

## **President's Report Fall 2011**

When was the last time you did something for the first time? It is said to be an excellent way to keep learning and alive. If that is true, then Prairie is very much alive.

### **In the past year we have:**

- Launched a new one-year Bible-immersion program called “Encounter”,
- Facilitated “al hayat”, a multi-streamed discipleship training for Muslim Background Believers (34 now enrolled),
- Implemented “Service Learning” training for all students, and
- Just for fun, introduced a campus game called “spirit” where the students compete in teams for a stuffed toy known affectionately as Richard the Lion (you can find him on Face Book).

### **Over that same time we have seen large improvements. We have:**

- A growing spirit of harmony and transparency,
- Increased Bible content in our curriculum,
- Vibrant Chapels and Prayer times,
- Donations that have grown substantially allowing us to keep tuition costs from increasing this year,
- A smaller team, so everyone is working “double-time”,
- And we have STUDENTS!

We are into the race again with the school year now well launched. Our official student count is 295, up 42 or 17% from 253 in the last semester. Students across all schools are actively engaged in learning from the Text about the Almighty and integrating faith into their everyday lives.

In the following reports you will be getting a more detailed picture of how our various schools and programs are doing. On average, you will find that each area is showing improvement. To become a truly great school, I believe we must continue to focus on our core business.

When our mission is distilled down to its simplest form we are in the “business” of:

### **A. Human Capital Development**

- **Students:** This is our reason for being, and this is what gives us life: Watching students transform from September to April (and Freshmen to Seniors) into contributing and loving community members who engage in each other’s lives and in whom we see Jesus in the flesh. They do this through Impact groups, in sports teams, in experiential programs, and in service learning. As students mature into the upper classes, Prairie is progressively more student-led as a school. This week viable plans are being implemented for students to voluntarily help other students with learning challenges. You can easily imagine how this provides great rewards in a more vigorous life for both the school and the students. The measure of success is a community that is alive and vibrant, giving life to one another. This is the community that we cherish.

- **Staff and Faculty:** The success of our school is limited to the quality of our staff and how well we model Christ-like living for our students. We began this school year with a staff retreat where we focused on living together, growing together, and working out the “one another’s” that characterized the church of the first century. We then took 22 of our team to the Willowcreek Leadership Summit in September. Interestingly, we all resonated with the sessions centered on humility, vulnerability, and dealing with difficult people, knowing we could all be better in these areas. This year we will continue to value living out the “one another’s” (which we believe is the face of genuine humility) and an active life of collective/corporate prayer. The measure of success is a community that is alive and vibrant, giving life to one another. This is the community that we cherish.

## **B. Intellectual Capital Development**

- **Students:** It is perhaps insultingly obvious to say that students come to school to learn. It is much more than vocational preparedness or intellectual expertise in ancient writings. Our goal is to have students drill into the foundations of timeless truth and embrace them as the bedrock of their lives. These are living principles that take on greater meaning throughout life. Prairie is the greenhouse environment for this critical chapter in every student’s development. I think we are seeing evidence of this by the fact that in just our second year of Encounter, it is already our second largest program. We believe every young adult would benefit immensely by having a year of Bible immersed training, whether here or elsewhere.
- **Staff and Faculty:** As a school we must foster a culture of continuous learning not only among the students but also across the entire campus. We must foster an environment in which we can readily and easily challenge one another to better performance as well as improved effectiveness. Our goal is not intellectual sterility and professionalism; rather it is effective and active life as followers of Jesus Christ. Although we have a limited budget for professional development, we are encouraging creative approaches to individual and corporate learning such as TED.com clips in monthly staff meetings and sharing personal library resources with all staff. An effective and active community would, at once, be honouring to God and encouraging to one another.

It is Thanksgiving season and we are celebrating all that God is doing here among us. We are tremendously blessed to be exactly where we are, serving our Lord Jesus and His church...

And you are very much a part of what God is doing on this campus. We need you and appreciate your joining us in this effort to improve Biblical literacy so that we can “know Christ and make Him known”.

Mark L. Maxwell  
President  
October 20, 2011