

## **Renee McPherson – Vice-President**

### **My Vision is**

#### **Hope**

For 3 years I felt like the man at Bethesda (*John 5:1-8*)

In Bethesda there was a healing pool where twice each year an angel would stir the water and whomever could jump in first would be healed. For 38 years, a crippled man lived beside the pool and never got healed. When Christ meets him he asks the paraplegic if he wants to be healed. The answer is obviously yes, who wouldn't? But that was not what Christ was getting at. He wanted to see his hope. After spending so many years at the pool, it would seem like his time to be healed would never come. All the plans, the arrangements and determination he may have had would have diminished after having been disappointed every year for 38 years. But he had hope again. Will we still hope, even in life's deserts or seemingly impossible situations? Will we recognize Him and declare His glory? Will we give thanks even if we are not yet out of the valley of the shadow of death?

We have been blessed with the concept of the body of Christ. There's no way any of us can maintain hope alone. We are too weak. We are human. But we have the Word, God's guidance and fellowship.

I pray that CCF will have and maintain the courage and hope to give thanks and remember God's promises; to have faith in all the victories to come. I pray that everyone will leave CCF thankful and hopeful, equipped with a positive mentality and unshakeable faith in God to aid in the growth or restoration of faith in others.

#### **How did I come to this vision?**

I came to this vision after leaving my depression and self-hatred behind. Because my depression had lasted so long, I had lost hope that God was working in me. I didn't believe that I was worthy of God's love, but He showed me He cared for me when He brought me to CCF. In CCF I had the opportunity to be an IG leader, where I learned humility and community. This experience showed me that it was not all about stringently following God's commands, but striving to be better through a relationship with Him and others. It demonstrated that caring for one another as the Body of Christ was more important than individual "achievements". I began to hope again when God provided kind and caring people to rebuke me, teach me and help me through my spiritual strongholds. Through this I saw His forgiveness. I discovered my caring nature and my desire to help other people and provide comfort. I discovered how passionate I could be about God and my desire for others to experience that love and freedom in Christ. I learned to work through creative differences and to open up to other people. I have also learned that I too must give back to this community the way it gave to me. I want to help bring hope to others in our community and maintain the hope that others have. I want all of us to share and experience hope and the victories that come with it.

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After having many conversations with friends and getting to know other members, I find that many people are broken in CCF. They come in broken, they enjoy themselves for a bit, and then they go back home to darkness unable to stretch the light from Fridays at the Koffler Building to the rest of the week in the rest of campus (just like 1<sup>st</sup> year me). Many people are suffering silently and they don't want to open up. They can't. They need someone to talk to. To encourage them outside of what the Gospel explicitly says and just be there. Healing begins with hope.

### **How do we bring hope to others?**

I feel that it starts with the leadership. I think it would be a great opportunity for the leadership to get to know each other better through prayer, worship, fasting and sharing in the summer and throughout the year to prep. This can help our IG and Ministry Leaders to be accountable to each other and to see the beauty in fellowship and that individual growth is tied to community growth. I think that bonding will help all of the new leaders to be able to open up, to learn more and for everyone to see each other as a team that is accepting. I believe that that this can help us to have faith in our visions and our self-worth as children of Christ. It also would bring hope to those who are going through spiritual deserts. The disciples could never have done what they did without brotherhood and companionship- no one could. I would like to see connections being made in ministry where leaders can share ideas and thoughts on how to better cater to the needs of individuals that come to CCF. The Kingdom should be filled with healed and empowered Christians, for the Spirit God gave us does not make us timid, but gives us power, love and self-discipline 2 *Timothy 1:7*.