



UCM at UBC

Christmas Newsletter
December 2020



To our dear friends, families, churches and supports,

What a wild year this has been.

To think that this time last year, we had the freedom to embrace without hesitancy, travel far and wide, and sit around and eat with those from those outside our household! It is easy to look back at 2020 and think about all that we've missed and lost, but there has been much good that has happened. As this year has looked different for us personally, it has also looked different for UCM @ UBC. Yet there is still much to be thankful for. We have continued to meet new students, carried on journeying with returning students and have seen God meet with and encourage students time and time again.

This Newsletter is a combined effort written from our Staff team and students, sharing highlights and reflections from 2020 - so grab a cup of tea, and have a read!





BUILDING RELATIONSHIPS & BUILDING "TEMPORARY" STRUCTURES

By Chris Felzmann, Staff

The first two months of 2020 were similar to any other year, but exciting as well. The term started with hope and excitement. One of my personal highlights was going on a winter retreat with all the UCM campuses just outside of Hope. It was a great time with the students. As the semester continued, I was able to go into dorms as a chaplain to chat and meet with students. Sometimes students stopped by to grab Homemade cookies and a couple mandarine oranges, others stayed a bit longer and we'd have some wonderful conversions about faith all within arms reach. Wow that seems long ago but it was a blessed time that perhaps we took for granted.

The Fall semester started out much differently, of course - It's not every year that hand sanitizer abounds and we build an outdoor structure in the G House backyard to meet in. And yet, still ministry continues. Students are growing in their faith and we encourage each other to persevere. One of the many highlights is a student wanting to know more about Jesus. I have been meeting with him and another student and going through the book of Mark every Monday evening since October. Each week, he is so thankful for the time we spend together and he is so close to making a decision to follow Jesus. Despite the Crazy year, The gospel is still going out. As we end the year, we give thanks, because God is good. He has been faithful. We look to Him for rest and renewal. Peace to you all.



THE BLESSING OF DISCIPLESHIP

By Diane Lewis, Staff



We knew from the very start that this school year was going to be very different. We no longer had the buzz of meeting hundreds (perhaps thousands!) of students on Imagine Day — instead, we met new students online and through the micro-events we hosted at the start of September. Though we didn't have the opportunity to cast our nets wide this season, we got a sense as a staff team that this school year is all about loving and connecting deeply. It has been a joy for me to meet with student leaders for one-on-one discipleship. One particular young woman I've been meeting with, Louise, has been such an incredible delight.



Every other Tuesday, rain or shine, we met together for a walk near both our homes for discipleship and prayer. It has been such a gift to get to know Louise more and more, particularly her love for Jesus and her heart for her friends and family. I always walk away from our walk-and-talks so encouraged by her thoughtfulness, kindness, and wisdom. I'm deeply grateful for the opportunity to come alongside Louise this year and the women I get the absolute privilege of walking alongside during this very strange covid season. Though it's been so different, it's incredible to witness firsthand that God is still on the move in the hearts and lives of university students.





THE HARDEST JOURNEYS ARE MADE EASY WITH GOOD COMPANIONS

By Anna Riley, Student (Bottom right)

The UCM community never fails to make people feel loved, seen, and encouraged. 2020 has been no different. In leading a core, I have been able to see the beauty and power of community amidst adversity. Having a small group of women that consistently supports one another, and with whom I can talk about real life struggles and rejoice over life's joys has supported me in my walk with God this year, and I know I am not alone in that. I have seen a glimpse into the resiliency of the kingdom of God, and that fills me with *hope*. UCM provides a space where people can be authentic about what they are going through, supported unconditionally, and pointed to Christ. I am super grateful for that space!

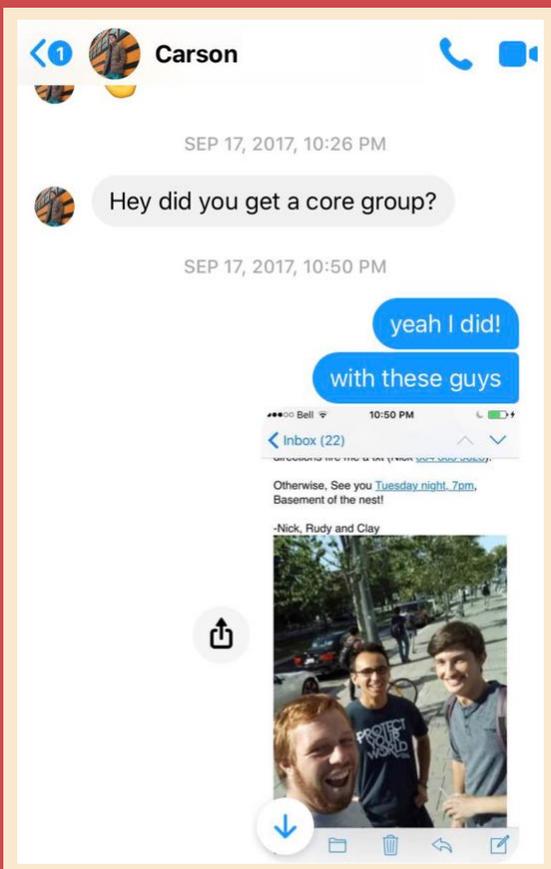




TAKING THE PLUNGE

By Nick Barnes, Staff

In the midst of a crazy year there is always the question of God, how are you going to work in this time. To my surprise, one answer was through the simple word “Baptism”. Aaron joined UCM September 2019 wanting to step into really following Jesus. Him and I met up a couple of times, discussed prayer, a little bit about baptism, and girls (Classic campus ministry). In the middle of the summer I caught up him and to my excitement he mentioned that he was getting Baptised at the start of September 2020. Thus On a smoke-filled Sunday afternoon, 20 people from UCM and Redemption church, joined Aaron and his family down at Jericho beach and watched him take the plunge. Our Covid School year started off with a Baptism.



Yet, that is not where it stopped. The picture to my left is a chat from 2017, my first year with UCM. It was between Carson and Andy, who were new to UCM and placed in my core group that year. Over the past three years I have watched them both meet and serve God in new and exciting ways. They have become dear friends to me. This September, Carson approached me to ask about Baptism, and shortly after Andy mentioned that he too was interested in Baptism. Throughout this fall semester we’ve been meeting every second week to discuss what Baptism is and why we do it, and we had a date set to baptise them on Nov 22nd – Sadly, the pandemic threw a wrench in there – and now we are waiting until Covid clears up a bit in Vancouver to allow us to have a baptism service where both their families can join us. Please be praying for them, and other students, as they take this next step in their faith journey!





GOD > CIRCUMSTANCES

By Noah Gray, Student



We asked Noah to share a bit about the year and where he's seen God moving throughout it. This is what he said

"Oh how glad I am that we don't have a circumstantial God. At first I was a bit stumped; a little resigned to the thinking that God moved a little less in 2020, all because WE were moving less. That, because of this whole pandemic, God wasn't as present or as relevant as other times, especially at a UBC where a lot of people weren't there in person. But that's when God started reminding me of his character and who He is. That he is not a circumstantial God, tied to our own hopes or fears, but is an immaculate loving God who is unchanging!"

So yeah, God has been working this year, especially through UCM! I think of all the lonely and isolated students who, because of UCM, have a place to join in community and walk out life with others. I think of all the young adults who are grieving loss; whether the loss of family, or freedom, or just the loss of a year of "real university", who were able to find other people to walk out there struggles with. This year, maybe more than others, I've seen UCM become a real refuge to those in need. As the prayer coordinator, I've been able to pray for people who are really hurting, and people who are really struggling to see where God is in this hard time. I couldn't be more proud to be a part of a club like UCM, and am excited for where God will move in 2021."





THE ENCOURAGEMENT OF SERVING TOGETHER (EVEN FROM A DISTANCE)

By Jameson Thomas, Staff

This year has been a difficult one, there is no denying. The hardest obstacle to overcome as a ministry has been our inability to foster embodied, in-person community—UCM has suffered because of it. Gone are the days of hanging out with students after our Thursday night gathering; walking to rain or shine to get ice cream and chat about the week, the evening, God. In absence of this, cores have never been more important, whether in-person or online. However, this has also brought to light how important service teams are—groups of volunteers who band together to pray, to run events, to do ministry, or to lead worship.

I get the pleasure of working with our worship teams each year, and this year was more hands on than ever before. While Public Health Order's allowed, we were meeting on campus in a theatre space to pre-record worship for each week. This brought together people who—starved for social interaction—gobbled up these moments and made the most of them. We laughed, we sang, we prayed, we worshipped (socially distanced the whole time), we did community together. When the situation changed with restrictions becoming tighter and cases escalating to a height, we didn't feel comfortable meeting under, I noticed an immediate and heavy gap. Those moments with the worship teams, though sometimes rushed, sometimes stressful, were ministry: not only my ministering to them, but their ministering to one another, and our ministering to UCM through worship.





We want to say a big thank you for reading, for praying for us and the students, for encouraging us, for supporting us and helping us introduce students to Jesus. That's all for now except to say we wish you all a safe and joyful Christmas!

**PEACE & BLESSINGS,
THE UCM @ UBC STAFF TEAM**

