



Living stones

IFES vision to 2020

*As you come to him, the living Stone – rejected by human beings but chosen by God and precious to him – you also, like living stones, are being built into a spiritual house to be a holy priesthood, offering spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God through Jesus Christ.
1 Peter 2:4-5 (TNIV)*

August 2008

International Fellowship of Evangelical Students

We are a global community of indigenous student movements,
called to engage the University with the good news of Jesus Christ.

Our vision

Students built into communities of disciples,
transformed by the gospel and
impacting the University, the Church and society for the glory of Christ.

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Defining our vision

Students built into communities of disciples transformed by the gospel and impacting the University, the Church and society for the glory of Christ

Our vision for ministry comes from God

The Lord has shown us students becoming Christians and having an impact on the world around them. Together with them, we want to be living stones, as described in 1 Peter 2:4-5 – modelled after Jesus, being built into a spiritual house that will honour and glorify his name. Under God, we are called to work and grow together to achieve our vision.

Our vision grows out of our identity, history and calling

As a global community, we are partners in global student ministry. This calling to bring transformation to the University, to students, to society has been lived out through IFES over more than 60 years.

Together at World Assembly 2007, representatives of our indigenous ministries took part in a day of vision-casting facilitated by Dr Mee-Yan Judge. The material collected on that day forms the basis of this vision. With God's help, our goals and priorities have been shaped by your comments and feedback, by the consultation and work of the IFES Senior Leadership Team and International Executive Committee and through the prayers of many around the world.

Our vision for the future provides direction for the Fellowship

Defining and expressing our vision allows us to focus on our priorities and not be distracted by secondary issues. It allows us to develop coherent plans which can be implemented internationally, regionally and locally, according to context. It will enable us to track progress and to celebrate God's faithfulness and provision.

As IFES, we see the redemptive power of the gospel and the Lordship of Jesus increasingly experienced among students around the world. We see students equipped with a biblical worldview. We see students as living stones.

We are now ready to develop separate ministry plans with specific ideas and activities aimed at releasing student initiative at every level of the Fellowship.

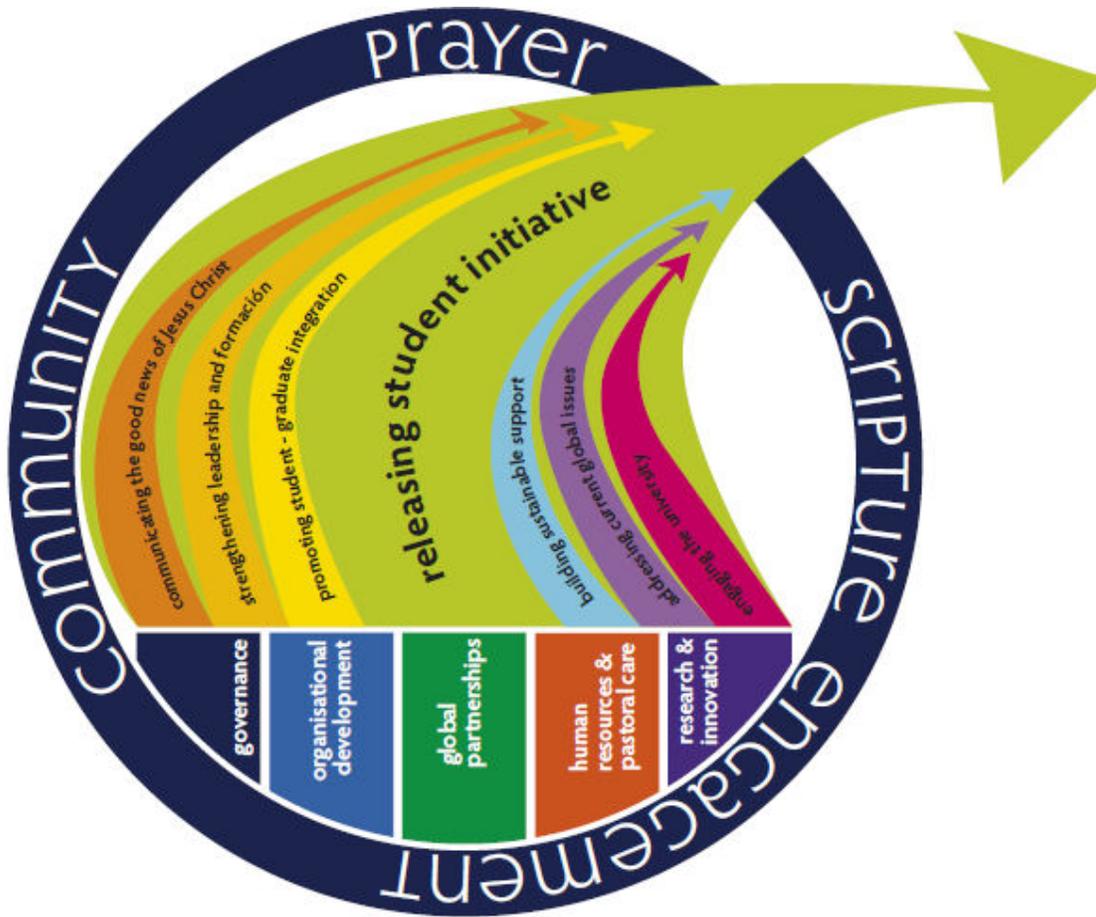
Let us keep on running the race with perseverance.



Daniel Bourdagné
IFES General Secretary

Living Stones: the big picture

Students built into communities of disciples transformed by the gospel and impacting the University, the Church and society for the glory of Christ



Living Stones: the big picture

STRATEGIC PRIORITIES

To meet our vision of growth and depth of impact, we will focus on six key areas, with one defining path running through all the priorities: to release the creativity and energy of students.

- 1 Communicating the good news of Jesus Christ
- 2 Strengthening leadership and formación
- 3 Promoting student-graduate integration
- 4 Building sustainable support
- 5 Addressing current global issues
- 6 Engaging the University



Releasing student initiative

FIRM FOUNDATIONS

Recognising that strong growth needs firm foundations, we will invest in identifying and initiating excellence and best practice in five critical areas.

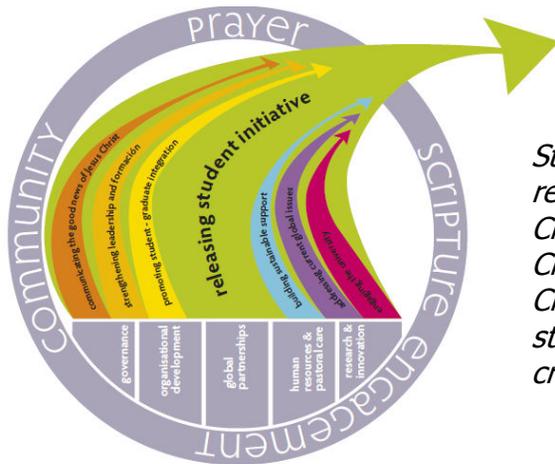
- 1 Governance
- 2 Organisational development
- 3 Global partnerships
- 4 Human resources and pastoral care
- 5 Research and innovation

CORE COMMITMENTS

As we work to achieve our vision, every aspect of IFES life will be surrounded and supported by three core commitments.

- 1 Prayer
- 2 Scripture engagement
- 3 Community

Strategic priorities



RELEASING STUDENT INITIATIVE

Students are at the centre of our vision: students reaching students with the good news of Jesus Christ, students growing into life-long disciples of Christ, students serving and strengthening the Church. We will nurture, train and equip our students in order to release them, to release their creative energy and initiative.

By God's grace, the IFES community has student movements in 152 countries and we believe there are currently some 500,000 students involved in IFES worldwide. Now is the time to increase the impact of our ministry. We want to vastly increase the people-power of the worldwide mission field.

Our goal is to double the number of students involved as active, committed members of IFES, to double the number of students who are influencing their societies for Christ.

We will live out the reality of an international fellowship of evangelical students.

release

- Young men and women with a sound understanding of biblical truth, a strong personal relationship with God, a concern for the University and the leadership skills they need to achieve growth
- Staff focussed on releasing student initiative through excellence in formación and careful, deliberate mentoring
- Organisational structures that support and facilitate student initiative and student involvement in developing strategy and implementing plans at all levels of ministry and governance
- Stories celebrating God's work through students and graduates who are prepared to be living stones to inspire and encourage people to praise God for his work



1. COMMUNICATING THE GOOD NEWS OF JESUS CHRIST

release: *students communicating the good news of Jesus Christ creatively and clearly in word, in action and through relationships, to every campus of the world*

communicating the good news prepare and serve

- Continually sharpen our theology of mission and allow what we learn to influence our strategy
- Develop a culture of:
 - listening, and then speaking
 - unconditional and loving involvement of students with their non-Christian neighbours
 - integrity between the content of the message and students' lifestyles
- Identify strategies for relating with non-Christians in areas of shared concerns, demonstrating how the gospel relates to all of life
- Equip leaders who are confident in sharing their faith in a broad spectrum of situations and who train others to do the same
- Identify and train people gifted in public proclamation and support them in finding platforms within the University
- Seek to increase the number of small group Bible discussions available for people to come to hear the good news of Jesus Christ
- Explore new media opportunities as a tool for communicating the gospel, and seek to employ new means sensitively

communicating the good news across cultures prepare and serve

- Integrate outreach to international students with the wider student ministry, releasing young graduates of faith and integrity to return home to their contexts with the good news of Jesus Christ
- Build on our tradition of missions conferences, recognising the need for each generation of students to be exposed to the call to cross-cultural mission
- Develop structures and mechanisms which intentionally encourage cross-cultural exchanges within and between regions



2. STRENGTHENING LEADERSHIP AND FORMACIÓN

release: *leaders of integrity for student ministry and for the wider world*

We will equip leaders who use their gifts and abilities to engage the University and who are persons with 'integrity of heart and skilfulness of hands' (Psalm 78:72). As we equip students, graduates and staff, we are preparing future leaders for the Church, for mission and for society, in government, industry, education, families and communities.

prepare and serve students

Stronger student leadership prepares us for numerical growth and a deeper impact of our ministry. It also provides potential staff and board members for the future at local, national, regional and international levels.

- Develop and share strong models for student leadership formación, appropriate to context
- Identify and invest in student leadership formación for a select group of student leaders for advanced training and input
- Develop curricula for different levels of training in a three or four year cycle, according to local context and need

prepare and serve staff

We affirm our staff and commit to providing ongoing training, so that they can, in turn, invest in students and release student initiative.

- Develop clear leadership frameworks to ensure staff understand their role
- Identify, train and equip specialists for the ministry
- Train staff in team building, facilitation, delegation and collaboration skills
- Identify and develop trainers, who will, in turn, train others
- Develop and make available resources and people to facilitate the process of staff training, for example through regional training institutes
- Encourage the integration of theological reflection and professional calling

Staff specialists

General secretaries, evangelists, writers, expositors, publishers and web developers, counsellors, administrators, prayer promoters staff working in support development, communications, HIV/AIDS ministry, graduates ministry, high schools



3. PROMOTING STUDENT-GRADUATE INTEGRATION

release: *life-long disciples committed to the student ministry that nurtured them*

We are called to prepare students for life after graduation and we draw on the experience of our graduates/alumni to strengthen today's student ministry. Graduates are part of the living fabric of IFES and an effective student ministry will give serious attention to the unique needs of its graduates.

prepare and serve

- Engage with graduates to understand their needs and aspirations for continuing connection with and involvement in student ministry
- Develop a vision for graduates ministry and strategic plans relevant to context
- Identify, develop and commission story-tellers from among our graduates to preserve and pass on how God has worked through the student ministry
- Identify and share models of best practice, materials and resources for graduate ministry and retention
- Make strategic graduate ministry staff appointments and identify graduates facilitators who are envisioned and equipped to champion and develop graduate ministry
- Provide training to facilitate ongoing relationships with students after graduation
- Initiate opportunities for graduates to support the student movement (for example, through prayer or finances, or as volunteers, staff or speakers) and to help students to engage with their respective subjects of studies from a Christian worldview
- Prepare students for life after graduation and support young graduates in their transition years, encouraging them to be witnesses to Jesus in their workplaces, committed to involvement in a local church and a prophetic voice in society



4. BUILDING SUSTAINABLE SUPPORT

release: a growing wave of generosity and involvement in supporting student ministry, starting with students

We commit to a deliberate focus on growing strong, self-sustaining national movements that contribute generously to the work of the worldwide ministry.

prepare and serve

- Develop a common biblical theology of generosity and support development
- Identify the hallmarks of a healthy, self-sustaining movement in terms of support
- Adapt strategic plans focussed on indigenous support to the local context
- Draw upon the best possible resources to increase our understanding of support development trends, including: use of the internet and social networking, graduate/alumni relations, student involvement, and the local church context
- Identify and implement standards of accounting, accountability and donor care
- Develop expertise, systems and tools to facilitate dynamic communications and to build strong relationships and mutual accountability
- Build networks of talented, gifted and trained specialists around three focal points: supporter relations, communications and fund development
- Gather and distribute resources and materials to help ensure discipleship programmes include an emphasis on stewardship and generosity
- Offer systematic training and ongoing mentoring/coaching of specialists in the support development field and affirmation of their role as ministry
- Celebrate best practice, and release news sharing examples and stories of indigenous support, transforming relationships and touching generosity

A growing wave of support

Lots more people!
Lots more support!
Lots more prayer!
Lots more resources!



5. ADDRESSING CURRENT GLOBAL ISSUES

release: *students, united in the body of Christ and equipped with the Christian perspective, seeking new opportunities for communicating the gospel in the modern world*

We are a worldwide community of Christian student movements with a global calling. As such, we acknowledge our need to identify and address contemporary global challenges and opportunities, seeking to apply biblical truth and identify biblical responses.

At different times regions and national movements address particular issues. The Muslim and Asian worlds have been identified by the international Fellowship as two current areas with huge potential for growth.

Muslim world initiatives

We celebrate the faithful Christian communities in the Muslim world. By God's grace we have seen unexpected openings for student ministry in recent years. We rejoice in this and dare to hope and pray that it will continue. We are committed to supporting the student ministry and its growth. We also want to be alert to opportunities for the gospel among international students from the Muslim world.

Asian world initiatives

China and India represent one-third of the world's population and are among the fastest growing economies. They have experienced remarkable growth in the number of students coming to know Christ in the past two decades, raising considerable challenges for training and discipleship. As an international fellowship, we celebrate this growth and recognise that we can learn much from the history and experience of the student ministries in these countries. Both countries have sent many students abroad and this trend will increase in coming years.

prepare and serve

- Map the regional environments, challenges and opportunities, and existing work and people in order to inform the development of a strategy for reaching Muslim and Asian students in a biblical way
- Identify existing resources and ministry networks to support these areas of ministry, and, where necessary, develop new ones
- Develop specific prayer initiatives around these issues
- Promote education to increase our understanding, learning from others who are engaging with the Muslim and Asian worlds
- Provide specialist training for those engaging with these issues, including theology, ecclesiology and missiology
- Raise awareness of the opportunities of international student ministry, and deliberately train and equip international students to serve the Church when they return from study overseas
- Set up inter-regional specialist platforms within IFES to engage with specific challenges



6. ENGAGING THE UNIVERSITY

release: students and faculty with carefully-developed biblical worldviews, who constructively and boldly engage with others, demonstrating the integration of faith, life and academic disciplines

Every Christian is called to engage the world in which they live. For IFES, the University is our primary sphere of engagement. All Christian students and faculty are called to witness to the truth and relevance of the gospel in all areas of university life and policy. By engaging in the University, students are prepared to engage with the culture and society they will live in after graduation.

We want a prophetic voice and witness to be heard in the world's universities. We want to see universities as places where the Christian worldview is legitimate and where the truth of Christ reigns.

prepare and serve

- Develop and share resources to inform and inspire strategies for engagement, including theology, stories and models
- Deliberately engage and develop key individuals with a view to increasing influence and presence in faculty and management of universities
- Develop post-graduate and faculty ministries
- Partner with other Christian groups on campus who are engaging the University
- Promote thoughtful Christian literature to students and faculty
- Promote debate and dialogue as a means of engaging with other worldviews
- Equip students to fully integrate faith and daily life and to be able to stand up for their biblical worldview in the face of opposition
- Train people who are able to speak prophetically – to articulate and publicly stand for Christian values

What does it mean to IFES to engage the University?

Analysing the changing world of the University
in context

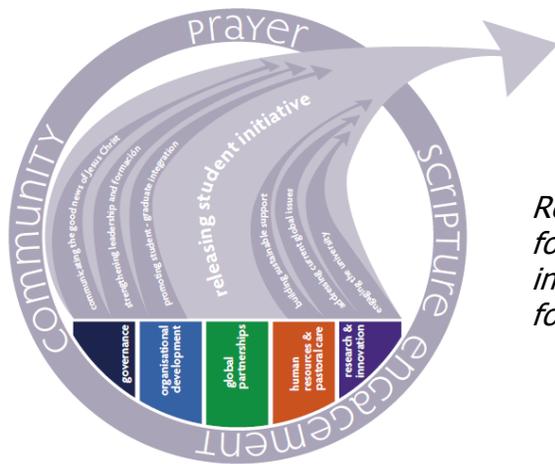
Making a positive Christian contribution to
scholarship and community in the various
academic disciplines in the University

Bringing a Christian mind to bear on ethical
and political issues in the University, and
the role of the University in wider society

Applying a biblical critique to the ideas and
ideologies that are propagated in the
University

Demonstrating a lifestyle of integrity,
consistent with a biblical worldview

Laying firm foundations



Recognising that strong growth needs firm foundations, we will invest in identifying and initiating excellence and best practice in the following areas.

- 1 Governance
- 2 Organisational development
- 3 Global partnerships
- 4 Human resources and pastoral care
- 5 Research and innovation

1. GOVERNANCE

invest in excellence: well-structured and wisely-governed ministry

Well-structured and wisely-governed work is honouring to God and is necessary for the growth of strong national and international ministries. Effective boards are important for the ongoing renewal of our Fellowship at every level.

Recognising that strong growth needs firm foundations, we will invest in identifying and initiating excellence and best practice.

identify

- Identify the hallmarks of a healthy board and define its role
- Define the unique characteristics of the relationship between the board chair and the general secretary
- Set minimum standards for boards: including measures for stability, competence, quality of commitment, vision for the mission and values of the organisation, written policies and procedures, financial governance
- Establish requirements for boards and proper board procedures, covering, for example, appointments, terms, regular meetings, agenda, minutes, manual
- Define best practice for board recruitment, including composition and involvement
- Identify resource people to train boards

initiate

- Encourage student representation in governance
- Promote ongoing internal and external evaluation of international and national boards, including a focus on financial practices and controls
- Encourage regional initiatives to strengthen the relationship between the board chair and leader of a national movement
- Encourage regional teams to develop relationships with board chairs
- Develop orientation and training programmes for board members, including IFES ethos, relevant legal requirements and financial responsibilities

2. ORGANISATIONAL DEVELOPMENT

invest in excellence: people and structures working well together to achieve common goals

Organisational development is about developing people and structures so that they will work well together to achieve common goals.

Recognising that strong growth needs firm foundations, we will invest in identifying and initiating excellence and best practice in our organisational structures.

identify

- Develop models to assist us in maximising our organisational development capacities
- Commission individuals who can serve as resource people for organisational matters

initiate

- Invest in training to develop management skills for general secretaries and senior staff
- Equip organisational specialists and make use of internal and external consultants and resources for advice and ongoing training
- Implement a regular cycle (at least quadrennially) of organizational review and evaluation, considering the health of the movement as a community in the light of Scripture

organisational development values

Developing effective leaders using biblical models

De-centralized structures — empowering the grass roots as much as possible

Building and encouraging sustainable organisations

Transparency and integrity in all relationships (openness and accountability)

Collaboration — promoting breadth of ownership and involvement of all relevant stakeholders

3. GLOBAL PARTNERSHIPS

invest in excellence: working in partnership and unity, as God intended

As living stones being built into a spiritual house acceptable to God, IFES will seek to work in partnership within the Fellowship and with others as an expression of our unity in Christ.

Recognising that strong growth needs firm foundations, we will invest in identifying and initiating excellence and best practice.

identify

- Map existing and potential partnerships on all levels, including global and local, churches, Christian agencies, and support partnerships
- Map existing and potential cross-cultural exchange opportunities within IFES, intra-regionally and inter-regionally
- Consult with existing partners over strengthening relationships and working towards unity on campus
- Explore current models and work towards increased and more mutually beneficial partnerships
- Inform future planning through better understanding of effective partnerships

initiate

- Consult between IFES regional training institutes and other training initiatives with a view to improving the cross-fertilization of ideas and benefits
- Make more effective use of resources, with improved mutual accountability and reporting systems
- Work together with other Christian agencies with whom we share beliefs and mission in order to reduce duplication and to ensure a more comprehensive cover of the University with gospel work
- Support reconciliation efforts through partnerships and relationships, recognising that, in turn, partnerships are also strengthened through reconciliation
- Promote ministry to international students as a means of building and enhancing partnerships and reconciliation

4. HUMAN RESOURCES AND PASTORAL CARE

invest in excellence: people valued and supported to serve God effectively

As IFES, we affirm that our people are our most precious resource. We recognise that people need caring for in all aspects of their lives: spiritual, physical, emotional, social, financial and professional. We are committed to caring for one another, seeking to promote growth and wholeness and to release the gifts and abilities that God has granted us.

Recognising that strong growth needs firm foundations, we will invest in identifying and initiating excellence and best practice.

identify

- Identify and implement principles of best practices in caring for students, staff and volunteers, and in receiving and sending workers across the Fellowship
- Review and improve our provision of support, supervision and evaluation to ensure that the needs of the whole person are addressed appropriately. These include:
 - self care (prayer life, self awareness, personal time, holidays)
 - physical, emotional, spiritual health
 - appropriate fit in terms of character, conviction and competencies
 - clarity of respective roles and responsibilities

initiate

We affirm the value of our staff and commit to caring for them, so they can, in turn, invest in students and release student initiative.

- Care for staff in their family context, including the particular needs of single staff and the importance of stability in marriage and family life
- Promote strategic partnerships to provide opportunities for better pastoral care
- Ensure staff have current job descriptions, and development reviews that include opportunity for ongoing training and growth
- Develop ways of sharpening self-awareness and interpersonal skills

5. RESEARCH AND INNOVATION

invest in excellence: continuous and creative innovation, informed by strong research

We are a learning organisation called to engage the University and the fast-changing cultures of our time. Building on the lessons of our history and reflecting on current issues, IFES is committed to research and innovation as critical components of effective ministry.

Recognising that strong growth needs firm foundations, we will invest in identifying and initiating excellence and best practice.

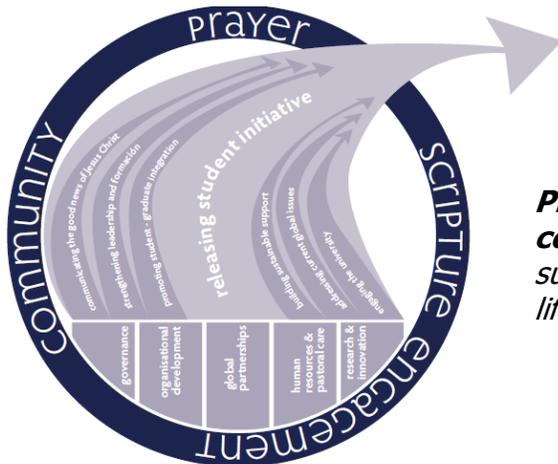
identify

- Define strategic areas for research which will promote innovation that enhances our ministry
- Gather and archive data to accurately document our history, both internationally and nationally
- Develop databases of professionals (for example sociologists, historians, journalists) to assist with research and innovation projects

initiate

- Involve students as sources of knowledge and innovation
- Promote innovation that enhances our ministry
- Learn from research and history to help us innovate for the future, reflect on issues affecting culture and the University, and enhance our ministry
- Promote a culture of reading and reflection
- Make effective use of appropriate new technologies
- Launch a process for effectively sharing the results of research, particularly cross-regionally
- Promote initiatives to enable developing movements to be fully involved in research and innovation

Core commitments



Prayer, scripture engagement and community are the core commitments surrounding and supporting every aspect of IFES life.

SCRIPTURE ENGAGEMENT

*Therefore go and make disciples of all nations ... teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age.
Matthew 28:19-20*

The gospel narratives make it clear that true disciples are known by their fruits, which come from obedience to all the teaching of Jesus. We want to see our staff and students grow in their relationship with God through personal Bible study and prayer, and deep theological reflection.

We are committed to being shaped by Scripture and will seek to achieve relevant application in all our areas of ministry and engagement. We will encourage students to be Bible readers – believers who use Scripture and apply biblical truths in their lives – through:

- modelling and training
- innovative and contextually appropriate Bible studies
- promoting patterns of regularity and discipline in their spiritual lives.

We will provide Scripture freely to those with whom we share the gospel, seeking partnership and unity with Bible societies, theological institutions and other student mission organisations, recognising our pan-denominational nature

CORE COMMITMENTS

PRAYER

*My house will be called a house of prayer for all nations.
Isaiah 56:7*

We are absolutely dependent on God's help and direction in all our plans, so we must regularly and corporately seek God's will for the Fellowship.

Prayer is an expression of our community in the IFES family. As students, staff and supporters, we are called to be praying communities, open to the Holy Spirit's guidance and offering praise and thanksgiving for prayers that have been answered.

We will have regular and up-to-date prayer news supplied through printed materials, electronic means, prayer events, creatively encouraging all places where IFES people meet and work to engage daily in corporate prayer for different parts of the Fellowship's work. We will promote partnership in prayer throughout the Fellowship through World Student Day

COMMUNITY

*For just as each of us has one body with many members...
so in Christ we, though many, form one body, and each member belongs to all the others.
Romans 12:5*

Our identity is in Christ, who binds us together as family, as people of God.

We are 'living stones' – modelled after Jesus, being built together into a spiritual house that will honour and glorify his name. One stone alone cannot create the building. Under God, we are called to work and grow together to achieve our vision.

As part of the wider Christian Church community, the body of Christ, we model the unity that Christ has made possible between people from a variety of church backgrounds and nations.

In our community we must be counter-cultural, witnessing to the reality of the kingdom of God.

What we believe

As a community, we are united around our doctrinal basis, the central truths of Christianity, as revealed in Scripture, including:

- The unity of the Father, Son and Holy Spirit in the Godhead
- The sovereignty of God in creation, revelation, redemption and final judgment
- The divine inspiration and entire trustworthiness of Holy Scripture, as originally given, and its supreme authority in all matters of faith and conduct
- The universal sinfulness and guilt of all people since the fall, rendering them subject to God's wrath and condemnation
- Redemption from the guilt, penalty, dominion and pollution of sin, solely through the sacrificial death (as our representative and substitute) of the Lord Jesus Christ, the incarnate Son of God
- The bodily resurrection of the Lord Jesus Christ from the dead and his ascension to the right hand of God the Father
- The presence and power of the Holy Spirit in the work of regeneration
- The justification of the sinner by the grace of God through faith alone
- The indwelling and work of the Holy Spirit in the believer
- The one holy universal Church which is the body of Christ and to which all true believers belong
- The expectation of the personal return of the Lord Jesus Christ