

FaithSearch a Hit at Wisconsin Christian School



Krista Mischo is the Middle School Bible teacher at Fox Valley Christian Academy, a K-8 school in Neenah, Wisconsin.

When parents started asking for a class that would prepare their children for moving on to high school, Krista thought of her professor from Crown College, Don Bierle.

It took some tracking down, but when Krista called Faith Studies and found Dr. Bierle late last spring, she was overjoyed to find that Faith Studies had just what she needed. FaithSearch was just about to be published, and it seemed like the perfect fit for her eighth grade Bible class.

Krista's class of 21 eighth graders meets three times each week, giving plenty of time for Krista and her students to really grasp the concepts presented in FaithSearch. Krista supplemented the FaithSearch workbook by adding creative assignments and tests to assess her students' comprehension. One assignment required students to interview 10 people, surveying them on their beliefs of Jesus

as a real person and the Bible as an accurate description of Jesus' life.

Most of Krista's students come from Christian homes and already know quite a bit about Jesus' life. FaithSearch was an ideal challenge for these students, since it made them take a critical examination of their beliefs and the reasons behind their



Krista Mischo, (front row, wearing blazer) and her Fox Valley Christian Academy 8th grade Bible study class. Krista says that FaithSearch has helped equip her students in their Christian walks as they prepare to leave the academy this year.

convictions. But Krista found that FaithSearch was relevant to each of her students, regardless of previous knowledge. Krista was thrilled that the FaithSearch workbook provided each of her students with a complete and accurate idea of what it means to be a genuine believer in Christ.

There was some concern that the

FaithSearch material might be too much for the eighth graders to handle. After all, the workbook contains all of the concepts of Dr. Bierle's Surprised by Faith. Nevertheless, Krista tackled the challenge, and when she came across material that seemed too difficult for her students, she just took things slowly and gave extra time to introduce tough concepts. Next to praying for her students, Krista finds that it's most important to "make it practical—help them discover things on their own—which this book does."

Many of Krista's students will go on to public high school in the next year. "FaithSearch has been tremendous for our students," said Krista. "It's a very thorough, logical, step-by-step process of presenting faith." Krista is confident that the use of FaithSearch has helped equip her students for defending their faith once they leave Fox Valley Christian Academy.

If you would like more information about using FaithSearch in your classroom, youth group, or personal Bible study, call Faith Studies at 1-800-964-1447 or, in the Twin Cities, 612-401-4501.

Have You Reserved Your Seat?

Space is Limited for the 2000 Faith Studies International Celebration Dinner



We'd like you and your guests to join us for an evening dedicated to celebrating God's blessings on Faith Studies International.

Dr. Stephen Paul Goold, senior pastor at Crystal Evangelical Free Church, will host this year's event, featuring

Dr. Don Bierle as the keynote speaker. International award-winning illusionists Toby Travis and Adrian Van Vactor will demonstrate their unique presentation of the Gospel. The Westwood Community Church worship team will provide the music for the evening. Please join us for this complimentary event.

Saturday, February 19, 2000

Hotel Sofitel Ballroom

HWY 100 & I-494

Bloomington, Minnesota

Punch Bowl Reception at 5:45 p.m.

Dinner Served at 6:15 p.m.

Reservations Required: 612-401-4501

FAITH STUDY CLASSIFIEDS

EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITIES

Receptionist/Administrative Assistant

PT receptionist/administrative assistant to answer phones, perform data entry, coordinate mailings, and greet visitors 10-30 hours per week. Microsoft Office experience required. Call Todd Burdge, 612-401-4501.

Events Coordinator

2 positions available, 20-30 hours per week each. Includes significant time on computer and clerical tasks. Pleasant phone manner and Microsoft Office experience required. GoldMine knowledge helpful. Call Kristi Wannamaker or Dale Witherington, 612-401-4501.

VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES

Data Entry Volunteers.

Three or four people are needed to enter seminar attendee information into our database. If you're comfortable with a PC and can give just a few hours a month, call Todd Burdge at 612-401-4501.

Prayer Foundation Coordinator.

If you're motivated to pray for this ministry, and you'd like to keep in contact with other prayer volunteers, we may have a fulfilling ministry opportunity for you! Call Hasnah Burdge at 612-401-4501.

Faith Studies International is an inter-denominational, not-for-profit organization dedicated to presenting evidences for the Christian faith through the Faith Study seminar and its derivatives—including outreach and training seminars, media resources, and discipleship programs. Funded solely by individual gifts, Faith Studies International is not publicly or denominationally supported.

For information call:

(612) 401-4501/toll-free 1-800-964-1447

Mailing address:

P.O. Box 786 (7801 Park Dr. Suite F)
Chanhassen, MN 55317

Want to contact Faith Studies on the Web?

Reach us at FSMN@FaithStudies.org
(Watch for our Web site later this year.)

© 1999 by Faith Studies International



Partnership benefits Wooddale

In the last issue of *Reasons*, Brian Doten, discipleship pastor, and Ken Geis, outreach pastor in charge of local initiatives, shared how Faith Studies has impacted Wooddale Church in Eden Prairie, Minnesota. These two pastors now continue their discussion of how their church's partnership with Faith Studies has provided benefits for both organizations.

FSI: What makes Faith Studies International unique among evangelistic ministries?

Geis: It provides a strategy that isn't a methodology. We've been able to plug it into our strategy, such as through the pairing of events. It's a logical progression for helping people to reach out. It's a synergy of events and opportunities.

Doten: It presents, at a popular level, historical and philosophical apologetics. It communicates at the level of the average person with information from books they wouldn't read. It asks age-old questions at a popular level. It delivers compelling arguments.



Brian Doten

FSI: What do you think are key challenges Faith Studies International will face during the next few years?

Doten: It's all related to growth. They need to hire people to do the work. Keeping the main thing the main thing. Making the Faith Study available to larger groups through video and CD-ROM. A big question: Can this experience have the same level of impact when not led by Don himself—by other presenters and other delivery systems.

Geis: Utilizing Don in more efficient ways. What if there

Budget Comparison 1999 - 2000

God's provision and our shareholder's faithfulness helped us meet our 1999 budget. This year's budget has increased by 8% over 1999. When making your monthly contributions, please prayerfully consider increasing your donation, joining us as we strive to complete all that God has placed before us.

“For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also.” (Mt. 6:21)

ale and Faith Studies

a couple of Saturdays a year when a live satellite down-link available? It would maximize what he does very well. It would be most efficient.

SI: How can a church gain the most benefit possible from seminars and resources of Faith Studies International?

Doten: I don't think every church can do what we do, because of the size of church we are. Every church can do book distribution. They can use video for small groups or a Sunday school elective.

Geis: Line up with other churches to do a live Faith Study.

Doten: Churches can use the Owner's Manual as a challenging Bible study book. There are multiple ways a church can make use of Faith Studies resources.

SI: How can an individual gain the most benefit possible from the seminars and resources of Faith Studies International?

Doten: I know people at Wooddale who keep a stock of books. They have it as an evangelistic tool for coworkers and friends. I know people asking when is the next Faith Study so they can bring it home. Don't just tell a friend about the Faith Study. Bring them along with your arm.

Geis: Use the experiences of people who have gone. Have people who've benefitted from the Faith Study testify to its effectiveness. The Faith Study is part of growth, of confirming faith. It helps bring it home, bring it to life.



Ken Geis

For Praise

Praise God for his provision, and for our Shareholders who gave generously and sacrificially in December to provide precisely the amount needed—\$250,000—to meet our 1999 budget.

Commitments. 2,105 people committed their lives to Jesus Christ in 1999.

New Board Members. Larry Balmer, Deb Kramer, and Eric Chico joined the Faith Studies board in January.

Video Completion. The Friend to Friend video is edited and in its final production stages prior to being released.

Matching Funds Met. Generous donors met our goal for matching funds to pay for the Friend to Friend video.

Housing Needs Met. A local family provided rent-free lodging for our new evangelist, Adrian VanVactor.

FaithSearch Enthusiasm. Many people express enthusiasm for the impact FaithSearch has had on youth.

New Intern. David Wigen joined us as Toby Travis' intern. David's wife, Jennifer, is volunteering her time in the Faith Studies office.

For Prayer

Health for the Faith Studies staff.

The Holy Spirit's anointing on our evangelists as they proclaim the gospel.

Provision of Office Staff. Recent changes have left positions open. Pray that God would send the right people to do this important work.

Volunteer Prayer Coordinator. Prayer is the cornerstone of our ministry.

Our Volunteers. Their generosity makes possible our mailings, data entry, and many other important tasks.

Celebration Dinner. Pray for the preparation, participants, and a good attendance

Seminar Attendance. Pray that God will prepare the way, seminar attendance will be strong and God will change many lives.

Starting February 27th

We Will Have a New Area Code!

Our new area code will be 952.

Please update your records with our numbers.
(Only our area code is changing!)

Faith Studies International
Phone and Fax Numbers:

Phone: 952-401-4501

Fax: 952-401-4504

Toll-Free: 800-964-1447

"Forget lunch...open your eyes!"

A brief report on the state of Faith Studies International



Funny how people can get distracted from the most important things. Even when they're with Jesus. Jesus had just finished a life-changing encounter with an unlikely person: a Samaritan woman. But when the disciples showed up, they had one thing in mind: "Rabbi, how about some lunch?" (John 4:31, a loose but accurate paraphrase).

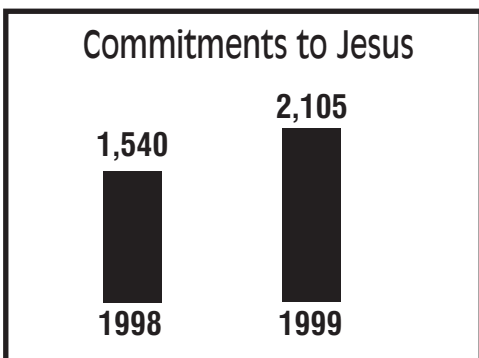
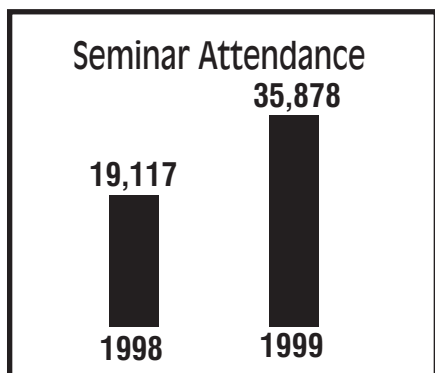
A woman's life had just been transformed. She was telling everyone in town. And all the disciples could think about was lunch. So Jesus jerked them back to eternal reality: "Open your eyes and look at the fields! They are ripe for harvest" (John 4:35).

Lunch could wait. The spiritual harvest was of utmost urgency. And it still is. The temptation of distraction is no less real at Faith Studies International. During 1999 we had our share of distractions—a move to new

facilities, a merger with another ministry, major financial pressures. But we kept our focus. We remained centered on God's call and timing for proclaiming the Good News. Let me share three areas that show we stayed on focus: spiritual fruit, new products, and shareholder support.

SPIRITUAL FRUIT

During 1999 the number of seminars increased 35% from 167 to 225. Attendance at those events increased 88% to 35,878, and the number of recorded commitments to Christ jumped 37% to 2,105. And more of the people who made commitments were being spiritually strengthened, based on a 51% increase in the number of Owner's Manual discipleship books purchased. Most encouraging was the number of churches cooperating with us for outreach and training—an increase of 29% to 242.



NEW PRODUCTS

The publication of two gospel-focused products shows that we have our eyes opened to the harvest. FaithSearch for youth is already reaping wonderful fruit in the lives of junior and senior high students (see the FaithSearch article on page 1 of this issue). The church outreach training video, Friend to Friend, will make our Great Commission strategy available to congregations across the country. The video will be featured at our Celebration Dinner.

SHAREHOLDER SUPPORT

The support of our shareholders encourages me that we have remained properly focused. Dozens of volunteers contributed hundreds of hours every month. More than 1,550 people prayed for us as part of our Prayer Foundation. And 694 households (up from 547 in 1998) gave financially. That is wonderful confirmation of our mission. Thank you! As a result of your generosity, our income increased by 32% over 1998 so we could meet our aggressive 1999 budget.

A TRUE STORY

Just before Thanksgiving our total income for the year was \$550,000, about \$250,000 short of our budget need. With the end of our fiscal year only weeks away, I took two actions. First, I wrote the Christmas letter to you, our shareholders, and explained the need. Second, I asked my staff to band together in a week of prayer. I have repeatedly affirmed that Faith Studies is God's ministry and it is in him that we trust. His faithfulness year after year has been a source of both praise and boldness to move forward.

When we closed the books after December 31, I was moved to tears by the bottom income line: \$800,471. We had received exactly the \$250,000 we asked and prayed for. Thank you! Praise God!

Now we're in a new year, with new energy and new goals. But the focus remains the same: the fields are ripe for harvest. Lunches are good, but as for me, I'm keeping my eyes open to God's urgent priority of bringing people into his kingdom. And I'm counting on you to share this vision.



Don

Dr. Don Bierle
Executive Director