

Harmony...

President's Report to the Board
April 2015

Harmony – A pleasing combination of elements such as colours, notes, or people: behind, beneath and around each other, supporting each another, giving texture and quality to one another.

The spirit on campus this semester has been much better, as we have worked through the implementation of some challenging decisions.

Our chapel series this semester, “The Magnum Opus of Christ” has been a refreshing look at the teachings of Jesus from the triumphal entry into Jerusalem to his revelation on the road to Emmaus.

We recently held our regular Day of Prayer which ended with several students leading us in thanksgiving. It was an exceptional day. It was a delight to see so many of the students step up, leading us in elegant ways. The focus of the day was unity, which is at the heart of God's call to us as His Church – in fact the Lordship of Christ is demonstrated to the world through our unity, and according to Jesus in John 17, is the best way to reach the world.

We continue in our commitment to prayer, collectively, as well as in our various departments. In addition we have challenged everyone on staff and faculty to pray every day for more students. We did it in response to a question Glenn asked: “I wonder what God might do if we asked Him every day to give us more students?” If nothing else, a life of prayer is a way of clearly demonstrating our total reliance on Him for all parts of our business, whether donations or students. In fact, we believe our work of preparing people to meet the greatest needs of the world is so important we dare not engage in it without the bulwark of prayer supporting us and protecting the students.



To Meet the Greatest Needs of the World...

With Board approval, which followed broad support among students, alumni and constituents, we have decided to move to “Prairie College” as a new name for our school. This will be expanded further in the report on Marketing by Peter Mal.

The risk in making this name change is that we could be accused of lessening our commitment to Bible by taking “Bible” out of our name, when in fact the opposite is true – we are stepping up our Bible content. At the same time as we propose this name change, we re-iterate our commitment to the Scriptures, best illustrated by the new curriculum being launched this fall which will see every four-year student study the entire Canon (all 66 books). We believe this will help us move toward our objective *“to be known for excellence in Bible education.”*

At this point, we intend to keep our corporate name unchanged as Prairie Bible Institute. We are basing the school’s name change to Prairie College on two cornerstones:

- One simple name that can reasonably represent the whole of our programs (Bible, nursing, aviation, etc.) and
- A name has the ability to travel into countries that might be difficult to access.

In other words, this name better serves our mission of training people to help meet the greatest needs of the world while still holding to our core value of Bible-centered training and continuing to honour our heritage.

Program Development: There are several improvements being made to our academic program which will be covered in the report from the Dean, Dr. Glenn Loewen.

E-Learning: We continue to launch fresh courses onto our e-Learning platform. The next phase of this product development will be marketing these courses and raising the profile of these courses.

Applications continue to come in at a steady pace. Inquiries (pre-application) are running at a record level (about 30% above last year) but applications are about flat to previous years. It appears that returning student numbers are stronger, so with that combination we are hoping to slip over the 300 student number, a barrier that has been formidable over the past 5 years. Please note the report on Enrolment by Janelle Atmore.

We are beginning to focus on three investment funds, inviting donors to join us as investors, or co-investors, pooling our collective resources to provide the foundation for training students to meet the greatest needs of the world. We think they are a worthy long-term investment and is expanded in the report on Development by Elaine Maxwell. The funds we are building are:

- Education Fund (primarily scholarships)
- Campus Rejuvenation Fund
- Program Development Fund

Partnerships: We continue to explore opportunities of working with partners. At this point we are in conversations with:

- Columbia International University & Seminary – exploring opportunities of offering their graduate courses on our campus.
- Briercrest University – exploring ways of sharing faculty between our schools, one professor teaching third and fourth year elective courses simultaneously on both campuses.
- Bethany College – exploring delivery of our courses to their campus or having them become a voice for the Mennonites on our campus.
- Global Social Justice Think-Tank Day – inviting several key social justice organizations to campus to help us identify and build the key components of an excellent Global Social Justice Program. This would be in preparation for a potential new four-year degree program.

Other highlights:

- We were recognized in early February as a “2015 Best Christian Workplace.”
- We have been approved as a site for the Willowcreek Leadership Summit for October 2015.

We are grateful for your partnership with us as we seek to know Christ, and make Him known.

Yours truly,

Mark L. Maxwell
President

April 14, 2015