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canvas

TERTIARY STUDENTS CHRISTIAN FELLOWSHIP'S MAGAZINE





CONNECTION



He ākonga ki ngā ākonga hei ara whakawhiti mō te Karaiti.

Reaching students for Christ, changing students for life.

TSCF's vision is to help students in New Zealand become servant leaders of character through the transforming gospel of Christ. TSCF is a founding member of the International Fellowship of Evangelical Students (IFES).



Editor Rachel Turner

Canvas is for all who are interested in the work of TSCF in helping students reach students for Christ. It seeks to stimulate deep thought and provide encouragement in the undivided Christian life, promoting true witness and the global reach of the gospel.

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

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CANVAS GREEN

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WELCOME TO CANVAS 94!

Ben Carswell · National Director

As Christians, we believe that 'The Word became flesh and made His dwelling among us.' (John 1:14). The reality of the incarnation is at the centre of all we believe and impacts our behaviour as disciples of Jesus. In this issue of Canvas, we're exploring the theme of Connection.

For many, this past year has brought unique challenges, but we have seen God's hand at work in the lives of students across Aotearoa. You'll read Dave Hodgkinson, (Waikato and Bay of Plenty Team Leader) reflecting on 'Connection'. The report from *Summit* highlights the value of in-person student conferences.

Since our last publication, we've mourned the passing of our colleague and friend Max Rideout, but "we do not grieve as those with no hope" and give thanks for his life and influence. We are also thankful to God for His provision of new staff, Morna and Italia.

for a new Communications Manager and that vacancy remains. We're very grateful

for Rachel Turner and Rachel Hay (both former Communications staff with TSCF) who have willingly stepped in to assist in the production of this Canvas. TSCF has always been about God's people stepping up to do God's work for His glory. We thank God for them, and for your partnership with us as we do God's work together.

In Christ





For the last year, we have been recruiting



CONNECTION

Waikato/Bay of Plenty Team Leader Dave Hodgkinson ·

Disruption and isolation have been regular experiences for students since early 2020. COVID has taught us that we struggle when we are apart from each other for considerable lengths of time. We all need relationships, connection, interaction, and friendships with people. And we need these to enable the gospel to be shared.

Connecting with Jesus

In John 15 Jesus emphasises the need to stay connected to Him. It is only as we connect with Jesus that we can connect with other Christians and together share and embody the gospel:

"I am the vine; you are the branches. If you remain in me and I in you, you will bear much fruit; apart from me you can do nothing. If you do not remain in me, you are like a branch that

is thrown away and withers; such branches are picked up, thrown into the fire and burned. (John 15:5-6)

As his trial and crucifixion nears Jesus is emphatic about the need to remain connected to Him. The words, "apart from me you can do nothing" are sobering. Furthermore, a branch that is separated from the vine becomes worthless and is thrown away.

TSCF staff regularly read and study God's word with students to help them establish good habits of connecting with Jesus. Often this is done on campus, in one-to-one or for students to do this with other students.

Jesus said, "I am the bread of life" (John 6:51).

recall what I ate for dinner last week, but I know it has kept me alive. And so it is spiritually: being connected to God, through Scripture, prayer and the Holy Spirit, is crucial for fruitfulness.

Connecting with Brothers and Sisters

A vine has many branches, all connected to each other through Jesus, the true vine (John 15:1). Through connection to Jesus, Christians are connected to each other.

Allowing time for people to develop friendships in TSCF campus groups has been important this year. Good friendships within groups are catalysts for health and growth.

TSCF-wide, we do this within campus groups, across cities, and at a national scale. In late-June TSCF students and staff gathered together in Queenstown for Summit, our annual national conference. It was a very special time of being together: worshipping Jesus; growing in God's word; discipleship; and grappling with campus mission.

Connecting with the lost

Jesus said that those staying connected to Him would bear much fruit. It is the fruit of the Spirit (Galatians 5:22-23), which shapes our desire to connect with other people. It is by the Spirit that we are enabled to love people and share the gospel in our words and actions.

To embody this, we need to be able to connect well with others. That's not easily done in the midst of a global pandemic which has led to responses such as physical distancing and online-learning It has been, and still is, a challenging time in student ministry, which relies so much on in-person connections for friendships to grow and deeper conversations about worldviews, spirituality, Jesus and faith to occur.

As we look towards 2023, we pray for more in-person opportunities to be together. We look to God to help us re-grow student connections and friendships. Australian missiologist Mike Frost writes that, "Becoming and being a friend isn't easy. It takes intentionality and training." He raises the concern that building good friendships is becoming something of a lost art, and that not doing this well is a risk to the Church's future. This should also be of concern and interest to our TSCF campus groups and their students.

I'm continually challenged by Paul's "whatever it takes" mentality of 1 Cor 9:22: "I have become all things to all people so that by all possible means I might save some".

Living out this verse could begin by simply seeing needs and trying to serve people. In Tauranga, we've recently combined serving with hospitality. The University of Waikato's Tauranga campus opened its first student hostel this year, housing 90 students. Since mid-June our campus group has run a monthly pancake night in the hostel, to bless students. It has been well-received and has helped create connections and enable friendships which lead to the sharing of the gospel. We can all look to meet the needs of people where we live, study or work, so that, "by all possible means we [Christ through us] might save some."

I encourage us all to "remain in Jesus" for connection with Him and others, bearing fruit as disciples as, together, all followers of Jesus grow God's Kingdom on earth, connected to the true vine that has come down from heaven.

1"The Lonely Crowd: Churches Dying Due to Friendlessness" – Mike Frost, 8 January 2022



MAX RIDEOUT

On Friday 17 June 2022, our friend and team member, Max Rideout died peacefully at the Mary Potter Hospice in Wellington following the diagnosis of a brain tumour in 2020.

The following is taken from a eulogy that Ben Carswell gave at Max's thanksgiving:

Max and his loving wife, Mei, moved to NZ six years ago to be close to family and to use their retirement to serve God by working with international students in Wellington. They came saying, "We think we have a few more years of good health to give to the Lord." We are so thankful for that willingness to serve and the way God has used it for His glory.

As a teenager with a self-confessed inferiority complex and numerous anxieties, Max found himself searching for the source of real joy. Whilst working as a security guard at Camp Ipperwash on the shores of Lake Huron in Ontario, Canada, he became curious when a colleague told him he found joy "with a huge group of Christian kids singing and worshipping God." Max knew that his Uncle Burton, who was a Baptist minister, was always jovial and friendly, but Christianity itself was something that Max was very nervous about.

One day, as a student at the University of Waterloo, Max made the 'mistake' of sitting next to a fervent Christian. Through their

friendship, a couple of Christian students explained to Max why Jesus had come and asked him if he would like to become a follower of Jesus. Max said, "I had no intention of agreeing to something I wasn't convinced of so I said 'No'!" But they persuaded Max to ask God to give him the faith to believe. Max described how "immediately the most amazing and profound sense of joy came over him".

Over the next year, Max started a search: reading the Bible, praying, talking to Christians and over time, he began to be convinced. Almost a year later, Max came across a book which posed an interesting question: "If you were to die tonight and stand before God and He asked you, 'Why should I let you into my heaven?' what would you say to Him?" As Max read more of the book, he realised he needed the redemption that Jesus offered. Max prayed putting his trust in Jesus to take his sin. Max said, "There was a real joy deep in my heart and I had a deep joy knowing that Jesus was with me now and forever. God became the most important person to me and I wanted to serve Him and people".

And that explains how, decades later, when Max and Mei moved to NZ, they sought out an opportunity to serve God and others. And so, in what many people call 'the twilight years', when time is given over to golf or other such leisure pursuits, Max and Mei would be found hanging out with young students from around the world, making friends and telling them about Jesus.

There is so much I could say to commend Max's life and character. In the six years I've known him, he showed himself to be a man of humility and gentleness, taking time to listen and learn our Kiwi context. But above all, he has sought to love God and love the students around him and he has done that by opening God's Word and introducing them to Jesus. Max the gracious, gentle Canadian, was a true gentleman and a genuine team player and he will be greatly missed. He was courageous, mellow and modest right to the end.

Kua hinga te Totara, kua hinga te Maple. Haere ra Max! Until we meet again. ✓

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If there's a better place in the world to hold a student conference than amongst the stunning scenery of Queenstown, we're yet to discover it! Students and staff gathered from every region for our annual Summit conference held at Lakeland Park camp situated below the Remarkables with views of Lake Wakitipu and the surrounding mountains.

After two years of restrictions, it was good to broaden horizons with our theme 'Made for Mission'. One Mainland student described it as, "One of the best Christian conferences I have attended." James de Costobadie, Minister at Latimer Church in Christchurch helpfully led our Bible teaching through 1 Peter, applying the text to student mission in the current generation. Each night, it was great to see students peppering him with questions and engaged in discussion about the day's passage as they wrestled with the text and their context.

TSCF staff provided teaching on world-views, sharing your faith and engaging your campus and one of the highlights was with missionaries from several mission agencies joining us for our Global Reach evening.

During free time, students made the most of the location to enjoy Queenstown's outdoor activities – on the lake, in the town and on the slopes, with some students even seeing snow for the first time!

Speaking of TSCF's annual conferences, Ben Carswell, National Director, said, "The last few years have reminded us of the importance of an annual gathering of students from around NZ as a tangible expression of being the Tertiary Students Christian Fellowship.

In meeting TSCF graduates of all generations, one of the most frequent comments I hear is of how significant student conferences have been in student mission and formation, so it was terrific to see this generation of students able to meet in person, to meet with God and study His Word, whilst having fun and forming new friendships that we pray trust last a lifetime. We pray that the fruit of this gathering will be seen in the coming years and into eternity."

The next Summit is taking place at Woodend Camp in Canterbury from 26th – 30th June 2023.

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Left: Students enjoy outdoor activities in the beauty of Queenstown; Top Right: Scott interviews Jackson about coming to faith; Middle Right: Small group Bible studies are a core component of Summit Bottom: South Island students receiving the Summit shield.

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prayermatters



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NATIONAL

Student Ministry

- Praise God for many gospel opportunities with students in 2022. Pray that connections won't be lost over the summer, particularly with students we've only recently met.
- Praise God for new student leadership teams as they plan and prepare for next year. Pray for God to be equipping student leaders over the summer for gospel-shaped, gospel-proclaiming leadership in 2023.
- Pray for rest and refreshment over the coming summer break for students and staff.
- Please pray for the new year ahead as students and staff prepare for leadership changes.

Staff and Families 20-24 January

 Pray for the staff team as they gather with their families. As we listen to God's Word, encourage one other and commit the year ahead to the Lord, pray that staff and spouses would be refreshed, inspired and energised in our ministry. Pray for the children as they are taught, that they will grow in their faith and have fun together.

Festival One 27-30 January

 Pray for the team hosting the student lounge that we would have the opportunity to connect with many new and returning students and to share the vision for campus mission.

Staff Vacancies

 Pray for the provision of staff and especially for the role of Communications Manager and Wellington Team Leader.

REGIONAL

Auckland

- Thank God for student initiative to see greater collaboration among Auckland's TSCF groups - both socially and for witness on campus.
- Pray for the recruitment, transition, and formation of new student leaders for our TSCF groups at Unitec, Massey, AUT, and UoA.
- Pray for the range of student and staff gatherings over the coming month for helpful training, effective planning.

Waikato and Bay of Plenty

- Pray for wisdom, unity and vision during our November planning retreat for student leaders, which are key for shaping 2023 activities on campus.
- Festival One runs in the Waikato. Pray that staff and students can make great connections with students at the festival, through the Student Lounge TSCF will run there.

Manawatu

 Pray for the OCF at Massey Palmerston North, that in 2023 we would be able to "I AM THE VINE; YOU ARE THE BRANCHES.
IF YOU REMAIN IN ME AND I IN YOU, YOU
WILL BEAR MUCH FRUIT; APART FROM ME
YOU CAN DO NOTHING."

— JOHN 15:5

refresh our mission to international students after two years of relative quiet.

 Praise God for a new leadership team, Jess, Hunter, Scott, Jackson and Naomi, and for their enthusiasm and willingness to serve.

Wellington

- Give thanks for the Lunch with Luke Vic CF group that meets weekly; for the public-facing nature of the group; for the opportunity students have to engage with God's word.
- Give thanks for the Case for Christ movie that was put on by Vic CF. Thank God for all who came along to the event and for the conversations that have resulted from the viewing.

Canterbury

- Please thank God for a number of new students who have joined CU and also three students investigating Jesus through reading Luke's gospel during the second half of this year. Please pray they would put their trust in Jesus.
- Please pray for the new exec team as we plan 2023 – pray for ideas on how to best engage with and reach students at UC with the good news of Jesus.

Lincoln

- Please pray for the new student leadership team as they plan and prepare for next year.
 Pray that God would use the humble but faithful plans they've made to reach students for Christ and change students for life.
- Please pray for the students who are living in *The Well* next year. Pray that God would provide the right students and that they would not only enjoy living together but would be a community which spurs each other on in Christlikeness and mission

Otago

- Please pray for the Otago Christian Fellowship (OCF) as they look to rebuild the group and re-engage students next year.
 Please pray that we will be able to connect with more students next year.
- Please pray for the CMF students who will be moving to different places for their placements next year; that they will find Christian communities to be a part of.
- Please pray that God will continue to grow the staff team in Otago.

PULL ME OUT AND PUT ME ON THE FRIDGE TO KEEP TSCF IN YOUR PRAYERS!



JOB VACANCIES

COME AND JOIN THE TEAM!

We are always keen to hear from people who feel that God is calling them to serve TSCF in many different roles across the nation. Our team is a diverse group of people, with different skills and abilities. Volunteering, part-time and full-time staff.

We are especially keen to hear from people for two essential roles starting early in 2023:

COMMUNICATIONS MANAGER

We are looking for a Communications Manager to help share stories of what God is doing amongst students in NZ, so that others can participate and pray. We're looking for someone who can tell the story of TSCF with passion and creativity, is confident with print and social media, can liaise with other stakeholders, and can develop and implement our strategy for Communications.

WELLINGTON TEAM LEADER

30,000+ students in Wellington need to hear of Jesus. We're looking for someone who can lead and inspire the team as they work alongside students in Wellington as they seek to reach students for Christ.

Do you know anyone who may be suitable to join our team and be a key part of student mission in these key roles? Please join with us in praying and seeking the right people to be part of an incredible work.

If you think the Lord might be leading to work with TSCF in these roles, or in another capacity, we'd love to chat. Please contact Maggie Barker personnel@tscf.org.nz in the first instance.

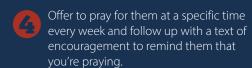
TOP TIPS FOR CONNECTING WITH STUDENTS.

Whether it's a student returning home, studying locally, or about to become a student next year, here are some top tips for connecting with students:











- What are the challenges and opportunities to your faith in your studies?
- How can we help you grow in your faith over summer?
- What are some specific things that I can be praying for you?
- Is there anything that makes it easier for you to engage with church whilst you're studying?
- What are the questions you/ your friends have about life?
- What matters to you/your friends on a deeper level?



Robyn Drake · Head of Resource Development Robynd@tscf.org.nz

If there's a specific topic/resource you would like to explore, please email me!



WE WELCOME NEW STAFF!



ITALIA

"I was born in Wellington but spent my childhood overseas in Japan and Wales with my family because my dad was a rugby player. There was a lot of moving around and a lot of travel which I was very blessed with growing up. I am currently finishing my Bachelor of Arts in Criminology and Sociology at Victoria University of Wellington!

I love to serve at my local church and have served in the youth ministry for three years. I love watching young people grow in their relationship with Jesus and going on the journey with them. I play competitive volleyball in my spare time, and you can often catch me with my film camera if I'm doing something with my friends and family. I have worked in a wide range of jobs from hospitality, retail, real estate, and now have this role as the office administrator!"



MORNA

"Hello! I work in the Wellington office helping John with the finances. My family mostly lives in Wellington: my husband, two sons and two grandsons. I spent many years working at Victoria University (in administration) so have some insight into what it is like working with students. This is my first time working for a faith-based organisation and I had no expectation of this ever happening. Obviously, the Lord had a different idea so here I am!".

AND WE THANK AND FAREWELL...



ROSIE SIM

It's been a joy to have Rosie as part of the TSCF staff team in Dunedin. Her love of students in the university and polytechnic is clear, and her desire for them to meet Jesus is self-evident. Along with her husband Simon, she led the Harbour Light Base residential community with diligence and care, coping so well with the ups and the downs of community living. I'm delighted that although she's no longer a formal TSCF staff worker, she continues to be involved with students. I look forward to God

continuing to work in her and through her: at home, at church and at work, as well as her ongoing gospel investment in Otago students.

Tim Hodge, TSCF Head of Training & Development.

Rosie has modelled a profoundly Christian way of life among students at Otago University and Polytechnic. Her willingness to listen, counsel and at the same time enjoy students has been outstanding. Pastoral care is her great gift, coupled with a love of God's word and ways. Together with her husband Simon, Rosie has been a witness to God's grace and goodness at Harbour Light and beyond, during her employ with TSCF.

Winsome Parnell, Honorary Associate Professor, Otago University and former TSCF Board member.



MATTHIAS LOONG

Matthias and his wife Pauline were both keen members and leaders in the CU at the University of Canterbury. During his time at uni, Matty always had a focus on helping others come to know Jesus, especially those who seemed disinterested at first.

After graduating Matty and Pauline worked hard at developing their friendships with colleagues and friends through sports and hospitality to connect with a whole range of people. They genuinely care for others and it often led to many opportunities to share the gospel.

Victoria University, in my opinion, is possibly one of the hardest places in New Zealand for evangelism. Victoria Uni has often led the way in liberal politics and anti-Christian agendas. In Matty's time with TSCF he has worked with students in varied and creative ways seeking to encourage Christian students to live faithfully in this environment, and also engage students who know nothing of Jesus. We are sad to see him move on, yet we look forward to seeing how God will use him in the future to help people come to know and grow in Jesus. Mark Santich, TSCF Canterbury Team Leader



Simon Sim, Otago Team Leader

One of the features of living in a university city is that it is a very transient community. Students arrive to start their studies and often leave when they graduate so we are always welcoming new people and saying goodbye to those we have known. The people are always changing, but our mission remains the same – reaching and discipling students in our city.

I've been serving as a staff worker in Dunedin, Otago since 2014, and as team leader since 2019. Over the years, our staff team has also seen many changes and, for the first time, I find myself on a staff team of one!

I'm married to Rosie, who works as a nurse. We welcomed our new daughter, Nadia, into our family in June last year. Navigating new parenthood and ministry has been full of joys, challenges and changes; we are still figuring it all out as we go.

My role involves working with the campus groups in Otago and serving alongside the team of student leaders. The work is also strengthened by the wide network of Christian academics, graduates, and supporters in Otago who continue to pray for and support the ministry of TSCF.

As people continue to come and go, one of the encouragements has been witnessing the impact that TSCF has made in students' lives, big or small, often in surprising ways. These years are some of the most formational and life-changing, and to see students' lives changed by the gospel and continuing to follow Jesus after uni.

Please continue to pray for the work in Dunedin. COVID continues to cast a long shadow on student life and well-being. Please pray for wisdom for us as we navigate a changing student environment and for opportunities to re-engage our campus with the gospel. •

WHAT'S HAPPENING ON CAMPUS?

In May, a group of ten medical students from Otago attended the recent CMFNZ Reflect Conference in Christchurch. It was a great time of engagement and connecting with the wider CMFNZ community. Esther, one of the students who attended shares her experience:

It was such a blessing to be surrounded by doctors, nurses, health professionals and students who share the same faith and hope in Jesus. The talks were so inspiring and gave me tools for coping with being overwhelmed. We were challenged to think about what we are like when we are under pressure and whether we are living with

our hearts at rest, receiving His grace and trusting in Him. I eft the conference feeling inspired and encouraged.

As the university year comes to a close, we are grateful for the student leaders of the three campus groups who have served faithfully amidst many ups and downs. This year has revealed the new opportunities and challenges for engaging our campus and rebuilding the student groups after the disruptions of COVID-19. Together with the new student leaders for 2023, we hope to re-imagine what gospel ministry on campuses in Otago could look like next year. •

CAMPUS GROUPS

Otago Christian Fellowship: a new group formed from the merging of the Varsity Christian Fellowship (VCF) and Overseas Christian Fellowship (OCF). They meet on campus on Thursday evenings to study the Bible together over hot drinks and snacks. A great community for students of all types to learn more about Jesus.

Otago Christian Medical Fellowship: a Christian group for medical students in Otago to think about how faith relates to medicine and healthcare. They meet on



Thursday lunchtimes. Supported in partnership with CMFNZ and their network of local Christian doctors

Dentistry Christian Group: restarted this year, the DentCG meets at lunchtime on Wednesdays and is a community for students studying dentistry, oral health or dental tech, with the aim of being salt and light in the dental school.



Simon Sim interviews Otago university student Jess Scott as she shares some of her faith journey with us.

Jess, can you tell us a bit more about yourself and about your spiritual experience or background? I grew up in Oueenstown and I've been in Dunedin since High School. It wasn't until I came to uni that I experienced Christianity, though I did go to a Presbyterian High School where I had learnt some things and had started to ask questions.

So, you went to a Presbyterian High School and that was your first introduction to Christianity. Were your family Christian, or did you come from a more non-Christian background? I think my Dad grew up going to church but my Mum is more agnostic.

And what about your cultural background? I'm half Japanese, half kiwi so growing up that was a big part of my identity. Before I found another identity in Christ, my cultural background was what I identified with. My experiences and the people who I was surrounded really made me who was.

So, what was it that first intrigued you about Christianity and Jesus? I had lots of guestions around how the world began, and where humanity came from, as well as what

"A BIG THING WAS RELATIONSHIPS AND FELLOWSHIP, I HAD JUST STARTED UNI AND IT WAS GOOD TO MEET THOSE PEOPLE AND FEEL CONNECTED BECAUSE AS A STUDENT YOU CAN FEEL LOST AND DISCONNECTED."

happens when we die. I had thought about those questions as a child and I just had this conviction that the world couldn't have been created by coincidence, that there must be someone behind it, who made all the details of the world in nature and people. It didn't make sense to me that there wouldn't be an afterlife. Even before I would call myself a Christian I believed in heaven. I thought there had to be a God and I guess in times of desperation or when I felt worried or lost, even before I had that relationship with God, I would pray about my worries.

Often the big guestions can be the gateway to thinking about these things. Tell us a bit more about when you started coming along to OCF. How did you start coming along? I didn't start going to church until the end of 2019. At the start of 2020 I started coming along to OCF because mutual friends were going and were some of the leaders there. I was really looking forward to plugging in to the group and it looked like lots of fun. Through OCF I met lots of good people and they were really helpful and patient in answering my guestions. Throughout the year I learnt more and engaged with the Word and found freedom. I had thought Christianity was just reading the Bible and going to church. Through OCF I found the community of people that you

could do everyday life with, because you share the same goals.

That is really encouraging to hear. What did you find most helpful about being part of OCF? A big thing was relationships and fellowship. I had just started uni and it was good to meet those people and feel connected because as a student you can feel lost and disconnected. It's hard at first to get used to new routines and everyone helped me find my way. Studying the Bible together and thinking about how we should use this in our everyday life have been helpful.

When you look back on your life before knowing about Jesus and knowing about Christianity and when you compare it to your life know, what do you think are the things that have changed most for you? There's a few big ones but I guess trust and hope stand out. Hope that there's something after life and that there's meaning in life. I try to feel secure in the knowledge that I might not have found the purpose in my life – but I know

ful for the future knowing that I can trust in Jesus.

there's a plan. So, I feel hope-



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