

"...AN INCREDIBLY HELPFUL TOOL"  
Mission Weeks



UNDIVIDED:  
IFES Europe  
Evangelism  
Conference



IFES Ireland: the Christian Unions

# review '12

## Director's Report

WHAT A YEAR IT HAS BEEN! It has been like running a year-long marathon, with many twists and turns, times of endurance, long hard hours, pushing oneself up a hill and enjoying the exhilarating relief of going over the top! With the odd setback and injury, overtaking and being overtaken there is that fixation and focus on the finishing line! No, I have not gone mad, but am rather describing the reality of many of our CU students, Relay and CU Staff Workers. Paul urges us to fix our eyes on Jesus... to run the race with perseverance! This is a precious reminder for our fellowship.

The year actually started in Krakow, Poland. Delegates from 120+ IFES movements around the world gathered for the quadrennial World Assembly, for fellowship, envisioning and to hear the call to proclaim Jesus Christ Lord of the Universe, Lord of the university. This theme was duly celebrated as our Polish IFES hosts, ChSA Poland, demonstrated clearly how much has changed in Europe since the fall of the Berlin wall. But there were also powerful reminders from around the world that living for Christ is tough in many places.

### IFES Ireland: Collaboration

Closer to home, the staff, their families and the Relay and Interaction teams gathered for our Staff and Families conference in Athlone. It was a privilege to have veteran student evangelist Michael Green and his wife Rosemary join us for training and preparation for the year. Indeed, as a fellowship we are so grateful for the many church leaders and university speakers who support our fellowship of CUs. Such partnership and collaboration is vital as we seek to encourage students to reach their fellow students with the gospel.

### IFES Ireland: The Christian Unions

It is so encouraging to be able to share with you stories of courage and faith as we continue to hear of students coming to faith or getting grounded in their faith in their university years. The CUs continue to be places where faith is forged

"...THE CUs CONTINUE TO BE PLACES WHERE FAITH IS FORGED AND GIFTS ARE EXERCISED..."

and gifts are exercised, where unity is celebrated for the sake of the gospel and minds are stretched, as through fellowship and Bible study, students wrestle together with the hard realities of living in today's world.

Many of the larger CUs around Ireland held Mission Weeks; a variety of lunch time and evening events, often including food, music and even the odd football game! Several CUs held debates on campus, often collaborating with other student societies, seeking to engage biblically with provoking issues. Several Islamic societies have become fairly vocal on campus, challenging some CUs to debates and dialogue. Some of the more fruitful times have simply been when a CU Staff or Relay Worker has sat down with a student with an open Bible.

### IFES Ireland: Conferences... See you there!

The student year is punctuated by conferences. This year the Belfast CUs held a joint term; 3 days in Castlewelling Castle of Bible teaching, a load of fun and a chance to meet and envision student freshers for the year ahead. Many CUs held their own weekends away. In the ROI, 80+ students attended this year's Joint Colleges Conference; Crossing Frontiers had world mission as its theme as students heard compelling Bible teaching from Jonathan Lamb.

However, much of the year was spent planning for a new conference: the CU Annual Conference or CUAC; a place to gather grow and go. Our focus was on the Cross, exploring

how One Death Won Life. Over 170 students and staff gathered to hear former IFES World general secretary, Lindsay Brown preach from Philippians. Others speakers included Davood Kami (Islam), Jonathan Berry (True Freedom Trust), Chris Kennedy (Critical Thinking), CMF (Ethics), Ann Brown (Arts) Christoph and Claire Ebbinghaus (Church) and Patrick Mitchel (Reformation), to name just a few, as we sought to bring the central truths of the Cross to every area of our lives and thinking. The weekend was packed with seminars, group discussions, Presidents Forum, Open Mic night, our very own Late Late Late show and some mooing cows! God really blessed the weekend. Please pray for the next CU Annual Conference, which will focus on The Church, with speaker Maurice McCracken (former head of Relay with UCCF). This conference

will reflect some of the issues which surfaced during our recent survey of 100's of students regarding their views and attitudes to the local church. We pray this conference will greatly strengthen the church in Ireland.

One final conference worth mentioning was the IFES Europe Evangelism Conference,



"...WHERE UNITY IS CELEBRATED FOR THE SAKE OF THE GOSPEL AND MINDS ARE STRETCHED..."



Undivided, held over Easter in Hungary. Over 20 staff and students from Ireland joined the 2000+ students to hear speakers like John Lennox and Peter Singer.

### IFES Ireland: A Fellowship

IFES Ireland: The Christian Unions is of course ultimately a fellowship of students, CU Staff Workers, Relay and Interaction team volunteers, Board members and supporters, within a family of CU movements worldwide. This year we are saying thank you and farewell to CUSWs Phil Howe (Belfast), Kieron Lynch (Dublin) and Peter Kenny (Munster). Phil is now with SUNI, Kieron is joining the staff of Immanuel Church Dublin and Peter plans to complete his Masters in the US. We are also sorry to say farewell to Sarah Keene (Dublin Office). Moving on too are Relay Workers Sam, Hannah, Fi, Sinéad and Christina and Stefan, Emma and Bryan from the Interaction team. We extend our thanks to them, their families and to God, for their ministry within the fellowship.

### IFES Ireland: a Continuing Ministry

As we look ahead we face many challenges and some tremendous opportunities, with a new Relay team and a changing staff and CU leaders team. As Ireland faces significant financial challenges, so do we. We will be carrying a vacancy in the Dublin area, which will be a great challenge to staff and CU leaders as we support the 9-11 CUs in the region. However, we are very much looking forward to a new Gospel Project: Uncover. 100s of copies of Luke's Gospels will be read through evangelistic Bible studies and special CU events. Take a look for yourself: <http://www.uccf.org.uk/media/uncover.htm>

As you read on, please be part of this continuing ministry of CUs as Mission Teams on Campus for this and future generations of students, as together we run with perseverance the race marked out for us. Let us fix our eyes on Jesus. Hebrews 12

Adam Jones

May 2012

"...AS THROUGH FELLOWSHIP AND BIBLE STUDY, STUDENTS WRESTLE TOGETHER WITH THE HARD REALITIES OF LIVING IN TODAY'S WORLD."

Gyor, Hungary

## Undivided: IFES EUROPE EVANGELISM CONFERENCE EASTER 2012

DEBORA ROEHL, DCU & CATRIN PETHERBRIDGE

It's a sunny and crisp morning. Hundreds of students from all the corners of Europe are standing there at the entrance wondering why they have to wait. Why are there barriers everywhere? Did something happen? A voice silences the murmur: "Do not be afraid, for I know that you are looking for Jesus, who was crucified. He is not here; he has risen, just as he said. Come and see the place where he lay." (Mat.28:5-6) - "Go! Run, see it yourself!" The crowd starts to run. A deep prayerful silence welcomes us in the hall. The tomb was empty, He is risen indeed!

This was Easter morning at the IFES Europe Student Evangelism Conference, Undivided 2012 in Hungary. 2000 students from all over Europe gathered to be encouraged and strengthened in their relationship with God and to grow in personal evangelism. Over 4 mornings we had the privilege of listening to John Lennox talking to us about Idolatry and Worship.

Each morning after the main teaching we broke into 'response groups'. There were options for all kind of processors: Q&A with the speaker, in depth study of the Bible passage, engaging creatively through the arts - painting and sculpting, prayer, silent

meditation, written responses, and relating the talks to the big questions of our time, in which we spent 1.5 hours each morning digesting and applying what we had just heard.

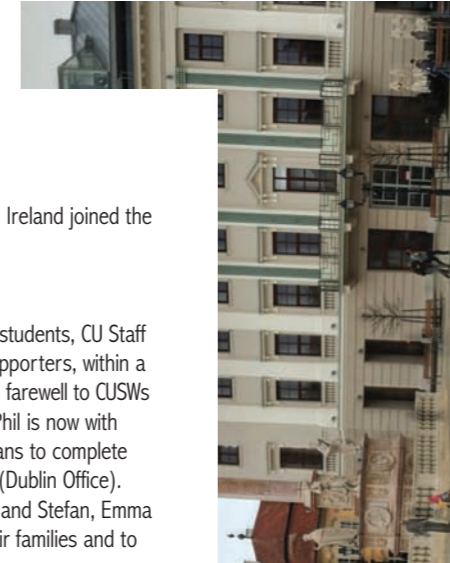
In the afternoons we were spoiled with a wealth of seminar and workshop choices ranging from 'Money, Power and Evangelism', 'Christian Ethics', 'Reconciliation and Nationalism', 'Reading the Bible with Joy', 'The Person of Christ', 'The Mark Drama', 'Mission Possible: Studying the Bible with Non-Christians', 'Facebook Evangelism: Do Social Networks help or hinder us in the spreading of the Gospel?' and many many more!

We were constantly challenged to think about the bigger picture, to consider how we can be faithful to God's mission in our local contexts but also to go to the

ends of Europe (and the earth!) with programmes such as IFES InterAction at the 'Mission Marketplace', an interactive space to listen and share ideas and experiences of fellow students in evangelism and service.

I, Debora, am going to Mexico for my year abroad in August. Two Mexican IFES Staff Workers were at Undivided and I was able to meet them. They were there as we took an offering and stood 'undivided' with our brothers and sisters in Latin America - to support their training conference coming up in November. It was a privilege to be able to intercede and share resources that will be used by our God all around the globe to continue to change lives for his glory. As for me, I am excited at how God is guiding me and shaping the year ahead. I hope to travel to the Mexican national conference in July and I pray that God will use me next year to start up a CU at the university I will be attending and put into practise what I took away from Undivided.

"GO! RUN, SEE IT YOURSELF!"  
...A DEEP PRAYERFUL SILENCE WELCOMES US IN THE HALL.  
...THE TOMB WAS EMPTY, HE IS RISEN INDEED!





## Mission Weeks on Campus

RACHEL LOGAN

Statistically the majority of evangelical christians make a personal conversion before the age of 21. Universities are filled with the latest secular ideas and theories and we believe it should likewise be a place at the forefront of mission to national and international students. We believe firmly that evangelism isn't simply an event. We actively encourage students to reach their peers in every daily activity and conversation that they have; to aid this we have seen the need for organized events.

These efforts have taken many different forms, from one on one exploration of the Bible with non-christians, or specific events to which students can bring their friends, which are designed to ask the big questions that this generation of students is facing. The aim is always to bring the gospel to students in culturally relevant ways, while in no way diluting Jesus. These Mission Weeks or Events Weeks are designed so that students can bring friends to talks or events, which are looking at the questions they are asking through a biblically shaped worldview. For example: Why does God allow suffering? Does God hate science? Is our identity tied to our sexuality?

One of the main forms these have taken is 'lunchbars': a free lunch

is provided for each student and a speaker delivers a twenty minutes apologetics talk on the question being asked. There is then time for Q&A. Lunchbars have proved to be a great resource as they give christian students a place to bring friends with whom they have been discussing such questions already. The non-christian students are able to ask questions of speakers who have thought these core issues through and are given a forum to ask questions which they may have feared would offend their christian friends. The CU takes follow-up of events extremely seriously; there is no point in opening up big questions in the hope people will come out the door without an opportunity to continue the discussions in a focused and directed way. People will obviously continue to talk to their christian friends who brought them but we will also encourage them to come to group exploration of the Bible. There is also follow-up provided for those who have become christians so that they can grow in their new found faith.

After a recent Mission Week the students teamed together to record their experiences of the week, declaring: "It was a really good way to get

## CU Annual Conference: ONE DEATH WON LIFE

PHIL CAIRNDUFF UUC

On Friday 30th March, 160 students from CUs from Coleraine to Cork set off for the first ever CU Annual Conference in Dublin. For some it was a short jaunt down the road, for others, a long trip across the island. We all made it to the capital, in eager anticipation for what was to be a fantastic weekend focused on the The Cross, with the tagline 'One Death Won Life.'

Our speaker was Lindsay Brown, the former general secretary of IFES World. He has been involved in ministry in universities throughout the world, crossing paths with many students who have suffered for the sake of the gospel. He was therefore well placed to speak to us on the key messages of Philippians with his talks focusing on rejoicing in times of suffering, understanding the person and work of Christ and justification by faith and how we should respond to this. With Easter being so close, it was helpful to focus on how Christ's

suffering death on the cross, brought many sons to glory (Hebrews 2:10).

The packed programme also included workshops and seminars on a great number of contemporary issues - some familiar such as 'Witnessing in the Work Place' and 'Money' to more recent challenges facing Christian students such as 'Engaging with Islam' and 'Walking with Gay Friends.' As people chatted to each other about which seminar and workshop they had signed up for, it was clear that some were keen to build on their enthusiasm for a particular area of student mission, while others were grasping the opportunity to learn about something completely new to them. Whatever the case, everyone found something they would enjoy! Small group discussions allowed more connections to be made over challenging Bible studies on topics such as 'atonement' and 'redemption.' Members from all CUs were involved in introducing the various sessions and we got to hear about what

each was getting involved in, allowing us to support each another through prayer.

We also, quite rightly, made room for light-hearted activity, such as a The Late Late Late show, with a number of informal interviews on Friday night and much laughter and cheering on Saturday, when different students entertained us with their impressive talents.

If there's one thing I took away from the conference, it would be this: the value of CU fellowship was unmistakable this weekend as new relationships were formed and experiences, hopes and dreams for student ministry across Ireland were shared. It is my prayer that this conference will continue for years to come and many more will get to experience the excitement that all of us at the first one had, as we were reminded that we are all key players in a global network of student Mission Teams on Campus.

## From the Board



STEPHEN GARDINER – CHAIRMAN

"Partnership in the gospel" is something Paul greatly valued from the Philippian Christians (Phil 1:5), and it's vital to the work of IFES Ireland: the Christian Unions. Your prayer and financial support are crucial as the work among students in Ireland continues to grow. Despite the economic downturn, which naturally puts strain on our resources, the opportunities are vast. There are more third-level students than ever before, more Christian Unions, and a greater diversity of cultural and religious backgrounds. An example of new openings was the recent debate on "Who was Jesus?" in my own university co-hosted by UCD CU and the Islamic Society. About 300 students heard a clear defence of the reliability of the New Testament and a winsome presentation of the Good News about Jesus by Jay Smith.

It is among the Board's responsibilities to consider how the movement can best respond to such changing social, economic and religious circumstances, while remaining faithful to biblical truth. Student leadership of CUs remains a central value for us, and we always have two student representatives on the Board: this year we welcomed Emma McAllister (QUB) and Pete Gardner (TCD), in place of Tom Campbell and Ross Coulter. We are also grateful for the many contributions of outgoing members Gareth Irwin, Bruce Harley and Rev John Woodside, while welcoming Hazel Reid to our number. A particular word of appreciation must go Bruce, who served as Vice Chair for 11 years. Our new Vice Chair will be Jim Crookes, who has already brought a wealth of insights to our meetings. The Board is composed of members from various denominations with backgrounds in student ministry, theology, university lecturing and business, united by the desire to see students reaching students with the Good News about Jesus. Please pray for us as we seek to play our part in this partnership in the Gospel.

conversations going". One student commented: "Lunchbars have been packed out and it's been great to see students engaging, I had the opportunity today to talk to a girl who is a Marxist, and it was really great to show her the hope that we have and share my testimony with her."

Mission Weeks can involve many different components. One student enthused about his time going out on campus with questionnaires: "One conversation I had was with a student from the baha'i faith, he believes some things about Jesus, Buddha and others. It was brilliant as a Christian to share that we believe... Jesus is the Son of God. It was great to see his response."

Past Mission Weeks have had events such as movie nights, with titles like "Fear can hold you prisoner and hope can set you free". Ben, a final year student, then shared his testimony and the reason for the hope he had. Other nights have involved football tournaments where a student shared

why God was so important to him and commented afterwards: "...people listening wouldn't have come to anything else."

We have been really encouraged by previous Mission Weeks and are learning constantly how to improve. In this previous semester I had the privilege of visiting a mission in Liverpool University. It was great to get alongside students there and see their ideas and struggles in putting on a Mission Week. We saw many students responding to Jesus and it was great to be able to be encouraged and encourage a sister university, sharing ideas and experiences. The university campus in Liverpool was a lot more diverse in the religions represented and this was evident in the conversations that we had. It was a reminder again that christians need to be aware of what they believe and how to continually improve their engagement with others, especially those from other backgrounds. We have found Mission Weeks to be an incredibly helpful tool

to compliment and not substitute everyday sharing of who Jesus is and what He has done. They act as a springboard to Bible studies and deeper conversations. Please pray for CUs as they plan their Mission Weeks of 2012/2013, that we would see students coming to know Jesus across Ireland.

"...EVANGELISM ISN'T SIMPLY AN EVENT... [IT'S] IN EVERY DAILY ACTIVITY AND CONVERSATION... BUT MISSION WEEKS ARE AN INCREDIBLY HELPFUL TOOL"

## Financial summary 2011

The figures summarised here are based on the audited accounts for the year ended 31st August 2011 of IFES Ireland (NI) Trust and IFES Ireland (ROI) Trust.

Following on from a deficit in 2009/10, we have returned a modest surplus in 2010/2011. This surplus is due, in part, to the release of funds accrued in previous years. In the past year we have witnessed reductions in our regular gifts thus leading to a significant funding gap in our general income stream. We recognize that IFES Ireland, like many other mission agencies and charities, is feeling the squeeze on family budgets as people 'tighten their belts' in these difficult economic times. Therefore in light of anticipated financial difficulties and challenges for the coming year we have had to postpone the recruitment for the Dublin Staff vacancy in 2012/2013. As soon as our finances improve, we will fill the vacancy.

We are grateful to all who continue to partner with us prayerfully and financially. Thank you. Please continue to pray for the Board and Staff of IFES Ireland: The Christian Unions as they work on fundraising initiatives including staff support raising and 'This is not your cow' leaflet produced for students. All of this enables more students in Ireland to be inspired and equipped to follow Jesus.

INCOME	£
Gifts (individuals)	203,924
Churches	34,553
Trusts	29,572
For IFES	19,469
Tax (Gift Aid)	39,755
Other	14,027
<b>Total</b>	<b>£ 341,301</b>

EXPENDITURE	£
Salaries	242,580
Travel	25,996
Training	9,647
Student Conferences	-22
Communication	11,600
Office	8,544
Promotion	6,709
Fees	7,985
To IFES	19,142
Miscellaneous	3,664
<b>Total</b>	<b>£ 335,845</b>

**Surplus** £ 5,456

Exchange rate of 0.87 as per average 2009/10

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