



ANNUAL REVIEW 2015



CU Annual Conference 2015

SAVE THE DATE
CU ANNUAL
CONFERENCE
18-20 MARCH 2016



Thank you!

Thank you for being part of this adventure with us. We hope you are encouraged as you read of what God is doing in our universities and colleges.

Yours in His service,
David Montgomery
Director

A WORD FROM OUR BOARD CHAIRMAN

Change. Perhaps the best known words in the letter to the Hebrews are: *Jesus Christ is the same yesterday, today and forever.* Yet, though Jesus does not change, the gospel is all about change – changing lives, changing communities. And so our vision is to see students changed by encountering Jesus and then transforming their campus, society, and the world.

The previous verse in Hebrews commends leaders who were faithful, and the verse after warns against those who would follow different teachings. So we must never change our commitment to Scripture. One of our core values as a movement is dynamic engagement with the Bible; we long to see students understanding it well and having their lives shaped by its truth.

Values like these underpin the new 5-year plan that Monty and the Board have begun to implement. Amid the rapid changes taking place in Ireland our aim is to bring the timeless message of Jesus Christ in fresh and relevant ways to today's students.

Our prayer is that implementing this plan will help us to maintain a clear direction, engage with new openings, communicate in fresh ways, adapt to changing circumstances, and protect against new dangers to the work.

Some things never change: finance is always a challenge. We're working at the limit of our resources, but the opportunities for the gospel on campus have never been greater. Please pray for the Director, the staff team and the CUs, and for the resources they need for their work. And pray that the Board might guide the movement wisely through all this change.

Finally, we were delighted to have Kim Patterson (CIT) as our new RoI student representative this year. She and Johnny English (NI rep) have played a key link role between the Board to the new Student Council.

Stephen Gardiner
IFES Ireland Board Chairman

DIRECTOR'S VIEW



David Montgomery, Director

sounding board for papers and discussion documents that we have been putting together for CUs on some currently relevant topics such as Human Sexuality, Partnerships with Local Churches, Relationships with other Student Societies and Transitioning out of University.

Other issues that currently lie before us include: apologetics training, support for Postgraduate students, graduate preparation, and relationships with FE Colleges.

There are three ways in particular in which we continue to depend on, and appreciate the support of the wider church. Firstly, your ongoing prayers are vital for our work to thrive, particularly when so many of our students face increased cultural hostility and the Christian message is often misrepresented in the public sphere. Secondly, financially, we are indebted to all who give generously towards our work. The appointment in the North West has only been possible through the support of local churches, and in order to be able to release some money for necessary future development we have needed to make it a contractual obligation for staff to raise a percentage of their salary themselves. This is a new development but one that will both enable new churches and individuals

"We long to see all students exposed to the transforming power of the Good News of Christ."

to come on board as partners, and also, over time, hopefully allow us to appoint new staff where they are needed, particularly in the South and West. Thirdly, we value the ongoing insight and encouragement of all our supporters, and in the Autumn we will be bringing together a number of supporters and church leaders for a conversation about student ministry and how we might best rise to the challenges before us.

Finally, it is always important to be reminded that we are part of a worldwide family. This past year I had the privilege to speak in Belarus and in the Czech Republic. We had Irish students serving with the IFES Movements in Slovakia (Hannah Stewart) and Italy (Aoife Beville). In the summer, I will be attending the 8th IFES World Assembly in Mexico along with our Chairman and four students: Christy Reid (QUB), Katie Tener (JUC), Samuel Jackson (TCD) and Yasmin Finlay (UCD).

We were also able to send practical messages of support and financial help to the Estonian Movement and especially the Movements in Nepal (after the earthquake) and Kenya (after the massacre). It was a prayer meeting of the Kenyan IFES group (FOCUS) that was initially targeted by the gunmen in Garissa, with many students losing their lives. Such courage and sacrifice humbles us and inspires us. We give thanks for the freedom we have and pray for strength to be His faithful witnesses on the safer, but increasingly spiritually challenging, campuses of Ireland.

David Montgomery
Director

Mission, Message and Maturity

are the three key areas of Christian Union life and they underpin our current strategic framework as we seek to increase the effectiveness of Christian witness on the campuses of Ireland. We long to see all students exposed to the transforming power of the Good News of Christ, we want Christian students to be taught the Scriptures in a way which equips them to be campus witnesses, and we are committed to seeing them grow and develop in their faith so that they can serve the wider church in the years ahead.

This year has seen progress on all three fronts. Many CUs held missions, often using the highly effective *Uncover* Gospel tool, and we rejoice to see many students come to faith and experience God's grace for the first time. Our CU Annual Conference was held again in King's Hospital School, West Dublin and over 150 students from 17 universities gathered to hear teaching on the Trinity and participate in a variety of seminars crucial to living as a Christian on campus. Also a series of regional weekends, leadership training evenings, and countless one-on-ones with staff continue to resource our CU leaders and members to grow in their understanding and obedience as disciples of Jesus in one of the most challenging contexts for young believers - the contemporary university.

This has been a year of staff changes. Catrin Carolan leaves us after eight years in Dublin, Hannah Gamble leaves after three as Admin Assistant and Director's PA. And, as usual, our Relay and Interaction volunteers move on. It is a bittersweet time as we will miss them but wish them well for their future ministries. We look forward to welcoming four new Relay workers and while our Interaction team are not being replaced, we hope that our International Student Ministry will continue in partnership with local churches and Friends International and that new leadership will be in place within the year.

We are delighted to welcome Lorna Morrison to our northern team, and we wish Rachel Greer and Peter Kenny well as they take up their new roles as Regional Team Leader in Belfast and Dublin respectively.

This year I was delighted to see re-established our Student Council, of which you can read more in this Review. It has allowed us to get significant student opinion and analysis on our events, resources and strategy. It has also proved a good

FAREWELL CATRIN CAROLAN (NEE PETHERBRIDGE)

CATRIN, DUBLIN REGION TEAM LEADER AND STAFF WORKER

Eight years ago I was finishing my year on Relay with uccf: thechristianunions in Wales and preparing to come to Dublin. I agreed to a two year commitment working with international students with the newly pioneered InterAction team.

The reason I signed up for that year of evangelism and discipleship training on Relay was because I had grown and benefitted so much from my own time in university as an unsure 18 year old. What I saw in the CU were students my age convinced of the truth of the Bible and lordship of Jesus, and unashamed about sharing that with others. My 4 years in college were deeply transformative. I understood something of the crucial and strategic nature of this ministry, and wanted to continue being a part of it.

These convictions have never waned over the years. We need a constant, robust, gospel-focussed witness for Jesus on our campuses, giving each student an opportunity to hear and respond to the message of Christ.

I'm so thankful for my years with IFES Ireland; seeing God at work, for lives transformed, and many of those continuing to live for Him after graduation, seeing his Word come alive, and for prayers answered. I'm thankful for your partnership in the work, without which the ministry would crumble. For students, graduates, long-term supporters, team members and myself, Jude's prayer is also my own:

"To him who is able to keep you from stumbling and to present you before his glorious presence without fault and with great joy to the only God our Saviour be glory, majesty, power and authority, through Jesus Christ our Lord, before all ages, now and forevermore!"

Catrin and her husband Len are moving to Belfast in September where Len will be studying at Cornhill



Catrin Carolan

STUDENT COUNCIL REBOOTED



IFES Student Council

The IFES Ireland Student Council was formed in September 2014 and representatives from all regions in Ireland were chosen to meet four times a year to discuss the movement and the happenings of Christian Unions across the country.

The council was formed with the intention of increasing student involvement within the movement and using the experience of current and former committee members to shape the direction and purpose of IFES Ireland. The Student Council has three main roles: to provide and share information; to analyse the effectiveness of the movement and give constructive feedback to Monty, the director; to participate in the movement in a different context than before and to propose ideas to the board and staff workers. It has been an interesting year sitting on the board as a student representative and co-chairing the Student Council with Kim Patterson.

It has shown me a completely different side of IFES Ireland and has affirmed my stance that the organisation has a very large role to play in Ireland both with students and in churches. This year has been about finding our feet and working out what role we want the Student Council to have. So far we have planned and promoted Student Sunday in November and discussions are ongoing about how to engage with recent graduates. In a few years, I think the Student Council will be the one of the most effective and strategic backbones of the movement. **Jonny English**



INTERVIEW WITH LORNA MORRISON

Lorna- tell us a little about yourself and your background.

I am from Glengormley, and a member of Ballyhenry Presbyterian Church. After leaving school, I read English Literature and History at the University of Edinburgh for four years, before volunteering as an intern with Trinity Presbyterian Church in Letterkenny. I'm currently studying an MSc at Queen's University in Teaching English as a Secondary Language.

How important was the CU to you when you were a student?

When I studied in Edinburgh University, I went along to the main CU meetings for my first two years, and it was through CU events in my Fresher's Week, that

I made some of my closest friends. Our CU was quite sizable, and if I am honest, it wasn't a place where I felt at home, so I didn't get involved too much. In my first year though, I attended a Small Group, and I loved it. I was able to join fellow Christians to engage with the Bible and grow together in our faith, at such a formative time in our lives.

You worked for a year in Letterkenny; how did your faith and convictions develop during that time?

I was in Letterkenny to encourage the growth and development of youth ministry within the congregation and assist the church to reach out to the local community in carrying out youth and children's work. It was a great opportunity to serve Him and His church in witnessing and mentoring young people, as they learn about God and for many, grow in their own walk with Him.

What are your hopes for the work, and how can we pray for you?

I hope I can be an encouragement, a support and a friend for students in the North West CUs, as they minister on their campuses. I'd appreciate your prayers as I get settled into the role and join the IFES team. Pray for safety, as I travel between the university campuses and for enthusiasm, energy, and wisdom. I ask that you pray for my own personal walk with God, and that I will continue to draw close to Him, to follow His path and remain true to the Bible and the work that He has entrusted to me.

FINANCIAL SUMMARY 2014

The figures summarised here are based on the audited accounts for the year ended 31st August 2014 of IFES Ireland (NI) Trust and IFES Ireland (ROI) Trust.

The financial and academic year 2013 – 2014 saw the appointment of Dr David Montgomery as Director. We carried two vacancies (Dublin & NorthWest) but despite this reduction in staff numbers IFES Ireland returned only a small surplus of £6,414 at the year end, August 2014. The Board recognised that change in leadership will affect income in the short term and have been working with Monty on a fundraising strategy to improve income streams in the future.

In the summer of 2014 we were delighted that we were able to appoint one new Dublin staff worker to fill the vacancy there, and a second to anticipate an imminent retirement in Aug 2015. Both new staff started in September 2014 and we continued to fundraise for the vacant NorthWest position. We are pleased that we met the target set by the Board in February 2015 and have successfully appointed a new staff worker to the NI team to start in September 2015.

We are grateful to all who continue to partner with us prayerfully and financially. Thank you. Please pray for others to catch the vision of 'inspiring and equipping students' and continue to pray for the Board, Director and Staff of IFES Ireland as we fundraise to secure the work of IFES Ireland for future generations. All of this work enables more students in Ireland to be inspired and equipped to follow Jesus.



Information on how to give to IFES Ireland can be found on our website at: www.ifesireland.org/giving

INCOME (£)

Gifts (individuals)	154,184
Churches	22,080
Trusts	22,300
For IFES World	28,466
Tax (Gift Aid)	35,830
Other	1,211
Total	264,071

EXPENDITURE (£)

Salaries (6 f/t & 1 p/t staff)	159,333
Travel	23,038
Training	5,427
Resources (inc CU Annual Conference)	2,726
Communication	11,913
Office	11,261
Governance Costs	7,541
To IFES World	30,407
Miscellaneous	6,013
Total	257,657
Surplus	6,414

Student Sunday.

On the way to your church this Autumn



Be part of Student Sunday this November and join churches across Ireland to **pray** for the ongoing student work and to **hear exciting stories** about the work God is doing on university campuses in Ireland from local CU students.

To get involved - contact either office of IFES Ireland (details below).



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