

## Candidate Document – Guershom Kitsa, Outreach

### Spiritual Life

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

*As Jesus passed on from there, he saw a man called Matthew sitting at the tax booth, and he said to him, "Follow me." And he rose and followed him.*

My name is Guershom Kitsa. I was born in a small town in DR Congo called Goma on January 7th 1998. Now all of CCF knows my birthday. I was raised in a Christian household where both of my parents were involved fulltime with the church. For them, the Gospel and the Faith wasn't just a religion, but the very essence of all they did. It was in this context that I was introduced to the Gospel, the Good News of Jesus Christ. For me, the Gospel does not merely represent an isolated event one makes at a point in their life to believe in Jesus. For me, the Gospel is the daily commitment of choosing to follow Jesus Christ as Lord, to lay down your life, and to take up His, every single moment of every single day. The Gospel for me represents the pursuit of the one who pursued us; for what good is Good News unless one gets to experience it.

The Gospel is the very promise of eternal life, promised to anyone who is willing to be emptied of themselves and be filled with affection for the Messiah and the One who made all things. John 3:16, "For God so loved the world, that he gave his only Son, that whoever believes in him should not perish but have eternal life. The Gospel is an invitation to fully love the One who loved all and gave Himself fully to us.

*Describe your relationship and current walk with Christ.*

*Matthew 16:24 - 25, NIV*

*Then Jesus said to his disciples, "Whoever wants to be my disciple must deny themselves and take up their cross and follow me. 25 For whoever wants to save their life[a] will lose it, but whoever loses their life for me will find it.*

Before my 18th birthday, I made a decision. I made a deal with God, that whatever He required of me, I would do it. I made the trade that my life was no longer my own, but now fully His. Everyday since then has been this constant tension, the wrestle of sorts between me and my desires, and the Spirit and His desire. This was not a conversion for me, for I had believed and faithfully 'practiced' since childhood. This was a rich young ruler moment for me (Matthew 19:16-22). Jesus asked for everything, and I said yes. The cost to this choice was to hit me later, but I guess now you have a question to ask me when you see me during fellowship. My current devotion is only to Jesus. I believe in His Love for me and for all His people, both near and far. I believe in Scripture, the Holy Bible and that it is the Powerful and Incredible Word of God. I believe it is meant to be experienced, not merely talk about. I believe in the Church and in the community of believers. I believe in the resurrection, and that there is meaning to all

that we suffer. And I spend all my days pursuing this, not that I am nearly perfect. I am a mess, and as two of my nominees said, very undependable. Gee thanks nominees (tongue in cheek). But I believe Jesus loves me, and I want to know and experience this love fully if it's the only thing that I do. And I want to extend this love to those around me.

## Your Candidacy

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

Yes (yes meme. If you know you know). My answer to this question would be the 2018/2019 Vision; Abiding in the True Vine. This also happens to be the time when I joined or rather became acquainted with the Fellowship. The University of Toronto Chinese Christian Fellowship is a community of believers, both Christian and pre-Christian all who share a similar desire to pursue relationship with God through Jesus, and relationship with one another. The University of Toronto Chinese Christian Fellowship Committee supports and facilitates the implementation of this Vision. As a member of CCF, a CCfer if you will, I have both experienced and benefitted from this. Through CCF I have had the opportunity to both get closer in my intimacy with God and also in my relationship with those around me. CCF has surprisingly been the means through which I have gotten to know, love and laugh with a lot of people I would have never had the chance to meet in a hundred years.

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

Yes (again. I'll stop now. These are just really intense questions you know.) My interest in running for committee was the by-product of being in conversation and in relationship with the amazing people here at CCF. I feel like I can genuinely say I have had an opportunity to grow and love the fellowship as much as I have grown to love the individuals serving the committee. I was inspired by the amazing people who previously and currently hold these positions, their love and their passion.

I have always had a passion for Asian culture. This has been a recurring theme in my life. I never thought I would be this involved in the community. I never intended for it. I thought I would live a quiet life. Being the only dark-skinned (African) person in a community of a couple hundred Asian people makes you question a thing or two about life. But I believe God authored my meeting with this fellowship and this community. This was definitely not my idea of fun, which is a tremendous understatement for a person who has been described as rowdy and undependable (thank you nominees). But God through the community took my guard down. He knocked down my walls. He still is, because I can tend to feel safe behind my walls more than I do behind Him. Running for me marks a significant moment where I choose, again like I did four years ago, to surrender all of me to all of Him. I do not expect that I should be elected, in that I do not consider this a given. I am just honoured God has given me an opportunity to partner with Him as He authors a new beautiful story for both me and those around me.

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

Nothing changes. I love the community and will continue to pour myself out through the different opportunities we have all throughout campus. Relevant, Missions Hub, Worship Team at CCF and DMCs. Lots and lots of DMCs.

## Vision

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*Where do you see God leading UTCCF in the upcoming year? Potential things to consider: the past, current, and future state of the fellowship.*

I have been a part of this amazing fellowship for 2 years now. In these two years I have seen people flourish in their relationship with God and with each other. The Vision for my first year at CCF was to Abide in the True Vine. This Vision for me really reached its peak during the 2019 Winter Retreat whereas a small group we explored the pleasure of being in the Presence of God. I believe we did that too this year, albeit through newer more elaborate experiences such as Sabbath, Silence and Solitude. Prayer for CCF was a big theme since the Vision was Prayer Empowered Pursuit.

I believe we now have an opportunity to pursue a new Vision. I believe that CCF as a fellowship now could pursue God *in pursuing one another*. Previously we have pursued God and that has been of utmost importance to us, and we have pursued each other but have treated both things as two separate ideas. I feel like the community now has an opportunity to pursue each other the way God intended for them to, to be as Renata once said, a Nation of Priests. So what is my Vision for CCF this coming year?

*Philippians 2:3 NIV*

*Do nothing out of selfish ambition or vain conceit. Rather, in humility value others above yourselves,*

This is my hope for where we are headed as a fellowship. I hope that we take all the amazing disciplines such as prayer and Sabbath we've already thus far, and incorporate them in our lives to the point of serving one another in love. My prayer is that we as a CCF community would learn to put the needs of others above our own, to pursue and serve one another in humility just as Christ first pursued and loved us. My prayer would be that this goes beyond just our CCF community and overflows into our campus and the different campus fellowships, our friends both Christian and pre-Christian, our families, churches and those around us. My Vision is that outreach would mean to reach out and invite someone into the amazing life you are already living that Christ has bought for you. My desire is that Outreach would not be a series of events, but a lifestyle of being intentional with one another even as we run our race and pursue Christ. So, in a sense the Vision is RunTogether (See what I did there!).

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

I believe that being a part of CCF and being a part of MissionsHub prayer already positions me in a place where I can witness and support all the amazing intentionality that is currently happening both through our Fellowship and the Christian Community at the University of Toronto. DMCs at CCF are always a pleasure. Not only with people I know or am interested in, but also with people I do not know quite as well or might feel awkward being around. So, continuing this DMCs both on the IG level, the Retreat level and creatively initiating them through out fellowship will be a worthwhile thing. Missions Hub on the other hand acts as a Watch Tower for all things Fellowship happening on campus. It is a pleasure to be a part of such an amazing group of passionate individuals.

### ***What are some practical points of implementation of this vision?***

Encouraging more collaborative outreach events such as last year's immensely successful Prayer and Worship night and UofTogether. These events offer a unique opportunity for Christians all over campus to come together, in relationship and support of one another even as they pursue Christ.

Create a space where more outside (Chinese) voices can speak to the Fellowship. Ultimately, we want this Fellowship to speak to what the Gospel and the Bible has to say about the unique conditions we as Christians and Asians from different backgrounds (with an exception of me, Kitsa, because well I am not Asian). For this reason having more people who were either previously involved with CCF such as Jimmy and Cedric from Salt and Light night, or people who are more mature in their faith such as Pastor Kwan\*\* (correct me if I'm wrong) would be very helpful to the Fellowship. Developing this relationship with these older Christians would offer amazing role models, people whose experiences are relevant to our own and who's lives are worth emulating. As Paul says, *whatever you've seen or heard me do, now do it... or elsewhere ...follow me as I follow Christ.*

It would also be expedient for us to continue with and improve on the amazing work our peers before us already set; to build on their foundation and water where they planted. Ideas such as Friday morning prayer, prayer for the nation, Sabbath and solitude, and outreach are just a few that come to mind.

## **Personal Evaluation**

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

God has made me such that I thrive from being in community with people. I am immensely relational in my approach to nearly everything. This has been both an asset and an Achilles heel for me. I enjoy being in conversation with people and am a lucid dreamer. I tend to get very excited about new projects and challenges which allow my imagination to run wild. For this reason, I can struggle with staying grounded. I ask a lot of questions, too many questions, and share a lot. This sounds like a dating profile. I also have a very witty (read bad) sense of humor but thankfully it built more relationships than it has destroyed.

I tend to think about the big picture and question how values and strategy align in executing this overarching Vision. While I am quite to delegate, I require and depend on structure to get most things done. This is not a bad thing, as it gives people an opportunity to get excited about what I'm excited for. I believe this relational mindset reflects God's heart for all His people. I also believe that with the right community, it can prove to be an invaluable asset.

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

My spontaneity, though to be admired, comes at a great cost of self-discipline. For this reason, I tend to isolate a lot when an important project needs to get done. I do this by limiting sources of distraction, as I am easily distracted. Now this sounds a lot like a linked in profile. (See!). I depend on structure in order to get things done. Structure helps me channel my creative energy well.