

# OTTAWA CAMPUS CHAPLAINCY

ENGAGING CHRIST, COMMUNITY & CULTURE



## A LETTER TO CHURCHES

BY SID YPMA, CHAPLAIN/CAMPUS MINISTER

Is ministry in a university context all that different from ministry in the local church? Yes, the ministry parishioners are all young adults (though some churches cater to this demographic). Yes, the parishioners have a short term commitment to the community and your leaders change regularly. Yes, it's an academic environment which attracts a particular type of people. But at the end of the day, it's still about discipling people in the kingdom of God. To that end, the question 'is ministry all that different in a university setting' is a question of what we think it means to be the body of Christ in ANY

environment. Are the postures and practices all that different?

Recently, I was blessed to listen to retired campus chaplain Bill Van Groningen, reflect on his 40 years in campus ministry. He spoke about how through the years he had seen churches adopt many different 'must do' fads that have come and gone. His sense was that the ancient ways of spiritual formation are the likely enduring practices that all ministry contexts should pursue. I wholeheartedly agree and you'll notice in our recently launched essential texts discipleship, that spiritual

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disciplines are a part of our essential practices. But Bill spoke of four ways we might measure or evaluate the work we do as we live missionally in the kingdom of God.

The first measure is, 'Are we beautiful?' When people look at who are and how we do, is it beautiful? I would even go as far as saying that this measure includes whether or not beauty is what we ourselves look for. Our student leadership team

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often speaks about who we see in the university. Do we see 'sinners who need to be saved' or do we see people made in the image of God? If we believe this world is created by God, then we must see the beauty in God's image bearers, even if people don't acknowledge where beauty comes from. This posture of heart will become known to others.

Secondly, "Are we generous?" Generous with what we have, yes, but more importantly, "Are we generous in spirit?" When we look at Jesus, we see one who had an ability to be 'present' even with people he disagreed with. Jesus' ability to 'listen' and take the time to understand those he encountered should define our ministry. If we truly want to build relationships, we need to listen in such a way that we are ready to have our minds changed. As missiologist Leslie Newbigin once wrote, "A dialogue which is safe

from all possible risks is no true dialogue." If we want others to respect us, we must truly respect those we encounter.

Thirdly, if we're seeking beauty and generosity, "Do we have a courage of convictions?" Courage of convictions is not just a matter of right thinking. It's as much about the courage to stand in the margins and, quoting Bill directly, "daring to be as much like Jesus as you can imagine." In our current culture too often courage of convictions fails to exhibit the fruit of the spirit and thus fails to look like Jesus. And when that happens...well, see the comments on beauty. But as there are many competing worldviews pushing us, we need to firmly be convicted of the centrality of Jesus in all we do.

Finally, do we truly love our neighbourhood? In the university context, it means loving higher

education and the whole university...ALL of it. It may be but a small corner in the kingdom of God, but if its the place we're called to, we faithfully love the place we're in. Ministry in the university means loving the unique questions that apply to the studies and students in this place.

When we think of these four evaluative questions of beauty, generosity, conviction and love, they are the types of questions all ministries and churches should be asking. Instead of getting caught up in measurements of numbers or measurements of competition (it doesn't matter what other churches are doing), we need to continually evaluate what faithful presence means for the unique calling God has placed us in and the unique people God has placed us with. May we all take pleasure in the paradox of being both unique but the same in God's call to ministry.



## Aidan Elliot



Aidan is a 5th year co-op political science student from Kitchener, Ontario. In his words, "Being a part of the OCC discipleship process has shaped my faith by allowing me the chance to articulate my faith each week. The

opportunity to join together and answer the question "what is the good news?" made me think about my faith and draw my experience and knowledge into a testament of God's work in my life. I love how the OCC creates spaces for students to belong, whether it's for a brief moment or for an entire degree." Aidan would like a career that will afford him a life of curry chicken.

## Miriam (Mim) Farkas



Mim is a 4th year student linguistics student who would call the world her home. In her words, "During the first year of the pandemic, the OCC hosted a weekly virtual Feast & Faith. The home cooked meals that were delivered

were a significant physical reminder to me of the caring community I belonged to. I always looked forward to Tuesdays, when I got to open up Zoom and talk to faces that became friends and enjoy the same meal together. I needed the security of knowing I had people to laugh and lament with." Mim will attempt to speak any language with you if you provide her with stir-fry!

## Liana Fonseca



Liana is a 3rd year music student (viola) from Winnipeg, MB. When asked about how participation in the campus chaplaincy has benefitted her she said, "The growth of beautiful, God-centred friendships, particularly through discipleship and by supporting each other through difficult times. In my time as an intern, God has been teaching me more about the importance of listening and patience. As winter comes be sure to feed Liana broccoli soup to keep her body temperature up!

## Samuel Nadurak



Sam is a 1st year Masters Cello student from Winnipeg, MB. "Going to the weekend winter retreat as an undergrad solidified my sense of belonging in the community of the OCC. It led me to some unique discipleship opportunities. I currently see God challenging me and giving me the privilege of sharing my faith with students in my program. It's an honour to grow as a leader among my peers." Sam professes great joy when Spicy Bowtie Pasta is on the menu. *(thank-you Cathy Vedder!)*

## Carlos Rios



Carlos is a 3rd year Bio-Med student from London, ON. When asked about formative faith experiences, Carlos said, "The most faith formative experience that I've had with the OCC was getting to read 'Language of God,' by Francis Collins. I've always had difficulties meshing together my faith and science. This book taught that they do not have to contradict each other, but can exist in harmony." Carlos likes to hit the gym to keep 'looking good,' so he always appreciates his high carb lasagna.

## CALLED TO CARE

BY KIM JAVIER - NURSING STUDENT

Last year I participated in a book study for the text *Called to Care* with the Ottawa Campus Chaplaincy. As an aspiring nurse, I found the text to be very inciteful and reassuring. The themes explored within the text reflect the questions I've had during my nursing student journey. The first chapters explored the different nursing paradigms through a Christian lens, and it was interesting to compare as I explored the same paradigms in my nursing research course. It warned me of the dangers of immersing practices like therapeutic touch that promote nurses to have the capability of manipulating human energy. It taught me how to provide care in a Christian



perspective and introduce prayer in appropriate situations. The stories provided in the text warmed my heart and really opened my mind to how Jesus would've cared for the sick.

During the online discussion with the authors I asked the question, "Is there anything specifically that called you to nursing and was there any doubt about choosing your profession? If so, how

were you able to deal with that?" I often doubt my capabilities to become a good nurse and I wonder if it really is "my calling." Through our dialogue I learned that this feeling, is very common. A lot of nursing students will feel this "imposter syndrome" and self-doubt. However, you learn to realize how broad the nursing profession is. There are aspects of enjoyment and there are aspects that aren't very amusing. It's a big learning curve but the growth and engagement you learn about yourself and the confidence you build is worth it. I am very glad I decided to stay in nursing school and I'll only keep growing. I advise all nursing students to read the book, and even if you aren't a nurse it provides a good reflection about caring and loving those around us.



## New Ways of Giving

*and getting a snazzy new OCC T-Shirt*

Crucial to our presence on campus are our Friends of the Chaplaincy, those of you who pray and give regularly to our work. We have some great news! **We now have the ability to accept donations via e-transfer or you can set up Pre-Authorized Remittance (PAR) to become a monthly donor.** E-transfers can be made to [ocrcbookkeeping@gmail.com](mailto:ocrcbookkeeping@gmail.com) and you can use the same email to set up PAR. You can also still go to our website and click on Donate if that's easier for you:

**OTTAWACAMPUSCHAPLAINCY.ORG**

**We also have an offer for you! All donors who set up monthly giving of AT LEAST \$10 a month (we don't want to limit you 😊) and all one time donations of \$100 or more before the end of 2021 will receive an OCC t-shirt designed by our student interns. Donate Today!**

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