-rate, it has prepared them to change the world in credible and unique ways.

## Reaching Farther

By August H. Konkell, president of Providence College and Seminary

One of the most disturbing social problems in Canada is the high rate of suicide in Northern communities. It is one symptom of family dysfunction. But some of our graduates are working to change that.

Last September alumnus Clair Schnupp contacted me. Clair and Clara Schnupp conduct a Providence certificate program



August H. Konkell

Providence was able to arrange completion of a distance-education counselling program for them.

The next day I received an enthusiastic call from Jonathan's father. Goyce Kakegamic is the educational co-ordinator for Northern Chiefs Council. Based in Thunder Bay, Ont. he directs 49 councils between Manitoba and Quebec. Goyce enrolled as a student and is seeking to bring together a cohort group of 20 or more teachers from northern Ontario to complete the Providence program. He is convinced this additional training will help support edu-

for family life from Yukon to Greenland. They introduced me to Jonathan and Rhonda Kakegamic who work in the Nishnawbe Aski Nation among the Oji-Cree people.

cators and families in the public schools of the Nishnawbe Aski Territory.

Goyce further plans to use the training he received at Providence Seminary in a new venture called Aboriginal Family Empowerment. This organization will help Aboriginal families gain access to knowledge, skills and services to improve community life.

## Making a Difference for Christ

By Justin D. Cooper, president of Redeemer University College

It never ceases to amaze me how graduates find creative ways to serve their Lord. Betty Broersma came to Redeemer with an interest in counselling and took this in a fresh direction with



Justin D. Cooper

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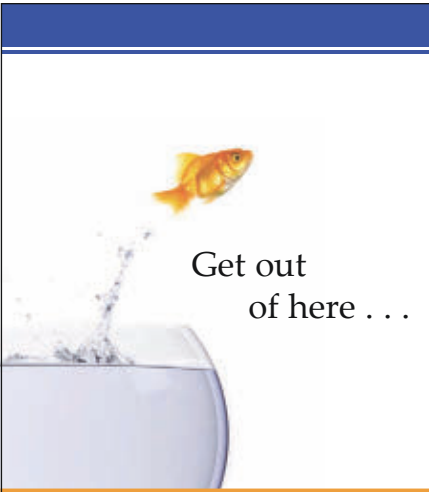
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majors in art and psychology. That led her to further training in art therapy.

After practising in this field for some years, she hit upon a new approach to reaching out in her city with the healing power and love of Jesus Christ.

Hamilton is not among the largest of Canada's cities but certainly has its share of social issues, poverty and homelessness. In this context she developed an outreach to street-involved youth through a studio ministry called Re-Create ([www.re-create.ca](http://www.re-create.ca)).

Over time this ministry has become not only an avenue to help these young people work through their issues and build relationships but also to develop confidence and self-respect as their best work is shown in various gallery exhibitions.

The impact of her efforts came home to me in a powerful way when I heard that one of these young people, despite his own great personal need, took the \$100 he received for the sale of his artwork and gave it back to the ministry that had helped turn his life around.

Praise God for the unexpected ways that Christian university education is shaping a new generation of servant leaders who are creatively and competently engaging our culture with the wisdom, love and mercy of Christ.



Rod Wilson

## Variety, Passion and Community

By Rod Wilson, president of Regent College

Recently I sat at my office table with eight students who have experienced part of their first semester at Regent College. Barry from Ontario studied theology in a secular setting and is so glad to be in a place where faith informs academics. Luke from Virginia worked in government policy research in Washington, D.C., and is experiencing a greater devotion to Christ at Regent. Jim from California is pleased that his love for rigorous academics and the church can be combined. Simon from China is a new



Christian and is enjoying being in an academic environment where his expertise in physics and math is taken seriously. Ruben from Costa Rica is encouraged that his peer students love Jesus and want to engage with Scripture and the culture. Debbie from Washington has been battling mental health issues and finds that her brokenness is accepted here. Kelly from Oregon is realizing his background in fine art and social work is a good fit in this community. Lindsay from Alberta is discovering that her passion for environmental issues and theology is being stimulated.

Not only is Regent College influencing our students but the variety and passion in our student body is also making an impact on this community of faith.

### Preparing to Serve

By **Brian C. Stiller**, president of Tyndale University College and Seminary

When asked about how Tyndale is doing something unique in the lives of people, the MacDonald family comes to mind.

Gary MacDonald and I first met at Youth for Christ in the 1970s. He became a Christian and married Denise. Both graduated from Tyndale: Gary from the college and Denise from the seminary.

Their son Andrew earned a degree in business from the university and now works for World Vision. He

also met his wife at Tyndale. Their daughter Amy is on staff in our development office.

This family loves what Tyndale has to offer: academics with a number of majors, a diverse and Christ-centred community, gifted and caring faculty, and respected degrees that prepare students for meaningful vocations and ministry.

I can't think of a better investment for

a family to make than in the lives of their children. Other universities and schools prepare people for careers. At Tyndale our goal is to prepare skilled and dynamic Christians ready to serve in the world. That is why I suggest it is in your interest to consider Tyndale for university and seminary education. **FI**

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# Campus Ministries Offer

By Stephanie Douglas

I was nervous and excited when I left home for university. There was the usual turmoil of questions: *Would I like my program? Would I manage everything well?* I had no idea what to expect. But I did determine, before throwing my bags into our family car, that when I got to school I'd give the Christian group on campus a try.

It was the best decision I made.

Each year hundreds and hundreds of Canadian students get involved in Christian ministries working on secular university and college campuses. Like me they have found groups like Inter-Varsity, Navigators, Campus for Christ and chaplaincy ministries unique places in which to flourish.

For new students coming up the pipeline, here's a picture of what these groups can offer you. —Stephanie Douglas

## A Place to Wonder

The college years are a time for exploration. "Students are thinking things through – what they believe, what their life is going to be like," says Ben Jolliffe, campus director for Campus for Christ at the University of Western Ontario in London. "Once they leave university people's lives seem to be set, but on campus they're constantly reconsidering things. It's refreshing."

Any campus ministry worth its salt offers a forum for asking the hard questions. For example, last year a group of

science students, members of Jolliffe's campus ministry, invited a Christian professor to speak to the question "Can a scientist believe in God?" They opened the event to the general public and more than 150 curious students came.

For Kelly Johnson, a Pentecostal Assemblies of Canada (PAOC) chaplain at the University of Calgary, sorting the intellectual pieces of the spirituality puzzle is a vital part of his ministry. Johnson organizes weekly discussion groups around hot topics, sometimes bringing in experts like the psychiatrist who

tackled the issue of cure versus healing. Day to day, students come to Johnson for drop-in counselling as they wrestle with everything from career choices, to relationship problems, to struggles with addiction. About 60 per cent of the students he works with are Christian.

## A Place to Belong

Compared to high school, college and university campuses are massive. At the University of Alberta in Edmonton, where Jon Lim works as campus ministry director for Inter-Varsity Christian Fellowship, there are more than 28,000 full-time undergrads and close to 5,000 grad students. Needless to say, newcomers are hungry for a place to belong.

Consequently, many campus ministries like Lim's emphasize relationships. For his group, an Asian ministry, this means eating together. A lot. "In Chinese culture," Lim says, "when you want to express hospitality, you ask your visitor 'Have you eaten?'" So, after a large group worship meeting, students and staff head out to a restaurant, spending the next few hours hanging together. During the week, the ministry fosters relationships through small groups. Some students join Bible studies, others organize sports teams, still others watch *Battlestar Galactica* and – predictably –

## What Ministries Are on Your Campus?

### **Navigators** – <http://navscanada.gospelcom.net>

Click "What we do" then "On university campuses" for a list of groups.

### **Inter-Varsity** – [www.ivcf.ca](http://www.ivcf.ca)

Scroll down to the bottom of the page and click "Campus Ministries" for a listing of groups.

### **Campus for Christ** – [www.campusforchrist.org](http://www.campusforchrist.org)

Use the "Find a campus" navigation tool for a list of campuses where Campus for Christ is active.

### **Chaplaincy Ministries**

Among evangelical denominations, The Pentecostal Assemblies of Canada and the Christian Reformed Church have the most comprehensive ministries to university campuses. Contact [missioncanada@paoc.org](mailto:missioncanada@paoc.org) (or visit [www.paoc.org/canada/nextgen-campuses](http://www.paoc.org/canada/nextgen-campuses)) for the first. Or for a list of Christian Reformed campus groups, visit [www.crcma.com](http://www.crcma.com).

Most major universities have an official multi-faith chaplaincy office, which can be another place to start looking to see what is available.

# Lots to Students

share a meal afterwards. Because of this emphasis on relationships, the group attracts all sorts of people: seekers, committed and nominal Christians alike.

In Daniel McDougall's ministry at the University of Victoria this longing for a place to belong is particularly poignant. As part of Inter-Varsity's international student ministries, he works for the most part with graduate students from around the world. On top of settling into campus life they must cope with such mundane challenges like figuring out grocery shopping and banking in a foreign place.

Recognizing their unique situation McDougall's ministry, called the International Friendship Group, offers students the tools to integrate into Canadian society. McDougall and his team run free Saturday morning English as a second language classes and open it up to spouses of students as well. Wednesday nights, he and his wife host popular potluck suppers and Bible exploration classes in their home. For the majority of students, this is their first introduction to Christianity and the Scriptures.

On the day we spoke, McDougall was preparing to take a busload of students from 20 different countries to watch the salmon run north of the city. People are curious about Cana-

dian culture, he says, and are glad to gather with others. The bonus? "I get to say, very gently, "This is the King of the universe in action."

## A Place to Grow

If university is a time for sorting through life goals, it's also a time for stretching

leadership muscles and identifying gifts. All campus ministries have the equipping of the next generation of Christians as part of their mandate. Staff regularly meet with students over coffee, and student leaders receive special care through Bible studies or one-on-one discipleship.



**Clockwise from top:** Each summer chaplain Kelly Johnson (far right) takes a group of students to Mexico to build homes; the Inter-Varsity Christian Fellowship group at the University of Alberta builds relationships through hospitality and eating together; Ben Jolliffe encourages students to ask hard questions.

Roger Berrigar, regional director for Navigators in Winnipeg, talks about this as the highlight of his ministry at the University of Manitoba. The goal is to help students walk with God in their own day-to-day world, Berrigar says. “We don’t want them to become locked up in a Christian subculture.”

A case in point: Berrigar began meeting individually with George, a member of the varsity hockey team and a Christian. Together they talked about ways to handle ethical situations that came up on the team and they prayed for team members. Some time later George asked Berrigar to start a Bible study at the rink. Six guys came out.

Fast forward a few years and 20 to 25 team members were coming out consistently to Bible study. Since then “We’ve seen five generations of Christian leadership on the hockey team,” says Berrigar. All this thanks to one

student’s courageous desire to live out his faith in his world.

## A Place to Serve

Learning to live as a Christian in one’s own milieu – whether this be the science department or the music faculty – offers opportunity enough for Christian service. On top of this, however, campus ministries frequently provide practical service opportunities at home and abroad.

“Students want to do well in their studies,” Johnson says, “but they also want to do good in the world. There is a huge interest in social concerns.” Locally, Johnson and his students have participated in World Vision’s 30-Hour-Famine and have served at the Mustard Seed soup kitchen and shelter for homeless people in Calgary. Each summer, anywhere from 12 to 24 students pack up and head to Mexico to build homes for people in poverty. While there, they



Newcomers are hungry for a place to belong: Jon Lim.

stay at Aqua Viva, a drug rehab ministry. A challenging context, Johnson points out, but also enriching, especially during their times of worship.

## A Ministry to Support

For today’s Canadian students, the benefits of campus ministries are legion. For those of us for whose student days are

[www.helpourworld.ca](http://www.helpourworld.ca)

You can get there from here.

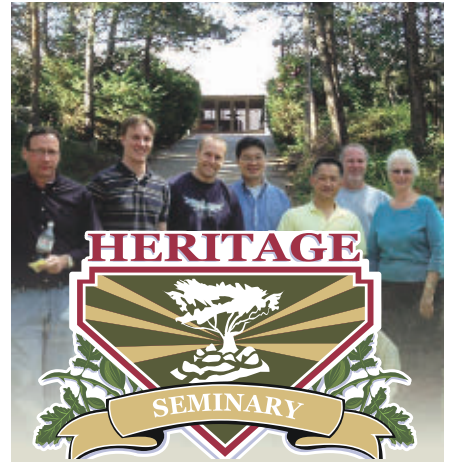


but a distant memory, this is still a ministry to keep on our radar and support. As Jolliffe says, the future leaders of the world emerge from our college and university campuses. "Universities are going to change our world and, as Christians, we need to engage where the fight for culture is happening."

McDougall couldn't agree more.

"I'm not a bean counter," he says "but just in terms of strategy, what better way to reach unreached cultures or even secular ones than to engage the influential people of the future and get the gospel deeply embedded in them?" ■

*Stephanie Douglas is a freelance writer in Toronto.*



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# Christian Colleges and Universities More Than We Realize?

By Darryl Dash

Most Canadians don't know it, but you can earn a degree in everything from accounting, aviation and biology to sociology, theatre arts and women's studies at an evangelical school in Canada. And, yes, you can minor in theology if you like

**W**hen Ken Clarke began to consider colleges and universities with his son Scott, the two of them hadn't thought of looking for a Christian school. "My first impression was that those are schools for people going into ministry," he says. "We didn't even consider them."

Al Hiebert, head of Christian Higher Education Canada (CHEC), knows that line of thinking. "The whole notion of studying from a faith-based perspective for careers other than clergy is surprising to many," says Hiebert. "This isn't their fault. It's ours."

The phrase "Christian higher education" means almost nothing to two-thirds of Canadians, according to a national opinion poll commissioned by CHEC. Most people could not name a single school that might fit with the phrase.

However, once pollsters explained that the phrase included colleges and universities where all subjects are

taught from a Christian perspective, most respondents said they would be willing to give "some consideration" to such schools. (The study of 7,700 Canadians was conducted by Ipsos-Reid in 2007.)

Kevin Kirk works with Hiebert at CHEC, a three-year-old association of 35 Christian universities, colleges and seminaries, although his main job is vice-president of marketing with Prairie Bible Institute in Three Hills, Alta.

CHEC schools are poised for significant growth, Kirk says, if they can get more people to begin to think about Christian higher education.

"People ask what their faith has to do with living. But Christians believe the world and all that is in it is God's. When confronted with this, young people and parents get it. Our

job is to get them to stop and think about it."

## Changing Perceptions

To boost that awareness, CHEC recently produced a nine-minute video and distributed it free to youth groups and congregations. And it launched [www.checusout.ca](http://www.checusout.ca), a website to help students investigate the programs offered by member schools. The site includes major programs in more than 50 areas, from accounting to youth and family studies (see sidebar).

Some CHEC schools are also seeking to overcome mistaken public perceptions by differentiating themselves from Bible colleges.

"Getting university in our name has made a big difference," says Justin Cooper, president of Redeemer University College, in Ancaster, Ont. The new name does a better job of catching the attention of students looking for the bachelor of arts, bachelor of science and bachelor of education programs that Redeemer offers.

Redeemer is also working to over-

**An Ipsos-Reid study reveals there is a solid Christian post-secondary education market in Canada**

## Considering an Evangelical Option?

**C**hecusout.ca is a new website to help students investigate the programs offered by more than 30 of Canada's Christian colleges, universities and seminaries. The site includes major programs in more than 50 areas, from accounting to youth and family studies.

Website visitors can sort through schools by province or by program.

School listings on the site include contact information, size,

accreditation, typical undergraduate tuition, typical room and board costs, scholarships and details about extracurricular options like athletics.

The website, along with a new awareness-raising DVD, is produced by Christian Higher Education Canada (CHEC), an association of 35 post-secondary schools affiliated with The Evangelical Fellowship of Canada (EFC).

In November CHEC mailed free DVDs addressed to senior high youth pastors at more than 5,600 evangelical churches across Canada. Many Christian bookstores also received copies

come perceptions that faith is private and does not belong in the public square, or that Christian universities are fundamentalist institutions.

“Our experience has been positive,” says Cooper. “Once they discover we are not fulfilling their caricatures of narrow Evangelicals, they are quite willing to listen.”

Redeemer and all the other CHEC schools are also trying to overcome the perception of some that Christian higher education is a second-rate option.

“We are trying to claim that our students can go head to head” with mainstream, secular universities, says Cooper. “We have a holistic grasp. A Christian university is going to do better. There is value added.”

The *Globe and Mail* recently began giving a few CHEC schools a boost by including them in its annual University Report Card feature. This year Redeemer, together with The King’s University College in Edmonton and Trinity Western University in Langley, B.C., received A to A+ grades in all areas under consideration.

The *Globe* surveys students to rank these CHEC schools but leaves out others based on institutional membership with the Association of Universities and Colleges in Canada (which recently added a fourth CHEC school, Canadian Mennonite University in Winnipeg, as a member).

Clearly, a school’s professional mem-

bership and accreditation can help its public reputation. CHEC itself requires its member schools be accredited with a relevant professional association. That prevents some of Canada’s younger or smaller evangelical colleges, evangel-

ism schools and schools for ministry from joining CHEC. (CHEC also requires schools be affiliates of The Evangelical Fellowship of Canada, agree with the EFC statement of faith and have an employment policy that requires all faculty and staff to be Christians – which prevents some long-established mainline seminaries from joining.)

That said, such administrative issues are not of inter-

est to everyone. In fact, the best way to change perceptions about the quality of CHEC schools is the quality of the graduates, according to Cooper.

“It’s a discussion starter and a prejudice stopper. Our graduates go into all kinds of careers. They are making a difference.”

Even the smaller size of CHEC schools can help. “If people read university ratings lately, they may conclude that smaller schools are better,” says Cooper.

Hiebert believes perceptions can also change when people are reminded of the Christian roots of many mainstream Canadian universities. “Prior to 1960, most universities in Europe and North America still had a strong memory of

Christian roots. There is a cultural memory of Christian influence.”

Even Canadians who believe faith is a private matter are somewhat open to Christian higher education, says Hiebert. “Most committed secularists appreciate values. Drugs, crime and lack of integrity in business are problems to be addressed. Committed secularists have told me they send their kids to Sunday school. There is a grudging respect for morality” that translates into an openness to Christian higher education.

### Considering Trade-Offs

While some CHEC schools are competing directly with mainstream universities, others are taking a different tack. Derrick Mueller, president of Emmanuel Bible College in Kitchener, Ont., says: “I don’t believe you can compete in the big leagues. There are too many trade-offs.”

While Mueller appreciates CHEC schools that have become universities, he still sees a role for Bible colleges. “There are advantages to a Bible college flavour. I keep reminding students, ‘Why did you come here?’ It’s not all about transferable credits.” Mueller believes colleges like Emmanuel fill a niche that universities cannot fill.

Still other Christians choose a mainstream university over a Bible college or a Christian university because they don’t want to be “sheltered.”

Cheryl Harvey, a student at York University, says: “It’s important to submerge in the real world. Once you graduate, you need the tools to deal with the

**T**he whole notion of studying from a **faith-based** perspective for **careers** other than **clergy** is surprising to many”

of the DVD with a sign urging customers to take a free copy for themselves and/or their youth group. Additional distribution to other Canadian churches may also be in the offing.

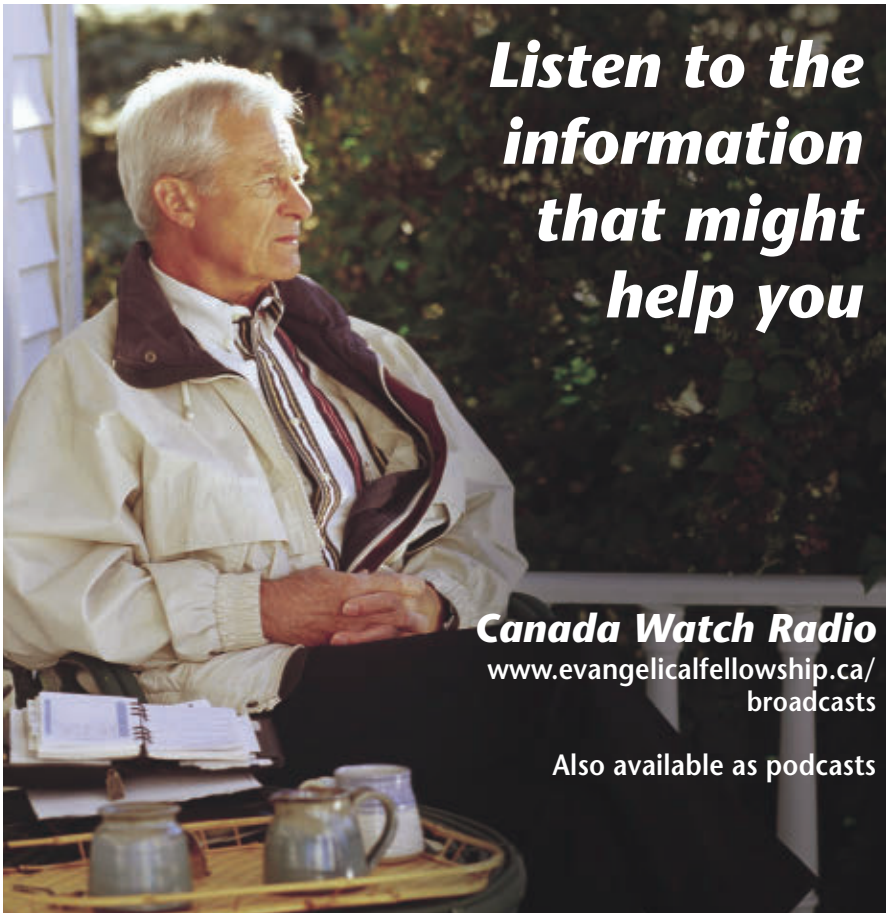
The DVDs include a nine-minute video of interviews with graduates of five CHEC institutions who talk about current professional roles and how their Christian higher education launched them into their careers, even though none of them is currently employed at a church. There is also a second video by Starfield, Canada’s hottest current contemporary Christian music group, singing “I Will Go.” The videos are intended for

use in youth groups or as a pre- or post-worship-service sanctuary video.

The first video invites viewers to visit [www.checusout.ca](http://www.checusout.ca) for more information on how to select the most suitable post-secondary education to meet their needs, how to finance higher education, etc.

CHEC was formed in 2005 by merging the EFC Higher Education Roundtable with the Association of Canadian Bible Colleges (ACBC) and the Christian Higher Education Enrolment Association (CHEEA). ■

–Bill Fledderus



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things you'll be thrown into."

Harvey tries to integrate her faith with her studies through a Christian student group on campus. (See related article about such groups on page 34.)

Harvey did consider Christian universities but found they did not offer the program she is pursuing. She also struggled with the size. "The main one I looked at was smaller than my high school. I was looking for a change."

The Christian university was also more expensive.

"Still, if they had my program I may have considered it," she says.

Ken Clarke, reflecting on his son's search for a university, now thinks Christian higher education should rate higher as an option.

"From a Christian perspective, if there is a school that offers a broader base, we should be looking at that."

### Optimism

Despite the challenges, CHEC leaders are encouraged by the potential openness of Canadians. "I relish the challenge," says Cooper. "I feel like an apostle for Christian higher education."

Hiebert also enjoys seeing people's views change as they encounter CHEC schools. "It's fun to take guests through campus. They had not expected the type of library or the size of the facilities. This is not the image of Christian higher education that the majority of Canadians have."

The Ipsos-Reid study reveals there is a solid Christian post-secondary education market in Canada, says Hiebert. "I wouldn't have predicted that 46 per cent of the general population would consider Christian higher education."

"The negative perceptions of CHEC schools by the public reflect their lack of experience of us," says Hiebert. "We have not corrected their stereotypes. It's time to upgrade their understanding." ■

*Darryl Dash is a freelance writer in Toronto.*

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# Contacting CHEC Schools

By Bill Fledderus and Al Hiebert

Much of the information in this chart is also available at [www.checusout.ca](http://www.checusout.ca). To research Christian colleges and universities that are not members of Christian Higher Education Canada, consider visiting the online tools section of [www.canlearn.ca](http://www.canlearn.ca) or [www.uc411.com](http://www.uc411.com).

## Stay Home and Study: Distance Education Options

Do work and family commitments prevent you from pursuing Christian higher education? Not able to travel to the nearest Christian college or university? Take heart, for schools are finding new ways to overcome these obstacles.

Online study programs, other distance learning programs and part-time study programs are offered at most of the 35 colleges, universities and seminaries that are part of Christian Higher Education Canada (CHEC). The following list specifies which CHEC schools offer courses for credit in one of three unusual

ways. "Distance education" can take various forms, including correspondence, audio, video and extension classes. "Modular & part-time" (M&PT) includes one week modules, one-day-a-week, weekend and/or summer courses. The number of courses available in single study mode noted as "<10" or ">10."

Degrees are named where the whole degree or a major "Part" is available in that study mode. "Deg. Comp." stands for "degree completion programs," which allow students with previous undergrad credits to complete a degree while continuing full-time employment.  
–BF and AH

School	Undergraduate (e.g., bachelor's degree, certificate, diploma)		Graduate (e.g., doctorate, master's)	
	Degree Programs	Online, Distance, Modular & Part-Time.	Degree Programs	Online, Distance, Modular & Part-Time.
Alberta Bible College, Calgary, 403-282-2994, <a href="mailto:inquiries@abc-ca.org">inquiries@abc-ca.org</a> , <a href="http://www.abc-ca.org">www.abc-ca.org</a>	BRE, BTh, BA	<b>Dist.:</b> <10. M&PT: >10, Deg. Comp. BA		
Ambrose University College, Calgary, 403-410-2900, <a href="mailto:enrolment@ambrose.edu">enrolment@ambrose.edu</a> , <a href="http://www.ambrose.edu">www.ambrose.edu</a>	BA, BMin, BSc, BTh	M&PT: BA, BMin, BSc, BTh	MDiv, MA	<b>Online:</b> <10. <b>Dist.:</b> Cert., Dipl. M&PT: Cert., Dipl., MDiv, MA
Atlantic Baptist University, Moncton, N.B., 506-858-8970, <a href="mailto:admissions@abu.nb.ca">admissions@abu.nb.ca</a> , <a href="http://www.abu.nb.ca">www.abu.nb.ca</a>	BA, BBA, BSc, BEd	M&PT: >10, Deg. Comp. BA		
Bethany Bible College, Sussex, N.B., 506-432-4400, <a href="mailto:admissions@bethany-ca.edu">admissions@bethany-ca.edu</a> , <a href="http://www.bbc.ca">www.bbc.ca</a>	BAR, BACE, BACSE, BTh, AA	M&PT: >10		
Bethany College, Hepburn, Sask., 866-772-2175, <a href="mailto:info@bethany.sk.ca">info@bethany.sk.ca</a> , <a href="http://www.bethany.sk.ca">www.bethany.sk.ca</a>	BCS, BA	M&PT: <10		
Briercrest College & Seminary, Caronport, Sask., 306-756-3200, <a href="http://www.briercrest.ca">www.briercrest.ca</a>	AA, BA	<b>Online:</b> >10. <b>Dist.:</b> Cert., AA, BA. M&PT: Cert., AA, BA	MA, MDiv	<b>Online:</b> >10. <b>Dist.:</b> Cert., Dipl. M&PT: Cert., MA, MDiv
Canadian Mennonite University, Winnipeg, 204-487-3300, <a href="http://www.cmu.ca">www.cmu.ca</a>	BA	M&PT: Cert., Part BA/BTh/BCM	MA, MDiv	M&PT: MA
Canadian Southern Baptist Seminary & College, Cochrane, Alta. 403-932-6622, <a href="mailto:recruitment@csbs.ca">recruitment@csbs.ca</a> , <a href="http://www.csbs.ca">www.csbs.ca</a>	BCMin	M&PT: Cert., Dipl., BCMin	MDiv, MACE, DMin	<b>Dist.:</b> MDiv. M&PT: MDiv, MACE
Carey Theological College, Vancouver, 604-224-4308, <a href="mailto:info@careytheologicalcollege.ca">info@careytheologicalcollege.ca</a> , <a href="http://www.careycentre.com">www.careycentre.com</a>		<b>Online:</b> >10. <b>Dist.:</b> Cert. M&PT: Cert.	MPM, DMin	<b>Online:</b> >10. <b>Dist.:</b> Dipl., MPM. M&PT: Dipl., MPM, DMin
Christ for the Nations Bible College, Surrey, B.C., 604-479-9236, <a href="http://www.cfnc.ca">www.cfnc.ca</a>	BCS, BTh	<b>Dist.:</b> Cert., Dipl.		
Columbia Bible College, Abbotsford, B.C., 604-853-3358, <a href="mailto:info@columbiabc.edu">info@columbiabc.edu</a> , <a href="http://www.columbiabc.edu">www.columbiabc.edu</a>	BA	<b>Online:</b> >10. M&PT: Cert., Dipl., BA		
Emmanuel Bible College, Kitchener, Ont., 519-894-8900, <a href="mailto:admin@ebcollege.on.ca">admin@ebcollege.on.ca</a> , <a href="http://www.ebcollege.on.ca">www.ebcollege.on.ca</a>	BRE, BTh	<b>Dist.:</b> Cert., Part Dipl., BTh, BRE. M&PT: Cert., Part Dipl./BTh/BRE		
Eston College, Eston, Sask., 306-962-3621, <a href="mailto:fgbi@fgbi.sk.ca">fgbi@fgbi.sk.ca</a> , <a href="http://www.estoncollege.ca">www.estoncollege.ca</a>	BBS, BA			
Heritage College/Heritage Theological Seminary, Cambridge, Ont., 519-651-2869, <a href="mailto:contact@heritage-theo.edu">contact@heritage-theo.edu</a> , <a href="http://www.discoverheritage.ca">www.discoverheritage.ca</a>	BRS, BRE, BTh, BCM	<b>Dist.:</b> Cert., Part BRE/BTh/BCM. M&PT: Cert., BRE, BTh, BCM	MDiv, MTS	<b>Online:</b> MTS, Part MDiv. <b>Dist.:</b> Cert., Part MTS/MDiv. M&PT: Cert., MTS, MDiv

School	Undergraduate (e.g., bachelor's degree, certificate, diploma)		Graduate (e.g., doctorate, master's)	
	Degree Programs	Online. Distance. Modular & Part-Time.	Degree Programs	Online. Distance. Modular & Part-Time.
Horizon College and Seminary, Saskatoon, Sask., 306-374-6655, inquiries@horizon.edu, www.horizon.edu	BA	<b>Online: &lt;10; Dist.: Cert., Dipl.</b> M&PT: Cert., Dipl., BA		
Institute for Christian Studies, Toronto, 416-979-2331, student-services@icscanada.edu, www.icscanada.edu			MA, MWS, PhD	<b>Dist.: &lt;10 MWS</b> M&PT: <10 MWS
Master's College and Seminary, Toronto, 416-482-2224, info@mcs.edu, www.mcs.edu	BTh, BRE	<b>Online: Cert., Dipl., BRE, part BTh. Dist.: &gt;10.</b> M&PT: Cert., Dipl., BRE, part BTh	MTS	<b>Online: &lt;10. Dist.: &gt;10.</b> M&PT: >10
McMaster Divinity College, Hamilton, Ont., 905-525-9140, divinity@mcmaster.ca, www.macdiv.ca			MTS, MDiv, MA, PhD	<b>Online: &lt;10. Dist.: Cert., Dipl., part MDiv</b>
Nipawin Bible College, Nipawin, Sask., 306-862-5095, www.nipawin.org	BA, BCM	<b>Dist.: &lt;10.</b> M&PT: <10		
Pacific Life Bible College, Surrey, B.C., 604-597-9082, plbc@pacificlife.edu, www.pacificlife.edu	BA, BTh, AA	<b>Dist.: Cert., Dipl., BA, BTh.</b> M&PT: Cert., Dipl., BA, BTh		
Peace River Bible Institute, Sexsmith, Alta., 780-568-3962, www.prbi.edu	BRE, BBS, ACS	M&PT: >10		
Prairie Bible Institute, Three Hills, Alta., 403-443-5511, prairie@prairie.edu, www.prairie.edu	BA, BMin, BTh, AA	<b>Online: &gt;10. Dist.: Cert., AA, BA.</b> M&PT: Cert., AA, BA		<b>Online: &gt;10. Dist.: &gt;10</b>
Providence College and Seminary, Otterburne, Man., 204-433-7488, info@prov.ca, www.prov.ca	BA	M&PT: Cert., Dipl., Part BA	MA, MDiv, MMin, DMin	<b>Online: &gt;10. Dist.: Part MA.</b> M&PT: MA, MDiv, DMin
Redeemer University College, Ancaster, Ont., 905-648-2131, recruitment@redeemer.ca, www.redeemer.ca	BA, BSc, BEd	<b>Dist.: &lt;10.</b> M&PT: Cert., BA, BSc		
Regent College, Vancouver, 604-224-3245, admissions@regent-college.edu, www.regent-college.edu			MDiv, MCS, ThM, DipCS	<b>Dist.: Dipl., Part MCS/MDiv.</b> M&PT: Dipl., Part MCS/MDiv/ThM
Rocky Mountain College, Calgary, 403-284-5100, admissions@rockymountaincollege.ca, www.rockymountaincollege.ca	BA, BRS	M&PT: Cert., Dipl., BRS, BA		
St. Stephen's University, St. Stephen, N.B., 506-466-1781, ssu@ssu.ca, www.ssu.ca	BA, BMin, part BIS	<b>Online: &lt;10, Cert.</b> M&PT: Cert., BA	MMin	M&PT: Dipl., Part MMin
Steinbach Bible College, Steinbach, Man., 204-326-6451, info@sbccollege.ca, www.sbccollege.ca	BA	<b>Dist.: &lt;10.</b> M&PT: Cert., Dipl., BA		
Summit Pacific College, Abbotsford, B.C., 604-853-7491, www.summitpacific.ca	BA, BRE	<b>Online: &gt;10, Cert., Dipl. Dist.: &gt;10, Cert., Dipl.</b> M&PT: >10, Cert., Dipl.		
Taylor University College & Seminary, Edmonton, 780-431-5200, info@taylor-edu.ca, www.taylor-edu.ca	BA	M&PT: Cert., BA	MDiv, MTS, MA	<b>Online: &lt;10. Dist.: &lt;10</b> M&PT: Dipl., MA, MDiv
The King's University College, Edmonton, 780-465-3500, admissions@kingsu.ca, www.kingsu.ca	BA, BSc, BCom, BMus, BEd	M&PT: Cert., Dipl., BA, BSc, BCom, BMus		
Trinity Western University and ACTS Seminaries, Langley, B.C., 604-888-7511, mps@twu.ca, www.twu.ca	AA, BA, BSc, BScN, BBA, BEd, BHK	<b>Online: &gt;10. Dist.: &lt;10.</b> M&PT: Cert., Part. BA/BSc	MA, MBA, MScN, MDiv, MCoun, MTS, ThM, DMin	<b>Online: &lt;10. Dist.: &lt;10.</b> M&PT: Dipl., MTS, DMin, Part MDiv/MA/ThM
Tyndale University College & Seminary, Toronto, 416-226-6380, info@tyndale.ca, www.tyndale.ca	BRE, BA	<b>Online: &gt;10. Dist.: &lt;10.</b> M&PT: Cert., BRE, BA	MTS, MDiv, ThM, DMin	<b>Online: &gt;10. Dist.: &lt;10.</b> M&PT: Dipl., MA, MTS, MDiv, ThM, DMin
Vanguard College, Edmonton, 780-452-0808, info@vanguardcollege.com, www.vanguardcollege.com, www.ibolt.com	BA, BTh, BRS	<b>Online: Cert., Dipl., BTh.</b> M&PT: Cert., Dipl., Part BA/BTh		
William and Catherine Booth College, Winnipeg, 204-947-6701, wcbc@204-947-6701, wcbc@boothcollege.ca, www.boothcollege.ca	BA, BSW	<b>Online: Cert., Part BA. Dist.: Cert., Part BA.</b> M&PT: Cert., Part BA/BSW		

# Blind Religion

By James Beverley



Things done in the name of religion can make us blush, but they should also lead us to self-examination

**I**tem: A female Hindu guru in Florida convinces her followers she will float up to heaven unless they buy her bracelets of heavy gold to weigh her down.

Item: An independent pastor in Ontario convinces his followers they should mortgage their homes to pay for his vacations.

Item: A former Seventh-day Adventist pastor convinces his New Mexico flock that seven virgins have to lie naked with him in order to fulfil Bible prophecy.

Item: An ex-Alliance pastor convinces the female members of his group to practise sacred prostitution for Jesus.

G. K. Chesterton wrote in the early 1900s that “religion is dangerous.” It’s just as true in our century. The four cases mentioned above are proof but even they are rather tame. Last November Muslim militants killed and maimed hundreds in Mumbai, India. In another November, 30 years ago, Jim Jones led more than 900 of his followers to death at their compound in Guyana.

I am currently involved in investigating a church near Toronto that will be featured in a *W-Five* documentary on CTV. The case involves allegations of brainwashing, destruction of family life, sexual immorality and financial abuse.

While some issues remain unclear, there are parts of the church story that boggle my mind. One of the members justifies divorcing her husband because God told her to do so in order to bring him back to church. The pastor (a 60-year-old, single male) defends living with a young woman in his house. He admits being attracted to her but also claims purity and innocence. Both he and his followers dismiss concerns about appearance.

Given such cases, it is no wonder people argue that religion is bad. In his book *The End of Religion* (NavPress, 2007), Ontario pastor Bruxy Cavey speaks directly to this issue by conceding religion may be bad but then asserting that, nevertheless, Jesus is great.

Ironically, warning against religion is no sure solution because even the name of Jesus will be used to justify folly and evil. In fact, in every example mentioned above, Jesus is invoked as part of the story. The Hindu guru claims Jesus led her to Hinduism. Muslim terrorists justify their killings in the names of both

the prophet Muhammad and the prophet Jesus.

What is amazing is that all this stuff is carried out without blinking. There seems to be no hint of doubt, shame, uncertainty or awareness that a wrong turn has been taken.

Take the situation of the ex-Adventist pastor. His name is Wayne Bent and he now goes by the spiritual name of Michael Travesser. In December he was on trial in New Mexico on charges of sexual molestation related to two of the seven virgins who were under age. One of my friends was an expert witness in court and told me Bent has no sense of wrongdoing. He really believes he is living out the drama of the Book of Revelation as God’s messiah for this final day.

It is depressing but actually quite easy to see the blindness in these rather bizarre cases. The far more difficult task is to see blindness in our own spiritual journeys, our own churches, our own denominations and our own theological paradigms.

Let me ask a string of questions to start us thinking. Do we spend too little on the starving children of the world? Has our eschatology caused us to minimize the need for caring for our planet? Has our evangelical faith created unnecessary barriers with people of other faiths? Have I asked my spouse or my friends to help me with my blind spots? Am I abusing the grace of God to ignore sin in my life? Have we asked the Holy Spirit to open our eyes? Are we anchored in Jesus, the Solid Rock?

There is nothing better than hearing that God delivers people from spiritual blindness. In his new book, *Illegitimate*, Brian Mackert tells of his exit from a polygamous Mormon home (four mothers and 31 children) and how the gospel healed him from emotional abuse. Nansook Hong left the Unification Church though she was raised to follow Sun Myung Moon from infancy. She writes in her memoir that “Moon had failed God, but God had not failed me. It was God alone that comforted me.” After abandoning the Hindu god Sathya Sai Baba, Tal Brooke records in *Avatar of Night* how Jesus met his deepest needs for truth and cleansing. ■

G. K. Chesterton wrote in the early 1900s that “religion is dangerous.” It’s just as true in our century

*James A. Beverley is professor of Christian thought and ethics at Tyndale Seminary. His latest book, The Nelson’s Illustrated Guide to Religions, will be released in winter 2009.*

# Will I See Jesus When I Die?

By James Peterson



**R**elated to the question of seeing Jesus is the question: Will I be in heaven right away when I die? There have been three major responses to Scripture related to these questions. Martin Luther took quite literally the words “fell asleep” in Acts 7:60. When those who belong to our Lord die, they fall asleep until woken up at the final Day of Judgment. “Cemetery” is Latin for sleeping place. We are asleep so the intervening time until the final Day of Judgment passes by without our experiencing or remembering it. It is like falling fast asleep at 10 p.m. and feeling as if one is waking an instant later at 6 a.m. Eight hours have passed but one does not remember them.

In contrast John Calvin pointed to the “souls of those who had been slain” calling for judgment in Revelation 6:9 as an indication that saints who have died are awake and aware of what is going on here. They are with Jesus in an intermediate state of paradise until the final judgment. Jesus promised the repentant thief on the cross: “This day you will be with me in paradise” (Luke 23:43). After time in paradise in Christ’s presence, at the final Day of Judgment, the state of heaven begins. The Roman Catholic Church also affirms an intermediate state but calls it purgatory because, by that church’s oral tradition, it is a trying place that purges one of sin until one is fit to enter heaven.

For Augustine the martyrs of Revelation 6:9, who can see life on Earth as it unfolds, are saints after the Day of Judgment looking back at what transpired before Judgment Day. At the point of death, God, who created time and is not limited by it, takes a believer out of the earthly timeline and into an eternal one that includes the Judgment Day. This might be like the skipping of space that Philip seems to experience after meeting the Ethiopian eunuch (Acts 8:39-40). Or moving directly ahead to the heavenly city as Faithful does after his martyrdom in John Bunyan’s *Pilgrim’s Progress*.

What does each one think then of the proclamation in 1 Thessalonians 4:16 that “the dead in Christ will rise first”? For Luther and Augustine the text refers to the first conscious resurrection on Judgment Day. For Calvin it refers either to a resurrection to paradise a long time before Judgment Day

or to our physical bodies raised to reunite with our souls at the start of heaven on Judgment Day.

What does each one make of Moses and Elijah visiting with Jesus at the Transfiguration in Mark 9:2-8? For Luther God has woken them early for this special purpose.

For Calvin they were visiting from paradise. For Augustine they were time travelling from “post” resurrection since all time is present before God.

Granted these different readings, notice that each takes into account what Scripture does say explicitly:

(1) “It is appointed to human beings to die once and then the judgment” (Hebrews 9:27). There is no ghostly haunting on Earth, seance communication, or no reincarnation to try again.

(2) “The dead in Christ will rise first” (1 Thessalonians 4:16-17). The resurrection is not completed until the Day of Judgment.

(3) Death has been defeated. While there is still the pain of loss for those temporarily left behind, there need not be grief for the child of God who has gone ahead. One should not be born to this life or the next prematurely. There are things God intends to work in and through each of us here but, when the time is right, death is graduation, homecoming, when we will arrive for the first time in that place where we are meant to be always.

(4) At least the subjective experience is that, at the point of death, the child of God meets the One who has been sustaining him or her all along. Luther, Calvin and Augustine all agree on this. The next life for God’s children, beyond our comprehension, is at its essence being in the presence of our Lord (Revelation 21:3-4).

Yes! When we die we will see Jesus! ☒

Death is graduation, homecoming, when we will arrive for the first time in that place where we are meant to be always

*James C. Peterson is the R. A. Hope professor of theology, ethics and worldview at McMaster Divinity College in Hamilton, Ont. Representatives of 10 seminaries affiliated with The Evangelical Fellowship of Canada take turns writing this column. Please send your questions to: FTeditor@efc-canada.com or Faith Today, Ask a Theologian, M.I.P. Box 3745, Markham, ON L3R 0Y4.*

# 614 Thorncliffe Park, Toronto

By Charlene de Haan



Members of a Christian network are befriending – and living among – South Asian immigrants.

Statistics Canada predicts visible minorities, mainly South Asian and Chinese, will be majority populations in Toronto, Vancouver and Montreal by 2017. That's already true in Thorncliffe Park, a little-known part of Toronto where 35 apartment buildings house 30,000 people – 90 per cent of them Muslim. A small group of Christians ([www.614thorncliffepark.com](http://www.614thorncliffepark.com)) has chosen to live in this neighbourhood.

*Canada's Largest New-Immigrant Neighbourhood*  
Thorncliffe Park Drive was originally a racetrack, but the grandstands were replaced with the 35 apartment buildings. According to the 2006 census, more than half the Thorncliffe population arrived in Canada in the past five years. Eighty per cent are visible minorities, many from countries where it is illegal to convert to another faith. South Asians, many of whom speak Urdu, Dari, Punjabi and Pashto, make up 66 per cent of the population. While this high concentration of new immigrants is impressive, Thorncliffe is mainly famous for its school of 1,900 students. Thorncliffe Park Public School, Kindergarten to Grade 5, is the largest elementary school in North America! Representing 47 countries of origin, 93 per cent of the students do not claim English as their first language.

## *A Church Without Walls*

The pastor\* of the 614 Thorncliffe Park Network says: "We couldn't believe an area like Thorncliffe exists in Canada. How could a community with the largest immigrant population in the country have only one church? Shouldn't Chris-

\*The pastor is unnamed in order to protect relationships being built in the community.

tians be moving toward these areas, not away from them?"

As Christians become aware of areas like Thorncliffe, we need to "step back and redefine how we think of church," reflects the pastor, who advocates a relational approach.

"If we truly believe the church *is* the people, then we must learn from Jesus because He functioned almost completely relationally." People who join the Thorncliffe community of faith live among the people – as Jesus did. They live in the same highrises, shop in nearby stores and send their kids to community schools.

Those interested in joining the network are "often the generation of 20- and 30-somethings who are looking for a smaller faith community with evidence of biblical authenticity applied every single day," says the pastor.

The result is a 24/7 church without walls. The Thorncliffe team demonstrates its philosophy of "living incarnationally by bringing together daily life, work and church all into one cohesive bond." Rather than inviting neighbours to scheduled church programs, team members "love them as they ride the elevator together, walk down the hall or shop in the mall."

Team members also get involved in local schools, the community centre or wherever they see an opportunity to be "salt and light" through the daily exchange of life. Instead of sponsoring a soccer ministry, they play soccer with kids in the park.

They take their inspiration from Gospel accounts of Jesus meeting one person and accessing families and villages. Jesus didn't invite them to the synagogue, he dropped by their homes, ate with them and shared stories about the kingdom.

Church historian Wayne Meeks suggests that the first church had a very different view of what it meant to be a disciple of Christ than we do today. “Becoming a Christian meant something like the experience of an immigrant who leaves his or her native land and then assimilates the culture of a new, adopted homeland” (*The Origins of Christian Morality*, Yale University Press, 1993). In other words, becoming a disciple wasn’t simply a heart change and changing moral behaviour, it involved the transformation of cultural values as well. Apparently, what’s old is new again.

### *What Do the Neighbours Say?*

How do these ethnically diverse neighbours perceive the Thorncliffe Park Christian community? One neighbour is quick to point out “They pray for me.” Another says he notices how “They are always helping people.”

Through the Salvation Army, the Thorncliffe Christians pass out winter jackets. They run summer festivals and teach Canadian traditions while building friendships. Neighbours frequently ask for help with immigration papers, English practice or homework for their kids.

The pastor comments: “Often I say, ‘We don’t do anything – but we do everything.’ We don’t funnel people into programs but everyone knows we’re available for practical help and prayer.”

### *A Growing Community of Faith*

“Frequently there is a need to deprogram church traditions,” says the pastor, “in order to see with new eyes how Christ equipped the disciples to share His message.” In this neighbourhood, the institutional church is completely foreign. Many ask questions about the Christian tradition and some request a Bible. Small groups are a mix of Christians and the curious.

Leaders call it a godparent approach, where neighbours are

sponsored into the faith community to a deeper and deeper degree. The Thorncliffe team has found a model for its ministry in David Garrison’s 10 disciplines of “movemental Christianity,” which include extraordinary prayer, abundant seed-sowing, the authoritative Word of God, intentional church-planting and more ([www.churchplantingmovements.com](http://www.churchplantingmovements.com)). Garrison would say “Churches and believers are multiplied as Jesus multiplied the loaves and fishes.”

### *A Collaborative Partnership*

Team members have been moving into this neighbourhood over the past few years, praying and waiting on God. The answer came through a miraculous partnership of four strategic groups. The Mennonite Brethren and Vision Ministries drew up a partnership to see a local church established in Thorncliffe. Leaside Bible Chapel played a partnering role along with the Salvation Army, whose headquarters is one block from Thorncliffe Park Drive. The result? A Mennonite Vision Salvation Brethren Ministries Army Church!

The challenge for the Church in urban areas like Thorncliffe is immense, but creative partnerships like the international 614 Network may prove to be an inspired answer.

### *Are There Challenges?*

“The challenges of church-planting are enormous,” admits the pastor of this little group. “But in an area like Thorncliffe Park, it requires a bona fide miracle!” In such situations it is a comfort to remember God’s promise: “Look at the nations and watch – and be utterly amazed. For I am going to do something in your days that you would not believe, even if you were told” (Habakkuk 1:5). ■

*Charlene de Haan is a freelance writer in Toronto. She also co-ordinates the EFC’s Missional Church Project. Read all the profiles in this ongoing series at [www.faithtoday.ca](http://www.faithtoday.ca).*



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# What's "Congregational"?

By David Schrader



The national pastor of the Congregational Christian Churches in Canada introduces his church family

**T**he Congregational Christian Churches in Canada came into existence in 1989. Since then we have been occasionally asked, "What is a Congregational Christian Church?" and "What is congregationalism?"

The short answer is that the word "congregational" refers to a style of local church organization and governance (often called "polity"). To some the term may also imply a connection or alignment with the historic Congregationalists of the Puritan era of the 1600s, but very few Congregationalists today make this connection.

Congregationalism is most often misunderstood as a kind of church democracy in which everyone has a vote and the church is governed by majority rule. While this description is true to an extent, it misrepresents the deeper truth of what we understand as the congregational model of church government for today.

Congregational decisions are not simply right by virtue of being made by the congregation. We always need to remind ourselves that the voice of the people (*vox populi*) is not always tantamount to the voice of God (*vox dei*).

Congregationalism may be seen as a form of government by the people (the *demos*, from which we get the word "democratic") in contrast with other forms of government labelled by academics as aristocratic (rule by the fittest), oligarchic (rule by a few), monarchic (rule by one) or anarchic (rule by no one).

Yet congregationally governed churches are also a monarchy because Christ is the King and believers are His willing and submissive subjects. Christ alone is the true head of the Church.

A congregationally governed church is also an oligarchy or aristocracy, overseen by a plurality of Christ's appointed and qualified under-shepherds. These leaders, along with their congregations, are responsible for the doctrine they listen to, the disputes they allow to fester, the discipline that must be carried out on unrepentant members, and the regenerate quality of their church membership.

In a congregational model, the gathered church deals with matters of discipline (1 Corinthians 5:1-13), doctrine (Galatians 1:6-9, 2 Timothy 4:3), personal disputes (Matthew 18) and church membership (2 Corinthians 2:6).

It is in these specific areas that the similarity of congregationalism to a democracy is most apparent. The reason is simple. Members are biblically responsible for casting their "votes" according to how biblical principles are brought to bear on church decisions.

Given these basic foundations, it should come as no surprise that the Congregational Christian Churches in Canada is diverse and eclectic. At the simplest level, we are a fellowship of diverse evangelical churches where every local church enjoys the freedom to control its own affairs. Yet our 73 member churches also agree to function interdependently and co-operatively.

Together we support church planting, home and foreign missions, and mutually agreed implementations of the vision and plans of our national annual meetings. Our churches also support a national board of directors, a national pastor and support staff, and various other committees – all of them working to achieve mutually agreed national objectives.

As our world continues to look for authentic leadership, the congregational church model can provide just such an opportunity. With corporate greed and scandals making headlines every day, it is obvious why our world is so cynical toward leadership. The recent indifference expressed by the lack of voter turnout in our most recent election is indicative of this cynicism toward leadership. The church can and must meet this challenge of leadership.

The church today can be one arena where the example of effective leadership is modelled and learned. A healthy congregational polity can provide for the development of church leadership and the proper accountability for the same. It can foster a living example of what the Apostle Paul meant when he said: "He makes the whole body fit together perfectly. As each part does its own special work, it helps the other parts grow, so that the whole body is healthy and growing and full of love" (Ephesians 4:16 NLT). ■

**The church today can be one arena where the example of effective leadership is modelled and learned**

*David Schrader is national pastor of the Congregational Christian Churches in Canada, which is headquartered in Brantford, Ont. This column continues a series by affiliates of The Evangelical Fellowship of Canada. For a list of affiliates, see [www.evangelicalfellowship.ca/affiliates](http://www.evangelicalfellowship.ca/affiliates).*

## GUARD US, GUIDE US: DIVINE LEADING IN LIFE'S DECISIONS

Authors: J. I. Packer and Carolyn Nystrom

**W**e human beings function out of fear, especially during the past 150 years or so. But the antidote can be found in the guidance God generously extends to us according to this new book by Vancouver theologian J. I. Packer and co-author Carolyn Nystrom.

Even spiritually astute Christians “still feel anxious about guidance and find decision-making spiritually uneasy and problematic,” the authors contend. And so they lead readers to focus on Psalm 23, which they call “a biblical classic on guidance, countering all the anxiety we may feel on the subject, with all the assurance and reassurance which in that case we need.”

(It is their contention that “personal messages from heaven are not and never were God’s usual way of leading and guiding.” God guides through His revealed word, the Bible, and there is much more to His guidance than divine yeses or no’s as we struggle to make life decisions.)

The book builds on Psalm 23, proposing that we are “Shepherd guided” (led by God), that God leads “in paths of righteousness” and nowhere else (God’s guidance will always operate in sync with biblical promises) and that we ought to pursue our relationship with God as closely as we can when we have decisions to make.

Good biblical exegesis, solid reference points and examples from Christian classics provide ample reinforcement throughout, resulting in a useful handbook for the Christian community including those who have been disappointed by superstitious or Oprah-esque approaches to God’s guidance.

Packer and Nystrom ultimately seek to show that God’s guidance is a covenant aspect of His relationship with us to guard us from sin and Satan and to bring us to glory. Secondly, our quest for guidance should be a quest for wisdom to cope with all the demands of decision-making. The gift of God-centred peace is a confirmation of wisdom attained.

This beneficial book is one to be studied and savoured.  
—R. WAYNE HAGERMAN

## MAKING THE BEST OF IT: FOLLOWING CHRIST IN THE REAL WORLD

Author: John G. Stackhouse Jr.

**T**wo questions, according to John G. Stackhouse Jr., lie at the heart of Christian religion: “Who is Jesus Christ, for us, today?” and “Who are we, for Jesus Christ, today?” The first,

posed by Dietrich Bonhoeffer more than half a century ago, continues to influence Christian ethics but it is the second question that forms the heart of this book.

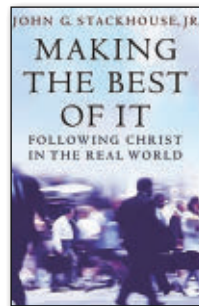
Stackhouse says Christians from modern societies tend to encounter only “two models of serious engagement” with the world: “cultural transformation,” the attempt to so reshape society that it embraces Christian values, and “holy distinctiveness,” the decision to withdraw from society into one’s own Christian community. He believes there is a better way.

Not wanting to reach his own conclusions “too easily,” Stackhouse provides an extensive look at four key Christian thinkers: H. Richard Niebuhr, C. S. Lewis, Reinhold Niebuhr and Dietrich Bonhoeffer. Investing the time to understand how others have wrestled with the challenge of living Christianly in this world will, in Stackhouse’s view, guard against all-too-prevalent glib and shallow theories of Christian engagement with the surrounding society.

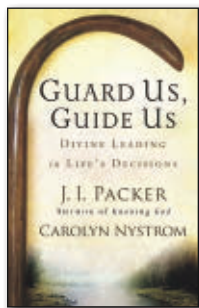
Having heard these thinkers out, Stackhouse develops his view by exploring how we discern God’s will, formulate ethics, establish procedural principles and apply our ethical theories to modern-day life. He describes his view as “renewed Christian realism.” It is a call to live “making the best of it.” It is to recognize the world in which we live and participate accordingly as true representatives of Jesus Christ.

Stackhouse demonstrates a thorough grasp of his subject, presenting a clear, carefully crafted thesis infused with genuine humility. Miroslav Volf says: “If you are satisfied neither with the program of a whole-scale transformation of the world nor with the project of building alternative enclaves in the world, this is the book for you.”

Whether or not you accept Stackhouse’s conclusions, you will find this an enriching read. —DAVID DANIELS



Oxford University Press, 2008. 384 pages. \$29.95 (hardcover)



Baker Books, 2008. 270 pages. \$22.99 (hardcover)

## SAVE MY CHILDREN: THE STORY OF A FATHER'S LOVE

Author: Emily Wierenga

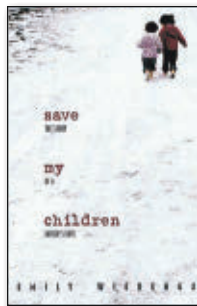
**W**ithering under a stepfather who neglected and abused her, Stormy turned to the solace of imaginary friends. The man who was to care for her after her mother’s death routinely used her as a washerwoman and a punching bag, and then left her at home alone for weeks on end with empty cupboards. Stormy became frail, filthy and likely near death until the day she awoke in a clean bed with a kind woman mopping her brow, smiling like an angel and smelling like cinnamon.

The woman’s name was Elsie Jespersen. She and her husband, Harvey, operated Bethany Homes for Children in



Wetaskiwin, Alta. Stormy soon flourished under their care and made so many new friends at the home she no longer needed her imaginary ones.

Stormy's story is only one of the many Emily Wierenga shares in her debut novel *Save My Children*, a fictional retelling of the true story of the founders of Bethany Homes for Children. From 1948 to 1991 the Jespersens fostered more than 800 children, caring for up to 55 at a time. Their home was set in old army barracks on an expanse of Alberta farmland that they transformed into a haven of hope and a hospital for broken little souls. Mended by love, "children who had never been taught how to smile ... cracked the world in half with laughter."



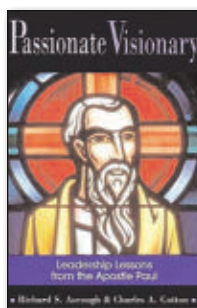
BayRidge Books, 2008. 303 pages. \$18.95 (paper)

A freelance writer and artist who served on the Bethany Homes board of directors, Wierenga inspires readers with illustrations of sacrificial love, entertains with the antics that took place on the farm and encourages with evidence of God's provision honouring the Jespersen's faith and obedience. This compelling and heartwarming novel is available from [www.castlequaybooks.com](http://www.castlequaybooks.com). —SHARON L. FAWCETT

## PASSIONATE VISIONARY: LEADERSHIP LESSONS FROM THE APOSTLE PAUL

Authors: Richard S. Ascough and Charles A. Cotton

**D**rs. Richard Ascough and Charles (Sandy) Cotton, both from Queen's University in Kingston, Ont., have compiled a worthy treatise on the Apostle Paul's life and leadership style. Pertinent for today's layperson and those who are directly involved in business or church leadership, this book offers practical help and inspirational encouragement.



Hendrickson, 2006. 204 pages. \$16.95 (paper)

The authors format their topics into four handy sections beginning with a description of what being a "passionate visionary" means in today's world. Next comes a focus on developing centrality in a leader's relationships, which includes encouraging followers, a willingness to risk personal transparency, and deepening relationships by networking and staying in touch.

Ascough and Cotton then delve into the challenging issue of nurturing community, which often includes overcoming abrasive encounters (from both a leader's and a follower's perspectives), understanding definitive and healthy boundaries, and working toward an ethos of shared leadership and teamwork.

The authors round up their lively discussion on Paul's life as a leader in the New Testament churches by noting

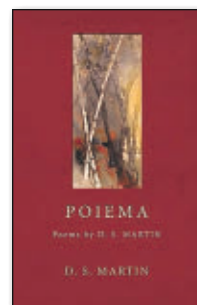
how he celebrated diversity, advocated for others, deliberately gave up control and modelled compassion as his bottom line.

Each of the 16 chapters opens with a generous portion of Scripture focusing on specific aspects of church life as found in Galatians, Romans, Philippians, Corinthians, Thessalonians and Philemon. Readers will appreciate how the authors consistently transition between Paul's leadership skills and style to today's current business/church challenges, making their observations and suggestions realistic to place into practice. —MICHELE HOWE

## POIEMA

Author: D. S. Martin

**I**n *Poiema*, a collection of 66 poems, award-winning Canadian poet D. S. Martin fleshes out the book's Greek title. From the opening "Cædmon" ("You stammer a protest as Moses did / but he calls you to sing") to the final "Poiema" ("Even more so we are His workmanship His poem"), he reveals the essence of one of God's poems – himself.



Wipf and Stock, 2008. 96 pages. \$13 (paper)

Martin grows out of rich family soil that stretches from Asia's mission fields to Europe's theatre of war. We savour the pieces that describe his ancestors and relatives: "Family trees / filled with testifying birds."

It's easy to identify with the tension in Martin's poems about faith. He declares: "I believe in the ram caught in the thicket the bread / that came down from heaven." Yet sometimes God feels absent to him. There are Bethlehem mothers who receive no angelic warning. Some who fall among thieves are not rescued by Good Samaritans.

Woven throughout the collection are poems about mundane things too – shopping carts, garden gnomes, hands, phone calls. They resonate with familiarity and amuse with whimsy. But even in these, Martin manages to turn our attention to the serious or eternal, often with startling last lines.

Martin's poetic versatility adds interest and pleasure. In addition to free verse there are prose poems, haiku and a variety of traditional forms from a ghazal (type of Persian poem) to a villanelle (French form with rhyme and repeated lines). However, nowhere does he stray from his self-imposed form of no punctuation (in-line tab spaces replace some as in the quotes above) and the use of "&" instead of the word "and."

*Poiema* is Martin's poetic DNA – a collection that reveals a skilful artist with a unique perspective. But these poems are also universal. They probe, delight and spur us on. Finally, they leave us with hope and a challenge. For we too are God's poems. —VIOLET NESDOLY

# The Classified Network

Classified ad deadline for March/April 2009 issue: Feb. 6

Tel.: 705-222-5025

E-mail: FTads@efc-canada.com

## CAREERS

### Director

The Leadership Exchange is an emerging organization of the Christian Reformed Church in North America, focusing on promoting healthy leadership formation that embodies and deepens Christian values and practices in the church and society.

The Leadership Exchange is currently seeking a Director to develop and implement its vision and mission. Qualified candidates must have a committed faith in Christ and evidence of an understanding of, and commitment to, the Reformed theological tradition. They must give evidence of a history of successful leadership in an organization, knowledge of the integration

of leadership theory and biblical perspectives, and demonstrated ability to creatively teach leadership and engage others in a process of interactive learning.

A masters degree is required and additional education is desirable. Visit our website at [www.crcna.org](http://www.crcna.org) for complete job description and to apply. Application deadline is January 31, 2009.

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AMBROSE  
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The Board of Governors announces the search for the President of Ambrose University College. The Search Committee of the Board invites nominations, expressions of interest and applications for the position of President and CEO. The appointment, for an initial five year term, begins July 1, 2009.

Ambrose University College, the official Canadian school of both The Christian and Missionary Alliance in Canada and The Church of the Nazarene Canada, came into being with the merger of Alliance University College (formerly Canadian Bible College and Canadian Theological Seminary) and Nazarene University College (formerly Canadian Nazarene College) in May 2007. This fall Ambrose opened the doors to a brand new 40-acre campus in the city of Calgary's beautiful Southwest, the culmination of a \$37 million construction project. With an on-campus student body of over 600, Ambrose currently offers 19 undergraduate programs in Arts and Science and Theology and 13 Seminary programs.

The new Ambrose President will be a highly qualified and gifted person who will work with the Ambrose community to achieve its vision of being a vibrant university college of exemplary quality, committed to the historic Christian faith, distinguished by the excellence of its programs, the character of its graduates and noted for its redemptive impact on Church and society.

A detailed position profile for the presidency may be viewed online at: [www.ambrose.edu](http://www.ambrose.edu).

Consideration of candidates will begin on January 9, 2009. Nominations, expressions of interest, and applications should be submitted in confidence to the address shown below. In accordance with Canadian immigration requirements, priority will be given to Canadian citizens and permanent residents of Canada. Ambrose University College welcomes applications from all qualified women and men, including visible minorities, aboriginal people and persons with disabilities.

Applications may be sent to:

Mr. Alex Baum- Chair, Presidential Search Committee: Ambrose University College  
150 Ambrose Circle SW, Calgary, AB T3H 0L5

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# The Classifieds Network

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## Executive Minister (BCOQ)

The Baptist Convention of Ontario and Quebec (BCOQ) seeks a proven, passionate Christian leader to provide visionary, spiritual leadership and direct the work of the Convention. Serving as CEO of the Convention, s/he gives visible, inspirational leadership, cultivates a sense of identity, directs executive staff, oversees plans/initiatives to further BCOQ's mission and represents BCOQ in the Christian community.

Further information is available at <http://www.baptist.ca/pastors/job-postings.php?id=179>.

BCOQ is an equal opportunity employer. All candidates whose training, experience, aptitudes and adaptability meet the requirements for the job will be considered, subject to acceptance of the BCOQ lifestyle policy.

The Search Committee will begin review-

ing applications by January 30, 2009, and will welcome applications until the position is filled. Submit letters of application and resumés by mail: BCOQ Executive Minister Search, 100-304 The East Mall, Etobicoke, ON M9B 6E2 or email: [emsearch@baptist.ca](mailto:emsearch@baptist.ca).

## Assistant Pastor

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## Contact:

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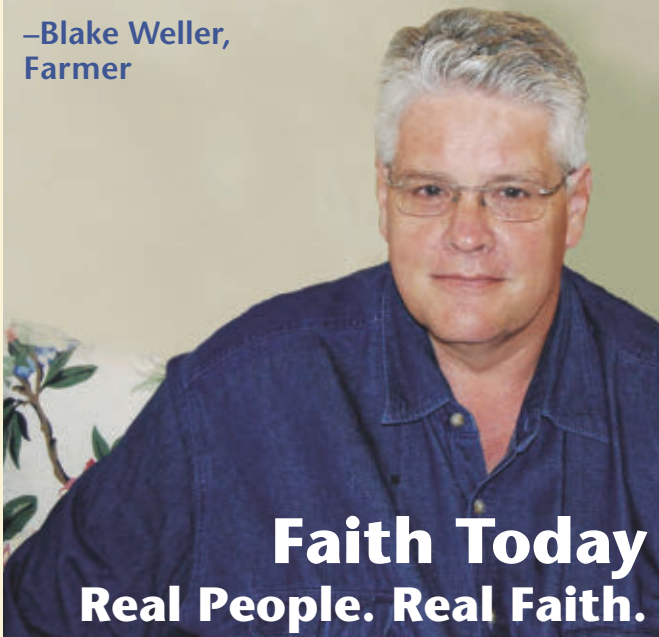
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**Tyndale Seminary**, a trans-denominational graduate school in the evangelical, Protestant tradition, invites applications and nominations for:

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Tyndale invites qualified candidates to apply for the position, however Canadian citizens and permanent residents will be given priority. Applications should include a cover letter highlighting the applicant's fit with the position, a curriculum vitae, and the contact information for three references. The successful candidate will affirm Tyndale's Statement of Faith and Community Standards. The search committee will begin its review of applications immediately. Start date is **July 1, 2009**.

Interested candidates should submit documentation in confidence to: The Search Committee for the Pastoral Ministry Position, c/o Ms. Tina Kim, Assistant to the Dean, Tyndale Seminary, 25 Ballyconnor Court, Toronto, Ontario, Canada, M2M 4B3. Email: [tkim@tyndale.ca](mailto:tkim@tyndale.ca)

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