

"...IT ERUPTED IN WORSHIP OF HIM WHO LOVES US. BUT THIS WAS NOT THE END; THE CHALLENGE IS NOW TO BRING OUR EVER-FORMING CHRISTIAN MINDS INTO THE WORLD WITH US AS WE JOIN IN ON GOD'S REDEMPTION PLAN!"

MARK, RELAY WORKER IN DUBLIN

PRAYER NEWS

MAR/APR
2008



Welcome to the March-April edition of Prayer News. Easter brings with it hope and promise of new life, in the student world too this theme is evident. There have been new events, students across the island are in the midst of choosing new leaders in preparation for econ (our leadership training conference), and many CUs are finding creative ways of living and communicating this new life. Blindfolded students from TCD CU, symbolising an apology for the Church's blindness to issues of racism and HIV/AIDS, caused a stir as they publicised their 'Grace week' – a variety of events and a Christianity Explained Course aimed at introducing their friends to Jesus. We also celebrate new life in Stranmillis as two CU members have seen their five house-mates become Christians or recommit their lives to Christ. However, in the midst of these signs of hope, many students will struggle to finish the year well in the face of opposition and heavy workloads. We value your partnership with us as we pray, give and work to see more students transformed by encountering Jesus and experiencing new life.



Learning to Lead

PATRICK, DUBLIN STAFF WORKER, WRITES...

All around the world nations are voting for new leaders, disputing the authority of others and arguing with each other on the basis of policies that their leaders have pursued. But where does leadership begin?

The Bible tells us much about leadership; from practical advice that Paul gives on the governance of churches, to epic leadership struggles that involved rebuilding the walls of Jerusalem (Nehemiah), lobbying a king to change a discriminatory law (Esther) to choosing the best people to oversee a food distribution programme (Acts 6). But the greatest example of leadership is, not surprisingly, that of Jesus.

He displayed an insight for leadership development that any HR Manager would envy: choosing the next generation of leaders of his organisation at an early age, spending countless hours teaching them and living with them, exposing them to many diverse and challenging situations and giving them tasks of responsibility followed by critical feedback (Luke 10). Slowly, yet thoroughly, he prepared them for the immense task that lay ahead of them - that of making disciples of all nations.

But his ultimate example to them, of leading by serving which resulted in his going to the cross, really was the most powerful, life-changing event in their lives. It is from this place of understanding Jesus' wonderful sacrifice for us and our great calling from him that all our teaching and practice of leadership comes.

Each year e:con sets out to provide excellent Biblical teaching on what true leadership is, for students who are involved in any aspect of leadership in their CU. This year Jason Lane from Innovista will be speaking on the theology of leadership, and facilitating workshops, as we take the theory of leadership and look at it in practice in a CU context.

Many 18-22 year old CU leaders are immensely gifted with all kinds of skills, including those of leadership. But few have been given front-line experience, taking on individual responsibility and making decisions as part of a team. CU is a great learning environment for the difficult lessons of leadership, a place where we see our strengths and weaknesses and wrestle with the fact that our attitudes and actions are often not aligned. This is an exciting time in the lives of our future leaders, as the lessons learned here will impact the workplace and the local church for years to come.

Reflections on Relay

JUDE, RELAY WORKER IN BELFAST, WRITES...

I am now halfway through my year as a Relay worker and I thank God for placing me here! He has been teaching me so much about his grace, his faithfulness, the power of prayer and the good news that Jesus is Lord! I am thankful for how I have seen Him working in my life but also in the lives of the students around me. Before Christmas, a fresher, who was really struggling





ABOVE:
2007/08 Relay
Team

with many things, gave her life back to Christ after having fallen away. It's been such a blessing to see God's grace at work in her life. Please pray that she will continue to know who Jesus is and learn what it means to follow Him.

It has been a joy to spend time with students and to learn from and be inspired by their passionate faith. I came to Relay thinking I would be doing the 'giving' but instead I have been given so much. It's been a blessing to be able to watch Christian students press on to know Jesus more and live for Him, and to be able to encourage them, as they also encourage me!

RELAY is a great opportunity for recent graduates to grow in their faith and serve God and others in a student context. Please pray that God would provide 5 or 6 Relay workers for the next academic year. The closing date for applications for 2008/09 is 31st March. More information is available from Karen in the Belfast office.

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JUDE, RELAY WORKER IN BELFAST

Mind Your Head

*The 'Mind your Head' conference took place in Maynooth from 1-3 February
MARK, RELAY WORKER IN DUBLIN, WRITES...*

The challenge of the conference was clear: all things come under the Lordship of Christ! Stephen Williams laid the groundwork; asking big questions of our minds, challenging us to see the world in a new way. It was on this basis that we examined questions of art, science, business, environmental concerns and faith in a plural society. Each of the seminars provided much food for thought, pushing us out of our comfort zones into a world where Jesus is Lord. This was reinforced by engagement with the creative arts, both through an art installation from NCAD CU and a singer-songwriter/DJ night. As our minds were filled with wonderful new ideas it erupted in worship of Him who loves us. But this was not the end; the challenge is now to bring our ever-forming Christian minds into the world with us as we join in on God's redemption plan!

BELOW:
Interacting with
NCAD's art
installation at
'Mind your
Head'.

God, How Can I Know You?

JEN FROM QUB CU WRITES...

This year in Queen's CU we spent the first semester exploring and wrestling with the Sermon on the Mount in small groups and main meetings, encouraging the CU members to build relationships with students in their classes, clubs and societies and halls. We want to be people who demonstrate Christ in how we live, love and serve one another. This semester we have planned a series of



events tackling common objections to Christianity, providing CU members with opportunities for deeper discussion with their non-Christian friends who they invite along to the events, and provoking further thinking about Christianity.

We kicked off the series with a gig in the Students' Union hosted by Steve Stockman (a local chaplain and author) where local bands played songs that explore the theme of redemption. The other weeks looked at suffering and science & faith, and will finish in early March with evenings exploring the questions 'Do all religions lead to God?' and 'God, how can I know you?' I am personally very excited about this series, not only the evangelistic aspect but also the training it provides so that we will be better equipped to deal with these frequently asked questions. Alongside our main meeting we are running a Christianity Explored course, which allows a more personal response to questions that people may have. We trust that God will use these events to build His kingdom and do immeasurably more than we could ever imagine as a result of the CU members' relationships with their friends.



Going Global - 2008 Summer Teams

SAM WRITES...

Many of us can identify experiences of short term teams as significant to our growth and understanding of mission and the global church. We pray this will prove to be the case for all involved in four IFES Ireland teams this summer.

Lorraine will once again lead the Encounter team in Greystones, with two weeks discipleship and two weeks outreach partnering with local churches around Ireland. Our link with Peru continues as Sam and Emily (TCD) lead a team to work alongside AGEUP (Peruvian IFES movement) in reconstruction and outreach in the Ica region (devastated by a huge earthquake last year). Two new European teams complete the picture - to Paris, led by Rachel partnering with GBU to reach out to French students, and to Rome led by Patrick with a focus on reaching international students. We would appreciate your prayers in recruiting Irish students for these teams, for a good north-south mix on each team, and for those leading teams as they plan, fundraise and prepare.

STAFF & RELAY: Adam Jones - Director/Hollie Steele - Staff Worker, Belfast/James Fleury - Relay, Munster/Jessica McCall - Dublin InterAction Team Leader/Judith Orr - Relay, Belfast/ Jürgen Karwig - Relay, Munster/Karen Buttimer - Communications Administrator/Lorraine Wylie - Staff Worker, Dublin/Mark Gorman - Relay, Dublin/Patrick Boland - Staff Worker, Dublin/Paul Gibson - Relay, North-West/ Peter Kenny - Staff Worker, Munster/ Rachel Gilmore - Staff Worker, North-West/Sally Patty - Finance & Personnel Administrator/Sam Moore - Project Manager/Steve Skinner - Staff Worker, Belfast

KEY TO ABBREVIATIONS: Church of Ireland College of Education(CICE); Cork Institute of Technology(CIT); Dublin City University (DCU); Dublin Institute of Technology(DIT); International Friendship Association(IFA); National College of Art and Design(NCAD); National University of Ireland, Galway (NUIG); National University of Ireland, Maynooth (NUIIM); Queen's University Belfast (QUB); Royal College of Surgeons Ireland(RCSI); Trinity College Dublin(TCD); University College Cork(UCC); University College Dublin(UCD); University of Limerick(UL); University of Ulster, Belfast (Art College) (UUB); University of Ulster, Coleraine(UUC); University of Ulster, Jordanstown(UJU); University of Ulster, Magee(UUM); Waterford Institute of Technology(WIT).

MARCH 1-10

- 1st-2nd – Adam will be speaking at the mission event ‘Your Move’ in Newbridge and Dublin. Pray for clarity as he speaks on ‘The Call to Go’ from Romans 10:14-15.
- Pray for God’s hand over all of the students in CICE as they continue their teaching practise. It can be a very stressful time, making it difficult to take time out to spend with God. Pray that the CU members would encourage each other and their fellow students.
- CUs are holding nominations and choosing new committees. Please pray for wisdom, grace and discernment for all those involved in this process.
- UUB CU are trying to encourage the CU members to take the initiative and lead some of the Bible studies and prayer times this semester. Pray for those who are willing to lead, that they would grow from the experience and be encouraged as they explore God’s Word and as they pray for and reach out to the college.
- UL CU ask for prayer that small group Bible studies including “The Truth Project” (a DVD series on having a biblical worldview) would transform them for God’s glory.
- Over the coming weeks Patrick is speaking in NUIG on the Last Supper, CICE on Guidance, and also in Trinity. Pray that he will find time to prepare all of these talks in the midst of leading the planning team for e:con.

MARCH 11-20

- 11th – Daire Killian (former Munster staff worker) is speaking at DCU CU on “What was the point of St. Patrick”. Pray that CU members would make the most of this opportunity to invite friends and classmates along.
- 11th – Workspace takes place in Common Grounds, Belfast at 7.30pm. “In transition – finding your place” aims to help and encourage final years and recent graduates as they move from university to the world of work.
- Pray for final year students at Stranmillis as they think about finding a job next year and begin their

last period of teaching practice over the next months.

- Maynooth CU are starting up a new Bible study for men. Pray that this would be helpful for those who attend.
- Pray that God would provide a leader and new members for the Dublin InterAction team next year. Pray for guidance for current team members as they make decisions about their future and whether or not to move on at the end of this academic year.
- 15th-22nd – Patrick is taking a group of guys from DIT CU and 15 of their friends from college snowboarding in Italy. Each evening they will be looking at the life and parables of Jesus. Pray for this time of discussion and reflection especially as most on the trip are not yet Christians.

MARCH 21-31

- 20th-25th – ‘Because of Love’, the IFES European Student Evangelism Conference, takes place in Linz, Austria. Pray for staff and students from Ireland as they attend.
- Pray that committee members would finish their year well. It can be difficult to balance study, CU and other commitments both in smaller colleges where there are few people on the committee to oversee everything and in larger CUs where the committees are leading groups of several hundred students.
- 22nd – IFA are taking a group of international students to the Ulster American Folk Park. Please pray for safe travel and good relationships to continue to develop.
- RCSI CU are proposing the addition of a theological/philosophical wing to the existing college library. Pray that the addition of this literature would be used by God to shape the minds of future medical professionals.
- The CU in Belfast’s Art college ask for guidance and wisdom as they decide what CU will look like next year. At present they have only one person to lead it. Pray that God would call people to step up and take over leadership for next year.
- 27th-29th – e:con takes place in Dublin. Pray that the practicalities of the accommodation in Dublin



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city centre will work out and that the venue will add to the atmosphere of learning and development that all our conferences seek to pursue.

APRIL 1-10

- Praise God for the Chinese student who became a Christian during UUC CU's internationals work in the early weeks of semester 1. He has since started a Bible Study with other Asian students.
- Praise God for the fresh opportunities that Peter has been afforded to meet up with students, which he didn't foresee.
- DIT CU are organising more social events for the members of the CU so that they can further get to know each other. These events also give members the opportunity to bring along friends and possibly the chance to talk further with them about Christianity, their personal relationship with God and what it means to them.
- Give thanks for the ongoing opportunities which UJJ CU members have within their classes and amongst various university staff. An article about CU is to be released in the new edition of the University magazine. Pray that God will use this message to impact the students who read it.
- Pray for good follow up to TCD CU's Grace Week that took place in January. The drama that the CU performed on the steps of the church got a great write-up in a college paper. Pray for students to pursue conversations with their friends and for God to draw more TCD students to himself.

APRIL 11-20

- WIT CU are trying to organise a Christian band to come and play in the college bar. CU members will be outside giving out tea and coffee to the students. Pray that people will come and that this event will raise the profile of the CU on campus.
- Pray for the students at Stranmillis who have recently become Christians - that they would allow themselves time to grow in understanding and their relationship with God. Also pray that God would bring clarity amidst any confusion.
- RCSI Christian Union plan to use Donald Whitney's

book 'How can I be sure I'm a Christian' in their weekly book study over the course of the semester. Pray that this book would encourage and affirm, convict and challenge, and help to dispel any false assumptions about the Christian faith.

- Pray for James as he continues to meet 1-2-1 with students in UCC and CIT for Bible study each week. Pray that these times together would be encouraging and helpful.
- This semester a number of the UJJ CU small groups will be working in the community, visiting local nursing homes and being active on campus. Pray that they may have opportunities to share God's love and to talk to people.
- Please pray for Adam as he meets with IFES and UCCF staff in Oxford and Leicester this week.

APRIL 21-30

- Samuel from UL CU writes "Pray that many people would come to morning prayer meetings and prayer triplets and that we would see clearly God's response to our prayers and give Him the praise He deserves".
- Pray for those who came along to the evangelistic series run by QUB CU during February and March. Pray that the Holy Spirit will move and convict the hearts of the students at Queen's.
- As UJJ CU study the Ten Commandments this term, pray that God would continually teach and challenge them.
- Pray that weekly group discussions in CIT CU would help them better understand how to study and engage with the Bible.
- 25th – Friends International invite you to meet their new staff worker, Kerry Fee, at 7.30pm in Belfast Bible College. Pray for Kerry as she works with churches and CUs in Northern Ireland to reach international students.
- The CU in WIT have a very good relationship with Michael and Robin in the WIT Clubs and Societies office. Pray that this relationship will continue and be strengthened and that the SU will notice a difference in the way the CU members live their lives.