

tertiary students christian fellowship quarterly magazine

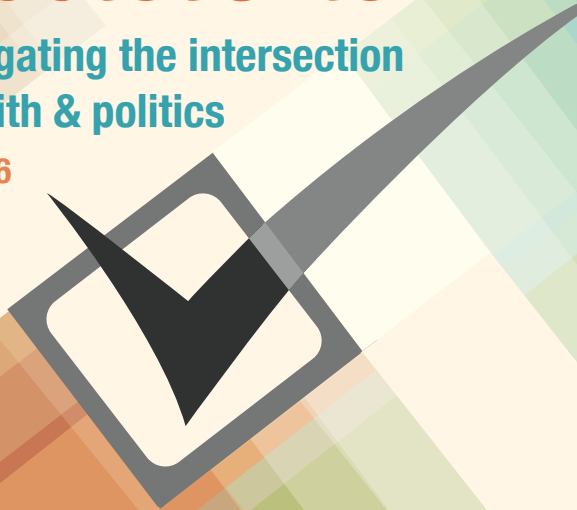
canvas

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of faith & politics

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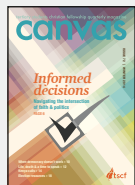
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CANVAS aims to inform and encourage all who are interested in reaching students for Christ, and in thinking Christianly about their life and work. It is published four times a year by TSCF.



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Winter 2014

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TSCF is a founder member of the International Fellowship of Evangelical Students and serves to help students reach students for Christ nationwide by enabling them to reach maturity in Christ, so that they understand and proclaim the truth about Christ and serve God by showing his love in the student world.

Send your thoughts, comments, questions and letters to us at canvas@tscf.org.nz

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canvasgreen

If you would prefer to receive a PDF version of Canvas, or an email reminder when it is available on the website please email canvas@tscf.org.nz

Clean politics

We like things to keep things tidy, don't we. Whether you're watching 5-year-olds invent rules for their home-made games or you're pulling pages of instructions out of the box with your new blender, you see how our need for safety in order quietly frames our world.

So it's ironic that the very institutions that keep chaos at bay are, themselves, often messy – families, churches and always, always governments. Even in New Zealand, with our “least corrupt nation on earth” trophy on the mantle piece, we get a pre-election scandal-stirrer called *Dirty Politics*. (Granted, scandal here does sound more like “she is **so** mean” than “and then he had them all assassinated,” but dirt's dirt.)

As voting season approaches – the first, for many students – we might overreact to our disordered means of creating order. We can skirt the mud, sidling into the voting booth holding our nose, cynically choosing the lesser evil. Or we can dive into the mire armed with references that clearly spell out right and wrong, enjoying the fray.

Some of us are built for battle, and some of us are built for reflection, so political engagement takes many forms. But as Geoff Robson writes in his helpful blog series, reworked here on page 6, we all need to start with a few biblical principles.

These are key: God appoints leaders, and God answers prayer. If we miss the significance of human authority, we'll also miss the privilege of participating in a democracy. And the first and best way to participate is by praying for our leaders, which we can do whatever our political system.

Do we expect God's sovereignty to bring ultimate good from politics' endemic messiness? Do we believe there is only One who can actually transform societies from the inside out? Then our hopes won't be pinned on one leader or another, and our own efforts to encourage order and justice will grow stronger and wiser.

Maryanne Wardlaw
Communications Manager



Engaged

Christina Shewan, Canterbury staff worker, and **Nathan Denmead**, CU president, will be married on 24 January, 2015.



Married

Benedict Kok, former Dunedin associate staff worker, married **Lydia Lee San San** in Malaysia in June.



Born

Ben Carswell, Wellington Team Leader, and wife Jenni welcomed **Hannah Erin Joy** into the world on 18 August.



Died

Christine Lange, the wife of author and pastor Stuart Lange, passed away 15 August after a long battle with cancer.

For the past four decades, many international students in Wellington Christian Fellowship knew

Chin Sun Jeng Yee as Mother, or more precisely as their advisor Rubee Yee's mum. She passed away peacefully on 23 May after a short illness. She was 97. Chin Sun Jeng opened her heart to many and they will miss her chuckles and smile.

Departed

With sadness and joy we mark the departure of **Simon Rabbidge**. He has been an exceptional staff worker in Lincoln for the past four years, doing anything and everything with various TSCF mission groups to see students reached for Christ and changed for life. His work is having ripple effects throughout the world. His enthusiasm and encouragement have helped many students meet Jesus for the first time or to deepen faith in Jesus. He will be sorely missed by both students and staff. We wish him well as he transitions from staff to supporter, working on a dairy farm, knowing that God will continue to use him to influence all around him with the gospel of the good news of Jesus.



– *Timothy Hodge, Lincoln Team Leader*

canvaswanted

Are you committed to seeing the gospel worked out in every area of life? Are you excited by the challenges and opportunities that young adults face during their university years? Do you relish seeing communities strengthened, pennies dropping, hearts growing, and fleeting opportunities grasped? At TSCF, we are and we do.

STAFF WORKERS

If you have a vision to invest in the next generation of leaders in any region of Aotearoa New Zealand, we would love to hear from you. There is a par-

ticular need for staff to walk alongside students in Auckland, Wellington and Lincoln, and graduates around the country through Catalyst's ministries.

TEAM LEADER

TSCF is accepting applications for the leadership of the Wellington team. We are looking for someone who can develop both staff workers and student leaders, helping them build community, study the word and share the gospel.

Please email info@tscf.org.nz for an application form and job description, or telephone (04) 384 7274.

Heather Brockett has finished as an associate staff worker in Auckland. She and her husband, Gary, met at the University of Auckland and were both involved in EU, as have been their children Stephen and Kelly.

Heather and Gary are now in Bangladesh with the Baptist

Churches of NZ, committed to a 10-year stint. Gary will use his science, technology and business knowledge to help alleviate poverty and prevent trafficking. Heather will work with women, children and possibly students.

To receive their news, email them at brockett.h@gmail.com.



Wahine Toa

E tupu atu kūmara, e ohu e te anuhe. (As a person's importance increases so do those who seek their favour.)

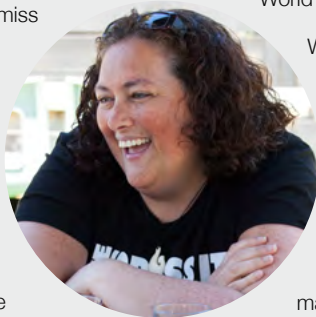
Val Goold has moved on after 13 years with TSCF to teach at Laidlaw College and to pursue further study toward a PhD. She is a strong leader, a woman of integrity, and we will miss her.

She has left a legacy behind in the lives of students and staff. From her days at Victoria University as a member and a leader of CU (1988-91) she motivated and empowered fellow students, which become her trademark.

Following a year on staff in Auckland, she moved to Wellington and became Head of Student Ministries in 2003. She had previously trained at Bethlehem Tertiary Institute and Laidlaw College, then worked as a teacher. Her work for TSCF had her charging around NZ encouraging and strengthening staff and students.

Nigel Pollock arrived as National Director in early 2006 and promised "change, chaos, clarity, complexity, community and challenge." Val ensured continuity was also present as she strengthened old and forged new relationships

alongside Nigel. Val also delivered conferences, recruited and trained staff, advocated for gospel integrity, pushed others to think hard, and worked to bring harmony. She also augmented TSCF's international ties with Fiji, Ecuador and India, and through her contributions at two IFES World Assemblies.



Whilst on staff Val has re-connected with her own whakapapa, personally working through the complexities of weaving Maori and Pakeha heritage together toward real strength. Her mana has further grown through her Masters study in adult education at Massey University.

We're thankful to God for all that Val has brought to TSCF and are confident she will continue to contribute to His work in this nation and beyond.

He hono tangata e kore e motu; ka pa he taura waka e motu. (Unlike a canoe rope, a human bond cannot be severed.)

– Andy Shudall, Head of Strategic Development



Summit's Great IFES Party inspired a variety of cultural (and not so cultural) dress.

Summit

TSCF's new annual leadership conference, Summit, took place in Hamilton the first week in July. About 50 students and some graduates came together to hear Nigel Pollock teach from Nehemiah and to study various aspects of being both a disciple and a leader. Thanks to a grant from a local trust, the team in Dunedin were able to take 10 students, including Zee Min Teo, whose testimony is on page 17.

Auckland

EU and other Auckland groups are having their annual combined retreat 5-7 September in Muriwai.

In South Auckland, MIT Christian Fellowship faces the challenge of most students working and many compulsory lunch-time tutorials. This semester CF has been split, with half the group moving to a new campus above the Manukau City rail station. It includes a plush Muslim prayer room but nowhere for student groups. Please pray that a fellowship of students emerges who engage in a dynamic witness.

Wellington

Rev Ian Cook, newly appointed Chaplain at Massey University, Wellington has brought together TSCF and a number of other ministries to connect

with students on this commuter campus. They hope to meet students and pool resources to involve them in activities across the city.

Dunedin

Red Frogs continues to be a fantastic opportunity to serve first-year students and have conversations about spiritual matters. The Christian Medical Fellowship borrowed the Red Frogs pancake kit to serve pancakes to med students while giving out invites to a "grill a Christian" event. An encouraging number of people responded.

Partnering in Fiji

For the fourth time, and last as a TSCF staff worker, Simon Rabbidge joined with Students International in Fiji to let Kiwi students loose in a mission context. The team spent two weeks in July building, painting, gardening and getting to know each other and those they were serving.

"The coolest thing for me to see was not the stuff getting done, but it was the change I saw in the students while we were there," Simon wrote in his final newsletter. "One of the highlights was our time of sharing personal testimonies in the evenings. ... I could just hear how God's love was changing situations in their lives."

"Year after year I have seen the sites change and improve and I have actually been able to see the difference two-week missions, over a long period of time, can do."



Students and staff returned to Fiji in July.

Informed decisions

Navigating the intersection between



They say you're not supposed to discuss politics or religion in polite company.

I'm going to boldly attempt to do both at once, even though I feel unqualified to talk about the political side of things. Don't get me wrong, I'm interested in politics and I think it's vitally important – even if much of what I've learnt about it comes from *The West Wing*. But it's not my speciality. And who could ever do justice to two areas of thought that are so profound and varied?

The wonderful diversity in the Christian community means that we bring with us all kinds of passions and commitments. Sometimes, sadly, trivial matters can become our consuming desire, while we remain coolly indifferent to things that should put fire in our bellies.

Other times, it is just a matter of personal preference; the things that excite one person leave the next person unmoved.

Should politics capture our attention, energy and imagination? Or

ween faith & politics

is it just all a matter of preference? How should we think about our governments, and (for those living in democracies) our responsibility to elect or un-elect them?

We approach this subject with different views, different passions and voting histories and backgrounds. I hope to be sensitive to those differences while outlining where as Christians – following the guidance and instruction we receive from God's word – we can be of the same mind.

Too often, Christians segregate their faith from other parts of life, including their political views. But at the end of Matthew's Gospel, in the Great Commission, Jesus says that all authority in heaven and on earth has been given to him – he has total authority over every single part of our lives.

In Romans 13:1-7, we read that every person is to be subject to the governing authorities. And regardless of the human processes that lead to their appoint-

Too often, Christians segregate their faith from other parts of life, including their political views.

ment, all earthly governments are instituted by God himself. He gives them power to administer justice and bring order to society as they work for the good of their citizens. They mediate his authority to the world, almost as though God chooses to govern societies through his appointed governments. With this authority, they have the right to make and enforce laws. For example, the government has the right to decide that there should be a bus lane outside your local shopping centre between the hours of 3 and 6pm. And even if I don't like it, they have the right to fine me \$150 for driving in it. (Not that I'm bitter.)

In a good government, laws will be made that work for the good of those being governed. As Christians, we know that the best laws will reflect God's

will and design for his world. Morality cannot be legislated, but good laws set norms and values, restrain evil, and over time set the direction and ethos of a society.

Knowing that laws in line with God's revealed will can bless a society, we pray and sometimes act to ensure that laws reflect God's order. That is part of our role as good citizens, working for the good of our cities. We find our own prosperity in their prosperity. We should pray for them, working for their betterment – alongside the government as it also seeks these things. So earthly governments are more than just legitimate in God's eyes; they are a good and necessary gift for the ordering of a good society.

For those of us living under

The gospel gives an enormous amount of freedom for us as Christians in all kinds of areas, including the formation of political convictions.

democratically elected governments (for which I am very thankful), it's helpful to remember that they are still flawed. As Winston Churchill famously said, "Democracy is the worst form of government – except for all the others that have been tried."

The gospel teaches us that we are all fallen, limited and sinful. These problems are not overcome simply because we all get together and agree on something. In fact, they could be made worse. As the saying goes, two wolves and a sheep voting on what to have for dinner is democratic. Truth is not democratically decided; truth is reality from God's perspective.

Just because something is legal, it is not necessarily right.

So what issues will we engage over, and how do we go about that? On many issues, there is no "Christian" position. For example, are trade unions good or bad? Is GST a good idea? Is the exploration of space worth pursuing? The gospel gives an enormous amount of freedom for us as Christians in all kinds of areas, including the formation of political convictions.

What about those issues where Christians should agree, as the Bible clearly directs them to a particular position? In these areas, we need to understand the difference between gospel absolutes and different opinions about tactics. Christians can differ on the latter, but we should not differ on the former.

For example, we agree that we are to be good stewards of God's creation. But is a carbon tax the wisest way to ensure that? We are to love our neighbour, but is deregulation the best way for a society to do that? We must protect the life of every person made in God's image, but is tighter gun control a helpful step to that end?

The late American President John F. Kennedy once said, "Our problems are man-made,

therefore they may be solved by man. And man can be as big as he wants. No problem of human destiny is beyond human beings."

Is JFK right? Of course not. The Bible, not to mention our experience of watching politics in action, tells us that emphatically. Government can never fix the world. Fortunately God's plans and purposes are not focused on earthly governments; they are focused on Jesus Christ.

This means our allegiance to earthly governments is limited. We won't always acquiesce and agree with whatever our governments say. Sometimes we will agitate for change – in the first instance, legally and respectfully disagreeing by contacting local members, attending public meetings, using our vote judiciously or even running for office ourselves. Because God has spoken to us, even the youngest Christian can know what is best for a society in ways that the most experienced politician who doesn't hear God can't.

Another reason governments will never be our ultimate hope is that they can only pass laws to protect people and restrain evil. Jesus changes his people from

Your most important contribution to the political process happens not when you step into the ballot box; it happens on your knees.

the inside out. He doesn't just give us an example to follow; he died to make us his people and poured out his Spirit, giving us new hearts so we can actually consider others better than ourselves.

There is one final and vital principle for our participation with governments: "First of all, then, I urge that supplications, prayers, intercessions, and thanksgivings be made for all people, for kings and all who are in high positions, that we may lead a peaceful and quiet life, godly and dignified in every way" 1 Timothy 2:1-2. The focus here is on prayer. Knowing God's desire for governments, we are to pray for it to come about.

This is the most distinctive Christian contribution to the political process. We can vote, act, speak out and protest in the same

way as our non-Christian neighbours. But we can also pray to the God of the universe. Your most important contribution to the political process happens not when you step into the ballot box; it happens on your knees.

So pay your taxes. Be a good citizen. Pray for your government. Vote wisely. Give to Caesar what is Caesar's. But put your trust in Jesus alone, and give yourself and your life to God.

These thoughts are condensed from a blog series on Geoff's website, *Every Thought Captive*. The full series is online at geoffrobson.com.

Geoff Robson
Canterbury
Staff Worker



HOW TO VOTE

don't ...

- Vote for someone because you've always voted that way
- Vote with cynicism
- Vote for someone just because they're a Christian; this is no guarantee they will be a good politician
- Vote to impose Christianity on society (Romans 13; 1 Timothy 2)
- Vote superficially; look beyond the sound bites and slogans
- Vote selfishly
- Allow your political preferences to divide the body of Christ

do ...

- Vote as a Christian; bring all your gospel priorities, theological knowledge and Christ-centred prayers into the ballot box
- Vote with the sovereignty of God in mind
- Remember one vote distills a complex process into an overly simple decision
- Vote for the sake of others

When democracy doesn't work

As another election approaches, we are encouraged to do our civic duty and vote, believing that democracy is the best form of government there is.

I have lived in the developing world for most of the past 15 years, in both new and established democracies, and I have seen the system fail and succeed. Even democratically elected politicians can use their power to escape justice, appropriate their country's wealth, or persecute minorities. Democratically elected governments have even been overthrown by military coups. Democracy's promise of freedom, peace and prosperity is not always fulfilled.

There is far more to making democracy work than individual votes, secret ballots and multi-party systems. There must also be a basic standard of ethics in the voting population, so people vote in the interest of the whole country and not just their own.

They also must expect honesty from political leaders and hold them accountable. This means taking a stand against all forms of bribery and corruption. Corruption is the curse of many developing nations, brought about by a subjective standard of right and wrong.

A tradition of valuing others, which leads to political compromise, is also helpful. In a functioning democracy, a party that is not in power is in opposition. However many countries have a tradition of single party dictatorships, where the goal of those in power is to benefit themselves and their own clan. Opposition politicians end up in exile, prison

Corruption is the curse of many developing nations, brought about by a subjective standard of right and wrong.

or the grave. When a head of state is chosen on party lines, there is no independent judiciary or police force so it is all too easy for a democratically elected government to imprison opposition politicians, usually on justified corruption charges. Should the opposition ever get into power, they naturally return the favour, leading to desperation that can turn into violence.

In New Zealand, we have a well run political system that is relatively free from corruption. We come from a Judeo-Christian culture that believes in the value of individuals made in God's image, in an absolute standard of right and wrong, and in individual accountability to God for our actions. This has left a mark on our political culture. While biblical beliefs may be waning in society, the benefit of those values remains even where their basis is no longer acknowledged.

But that legacy is not guaranteed for future generations – our culture's values and morals are changing. If the price of freedom is eternal vigilance, the price of good government is found in obedience to God's will.

Andrew has worked for 15 years in Asia doing missions and development work.



Reverse cynicism

It's 2014, and apparently our votes count and our political participation is important. A range of campaigns have been launched with the aim of increasing voter turnout above the paltry 74% achieved in 2011 (the lowest recorded turnout since 1981). Yet, if I'm honest, my instinctive reaction to the present election campaign tends towards cynicism rather than engagement.

It's hard to get excited about an election campaign where the main highlights so far have included a range of cringeworthy campaign videos, racist jokes and creative examples of billboard vandalism. Our news media appear to be more enthusiastic about scandals, celebrity puff pieces and clever one-liners rather than debates about public policy and ideology.

To make matters worse, much political rhetoric and policy inevitably targets our basest desires such as greed, fear and selfishness.

But despite a gloomy political climate, as Christians we are not called to cynicism but to a hope grounded in reality. Scripture calls us to pray for our political leaders, to gently speak the truth to power and to participate where possible for the good of our neighbours – despite the reality of

structural sin that pervades all political institutions to a greater or lesser extent.

Instead of embodying the naked self interest and conceit we observe within our society, our political behaviour should be governed by the example of Jesus who embodied humility (Philippians 2:1-11). Evangelicals have a proud history of humbly standing up for the cause of those who have been marginalised, causes such as women's suffrage, the right of all human beings to life, penal reform and the abolition of slavery.

Wherever we stand on the political spectrum, my hope and prayer for Christians this election is that we would continue this tradition of acting and speaking for the interests of others despite the current failings of our political culture.

Richard studies theology, brews beer, and follows politics from Wellington. He was a TSCF staff worker from 2011 to 2012.

Richard Deeble

Former Wellington Staff Worker



Suicide and activism

Political engagement often mean more than casting a vote. For Renée Joubert, the conflict between an international lobby group's view of human life and that of the Bible has led her to trade paid work for a voluntary, national campaign.



Renée

The catalyst is a Private Members' Bill by Labour MP Maryan Street, called the End-of-Life Choice Bill. She withdrew it so it would not become an election issue, but promised to resubmit it. She wants to legalise euthanasia by permitting doctors to administer lethal drugs. Renée joined Euthanasia-Free NZ in June 2013; she and others are publicising the negative implications of such a policy shift. Her passion for this cause is informed by her faith and fuelled by tragedy.

What led you to be so devoted to this cause?

My best friend committed suicide during my third year at uni. I know first-hand that suicide leaves a wake of unanswered questions and pain that never completely goes away. I believe the last thing NZ needs is a law that facilitates suicide!

What would passage of the bill mean?

It would legalise "assisted dying," a euphemism for doctors giving lethal drugs to people who request assisted suicide. This bill puts everyone who feels overwhelmed, lonely, grieving or depressed at risk.

Overseas experience shows that assisted suicide doesn't affect only those who "choose to die." It endangers society. The elderly and disabled experience pressure to request death.

Euthanasia laws inevitably gets widened: Belgium

now euthanises children, the Netherlands euthanises disabled babies.

How does biblical truth apply?

Our bodies belong to God, the giver and taker of life. Suicide violates the Sixth Commandment. Satan, the destroyer, wants people to die without hope and without trust in God.

We should follow Jesus' example and address people's physical, psychological and spiritual needs. We have a responsibility to actively oppose laws that put vulnerable people at risk.

As Dietrich Bonhoeffer put it, "We are not to simply bandage the wounds of victims beneath the wheels of injustice; we are to drive a spoke into the wheel itself." And, "Silence in the face of evil is itself evil: God will not hold us guiltless. Not to speak is to speak. Not to act is to act."

What does action look like in this context?

- Be informed and help to inform others. We are on Facebook and at www.euthanasia-free.org.nz.
- Vote for politicians who uphold life and biblical values.
- Visit or write to your MP and ask him or her to vote against this bill.
- Pray for our politicians.

In addition to Renée's suggestions, you can give to organisations that rely on donations to help people or promote just policies, or volunteer your time and talents. Renée herself is donating her time as Executive Director until Euthanasia-Free NZ has the resources to support staff.

If you or anyone you know is thinking about suicide, please phone Lifeline at 0800 543 354.



Calling out students

In university there are all types of pressures. Finding yourself amidst new ideas and theories can be especially challenging for Christians as we are challenged to think outside a comfortable bubble and really affirm the faith we have. Ideally, we learn that our faith should encompass every aspect of our lives.

As voting season has arrived, we learn that it needs to be present in our political engagements as well. Students can see this new responsibility to vote as a blessing or a curse. One pitfall for a student fresh to the political world is basing opinions on a speech that a politician has crafted to be pleasing to the ear. Another is basing political views on what the majority thinks, just to go with the flow. Other students may be disinterested and become apathetic – as so many people are towards politics.

Our society stresses a separation of religious views and political issues. But what does the Bible teach? We need to involve God in everything we do, and yes, this includes voting. Democracies give a voice to everyone. As Christians, we have views on what God decides is best for society;

We need to involve God in everything we do, and yes, this includes voting.

voting is a time for Christians to put that into action. Some students have realised this and are actively involved in clubs and parties. Some independently voice their opinions and let God's Word inform issues we face. Others research politicians and meticulously decide who they will support while some research ... well, not so meticulously, but with good intentions.

We need to bring glory to God in every way possible. I encourage students to engage with politics. You now have a voice. When you get ready to vote, remember the issues that are on God's heart.

Brittany Smith
University of Auckland student



Kenya calls

It's an overcast winter's morning in Nairobi. The traffic is heavy, thousands of people are walking to work. Steve Maina, a Kenyan and the National Director of the New Zealand Church Missionary Society, accompanies me to the national office of the Kenyan student movement, FOCUS.

FOCUS has 43,000 students resourced by 23 hardworking staff and a small but growing number of graduates. Many graduates struggle with unemployment and under-employment. Because of that, and other challenges, only 400 graduates support the work financially. This is unsustainable.

The Kenyan student and graduate movement has a huge focus on missions. About 7000 students attended the last Commission, their missions conference, and 700 committed themselves to cross-cultural mission. The movement has been sending missionaries to Uganda, Tanzania and Rwanda, and played a critical role in establishing a gospel witness in Eritrea.

Jacinta was a student leader and then a FOCUS intern for two years before being employed by the Ministry of Agriculture. She is now the Associates (graduate) Ministry Director. Jacinta said that they focus on impacting Kenyan society, through students and graduates, by running a year-long leadership development program. They want trained, mature Christian leaders to influence church and society, disciple students on campus, and become involved in society – particularly in social issues. Since 1992, more than 300 have completed the programme and 90 have completed the community development programme.

I was deeply moved at what these men and



“I love to see students transformed progressively to become faithful and effective witnesses in and out of campus, and become salt and light wherever the Lord locates them.”

– Simon Masibo, FOCUS General Secretary

women are doing with what they have.

I asked what the critical needs are. The team is looking for someone with ministry, marketing technology and database management skills. They also want to engage young graduates and invite them to invest in the work financially.

Steve Maina pointed out that Kenya doesn't need an influx of Kiwi missionaries but it does need Kiwis with key skills to take up critical roles. I believe this is one of these roles. It will enable the movement to see more students come to faith in Christ, more graduates impact Kenyan society, and more students and graduates sent as missionaries throughout Africa and across the world.

If you'd like to know more about this role, contact Steve Maina at steve@nzcms.org.nz or visit focuskenya.org.

Mark Grace is TSCF's Catalyst Team Leader.

LIFE OF A GRADUATE:

Finding a place for the heart

A few months ago, I saw a boutique advertisement in the Meridian Mall that wrote, “It’s like Dunedin: only a few get it, but those who do, absolutely love it.”

I am one of the few.

At your first encounter, Dunedin is like your ordinary Joe – not particularly handsome, not particularly anything. But as time goes by, you find that he has an astonishingly beautiful heart with hidden treasures. He has character. His tastiness reveals like a good wine. He is pleasant despite dramatic mood swings at times.

I recently graduated from the University of Otago, a place I called “home” for three years. There, in the petite Scottish town, this city girl from Hong Kong fell in love with its simplicity, nature, and people. There, I made two of my best decisions ever: joining Elim church and TSCF. They provided me with a family in this home-away-from-home. I began to understand what being a disciple of Christ means. They equipped me with sound biblical knowledge, picked me up in times of adversity, and blessed me with lifelong friendships.

Unfortunately, Dunedin is not the best place for job

hunting. I left in April, in a rush, for a job interview in Auckland. Leaving Dunedin was heartbreaking; I cried so badly on the plane that a flight attendant had to ask if I was okay!

Although I was physically where I should be, my heart was left with a void. It does not seem to be fully satisfied anywhere on earth. I have lived in three countries and backpacked through more than ten. Each place captures my heart and takes a piece of it away when I leave. Some take a bigger portion, like Dunedin.

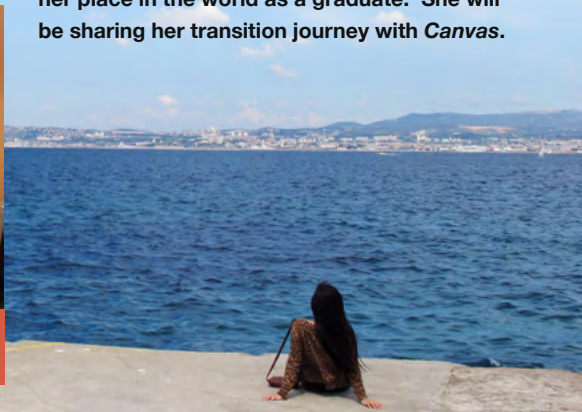
Where does my heart belong? How do you know where you should be? Perhaps there is a simple answer. No matter where I go, my heart will always have a hole that yearns for somewhere more glorious; an eternal home where my citizenship is, a court in the Father’s house where I was fearfully and wonderfully designed.

I had no clue what my adventure would look like in Auckland. But until I get to where my heart truly belongs, I will take steps of faith as God leads down in the Kiwiland.

Joyce Yip studied communications, theology and French at Otago, and is now exploring her place in the world as a graduate. She will be sharing her transition journey with Canvas.



Joyce during her time in France and (lower right of inset) with her TSCF family in Dunedin.





Celebrating Auckland

One man from a Muslim nation joined others at the international café run by St Paul's, Symonds Street. Jeff Pelz, who is partnering there with his wife Jane, began a conversation with him about New Zealand, the challenges of being away from homeland and culture and, inevitably, faith. The man's openness to talk about and discover more of the truth of Jesus is breathtaking – in his home city, this conversation could cost him and the Pelzes their lives.

Elsewhere in Auckland, Jeff and Annette Lane are seeing equally exciting opportunities with students from East Asia.

A student from China who joined others in a campus meeting said, "I am not a Christian, but I am very interested in Jesus. Is it okay for me to continue to come?" She is more than welcome and has started reading the Bible one-to-one with Robyn Drake.

May Lee, who worked alongside TSCF this year as an intern and now as an associate staff worker, is meeting with various students at AUT in the city as well as Auckland University. May has come from Korea, like other students from all over the world seeking further education, and is helping them discover more about Jesus. She is currently raising funds so that she can join the staff team full time.

In Albany, at Massey University, a group that struggled for years has blossomed in the last two.

Stephen Turner, associate staff, meets with about 30 students for Bible study and chat each week. They're from all over Auckland and all over the world.

Michael Drake works within the chaplaincy at MIT in South Auckland, also as associate staff, supporting small groups of students and taking up amazing opportunities with individuals.

I sat in one of the Auckland University cafés with two students, training them and talking about how they can lead others in Bible study. They're inviting Christian and non-Christian friends to sit with them under God's word and have their lives transformed. I look around and see students from other TSCF groups as well as staff from other Christian ministries sitting around tables talking about Christ and commending faith and faithfulness on campus.

God's work in this city is worth celebrating – it provokes awe and wonder in worship. There's much more to be said; praise God for all he's doing!

Andy Shudall

Auckland Team Leader
& Head of Strategic
Development



We invite you to "Celebrate Auckland" with us on 23 September, 7:30pm at the Auckland Baptist Tabernacle on Queen Street. Refreshments and free parking will be provided. Please RSVP to andy@tscf.org.nz.

One year, two paths

Zee Min Teo arrived in New Zealand last July. She came from Malaysia, following a stint in the workplace, to pursue a Bachelor of Commerce.

Back home, she said, she was a “typical working person” whose life revolved around career. The focus on achievement remained with her when she enrolled at the University of Otago, dedicating most of her time to her studies.

But she did get involved with the Overseas Christian Fellowship. A friend she made in transit in Singapore happened to have friends in the group. Zee Min went along to the social activities, and sometimes attended Bible studies. By early this year, what had been peripheral to her life had become central. What she learned at OCF and the church she became involved in transformed her outlook.

“In April, after I accepted Christ, something touched my heart,” she said. “I wanted to dedicate my life to Christ. I want to give up my life and my time for him.”

Friends have noticed the freedom she feels, focusing less on what she can achieve and more on what she has received. With Christ at the centre, Zee Min said she has

become more humble.

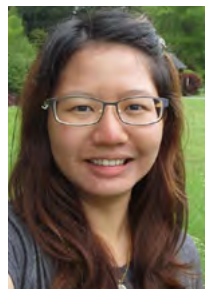
It has also given her a deeper relationship with her sister, who had become a Christian six years earlier – also at university. She works as a doctor in Malaysia.

“Now when we Skype, we will end up with prayer,” Zee Min said. “This is quite different!”

Her faith met an early challenge when a friend from church – who is also a Christian from a Buddhist family – tried to commit suicide. Zee Min said it is not the first time she has intervened with someone who is suicidal, and that this time she saw clearly in her friend’s desperation a need for God to heal her and grow her faith.

Zee Min continues to make the most of her faith community, studying the Bible with her pastor and his wife, meeting with Jen Allaway and other TSCF staff, attending the OCF studies and TSCF conferences, and getting involved with her church. And the support she receives, she is passing along.

“You have to constantly monitor people,” Zee Min said in reference to her friend. That story isn’t over, but it has turned a page: “She is growing stronger in Christ.”



Zee Min Teo

Friends have noticed the freedom she feels, focusing less on what she can achieve and more on what she has received.

Election resources

Are your electoral details up-to-date?

Do you understand the process?

www.elections.org.nz

Yes, there's a quiz for that

www.onthefence.co.nz

A simplistic but fun way to see which parties' policies match your preferences. When it tells you that you want to vote for a fringe party you wouldn't be caught dead with, console yourself with the fact that it doesn't rank your priorities or the parties'.

And there's a survey, too

tvnz.co.nz/votecompass

This survey uses a more nuanced approach to placing you on the political spectrum. It takes into account which issues are most important to you and includes information on party leaders.

Family First surveyed party leaders

valueyourvote.org.nz/2014-general-election

It looks like an ad for the Conservative Party, but it's actually a useful tool to see where parties and politicians stand on issues that affect relationships between people: marriage, abortion, loan sharks, parental leave, media standards etc. Some Christians may disagree with this conservative advocacy group's policy preferences, but the worldview will look familiar.

How the parties sell themselves

www.electionads.org.nz

Browse billboards and ads from this election and back through the decades. It includes offbeat contributions from lesser-known groups like the "Patriotic Revolutionary Front."

Policies matter

www.maxim.org.nz

Maxim is an independent think-tank with a biblical worldview. Researchers have written extensively on



poverty and education recently. They also have a handy refresher on the MMP system: maxim.org.nz/Blog/MMP_refresher_-_the_paths_to_power.

Meet the taxman

www.yourtaxtracker.co.nz

Enter your income, and this website calculates how much you contribute to education, health care, social welfare, defence and other government spending. The proportional breakdown is useful for considering parties' claims that they will, should, can or mustn't spend more or less on an area.

Party websites:

- » www.act.org.nz/policies
- » conservativeparty.org.nz
- » www.greens.org.nz/policy
- » internet.org.nz/policies
- » campaign.labour.org.nz/policies
- » maoriparty.org/our-policies
- » www.national.org.nz/plan
- » nzfirst.org.nz/policies
- » unitedfuture.org.nz

All to be read with a grain of salt. For instance, the Green Party doesn't mention that it proposes abortion up to full term for disabled infants in the main policy section, following controversy earlier in the year. Only the most palatable policies will be front and centre in an election year.

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