

tertiary students christian fellowship quarterly magazine

canvas

ISSUE 79 | SUMMER 2016

A beautiful mess

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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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TSCF is a founding member of the International Fellowship of Evangelical Students. It helps students reach students for Christ, so they will grow in faith and understand and communicate the truth about Christ, showing God's love in the student world.

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

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Centred on the church

It doesn't matter how many times it happens, I always flinch: Someone says "para-church" and "TSCF" in the same sentence, and their innocent remark sets off an internal hashing-through of the relationship between the two. It's a petty bugbear, but the end of that train of thought is a worthwhile destination – not because the definition of TSCF is important, but because the definition of the Church is. The rest of this *Canvas* takes a shot at defining it, and explaining what its purpose means practically for those of us who call ourselves Christians.

TSCF exists for the Church and only operates thanks to local churches. It's really an *inter*-church organisation. Many Christian leaders over the past eight decades have credited their brief time of involvement in student ministry for significant spiritual formation, and TSCF is fuelled by the hours, prayers and donations released by congregations here and overseas.

God created the Church for many good reasons, and the diary of its infancy in the book of Acts records them in beautiful detail. We see how, through the Spirit, the care and sacrifice of its members and the knowledge, perseverance and wisdom of its teachers turned a group of outcast Jews into a bold and attractive community. It grew, against all odds, so that we might know God fully and care for each other the way that he does.

During those transient uni years, students leave their native communities and form other communities, for better or for worse. Student groups are among the "better" – engine rooms for biblical teaching, sacrificial care and evangelism on campus. And none of this thrives apart from local churches. TSCF exists to fuel churches as a source of unity and knowledge, an equipper of leaders and a signpost to the lost.

This Church is made up of our imperfect local churches, just as imperfect as we are. So we need constant reminding that Christ's bride didn't win the honour like a successful contestant on *The Bachelor*; she was gifted that position because infinite love chose her. He loves her, so we must love her too.



Maryanne Wardlaw
Communications Manager



Students, staff and supporters gather in Canterbury on 5 November to celebrate TSCF's 80th anniversary.

Celebrate Canterbury

Canterbury celebrated TSCF's 80th anniversary on 5 November with around 100 people – students, friends and graduates from the 1950s and beyond. Older grads recalled daily prayer times and challenged staff and students with their commitment to pray regularly for God to work on campus and around the world. Current and past students shared how the student groups helped them come to know Jesus and equipped them to serve in churches and talk to their friends about Jesus.

The gathering also thanked God for the 15 years that Mark and Renée Santich have served with TSCF at Canterbury University. Prayer continues to be the frontline of evangelism; please partner with us in prayer as TSCF continues to faithfully proclaim Jesus through the years to come.

Vision 80

TSCF's fundraising campaign to wrap up our 80th anniversary year, "Vision 80" is currently running. Thanks to those who have responded to letters or

emails with a donation; we are very grateful.

We will be writing to more supporters over the next few weeks, but if you haven't received a personal invitation and would like to donate, then please visit www.tscf.org.nz/vision80 or give us a call.



Festival One

If you are going to Festival One January 27-30, 2017, then come and say hi to TSCF. We'll be hosting the student lounge and running the Sanctuary, a place for people to reflect and respond to what they learn and experience, and a place to hear some great speakers and musicians.



Lincoln

Lincoln CF

Over the second semester we had a growing number of Christians eager to get involved in the activities, events and learning opportunities, growing in faith and serving the campus. LUCF finished the year on the theme “True Witness.” Speakers at our shared lunches shared how they had opportunities to be true witnesses. Robin and Margaret Aim spoke about their work in Kenya, setting up a business for youth in a poorer area to gain work experience.

Many students volunteered to help out at Lincoln Uni’s biggest event, Garden Party, to make a difference locally. Some were outside in the rain at early hours to set up a BBQ beside the halls and give out sausages to those who had been partying into the morning. The group also ran a BBQ and water tent all day for hundreds of cold and hungry students to have a free feed and have conversations with the friendly team. As the tired partiers went back to their rooms, the LUCF crew stayed and cleaned up the rubbish scattered throughout the area before finishing off for the day.

We’re grateful that we can get the opportunities

to serve our fellow students and we learn a lot in the process. LUCF will continue to grow as we strive to be a welcoming, loving bunch, like “true witnesses” are called to be.

– Baylee Connor-McClean and Michael Bresler

Otago

Dentistry CF

We have leaders for next year! They are four enthusiastic third year dental students, Anne, Carla, Weiming, and Anastasia, with fifth year student Wei-Yan. We are all excited that they are prepared to step into this role.

– Annie van Wichen

VCF

We have been studying the story of Abraham and how it fits into the gospel. We’ve enjoyed having American exchange students from InterVarsity join our community for the semester, and also ran a “hunger banquet” as a fundraiser for IFES. The continued growth and strengthening of the group is an encouragement and we look forward to next year.

– Yunyee Szeto



Judge Andrew Becroft, TSCF board chair, speaks to students at the University of Auckland Law School during Jesus Week.

Auckland

University of Auckland

Groups held Jesus Week in August, with the theme “Does it matter to Jesus?” The Christian Medical Fellowship on the Grafton campus invited students to ask a panel of Christian medical professionals any of their questions about faith and medicine. Around 200 students attended the various events, and took 250 copies of *Rongopai*, the gospel of Luke.

They were encouraged to take up the “coffee challenge,” read chapter 1, put a tick next to every-

thing they agree with, an x next to anything they disagree with, and underline anything they don’t understand. Then they ask a Christian friend to buy them coffee and talk it over. They’re encouraged to continue these sessions as long as it’s helpful.

Wellington

Wellington CF

We are thankful for the way the group has been used, challenged and grown this year. We are also thankful for the arrival of Kim, Max and Mei, new members of staff. It has been great to see their passion, care and desire to get involved.

To celebrate the end of the year we went to Princess Bay to spend the evening on the beach, toasting marshmallows and eating good food. Unfortunately the Wellington weather turned bad, but it was still lovely to eat fish and chips in the car and head back to university for a movie. We celebrated a year of seeing people come together in fellowship, continue to grow in their love for the group and become excited about what God will do in the coming year.

– Lachlan Whisker

Wellington accommodation

Are you looking for student accommodation in Wellington for 2017 or know anyone who is?

TSCF is taking applications for Rongopai House during 2017. Located at 2 Kelburn Parade, right at the heart of Victoria University, Rongopai is an intentional flatting community of students committed to sharing the good news of Jesus and growing together as disciples.

If you would like information about its ethos or an application form, contact Ben Carswell, TSCF Wellington Team Leader, on benc@tscf.org.nz or 04 384 7274.



Starting uni well

In 2016, Annelise Chan joined more than 20,000 other Kiwi students in the transition from high school to university. The Auckland native continued to live with her family and attend the church where she grew up, but enrolling at the University of Auckland was still a big adjustment.

We talked about the transition three days after her exams finished, watching other students come and go from the Starbucks on Symonds Street. “It was actually pretty scary going into it,” she said. “You know that there’s a jump between high school and university, and that was proved throughout this year.”



A few weeks before she began her first year studying law and commerce, Annelise attended TSCF’s summer camp, Launch, thanks to encouragement from a friend, Tessa King. Tessa is a law student and leader in Veritas, TSCF’s law group at the University of Auckland. “I wouldn’t have gone if it was just me,” Annelise said. She assumed everyone else had already begun studying, and didn’t know anyone besides Tessa who was attending. For those who still have a high school mind-set, the separation between years can be a hurdle to getting to know people. “Uni is quite melded – which I didn’t realize until I got here,” Annelise said.

Launch was held near Wellington in February for students around the country. Annelise met a few others from Auckland during that week, which helped her feel more confident when she showed up on campus.

She said the week was also packed with good conversations with people who were further along in their studies. Their insight was particularly useful as they had the same worldview.

“On the faith front, it was challenging in the way it forced me to think about things in advance,” Annelise said – especially the specific issues a career in law presents. “I’ve never experienced something that was so closely related to my faith, or so controversial in a way. Being prepared for that through Launch was really valuable.”

She was also challenged to think about evangelism in a way that she never had before. “As a whole, everything in TSCF is outwardly focused – focused on getting out there and doing things like that,” she said. “Up until Launch, I hadn’t been around such a big group of people who were so focused on evangelism.”

A side effect of thinking about evangelism, Annelise said, is that it has kept her from focusing too much on herself and her own studies this year – “it’s how I’ve not gone ‘recluse’.” She has stayed involved with fellow students, both Christian and non-Christian, in a more consistent and intentional way than the self-described introvert would have otherwise. She observed that while university provides more opportunities to meet new people than high school did, it’s much harder to develop those relationships.



Tessa King and Annelise Chan – second and third from the left in the middle row, respectively – joined in the activities at Launch in February 2016.

Regarding faith, one of Annelise’s key discoveries has been how fundamentally holistic Christianity is. “Everything you do, from your lifestyle to what you study to everything – faith has an impact on that,” she said.

Next year she will serve on the executive committee of Auckland’s Evangelical Union. She said that the old (and original) EU, which celebrates its 90th anniversary in 2017, represents the ministry of TSCF well. “I was really inspired by TSCF’s values, and the things that TSCF stands for as well as the vision that they have for students,” she said. “It’s different from what I’ve experienced before. ... It makes me get outside my comfort zone.”

Students who come into university with strong family and church support may not immediately see the value of becoming part of a Christian community on campus – a community that can never replace a local church.

“University definitely has its own set of challenges

“Until Launch, I hadn’t been around such a big group of people who were so focused on evangelism.”

that aren’t exactly easy to discuss within the church, just because those who aren’t in uni don’t really understand the current context of the university,” Annelise said. “I think it’s always changing, and that’s really good but it brings different challenges.” Being able to work through this with others who are also on the ground has been helpful.

“[Church] wasn’t really focused on evangelism, because I think the focus is kind of on *your* faith – which is good as well,” she said. “But I realize now how much of an opportunity university is, how people are already thinking about the deep things in life. Why not put it into the conversation while they’re here?”

“University is the place where you form your life opinions, your life career. It’s so future-focused. It’s the perfect time to decide what you believe in.”



Wellington team expands

Kim Shaw

Wellington staff worker

Kim Shaw studied at Canterbury University in the 1990s (when she was Kim Irving), serving as a leader in the CU. She says it caused her to think deeply about the Bible and how its message would shape her life beyond university. “It provided an awesome community that encouraged me to put my faith into action on campus,” she said. “I was pushed to think creatively and deeply about how my training could be used for God’s Kingdom both in NZ and overseas.”

Kim completed her education and teaching qualifications and worked in state schools in NZ and the UK as a teacher, in schools-based youth work, in state school chaplaincy and in alternative education. She married Dan, also a teacher, in 2001. They lived in Cambodia, providing education and pastoral care for missionary families at Hope International School.

“(TSCF) was so influential in my own life,” Kim said. “I can look back and see that the decisions I’ve

“My vision is to see students live undivided lives of authentic love for Jesus on campus and beyond – devoted to him and living the adventure he calls them to, wherever that may lead.”

– Kim Shaw

made since I graduated were strongly influenced by teaching I received through the CU. The life experience I’ve had since then gives me something to help others explore life from God’s perspective – not to just take the expected steps, but to discern how God can use their training and personal gifts.”

Kim has also worked for Scripture Union, where she completed a ministry internship with Laidlaw College, and she has started a graduate diploma in theology.

After living in three other countries and both the North and South Islands, Kim is now based in



From left, Kim Shaw, Shani Vaughan-Broome, and Caroline Zengenene.

Wellington with their three children, aged 3 to 10. Kim will be working part-time with students at Victoria University, stepping into a role that TSCF has been seeking to fill for the last couple of years. “It is exciting to now walk alongside a new generation of students,” Kim said. “My vision is to see students live undivided lives of authentic love for Jesus on campus and beyond – devoted to him and living the adventure he calls them to, wherever that may lead.”

Shani Vaughan-Broome

PA to National Director

Shani grew up in Wellington, met her husband, Michael, at school, and together they are now youth leaders at Epuni Baptist Church in Lower Hutt. She worked as a preschool teacher before taking on the role as Nigel Pollock’s PA. She loves nature and exploring creation, and she and Michael have a big heart for young people.

Max and Mei Rideout

Wellington staff workers

Max and Mei have recently arrived from Toronto, Canada where Max was on staff with InterVarsity Christian Fellowship of Canada working with international students and Mei was serving as a

primary school principal. They moved to Wellington be closer to their daughter, son-in-law and three grandchildren.

Max became a Christian as a student at the University of Waterloo. Mei moved from Hong Kong to Canada to study at the University of Toronto. They



Max and Mei Rideout

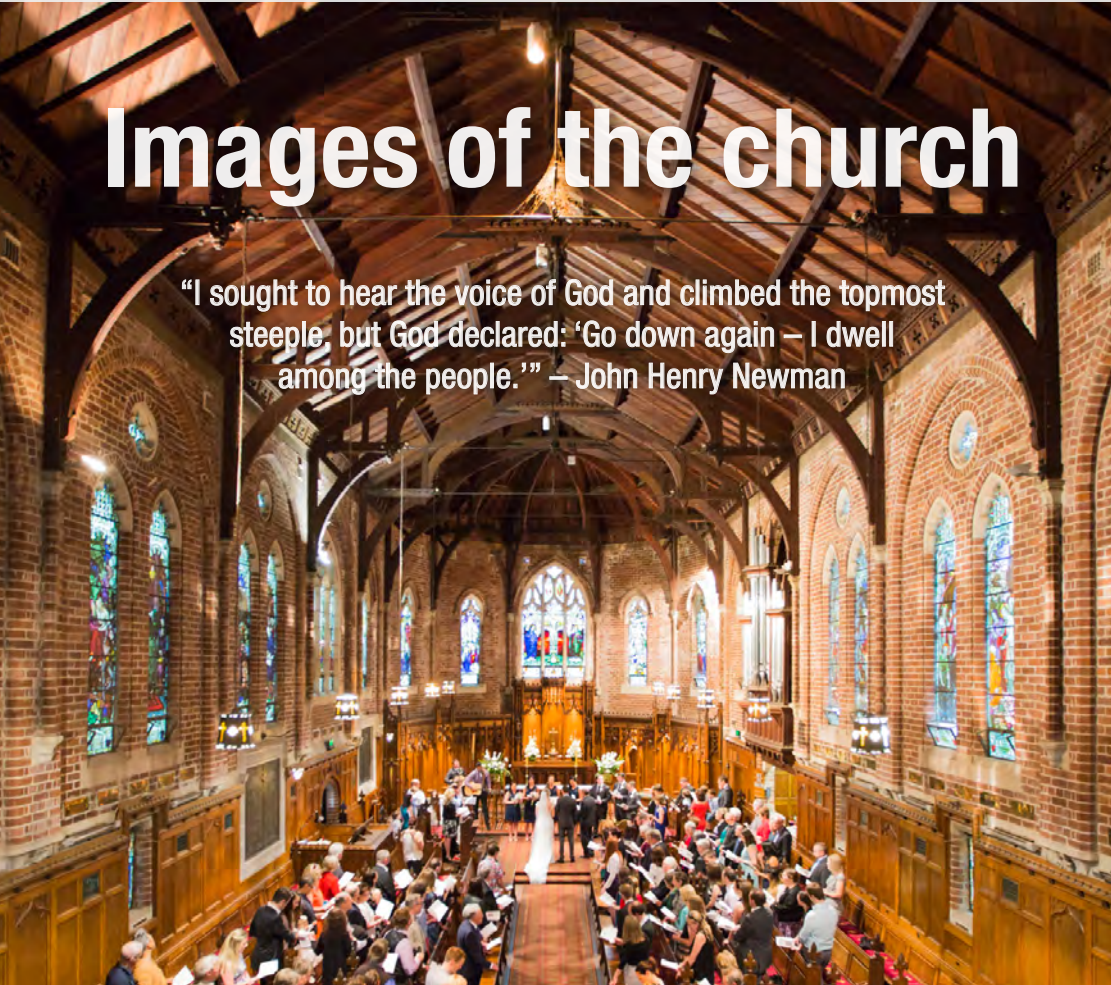
both made life-long Christian friendships in their student groups and their university experience was formative in their Christian lives. A visit to TSCF’s Summit conference in 2015 and a warm welcome by the TSCF family of staff and students confirmed God’s calling here.

Caroline Zengenene

TSCF’s work nationally benefitted from Caroline’s contribution to the office team as personnel and finance administrator this year. She was involved in TSCF as a student in Otago before picking up this role in February. In November, she left to begin a new job and will be getting married in January 2017.

Images of the church

“I sought to hear the voice of God and climbed the topmost steeple, but God declared: ‘Go down again – I dwell among the people.’” – John Henry Newman



God's building

The honour of New Zealand is reflected in the architecture of Government House (the dwelling place of the Governor General), as the honour of a city is portrayed by architecture of a city hall with columns and elaborate stone-work. Buildings around the world compete to best display the honour of heads of state, capital cities and the nations who commission them. God also has dwelt in many

places, some more humble than most humans, and some with unobtainable grandeur. Heaven is God's throne room, and the earth his footstool.

Yet, at times in history, God has made a point of dwelling among his people. The tabernacle that Israel made at Mt Sinai was an elaborate tent, yet a tent nonetheless. The stone temple that Solomon built was an elaborate house, yet a house

nonetheless. The manger was an animal feed box, and it housed the presence of God made flesh. God is not opposed to humble dwellings, and his presence fills them with glory.

I remember clearly the first time I was taught about the days in which God moved into his new dwellings. The Shekinah Glory of the presence of God that led Israel out from Egypt by fire and smoke filled the Tabernacle and Temple on the day of their commissioning such that no priest was able to enter and serve (Exodus 40 and 1 Kings 8). The part of that thread that most captivated me was the similarity to Acts 2, where the presence of God takes residence in the early Church through the giving of the Holy Spirit.

God has taken up a new dwelling on earth, a new temple to house his presence in the nations – and it's us! The church is the dwelling of God on earth. The people are the new house, the new temple, the new tent. The glory of the Lord dwells within a people who have been cleansed and commissioned by the sacrifice of Jesus. The Church is honoured by the presence of God, and we are assured of our worth by the Spirit who dwells in us and binds us together. The metaphorical building may not always look grand, but the owner/occupier assures us that the Church is loved by God and honoured by his presence.

God's bride

In the cool interior of the large building, we all sit awkwardly in unaccustomed finery. We are painted and shaved and wearing jackets and ties and hats and flowers, the likes of which are worn only a few times each year. We wait in hushed expectation, glancing to the small party in tuxedos at the front; watching for their reaction, waiting to share that moment. A wedding brings together a group of people behaving in a manner foreign to

most of them. All scrubbed up and on their best behaviour. But all of them wait on one. In a room full of people looking as beautiful as they can manage, the wedding has only one star. The Bride is the definition of beauty at her own wedding, the only one who makes all the assembled finery gasp, the only one who makes the men at the front shed tears of admiration.

This is the beauty that we are told the Church holds for her husband, Jesus. In all its foibles and idiosyncrasies, and chequered history, and variegated denominations that ooze suspicion of one another, Jesus sees the most beautiful Bride and the heavens rejoice with him.

Ephesians 5 teaches us that Christ left his home above and came to create for himself that perfect specimen of beauty. She is only perfect because his life-giving blood was shed to make her so; his righteousness shines through her wonderful adornment. The final day is a wedding feast, and the kingdom will finally be consummated in eternal covenant.

Do you find it hard to picture the Church this way? We are so accustomed to finding fault and experiencing distrust and shame when we think of the global Church. It is hard to imagine the Church as something this beautiful. Yet scripture tells us firmly that Christ has made a people for himself, to be his partner in all eternity, and that they share his perfect righteousness through his saving action at the cross.

However we view the Church, however we interpret its state, we must remember that God loves it. However well or poorly the church behaves in our field of view, we know that Christ stands waiting like a hopeful Groom to finally set his eyes on the only true star amongst all people. The Church is his Bride, and she is beautiful in his eyes.

Mike Summerfield
Otago Staff Worker



A brief disclaimer

This *Canvas* focuses on what the Bible teaches about the institution of the Church and how that informs the way we act as members of local churches. But because anyone can start a church (and we have plenty of evidence that, really, anyone can), “church” needs to be defined.

This discussion does not address churches that follow leaders who require individuals to be loyal and obedient to them, and not – ultimately and unmistakably – obedient to Jesus as he is revealed in Scripture. So many people have experienced abuse emotionally, financially or sexually at the hands of authority figures who present themselves as quasi-saviours, leaders who are not themselves in submission to the true Lord.

There are also churches where teachers do not follow Christ’s teachings, nor do they entirely believe the prophets who foretold him and the witnesses who wrote about him. “Churches” that don’t acknowledge the Bible’s authority or teach it faithfully aren’t spreading the power of God for salvation. They have created their own counterfeit.

This discussion doesn’t address those leaders or institutions. We are asking how we ought to relate to our own flawed but true churches, ones that are rarely as messy as the New Testament congregations that Paul scolded and affirmed, bodies that are just as precious to God. These churches are founded on his Word, and they call us to worship and obey the person of Jesus Christ.

If that sounds like the church you are part of, then no further disclaimer is needed.

canvasview



Building to plan

The good news is that we are the church.
The bad news is that we are the church.



Photo by Steven Wei

Why do you go to church? When your alarm goes off on Sunday morning, what motivates you to get out of bed and go? Perhaps you grew up going to church so it’s out of habit. Perhaps you’re on the roster to set things up or serve morning tea and you don’t want to let people down. Perhaps you look forward to the singing, the teaching, the time to reflect or catching up with friends over coffee afterwards. Perhaps you don’t actually make it to church most weeks and aren’t sure what the point is. Perhaps you’ve been hurt by your experience of church and don’t trust that another church won’t hurt you in the same way.

Church is messy. It’s a gathering of sinners saved by grace who are not yet fully sanctified. People

“And let us consider how we may spur one another on towards love and good deeds, not giving up meeting together, as some are in the habit of doing, but encouraging one another – and all the more as you see the Day approaching.”

– Hebrews 10:24-25

will get things wrong, overreact, not show the love and care they ought, get too wrapped up in minor details, not pay enough attention to important details, and otherwise contribute to the messiness. None of us has found the perfect church; we won’t. It can be frustrating and disappointing being part of a local church. It’s no wonder we sometimes feel like leaving and looking for a better church, or giving up on church altogether. And

there are good and right reasons to leave a church, but ask this question first: Do we understand what church is all about?

The church is the local gathering of the chosen people, royal priesthood, holy nation and God’s special possession that 1 Peter 2 talks about – what a privilege to be God’s family meeting together. Paul likens the church to a temple under construction: “Consequently, you are no longer

foreigners and strangers, but fellow citizens with God's people and also members of his household, built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets, with Christ Jesus himself as the chief cornerstone. In him the whole building is joined together and rises to become a holy temple in the Lord. And in him you too are being built together to become a dwelling in which God lives in his Spirit" (Ephesians 2:19-22).

How wonderful to be part of God's building, the place where he chooses to dwell. God's purpose is to gather his people around himself, looking ahead to the day when all his chosen people will be gathered in the new creation around Jesus.

Paul also describes the local church like a body with many parts. Each has a different purpose, some major and some minor, but all are essential – "so that there should be no division in the body, but that its parts should have equal concern for each other" (1 Corinthians 12:25).

You may be familiar with 1 Corinthians 13, the "love chapter." It might not read like a description of your local church, but if we each practiced its definition of love then the Church would resemble a beautiful body, with all of its parts taking care of each other and treating each other as essential members. We would suffer together, rejoice together, work together.

Church has never been about what I can get out of it. It is not about whether my needs are met, whether my preferences are accommodated, or whether I feel like I fit in. We are brothers and sisters in Christ, preparing together for Jesus' return and the ultimate family gathering. We do this by encouraging one another to become more like the Christ we follow and welcoming others into the family.

The churches we belong to are not perfect. Through the highs and lows they are God's chosen



So rather than focus on what church is or isn't providing for you, focus on how you can be part of the church body, loving other members in a 1 Corinthians 13 kind of way.

means of gathering his people together on earth. So rather than focus on what church is or isn't providing for you, focus on how you can be part of the church body, loving other members in a 1 Corinthians 13 kind of way, encouraging others to love and to do good.

Keep the bigger picture of what God designed the Church to be as motivation to persevere now, in the "not yet."

Robyn Drake
Auckland Team Leader



Photo by Elliot Ng

Paul Windsor, right, trains UESI and YWAM staff in preaching during a course in Indore, India.

Breaking down church walls

A faith that influences all of life will have more than one meeting place

Paul Windsor is the Director of Langham Preaching and former Principal of Carey Baptist College. He is now based in India, where he teaches homiletics and coordinates the training of church leaders around the world. Paul was also a student leader in EU during his university days, and is a past TSCF vice president.

Much of your life has been devoted to training church leaders. Why has equipping the church been such a priority for you?

The local church is central to the purposes of God in the world. Leaders are central to the effective-

"With 'local church' I am thinking as much of the church scattered into vocations for mission, as I am the church gathered into worship services for ministry. And with 'leaders' I am thinking as much of those who exert influence in informal settings."

ness of those local churches. It is that simple. But with "local church" I am thinking as much of the church scattered into vocations for mission as I am the church gathered into worship services for ministry. And with "leaders" I am thinking as

much of those who exert influence in informal settings, as those who fill more formal appointments in the church. When these more spacious understandings are in place, making the training of church leaders a priority is both logical and easy.

In what ways have you seen those whose 9-to-5 lives are spent in secular vocations best serve the church?

They are the church and in those vocations they can be serving the mission of God. The sacred:secular divide is unhelpful. When these folks target being “full of grace and truth” in the workplace and when they commit to living distinctive lives with distinction among their colleagues, they are inhabiting mission’s front lines. Such people are to be honoured, even celebrated, in the church. As Chris Wright expresses it, “People don’t go to church on Sundays to support their pastors in their ministry; the pastor goes to church on Sundays to support people in their ministry.”

Students’ church homes are often short-term and their communities can be transitory. Do you have any strategies for them to serve others and be cared for and held accountable themselves, despite these obstacles?

I used to play and coach basketball. The game is evolving. Coaches often revert now, rather surprisingly, to “small-ball” with a much shorter line-up on the court. Amidst all the busyness and mobility, churches and students alike do well to go small. Think in terms of discipleship and mentoring, hospitality and Bible studies – and aim at a deeper work in a fewer number.

Students: Aim to take someone with you in your heart when you leave.

Churches: Aim to keep someone in your hearts when they leave.

Mucking in

A student perspective on being part of a church in transitory seasons

Brydon Sundgren is a student leader at the University of Auckland and a student representative on TSCF’s board. Four years ago he left family and church connections in Wellington to begin university.

As a student, what are the biggest challenges to being involved in a church community?

Moving away from home and finding a new church community was a challenge; there are so many options. Two other challenges are time and transport. I’m involved in the worship ministry, but when it comes to small groups I tended to prioritise my involvement in TSCF groups. University is a season, and one I sow into whilst I am there. However I do aspire to have greater connection to a small group, not just the worship team I lead.

What challenges have you observed other students facing?

Many first-year students struggle to find a church community where they feel welcomed and belong. It’s also challenging to understand the differences between churches, such as their theological position. Church can be a social thing, or people may be drawn to a church because of the style of music. Working out what is important for your faith and finding a church that suits that takes time.

Committing to church involvement is another challenge. Students from out of town aren’t around for the whole year and sometimes go home at the weekend.

Has anything been particularly helpful in



Brydon helps lead worship during an OCF event.

overcoming these?

- An active young adults community – people in the same stage of life to relate to and support each other.
- Reading up on what different churches believe and talking to friends who have grown up in different congregations. The last few years have been formative in confirming what I believe.
- Choosing a church, getting involved and sticking with it.

What should people who want to serve students in the context of their churches do practically?

Be welcoming and accepting of students. The first Sunday at my home church, a group of us visiting students were invited around to lunch with other

students. That had a lasting effect.

Accommodate students. That may mean letting them try out their own thing as a small group. Be willing to mentor them if they are looking for it.

Looking out for students – especially feeding us – works a treat. Hospitality is a big way of getting people welcomed into the community.

Be willing to lend a hand (e.g. in moving flats) or ask how we’re doing. Most students are living away from home so having people checking up on them makes a big difference.

What attitude and expectations should students bring to church involvement, especially those who aren’t in their “home” church during the uni year?

- Be willing to get involved.
- Church is there to support you. It’s for your benefit, as much as the community who will benefit from you being a part of their community.
- Search with an open mind for a church, ready to go where God leads you.
- Don’t be afraid to speak up or be noticed, just because you’re young.
- Set aside the time.

Personally, I have had the opportunity to use and grow in my gifts of music. I’ve been blessed to be a part of a group of young adults with whom I have been able to share some of the challenges and blessings of life.

The church community has supported me, providing care and love while I have been away from home.

I have been challenged through the teaching, and have grown in my relationship with God and in the understanding of his ways. It has encouraged me to be bolder and to live evangelistically.



Celebrating with CECE Ecuador

April 2011: Val Goold, then the national director of student ministry for TSCF, came to share in CECE's 20th anniversary celebrations. At that time CECE was working in just two cities with two groups meeting weekly on university campuses. From that anniversary meeting, four students became key to a burst of life in mission at Ecuador's universities.

Skip forward to October 2016 when we celebrated CECE's 25th anniversary. We are grateful for the 23 groups that meet each week in six cities, and for a staff team that has grown from three to 11 over the past two years. These elements have contributed to our growth:

- Key partnerships with local churches, which have allowed university students to be discipled and mobilised for mission on their university campuses.
- The development of a common language and minimal but clear structures that empower students to focus on living and sharing their faith in the university context.
- More spaces for formation and training, especially through partnerships with the IFES family. Over the past five years this has included partnerships with NKSS (Norway), TSCF, and InterVarsity (USA).

“Almost weekly I am reminded, and remind our students, that it's not about having much, it's about offering Jesus what you have.”

- A focus on giving students practical skills in knowing and sharing the Bible, growing Christian character, and sharing Jesus faithfully and creatively in the university context.

Last semester, all the student groups in Quito worked through Mark as the gospel of invitation. The invitation is to explore who Jesus is and what it means to follow him. Two things have struck me afresh from Mark 6:30-44.

First, the miracle occurs at a moment when Jesus' team desperately needs a break. Verse 31 says, “they didn't even had time to eat.” Despite this, Jesus responds with compassion and invites his disciples as a team to respond to the needs of the crowd. At CECE we continue to lack time,

Ruth and her husband, Josué, CECE's general secretary, plan to visit New Zealand in 2017. Shortly before *Canvas* went to print, Ruth's mother, Bev Hicks, suffered a stroke that has affected her left side. Ruth is now caring for her as she recovers, in addition to her work with CECE. She reports that Bev is in good heart and has a good chance of regaining movement. They are grateful for the support from family and friends. Please pray for a full recovery and for all that they need in the meantime to be supplied.



The South American contingent at SPARC 2016 – from left, Salomé, Dania (from Chile), Karolyne, and Brett.

energy, staff and finances to sustain the growth and opportunities we face. Pray with us, both for times of rest and miraculous provision.

Secondly, the raw material for this miracle is found in the simple lunch pack collected by the disciples. Almost weekly I am reminded, and remind our students, that it's not about having much, it's about offering Jesus what you have.

Celebrate God's faithfulness throughout 25 years of proclaiming Christ in the universities of Ecuador, and 15 years of partnership with TSCF. Thank you for partnering in student mission in Ecuador.

• • •

Brett Schaffner, CECE staff, and students Salomé Vasquez and Karolyne Saltos visited New Zealand for SPARC last July. These are their reflections:

"I was impressed by how students are committed to the mission in their universities. How they want to give their best to serve others has inspired me to serve my campus in Ecuador. I was impacted observing that students love to pray. It challenged me to see a culture of prayer develop in CECE. Not only are New Zealand landscapes beautiful, its people are welcoming. I loved its cultural diversity and the respect showed for everyone no matter where you are from."

– Salomé Vasquez

"A heart for prayer, a country that celebrates diversity, and a passion for evangelism – these would be my takeaways from SPARC 2016 with TSCF and other IFES movements from the South Pacific.

"We can make our faith hard to live out by falling into the trap of not 'knowing enough,' but I greatly appreciated the back-to-basics approach and the simple but convicting applications the leaders of SPARC called us to:

'Follow Jesus, proclaim the Kingdom, and don't look back.'

'Awkward evangelism is better than silence.'

'If all my prayers that I prayed from the last week were answered, how many of my friends would know Jesus through these prayers?'

"I am proud to be part of an international family so focused on spreading the gospel and living it out in tangible ways that have an eternal impact in the world. Thank you for letting me join you for SPARC and helping me grow my IFES familia."

– Brett Schaffner

"New Zealand has a beauty that is hard to forget – its landscapes, its hospitable people, and the warm enthusiasm of their conversations. SPARC was a crucial opportunity in my personal and ministerial life. I was reminded that the basic concepts must be clear and well-rooted. If our classmates need to experience the love of Christ, we have to know what to say and how to say it. I was challenged by Kiwi students who creatively and passionately show Jesus Christ in their universities. I was blessed to learn from the multicultural expression of people I now count as friends."

– Karolyne Saltos

Ruth Hicks
CECE Ecuador



Dave Baab speaks at Dunedin's 80th anniversary celebrations and receives a farewell gift from students on 14 September.

One of the Canvas issues that won a design award, below.



Departing

At the end of 2016, the Dunedin team will say goodbye to Dave Baab. He and his wife, Lynne, will retire back to the USA in 2017. Dave has been an associate staff worker with TSCF since 2007, making him one of the longest-serving volunteers. He began working with Dunedin Overseas Christian Fellowship, teaching and modelling inductive Bible study and helping international students adjust to life in New Zealand.

Dave's experience as a professor of dentistry was invaluable in the establishment of the Dentistry School's Christian Fellowship at Otago University. He helped dental students prepare for the challenges and opportunities they will encounter in their careers. He has also been a stand-in father, grandfather, friend and mentor.

Students and staff turned notes and prayers for Dave into a book, with a cover that was designed by Amy Archer, a Dunedin student. They presented

it to Dave at TSCF's 80th anniversary celebration in Dunedin in September.

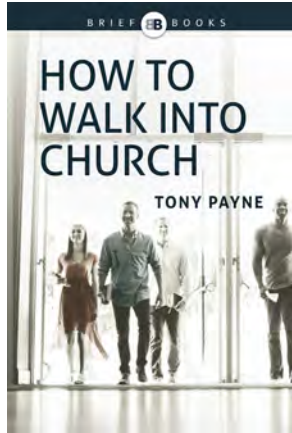
If you are interested in finding out more about becoming an associate staff member, please contact TSCF.

Born

Erin Hazel Cooley was born on 12 October to Richard and Glenda in Taranaki. Glenda (nee Rowland) was part of LUCF.

Awarded

Canvas garnered four mentions from the Australasian Religious Press Association in ARPA's annual awards for Christian media. Nigel Pollock received gold in the faith reflection category for "Service and sacrifice," and the feature "Faith meets fiction" by Maryanne Wardlaw was highly commended. For magazine design, Canvas received two bronze awards, one for the Autumn 2015 cover and the other for last year's issues.



How to Walk into Church

By Tony Payne

Reading this left me encouraged about my local imperfect church and inspired to be an active member of it. It's a short, practical booklet that takes less than an hour to read. Tony Payne looks at God's purpose for the Church and how to be part of a local church body.

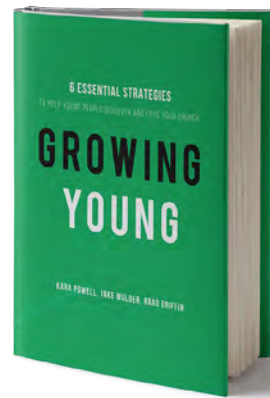
– Robyn Drake

Growing Young

By Kara Powell, Brad Griffin and Jake Mulder

Christianity Today recently interviewed Kara Powell about the research she and two other authors conducted on 250 churches that are bucking the trend of losing members between the ages of 15 and 29. In *CT's* overview of their book, *Growing Young*, Kara points to six characteristics that set those churches apart. And they don't have much to do with music, personalities or congregation size.

A welcoming community, keeping a "ruthless" focus on Jesus, the challenge to live radically, and openness to discussing tough theological issues made the list. "Christianity can be awkward and sometimes confusing, but Jesus is always magnetic," Kara said.



Programmes, denominations, facilities and worship style were not significant factors.

"When describing what makes their church so effective, 40% highlighted how their congregation 'challenges' them," Kara said.

Visit www.tscf.org.nz/about-the-church for a link to *Christianity Today's* interview.

About the Church

In New Zealand and two other countries – France and the Netherlands – non-religious may outnumber the religious by 2050, for the first time. The Pew Research Centre's "Future of World Religions" predicts that agnostics, atheists and the unaffiliated will make up just over 45 percent of our population.

New Zealand may be ahead of the curve, but "church decline" has long been a topic

of conversation. How do we encourage the growth of individuals who are committed to being part of the visible Church – and making it visible for all the right reasons – at a time when an increasing number of people believe it is irrelevant?

More contributions to the conversation about church engagement are linked online at www.tscf.org.nz/about-the-church. Please email us at canvas@tscf.org.nz if you would like to suggest other resources to add to the list.

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