

Interview with Warren Farha - June 27th, 2018

00:04 - Jacob Beebe

What is your name?

00:06 - Warren Farha

Warren Farha.

00:08 - Jacob Beebe

Can you spell that.

00:10 - Warren Farha

That's W-A-R-E-N. And last name is F like Frank, A-R-H-A.

00:13 - Jacob Beebe

What is the name of your bookstore?

00:15 - Warren Farha

It's Eighth Day Books.

00:17 - Jacob Beebe

What is your status in this bookstore?

00:26 - Warren Farha

I'm the founder and owner.

00:29 - Jacob Beebe

Where is your bookstore located?

00:31 - Warren Farha

We are at 2838 East Douglas in Wichita, Kansas. We started the store at 3700 East Douglas 1988.

00:40 - Jacob Beebe

When did your bookstore open?

00:45 - Warren Farha

1988, September 8, 1988 to be exact.

00:50 - Jacob Beebe

What sets your bookstore part? What are the defining characteristics of your bookstore?

01:04 - Warren Farha

Well, the stores focus is to concentrate on classics, and literature, religion, the arts, philosophy, theology, etc. The key word is classic. We try to focus on those books that have been perennial important, books that have been important for the shaping of human thought. The best that's been thought and written. That's, that's our goal. That's our aspiration.

01:48 - Jacob Beebe

How do you choose books in your bookstore?

02:00 - Warren Farha

Well, we choose books based on those criteria, the books that we feel have been seminal books, or pivotal books in any particular field,

02:19 - Jacob Beebe

Do you receive outside suggestions?

02:21 - Warren Farha

Every day. I have a background in classics and religion, so I have read quite a bit in those fields. So I guess that's how the knowledge base started, was what I had learned up to the age of 32, when I started at, 33 when I started the store. But every day, Customers come in with their own suggestions and we learned a tremendous amount from our own customers who represent a pretty savvy group of readers. So we're constantly profiting from that. I was part of a circle of friends that read pretty deeply in religion, theology, so forth. So I learned a tremendous amount from this from that circle of friends

03:14 - Jacob Beebe

Who is (makes up) the circle of friends?

03:17 - Warren Farha

They would include people like Dale Allison, who is a first rate biblical scholar, and is now the chair of a, is in an endowed chair at Princeton Theological Seminary. Michael Neff, who teaches at Middle Tennessee State University, Chris Kettler, who's professor of theology at Friends University since the late 70s I believe, early 80s. And several others, Doug Nigh, he was a fellow student at Wichita State University. A number of others, but those were sort of the core, Bob Harrington, a local resident who's a genius in certain fields, mostly science and science and philosophy. So that kind of hits the high points.

04:14 - Jacob Beebe

Can you tell us anything about the founding and early days of the bookstore? What motivated you?

04:16 - Warren Farha

Yeah, I wanted to, I've been part of a family business since I was a child. I worked for my dad growing up, and worked with my family up until up until I was 33, when, due to a personal crisis,

the loss of my first wife, in an auto accident, I decided to reorient my job, my life, vocationally. So that led me to think of starting a bookstore, basically, because I thought that would be a pretty, pretty cool job to look forward to going to every day. And it would incorporate what I had learned as far as being in retail all my life. But it would also incorporate my academic interests at Wichita State, which were religion and classical studies. I could put those skills together in starting a bookstore that I thought would do something that nobody else was really doing. And that's really focusing on the classics. And, in addition, I wanted to bring Orthodox Christianity, some people would say Eastern Orthodox Christianity, that term is not to my liking for a number of reasons. But I wanted to bring Orthodoxy to the table of cultural conversation, which I didn't see happening anywhere else. So those are the components that came together when I opened the store.

06:31 - Jacob Beebe

What kind of training, education, or experience did you receive prior to running this business?

06:39 - Warren Farha

Strangely enough, my experience in the book business, in particular, was limited to about nine months working at a local Christian bookstore back in, right after I got out of high school. Apart from that, I had no experience whatsoever in the book business. So I started from scratch as far as that goes, and made all the mistakes that you would expect. Someone who's so green as I was to make.

07:15 - Jacob Beebe

Did the bookstore that you work in, was it there that you found your niche?

07:23 - Warren Farha

No, it was much later, it was much, much, much later, during college years, late college years, and even later...

07:32 - Jacob Beebe

I mean you found your niche for the business, you found a business that would provide for people who are deprived of classics. I assume a Christian bookstore, I worked at a Christian bookstore, and they have very generic or very, they have a wide range.

08:00 - Warren Farha

Right. Well, this is this is a typical evangelical bookstore, which there are many, many throughout the country. I did learn, you know, I did learn a lot about books and authors there in the evangelical world, at least. I, you know, I did Bible imprinting, and I did deliveries for that store. It was a pretty prominent Christian bookstores, regionally, even, was a leading Christian bookstore in the evangelical book world. So I, I counted it as a blessing that I got to work there when I was so young.

08:59 - Jacob Beebe

What are other books, authors or other people personally, that have influenced your professional or personal choice?

09:13 - Warren Farha

Well, I would say the first really pivotal author in my own life was C.S. Lewis, who I discovered when I was 16 years old, and by a strange set of coincidences picked up *Mere Christianity*. I knew nothing about Lewis, but that book intrigued me from a footnote I had read in another book. And that's how important footnotes are. And so I went to Lewis and *Mere Christianity*, and it changed my life, if kind of, in many ways, was formative in my intellectual and emotional life, My understanding of Christian faith and how it relates to other arenas of thought and knowledge, English literature, mythology, philosophy, so many other areas were kind of opened the door for me to understand them in a Christian way. So C.S. Lewis, a little bit further down the road was Alexander Schmemmann, who's one of the greatest Orthodox theologians of the 20th century, wrote a great book called *For the Life of the World* which changed the face of liturgical studies. So *For the Life of the World* kind of return me to the roots of my own native Orthodox faith. I was born and raised in an Orthodox community. And so, well, this may get off topic, but I, in my teens, encountered the Jesus Movement, which was a major kind of ground swell groundswell of, of Christian experience and evangelism that took place in the late 60s and early 70s. Very influential here in Wichita and at my local school, and so I became involved in a large gathering of so called Jesus people. And it was through that arena that I really began to experience the evangelical sort of frame of Christianity, but a little bit later then, reading Sherman and Robert Pain and other writers, it sort of helped me return to the paternalistic roots of Christian faith that you find in Orthodoxy. So my life and faith was kind of a synthesis of those two experiences I guess you could say.

12:55 - Jacob Beebe

Does your bookstore do any community service or outreach, or any projects with the community.

That could be broadly interpreted? I was part of Pr. Boyles reading group reading group, I know he went through you, do they still order books from you?

13:26 - Warren Farha

Well, I guess that is a community service, but it's certainly a sort of self serving one because I sell books through that activity. I guess you could say school book fairs would be another way in which we participate in the community in a positive way, I hope, I'm trying to stock the best children's books so that we can. Again, it's also a commercial enterprise.

13:59 - Jacob Beebe

Well, it's your presence in the community.

14:05 - Warren Farha

Eighth Day Books is, is the meeting place of several book groups and discussion groups that I think are really valuable and praiseworthy, and bring people together in a really rich community

of thought and experience. Some of the groups have been meeting for 10, 15 years, on an ongoing basis, so I think that would probably cover it. I feel like an emphasis on the classics is a source of health for the wider community, to remind people of their roots, the roots of our civilization, the roots of our culture.

15:07 - Jacob Beebe

What are the daily experiences in the business? What are the hours, the clientele, and what are popular items, items or authors that people come searching for the most?

15:26 - Warren Farha

We're open about 60 hours a week, 10 hours a day times five. Yeah, about 60 hours a week. So we're a regular bricks and mortar bookseller. You know, at least half of our revenue is generated through over the counter sales to walk in trade. The other half of the revenue is through off site events, which we do frequently, going to conferences and conferences, educational, literary, arts conferences, theological conferences, and we also sell quite a bit online and through mail order. People come to us for the classics, for the real essence, the essential writers in particular fields, specialized writers, we try to go beyond the familiar names into those writers who influenced the familiar names. So we try to go back to the roots of those great works that have stood out to those more obscure works that may have nourished, you know, the great well known books. And so we're kind of known for digging in and finding some obscure sources that are yet very important. C.S. Lewis is fabulously popular, continually popular, even after these 30 plus years, his books sell on a daily basis, without us even realizing it until we run out of particular titles. They just, they just quietly, get purchased and leave the front door. Children's books have been a very important part of our business from the get go. More important than I ever thought they would ever be.

17:51 - Jacob Beebe

What kind of authors, or how do you choose children's books? It must be a different process.

18:00 - Warren Farha

A little bit. When we, from the very, from a year after we first opened, we started doing school book fairs. So we were able to profit from the wisdom of teachers and what they recommended and librarians. And so that was a really valuable aspect of learning about the children's book world. Of course, I had my own experience as a child and what I liked. I kind of have a strange, a criterion that kind of goes against the grain, and that I am kind of drawn to and focus on, well, I guess it's not so surprising, classic children's books. So I tend to be drawn to the older children's books, the ones that have not been formed by modern trends, perhaps modern prejudices, and blindnesses. CS Lewis has a great essay called "On the Reading of Old Books", and he says for every new book that you read, you should read two old ones" to "keep the fresh wind of the centuries blowing through our minds." And I take that really seriously, and even, especially in the arena of children's books. I think that some of the older books have the depth and richness that a lot of the more contemporary ones don't. So sometimes I fall into a pattern of older is

better. Or instead of the newer the book is, the better or more interesting. It's chronological snobbery in reverse. Again, C.S. Lewis talks about chronological snobbery as the kind of natural tendency to assume that we're always progressing and whatever is newer is going to be better. And I take the opposite stance of, well, not so much. I find that I tend to favor the older over the newer, so that has its own pitfalls, but that's what we do. Okay.

22:15 - Jacob Beebe

So when you walk into the bookstore, art forms are hard to ignore. Can you describe, just describe your art forms?

22:31 - Warren Farha

Well as art forms would be overwhelmingly the iconographic tradition in the Eastern Christian world that has roots in earliest Christianity, at least from, well you go back to the catacombs, paintings and bar relief sculptures. And then you have the development of formal sorts of canonical rules about the making of Christian art. The iconographic tradition is inseparable from the liturgy of the church. It's meant to be, again, an integral part of the experience of Christian worship, if you go back to the early centuries, in the earliest Byzantine centuries. So we've had icons from the very beginning, I feel like they are another form of theology, visual theology. I like the fact that they're unsentimental, that they, they're not trying to be realistic representations. They have, there's a whole different set of presuppositions by with an iconographer creates his icon, his or her icons. And there's just a deeply rich tradition that icon making is rooted in. It's a celebration of the kingdom of God, which is in many ways, beyond our experience of this world. And so instead of a realistic representation, you're drawn into a representation of life in the kingdom, transformed by life in the kingdom. So they've been around so much, and they're so present in our store that I've kind of, you kind of begin to take them for granted. But I think to somebody coming in the store for the first time, they're probably shocked, in ways good or bad.

24:34 - Jacob Beebe

A representation that conference, confronts who you are as a person to change you and make you look at things differently.

24:38 - Warren Farha

That's a good summation.

24:43 - Jacob Beebe

What property is owned by the bookstore? Is only this bookstore owned by you?

24:49 - Warren Farha

Yeah, this is the only the only location we have. And we do it on the building. Now, the first 13 years, we were in leased space in Clifton Square, just a half mile east of where we are now. Part of the reason for moving was to move into a space that we could end up owning, which thankfully, we've been able to do that.

25:17 - Jacob Beebe

What do you see for the future of the bookstore? Do you see it growing or modernizing in any way? Are there any things that you would like to see change?

25:33 - Warren Farha

Well, at some point I would love to see a meeting space attached to the store where readings and book groups could be held more in more spacious quarters than we're able to provide here. Perhaps a coffee, you know, a coffee house dimension to what we do now. That's a lack that I really mourn. So I'd like to see that develop going forward. I'm not sure how that would look right now. But I, we always have it in the back of our minds. There has been and will be no change in our primary criteria of book choice. If you looked at the categories that we stock today, they are by and large, the same as when we first opened the front doors, much more emphasis now I think on the arts, because in the past 25 years I'd say, there's been a real explosion of religion and the arts, activities and thoughts in the general culture. So we have a much larger representation of that. A lot of that is due to our experience with a great journal called *Image*, a journal of the arts and religion that was founded by Greg Wolf back in the late 80s. And we've had an extremely close relationship with Gregg's project, and the journal itself and a series of workshops that they sponsor every summer. This year will be, I think, our 22nd time going to that particular conference. So a lot of credit has to be paid *Image*. Also, another exploding category would be classical Christian education. We do at least three or four different education conferences every year. And the classical education movement has really exploded in influence and numbers. So that's been another category that we probably had very little of when we first started, but now having an extensive inventory of books on classical education.

28:51 - Jacob Beebe

Last question about the bookstore. Have there been any memorable figures that have visited your bookstore? Or have you had any memorable events held by the bookstore throughout its history.

29:08 - Warren Farha

We have had some famous people come through here, probably earliest on would have been T.F. Torrance, prominent reformed theologian from Scotland. I mean, in the world of reformed theology, he's one of the top names of the 20th century certainly. He was here within the first year or two that we were open. Another landmark was when Kallistos Ware, who is a contemporary Orthodox theologian, probably the best known in the world, in the English speaking world anyway, was here in February of 2002. He had come to Wichita for a series of retreats and during that time the host of these events brought in by the store. So we treasure the photographs that were taken off him here in the store. I mean, we've had some pretty fine authors here, it would take too long to mention them all. Scott Karen's one of the best contemporary American poets, has been here numerous times. Ralph Wood, who teaches theology and literature at Baylor University has been here numerous times. Hans Boersma contemporary theologian, many, and many of these theologians have been in Wichita because of the activity of Eighth Day Institute, and the three central events that they have every year, the

Eighth Day symposium, this year will be our ninth symposium where we have speakers from the three great Christian traditions, Catholic, Orthodox, and Protestant present a position paper, so to speak, representing their tradition concerning a particular designated theme. So the Eighth Day Institute has brought a lot of great thinkers and writers to the store. Yeah, so that's another whole part of the story is the development of the Eighth Day Institute.

31:47 - Jacob Beebe

Okay, that's my next question. Feel free to elaborate as well, can you describe the history and mission of the Eight Day Institute.

31:58 - Warren Farha

Yes, in brief, it is the creation of the vision, from the vision, of a former employee of mine and good friend, Erin Doom, who worked here from 1998 and 2006. And then struck out on his own while he was doing graduate studies in history and theology to found the Eighth Day Institute as it eventually became known, it was originally called the St. John of Damascus Institute. But for a number of reasons the name was changed to reflect the relationship between Eighth Day Books, and Eighth Day Institute, the institute is, to be clear, the institute is a nonprofit organization that exists to renew culture through faith and learning. That's the short form of a description of the Eighth Day Institute, you might even look at it like an educational arm of the bookstore. Beyond the education that's available just in the books themselves, Eight Day Institute brings together like minded people, or people who are interested in the renewal of small "o" Orthodox Christianity, both in its Orthodox, Catholic, and Protestant forms. It's, one of its purposes is to bring together and fellowship, Nicene Christians, those Christians who unite around the confession of faith of Nicea in 325 ad, which became the classic symbol of, of the Christian faith. The Institute sponsors, as I said before, the Symposia. There is a weekly, bi weekly gathering, there they called the Hall of Men, in which local men meet together to have a meal, to share a meal, some beer and a lecture. This has been going on for about 10 years, twice a month. And in the future we will provide a digital library of all the writing and both printed and spoken work that goes on in the Eighth Day Institute and in the Symposia. And many others, there's many other visions of the Institute, Eighth Day Books has always tried to work hand in glove with, with the Institute, always trying to distinguish the two different entities, you know, so people realize that we're a regular for profit bookstore, and the acting Institute is a regular nonprofit organization that depends on, you know, depends on donor support.

35:40 - Jacob Beebe

Is there a membership, or are there rules for membership? Is it just your invited to come to the Institute? How are people invited?

35:52 - Warren Farha

Yeah, it's both. There's an open invitation for people to come to the activities of the Institute. If they wish, if they have enough interest and want to go to a deeper level, then they can become members at several different levels, with several, several different levels of benefit from the activities of the Institute. So it really tries to be both, the Eighth Day Symposia, you know, is



attended by many people who are not members, but hopefully become members through a good experience with that event and others like it.

36:38 - Jacob Beebe

What are the demographics of people who attend, religious demographics? Obviously the Hall of Men is men.

36:49 - Warren Farha

There's also a corresponding kind of fellowship of women called the Sisters of Sophia. And they do the same sort of thing that the Hall of Men does only attended only by women. And then the public events, of course, are open to the world, men and women and children sometimes.

37:21 - Jacob Beebe

Do you have anything else to add regarding the institute?

37:27 - Warren Farha

Well, the institute was founded, I believe, in 2018, excuse me, 2008. So it is past its 10th anniversary and as gaining in the articulation of its vision, and on the number of members. One of our primary hopes this coming year is to bring back the Eighth Day book catalog, which Eighth Day Books put together and mailed from 1989 until 2012. So we like to say that the catalog didn't end in 2012, it just went into a pause. And so in cooperation with the Eighth Day Institute, Eighth Day Books hopes to get that catalog back out into people's hands, which is a completely countercultural thing to publish your big fat catalog, mail order catalog, of ink on paper, that it also expresses real conviction that that's the best way to read. It remains the best way to read despite the rise of digital reading. And countless screens that we're surrounded by. In this culture, we still believe that there's a devoted core of readers who want to read ink on paper.

39:12 - Jacob Beebe

What have been some of the topics that have been discussed at the symposium? Do you have themes? What are some popular topics that are discussed at the bi-weekly meetings?

39:33 - Warren Farha

So, as far as the symposia are concerned, our very first one was on classical education. And there was a talk called "Why Books". Of course, that was in 2011, and that was during the heyday, I mean, the real surge of interest in digital reading on the Kindle like devices. And it was popularly touted that this kind of reading would replace books. Well, that hasn't happened. And it just so happens that digital reading has plateaued and began to decline as a percentage of all reading. So that was the first symposium. Others that followed, were on the Inklings. The nature of the fellowship of writers that met in the circle of C.S. Lewis, J.R.R. Tolkien, Charles Williams, and so forth. There's a group of friends at Oxford in England who met twice a week, I think, and in these meetings they read works in progress by each other. It was through the Inklings that Tolkien eventually published *The Hobbit* and *The Lord of the Rings* because of the

encouragement of other members of that fellowship. C.S. Lewis read aloud things like the Screwtape Letters, things like some of the Chronicles of Narnia, those, that circle of friends nourish those kinds of books that changed the face of Christian thought and the arts. So there's enough material in the Inklings that you could have a conference every year, and as a matter of fact, we do have one of one of the yearly events that the Eighth Day Institute sponsors is an Inklings festival, which focuses on one or the other of the great Inkling members. There was a symposium on Dostoevsky focusing on Dostoevsky. Another year was focused on Aros and the family, the meaning of family and friendship. Well, in fact, one of the symposia was focused on friendship itself, versus the often the isolating force of social media and screens all around us. Yes, they're within arm's reach, two, or three. So that gives you an, that gives you a sense of what the symposium focuses on. The Hall of Men is structured around a lecture on a great hero of the faith, be they Orthodox, Catholic, or Protestant, or be they just a great positive cultural force. So, each week, someone prepares a talk on a great figure like this. This is after the attendees have had a nice meal and a couple of beers perhaps, and then there's the lecture. So there's kind of a consistent attendance of 20 to 30 men at those events, likewise with the Sisters of Sofia. So that's the basic structure of these meetings. So now, after 10 years, twice a month, go figure, there's been a couple of hundred different topics, a couple of hundred different figures in Christian history who have been discussed. It's just a great well of learning, and experience that opens up. Part of the purpose of the Institute itself is to bring together people from the great traditions, and really experience what these traditions have to say, not just second hand, not just as a result of polemics, which can also, can often be superficial, but you actually have to face fellow Christians of other traditions and see them as real people, and hear what they have to say about Christian faith. Likewise, you say with all honesty, and without covering up the blemishes your own faith and the differences between you, but to be able to do that in a community of friendship, and conviviality, but in honesty, not not trying to cover over the real differences that still exist between us as Christians.

46:06 - Jacob Beebe

Do you follow like a, David Ford scriptural reasoning, or Peter Oaks?

46:10 - Warren Farha

I'm not familiar. Well, I've heard their names.

46:12 - Jacob Beebe

It's like the interfaith dialogue, but you don't water it down.

46:17 - Warren Farha

Exactly.

46:19 - Jacob Beebe

You confront the differences. And the interest in reconciling, with an interest in, in at least understanding one another, is enough for comradery.

46:25 - Warren Farha

Exactly, yeah. That's what we call Eighth Day ecumenicism, and in the context of the Institute, and actually in Eighth Day Books, I mean, the bookstore here, we try to put the best resources of each of the great traditions on the table, side by side, so that you can look at them objectively and see the asked statements of those, of those traditions that exists. That's always been an aspiration of the bookstore. There is no place in the store for proselytizing. People are welcome to come here. And go about their business and their interests without any, you know, any interference from staff. No attempt to proselytize. But if questions were asked, we say what we can to answer them and be honest about our own faith. So that's been, that's been with the ground of Eighth Day Books since the beginning, and that's also an essential guiding principle in the Institute.

48:06 - Jacob Beebe

Are the employees here all Orthodox?

48:12 - Warren Farha

No, no, no, we have, right now we have a couple of Catholics and we have three Orthodox, that's what it consists of right now. We've had plenty of Protestants of various stripes and couple who weren't committed to a faith that are open to learning. Yeah, there's always been a diverse crowd around here in our clientele also reflects a real diversity of Christian experience. And you know, many non-Christians come here, just because of what we feel like is the richness of, of what's offered on the shelves. You know, we have a lot of people come in who are not believers and all, but appreciate the quality of the books. But if I'm asked, but if I'm asked, I share my understanding of what Orthodoxy is, as the best that I can try to, in the midst of that, I try to maintain an attitude of respect for those other traditions, because that's the only way you can go forward is with respect, respect and honesty, those two things in tandem, I think, lead us forward in a profitable way, towards fullness of truth. Hopefully, that's what we're all aiming for, personally, and community we're, we want want to embrace the fullness of truth. I believe that fullness is best expressed in the Orthodox faith, and others that come in here feel its best expressing the Roman Catholic faith. We all, we are honest with each other and we're close friends. It's the way it's always been.

50:54 - Jacob Beebe

So what is the name of your church?

50:57 - Warren Farha

St. George Orthodox Christian Cathedral.

50:59 - Jacob Beebe

Where is it located?

51:03 - Warren Farha

It's close to 13th and Rock Road.

51:09 - Jacob Beebe

What would be the defining characteristics of the Orthodox faith in your opinion? What sets us apart from Catholicism? You can go way back in history.

51:31 - Warren Farha

So Orthodoxy is the fullness of Christian experience. To define it simply, I think, I think I could start with that. It is the community that flows from the experience of beholding the risen Christ. Therefore it goes back to the very pristine origin of Christian faith, it starts at the empty tomb, and it has come down as a stream of Christian experience down through the centuries, in unbroken sort of manner. So when you look at the church, you're looking at the present expression of that fullness of tradition that is absolutely continuous with the community of believers that witnessed the empty tomb and the risen Christ. So there's never been a break in it. There's just been this growing apprehension of truth, and of experience, that primarily exists in the liturgy, as we discussed earlier, and the living experience of the saints, down through history, and all ages. In their infinite variety, they all seem to speak with one voice when it comes to the expression of Christian faith. Whether they were sophisticated theologians like many of the church fathers, or whether they were unlettered peasants, rough peasants, like Silouan the Athonite of just the last century, and many others. They all speak with one voice, they all witness to the same experience of God, the Holy Trinity, and the ongoing historical consequences of God's incarnation in Jesus Christ. These are the touchstones of Orthodox faith since the very beginning. And that the church maintains through its confession of a Nicene Creed every time we celebrate the liturgy.

54:22 - Jacob Beebe

Have you participated in any other religious organization, religious tradition?

54:30 - Warren Farha

Yes, as I mentioned before, when I was a teenager I became deeply involved in an evangelical arena, young Jesus people. An enthusiastic sort of experience of basic Christianity. With some charismatic sort of touches to it, I guess you could say, I found it overwhelmingly a positive experience, I feel like, that it did not contradict Orthodoxy, but it simply enhanced my experience of God in Jesus Christ. As far as calling it an organization, that's the last thing you would call it, because it was deeply unorganized, but the central aspects of it were fellowship in small groups and Bible studies, and evangelism in various ways. In yeah, study groups, that was that was one of the central, that's as close as you got to organized and those days. But no, apart from that, an unorganized organize. I always, I've always been in the church. I've never, never left the church, even during my Jesus freak days. I have never been involved in any other religious organization.

56:25 - Jacob Beebe

Why do you think people are attracted to, broadly, Orthodox faith, but more specifically, St. George Orthodox Cathedral?

56:45 - Warren Farha

I think people are drawn because of a thirst, sometimes an unrecognized thirst for a deeper expression of Christian faith. One that has historical roots that go back to the very earliest generations. I mean, every day I see it in the publishing world. I mean, even your most well known evangelical and reformed publishers are using iconography to decorate their publications. (phone call) Where were we.

57:59 - Jacob Beebe

You were talking about the attraction, and publishers using iconography?

58:09 - Warren Farha

Yeah, that's just one. I think that's just one manifestation of a real desire to, to express a deeply historical sense of Christian tradition. And so those iconographic front covers on evangelical books, I think, are an unspoken ones, were an articulated sort of expression of that thirst. Why else? I mean, it's just obvious. They're just all over the place. There's, there's an interest in icons by all manner of Christians and non Christians even. Why is that? I think it's, it's an authentic, unsentimental expect of, of Christian art, if you want to put it that way, although icons are not just art, to consider them as just art is to contradict the very meaning of them. Interest in the church fathers, I think, I think it's in the church fathers that Christians of all ages find their commonality. Because the Church Fathers expressed their faith when Christendom was all still unified in a fundamental way. So if all Christians have something in common, it's the fathers. And whether many traditions within Protestantism don't recognize that, it is a fact. I mean, the basic doctrines of the faith were hammered out in the age of the fathers. They took the biblical data, and they synthesized it with Greco-Hellenistic thought. And, and that is what the basic Christian faith is, it's that synthesis? And it's, you know, Protestants have to own up to that, you know. So, again, I've probably gone off course of what you asked. So again, in the publishing world, their number of books there have been published in the last 15-20 years getting to know the church fathers. Why is there this interest in the church fathers? I think it, it expresses, again, a thirst for the authentic, a thirst for the historic versus the ephemeral, you know, that you see come and go, trends that come and go every few years. And looking back 10 years later, those trends are almost, look bizarre. So I see that, you know, my experiences of bookseller, just limiting it to books.

1:01:55 - Jacob Beebe

Last question, how are members, what is the joint process in the Orthodox Church? Is it defined by baptism? Is it defined by a catechism? For an adult and for an infant or a child, how would someone join the church.

1:02:17 - Warren Farha

Well, the experience of the Orthodox is that a person will, since the fourth century, certainly, but even earlier, a person was part of the church as infants as children. They were baptized into the faith and raised in a manner that would, in which the baptismal grace that they've been given

was unfolded, you know, unfolded through the course of their lives and their experience of the church. That's been the overwhelming experience of most Christians since the fourth century I guess you could say. But, obviously, in the earlier centuries, adult formation was the rule. And...

1:03:25 - Jacob Beebe

More converts.

1:03:27 - Warren Farha

Yeah. Right. And so, in the early church, people went through a very rigorous process of catechesis, of teaching, of learning the Christian faith, usually lasting two or three years. And, and then they were brought to baptism, usually on the night of Easter. And we're experience their baptism and their first Eucharistic. Orthodox churches in the modern world, they all, I would say that they all have a categorical program of some sort or another. Hopefully, it mirrors the process in the early church of a pretty strict and rigorous catechetical program of requiring the chatacumen to live through a Christian year, at least one Christian year, going through a Lent for instance. And with the experience of that Christian year and formal teaching, a person is brought into the faith, often in the modern Orthodox world is through chrismation. That is anointing with holy oil, and a confession of faith in the Orthodox Church. Because, at least in the Antiochian family of churches, and in the OCA family of churches, the baptism of other Christian traditions is accepted as valid if a person is baptized in the name of the Holy Trinity, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, not creator, sustainer, or redeem, or anything any other foe equivalent. It has to be in the name of the Trinity, and it has to be by baptism in water. And so in most instances, those baptisms are considered valid, and chrismation is seen as the completion or the fulfillment of those baptisms. So that's the situation in the in the contemporary Orthodox world, at least as far as I've experienced here in Wichita. Now there, there are many variations and different parts of the Orthodox world, and I would take too long to go into those variations.

1:06:35 - Jacob Beebe

Just wrapping this up, is there anything you want to add about the bookstore, about the institute, about yourself that you don't believe has been covered in the past?

1:06:54 - Warren Farha

No, I think that covers it.

1:06:57 - Jacob Beebe

All right, thank you for your time.