

# Prairie Bible Institute **Semi-annual Meeting**



Report to  
the Board of  
Directors  
**April 26, 2021**



# PRAIRIE COLLEGE

## "COVID – COVID – COVID"

### April 2021

One year ago in this report I wrote, "We have seen seismic change in our world and on our campus since we last met."

The change we had seen at that point was just a glimpse of what has turned into a long and challenging year. We have made it through, and we are better positioned for the future as a result. But I am certain that we, as a team, are truly exhausted as we near the end of this school year. How are we better?

- Technology – The tech team that Elaine assembled for us a few years ago rose to the challenge of upgrading our campus infrastructure and installing 6 Hyflex classrooms that allow students to participate in class, whether in the room in-person or online. We are now able to reach students who are in quarantine, in prison, or across borders with our live-interactive classroom. It might have taken 5 years to make these changes and would likely have cost much more if we had taken the normal route of implementing in steps.
- Teamwork – Once again, we are amazed at the depth of talent that God has given us on our team. When that talent is underpinned with commitment to mission and built on healthy community, it is truly remarkable how much we can get done, working together, for the good of the college and the glory of God.

This teamwork surfaced in our Best Christian Workplaces (BCWI) survey (see Appendix for summaries). The survey, that we take every three years, measures of the vitality of our workplace. This year we scored 4.38, up from 4.28 in 2018 and 4.01 in 2015, putting us among the highest scoring of the 900+ organizations surveyed by BCWI. In terms of industry groupings that BCWI surveys, Christian colleges and universities are typically the lowest performing group. Our prayer throughout the past decade has been that God would grant us the miracle of harmony, while we serve Him on this mission.

I believe God has provided generously for us in talent and teamwork because of our posture a) toward the Scriptures in our 7-course coverage of the Canon, and b) toward prayer in community. He has been generous and gracious, and we are grateful.

### **Expanded Scope**

The long walk toward expanding our scope of degree offerings to include a Bachelor of Education is now well underway, led by Darrel Reid. Darrel, being familiar with political ways, has opened many doors and consolidated good support for our application. He is now assembling the team and timeline for writing our application,



which we hope to have submitted by the end of July 2021. Sandra Paetkau has taken the lead in writing our application with James Enns and Kevin Peters serving as readers/editors, along with several external experts that have offered to help. Our goal of receiving approval by July 2022 appears to be on track and achievable.

In each of the past few years I've chosen a word for us to gather around for the year. Two years ago, our word was "*Grateful*," what I might call the sap that runs in the tree of life. Last year, based on a devotional by Phil Orazi, we chose "*Anticipation*," and we have seen God move us forward in part as a result of the unexpected pressure of Covid. This year, our word is "*Diligence*," expressing in work our worship for the Creator, the Working God.

Throughout the remainder of this Board Report, you will hear from each of our Managing Directors. I expect you will see the *diligence* of their work and the work of their teams, and I hope you will find cause to pause and worship the One who has given us our work, and who is accomplishing much through our work. My prayer is that this report will be a great encouragement to you in your critical role on our team. Here are some of the highlights in their reports:

- **Marketing and Enrollment, Emily Allert-House** – getting traction
  - Our enrollment funnel has been lagging throughout this year, probably because the previous year was pre-Covid. We have been seeing the gap close nicely in the past month, with March being a record month in applications (Emily's report says 48 apps in the month, but I know they closed with 50!).
  - In addition, we have just signed a contract with MSM Global, an international recruiting agency, that has offices in 52 countries. Together with MSM we believe this could result in a solid flow of international students to Prairie.
- **Education, Glenn Loewen** – Covid has complicated everything in the classroom, but the faculty and students have been great at making the best of it.
  - We had completed our ABHE 10-year review and are waiting for the report back.
  - We launched our Masters of Leadership degree program in January.
  - Online enrollment is up about 50% over last year.
  - Prison inmate enrollment will likely jump this next year as we move from two penitentiaries to four. One prison is going to pipe our content to all cells!
- **Student Development, Glenn Loewen** – Covid, Covid, Covid: it has been a complicated year on campus, especially in residence. We are currently in the midst of an outbreak with 15 positive cases, and 50+ in quarantine. Classes this week are entirely online.
- **PATC, Calvin Hildebrandt** – continued good news, thanks MAFC.
  - MAFC just replaced one of our planes with a new one.
  - The pipeline of students for the fall is filling in nicely.
- **Finance & Information Technology, Elaine Maxwell** – continued good news.

- Controls on spending have brought us through Covid in good shape.
- YTD: profit is \$278K on revenue of \$5.5 million
- Both Finance and IT teams are functioning well and are great to work with.
- **Operations, Darryl Elliott** – continuing to chip away at campus renovation and upkeep, funding is the only thing holding us back. Hopefully a Centennial Capital Campaign will help us get many of these projects done.
- **Development & Alumni Relations, Kendi Dyck** – donations have been weak.
  - Kendi has assumed the lead in Development
  - Tim Mackenzie has assumed a new portfolio, advising donors on estate planning.
  - We are nearing the end of a search and are planning to retain a campaign consultant to help drive our Centennial Capital Campaign.
  - Centennial Celebration plans are coming together around the theme: Joy in the Journey. Save the date: July 11-17, 2022!

On the assumption that God is good, and that, in all things God works for the good of those who love Him, then we should assume that change, especially in the hands of a good God, is good; even seismic change that disrupts our routines. God is at work bringing about improvement, or He will take what has been meant for evil and turn it into good. This is the nature of God, at the core of His character. This is the good Heavenly Father we worship.

Blessed art thou, Lord our God,  
King of the Universe  
Who has blessed us with work to do,  
Who has blessed the work we are doing,  
And Who is blessing us in our work.

*Mark*

Mark L. Maxwell  
President

PS (who adds a PS to a Board Report?!?) – I saw this in one of my past reports and feel it is still timely.

I'd like to finish with some reasons for giving thanks...

- I am thankful that we have a solid and stable team of high-performing professionals and executives. We are marked by living well and in harmony, by flexibility and creativity, and by high levels of individual performance. The result is that individually, we have joy in our work, and collectively, we are strong and effective. What a team God has provided for such a time as this.
- I am thankful for a Board that understands the important role of governance, giving direction and encouragement as it is needed. You are important to the

long-term welfare of this College and you are a powerful and critical component of our team. Thank you.

- I am so thankful for donors who have helped us rebuild our balance sheet, repair our campus, and fund our student scholarships ... and done it for the past century. They have stood with us and cheered for us through tough times in the past and I have no reason to doubt they will be here with us through this. Some of these faithful ones have become close personal friends with Elaine and me, and we are grateful for every one of them.
- I am so very thankful to our Almighty God, the Creator, who has brought us to this point, provided through many seasons, both good and bad. He is about the business of establishing his Kingdom under the Lordship of Jesus Christ. It is our mission to be a tool he will use to build his Kingdom.