

September 9<sup>th</sup>, 2025

## **Family Update**

It is an understatement to say our summer since Scripture Camp has been filled with a great deal of sorrow and lamentation. We have experienced more than one death this summer, as well as several other setbacks that led us to step back from various activities, such as writing support letters and connecting with all of you. With that, we want to express our gratitude to those who have continued to support us financially in our mission to bring the Gospel to Northern BC. A huge thank you also goes to those who have offered encouragement, whether through prayer, bringing us food, or being a shoulder to cry on. During seasons of lamentation, we cannot overstate the importance of community—especially when you have a toddler running around naked as you try to wrestle him like an alligator to get a diaper on. Parenting itself can be exhausting, but parenting while navigating the complexities and tragedies of life is an entirely different challenge. With that, we have two separate updates on IVCF and Village Missions ministry. But first...

## **Financial Update**

We have done what we can to raise support before the fall ministry season begins. At the start of the summer, we were informed that our financial need had increased due to receiving a raise (Wahoo!), but this meant I had dipped to 50% of my support and needed to spend time fundraising (Booo!)

Currently,

I am at:

**65%** monthly support and **70%** of her overall yearly support for 2025. This means Cristyn will still need to fundraise throughout the school year. Financial support is something we have prayed for together as a couple, and it is exciting to see the numbers increase week by week. And we want to invite you to join us in those prayers to see our support hit 100% this year.

If you are interested in helping, you can contact Cristyn at: [cbergen@ivcf.ca](mailto:cbergen@ivcf.ca)

## **IVCF Update**

Wow! It has been a crazy couple of months since Scripture Camp. We raised nearly \$10,000 to send 14 students and 7 volunteers to Thetis Island and support our ministry for the fall season. This is the most we have raised, and almost every student received a scholarship thanks to your generous support! Our time at Scripture Camp was a time of students wrestling with the Lordship of Christ, discipleship, and the work of the Holy Spirit as we studied the book of Luke with students across BC. New friendships were formed, and students encountered Christ. I was blessed to work alongside our BC interns by emceeding and assisting with worship throughout the camp. It was amazing to help support the next generation lead and challenge their peers with the Gospel.

Afterward, we had a short break before I boarded a plane to attend our Campus Ministers Conference. It was an encouraging time. I'll confess, I cried a lot as I processed my grief. It was after Scripture Camp we received the news of the first death we had to walk through this summer. I was able to help with worship again at Pioneer Pacific, joining IVCF staff from across the country. It was such a gift to learn from and lead with this team. We led the staff in songs in French from our Quebec friends and in Spanish. I taught the staff a song from my time at Bible Camp and led worship during communion. Despite everything going on in our lives at the time, it was encouraging to break bread and drink the wine with such close friends and sing "Yet Not I but Christ in Me." We talked a lot about the ministry and the importance of providing students with opportunities to encounter Jesus. It was undeniably clear that through much joy and prayer for one another, we encountered Jesus as a staff team. There was plenty of laughter that week amidst my tears.

Throughout the rest of the summer, I spent a lot of time rethinking how we have done things in the North, specifically with our leadership team. There is no doubt that our student leaders at UNBC have been one of our strengths as a fellowship. However, last year, I spent time talking to many of the students, reading up on the challenges Gen Z faces, and considering how we can help students encounter Jesus, cultivate Christ-centered lives, and radiate the love of God to others.

That time of prayer, workshoping, bouncing ideas off my coworkers, and refining resulted in a new leadership structure! It will be a new challenge to implement this year. This year, we have six leaders, and we have a returning leader, Taylor, stepping into a role called Campus Associate. This is a part-time job for a student to work alongside me in campus ministry!

But there is more to just these six leaders and Taylor that hopefully I will be able to explain at a later date! So far, I can say as I have excitedly pitched my new plan to the students they have been kind enough to get into this car and new destination I've set for the year with excitement and a bit of trepidation!

Along with leadership, fourth-year students, grad students, and alumni have excitedly started a new initiative called the "IVCF Grandparents." This will be a group of students trained in how to disciple and mentor other students, equipping them to take those skills to their local churches as they transition from the IVCF community into life with the local church.

While this new season will present new challenges, we were given a strong start to the year thanks to our first-ever student leadership conference. In late August, I drove six students to Abbotsford to join other students who had said "yes" to leading their peers on campus. The conference, called EQUIP, was for students and led by students.

EQUIP was a time to train student leaders in BC together, rather than apart in their different fellowships. Not everyone could attend, but it certainly jumpstarted our planning for the school year! We also had a workshop with Seth who is IVCF Canada's social media guy. He did a great job in helping the students see how they can use social media to help students encounter Jesus and tell stories. And the students have really taken what he talked to us about, the result of which you can check out on instagram!

The content that they have been making has been amazing! I will admit, a social media presence is something we lack in the North, but Seth certainly help us to dream and make it possible. It was our first year hosting EQUIP, and the feedback has been positive from the students as they begin the school year. We are now in the middle of what IVCF calls NSO season (New Student Outreach). September is a busy month with meeting new students and restarting our weekly ministry. Already, I can see how the momentum that started last year is carrying on into this year. There is an air of excitement among the returning students, and of course, nerves are high for the new students. Overall, there is a lot of hope that the Gospel will be preached again on campus through our words, actions, and character as a student fellowship. Next week will be a big one for the Prince George fellowship as we have Clubs Days, Leadership orientation and our Kick Off BBQ all in one week!

Would you pray for us as we connect with students this month?

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