



# The State of the University

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## I. Welcome & Introduction

Thank you, all, for coming.

This important event tonight marks the second annual State of the University address.

First, I want to extend a special welcome to some honoured guests:

- to his Worship, Mayor Fassbender, Mayor of the City of Langley, with whom the University has enjoyed a very supportive relationship;
- to Trinity Western's presidents emeriti:
  - President Emeritus, Calvin Hanson, who gave leadership to the institution when it was a junior college
  - And President Emeritus, Dr. Neil Snider, who guided the college into a fully accredited university
- to the University's Board of Governors who join us from cities and towns across North America;
- to our special partners in resourcing our mission – and our donors – the members of the President's Circle and University Partners;
- to prospective friends of the University;
- to the members of the University's leadership teams - the University Policy Council, and President's Cabinet;
- and to faculty, staff and guests for the honour of your presence here tonight.

*We welcome you all and thank you for coming.*

## **II. Purpose of The State of the University Address**

Each year, at our fiscal year-end, we are committed to bringing together our leadership, partners, and donor communities for a face-to-face conversation about the state of the University. As part of our commitment to external accountability, this State of the University address will provide you – our stakeholders – with a transparent statement of the status of the University, and it will present you with an outline of our plans going forward.

But more than this, I hope tonight you will be amazed and humbled by the stories of God’s provision in the lives of people - like David Burke who is indeed “shining brightly” in his workplace, using his knowledge and abilities in business for a higher purpose. I hope you will also be inspired by the bold vision that is unfolding for this marvelous academic institution for the sake of future students and future generations.

## **III. Our Legacy – Our Cause for Celebration**

Trinity Western University was established in 1962 and today is one of seven chartered universities in British Columbia. TWU is the 24<sup>th</sup> largest employer in the Metro Vancouver region. Through more than 300 faculty, the University offers 40 undergraduate degrees and 16 graduate degrees - more than any other independent Christian university in Canada. Apart from the main campus in Langley, the University has three extension sites including the Laurentian Leadership Centre in Ottawa, the Bellingham Washington Campus and the Crow’s Nest Ecological Research Area on Salt Spring Island BC. Each location offers strategic curriculum tailored to meet the specific needs and opportunities.

In the past four years, three of our faculty members have earned prestigious Canada Research Chair awards – in sciences, humanities and religious studies:

- Dr. Eve Stringham’s work is providing insights into the causes and possible cures of human diseases such as cancer and diabetes as well as neurodegenerative disorders like Alzheimer’s and Parkinson’s;
- Dr. Jens Zimmermann’s research and writing is assessing the role of religion in providing ethical guidelines for reshaping our Western identity and cultural ethos;
- and Dr. Peter Flint’s research on the Dead Sea Scrolls is advancing the study of the biblical text, the canon, and the interpretation of the Scripture in the Scrolls.

The scholarship of Trinity Western’s professors is bringing federal funding, professorships and grants to the University, approximately \$1.8 million in the past two years, so that faculty and students can address important concerns for our society and the world. We have much to commend our faculty for! They live out their commitment to scholarship at the highest levels of excellence, and that is what attracts, retains and transforms students.

In a recent survey, the majority of alumni reported having 2 or more mentors while studying at TWU, and two thirds of those mentors were senior faculty. That is the distinction of a Trinity Western University education – it’s personal, relational and meaningful.

Trinity Western has a powerful legacy as a particular University – a Christ centred university that inspires us to continue to discover, learn, and engage in the calling to be a service to humanity and the world – to walk with confidence into a strategic vision for the future as a university that, through its people and partnerships, will address the world’s deepest needs and opportunities.

I am continually reminded of TWU’s distinctive position in the realm of higher education: We are a privately funded, independent institution, offering undergraduate, masters and doctoral programs that integrates faith and learning – that requires of the student her mind

and her soul – that asks of the athlete his energy and passion for sport, for the opponent and for Christ. Our students are shaped by this learning process and give in return through internships, studies and volunteer opportunities. In fact, our research tells us that 57% of TWU students volunteer – that’s 24% higher than the norm for universities in Canada. Our students are addressing local issues of homelessness and poverty, are teaching children in inner-city Chicago and a remote village in the Dominican Republic, are gaining nursing experience in a hospital in Zambia.

Other institutions look to us as a pioneer in Christian higher education and are following in our footsteps. We are giving leadership to an emerging sector of independent higher education in Canada.

As we look ahead, the original vision inspires us still. You, our friends and supporters, and the 18,000 alumni, in over 79 different countries around the world, stand with us in expectation of great things yet to come.

#### **IV. Our Essence and Ends**

I have been working together with many stakeholders toward shaping a strategic direction for the University that would point this institution, currently in its adolescence, into its maturity, its preferred future as a great institution.

What is the measure of a great university? To consider this, one has to ask what kind of university it is? What does it say it will do? Does it fulfill the expectations and objectives? Our *Design the Decade | Envision the Century* strategic directions document, will ask these questions and define what the essence and ends of this institution are: namely,

**Essence is the heart and soul of the University ... its spirit.**

In its essence, Trinity Western University is a university with a deep commitment to education in the liberal arts as informed by the rich Judeo-Christian understandings and traditions that frame the study of the humanities, sciences, and professions as interdisciplinary, complementary and integrative.

Consistent with the University's mission and core values, the University will continue to be centred in Christ, pursuing truth with grace and assertiveness, promoting self-criticism and showing generosity to others, treating all ideas with charity and respect, holding a confident place in the diverse intellectual life of society, and promoting a holistic and interpretive role for understanding truth, world view and faith.

**With character or essence in mind, the University will focus its efforts on achieving particular goals or ends.**

As Canada's premier independent, Christian university, Trinity Western University exists for the cultivation of knowledge across disciplines, in pursuit of that which is good, true, ethical and authentic. The University's ends are what we as a community aim to ultimately achieve individually, institutionally and globally:

**That means:**

**Individual Transformation**

To assist students in becoming those who can address the world's deepest needs through their competence, character, commitment and calling.

**That means:**

**Institutional Competence**

Trinity Western University, uniquely Canadian institution of Christian higher learning, will be a world-class centre for vital research, exemplary scholarship, and excellence in learning that seeks reconciliation, peace-making and charity.

**And that means:**

**Global Impact**

Through students, alumni, faculty and staff, Trinity Western University will be a means of compassion, hope, healing, and reconciliation in the world through Christ.

The essence and ends define who we are and what we will do. They make clear our path for the future – and embed in our DNA our commitment and fidelity to God. What an exciting future there is ahead for Trinity Western University when God is in it!

While we are setting a course for the future, we are also living in the present. That takes a large measure of faith. Let me now reflect on the past year and, in so doing, update you on where we are today.

**V. Year in Focus**

**Along with my senior team, I have focused my efforts on three significant areas in the past year:**

- strengthening enrolment and our financial stability;
- introducing a policy-governance operational model for the board of governors and the institution;
- and developing an ambitious strategic direction that will ensure Trinity Western's role as a world leader in Christian higher education.

**a. Enrolment and Financial Stability**

Trinity Western University remains a very tuition-dependent university. While we are launching plans to moderate that economic model, we are very dependent on enrolling students to create essential cash flow for the University. Undergraduate enrolment peaked in 2003-04. Since then, new student enrolment has declined each year. This

past fall we changed the trajectory of our enrolment and, for the first time in four years, the number of entering students did not decline.

Building on this momentum, I commissioned the Great Campaign for Students. This organization-wide initiative is bringing new focus and energy to our student recruitment activities. For example, we recognize that cost is a barrier to many students. As part of this campaign, I am very pleased to advise you that we have taken the bold step of investing an additional one million dollars in student scholarship funds. The tuition rate increase for next year will be the lowest in more than a decade. In addition, I have commissioned the creation of a new church matching scholarship program, where we will match the gifts offered by churches in support of their students attending our university.

We fully expect our entering new student cohort this fall to grow to 800 undergraduate students and that our retention of returning students will improve slightly over previous years. Can we do it? It is a bold vision. There is heavy lifting underway in the enrolment management division, with the support of faculty, staff and friends who are actively helping. Here is my perspective. There are about one half million new students entering Canadian universities every year. We are only looking for 800.

Since the University is presently extremely tuition sensitive in its economic model, it is imperative that we increase enrolment. In fact the strategic direction of the University is to grow our enrolment from a present level of slightly less than 4,000 to more than 6,000 within the next decade. And we can do that.

The University must develop a fiscal model that provides for strategic investment in our people and our plans to ensure the long-term success of the University. We must realistically operate within the revenues we can effectively generate. I have commissioned the development of a five-year budget planning process that will serve

to direct us in our operational planning and development. The plan does reflect the economic reality of lower than required enrolment but also incorporates expected growth in revenues during the next five years. We are confident in our future. And let me underscore that that I am committed to working within the guidelines of our approved plan and we will operate with a commitment to best business practices.

The endowments of the University have grown very slowly. Today we are just over \$8 million of market value. We can spend about 5% of our market value on scholarships, bursaries and awards from the endowments. This is only \$400,000 per year. This means that the endowment does not significantly help the budget, nor does it help to leverage tuition like it should. The support that we require to serve 4000 students, a robust faculty and program excellence cannot be adequately supported with an \$8 million endowment. TWU's endowments are dramatically under funded and, realistically, should be \$160 million - 20 times the present value. Endowments are typically developed through legacy gifts funded through planned giving or as a major focus in a capital campaign. This has become an organizational priority for us.

I am pleased to tell you that in the past year we established a planned giving registry at the University. It's a listing of our friends who have indicated their intent to provide the University with a gift that will be directed to our endowments. We began the year with \$37 million in the registry and have added about another \$5 million to the number this year. But we have a long way to go to experience the operational benefits of these significant commitments. You should expect that in our future campaign announcements, in addition to program support and brick-and-mortar opportunities, we will be seeking support for endowments for scholarships, professorships, chairs and schools. And may I say that we hope that we are in your estate plans.

As we look at giving to the University, it has largely remained flat over the last decade. As the University has grown in influence, reputation, and programming, donor support

has not grown. We are aggressively working to renew support lost as well as to engage many new friends and new investment opportunities to secure the sustaining support of operations, endowments and capital construction needed to ensure the University's educational vitality.

**b. Policy Governance**

Another area of focus is to develop a policy governed culture. In meeting with many of you, I have become aware of the need to strengthen your confidence in how the University is governed. Last fall, with the cooperation and support of the Board of Governors, I introduced an option for a new policy-governance structure that will strengthen and streamline our operational culture – tighten our operations and rebuild collaboration across the University.

Our commitment to you is to develop a policy-governed culture that will bring clarity to the function of our Board of Governors, to the role of the President of the University through stated executive limitations, and to the roles of those who serve at the University, through policies that will govern the direction of our team. This process is already transforming our organization's culture bringing in great collaboration, efficiency and clarity. And I am pleased to advise you that our restructured leadership teams - the University Policy Council, and the President's Cabinet are adapting well to the new governance paradigm.

**c. Strategic Directions**

**The development of strategic directions for TWU is another important area of focus.** It is vital that we lay the foundation for educational vitality for the coming decade with the next century in mind. The *Design the Decade* strategic directions document defines four areas of University activity including, **educational vitality; supportive infrastructure, resource stewardship, and advancement momentum.**

Bringing these four elements into focus, developing short and long term goals that are manageable and measurable, and that align with our essence and ends, will ensure that Trinity Western University flourishes. The *Design the Decade* document will be ready this fall to share with you. But tonight, let me outline these four building blocks and focus in particular on some key activities and discoveries we have made as we have engaged this process.

**i. Educational Vitality**

**...is the ability to educate, transform, and impact the world through the wisdom and enterprise of its students, alumni, faculty, and staff.**

We have a great university with world class faculty and excellent staff providing a superb education for our students. Last fall, *The Globe & Mail* University Report Card, awarded TWU an A+ for “Overall Quality of Education.” TWU is the only university in all of Canada to receive this rating two years in a row. TWU also earned an A+ for “Student-Faculty Interaction” and A’s for “Quality of Teaching” and “Most Satisfied Students”. Small class sizes means personal attention and deep relationships with students. Here are some interesting statistics: 72% of our alumni were hired within 90 days of their graduation; 70% of those alumni are working in an area directly related to their TWU degree; and 89% of our alumni tell us that their experience at TWU prepared them for the marketplace. Let me assure you of this one thing; a TWU education is well worth the investment.

**ii. Resource Stewardship**

**...means being a university that is a steward and beneficiary of remarkable resources, gifted people, beautiful lands and properties, and robust financial support.** We are thinking strategically about this area for the future.

### **iii. Necessary Infrastructure**

**...is developing the University as a place that draws learners from around the world to various and diverse campus communities.**

To build our facilities and lands with the future vision in mind, I commissioned a campus master planning process. As you know TWU's facility infrastructure is aging. We have some immediate needs but they must be addressed within a broader framework of a campus master plan. A great example is campus residences. I reported to you last year that I introduced the concept of living-learning centres that will increase the number of residences and classrooms for students. Historically, we have run our residential program as a modest business operation—going forward, we want to be much more innovative with this opportunity and include investors and partners in developing revenue-generating ventures on our campus.

I envision four Living Learning Centres to be built on campus in the next decade in a village concept, like the town of Whistler, that blends west coast design with the beauty of the natural setting to create a rich sense of culture and community. I am pleased to inform you that we are in the final stages of negotiation with a local firm of friendly investors who are prepared to build our first Live Learn Centre. We expect the first one to be operational by summer 2010. And we have agreed that the academic space of the first centre will be dedicated to the faculty of professional and performing arts.

We have been working with the Township of Langley on several exciting endeavours. The first of which is our partnership in Langley's new sports events centre. Scheduled to open in May 2009, the centre will be the new home for our School of Human Kinetics and our award-winning Spartan athletics teams. Our external relations team is actively working to secure the corporate support required to enable us to gain access to this great facility. I am also very pleased to tell you

that, in collaboration with the Township of Langley and the province of British Columbia, the University was officially connected to the Metro Vancouver water supply. As of February, we now have clean drinking water and no longer rely on our wells and costly purified water. On another front, we are making progress in the development of the university district lands; two strategic properties were recently acquired for the University by a donor. These are exciting opportunities that move us forward.

**iv. Advancement Momentum**

**...is raising awareness of the University's excellence and its unparalleled higher education in local, provincial, national and global arenas so that TWU will attract and retain the finest faculty, staff, students and supporters.**

It is virtually impossible for a university to thrive in our nation without a proactive approach to government relations. Therefore, I have commissioned the development of a government relations strategy for the University that effectively positions us with all levels of government: local, provincial and national in each region of our operations. We must not deny our province the opportunity to fiscally participate in the world-class education we offer.

However, let me assure you, our strategy will not allow a fiscal dependency on government funding to develop nor will we in any way compromise our core values. We do believe, that as the premier independent university in Canada, we have a government relations agenda that must actively ensure that our students receive every right and benefit as those provided at public universities, that our faculty have access to research and development funding, and that the University and its supportive infrastructure, which contributes significantly to the region and province, is supported in a like manner. We are actively working to improve government relations.

We are convinced that we need to build broad public awareness of Trinity Western University. I have commissioned a major investment in external marketing and communications activities. Over the next five years, I am expecting that we will invest approximately \$1million to develop brand awareness and understanding of TWU. In particular, this initiative will focus on positioning the University within Metro Vancouver. As the first expression of this major investment, I am very pleased to announce that we will be publishing a Trinity Western magazine, which will become the flagship communication tool of the University. Look for the first issue this fall.

Our strategic direction also includes increasing enrolment numbers, strengthening partnerships with stakeholders – alumni, corporations, and government bodies. And we must pursue a comprehensive, integrated marketing and communication strategy developed and executed on the strength of a cohesive core brand. The essence and ends of Trinity Western University comprise this core brand.

## **VI. Vision for the Future – Challenge and Hope**

Trinity Western University is a miracle of God's grace. As Canada's premier independent Christian university, we have accomplished so much. And yet we see so many opportunities to grow – to reach our potential in maturing into a great university. What will it take to become a great Christian university? I believe we have a solid foundation from which to start:

- a bold vision for the institution;
- stellar faculty who are leaders in their fields who are magnets for other faculty, for students and for research funding;
- students who engage in the vision;
- alumni who are transformed by their educational experience and impact the world;
- and partners who support that vision and embrace the impact that we can have together.

I believe we have these essentials already, but we must enable these to multiply. To do that, I want to ask you to commit yourself to pray for Trinity Western University and its people.

As President, I firmly believe the essence of Trinity Western University is Jesus Christ. The synthesis of Christ-centred, faith-based scholarship and learning must be the single-focus for TWU. Alongside McGill, Harvard, and UBC, TWU stands as an institution that holds to values of quality, excellence, integrity, professionalism, and discipline. Yet, I want something more that will define a TWU education. That something more is the deeply planted root of the social-spiritual ecology of the campus, a dynamic between people and the Divine. As students experience such a dynamic, lives will change, relationships will change, and workplaces will change. TWU will be nothing less than the environment for that experience, the point of convergence for that change, and that change will affect the world.

As hopeful as we are about the opportunities before us, our current financial status is a difficult burden. Today is the last day of our fiscal year. Many of you have already contributed this year. We thank you. But we have a serious end-of-the-year shortfall that we hope you will help us bear. As of this morning, we are still in need of a significant amount of giving to end the fiscal year well. I am personally grateful for your partnership in helping to address this heavy load.

## **VII. Closing Remarks**

For the past 46 years, the University has remained firmly planted in Jesus Christ as, through its graduates, the circle of University influence in the world has grown wider and wider.

It is my great privilege to announce a major development in the history of the University that will expand this circle even more. Perhaps you have been wondering why we chose to host the President's Circle Dinner here in Richmond. This is a community of rich cultural traditions. It is one of the fastest growing in all of Canada. It has been a community that I have been interested in since my arrival at TWU in 2006. It is home to many major corporations including the new headquarters for Microsoft Canada. The Vancouver airport, with its more than 28,000 employees, serves as the entrance point for the world coming to celebrate the Olympic games, some of which will be held right here in this community. Richmond is a vital community with a significant interest in university education. While other communities in Metro Vancouver are being served well by multiple other chartered universities, Richmond is not.

Recently, Trinity Western University was invited, along with both UBC and SFU, to submit a proposal to a well-known philanthropist outlining our vision for a campus in downtown Richmond. I am very pleased to advise that our proposal prevailed.

TWU has signed a memo of understanding with this donor. The value of the donation in the lifespan of the agreement will approach \$40 million, certainly the largest single commitment received in the history of the University. And now the work really begins. Praise God!

The building, part of a major redevelopment plan for downtown Richmond, will provide up to 40,000 square feet of space for University operations. I have directed our Provost and his team to begin working toward a planned fall 2010 opening of the TWU Richmond campus. We will be conducting research to determine what programming will best meet the needs of the Richmond community. We intend to begin to seek additional funding in support of the development of the campus. Over the past several months we have been conducting a funding feasibility study with Richmond community and business leaders as well as others from Metro Vancouver. The vast majority of these are characterized as

friends who are new to the University. The support for our developing operations here in Richmond has been remarkable.

We will cautiously proceed in developing plans for this opportunity. We are aware that the development project approval is subject to a third reading by the city later this summer. However, we are confident that this massive redevelopment of the city core will be approved and that construction will begin in time for our opening late in 2010. Certainly you will hear more from us on this exciting development. I am convinced that this opportunity will serve as a gateway for our university to serve and attract new student populations and to deepen the profile of the University in the Metro Vancouver region. It is another remarkable expression of God's provision for the University. To God be the glory!

The University is well into its adolescence. While we still have some heavy lifting to do in critical areas of the University's operations, I am very encouraged with the progress we have made in the past year. We have identified key issues and are proactively working on elements that will strengthen the University.

In the next decade, key characteristics of the institution's maturity and influence will be further established. We go and grow from strength to strength, keeping the essence of our university centered in Jesus Christ.

Thank you for doing your part in prayer, partnership, and meaningful support to make Trinity Western University a remarkable means of God's grace in transforming students' lives to impact the world toward kingdom ends.

We are grateful that you have joined with us in this endeavour.

Thank you and God bless you!