

BRIERCREST ANNUAL REPORT

2024-2025

*Stories of
faithfulness from the
heart of Briercrest.*



2024-25 Highlights



ACAC Mens Basketball Championship

In 2025, the men's basketball team celebrated an ACAC championship win, marking a season defined by hard work, teamwork, and excellence in competition.



Youthquake 2025

Youthquake 2025 welcomed 1,700 high school students and youth workers. The theme, *In the Beginning* (Genesis 1), invited them into a discussion about what it means that we were all created in His image.



Korean Students Learn English at Briercrest!

30 Korean grade 10 students arrived for a month-long English program. Our TESOL students, Elisa Cara and Karlene Thiessen, together with staff member Angela Lim, put their training to work in teaching and mentoring.



Sports Camps

This summer, our campus was alive with athletic camps, welcoming nearly 700 young athletes. Remarkably, about half of these students came from unchurched homes. These camps created powerful opportunities for them to hear the gospel and tangibly experience God's love through our coaches, staff, and student leaders.



BRIERCREST
CHRISTIAN ACADEMY

Head Count: 149
Grads: 37



BRIERCREST
COLLEGE

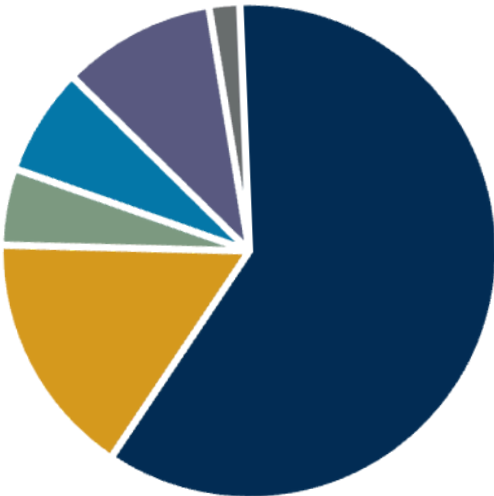
Head Count: 426
Grads: 113



BRIERCREST
SEMINARY

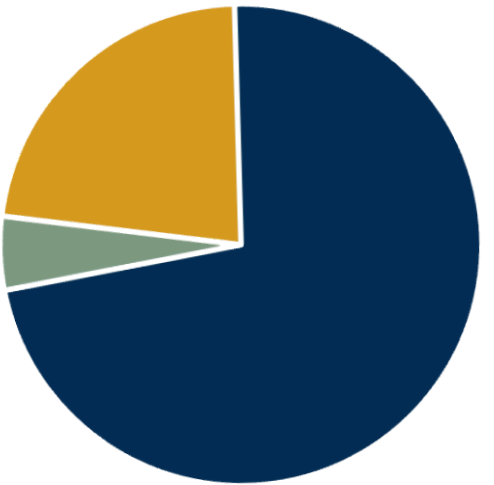
Head Count: 241
Grads: 41

2024-25 FINANCIAL UPDATE



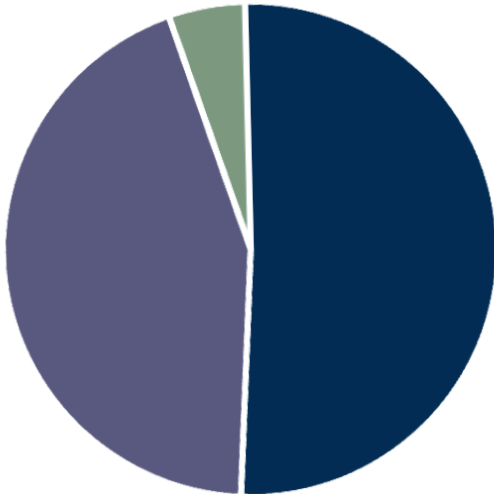
Revenue - Operating

- Tuition and Fees: **60%**
- Donations: **16%**
- Business Sales: **5%**
- Rentals: **7%**
- Other Revenue: **10%**
- Government Grants and Assistance: **2%**



Donations

- Operating: **\$2,476,587**
- Scholarships/ Special Projects: **\$775,046**
- Capital: **\$169,388**
- Total Donations: **\$3,421,021**



Expenses - Operating

- Salaries and Benefits: **51%**
- Operating Expenses: **44%**
- Business Purchases: **5%**

A Message from President Michael Pawelke



For ninety years, God has been faithful to Briercrest. As we mark this significant anniversary, I find myself deeply grateful—for the Lord’s sustaining grace, and for friends like you who have stood with this ministry through prayer and generous support.

Our guiding theme this year comes from Colossians 2:6–7: *“So then, just as you received Christ Jesus as Lord, continue to live your lives in him, rooted and built up in him, strengthened in the faith as you were taught, and overflowing with thankfulness.”* This verse captures both our heritage and our calling.

At Briercrest, we exist to provide an education that disciples—forming students who are deeply

rooted in Christ, strengthened in faith, and bold in grateful witness. In a world of competing ideologies and growing uncertainty, this mission has never been more urgent. Because of your partnership, students are being shaped spiritually and intellectually for lives of service, and the gospel continues to be carried into churches, communities, and nations around the world.

In the pages that follow, you will hear from faculty and staff who have devoted many years of service to Briercrest. They share highlights from their time here, their hopes for the future, and words of encouragement for the students and alumni whose lives they have helped shape. Together, their voices reflect the enduring heart and mission of this community.

Thank you for believing in this work. Your faithful giving and prayerful support make it possible for Briercrest to stand firm, grow strong, and move forward with confidence.

As we look ahead, I invite you to continue walking with us—praying for our students, staff, and faculty, and considering how God might lead you to invest further in this mission. Together, may we remain rooted, strengthened, and overflowing with thankfulness—for the glory of God.

Michael

A Life Shaped by Scripture: Carl Hinderager



Challenges and God's Faithfulness

In his early years of teaching, Carl found himself overextended—teaching full loads, coaching, travelling, and raising three young boys. Learning to pace himself became essential to sustaining a long and faithful ministry.

He also remembers earlier moments of God's provision, like the time he and Della had no money or food, and a woman at church unexpectedly handed him five dollars.

"Trust the Lord—He always takes care of us."

Where It All Began

Carl's Briercrest story began as a freshman at Youthquake, when he decided to give himself to the Lord. After that, "most everything good in life started to happen." He played college basketball, met his wife Della, embraced his studies, and made lifelong friends. Years later, returning as faculty became a natural way to give back to the place that had shaped him so deeply.

A Calling to Teach Scripture Faithfully

Carl's training was primarily in the Old Testament, but when he was hired, the dean asked him to teach the New Testament instead—a switchover he sees as God's provision in his life.

"My goal has always been to teach what Scripture says, not what I want it to say." He committed not only to teaching but to studying Scripture daily for his own growth. That posture has sustained his passion for teaching across five decades.



Highlights of a Long Ministry

One of Carl's most memorable early moments was coaching the men's basketball team to a national championship. This moment was made even more special when his parents came up from Montana to watch. But even more meaningful has been watching students grow in their faith.

"Seeing the lights come on—seeing students get serious about the Lord—that's more fulfilling than anything else."

Rooted in Scripture

Briercrest has always been anchored in God's Word, and Carl has spent his career studying and applying it. He sees teaching as a learning process for himself, even after five decades.

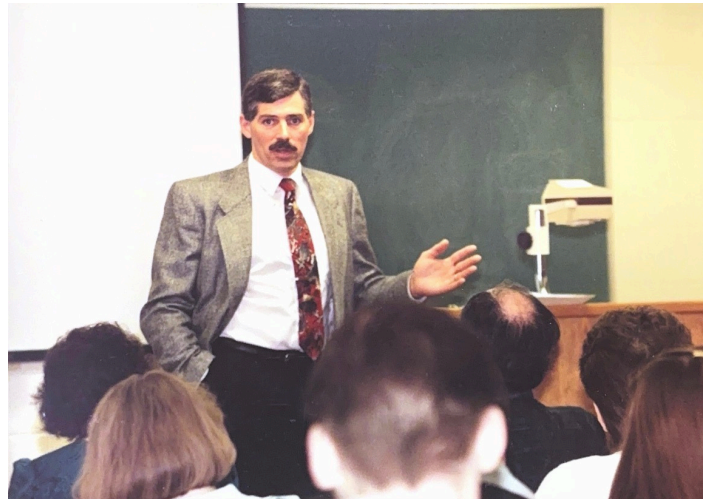
"For me, the best thing is the freedom I've been given to read scripture and study scripture and try to obey it and teach it without having to line up with some denominational dogmatic teaching...it's all part of the learning process. It's not just going over my notes that I've used for decades."

By continually returning to the Bible as both his authority and his classroom, Carl has modelled a lifelong posture of humility, obedience, and learning that has deeply shaped generations of students at Briercrest.

Gratitude and Hope for the Future

Above all, Carl is grateful for the privilege of being paid to study Scripture and to keep growing through teaching.

Looking ahead, he remains hopeful: "God has been in this place from the beginning. As long as we stay rooted in Scripture and obedience, He will continue to use Briercrest to advance His kingdom."



Encouraging Today's Students and Alumni

To students, Carl's advice is this:

"If you will read and study scripture and build the habit to do that, to meet God in scripture every day and obey what he said, you're going to keep growing the rest of your life. And that's a sweet deal."



A Lasting Legacy

Carl's life and ministry reflect the enduring truth at the heart of Briercrest: "The Word of our God shall stand forever."

A Faithful Journey of Ministry: Paul Magnus



Called Early, Shaped at Briercrest

Paul's journey at Briercrest began as a student. He spent two years in the high school, followed immediately by university studies. Initially, he planned to pursue pastoral ministry after graduating. While working on a farm to save money for another year of university, Henry Budd reached out and encouraged him to return to Briercrest once his farming was finished.

"My calling, really, on my journey was a sense that God made me and designed me for a purpose."

Leading with Vision and Purpose

By the time Paul became president, he had already served at Briercrest for over 30 years and brought a deep understanding of the institution and its needs. Building on the strong foundations and facilities established by his predecessors, Paul sensed a clear calling to focus on systems, team development, and institutional momentum. His goals were clear: increase enrolment, strengthen teamwork, and eliminate institutional debt. By the end of his presidency, student enrolment had reached its highest point in history, and the institution was debt-free.

Trusting God Through Financial Challenge

Serving as president brought many challenges, the greatest of which was managing finances. However, Paul witnessed God's remarkable provision, including a defining gift that helped achieve a critical financial goal.

"The mega challenge is having enough money and having enough friends who are willing to share their pool of resources, really their finances. And God was so good."



Learning Dependence on God

During Paul's leadership, he learned more than anything to "become more dependent on God and on Jesus as a partner." Personal resources may run out, but God's never do. "I've been involved on the staff side and the delivery side for 56 years. And I can just say, how can you not trust God in an environment that is God-centered, God-filtered, God-bathed, year upon year?"

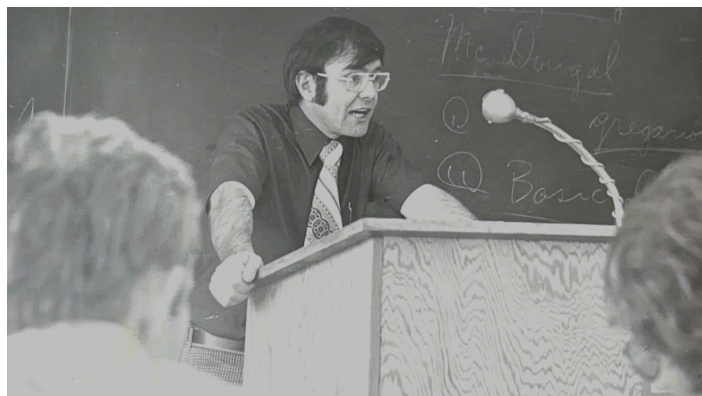
Shaped by Community

Paul developed a deep love for students and became a trusted advocate, opening his home with his wife, Jane, and investing in relationships beyond the classroom. Many of these connections have endured, with alumni becoming lifelong friends who welcome them wherever they go. Teaching remained central to Paul's calling, even as he took on leadership roles. He believed that every aspect of campus life—academics, athletics, worship, and the arts—formed a unified learning journey, shaping students through shared life, faith, and community.



Encouragement for Students and Alumni

Paul's advice to the students is this: "Team up. Team up with people who'll help you with life. Team up with the Holy Spirit, who will help you beyond life, not just in this life, but in eternity." To alumni, he shares this message: "First, stay connected with the institution. Find us, even if we're not always good at coming to find you. Second, support your church. Be part of building that body in every way you can."



Gratitude for Alumni

To the many alumni who have been part of his journey, Paul offers his heartfelt thanks. "God used your time here to build His kingdom—and He's still doing it. Thank you for continuing to support and pray for this place."

Hope for the Next Generation

Looking ahead, Paul has hope for Briercrest and the next generation: "The next generation is much more serious about promoting Christian values, family values, and the freedom to live out our faith and be acknowledged for it. I think our world is desperate for what Briercrest has to offer."

Working Wholeheartedly for the Lord

Paul's final encouragement is this: "One thing kept motivating me and gave me the confidence to take on each new challenge. It was part of my calling, and it's found in Colossians 3:17: 'And whatever you do, whether in word or deed, do it all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father through him.' Then, in verse 23: 'Whatever you do, work at it with all your heart, as working for the Lord, not for men.' Nothing compelled me more to pour myself wholly into what I was invited to do."

Faithful Partners in Ministry: Ken & Judy Guenter



A Calling They Never Expected

Ken and Judy's Briercrest story began long before they ever imagined serving here. As young students with hearts to serve God, they discovered in this community a depth of discipleship and biblical formation that changed the direction of their lives.

This place shaped them—and eventually they returned to help shape others.

Growing Through Opportunity

Neither felt dramatically called, but both were willing. That willingness opened doors they never anticipated. Ken moved from athletics into teaching Bible and ancient history, discovering passions he didn't know he had. Judy found her place in staff roles and the daily rhythms of close community life.

Teaching Minds, Shepherding Hearts

Ken devoted his career to helping students grow in academic excellence and spiritual depth. His classrooms were places where ideas were explored, Scripture was honoured, and students were challenged to think critically and biblically.

Judy also played a crucial role in caring for students and staff—through mentoring, encouragement, and building community. Their shared passion for discipleship made them a powerful ministry team.

"Building into the lives of students is a privilege we never took for granted."



Challenges and God's Provision

Their early years were full and demanding—teaching, coaching, parenting, studying, all while living entirely within the same small community.

"It was a big challenge, and it was also the biggest blessing."

God's faithfulness wove through every season, sustaining them through the pressures and guiding them into deeper character, humility, and trust.

Formed by Community

Briercrest became the village that helped raise their sons. Faculty, coaches, and neighbours poured into their children, sometimes through encouragement and sometimes through hard conversations. Their home became a gathering place for students, families, missionaries, and friends, filling the table and shaping their family's life.

Rooted in Scripture

Decades of studying and teaching Scripture profoundly shaped Ken. Judy was shaped by the example of faithful, godly women who taught her what it means to live simply, love deeply, and follow Christ with joy.

"We get paid to read the Bible... Over a lifetime, it forms how you think."

What Briercrest Is All About

To Ken and Judy, Briercrest has always been a place where people come away to meet God, learn His Word, and form relationships that last a lifetime. Students are known by name, cared for sincerely, and invited into a community grounded in Scripture.

"Our students have a chance to come away and build friendships that they'll have for the rest of their lives in their walk with God."

Gratitude and Hope

Looking back, they are thankful for the opportunities they were given, the people who shaped them, and the community that helped form their family. Today, seeing their sons walking with the Lord remains one of their greatest joys. Looking ahead, they remain hopeful: "If we honour God, He'll continue to guide and bless this place."



Encouragement to Students and Alumni

Their message to students is simple: dig deeply into God's Word and trust Him with your life. To alumni, their gratitude runs deep. "Every gift, every prayer matters," Judy says. "God knits them together to accomplish His work."



A Life of Faithful Service: Shirley Entz



Mentors Who Modeled Christlikeness

She was deeply shaped by leaders like Dr. Budd, whose clear teaching of Scripture and calm wisdom left a lasting impression. Dr. Barkman also modeled genuine, practical faith, often praying for families as he ran across campus. Dr. Hildebrand's commitment to prayer and personal care, remembering her children by name, reflected the heart of Briercrest's community.

Called into Kingdom Work

Shirley's journey at Briercrest began with a clear sense of calling: God was leading her to serve Him in a Christian non-profit organization. When Carl Hinderager told her that Briercrest fit that vision perfectly, she applied to become President Henry Budd's secretary.

"After accepting this role that was offered to me, I determined to do my very best with the giftings God has given me."

Growing Through Challenge and Grace

Briercrest has been a place of profound growth for Shirley. Naturally shy and uncomfortable with public speaking, she didn't understand at first why Dr. Budd had hired her. Now, looking back, she sees that Briercrest has been an opportunity to hone her skills and develop in ways she never imagined. Being at Briercrest has "given her the opportunity to study God's Word and grow deeper in her faith and walk with Him."

Stories that Reflect Briercrest

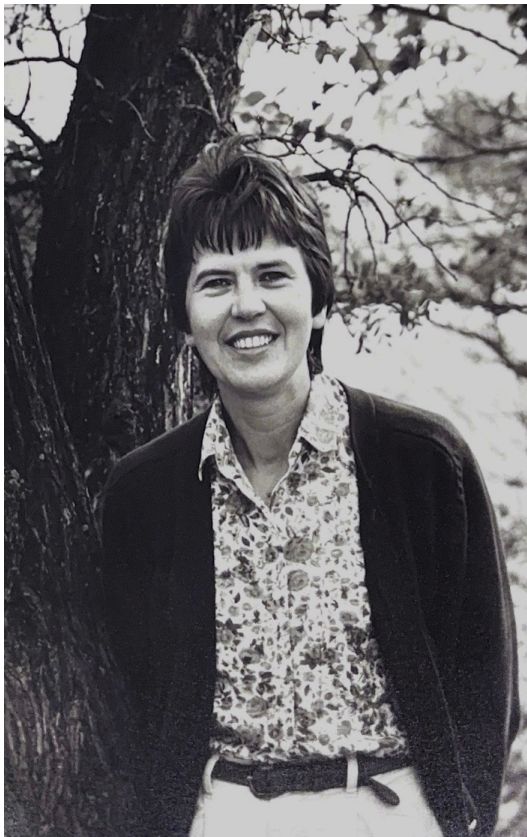
One story stands out from Shirley's years in distance education: in the 1990s, two students completed their BA in Christian Studies entirely from prison. Recently, one of those students stopped by her office to share that he's now working in a ministry with inmates.

"What a blessing to have been part of his growth and to now see him serving the Lord."

Another story captures what Briercrest means to Shirley: when an elderly German woman sent small monthly donations, Dr. Hildebrand would dictate letters of thanks in German. "It's people like her, and leaders like Dr. Hildebrand, who embody the care at the heart of Briercrest."

Gratitude and Hope for the future

After more than 35 years, Shirley feels deeply blessed to have been part of this ministry. She's thankful for every staff and faculty member she's worked alongside, and encouraged by the many alumni who continue to serve Jesus faithfully. Looking ahead, she believes Briercrest will continue to stand firm as a place of spiritual and intellectual transformation, shaping the next generation to follow Jesus wholeheartedly and serve Him wherever He leads.



A Message to Today's Students

A word to today's students: "Use your time at Briercrest to dig deeply into God's Word daily. You can trust God with your whole life. He is faithful.

Dr. Barkman signed off on every letter he wrote - "Stand firm. Let nothing move you. Always give yourselves fully to the work of the Lord, because you know that your labor in the Lord is not in vain." (1 Corinthians 15:58)."

A Word to Alumni

To alumni, Shirley says: "God is at work in this place. I see it every day! Thank you for the prayers and the gifts you continue to give so that students can continue to grow in their faith and serve Him in this needy world."



Building Kingdom Builders: Ellery Pullman



Formed as a Student, Called to Return

Ellery's journey at Briercrest began as a student, during which his faith deepened, and he was profoundly influenced by the faculty. Inspired by their impact, he aspired to pay it forward and invest in the next generation by becoming a professor.

A Sense of Calling That Sustains

For Ellery, working at Briercrest requires a clear sense of calling; without it, the experience can be short-lived. However, his time at Briercrest shaped him profoundly as he took on various roles, honing his craft in teaching, leadership, and service.

Life with Students and Colleagues

Some of Ellery's favorite moments are with his students. Engaging with young people and helping shape the next generation of kingdom builders are deeply valued by him. He also feels blessed to work alongside colleagues who share the same mission and sense of calling, which he sees as the very purpose of Briercrest.

"I think some of my best memories are of the students. It's energy, it's fun, it's enjoyment, it's challenging, but it energizes you."

Grateful for Opportunity

Another aspect of the job Ellery is most grateful for is the opportunity—not only to serve at Briercrest but also to work in multiple roles. The experiences Briercrest has offered have allowed him to expand his gifts and contribute to the community, both locally and across the country, for which he is truly thankful.





Encouragement for Alumni

To the alumni, Ellery's message is: "Thank you, first of all, for your continued support—whether it's through prayer, financial contributions, or sending your kids. We hold that trust very dearly." He encourages alumni to continue reaching out and reminds them that Briercrest is always there for them.

Hope for the Future

Ellery's hope for Briercrest's future is firmly grounded in faithfulness to God and His word.

"As long as we stay faithful to realizing the word of our God shall stand forever, Briercrest is going to be here for a long time."

A Continuing Legacy

Ellery's story reflects the heart of Briercrest: a place where God shapes lives, calls people to serve, and sends them out prepared to influence others for His Kingdom.



