

Community: The Good Soil

Secretary/ Treasurer Vision - Kaiti Chen | 2024 - 2025

Spiritual Life

What is the gospel to you? Briefly share your personal testimony.

Growing up in a Christian household and going to church ever since I was 8, I occasionally struggled with finding the meaning of church beyond what I knew from my parents. Throughout my middle school and high school years, I struggled with maintaining friendships. I knew God and I often prayed, but I was blind and never accepted the Gospel, with the strong desire to control each aspect of my life personally. I became extremely lost, I felt as though I had no community that cared about me, that I had begun to fail in my career and that I was completely worthless. These thoughts persisted till God brought me to CCF where I managed to see how God continued to work in my life by providing guiding figures from my parents, youth group leaders and friends who helped ground me in my faith. He helped me realize that He has the ultimate path for me, realizing my errors in my ways in releasing my desire for control over my life.

For me, the gospel is Jesus's salvation on the cross for the forgiveness of our sins and for eternal life. Only through God are we able to receive salvation through his guide and his path that he has for us. Practice and guided by grounding principles and the commandments that the Lord is our one and only God and to love our neighbours. These grounding principles came to light during the 2023-2024 year when God put me through CCF's vision of Reveal, Renew and Respond. Through this vision, it was revealed to me that I need to find myself in Christ and ground myself in His path and presence. He renewed me by giving me the opportunity to grow and change through providing a supportive community through CCF. Now through the opportunity to respond, to become closer to Him and continue spreading the gospel through fellow brothers and sisters.

Describe your current walk with Christ. Are you supported by a church community and if so, how are you involved?

"I had heard of you by the hearing of the ear, but now my eye sees you." Job 42:5

In being called back to him, through the revealing process, I went through a time of reflection where I truly felt like He was walking with me in my challenges and preventing me from falling to the ground. This revelation occurred through amazing CCF sisters and brothers who became the community that I needed. Despite not being a church, CCF gave me community and healed my heart to recognize that I needed to change. During our unity collaboration with ACF fellowships, I realized that God placed the "Reveal, Renew, Respond" vision physically in my life for my personal reflection. He changed me through supporting me with angels in CCF who became my greatest support in my deepest depression. I have started going back to church after my home church closed down 5 years ago. So far, I have been attending Chinese Gospel Church with intentions to integrate more into the community through joining a

small group once I come back from my summer break. In addition to that, my Christian community also consists of my family. Within my family, my parents are both Christian who are extremely supportive of my walk with Christ. My aunt and uncle are both pastors that I hope to rely on for spiritual guidance during the trial and tribulations that occur in pouring out love and serving. In summary, I'm most supported by CCF brothers and sisters who help keep me accountable and inspire me in my faith to continue growing in my faith. To continue serving and escaping the burnt out from pouring out love, I have a supportive Christian family and I am becoming more involved in my church community.

Candidacy

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

The purpose of CCF is to fellowship with one another in promoting the love of Christ to brothers and sisters and advocating through The Word of God. With UTCCF committee, it is important to recognize that servant leadership through Christ is not to put my own goals and aspirations first, but to put the needs of the fellowship and the participants first.

“But emptied himself, by taking the form of a servant, being born in the likeness of man” Philippians 2:7

Through being on committee, the true purpose to is lead as an example for brothers and sisters in Christ and to serve for what God's path is for the fellowship. As CCF is not a church, CCF is structured to support people in developing in their faith. Through my own personal journey, CCF is a great community to provide introductions about our faith and bring greater interest in learning more. As committee, we can serve our participants, to leave a lasting impact in partnering with God to serve through him. This means also recognizing when potentially, there are errors in my judgement or way in serving on committee.

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

God paved the way for me to run for committee through recognizing that the current committee could use both a louder voice and offer greater support. An example of this is how the hospitality ministry became supporting members of committees for large group events such as Uoftogether and Unity's welcome tables. I also felt the call through supporting my IG in bridging the gender gap that persisted. I attempted to be more flexible in approaching each member in my IG to be a positive voice that anyone could feel like they could reach out to. To cultivate greater unity within the fellowship, I hope to be that encouraging and welcoming individual that people are not afraid to approach beyond managing the structure of the fellowship.

I feel called to secretary/ treasurer comes from the opportunity to support the logistical side of CCF for committee and supporting greater fellowship for participants. There were numerous times where miscommunication occurred between committee and hospitality as a member and a participant. I

have the strong desire to improve the communication between committee, ministry and participants through implementing greater announcements channels to prevent miscommunication. Given my financial background, I believe I have strong ability to understand the logistical side of managing the fellowship in ensuring it runs smoothly. Beyond the financial side, I am extremely hardworking. I am someone who is willing to jump into any issue that arises to help out and resolve high priority conflicts. Within CCF, I believe there needs to be a supporting figure who is open and comfortable to jump into any scenario with quick response time. Additionally, with my love of talking to people and being supportive, I would love to support the committee in planning or addressing any issues that may occur.

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

If I am not elected, I will carry out my vision and continue to serve through hospitality or through Investment groups. With my vision to highlight how CCF can be the Good Soil, I am excited about the possibility to serve in other contexts through bringing an IG group together in bible study and other contexts. Hospitality continues to share that goal in grounding faith through unconditional love. If it is not in God's plan to be elected into Committee, I have full intentions to serve in other forms at CCF next year.

Vision - Community: The Good Soil

My vision is grounded in the Parable of the Sower that I learned from Outreach Ministry. Previously within CCF, with smaller communities, there was a greater willingness to get to know one another and build deeper relationships regardless of friend groups or IGs. Regardless of the greater willingness, there was a strong barrier and fear to entering CCF given that it appeared that everyone already knew each other. This exclusivity made it difficult to maintain CCF relationships due to the large effort required in reaching out continuously and breaking into new friend groups. Although hospitality tried to bridge this gap within CCF through having hospitality members within every IG this year, it was extremely difficult to build relationships without having to put serious commitment into doing so.

In reflecting on the Parable of the Sower,

“Other seeds fell on good soil and produced grain, some a hundredfold, some sixty, some thirty. He who has ears let him hear.” Matthew 13:8-9

This parable inspired me to highlight that CCF can become the good soil and community that helps grow strong roots for our community to grow in Christ. Not only can the Parable of the Sower help recognize the need to grow as a community, it highlights how we can grow to support one another in our faith to grow beside each other rather than against. CCF should work in a direction to promote greater unity within the fellowship beyond friend groups to build stronger and deeper relationships. Through a greater encouraging environment, we can bring more people to learn about the faith and the goodness of God.

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

“And I am sure of this, that he who began a good work in you will bring it to completion at the day of Jesus Christ.” Philippians 1:6 ESV

God uses broken- imperfect people to serve his kingdom within and outside of the Bible. In recognizing my own weaknesses of being highly emotional and often a conflict-adverse individual, there is no doubt that I may struggle to manage the responsibilities of committee. In partnering with God, I truly believe that through my brokenness, he can surpass my struggles and serve through me. This means that in making an effort to do good work, I’m sure that Christ will see the plans through beyond my own personal capabilities through his strength and his wisdom through partnering in serving.

What are some practical points of implementation of this vision?

Greater Communication between Committee and Ministry Leaders and Participants

- There have been numerous times where miscommunication occurred between committee and various leaders
- I want to work towards creating messaging channels and announcement channels that can clear up possible miscommunications that occur due to delays or honest mistakes
- This would include weekly messaging news letters and maintaining continuous logs for reminders in managing logistical issues

Greater large group events

- Building greater connections with other campuses through ACF or other fellowships on campus
- Different large group events that are not bible study, large group games night, mental health night, field-trip night (Harbour Front, Niagara Falls ETC), Prayer Night, Coffeehouse, Baking Night

Increasing Social Media Presence

- With more social media presence, this means that we could create short form videos that represent CCF and some of the events we do for greater promotion
- Greater promotion can help with retention and reaching new people through outreach

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?

Empathetic and Observant - I am extremely extroverted where my strong personality and energy supports my ability to be approachable and willingness to reach out to newcomers and older members. In my openness and lack of fear, I use my own experiences to bring forward a welcoming and positive environment to whoever God provides me the opportunity to touch. Through my personality, I tend to catch out to when people are not feeling great and jump in as someone to bring support. This is essential for recognizing when people are not feeling included or jumping to ensure that all opinions are heard.

Financial/ Accounting Background - The position of secretary/treasurer requires managing the logistics and financials of the fellowship. With my education in accounting, essential bookkeeping and logistical planning does not pose a challenge and allows me the opportunity to ensure that the fellowship continues to run smoothly with limited financial challenge.

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

Conflict Averse - In confronting conflict, I tend to avoid certain conflicting ideas or people when I have emotionally invested too much into a certain topic. Given this conflict aversion, it is possible that during conflicts that occur in committee, that my emotions might create potential struggles with planning or maintaining my position within the fellowship and fulfilling my duties. This is something I have been actively working through in therapy and through going to church and using Bible App's different plans to build my devotional background and strength in difficult situations.

Limited Biblical and Theology knowledge - As I am returning back into Christianity last year, my biblical and theological knowledge is limited making it difficult for me to possibly lead by example. With that in mind, I struggle with the potential requirement to be a supporting member in also developing my own faith given that currently I do not have a strong Christian community outside of CCF. I am currently working towards improving that through attending church more frequently and hopefully being involved in small groups next school year.