

Candidate Document – Gregory Wong, Chair

Spiritual Life

- a) *What is the gospel to you? Briefly share your personal testimony.*
 - b) *Describe your relationship and current walk with Christ.*
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The Gospel is a story about God's glory and His character. In the beginning, He created the heavens and the earth. All of nature as we know it was set into order so that we may bring glory to Him. But, it was marred because we chose to rebel against Him. Instead of turning His back on us, in His love, He chose to redeem us to return us to our original place of worship before Him. By working through history, He brought His son Jesus into the world as an atonement for our rebellion so that we can be restored to Him. Through this, I see that He is sovereign and faithful to us even though we don't deserve it. Because of this, the Gospel is the hope upon which I can anchor my life.

Since childhood, I've been a Christian and raised in a believing household. However, it was not until I was baptized at 13 that my relationship with Christ started to form. After my baptism, I learned a lot about God's character and started to grasp the weight of following Christ. This was also a time of deep Scriptural enrichment having started to enjoy reading my bible. Despite these opportunities, my growth was primarily academic but not heart changing. In my first year, God changed this by bringing me to the limits of my academic abilities. Nearly failing a core course, I realized that I had to surrender to His sovereignty because there was nothing else I could rely on. Since then, I began to seek God more earnestly in my will and attitude towards life. This year God has led me to further solidify my walk. Through the help of my housemates, I've disciplined myself to have a very regular time of devotion with God. Consequently, I've been able to view the Word with a bit more wonder. Finally, He has also been using this time to teach me to see His goodness especially in places or times that I would not expect.

Your Candidacy

- a) *What do you believe is the purpose of UTCCF and the UTCCF Committee?*
 - b) *How has God led you to run for committee, as well as the specific position you are running for?*
 - c) *If you are not elected to your chosen role, how will you still serve and carry out your vision at CCF next year?*
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I believe that UTCCF is supposed to be a community of Christians who seek to know God more and be a witness of His works and will to the surrounding student community and others whom we interact with. Its committee is to be a group of leaders who set and maintain a specific direction which aligns with UTCCF's purpose for the entirety of the fellowship. They are responsible for facilitating a space in which the fellowship's direction and purpose can be executed.

After a previous turbulent term on committee, God has been using the past year to allow me to rest and be renewed in His power. He has used to this time to remind me that He is still working in the world including the people in this fellowship even if it is in ways or timings that I did not anticipate. Out of this reminder, He also has been teaching me to simply rest in His power and works because He is sovereign. With these lessons, I was prepared to be around as an older presence helping to further UTCCF's purpose. However, in recent weeks, the apparent vacancies caused me to reconsider my initial decision. This

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prompted me to further reflect on my journey this year. In this process, I realized that having a fifth year at UofT (and thus the ability to even consider this opportunity) is ultimately a gift. I could have simply moved on to finish my degree; however, the Lord blessed me with an incredible PEY position and now as I look ahead, I had to ask myself for what purpose did I receive more time at this school? Taking this into account, I decided to run for committee once again as a faithful response to His goodness and grace. Considering my previous term with committee and my time with this fellowship as a whole, I believe I have experience that is beneficial for bigger visioning. Consequently, I felt that the position of chair was most appropriate in this season. However, if I am not elected for this position, I will be content to remain as an older presence for this fellowship as I mentioned earlier.

Vision

“Your Praise Will Ever Be On My Lips”

In my journey with God, I often find myself running hard focusing on serving Him and obeying His commands. I become so consumed with it that I forget my place. I forget that God is sovereign and that I am a servant. I need to be reminded that I am His beloved creation whose role is to be the created rather than being the creator; it is my place and birthright to simply rest in His established order. In a world where everything we know can instantly change, it is easy for us to run headlong without reflecting upon and embracing what He has done and what He promises to do. In response to this, my hope is that as a fellowship, we will learn and remember to live a life of worship in all that we do.

Life of Worship

Give thanks to the Lord, for He is good, for his steadfast love endures forever ~ Psalm 136:1

Simply put, we are commanded to praise God because He is continually good and faithfully loving. In Psalm 136, we see the psalmist extol God for His works. Amongst many things, the psalmist declares that He created the world, He rescued his people, He provided for his people, and He set a beneficial order not for any reason except that His steadfast love endures forever. It is an awesome mystery that someone would do this on the basis of His love; it is a powerful statement because we can never be separated from this love. Thus, I hope that we will seek this stance glorifying God because His love is a sure foundation.

Trust in the Lord with all your heart and do not lean on your own understanding. In all your ways acknowledge him, and he will make straight your paths. ~ Proverbs 3:5-6

Fundamentally, a life of worship is about acknowledging God in all our ways. It is about speaking of His ways when we lie down or when we go on our day. It is about seeking His will in the opportunities we are given. It is about committing our heart and our actions into God's hands. Thus, I hope that we will challenge one another to worship God with all our being.

We love because he first loved us ~ 1 John 4:19

Ultimately, a life of worship is a response to God's goodness. We are enabled to love and obey Him because of his initial and greater love. As we strive to live a life of praise, I pray that we will be renewed to freely live in obedience to Him and joyfully seek to know Him more.

Practical Points:

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- Continued Gospel Sharing & Testify Sessions – Let us build a habit of speaking of God's works, big and small, so that we can remind ourselves and encourage others
- Culture of Prayer – In all seasons, we need to realign ourselves with His will so that we can continue to see Him

Life of Witness

You are the light of the world. A city set on a hill cannot be hidden. Nor do people light a lamp and put it under a basket, but on a stand, and it gives light to all in the house. In the same way, let your light shine before others, so that they may see your good works and give glory to your Father who is in heaven ~ Matthew 5:14-16

A life of praise should be a transformative process that changes our attitudes and actions both private and public. Each of us has been touched by God in ways beyond our wildest dreams. These things aren't supposed to be hidden. They are to be shared with everyone else so that they too may glorify God and find their hope in Him as well. I hope that we will come to see witnessing not as a fearful or burdensome act but as a natural outpouring of the joy we have received in Christ just as a light cannot be hidden away. Therefore, if we have been so touched by Christ, let us make it known to everyone around us so that they may also experience and know the same life-giving joy that we have in Him.

Practical Points:

- Prepare your testimony – It is a record of God's work ready for yourself and others outside the faith to see!
- Relevant and Other Evangelism – People around us have questions and needs only satisfied by God's love; let us be vessels of that same love we've received!

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?

I think two notable gifts that God has blessed me with are a) a mind that is analytical and discerning and b) a heart that deeply cares. At a personal level, I believe that my ability to be analytical is helpful for understanding more of who God is and what he desires of us. This could manifest itself in studying His Word and more generally in helping others navigate different parts of their life/journey in a Christ-like manner. In terms of leadership, I believe that my ability to be discerning will be helpful for making decisions to guide the overall direction of the fellowship. With regards to the people in the fellowship, I believe that my caring heart enables me to be intentional with them. I think it helps me to listen, to be present for people and ultimately be a vessel of God's love. These features allow me to help encourage people but also speak into their lives when needed.

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

On the other hand, I am known to be pessimistic. This makes it difficult for me to let go of my frustrations and continue to see how God is working despite the given situation. In order to address this issue, I have been practicing lifting these thoughts up in prayer to God whenever they arise so that He can

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show me where He is and fill me with His peace. I also do my best to seek the counsel of other brothers and sisters to temper my thoughts. In addition to the pessimism, I also tend to shoulder all the responsibility leaving me burnt and further frustrated. Though difficult, I am striving to combat this by again lifting these tasks into God's hands to remind myself that it is ultimately Him who works and not me.