

# BRIERCREST

CARONPORT HIGH SCHOOL — COLLEGE — SEMINARY

## CORPORATE MISSION AND INSTITUTIONAL COVENANT

### WHO WE ARE

Briercrest College and Seminary (hereafter, Briercrest) is the partnership of three Christ-centred, Bible-anchored, ministry-focused schools that thrive in the context of a vibrant spiritual community.

#### Our Mission

Briercrest is a community of learning that calls students to seek the kingdom of God, to be shaped profoundly by the scriptures, and to be formed spiritually and intellectually for lives of service.

#### Our Schools

Briercrest is comprised of a Christian high school, a Christian college, and a theological seminary. Guided by our common mission, each school has a specific role in serving as an ally of the Church in providing Christian education.

**Caronport High School** provides outstanding secondary school education which prepares students in a growth-focused, holistic way for lives of service in academic partnership with Prairie South School Division.

**Briercrest College** is a unique Christian college built on three pillars: a biblical/theological foundation, the formation of Christian life and service competencies, and reflection of these in arts, science, and marketplace learning.

**Briercrest Seminary** is an innovative centre for graduate level ministry training, leadership development, and theological education.

#### Our Values

Values shape behaviour. In addition to a commitment to observe all that is taught in Scripture regarding Christian life and community, the following focused values shape how we function and behave at Briercrest and the culture to which we aspire. These focused values include:

- **Boldly Christian:** Christ-centred, Bible-anchored, and ministry-focused
- **Proactively Leading:** Always learning, always teaching, and always influencing
- **Intentionally Collaborating:** Cooperative, communicative, and synergistic
- **Continuously Innovating:** Creative, adaptive, and responsive
- **Conscientiously Serving:** Observant, active, and caring

### WHAT WE BELIEVE AND TEACH

We embrace the revelation given by God in the Christian Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments. We likewise appreciate the faith which is taught in the Scriptures and summarized in such orthodox statements of the whole Christian church as the [Apostles' Creed](#) and the [Nicene Creed](#). We understand our own faith in continuity with the [Protestant confessions of the Reformation](#) and the evangelical awakenings in subsequent centuries. We affirm our own heritage since the 1930s within the global, interdenominational evangelical movement. Our own community therefore reflects a range of evangelical traditions, denominations, mission societies, and other associations. In continuity with our previous

statements of faith and with the beliefs of evangelical Christians throughout the world, we affirm and have based the statements to follow on national and international evangelical movements such as the [World Evangelical Alliance](#) and the [Evangelical Fellowship of Canada](#). We regard the doctrines that follow as essential to the understanding and proclamation of the gospel and to Christian life and practice.

### **Institutional Doctrinal Statement**

We believe in:

*The Holy Scriptures* as originally given by God, divinely inspired, infallible, entirely trustworthy; and the supreme authority in all matters of faith and conduct;

*One God*, eternally existent in three persons: Father, Son, and Holy Spirit;

*Our Lord Jesus Christ*, God manifest in the flesh, His virgin birth, His sinless human life, His divine miracles, His vicarious and atoning death, His bodily resurrection, His ascension, His mediatorial work, and His personal return in power and glory;

*The Salvation* of lost and sinful humanity possible only through the merits of the shed blood of the Lord Jesus Christ received by faith apart from works, and as characterized by regeneration by the Holy Spirit;

*The Holy Spirit*, by whose indwelling the believer is enabled to live a holy life, to witness and work for the Lord Jesus Christ;

*The Unity of the Spirit* of all true believers, the Church, the Body of Christ;

*The Resurrection* of both the saved and the lost; they that are saved unto the resurrection of life, they that are lost unto the resurrection of damnation.

Moreover, we strive to reflect this gospel in our life together. We share the ideals of movements such as the [Lausanne Covenant \(1974\)](#) regarding the authority of Scripture, the priority of evangelism, the need for Christian social responsibility and personal holiness, the costliness and urgency of world mission, and the importance of theological education. The perspectives to follow identify priorities applied to the Briercrest situation.

## **HOW WE TEACH**

### **The Bible as the Anchor of our Teaching**

At Briercrest, the Bible, God's Holy Scripture, is the anchoring source that shapes what and how we teach. We believe the Bible contains the record of God's communication to humans. It is the ultimate authority of our theology, faith, and practice. Though the Bible is not an object of Christian worship, it is to be consistently upheld and revered as sacred.

We believe that the Bible is infallible, essential, authoritative, and understandable. We believe that the Bible is an inspired witness to God's historic revelation of himself and his purposes, which are most fully revealed in Jesus Christ and the Holy Spirit. In concert with the great patristic and Protestant traditions, we affirm that the Bible recounts the history of God's dealings with humanity, centered in Jesus Christ and testified about by the witness of the Holy Spirit both to individuals and the corporate church.

Although we believe the Bible records God's authoritative word, we also affirm Scripture's humanity in that it was written in specific languages, genres, cultures, and contexts, mostly foreign to our own. In such cases, we seek to read and interpret Scripture responsibly according to its human historical and cultural contexts.

## **Pedagogical and Curricular Principles**

We intend to offer a biblically-anchored and spiritually-formative education that seeks to integrate biblical values within every aspect of our curriculum.

We seek to bring the teaching and witness of the Bible, whenever possible, to bear on the subject matters dealt with in the classroom, in residences, in worship, on the stage, and on the court and field.

We offer an education in which a vibrant biblical studies program stands at the heart of the curriculum, and in which the study of the Bible lends perspective to everything we do.

We seek the best contributions from the classical liberal arts and encourage the development of critical thinking skills across our curriculum.

We offer both church and marketplace professional training that helps our students to serve the church and society with wisdom and excellence.

## **Faculty Practice**

Faculty at Briercrest are expected to be model senior learners—scholars—that are increasingly well-equipped to lead students in the formation of the type of learning community sketched above. Toward that end, we aspire together to learning and scholarship that finds expression in how we *teach*, how we *discover*, and how we *serve*.

- The Scholarship of Teaching
  - o We expect both faculty and staff to view teaching as absolutely central to their vocation and to demonstrate deep commitment to their own growth and to the growth of their colleagues as effective teachers;
  - o We expect each other to be captured by a love for learning, both *within* and *beyond* our chosen disciplines, and we expect that this learning finds expression in our teaching;
  - o We expect that, in humility, each of us will recognize the communal nature of our calling. A recognition of our fallen-ness and of our frailty invites us to be conversant with our own community of scholars but also with classic and contemporary scholarship.
- The Scholarship of Discovery and Integration
  - o As senior learners, we expect our faculty to engage in disciplined research and reflection appropriate to the school in which they teach. Research and reflection (that culminates in writing, the production of musical scores, artifacts, etc.) is important for our own professional development. We need to research and write for our own growth, as stewards of the gifts with which God has entrusted us.
  - o We expect faculty to submit the results of their research to their disciplinary communities for 'peer review'. In so doing, the community is enriched by patient consideration of the work of one of its members; the individual member has her or his own thinking sharpened and corrected; and subsequent students reap the benefits of this community discipline.
  - o We expect faculty to devote particular attention to the centrality of biblical truth. Faculty will aspire to an exploration of the Christian Scriptures in the formation of a Christian worldview, to a biblically-integrated approach to their disciplines, and to a consideration of the implications for Christian practice.
- The Scholarship of Service
  - o Broadly, we expect all faculty and staff to be keenly interested in students' lives. To paraphrase the apostle Paul, we must love our students so much that we share not only our disciplines but also our lives with them. We seek to invite our students to follow us as

we follow Jesus. Of course, this implies lives marked by discipleship — gifting can never replace Christ-like character.

- We expect faculty to use their scholarship in service to the church. If we wish our students to own “a profound sense of calling to serve God by sharing in the church’s mission in the world”, then this sense of calling must take deep root in our own lives, guided by Christ’s call to seek first God’s kingdom.
- Similarly, we expect our scholarship to find diverse expression in service to our institution and, for many, to our professions, and to society at large.

Not all of us will be equally proficient in each of these expressions of scholarship. Nor should we be. We are a diverse learning community, enriched by the distinctive strengths that we bring to the one community in our diversity. But, equally, none of us can consider any one of these three tangential to our vocation. As professors, all of us will be teachers and researchers and servants.

## WHAT WE PRACTICE

People generally make strong moral claims (such as that life is to be respected, persons have dignity and therefore ‘human rights’, suffering ought to be minimized, the ordinary life of work and home is important, and so on), but more often than not these claims are not properly grounded. As Christians we want to affirm many of these same values, but also to show how they have a firm basis in the character of the triune God of Holy Scripture, who has revealed himself by word and deed throughout history, and supremely in the person of Jesus Christ. Our practice ought to be informed by our most deeply cherished religious beliefs.

In continuity with what we believe and teach, therefore, we affirm the central Christian tradition, expressed so well in the Westminster Confession, that “the chief end of man is to glorify God and to enjoy him forever.” This is the “good life.” If *ethos* is the characteristic spirit of a community or institution, then our desire is that the ethos of Briercrest would be the pursuit and enjoyment of God’s glory on the basis of the Scriptures.

God’s grace does not free us from obligations. Rather, because our human condition is so fallible, we need both forgiveness and moral guidance. The Ten Commandments epitomize God’s moral will for the good and the protection of human life. The liberating teaching of the New Testament is that through Christ, the Spirit frees us from our self-serving patterns of life to a life which is radically orientated toward God and others (2 Corinthians 5. 15-16; Galatians 5. 5-6). The whole law is summed up in the love of God and neighbour:

*One of them, an expert in the law, tested him with this question: “Teacher, which is the greatest commandment in the Law?” Jesus replied: “Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind. This is the first and greatest commandment. And the second is like it: Love your neighbour as yourself. All the Law and the Prophets hang on these two commandments.” (Matt. 22:35-40)*

Moreover, because of our evangelical heritage and our mission to provide “spiritual and intellectual formation” for the whole person, we affirm the declaration of the Lausanne Committee for World Evangelism of the need for integrity on the part of those who teach and proclaim the gospel.

## WHAT WE EXPECT

Briercrest is not, however, an abstract community of Christians. It has a particular history and calling in theological education, and to this end it is necessary to identify those aspects of conduct which form part of the contractual obligations of those serving within Briercrest (including Board members, staff, faculty,

and faculty of associate schools). In defining those areas of conduct which are contractual, and are therefore grounds for discipline or for termination, the intention is not to reduce our ethos to the contractual.

Signatories are expected to agree to and support the objectives of Briercrest and seek to contribute to the educational mission of the schools in and out of the classroom, and in academic and non-academic roles. Signatories are to conduct their lives in a way which is exemplary and supports the principles and practices that follow.

Signatories are also expected to establish in their lives the spiritual disciplines needed to maintain and promote a relationship with God, which is essential to effective service to Christ, including such practices as prayer, Bible study, corporate worship, stewardship, and faithful Christian witness. Signatories are to attend regularly and participate faithfully in a church whose beliefs are consistent with what is believed and taught within Briercrest.

Moreover, because of our commitment to Christ and our particular identity as an educational community, we affirm the following guiding principles as central to our life together. Signatories are expected to conduct themselves in the light of these principles:

- We view learning and the pursuit of truth as a Christian calling.
- We believe that life is sacred; people have worth because they are created as male and female in God's image.
- We believe that our relationships should reflect our connection in the body of Christ.
- We believe our minds and bodies should be used in God-honouring ways.
- We believe that marriage is a covenant instituted by God to be marked by a loving, lifelong union of one man and one woman for the purpose of bringing glory to God.
- We view sexuality as one of God's good gifts, to be enjoyed exclusively in the context of the covenant of marriage between a male and a female to the exclusion of all others.
- We value the wise stewardship of resources.
- We believe that maturity calls for us to exercise discretion in our behaviours.
- We believe that everyone should be treated with equal respect and care.

Without limiting the spirit of these expectations and principles, Briercrest will not condone conduct such as the following in any context:

- dishonesty and deceit in personal or business relationships, including plagiarism and other forms of academic dishonesty
- theft or fraud
- addictive and destructive behaviours as related to substance abuse, alcohol, or gambling
- verbal or physical abuse
- slander and other breaches of trust or confidence
- the possession and use of pornographic material
- sexual and other forms of assault, exploitation, harassment, or abuse
- sexual immorality; any form of interpersonal sexual activity conducted outside of a church or civil ceremony sanctioned monogamous, heterosexual marriage
- gender reassignment therapies
- any criminal activity

Such conduct on the part of a signatory is just cause for disciplinary action, up to and including immediate dismissal with due process. This agreement will not be used to help create or maintain a climate characterized by inordinate intrusion, suspicion, or gossip. Instead, signatories can expect to be treated with respect in an atmosphere of trust and mutual accountability.

Scripture references that support the above statements are available upon request.

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The Corporate Mission and Institutional Covenant articulate the unique community of faith to which all staff, faculty, faculty of associate schools, and board members serving with the Briercrest ministry join themselves. The Institutional Covenant is a regularly renewable covenant that serves to remind one another of who we are, what we believe, and what we practice. It should be understood that references to other historic and current covenants, creeds, or statements (such as the Apostles' Creed, Nicene Creed, the Lausanne Covenant, etc.) simply show our heritage in Christian orthodoxy. This document and covenant are intended to stand alone and when signed, they alone are being agreed to.

<b>Signature of Affirmation</b>		
<i>I have read the Corporate Mission and Institutional Covenant of Briercrest, and I am in full agreement with them. As an employee of Briercrest, I will support this position before students and other constituencies of the institution.</i>		
Full Name (Please print)	Signature of Affirmation	Date (mm-dd-yy)