

GRACE

SOUTH PACIFIC REGIONAL CONFERENCE 1 VANUATU

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canvas

TERTIARY STUDENTS CHRISTIAN FELLOWSHIP'S MAGAZINE



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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 three times a year by TSCF.



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Maryanne Wardlaw

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.

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Phase two for “The Well”

In John chapter 4, we meet a woman whose life is transformed after meeting Jesus at a well. The TSCF Springs Road Project is driven by our desire for men and women from all over the world to have their lives transformed by meeting Jesus.

Springs Road runs alongside Lincoln University. In recent weeks, thanks to the generosity of God and his people, TSCF has purchased a section of land there opposite Lincoln University. Our desire is to build a place that will serve the gospel for generations to come. The vision is for Christian students to live in community for their own discipleship, and to form a base for evangelism similar to Rongopai in Wellington and The Quarters in Dunedin. In this case, we also own the land and could generate funding to help with staff costs and gospel projects for decades to come.

We will call this building The Well as a reference to John 4, to tie in with “Springs” Road, and as a reminder that the purpose of the project is for others to drink deeply from the well of living water, Jesus himself.

TSCF has four key aims:

True Witness. This is our first-amongst-equals aim. We are about evangelism, speaking clearly and winsomely about Jesus in creative and faithful ways. This is what The Well on Springs Road is all about.

Undivided Life is about helping Christian students live the whole

Students and staff at The Quarters, Dunedin, an intentional community that The Well will be modelled after.



This lot opposite Lincoln University will be developed as a place for Christian students to live in community and minister to their campus.

of life for Jesus without a Sunday/Monday divide. This is what The Well on Springs Road is all about.

Global Reach rejoices that there are huge global gospel opportunities because students from all over the world come to NZ. In addition, we want to encourage Kiwi students to consider going overseas for the cause of the gospel. This is what The Well on Springs Road is all about.

Deep Thought, thinking about the implications of the gospel for all walks of life, is also a key aim—to think

“Christian-ly.” This is what The Well on Springs Road is all about.

As a team, we’re excited about the possibilities. We’re grateful to God and his people for enabling the purchase of a section. However we’re aware that there is so much more required to construct a building before students can move in. Therefore we’re continuing to pray about and donate to this project.

Tim Hodge
Lincoln Team Leader



WOULD YOU LIKE TO BE PART OF THE SPRINGS ROAD PROJECT?

Contact Tim Hodge at tim@tscf.org.nz to find out about various opportunities to partner with us. For one-off or recurring gifts to make the building a reality, visit www.tscf.org.nz/give and choose “PR-LSR – Lincoln Springs Road Project.”

Leaving Aotearoa

Nigel Pollock and his family first came to New Zealand from the UK in response to a call from TSCF. He became National Director in 2006, bringing a fresh energy to the work of taking the gospel into campus life and, ultimately, into all of life for students and graduates.

His first home is Scotland. Nigel spent years developing Christian leaders in the context of UCCF in the UK, another IFES student movement, before the family adopted Aotearoa. At the end of 2018 Nigel and his wife, Ailsa, are repeating what they did 13 years ago—moving to Toronto as Nigel answers a call to head up InterVarsity Canada, the IFES work there. This time they will be starting over without their now-grown sons Luke, Jamie and Craig, who remain here.

To mark Nigel's time here, we've compiled his annual TSCF reports in a booklet titled "Encourage the Good." It tells the story of TSCF over this past season and gives an insight into Nigel's leadership.

(Contact us if you'd like a copy, or visit the "resources" section of the website for a PDF.)

Judge Andrew Becroft, who chairs TSCF's board, wrote this in his introduction of "Encourage the Good": "Nigel arrived in New Zealand with an established reputation as a strong and effective leader—in particular, as a powerful written and oral communicator. TSCF was in a parlous position when he arrived. There had been no full-time National Director for several years. Nigel immediately steadied the ship and provided a clear vision for the future direction of the fellowship. He did this primarily by his wonderful ability to communicate in a compelling and winsome way.

"I well remember the first message that he preached at the then Bible College of New Zealand. My own father, who also heard it, said, 'Nigel, you could preach that sermon 100 times.' Quick as a flash Nigel replied, 'How do you know I



Nigel speaking at TSCF's 80th anniversary celebrations in Otago, 2016.

haven't, Lawrie?"

Paul Trebilco, a TSCF Vice President and Professor of New Testament Studies at the University of Otago, wrote this in his foreword: "His crystal-clear sense of vision stands out. His passion is 'to seek and to save the lost,' and he speaks often of the vision of 'seeing students coming to Christ and disciplined for life.' He longs to see the lordship of Christ over all our lives, over our nation and over our world.

"Along with this clear vision comes a strong prophetic dimension to Nigel's ministry. He writes of 'a prophetic mindset that sees beyond the horizon and steers a course that shapes the decisions of today and tomorrow.' He often un.masks what is really going on around us on our campuses, in our society, and in our world. He asks the hard questions. He challenges us to grapple with what we must do differently, in the midst of challenging cultural currents, to keep communicating the unchanging Gospel.

"We also see what is close to Nigel's heart. He loves the Scriptures. He is committed to worldwide

evangelism, especially here! He has a vision for leadership development and he invests in emerging leaders. He expresses great confidence in the Gospel and, most of all, great confidence in Jesus Christ.

"In his time as National Director this vision, this prophetic dimension to his ministry, this passion for the Gospel and for the Lord Jesus, along with a great team of staff and many committed students, has led to a reinvigoration of TSCF. Nigel has led a range of fresh initiatives, spearheaded innovation and been instrumental in reaching the movement's goals through quite different means.

"I'm thankful to God for all that he has done through Nigel, and ask God to bless Nigel and Ailsa in the days ahead in Canada."

Nigel's successor is Ben Carswell, who also came from the student ministry in the UK to invest in Kiwi students, and had this to say of their time working together.

"'He's unique, but you'll love him.' This was how I described Nigel to my wife, Jen, as we considered God's calling to work alongside Nigel in NZ. After 11 years, I'd still say 'he's unique and we love him!'

"Nigel, Ailsa and their family have become dear friends. It has been a privilege and joy to work closely with someone who so clearly loves God and also those around him. Nigel has exemplified the importance of both 'content' and 'creativity' in proclaiming Rongopai, the good news of Jesus, helping people live joined-up lives, applying their faith to all of life and seeking to encourage the good wherever he finds it.

"Nigel has passed on the baton of leadership in TSCF having run well. We are thankful to God for him and all that has been done in his time in NZ. We cheer him on as he takes up the baton of leading InterVarsity Canada and ask for your prayers that both we and he would run with endurance the race God has set before us, fixing our eyes on Jesus."

Nigel with the 2016 ministry interns.



Fresh challenge for Mark Grace

In 2018 Mark Grace officially transitioned from TSCF staff to becoming the full-time Ambassador for the CCCNZ network of churches. His friend Mark Santich, who heads up the Canterbury team, recalls the contributions he has made to TSCF.

Mark Grace and I joined TSCF staff around the same time more than 16 years ago. It has been a great privilege and joy to serve together. Having the same name meant we often received each other's emails, but we have shared so much more than that over our time together—especially as our families grew to know and love each other over the years. Despite living on different Islands, Mark in Palmy and myself in Christchurch, we have had a close ministry bond and friendship.

Mark has always been entrepreneurial, thinking outside the box and always dreaming of new ideas. I'm more of a slow plodder, happy to put my head down and get on with ministry. This led to a great, complementary gospel partnership. In

the earlier years, I would spend a week each year in Palmy for "Word Week" to help teach and train students in Palmerston North. Mark helped this Australian to keep growing in my understanding of Kiwi culture and biculturalism, to learn about Aotearoa's rich gospel heritage, and to keep growing in my love for Jesus.

We also benefited from key student leaders Mark had invested in—Scott Mackay and Erin Robinson, who served on campus in Palmy and came down to Christchurch as TSCF interns and staff.

Mark's creativity helped TSCF in many ways over the years. He formed missional prayer groups on campus to help people consider serving God on campus and overseas, and developed Catalyst, our graduate ministry and a resource to help students through a book ministry.

Mark's great creativity has been matched by his great desire to see people come to know Jesus



Mark Grace at a Catalyst conference in 2012.

and to serve him. He leads by example. He wants students to step up their evangelism on campus, so he met with a number of students who didn't know Jesus and read a gospel with them. Mike Butcher, a student at Massey University in Mark's earlier years, is one of the people who will be eternally grateful for Mark's help in coming to know and love Jesus.

In order for students to reach other students better, Mark invested time training them in handling God's word and in ministry skills, often with early morning sessions. Mark's love for others was evident throughout TSCF—there was a strong bond in the Palmy student group for community and mission that had an effervescent effect on others around the country.

Mark has always made me think more about how I am living for Jesus and glorifying him in the things that I do, whether in everyday life or ministry. He loves reading. It has always been encouraging to wrestle through matters together, whether theological, ministry or just everyday life and relationships.

Mark has a beautiful family who have been very much a part of TSCF life. His wife, Emma, has contributed greatly to Mark serving with TSCF for this length of time.

So as you finish your formal time with your TSCF family, Mark, I want to thank God for the way you have left Jesus' mark, not just on campus in Palmy, but throughout the TSCF family.

Otago team farewell Mike Summerfield

Mike Summerfield and his wife, Michelle, have a long history with TSCF. In the 1990s Michelle served as president of Otago's Varsity Christian Fellowship. Mike and I first met in 2011, when they returned to Dunedin from the UK for Mike to complete his degree in theology at Otago. He was nominated president of VCF, and without his service we would not have been able to restart the group. In



the final year of his degree he went on to serve as a volunteer, and on graduating, became a part-time regional staff member in 2013.

Over the years, Mike has served alongside different student groups, bringing his medical research background to bear on his work with medical students and leading Bible studies for the Lawyers Christian Fellowship, which he helped pioneer.

As well as being a scientist, Mike has a creative streak. He expressed that in various ways from home brewing to art. At the latest Summit conference, Mike had students smash a number of plates and then used the broken pieces to create a mosaic of one of the symbols that Christians have used to represent the Trinity. The goal was to give the students a physical example of how, by his grace, God can use the brokenness in our lives to produce something that is beautiful and that points to him.

While working on staff, Mike has also served as the pastor of Roslyn Baptist. He is now going to give more of his energy to the work in that

congregation and in service to the wider region as the chair of the executive committee for the Otago and Southland Baptist Association.

Mike and Michelle returned to New Zealand because they were called by God to serve the church here. So while we are sad that Mike's time on staff ends this year and will miss his unique blend of gifts and skills, we're glad that they'll continue to be friends of TSCF locally. We look forward to seeing what God will do in and through their family as they direct their focus towards the Baptist church.

— James Allaway, Otago Team Leader

Finishing the race

Margaret Piper died on 11 March 2018. Her faithful support and prayer are missed by many, including TSCF. Margaret Frethey and Ross Piper first met at the 1960 IVF Conference in Masterton and became strong supporters of TSCF. Margaret and Ross coordinated the mailout of Canvas for many years. Margaret also helped to coordinate prayer groups and mission interest in the Wellington area for both Interserve and OMF.

Professor Wilf Malcolm PhD, CBE, died on 6 October 2018. He was the second full-time General Secretary (National Director) of TSCF from 1964–1967. He had a huge influence on many faculty and students.

At Feilding Agricultural College he was a keen sportsman and went on to Wellington Teachers' College where his interest in mathematics grew. He gained an MA, after which he worked as Travelling Secretary with Scripture Union for a year.

While studying at VUW he was president of the Evangelical Union for two years. During this time a mission was held on campus with Rev Dr Howard Guinness, in which many came to faith. Howard's earlier visit to NZ in the 1930s had been highly influential and led to the formation of Scripture Union and IVF/TSCF here. While a medical student in the UK, Howard was asked by fellow students from IVF to go in faith to other Commonwealth countries and lead missions there. This also led to the formation of sister fellowships in Canada and Australia.

Guinness wrote that there were 100 EU members at Vic when the mission began and 200 at the end—in a university of about 1000 students! EU was the largest club on campus.

Wilf went to Cambridge on scholarship. He and Ruth, who had also been on the VUWEU exec,

were married there.

They returned to New Zealand and he took up a lectureship in Mathematics at Victoria University. In 1963 he became General Secretary of IVF (later TSCF). In his final year, 1967, he also lectured full time. Back at Vic, one of his own students was lecturing in his area of pure mathematics and he had to carve out a new area of teaching and research.

In 1975 he became Professor of Pure Mathematics and in time became Academic Pro Vice-Chancellor. In 1985 Wilf and Ruth moved to Waikato University where he was Vice-Chancellor until he retired in 1994.



Wilf had a lifelong commitment to consistent, thoughtful Christian living and leadership. He gave himself generously to people even when

he was extremely busy. He was a brilliant chair of any committee and continued to lead significant government committees after he retired. He also lectured in the University of Brunei, Darussalam. In 2003 the Wilf Malcolm Institute of Educational Research at Waikato University was established.

Wilf's older brother and sister also made important academic contributions and were very involved in TSCF. Margaret became the first woman to be appointed Principal of a NZ Teachers' College and Geoff as Professor of Chemistry and Dean of the Faculty of Science at Massey University. They were both Vice Presidents of TSCF. Hilary Hague, the recently appointed National Director of Scripture Union, is the oldest daughter of Wilf and Ruth. He is also survived by Ruth and children Alison, Judith, Kirsten, Gordon and Tane, and their families.

– Dennis Fountain, TSCF board vice-chairperson



Students, staff, graduates and TSCF partners gathered in Waikato last October.

WAIKATO

Celebrate Waikato

Students, graduates and local church and mission leaders gathered for stories, supper and prayer on 29 October. Celebrate Waikato was an opportunity to reflect on how the work has progressed since the last event in 2016.

I introduced Waikato staff Nick Goodwin and Nadine Liddle, and a student panel fielded questions about campus ministry, discipleship and their personal growth. We heard from Nigel Pollock before he headed to Canada, and incoming National Director Ben Carswell about the ongoing mission to reach students for Christ and change students for life.

– Dave Hodgkinson, Waikato and Bay of Plenty Team Leader

WELLINGTON

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We have been focused on reaching out to students on campus, particularly those who are seeking. We held an event titled "Does God Exist?" with physicist Dr. Bridget Ingham, offering a perspective on science and faith. More than 30 students attended, many were new and came with great questions.

In the last week of the term we set up a free "Waffles and Chats" station in the uni hub. We had conversations with more than 100 students.

We are also excited about the engagement of previous president Lachlan Whisker and previous committee member Victoria Webber, who plan to marry in February 2019.

– Tamara Stratton

Funding update

TSCF expects to finish 2018 with a small surplus of funds. After a difficult finish to 2017, we are extremely thankful to God for his provision, both then and throughout 2018. We also want to express our thanks to all our supporters for your sacrificial giving and for graciously upholding TSCF in prayer. We continue to trust God to provide for our needs in 2019 and as he continues to grow his ministry among the students of Aotearoa New Zealand and beyond. Ngā mihi nui ki a koutou.

– Caitlin Ormiston, COO

Drama in Canterbury

The Mark Drama began in Austria with students performing the entire gospel in theatre-in-the-round. It has been used by God all over the world. Through TSCF's partnerships with those who have produced it elsewhere, the drama has been introduced to New Zealand. Last spring the first performances took place in the South Island.

Clarissa Chelliah was a cast member during her final semester at the University of Canterbury. **Lincoln Team Leader Tim Hodge** chatted with her about the experience.

How did you hear about the Mark Drama?

Through University of Canterbury's Christian Union when Claire Haworth and her husband from Ireland came to give us a briefing and preview about the Mark Drama. I was instantly drawn to it from experiencing the rawness of the play. We did a quick run-through of a scene where Jesus calms the storm. The chills it gave me while watching that scene will always stick with me.

What attracted you to the Mark Drama?

Having been involved in a number of plays, I was attracted to how different this was to the conventional/traditional drama, from the way the stage is set up to the multiple roles the characters play. The motivation behind acting out the Gospel of Mark is also different, because we are acting out the Word of God. On one hand, we can feel the weight of responsibility, ensuring we don't add our own story to what Mark has written. But on the other, there is such a freedom we feel when we can trust the Holy Spirit to help us.

How was the process of rehearsals?

Unlike most plays where one has to memorise lines of script, being part of the "Plus Team" (half the cast has named roles and half—the Plus

Team—have multiple roles) meant that I needed to just memorise the sequence of events. A guide is provided to help us memorise the book in six weeks. I found this very helpful, not only for the sake of memorising the drama, but for my own growth as a Christian. Meditating on the work of Jesus throughout those weeks was incredible.

As a few of my friends were also part of the play, it was helpful to go over the sequence of events together every time we caught up. It is certainly an encouraging time when we are challenging each other to memorise the gospel together.

We only practiced for a total of 15 hours before performing it for three nights. Insane? Not when you have the Holy Spirit helping. It certainly helped maintain that "raw and real" experience for us and the audience.

Was the Mark Drama experience for you as expected?

Certainly not. It was so much more than I expected. Being part of plays, we benefit from improving our talent and building relationships with fellow actors. This experience was more than that, because it was not for personal gain. Yes, our knowledge on the book of Mark improved, but more than that, it was all for God's glory. Unlike most plays where the lines do not benefit you once the play is over, what we have memorised for the Mark drama will always stick with us.

Your fiancé Jordan acted as Jesus; how was it for you as he learned Mark's Gospel?

It was certainly very encouraging to see my future husband spend hours memorising God's Word. Playing the role of Jesus is no easy task, but seeing him depend more on God challenged me to do the same. It was a very real experience



Jordan Simmonds speaks Jesus' words while Clarissa (centre) and others look on.

of my future husband striving to be like Christ. Helping each other in our pursuit to memorise the flow of Mark's gospel has also been wonderful. Now that the Mark drama is over, we still try to go over the sequences and lines so we do not forget them. Nothing beats a date night then a quick run through of the book of Mark. ;-)

What was your role?

I played different characters. This included being a member of the crowd, a disciple, and Pilate. It was not easy playing Pilate and sending Jesus to be crucified! Through playing these different characters, I was able to be in the shoes of people who encountered Christ. This gave me a deeper appreciation of Jesus and the compassion he showed people. Now when I read the gospel, I certainly have a different, more realistic picture in mind.

What's your hope as a future Mark Drama director?

If God wills, I hope to direct the Mark Drama wherever he has placed me in the future, be it in NZ or in Malaysia. My desire is that everyone involved, cast or audience, will encounter Christ in a personal way.

What were some of the comments and reactions from those you invited?

Most people were impressed at how we were able to perform after only three days of practice. Many told us that they had never realised the reactions of the disciples and people in the Bible were so relatable. Seeing Jesus beaten and crucified were certainly moments that impacted many. There is nothing quite like visibly seeing someone suffer because he loves you and wants to save you from your sins.

What do you think is in store for the TSCF groups doing the Mark Drama on campus?

It will be an awesome opportunity to unite the Christian students on campus, as well as to grow in faith as they dedicate time to read and memorise the Word. It might not be easy balancing this with studies and other commitments, but it is certainly worth it.

In terms of reaching non-believing friends, inviting people to a drama like this will open up doors for conversations. As Timothy Hodge often says, if they might not be keen to read the Bible with you, they might be willing to watch it! And we can trust that the Holy Spirit will convict them through that.



Hine at Massey University. Her print of people worshipping is for a photography project titled "Transitional spaces."

Freedom in God's love

Hine Tihore didn't know any other Christians on campus, so she would head to the smokers' area by herself to pray. Each day she sat on a wooden bench sheltered by kowhai and pohutukawa at the Massey University campus in Wellington, and she talked to God.

"I was praying mainly for the students on campus to know Jesus, for his Spirit to sweep through this place," she said. This is her heart: For students to know Jesus, and to know that they are loved by God.

Hine was new to both uni and to Christianity then, early in 2016. This past spring, as leader of TSCF's fledgling Christian Union on campus, she sat on that bench again and explained how she is living a life that she never dreamt possible.

Hine's story.

From her teen years, Hine was searching. "I felt like there was something that needed to be filled," she said, "but I kept trying to fill it with alcohol, sex, gambling—anything." The harm was compounded when a family member sexually assaulted her.

"I thought men were the problem," she said. "At the same time—you know, the Devil puts stuff around and twists truth—he took advantage of the fact that I didn't know the truth about who I was. I came to believe that I was gay."

About the same time as Hine came out, her younger brother came to faith. Over the years, both their sister and their late father became Christians through her brother's witness.

At the age of 28, Hine was settled in Melbourne. She was engaged to another woman, still fettered by addictions and working a job she didn't enjoy. She had never pursued higher education.

"At the time, I didn't think I could," she said.

She was also living with terrible anxiety and a deep conviction that she was unlovable. Until a couple of years ago, Hine struggled to even look at herself in a mirror. "I didn't love myself because I didn't know I was loved first," she said.

Her family had attended church when she was a child, but left without understanding the gospel or the reality of a loving God. By the time Hine and her partner visited New Zealand five years ago, her family knew God and were united in prayer for the pair.

"That's why I love prayer so much," she said. "My testimony reminds me that prayer is answered, because they were praying for me. And they didn't stop praying for me."

That visit was a turning point for Hine and her then-partner.

"We went for a trip to Rotorua, and the whole way we were talking about Jesus—two gay girls in a car. One had never really had anything to do with Jesus, and me, who had my family coming back to it."

"We went for a trip to Rotorua, and the whole way we were talking about Jesus—two gay girls in a car," Hine recalled. "One had never really had anything to do with Jesus, and me, who had my family coming back to it. The whole way we were talking about God, because we felt something but couldn't explain it. I was trying to tell her everything I could remember about religious education in primary school, I was telling her these Bible stories and testimonies that my brother and sister had told me."

Hine had also seen the changes in their lives and was unable to ignore the reason why. When it was time to return to Australia, Hine's sister slipped a Christian book into her bag and her brother prayed for them.

"At the end of the prayer, my partner said to me, 'I've never felt anything like that in my life.' Then we went to the airport, and we weirdly both had this overwhelming sense that we were going to die. We're sitting in the departure lounge, both in tears, so I turned to her and said, 'I think we need to give our hearts to Jesus!'"

Hine's sister had previously told her that she must confess Jesus as Lord and Saviour and repent of her sins, "so I haphazardly led us through it."

When they got home, Hine read the book and started reading the Bible at her sister's encouragement.



Hine at Massey University, in the place where she began praying for her campus.

"I just opened it up and started in Ezekiel," Hine said. "I'm like, what is happening? What does he mean with the bones coming to life? What? None of it made sense. But I read it anyway because she said, 'Just persevere. Just keep reading.'"

Her daily commute was more than an hour each way by train, so she used the time to dig in. God was working, she said, revealing himself to them by providing freedom even before they really knew what they were doing.

"My sister had pointed out that the thing in my head saying bad things to me wasn't me," Hine said. "That was groundbreaking. That was such a revelation. She said, 'That's not you; that's the Devil. It might sound like you, but it's not.'"

"He would constantly speak very loudly—'You're useless. No one really likes you. You're nothing.' I felt really worthless."

Hine latched on to 1 John 4:4 and responded by repeating it: "He who is in you is greater than he who is in the world." The voice silenced.

"Another thing was that my partner at the time was heavily addicted to synthetic drugs," Hine said. "She'd done all sorts of drugs, but her addiction to synth was really bad. She literally couldn't go 10 minutes without it." Attempts to quit had resulted in severe withdrawals, and neither of them felt they had the power to break their addictions. One day Hine asked God to do this for them, and she said the answer was instant.

"She never picked up the bong again," Hine said. "She had minimal withdrawals, and it was nothing she couldn't handle. We knew right then that God was real."

They moved to New Zealand six months after that visit and began attending church for the first time. They went to Equippers Lower Hutt, where Hine's family attended.

"For my brother, it was seven years of praying for his family and not one of us showed any interest, seven years until one of us set foot in church. And now, we fill up a row."

"The first time we went, we were waiting for people to judge us," she said. "We were waiting for people to flinch or stare or something. And when they didn't, we relaxed. We thought, no one is here to judge us. Someone probably did, but we never saw it because God shielded us from it."

However when they decided to get baptized, Hine's brother told them that they couldn't while they continued in a lesbian relationship. They took offense and stopped going to church for four months.

"About a year later—after God had walked me through so many things, and healed me in a lot of different ways, built back my trust in men again—he said to me, 'I'll turn you from this sin, and I have a husband for you.' At first I was like, 'You must have the wrong person! I'm engaged to another woman,' but he didn't stop saying it. And it was very gentle, it wasn't forceful, it was just—this is how it is."

Through reading the Bible, Hine was convinced that her church's take on sexual ethics matched God's design.

"I got to the point where I had to read it for myself," Hine said. "Even though I might not have understood the theological side, the academic side—I just read the words. I read the words and went, okay, this is what it says."

"Then it's confusing because you say things like, 'I love my partner so much, and isn't God love?'"

"And identity plays a huge part in it. You put your identity in being gay, so when you reject that, you feel nowhere."

Added to this confusion was Hine's concern that breaking up would damage her partner's recovery and her faith. She submitted her will to what she knew God wanted of her, but asked him for one thing: "Make sure she's okay."

As they prepared to go to a church conference, both of them knew something was going to change.

"We started to have a practical conversation, and she brought it up," Hine said. "She said, 'If we break up, I'll be okay.' And the second she said, 'I'll be okay,' I literally felt something leave my body—a weight, a shadow. I felt instantly joyful. That's when we knew, it's done."

Hine said that it took another three days for her former partner to believe that their lifestyle was counter to God's will. Once she did, she also felt that release.

"Admitting that it's sin is the hardest thing to accept, but once you do, that's where freedom is," Hine said. "It's weird. Rather than it condemning you—I think that's why I denied it, initially. Rather than explaining it away with certain things, the truth of it is, if you don't accept it, then it can't change you. Then you can't fully accept Christ and you can't fully accept everything that he is."

When they arrived at the conference, Hine met someone who knew her brother. When they made that connection, the woman said, "You're the sister we were praying for!"

"I said, 'Well it worked, because I literally just walked out of that life two weeks ago.' For my brother, it was seven years of praying for his family

and not one of us showed any interest, seven years until one of us set foot in church. And now, we fill up a row.”

And alongside her brothers’ friends in church, the ones who prayed for her, Hine now meets to pray for others.

“The way I see it, my testimony is not my own,” Hine said. “It’s the result of, obviously, God’s grace, but also a lot of other people’s prayers and their faith and their diligence. It’s *their* faith.”

Today.

During semester time, you can find Hine on campus early on Wednesday mornings for the worship and breakfast hosted by the campus chaplains. A dozen people crowd into a room to sing, read the word and pray together. Then they spill out to make coffee and toast in the open area adjacent, where more people join them. CU members, a Student Life staff member, chaplaincy and students in search of food and conversation mingle for another hour.

When Hine met Ian, one of the chaplains, in the second semester of 2016, just three people were meeting to pray. She joined in their efforts to start a Christian presence on campus. Ian introduced her to Kim Shaw, TSCF’s Wellington Team Leader at the time, to help form a student group. When Kim shared TSCF’s aims at their first meeting, Hine felt that they aligned with the students’ vision for a group and so the CU began. It is still small, but has a committed core.

The group received some unexpected attention this year when someone complained to the student body about what they overheard during a meeting in a public space.

“They said they felt uncomfortable listening to our stories, and anyone in the LGBT community would have also felt very uncomfortable,” Hine said. “So

it was recommended that we hold our meetings in an allocated room, which ironically we had asked for, but the logistics weren’t right and the public space ended up working better. So I replied and said, ‘No thanks, we’re happy where we are.’

“I said to them, look, this is my background. We weren’t saying anything disrespectful, I was just telling a story of my life. The point of the story is how it’s important for us as Christians to love people as they are. I don’t see how that’s offensive. I love how Massey encourages diversity, but that includes allowing Christians to be who they are too. So I was sure they didn’t want us to feel hidden away.

“I also said to whoever that person is, I’d be happy to meet with them, but nothing ever eventuated.”

While the complaint initially annoyed her, the situation ultimately made Hine more thankful for a testimony that bridges societal divides. “I’m from that community,” she said. “God found me and loved me while I was in the gay community. So it wasn’t about us hating on ‘the other side,’ it really wasn’t. It was about sharing how the love of Christ transforms.”

Hine is stepping back from leading the CU in 2019 because she has been elected Māori Executive on the Student Association. She sees fresh opportunities there, both to ensure that Māori are well represented on campus and to bring a Christian perspective to the Student Association.

She’s at home on campus. It’s small, with fewer than 4,000 students. Hine has connected with so many people in various capacities that, as we walk the halls, she regularly greets familiar faces.

This will be the third year of her communications degree, majoring in marketing and minoring in linguistics. Hine said that she didn’t know much about anything when she first enrolled, but has begun to see reasons for the course she’s been



Massey Wellington students mingle over breakfast and coffee after the weekly worship time hosted by chaplaincy.

led on. University life suits her so well that she is considering a doctorate in linguistics and hopes to become a lecturer.

Last August she joined other students who are part of IFES movements at the South Pacific Regional Conference in Vanuatu. She found the time there an important opportunity to connect with believers around the region and to look back.

“I kept reflecting and thinking—he’s completely changed my life in the past five years,” she said. “There’s things that he took, things that he walked me through. There’s big things that people can see, that are obvious, but there’s a whole lot inside that they can’t. I might not be able to ever really express—not living with weight and shame and condemnation, or anxiety. And finding my worth and my identity. It’s been such a short time that he’s just put a whole lot in and worked a whole lot out.

“In Vanuatu I just sat and thought, ‘I can’t believe I’m here.’ I have no idea where my life would be otherwise.”

The contrast between Hine’s life before and after finding her identity in Christ is stark, and she wants others to discover the same freedom—stirring up “undercover Christians on campus” (as she calls them) to walk with conviction and share the gospel with those who haven’t heard it.

“It’s so important for me here to show others that they’re loved, because a lot of the message in the media is that they’re not,” she said. “Being in Christ is so much more than we’re taught to believe in society. We’re taught to believe that it’s a religious thing, and it’s anti-freedom. That being a Christian is oppressive and it’s offensive. ...

“It’s not the truth. I’m so much more than I ever thought I was. I’m not confined to my sexuality or my ethnicity or my occupation, or my financial status or anything. It’s more than that.

“Now I’m working on knowing my identity as a child of God.”

—Marianne Wardlaw, Communications Manager



Caleb Baptista, a first year computer science student and a leader at Auckland Christian Union (formerly EU), shared his experience:

"It was the first opportunity that I've had to evangelise strangers. I remember that my first day helping out was particularly daunting as I was unsure how to start conversations about Christianity despite being eager to do so. I also worried about being unable to answer questions and failing to convey the message of the gospel effectively. However, with practice, persistence and prayer, the experience and opportunity to share the gospel with fellow students became more and more enjoyable as my confidence grew with each conversation. Despite the occasional dismissal from students, the ability to share with those who did stop made our endeavours over Jesus Week very worthwhile."



Caleb, left, chats to a student during Jesus Week.

Making space for Jesus

Is it a rule that Christians must close their eyes when they pray?

Why is there so much killing in the Old Testament?

These were among the questions that came up during Jesus Week at the University of Auckland in September. The TSCF groups worked together with a couple of other Christian groups on campus to put on a mission week focused on introducing people to Jesus.

Each day they set up a stand to give away hot chocolates with the aim of engaging students who were walking past in conversation about the gospel. This was the highlight. Many students enjoyed the freebie and moved on, but some hung

around to chat, curious about our motivation or interested in matters of life and faith.

We invited everyone to a free dinner on Friday night, with a talk on "Who needs Jesus?" A couple of students shared their testimonies and invited students to ask questions. It was there I met "Jenny," who had seen an advertisement for the event in chalk on the footpath. She's here from China for a year and has many questions about Christianity. It's been a joy to meet up and answer some of those questions, to see her enjoy coming to church even though there's so much she doesn't understand, and to give her a bilingual Bible so she can read about God in her heart language.

Please pray for Jenny and others like her who heard the gospel during Jesus Week, that they would continue to seek answers and that the Holy Spirit would open their eyes to the truth and hope found in Jesus.

There are similar stories of students across Auckland bringing the gospel into conversations with friends—sometimes just a snippet before the conversation moves on, sometimes a longer discussion.

A highlight of the year has been the establishment of groups at all three campuses of Auckland University of Technology, little communities of Christian students encouraging one another to live out their faith at uni. We're also encouraged to have Candy Grice raising support to work with us three days a week from next year, and two pastors volunteering a few hours a week each to work as associate staff with their local groups. With almost

Auckland by numbers

- 120,000 tertiary students
- 6 universities and polytechs
- 14 campuses

TSCF:

- 3 full-time staff
- 7 associate (volunteer) staff part-time
- 12 student groups across 7 campuses
- 2 international student ministries
- 1 graduate group

half of NZ's university students, we have a massive mission field and would appreciate prayer for more staff to join the team in Auckland.

Robyn Drake
Auckland Team Leader





Worshiping across the South Pacific

Vanuatu hosted this year's South Pacific reunion for regional IFES movements. Following on from SPARC 2016 in Wellington, at the end of August 140 staff and students found some midwinter warmth both literally and spiritually. They spent five days immersed in Romans and the Gospel of Grace with brothers and sisters from Fiji, Vanuatu, the Federated States of Micronesia, New Caledonia, Australia, Solomon Islands, Papua New Guinea, Tonga, Samoa and here in NZ.

Here is what some of the Kiwi contingent had to say.

"My highlights included the morning worship with an enthusiasm and simplicity that is hard to find, hearing a sermon on the call of Abraham preached entirely in Bislama (the national language of our hosts, made up of English, French and other indigenous words), and above all the fellowship. I was so proud to see all the NZ students making the effort to spend time with other students and

the impact that this has had on their vision—not just for the work on TSCF on campus, but God's heart for all people."

— Rosie Sim, Otago Staff Worker

"I'm becoming more aware of the many ways in which God provides resources and opportunities to suit our needs. We can be easily blinded by consumer culture, asking God for more. We need to be grateful; God can bless us with having less, allowing us to focus more on seeking him, to become generous in heart like our Pacific whānau."

— Sarah Visser, Lincoln University student

"We saw God answer prayers and enjoyed hearing Dave Walter teaching on the theme of grace. We were excited by the opportunities of sharing Jesus in new places around the region."

— Ben Carswell, National Director Designate

"We heard stories over meals and conversations with one another of what being bold for Christ



Students and staff gathered at SPARC. Photos contributed by Hine Tihore and Richie Jephthah Isu.

looks like, whether in a large campus group or a small island nation with just two students in the student group. As we spent time in Romans 4–7, our different cultures and backgrounds really shaped our reading of the Bible. I was encouraged by the diversity of who God is reflected in our small group."

— Kate McClelland, Lincoln Staff Worker

Following SPARC, three small teams left to serve on missions team in villages around Vanuatu.

"SPARC+ was an amazing opportunity. I spent time in Emua village. On the first morning they welcomed us and allowed

us guys to join in with the community projects as though we were one of them — cutting the grass on the side of the road with machetes, collecting firewood for cooking lunch and then collecting and eating and drinking coconuts. In this environment, we quickly formed amazing friendships."

— Ian Bresler, University of Canterbury student

Kate McClelland was also part of SPARC+:

"One moment that stands out was a conversation with one of the 'mamas' at the start of the week. As we were sitting getting to know one another and talking about our different





The New Zealand contingent at SPARC in Vanuatu early September 2018.

cultures, she said, 'for us, conversation is life.'

"Our team of mostly Kiwis and Australians entered the week very programme- and time-driven. But as the week went on, we all embraced the slower island pace and its catch phrase 'I stret no more' (stress no more).

"We left Siviri with a greater humility and understanding of the importance of slowing down and hearing each other's stories. We were more ready whether over a meal, preparing food together or wherever we were to share of the hope we have in Jesus.

"Those precious moments of pointing each other towards Jesus really do bring life!"

Kate discovered that SPARC was also significant for Jen, a student who began the year as a seeker.

"Since the start of the university year, Jen and I have been meeting up weekly to read through Luke's Gospel together. Some weeks there have been doubts and questions, but God has faith-

fully revealed who he is to Jen. When I asked her if she'd like to come to SPARC, she jumped at the opportunity. In Vanuatu Jen met other Christians from Lincoln but also other parts of the South Pacific. She was exposed to Christian worship, sound biblical teaching, fellowship and sharing the gospel with others on our missions trip.

"After Jen's time in Vanuatu, and having reached the end of Luke's gospel, the obvious next question for her was, 'So what?' Sitting with me in the student cafe, surrounded by the laughter and noise of students, Jen knew that the answer to her 'so what' was Jesus. We prayed together that he would be her Lord and Saviour."

Jen explained her new understanding of grace this way: "Before joining the Christian Fellowship, I always had in my mind that because I hadn't lived as a Christian I couldn't be a true follower of God. But as we've been reading the Bible this year, I've come to know God as a loving God who pours love into our hearts no matter who we are."

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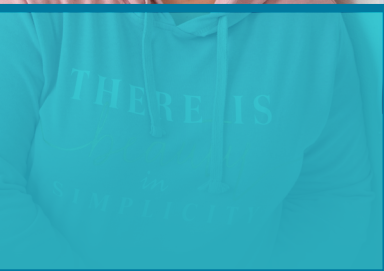
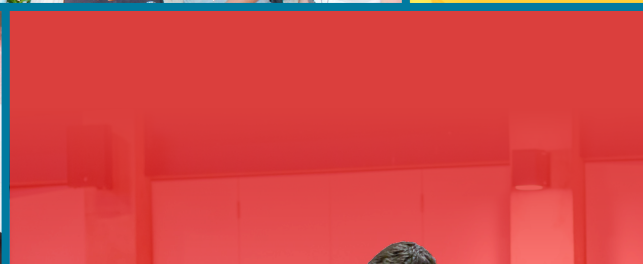
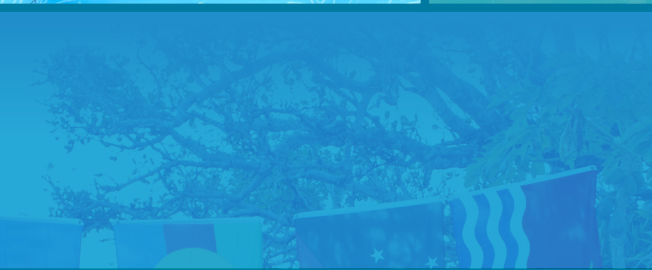
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