State of the College Address  
Dr. Peter W. Teague, President  
August 24, 2015

Well, I hope we’ve all had a chance to get away for a period of refreshment this summer. The word “refreshed” is found 17 times in the scriptures. In most times, the spirit of one person is being refreshed in the company of another. I want to be one of those Christians that when I’m with other believers, others would be refreshed; weariness and discouragement would be replaced by hope and renewal. Wouldn’t it be great to have someone look at us and say, “Because of you, I didn’t give up.”

During my time of refreshment, three main thoughts emerged from my pause to reflect:

1) Increasingly, daily, I am more aware of the attack and schemes of the evil one in my life.

   The Devil would like nothing more for me and each one of you than to fail in our God-given call to advance the gospel of Jesus Christ around the world for generation after generation to come.

2) After a life-time in ministry, Paulette and I have accumulated more good friends and colleagues than we could ever deserve or imagine. We have been truly blessed! Conversely, the list of critics, both from within and without, continues to grow. Somehow I’m sure this is also a blessing, but for now it is very well disguised. In 1 Timothy 1:12 Paul said, “I thank God for putting me into the ministry.” Ministry is received. It is not achieved. It is a gift of God’s grace.

3) On more than one occasion I’ve had people say to me, “After all these years you really must have your job down pat. It must be pretty routine by now.”

   My response is that as chief servant at LBC and entering yet another year together with you, never before have I felt more inadequate, and never before have I felt such great need for your prayers. The saying goes, “It takes a village.” In our case, “It takes the whole Body of Christ.”

I think I am in good company based on former Oracle executive and consultant to Fortune 10 companies Liz Wiseman’s recent comments at the Global leadership Summit. Wiseman underscored it’s not what you know, it’s how fast you learn and for a team or organization or institution to move forward we need to lead into the unknown. How true, as you will hear in my upcoming comments.
We gather today at a propitious time in the history of Lancaster Bible College, a time in which several long-standing endeavors, such as crystallizing our mission, implementing vertical integration, increasing our program and degree offerings, and expanding our borders, bolster a promising future in which I believe Lancaster Bible College will thrive. Our rich history provides a solid foundation upon which to build. Each one of you has been involved in one way or another, and together we lift our hearts in praise and thanksgiving to God for His faithfulness and grace in bringing us thus far. You have in many ways made the impossible possible. Today our campus is alive with innovation and intellectual discourse thanks to each one of you!

Recently, Mr. Malcom Nimick, who some of you know as a friend of the college and financial consultant, toured our campus and commented that as someone who has seen and served many other colleges around the country, he continues to be impressed with Lancaster Bible College. He believes LBC is uniquely positioned to become the “Harvard or Princeton” of Bible Colleges in the United States, and raising the bar to where we could become known as THE Bible College to attend.

As I ponder that thought, and as I think about our vision statement, I know we must work intentionally and vigorously to create an environment where the student who is serious about his walk with God will receive an academically rigorous education coupled with a heart transformation. Our growth model must be nimble, flexible, and based on adaptable strategies. It requires a sound vision, faith-filled courage, and an unwavering commitment to our mission.

As we continue to grow, evolve, and improve, we are constantly refining our long-term strategic plan and defining more clearly our strengths and assets and where our greatest potential lies. In fact we will be working on this a little later today. We so want the vision of Lancaster Bible College to be big enough to accommodate your vision.

Our Board of Trustees has been working on our strategic plan, beginning at the Board Retreat this past February 26-28 when they were tasked with determining our top priorities. They have established these 10 priorities on our path forward:

1. University Status (change of name)
2. Online Education
3. Market Positioning
4. Capital Seminary and Graduate School
5. Grow Scholarship Fund and conduct Capital Campaign
6. Center for Urban Theological Studies (CUTS) in Philadelphia, Memphis, potentially Pittsburgh
7. Pastors Discipleship Network (PDN) in Uganda and China initiative
8. People Development
9. The Trust Performing Arts Center
10. Future Facilities – athletic fieldhouse, rehab of administration building (possibly for student rec space); natural museum/science building, development of 38 acres (north side of campus); Stoner Farm property

We look forward to a promising future in the midst of staggering complexity and change. As I begin my seventeenth year in the presidency, I am profoundly aware of the enormity of challenges facing biblical higher education in general and LBC in particular. We now live in a non-moral, non-religious world of secular correctness.

Many challenges come from within the Church itself. At one time most of our Bible colleges were surrounded by a robust Christianity that is now being eroded and diluted. We are experiencing a shift that causes us to live in exile rather than in Christendom. Quite frankly, the world in which we live is not the world of my formative years in the 50s, 60s and 70s. The infusion of secular culture into what was once considered sacred is more and more overwhelming. Yet the Scriptures remind us that we have always been strangers in this world because we are no longer of it.

Other challenges come from external forces. The historic Supreme Court decision handed down on June 26 ranks as one of the most far reaching judgements of all time. In my journal I have titled this summer the “Summer of Great Decline.” The Supreme Court ruling that the Constitution guarantees a right to same-sex marriage will dramatically and fundamentally alter the moral fabric and future of the American family, Church, and society.

We believe this decision has created a constitutional crisis pitting the new marriage equality right against the long-standing freedoms of speech and religion. This could well put Lancaster Bible College and other institutions and ministries in the position where we will have to decide to follow man’s new law or God’s law. We must determine today that we will not compromise on this issue that is such an assault on our religious freedom and our Christian belief.

With this ruling by the Supreme Court, good and evil are colliding today with new ferocity. Just 10 years ago it would have been impossible to find churches that would marry same-sex couples. Yet today whole denominations and in increasing numbers are supporting openly gay expressions of all kinds as we increasingly live in a biblically illiterate culture.

History shows that God transforms lives and societies by raising up leaders to revive His people and reform the culture. This is precisely the mission of LBC, and for another year you and I have the opportunity to be a part of it! For 82 years LBC has stood like a mighty skyscraper against the winds of immorality and secular humanism.

Today LBC has been raised up at the precise hour when secular humanistic thinking is coming to its natural conclusion in morality, education, and our judicial system. If we are to withstand the onslaught we must renew our conviction that we have a message from God – a sure word that “shines in a dark place.” We
believe the Bible alone holds the answer to our national crisis as we live and as we operate Lancaster Bible College in an anti-Christian society. And so in this climate, we at LBC press on.

The question uppermost in my mind and on my heart is how we deliver biblical higher education amidst such a backdrop. Are we delivering what students need in order to proclaim and serve Christ in the Church and society? How are we equipping them to be salt and light in our culture without becoming absorbed in it? In answer to these and other questions, we do know we must first of all seek God in all things; we must be ever-mindful of the times and the needs of our students; we must be clear about who we are and who we serve; we must be convinced of where we want to go; where we stand today; and we must be winsome as Kevin DeYoung so eloquently reminds us in his recent book titled; “What Does the Bible Really Teach About Homosexuality?” So we begin a new year with fresh resolve to love people enough to tell them the truth with grace, and to pray for continued spiritual stamina.

Advancement:

Every year our Advancement team labors to meet the year-end funding needs for LBC. It is a tireless effort of meetings, conversations and prayer shared across many departments. It is one of the highlights of my year to see various groups come together in prayer supporting this effort.

Every year God makes a way for us. This past year He did so in remarkable fashion. LBC enjoyed His blessing manifest in the third largest giving year in our college history - $6,092,921! Just amazing –and we thank the Lord for His increase! 2775 donors gave 5497 gifts to yield the highest giving year in a decade.

That said, and celebrated, we did not meet the scholarship goals for funds raised by June 30, falling $224,000 short. Our Advancement team is now at full complement and charging hard into next year. We have enjoyed more new connections with people eager to hear the LBC story than I can recall in some time.

As June 30 loomed closer God did some unusual things to cover these goals differently –a way other than we thought - and as only He could. The $400,000 scholarship goal from the capital region was ultimately satisfied and surpassed by a mix of annuities funding and a $200,000 gift from WBC, Inc. – Washington Bible College/Capital Bible Seminary’s wind-down organization. The matching gift of an LBC trustee was fully realized and yielded approximately $50,000 in revenue in the home stretch. The bottom line – we finished the 2014-15 operational budget in the black despite not having met the Scholarship Fund –yet enjoyed a record giving year. We thank the Lord from whom all blessings flow.


Academics:

- We are continuing to make significant progress towards a vertical structure over this next year, focusing in on the Church & Ministry Leadership and Bible & Theology departments as we imbed these two departments within the seminary.

- Significant department chair and faculty appointments strengthen our already stellar teaching body:

  New department chairs include:
  - Dr. Rick Rhoads, Church & Ministry Leadership Department;
  - Dr. Ryan Kuehner, Counseling & Social Work Department;
  - Dr. Paul Thorlakson, Worship & Preforming Arts Department.

  New class of full-time faculty members:
  - Dr. Anjanette Bender who moved from adjunct to full-time faculty for our Business Administration Program.
  - Mrs. Ling Dinse who also moved from adjunct to full-time faculty for our Social Work program.
  - Dr. Anita Graham-Philips has been appointed Program Coordinator for the launch of our Masters of Arts in Professional Counseling and Assistant Professor for Greenbelt, Maryland.
  - Mr. Justin Harbin has been promoted to Assistant Professor, Instructional Designer in our Online Education department.
  - Mr. Roger Newton joined the faculty of our Health & Physical Education Department.

- Lancaster Bible College was recently ranked 4th among the top 25 social work programs among Christian Colleges by the Social Work Degree Guide. A program that enjoyed a 100% placement rate of graduates for the last two years.

- We are now in our final year of our specialized accreditation process with the Council for Social Work Education. We should have our answer in February 2016. (A special thank you to Kurt Miller, Mary Yager, Ryan Kuehner and Ling Dinse.)

- This year will be a time of preparing for our decennial accreditation site visit scheduled for spring, 2017. By the end of the academic year, the draft version of our self-study will be written. That means that Dr. Mort and our self-study committee will be very busy in the coming months researching and writing our report.

- Before we know it, we will be moving into the Charles Frey Academic Center. In February, faculty from 6 of our 7 departments along with our Communication major, Business Administration major, online education, and our advancement team will call the Charles Frey Academic Center home. There’s even a rumor that there may be a creamery in the lobby of the building!
• Under the capable leadership of Dr. Doug Kegarise, our inaugural cohort of 6 students will begin their Doctor of Ministries studies this fall. This is LBC’s third doctoral program. Believe it or not, we will have close to 80 doctoral students this academic year!

• We are launching our Masters of Arts in Christian Counseling in Greenbelt, MD with Rev. Phillip Bena overseeing this initiative.

• We have 5 new doctors in the house! (Ryan Kuehner, Chris VanBuskirk, Rick Rhoads, Mark Farnham, Joanne Williams)

CUTS/Strategic Partnerships:

It’s been quite a journey since the signing of a 2012 memo of understanding (MOU) with Philadelphia’s Center for Urban Theological Studies. That moment precipitated a similar arrangement in 2014 with the Memphis Center for Urban Theological Studies in Tennessee, and currently a developing relationship in Pittsburgh. We have learned a lot in the last three and a half years. What started in Philadelphia descended into some challenging trends and necessitated right-sizing of their team indexed to enrollment projections, a change in leadership in that location - for all of the right and honorable reasons - and a rigorous financial review and corresponding projections.

Much of what we have learned from how to move forward has been crafted by two sources. The first source, our relationship with the Memphis Center for Urban Theological Studies is strong. LBC@MCUTS is growing and we are in the early stages of expanding LBC programming in that area. LBC@MCUTS president Rob Thompson is a capable and gifted leader forging relationships within the Memphis community and beyond to raise the profile and enrollment of that LBC location. Its finances and enrollments are healthy, and are growing.

The second source of learning for LBC is the person of Dr William Krispin. Dr Krispin was the founder of the Philadelphia Center for Urban Theological Studies and remains in high regard within its community, and beyond. A professor at Westminster Theological Seminary and a five-decade urban ministry veteran, Bill’s energy and enthusiasm mask his age as he now leads our Philadelphia CUTS initiative. In just a few weeks he has dramatically turned the credit per student metric, and the enrollment is sustainable and building. We are indebted to Bill for his vision and focus and for coming out of retirement to help us.

We would be remiss if we did not recognize the efforts of the Philadelphia CUTS core team: Academic Dean Sherry Jones, Director of Student Experience Dr. Ron Whitaker and his team including Carla Jones and Janet Chung. As we review the efforts in Philadelphia, the future is looking brighter every week with high-profile alumni ready to make a difference. Indeed, some already have and I look
forward to connecting with those difference makers at a breakfast scheduled for October 3 in Philadelphia.

I mentioned Pittsburgh, and we are in the early stages of an MOU. With these three CUTS locations, I believe it is time to pause and stabilize these initiatives, to assure they are growing well, before taking on the opportunities that seem to constantly present themselves. I am reminded of the foundational tenet that good is the enemy of best. We must be ever vigilant to focus on the best opportunities related to our mission and resources.

**Enrollment**

LBC continues to go opposite of the trend of decreasing enrollment at the traditional level. We are attracting more students and the appreciation of their parents as we anticipate a full house in our brand new dormitory from the very first day we open its doors, reminding us again of God’s blessing on our recruitment efforts shared by every employee of LBC. Brubaker Hall has been closed, in keeping with our long range plan to tear it down and to make room for our promenade, opening a line of sight from the Good Shepherd Chapel to the Teague Learning Commons.

With the sober reality of more Christian institutions closing their doors again this year, we are renewed in the urgency of finding mission-fit students. Even as many of our students are already beginning to arrive on campus, we anticipate welcoming over 311 new students (including our OneLife students) to LBC this semester. This group includes 40 students coming to us from institutions that have closed their doors this past spring and represent the greatest geographic footprint of any incoming class to date. What an opportunity we have to come alongside these students during this season of unexpected transition in their lives.

We continue to rejoice in the growth of our Accelerated Undergraduate Degree programs and we anticipate continued growth as we expand our online and on campus offerings in this area. In the midst of all this growth, we have needed to right-size our staffing in some areas. These changes have allowed us to step back and re-evaluate our academic and service model, and we anticipate growth in the near future as we more intentionally recruit for our Graduate School and Seminary.

Our campus will feel the weight of our increased student population this fall with more cars on campus, more meals to serve, and more activities across all levels of the student experience. In the midst of this, our students continue to navigate the weighty issues of our world. Our students are coming with greater needs than ever as evidenced by the continued growth and demand for our Counseling and Career Center under the leadership of Mr. Thomas Starr. More students are looking for answers, and we all must intentionally come alongside our students as we educate them to think and live a biblical worldview.

We continue to grow both the quality and commitment of our student-athlete experience. While many across our campus look at the men’s basketball team’s 28-3 record culminating with the school’s first
NCCAA Division II championship, we are even more energized by the fact that we have close to 200 student athletes participating in 13 intercollegiate sports with coaches committed to the mission of LBC. These coaches are using the platform of athletics to mentor students and reach out to share the Gospel through the universal language of sports.

I am by nature a very optimistic person, but I could never have imagined what our trustees, faculty, and staff could have accomplished this past year! I am so thankful for our history and so very honored to be a part of LBC, but I believe the best is yet to come!

A recent alumnus serving in full-time ministry just wrote a note to me saying, “I wouldn’t trade my LBC experience and training for anything!” Testimonies like this (and we hear many) point to our almighty, glorious God as He accomplishes His divine purposes through Lancaster Bible College. Seeing His good hand at work in this ministry is a refreshing blast of energy for us to press on “As One”!