



Discovering God's Goodness at MARKcentral



Staff and students from across southwestern Ontario and the GTA gathered at Pioneer Camp Ontario for MARKcentral 2018: April 30 - May 6.

My MARKcentral experience didn't end up looking like what I anticipated, but ended up being a practice in trusting and discovering God's goodness. My role at MARKcentral this year was to co-lead the Prayer Team. This was a new endeavor for me, and I learned much in the months leading up to MARKcentral. Only three days before MARKcentral was set to begin, I had to make the decision to not attend the conference. Due to some complications with my pregnancy, I was advised not to go to Muskoka for seven days for an intense week of ministry. I've been told to ease up on my work and activities, not walk too far, and to avoid lifting Arya as much as possible (all easier said than done!).

At first I was quite disappointed that I would not be attending MARKcentral. After all, I had spent significant time in the months leading up to the conference in visioning for and planning what the prayer team/ministry would look like at MARKcentral. After hearing the news, one of the prayer team members called me to offer some hope and insight. What I heard (and really did need to receive at that time) on that call was that I was not disqualified from being a part of the prayer team. I didn't cease to be a part of the team because I would not be there in person, but I would continue to be a core member of the team who could still participate and intercede on behalf of the MARKcentral community.

With a renewed view of what my role on the team would look like during the week, I began to pray for the MARKcentral community and listen to hear what words, images, scriptures, or songs the Lord would want to offer the prayer team as they ministered throughout the week. At a few points throughout the week, I sent the prayer team emails letting them know what was coming up in prayer for me. To my surprise and delight, words and songs that had stood out to me in prayer, had been the same words and songs that had been significant to the prayer team on those days. God's goodness was a theme that was coming up for many students at MARKcentral. While I spent time praying that the students would know God's goodness in deeper ways, I too had a clearer glimpse of His goodness. Partnership with the prayer team was a real thing, so much more than I could have anticipated after learning I wouldn't be attending in person.

It was a real joy to both walk with the prayer team leading up to MARKcentral and

partner with them in prayer throughout the week. God was clearly at work in the MARKcentral community and continues to minister to the students who attended. Lives were transformed, walls were broken down to allow students to know God's goodness, and hearts are now pointed towards Jesus in renewed ways. Thank you so much to those of you who also partnered with our team in prayer! God has answered, and is continuing to answer, many of those prayers!



Guelph students gathered for a 'stress buster' event during final exams. Games and tasty treats are always a hit during exams!



Students who attended the Urbana Registration Party in Guelph, to help build Urbana buzz and encourage students to register!

MARKcentral Reflections: Jared

Jared, a first year student at Guelph who has joined the student executive team for 2018/19, was one of the students from Guelph who attended MARKcentral. When I invited him to share some of his reflections on his experience at MARKcentral, this is what he had to say:

"I heard about MARKcentral from my InterVarsity campus group at the University of Guelph. I signed up for Mark 1 almost immediately. I was not certain of what to expect from the week since I had never attended a week-long camp dedicated to studying the bible and it seemed as if I would be one of only a handful of other Guelph students signing up. Any apprehension that had clouded my expectations quickly dissipated on the first night, when we dove right into chapter 1 of Mark,

establishing Jesus' mission on the Earth and his identity as God's son.

The classroom sessions in which we analysed passages from the Gospel of Mark in sequence were very helpful for understanding the events and teachings of Jesus' ministry. Throughout the first half of the gospel I was struck anew by the universal intentionality of Jesus' ministry. He always spoke into the life and cultural circumstances of His audience, meeting them exactly where they were.

Though largely strangers to each other, throughout the week, we could see the Holy Spirit work in the hearts and minds of students to direct discussion and offer helpful observations and questions. Quiet students opened-up and expressed what was on their hearts, expressive students allowed the discussion to organically develop. By sharing testimonies as an adopted fellowship, and spending down-time together, many of us experienced a strong sense of companionship as we disciplined each other through the dense information we were accumulating, turning head knowledge into heart knowledge.

I thoroughly enjoyed my time at MARKcentral. I learned so much about God's Kingdom during the study and also feel much more connected to the wider InterVarsity campus communities after our week of fellowship."

Pray for Jared and the other students at MARKcentral, that the Lord would continue to help turn their head knowledge into heart knowledge. As they do this, would they be compelled to walk alongside other students on their campuses to do the very same.

Celebrate What the Lord Has Done: Prayer Requests & Praise



The InterVarsity Undergraduate fellowship at Guelph celebrating the year together at our final weekly potluck dinner and discussion!

As the academic year at the University of Guelph has come to an end, we really do have much to celebrate and give thanks for! The photo above shows a good representation of the students who have called InterVarsity home this past year. Each has their own unique story of how they have met and interacted with Jesus this year. It was a joy to celebrate with, worship with, and commission these students as they head in separate directions this spring/summer.

Even though this academic year has come to a close, our prayers can continue! Please take some time to pray through this list throughout the next few months.

Please pray for...

...the seven students who will be serving on the student leadership team during the 2018/2019 academic year. Pray for Alida, Tori, Caitlin, Aaron, Alyssa, Jared, and Johnathan as they become team together and offer leadership to the fellowship in Guelph.

...the students across Canada who became Christians at MARKcamps this month! At least ten students made first time commitments! Pray that they would be

encouraged in their new walk with Christ, and would find loving and supportive Christian communities to immerse themselves in this spring/summer as they may be far away from their campus fellowships until the fall.

...students who are considering registering for Urbana 2018. Urbana may seem far off at the moment, but for many students, now is the time for them to give consideration and prayer to this decision, since the early-bird deadline is June 30.

...students from the University of Guelph who will be serving at Pioneer Camp Ontario this summer. Pray that they would be strengthened and energized for the months of camp ministry ahead.

...our family as we prepare for and anticipate the arrival of baby #2. Pray for continued health for this growing baby and I.

Personal/Maternity Leave Update



Our family is gearing up to welcome a new member very soon!

I have about one month left before I begin maternity leave, and we

ministry in Guelph! Your partnership in these ways have been a huge blessing to both me and the students in Guelph. While I'm off on maternity leave this coming year, there are good supports in place for the InterVarsity fellowship in Guelph. In addition to the seven student leaders who will be leading the fellowship throughout the year, Melissa Melick, InterVarsity staff at Waterloo and Laurier, will check in with the students leaders in Guelph once a week or every other week to offer training and discipleship.

Please be praying for both the student leaders at Guelph (Alida, Tori, Aaron, Caitlin, Alyssa, Jared, and Johnathan),

welcome a new little life into our family! As we've been preparing ourselves and our home for this new season, Arya has been quite helpful in finding all the toys she'd like to share with her new sibling!

I'd like to thank you for your continued prayer and support for me and the

as well as Melissa, as they all navigate a new year of ministry without the presence of a full time InterVarsity staff. I look forward to returning to ministry on campus after my maternity leave, and I trust that God has good plans for the fellowship in Guelph in this next season.

Thank you again!