



TAYLOR

SEMINARY • E P WAHL CENTRE

June 2016

Dear Friend of Taylor,

“So, how are things at Taylor?”

That is likely the most frequent question I get as President. It sounds like a simple question but in reality it is a bit hard to answer. My initial response is generally “great!” because things are really going well. This past year has been a very good one for the faculty, staff, institution, and particularly for our students. I am always amazed at the quality of women and men God has called to Taylor, and their time here does make a difference in people’s lives.

Just last week we received a note from a recent **Seminary** grad who is serving as a solo pastor in a small Baptist church who remarked how significant his time at Taylor had been -- for his family as well as his church. He was so impacted by one of his classes that his family has decided to begin the slow and arduous journey of taking on a foster child. Also, his church is in the process of helping to sponsor a refugee family. God is making a difference in the lives of Taylor seminary students as they serve as leaders in their congregations.

Sometimes my “great!” has more to do with what God is doing through the work of the **E P Wahl Centre**. This year, for the first time, numerous events have been sold out. Some are high impact offerings engaging critical issues, such as the “Crucial Conversations” series. In April, we partnered with Ravi Zacharias International Ministries and a local Edmonton Mosque to host a robust and informative conversation about “Islam & Christianity.” We originally planned on holding this event in Stencil Hall but interest was so strong we were forced to move it, and we welcomed over 400 participants. It was a great night, thanks in no small measure to Dr. Randal Rauser who served as moderator. If you missed the event and would like to hear it, you can find it (along with many other Wahl Centre recordings) in our archives on the Taylor web site at: www.Taylor-Edu.ca/AudioArchives.

The E P Wahl Centre has also seen significant traction in our offerings for pastors (such as our annual E.P. Wahl Lectures, THRIVE!, Sabbatical Preparation Workshop and Flourish) and offerings for Churches (such as Turbulence, Building Healthy Church Staffs), offerings for Church Administrative Professionals, and more. The Wahl Centre is really finding its legs and we are pleased with the impact it is making for the sake of the Kingdom.

So, when you hear me say that things are going great, you should know that that is really true: things are going great. That being said, many people when they ask how things are going, are really asking about our financial situation.

...developing Christ-minded leaders who make a difference in the world.

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That is a harder conversation. Everyone is aware that the economy is in a difficult place. Families are hurting and finding it difficult to make ends meet. That often leads to churches being in the same difficult situation having to make difficult choices with the limited resources which have been entrusted to them. Too often, we get letters from churches and individuals explaining that the resources coming to Taylor will either be lessening or are ending altogether. We know that these decisions are difficult, but the reality is that this puts stress on the ministry here.

Therein lies the core truth you should know about Taylor: we have utter confidence that God provides the resources needed to do what God has called us to do. We, too, are stewards of resources that don't belong to us but have been entrusted to us by God to do God's work. So, with full transparency, I tell you that in 2015-16, the fiscal year ending on June 30th, Taylor is expecting to record our second operating deficit since closing the university college. This comes as we continue to build the E P Wahl Centre and provide outstanding graduate theological education here in Edmonton.

We recently had a focused site visit from our accreditors (ATS) who were looking at, among other things, our long-term financial picture. They were full of praise for our stewardship of the resources God has provided and the strong financial situation we currently find ourselves in. They noted that we are the envy of many seminaries in North America and the good news is that we have time to discern wisely what our future will look like. However, deficit operating budgets can't go on indefinitely. In response to these changing times, God is clearly continuing to call us to work together with ministry partners to fulfill our mission.

You are actually our most significant partners. This ministry is sustained by the faithful and often sacrificial partnership of people just like you. Thank you for that partnership. Thank you for your prayers, your words of encouragement, and most of all for your faithfulness. Though we all face an uncertain economic future, we remain steadfast in our confidence that God has great things in store for the ministry here as we faithfully "develop Christ-minded leaders who make a difference in the world."

Shalom,

David Williams, President

P.S. I trust you read the above as encouragement. Although we are currently experiencing a gap between ministry needs and declining donations, we are seeing God's blessing in so many ways. Rejoice with us, and continue to ask God our Provider to supply all that we need. Thank you!