

Spiritual Life

I grew up in a Christian environment, going to church every Sunday and praying before every meal was a natural instinct. Because of this, I accepted Christ around the ripe young age of 12 during a Sunday school class since it seemed like the “natural” thing to do. I prayed when things got difficult but I never truly trusted that God would answer them in the first place, so I stopped. I had yet to realize that God was always there even during my struggles, I just never told myself to look for him.

*“...that **they should seek God**, and perhaps feel their way toward him and find him. Yet he is actually **not far** from each one of us...”*

– Acts 17:27

In constant meditation during my devotions, I was constantly reminded of God’s providence, love, and presence. By God’s grace despite being a sinner, He had given me the hope and ability to serve Him wholeheartedly as long as I make the effort to seek Him, feel my way towards Him and find Him. Throughout my journey in the past 3 years in university, God has sent so many opportunities to me. I had multiple chances to share the gospel with close non-Christian friends, bringing them to fellowship, leading small groups, growing together with the frosh during my time as freezer leader, and so many more.

Currently, I am relieved to say my faith has been on a steady rise. By using the spiritual gifts of leadership and serving, I feel a lot of joy sharing the gospel with Christian’s and non-Christian’s alike. I feel a lot more confident about the gifts, courage and perseverance blessed to me by God in order to share the gospel and further His kingdom. In continuing to serve the youth as their counsellor and worship team leader at my home church, I hope to be a role model showing that all I do is for the glory of God as others have shown to me. Of course, my faith is always being challenged and growing. I think I was challenged a lot this year, especially amidst serving on the REC ministry team for Teens’ Conference, but I understand that these trials and tribulations are what helps me grow into a better Christian. I’m thankful to the many brothers and sisters that have kept me accountable throughout my journey so far as I learn to centre myself around Christ, and further as I decide to run for the role of Social Coordinator in CCF.

*“As each has received a gift, use it to **serve one another**, as good stewards of God's varied grace: whoever speaks, as one who speaks oracles of God; whoever serves, as one who **serves by the strength that God supplies**—in order that in **everything God may be glorified** through Jesus Christ.”*

– 1 Peter 4:10–11

My Candidacy

What do you believe is the purpose of UTCCF and the UTCCF Committee?

I believe a campus fellowship is not simply connected because of similar life stages, personalities, or interests. While that may be true, we are many parts of one body because we are spiritually connected and unified by Jesus' blood. UTCCF should be a welcoming community open to Christians to walk together in faith through their student journey, but also a community where non-Christians should be comfortable enough to explore their faith in whatever stage they may be. Community is all about intentionality, we should have a willingness to seek out others we may not know as well. UTCCF Committee should help set the precedent, understanding that people tend to mirror behaviour they see from leaders.

How has God led you to run for committee, as well as the specific position you are running for?

Over the past few years, I've heard many callings into leadership positions, whether it be small groups at church or leading the fellowship during high school. During my discernment process, I was reflecting about whether Chair or Social Coordinator would allow me to serve God at my best. I realized that my passion was ensuring that the fellowship community would be accepting of both strangers and fellow brothers and sisters. I believe through personal experiences in UTCCF as well as other campus fellowships, I heard God's calling encouraging me to apply what I've seen and learn into the community as Social Coordinator.

If you are not elected to your chosen role, how will you still serve and carry out your vision at CCF next year?

"Iron sharpens iron, and one man sharpens another."

– Proverbs 27:17

Nothing would change if I am not elected, I would still hold the same thoughts and values of my vision as I live it out as a regular member of CCF. Community is an important part of fellowship, Christians should be growing alongside fellow brothers and sisters. We must hold each other accountable and be willing to recognize that God uses us through our relationships. I understand that in community, relationships are to be intentional, we are to show up, engage, love and serve everyone.

Vision: One Body, One Christ

*“For just as the body is one and has many members, and all the members of the body, **though many, are one body**, so it is with Christ. For in one Spirit we were all baptized into one body—Jews or Greeks, slaves or free—and all were made to drink of one Spirit. For the body does not consist of one member but of many.”*

– 1 Corinthians 12:12-14

I want all members of CCF to remember that as we are many separate parts of the church, we are still one body in Christ. A campus fellowship should be an inclusive community where everyone is able to be comfortable as themselves, breeding vulnerability with not only other fellow members, but also newcomers who may not be as familiar with the space. It has been a joy to see the fellowship grow in numbers, especially after the pandemic and it is truly a blessing to see God working through all the meetings throughout the year. However, it is my vision to see every member of CCF be intentional with their relationships, taking care not to be too exclusively closed off into their own groups.

*“Therefore encourage one another and **build one another up**, just as you are doing.”*

– 1 Thessalonians 5:11

Personally, having reflected on the past year as well as speaking with other members and newcomers, I realize that it is inevitable that people naturally gravitate towards people they are more comfortable with; I am just as guilty as charged, and that is perfectly fine. What I hope to see is that as Jesus took care to be intentional in all his relationships even with strangers, that we would do the same and open our circles to be more accepting to others. Jesus had his group of 12 followers and friends that he shared close relationships with but he still made the effort to form relationships with others that are/may be isolated (eg. tax collectors and the samaritan woman). He demonstrated intentionality in his relationships and used that as a way to spread the gospel. We should be actively loving everyone, even the isolated.

*“**Love one another with brotherly affection. Outdo one another in showing honor.**”*

– Romans 12:10

It is my hope to see CCF become known less as an “exclusive” fellowship and more of a unified body of Christ. Being encouraging to each other, stepping outside of our comfort zones and reaching out to newcomers, and building one another up as fellow brothers and sisters in Christ as we grow together in our faith.

*“And let us consider how to stir up one another to love and good works, **not neglecting to meet together**, as is the habit of some, but **encouraging one another**, and all the more as you see the Day drawing near.”*

– Hebrews 10:24-25

How has God called you to partner with Him in this vision?

This year has truly been a year of learning amidst serving in leadership positions. I recall a prayer, prayed before Teens' Conference: *'please help us remember that we are not serving for you, but with you'*. I realize that while I am a vessel for God to work through, we are not just serving for Him, but we are serving alongside Him. With this in mind, I recognize my love for interacting and meeting with new people as well as bringing people to fellowship has been my desire to serve God in this position in the upcoming year.

What are some practical points of implementation of this vision?

- Welcome/Hospitality Table: In collaboration with hospitality ministry and outreach, I hope that the welcome table will:
 - Be an encouraging and welcome environment as it would be the first thing people see
 - Include small baggies with snacks, encouragements, etc.
 - Include a prayer box where people are able to write down their prayer requests
 - Include a general comments and questions box where people are able to write a compliment or encouragement to others, or questions for the fellowship
- Intentionally approaching newcomers and helping them feel welcome
 - Especially during large groups, dinners, events, etc.
 - Follow up on intentional interactions, just saying hi to them once is not going to do anything. Maybe checking up on them once in a while, it doesn't even have to be in person, it could be shooting them a text, it's the small things that could touch a person
 - Encourage the fellowship to set a goal, eg. "Say hi to 5 people you didn't see this week/haven't met."
- Mixed IG dinners and hangouts
 - Cliques tend to form due to everyone in the group not being very open to new people. While not everyone intends for that to happen, once people find a group its very hard for a newcomer to join in sometimes
 - Mixed IG events would help focus on actively looking outwards and being comfortable to mingle with people we may not be spending most of our time with
- Bring awareness to our actions
 - Leaders/more mature people of the fellowship act as role models and precedents to the fellowship
 - People need to acknowledge its happening and want change for it to actually change

Personal Evaluation

What God-given gifts do you see in your life? How do you see God using these gifts to further His kingdom at UTCCF?

Throughout my years in the church I can definitely see that God has blessed me with the spiritual gifts of serving and leadership. There is a different kind of love and joy when sharing the Gospel to others and bringing Non-Christians to Christ. There is also a love and joy in seeing people you've led also grow alongside you in faith together. I love meeting new people, bonding with them by simply listening to their stories or sharing a meal. My experiences in leading small groups and Freezer have pushed me out of my comfort zone, enabling me to enjoy serving others by growing alongside them despite being a leader. With these gifts, I feel that God can use my extroverted personality to bring a vibrant, energy-filled environment to the fellowship. I hope to see Him use me as a way to share the passion of studying the Gospel together as an inclusive Christian community.

What are some areas of weakness in your life? How are you taking grace-driven steps to overcome them and become more like Christ?

One weakness would be my lack of knowledge in theology. Since the beginning of my faith journey, I have never really been confident with my Biblical knowledge. However, if I am unequipped, I should equip myself, leading to my current steps in tackling this weakness. Currently, I am going through multiple plans, one of which is a study on the gospel book Matthew, and the other is a one year reading plan in order to further familiarize myself with the content and passages. Another issue is I have a habit of taking on too many things to the point where my plate is always full. However, I think it all comes down to trusting my team and relying on God, trusting that he's always there for me to fall back on. Remembering that everything is part of his will and if He wants something done, then who am I to stop Him?