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CONVOS

TERTIARY STUDENTS CHRISTIAN FELLOWSHIP'S MAGAZINE





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).



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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

If you would prefer to receive a digital version of *Canvas*, please email canvas@tscf.org.nz.

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Apology

We want to offer a sincere apology for an error in the last issue of *Canvas* (print version), where we inadvertently left out the author of the tribute to Efeso Collins on page 21. This was lovingly written by Andrew Saunders.

'Yet you do not know what tomorrow will bring. What is your life? For you are a mist that appears for a little time and then vanishes. Instead you ought to say, "If the Lord wills, we will live and do this or that."

James 4:14-15





Kate Irving Communications Manager

James likens our time on earth to a mist that appears for a little while and then vanishes. Each day is a gift from the Lord, and a chance to serve Him. Our prayer for this issue of *Canvas* is that it would encourage

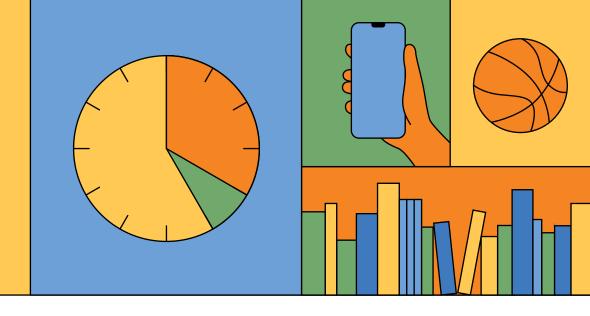
you to make the most of your time as a student, or as a graduate – in whatever role God has placed you in. Together, may we "live and do" as the Lord wills, waiting on Him and trusting in His good timing.

THE TIME OF YOUR LIFE.



Brydon Sundgren

Brydon Sundgren studied Engineering and Commerce conjoint at the University of Auckland. He now works as a Civil Engineer and Project Manager.



Life is often a series of gradual changes, but there are some milestones where the change is rapid and suddenly life is completely different to how it was before: moving cities, getting married, or losing a loved one, for example. Starting tertiary studies is one of those milestones that presents many challenges and opportunities. I recall being both excited and somewhat petrified. There were so many possibilities, but also so many changes and decisions I would have to navigate myself. The time and freedom a tertiary student has is somewhat unique. How should a student make the most of it and, at the same time, set habits that serve them well in the future?

Spending time

"Teach us to number our days, that we may gain a heart of wisdom" (Psalm 90:12).

The phrase, 'spending time' is helpful as we think about how to use our days. Like money, if we are wise and want to use it well, we need to know God's priorities, to make prayerful decisions, and to make some deliberate choices.

For the tertiary student, the expectations to be attending school every weekday, wearing a school uniform and having scheduled morning tea and lunchtimes, have gone. It's up to you to decide when to go to campus (or attend class online), what you're going to wear, and when you're going to eat, to name just a few decisions you'll need to make each day.

Yet the increased freedom is contrasted with the fact that we still only have 24 hours in a day. Moses recognises this in Psalm 90. He desires to make the most of each day, knowing that time is limited, and wanting

to seek God's wisdom for how best to spend his time. Similarly, our time as students is limited. Yes, we have more freedom to decide how we spend our time, but at the end of the day, we should be aspiring to use our time well.

As Christians, our primary purpose is to glorify God in all that we do. 1 Corinthians 10:31 states, "So whether you eat or drink or whatever you do, do it all for the glory of God". This means that our studies, relationships, and even leisure activities should reflect our commitment to honouring Him.

There will be many competing calls on your time. How will you choose what to prioritise? What could this look like in your day-to-day life? This will be different for each individual, but take some time to pray and to chat with a trusted friend about what you really want to prioritise in the next few years. You might find it helpful to make some notes (you'll find a space on pages 8-9).

These are some areas that you might like to consider.

Set aside time for spiritual growth

One of the richest parts of my life today is the daily devotional time with my wife. During this time, we also spend some time discussing the highs and lows of our day. We commit those things and anything else that is on our minds to prayer. This was a habit that we committed to forming at the start of our marriage, as we wanted to spend quality time together, dwelling on God's Word and in prayer.

Similarly, as a student, you can set aside time for your daily devotions and prayer. Some apps or resources that can help you do this are: Rhema's "Word For You Today", the YouVersion Bible app's reading plans and the Lectio 365 app.

You could prioritise being a part of a Bible study group to help you grow in knowledge and understanding of your faith. This could be with your local TSCF group or through your local church. I've found that it is important that I make my spiritual growth

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a priority. Doing so allows me to stay connected to God, grounds me in my faith, and my life is richer having spent the time pursuing Him.

Be diligent in your studies

I recall someone older and wiser reminding me that the main purpose of tertiary study is "to achieve your qualification." It is easy to become distracted by everything else you could get involved with, but remember to be diligent in your studies, too. Seeking to do our best in our coursework is an act of worship as we seek to fulfil the potential God has given us. And to grow in our understanding, insight, and wisdom gained through our studies.

Try new things

At the same time, I really enjoyed the opportunity to try new things at university. Whether it be picking up a new sport or trying out new hobbies and interests, there are lots of opportunities for you to get involved and broaden your horizons. As Christians, we believe that God is our creator and that what He has created is inherently good. I challenge you to venture out of your comfort zone and try something new. With all the clubs and societies available to you, it'll likely be the easiest (with the amount

of free time you have) and cheapest (with the student discounts) time for you to give something new a go!

Use your time to invest in relationships and community

Reflecting on my time at high school and university, I wish I had spent more time investing in building deeper relationships with others. As someone with an action-oriented personality, I did (and still do) get caught up doing a lot of things and getting 'busy'. This meant that I did not spend a lot of time growing friendships and relationships with others. I neglected this to pursue my own selfish desires and ambitions

As Christians, we are taught that we are all part of the body of Christ (1 Corinthians 12), with each of us playing our unique roles and yet living in community and relationship with one another. I'd strongly encourage you to connect with your local church, particularly if you have moved out of your home, and to consider joining a TSCF group as well. Aim to grow deep relationships with classmates, friends and those in the groups you are part of. How could you get to know people better and grow your relationships?

As a student, you could also consider giving up some of your time to serve in your local church, TSCF group, or community. You are likely to be quite flexible with your time, so you could give away some of it to help serve others. This embodies loving your neighbour.

Prioritise rest

During my time as a student, I struggled with making rest a priority. There were always so many different activities I could do, people to hang out with, and even TV shows to binge-watch. One thing I've come to learn, particularly as I've grown older, is the importance of rest. As Creator, God modelled the importance of rest from the outset. In Genesis 2, God rests on the seventh day from all his work: "Then God blessed the seventh day and made it holy, because on it he rested from all the work of creating that he had done". Later as one of the Ten Commandments, the command to "Remember the Sabbath day and keep it holy" is given (Exodus 20:8).

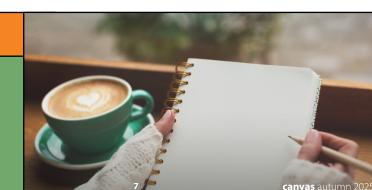
Today, I observe that our society is living with an expectation of immediacy. This has led to us living 'busy' and fast-paced lives, seeking instant gratification and being alert. It's very easy to feel pressured to always be'on', ready to react immediately to the next thing or

urge. God not only invites but commands us to rest from our work as he recognises the importance of slowing down. "Be still and know that I am God" (Psalm 46:10). How can we do this if we're constantly busy and not taking time to slow down, rest, and be still? I'd encourage you to make sure you prioritise resting. Could you make sure that you put aside time once a week to not be completing assignments or studying? Could you prioritise giving God some time by committing to regularly attending a church every Sunday? How about committing to being present and slowing down by being technology-free for all or part of a day?

Though some of us may need to hear the call to greater discipline or diligence with our time, others of us may worry too much about making choices, have the fear of regret looming over us, or joy-sapping FOMO. You may need to hear the call to rest in God, to trust that God is with you, guiding and empowering you every step of the way. Avoid comparisons, and the temptation to try and do everything. Trust in His wisdom, seek His guidance, and commit your time to bringing Him glory. I pray that you remember that you are not alone.







TAKE SOME TIME

In the busyness of life, it's easy to intend to do something, but for that intention to get lost as other things call on our time and attention. Here's a space for you to reflect, be thoughtful, and to make commitments.

Make space. Put aside some time and a place where you can be free from distractions.

Pray. Ask for the Spirit to guide you as you consider the year ahead.

Consider sharing these things with a friend who can give you another perspective and pray with and for you. You might invite them to check-in with you through the year to see how you're getting on.

What is the main goal of my How might I serve others with tertiary studies? (or in my the time I have? place of work, or in the place I spend most of my week?) What gifts has the Lord What might be a distraction from What will I prioritise in order to grow as a disciple of Jesus? the goals I have? blessed me with that I want to use and develop in the next few years? Which people should have my focus What else do I think I should prioritise? and time? What responsibilities do I have What new things do I have Who can help me stay on track? that need to be fulfilled? the opportunity and desire to try?

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prayermatters



National

On Campus

- Give thanks for the students we have connected with at Festival One and Orientation Week. Pray that these relationships would continue to grow and that the students would become active members of our groups. Pray especially for those who don't yet know Jesus.
- Pray for new student leaders and core members at CU, that we would be welcoming and engaging in these early weeks with many new students joining for the first time.
- Praise God for the new student leaders' energy and initiative. Pray that they will successfully manage studies alongside their roles and other commitments.
- Pray for core members who have returned to uni, ready to serve and grow as leaders.
- Pray for international students settling into NZ and for opportunities for our TSCF students to show care and hospitality to them.

Resource Team

- Pray for our office team as they continue to recruit people with a heart for mission. Pray for wisdom to train and envision those who are new to the team.
- Please pray for preparations for our gospel project, that the production process would be smooth, and inspired by the Holy Spirit. Please pray that students would be bold to read it with their friends and that they, in turn, would put their trust in Jesus.
- Please pray for our Summit team as they prepare for the conference in June. Pray that God would give them wisdom, a clarity of vision, and stamina to plan the many details.

Global Reach

- Thank God for the reconnections being made with UESI in India and pray as we discern good ways to grow our partnership in the future.
- Pray for Ruth and Josue in Ecuador who have faithfully served in CECE for more than two decades, as they seek God's wisdom on their future path in a way that works for the complexities of intergenerational family life.
- Pray for staff and student groups around the South Pacific Region, especially those who are forging their way as new groups in IFES.

Regional

Otago

- Thank God for Simon (Otago Team Leader) and his family's safe travel to Vancouver; that they are trusting in Him and letting their light shine in a home away from home.
- Please join us in prayer that the Otago CF would make the most of the opportunity to gather together in weekly Bible studies and engage with the Long Story Short course.

Lincoln

 Our hope this year is to establish a more regular fellowship for postgraduate students. Please pray that God would bless our efforts and that the postgraduate students would enjoy gathering weekly to study the Bible and pray together.

The Well

- Praise God that The Well is full this year and eight students are excited to see what God does in and through them this year.
- Please pray that the Lord would draw each student closer to himself. Pray that they would mobilise their desire to serve their local community and reach their non-Christian friends, and that they would be a blessing to Lincoln University as they direct people's gaze to Jesus.

Canterbury

- Pray for the continued follow up of new contacts over the coming weeks as we set up small groups and start our Wednesday night dinner and Life Groups on campus.
- Pray that our Wednesday night short talks and studies on Encountering Jesus would be engaging, and that people would come to meet Jesus themselves.

Wellington

- Pray for the community to be committed to growing as they offer hospitality and find ways to connect with the wider student population.
- Please pray for students who haven't heard about Jesus to be open to the gospel message and discover God's love through His Word and His people.

Manawatū

- Ask that through our Bible studies people will be changed by His Word.
- Pray that our speaker nights would lead students to Christ.

Waikato & Bay of Plenty

- Thank God for incoming Bay of Plenty staff worker, Natasha Burling. Pray that God will use her (and all our staff team!), as she disciples students
- Pray for our partnerships with some of the local churches within the BOP area. We are looking for support from a few churches for things like prayer, event hosting possibilities, and fundraising.
- Pray for the pioneering of new groups on Hamilton's Wintec and Rotorua's Toi Ohomai Polytech campuses. Pray that God calls motivated and mission-minded students for this and that our staff can support them well.

Auckland

- Give thanks for the Auckland students who committed their lives to Jesus last year! Pray that each would settle well in a local church and continue to establish strong foundations in the faith
- Give thanks for KYCF (Korean Young-Adults Christian Fellowship) who are wanting to reignite a wider campus outreach at UoA City Campus. Pray for them as they plan their outreach initiatives for 2025.
- Give thanks for growing staff capacity in Auckland and, as a result, the ability to connect with, train, and support more students more closely.

Pull me out and put me on the fridge to keep TSCF in your prayers!

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YEAR IN THE LIFE OF TSOF

Being part of your campus group offers lots of opportunities to get involved, learn new things, work with different people and to expand your horizons. Part of being a student is discovering more about who God has made you to be. There's lots to dig into – not everyone does everything – but here are a few things you might come across if you're involved with TSCF.

Weekly gatherings

Each group does things differently, but the core of these will be a Bible Study: with students attentively figuring out what God is saying to them, how they can apply it to their lives, and how they can keep growing in their love for, and faith in, Jesus. These times are mobilising a team that wants to reach out to the students around them.

Global Reach Journeys

An opportunity for students to connect with another IFES movement, deepening their understanding of God's heart for the nations as they experience the unique opportunities and challenges of sharing the Good News in a different context.

IFES

TSCF is a founding member of the International Fellowship of Evangelical Students, a community of over 180 national student movements around the globe who are engaging their campuses with the good news of Jesus.

April

Easter camps and student retreats:

Some of our groups use the Easter break as an opportunity to get a few days away together. It's a great time for deepening relationships, delving into God's Word and getting some rest and relaxation!



+

January

The Student Lounge at *Festival One* is a great opportunity to hang out with TSCF staff and students and grads in a restful oasis amidst the hustle and bustle of the festival. It's a great opportunity to find out what's happening on your campus.

Launch: Before the academic year kicks off, there are *Launch* events in each region: a social event for students new and old to connect. When semester begins, new students can arrive with increased confidence, already knowing some familiar faces!

February

Orientation and Clubs Weeks: you'll see students and staff on campus, communicating what their clubs are about in an interactive and creative way. Look out for your TSCF group(s) and feel free to throw some questions at them!



July

Summit: Every year, students from TSCF groups across Aotearoa New Zealand gather for six days of fun, food and fellowship. It's a great opportunity to take a break from study, meet new and old friends, and grow in your faith. Alongside the main talks which dig into the Bible, there'll be a range of workshops to help you go deeper and time in small groups to process together what you're learning. There'll also be lots of free time to chill, play some sport, or get competitive with board games or table tennis.

Outreach

TSCF groups are more than a place for Christians to get together and encourage one another from the Word; they are outward looking seeking to bring the good news to their campus. Whether it's someone sharing their faith with a friend or strangel inviting friends along to organised events; or the group getting involved in serving the campus, TSCF groups are creative, fun, and enthusiastic when it comes to sharing the gospel and the hope we have in Jesus.



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OUR FOUR AIMS

1. True witness

"We are therefore Christ's ambassadors, as though God were making his appeal through us. We implore you on Christ's behalf: Be reconciled to God."

2 Corinthians 5:20

The gospel calls Christian students and graduates to a unity of speech, actions and character that grabs the world's attention and asks everyone to respond to the good news. True witness pays attention to all of the gospel's implications. TSCF pursues true witness through its training, resources and holistic approach to discipling student leaders.

"Perhaps becoming a 'true witness' is like learning a piece of music. Most of us stumble through the obligatory theory lessons and take some pleasure in taking the sheet of music and carefully following the notation. A good teacher helps! With practice, our stumbles become a recognisable tune. And finally (sometimes) we play the score from our hearts, responding as the composer intended. Then, we make music. To be a true witness takes time." – Winsome Parnell

2. Undivided life

"And whatever you do, whether in word or deed, do it all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father through him." Colossians 3:1–17

Undivided Life is about worship in the whole of life, bringing everything together under Christ. Worship is primarily a whole-of-life response to Jesus rather than a Sunday activity. The gospel calls us to live authentic, consistent lives, fully integrated with our faith in Christ, held together and under His faithful Lordship, authority and rule – our study, work, leisure, relationships and community – the whole of life!

"As an international student, TSCF helped me navigate many new challenges friends, studies, and work—while staying rooted in Christ. I was challenged to live a more joined-up life, viewing all my time and decisions as potential expressions of faith, worship, and even witness. Through God's grace and the support of friends, I am still walking this journey, praying that my identity in Christ will more deeply impact every aspect of my life." — Daniel David Our four aims encapsulate what we are passionate about. Whether it's weekly campus meetings, conferences, or how we invest our time and resources, you'll see these aims shape all we do.

3. Deep thought

"Do not conform any longer to the pattern of this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind. Then you will be able to test and approve what God's will is – his good, pleasing and perfect will." Romans 12:2

The scriptures shine light on how to think about every area of life, from studies and career to lifestyle, morality and social justice. We reject an unreflective faith. Staff workers provoke deep thought in students and graduates, from one-to-one conversations to training events with respected teachers.

"An unchallenged faith is no faith at all. TSCF has challenged, teased and provoked me into deeper questioning of the value of my Christian faith – how to relate it to practical life while being steered towards the cross. Rather than accept the Christian values passed on from others, TSCF has taught me to think deeply for myself and to make the Christian faith my own." – Flaine Tan

4. Global reach

"Then Jesus came to them and said, 'All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age." Matthew 28:18–20

Generations of TSCFers have brought the gospel to their corners of the globe, whether in New Zealand or in far-flung lands. With the influx of international students, many from places where the gospel is barely known, the world has come to us. A global perspective and calling begins long before graduation. In our events, in our partnership with other mission organisations, and especially in our participation with IFES, TSCF shares a gospel with global reach.

"From my first conference I was challenged by 'Global Reach.' God's call took us to work with students and graduates in India and to teaching theology in PNG. Our lives were greatly enriched and friendships made in many places. We continue to be grateful for the global vision of the fellowship." – Dennis Fountain

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A REFLECTION ON COMMUNITY LIVING



Sam Dickson

Sam Dickson studied Agriculture at Lincoln University and was a resident at *The Well* for two years.

Heading off to uni from a small farm in the back blocks of Taranaki, I was ready to go to Lincoln to see the world, to learn bigger and better things. My faith was very marginal at this point but my reasons for going to uni were not the purposes God had. I was there to gain a degree, but God used my time there to enable me to deepen my knowledge of Him, to grow in His Word, and for me to give my life to Christ. The most influential part of this was TSCF and living in the Christ-focused community of *The Well*.

I was very indecisive about going flatting in my second year. I could have gone with my friends from the uni halls, a few of whom were Christians, or I could move into *The Well* which is a TSCF-owned flat in Lincoln. In making this decision, for the first time, I chose to focus more on God leading me rather than depending on myself. And I can truthfully say what a blessing it has been to live in this flat for two years.

Through being in the community living space of *The Well,* I saw over my two years some stark differences from other flats.

Firstly, at *The Well* there is a deep sense of, and commitment to, community. Many of my year groups' flats around Lincoln started well but through the trials and tribulations of life, some of these flats faltered and, for some, the only thing the flatmates had in common was living in the same house. In *The Well* I saw a sense of what community means: we had a common direction, a common goal and were united to follow Jesus Christ.

Secondly, our commitment to community was based on our shared faith. Hebrews 13:1 says that we are to love each other as brothers and sisters: a love deeper and richer than friendship. I never really understood what it meant to have brothers and sisters in Christ but living in *The Well* and focusing on God with other believers, I now can truly describe the people in the community of *The Well* as my brothers and sisters. We ate together, prayed together, and read God's Word together. These people of *The Well*, of which many are from different nations and cultures and experiences, are all united, or as Galatians 3:26 puts it, "in Christ Jesus [we] are all children of God through faith."

Thirdly, our faith helped us to ride the waves of student flatting as we followed the teaching of Jesus to serve one another. John 13:1-17 speaks of Jesus putting himself below

another to serve that person. He commands his disciples to do the same. Though I haven't washed anyone's feet, I have seen this idea of serving others and seeking others' needs before your own played out. As a flat we would serve each other's needs in the capacity we knew how. An example of this was that as we cooked for each other, we considered each other's dietary requirements and in one case the beauty of onions was cut out from meals in order to cater for everyone. And I must point out that many a cricket game was turned off so the TV could be used for 'Farmer Wants a Wife'!

Ultimately, having brothers and sisters in Christ walking beside me as we lived in community, was exponential for the growth of my faith. When you are not in community, there is no-one to challenge or encourage you. In these times it is easy to be distracted or lazy, and you don't grow. But being at university and flatting in a community focused on Christ is so good and rich that I would do it all over again, no hesitation.







BOOK REVIEWS



Robyn Drake

Head of Resource Development



Do More Better: a practical guide to productivity by Tim Challies

"Productivity is effectively stewarding my gifts, talents, time, energy, and

enthusiasm for the good of others and the glory of God."

It can often feel like we have far more things to be doing in our lives than there's time to do them: not just during work hours, but family responsibilities, serving in church, physical wellbeing, spiritual health, friendships and so on. Challies proposes that having a biblical approach to productivity can help us do what God calls us to do within the time and energy we have.

Along with identifying the hurdles, he gives a framework for figuring out the different areas of responsibility we have in life: focussing on what the headline priorities are in each of those and then using tools effectively (e.g. a to-do-list app) to help you focus on the right things and not have to keep everything swirling round in your mind. Whether or not you choose to use every tool he suggests, it's a concise, clear book that will help you use your time wisely to the glory of God.



Faithfully Present: embracing the limits of where and when God has you by Adam Ramsey

"God has placed you where you are, and when you are, for his glory, right now. What if you made peace with that? Both your joy and your longevity lie in embracing a life that loudly declares, "I am not God". That confession – and the freedom it brings – is the goal of this book."

Longing for more time, wishing to be in two places at once, looking back with nostalgia – we all wrestle with the reality of being mortal human beings. Reading this book has helped me embrace who God has made us to be and find joy and contentment in being present, knowing we serve a God who is above and beyond our limitations. I know that in the abstract, but seeing the gospel worked out in the details of changing seasons of life or a time of waiting or the aging of my body has given me greater peace.

"If God is with you in every season, then there is unimaginable joy and goodness and purpose and meaning and courage to be found in every season. Each stage of our life is unrepeatable. Each is beautiful. The only question is: do we really believe that?".



It's finally here! Our NEW STUDENT PACK is ready for purchase online!

Know someone heading to uni or polytech for the first time this year? We've designed a pack of goodies just for them! You can buy a pack and get it sent directly to them, to celebrate this new phase of life, to encourage them spiritually and help them get connected with a TSCF group on their campus.

Pack contents:

- A welcome note from a current student
- A journal to help navigate student life, exploring different topics like identity, study and friendship
- Mini chocolate bar and treats
- A book: *Things We All Have in Common* by Pete Jackson
- The Gospel of Mark to read or give away
- A TSCF drink bottle
- All packaged in a matching TSCF tote bag.

This is the perfect gift for any students-to-be in your life!

For more details and to place your orders, visit **tscf.org.nz/student-pack**



Team Leader -Palmerston North

We are looking to appoint a new person to lead our Manawatū Team. This person will lead the ministry amongst students at Massey University, Te Pūkenga and Te Wānanga o Aotearoa, and grow our reach amongst local and international students, especially as we are seeing international students arrive in New Zealand again.

Please contact Wilma on personnel@tscf.org.nz to find out more.

Staff Workers – opportunities available nationwide

We are looking for staff workers to serve in Palmerston North, Wellington, Lincoln and Dunedin to walk alongside students. This could be in a full-time capacity, with financial support from churches, graduates and other partners, in a parttime supported role, or fully voluntary.

Please get in touch if you would like to meet up with TSCF staff in your region to find out what student ministry looks like on a day-to-day basis, and learn more about the needs on campus.

Visit **tscf.org.nz/jobs** to keep up to date with our vacancies.

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Summit 25 WALLING WALLING Faith that endures

