

Imperial College Christian Union- Summer Newsletter 2015

As the academic year draws to a close, it has been a delight to look back with thankful hearts at all that God has done. We hope that you will enjoy reading about what has gone on in the last two terms specifically, and will join us in praising God as a response.

Skeptical

After a long 3 weeks off for Christmas the CU threw itself back into the popular lunchbar event 'Skeptical'. We tackled some tough topics in this series, such as Bible reliability, how a good God can allow suffering, how it's right for God to punish sin, and what it means to have faith. We continually praise God for the growth we have seen in Skeptical over the last year, with a normal weekly attendance of over 30 people. It was greatly encouraging to see students come along for the free lunch, but end up returning every week, enjoying the talk and having an active role in the Q & A. This event has been fantastic not only in its primary purpose of getting non-Christians to hear the gospel and begin to think about the claims of Christianity, but also in equipping CU members to learn how to tackle these types of questions themselves. We would particularly like to thank Christ Church Mayfair, whose financial support of Skeptical has been an incredible blessing!

A room full of inquisitive students at one of our Skeptical lunchbars



Above: A packed out RSM lecture theatre for 'God How Dare You'

Below: Live Lounge in Starbucks

Events Week 2015

9th- 13th February saw what was arguably the most important week in the CU calendar- events week! This was a concentrated week of events where the CU drew together to focus all of its efforts on sharing the good news of Jesus Christ with as many students and staff as possible. The week kicked off with a live lounge in Starbucks where we heard talented musician Andy Mayo sing about his experience of faith. The theme this year was 'So what?', and each day we put on a lunchbar questioning our lives and how Christ can impact them. Talk titles included 'I'm not that bad so why do I need God?', 'Jesus died, so what?', 'Then what? Is there life after death?' and 'Is Jesus worth giving up my life for?'. 'Grappling with God' was an evening event put on to provide an opportunity for people to bring any questions that had arisen during the week to a panel of wise Christians, including 2 CU members, a senior bioengineering lecturer, and our speaker for the week Sye Pethick. Likely our most popular event was an evening talk, titled 'God How Dare You: A Response to Stephen Fry'. About a week before events week an interview in which Stephen Fry passionately argued against the existence of God on the basis of suffering went viral on

social media. The committee made the brave decision to try and challenge some of the incorrect assumptions and claims made about God in this video by hosting a talk on the topic, and the risk definitely paid off. RSM lecture theatre 1.31 was filled to the very back row with inquisitive students, and debates went on for a long time after the talk ended!

Amazing conversations were had with numerous students throughout the week; it was fantastic to see friends grasp the concept of the gospel for the first time and find answers to questions that had been plaguing them. One of the most encouraging aspects was witnessing the way that all the CU members drew together and were so emboldened for mission. The prayer meetings each morning were particularly powerful in this, uniting us as a team and exciting us for the events of the day. After this time of committing our plans to the Lord we would head out to flyer every corner of campus, so that nobody could claim not to know what was going on! It was so encouraging to see the CU have such an active presence at Imperial throughout the week, and we are very much looking forward to seeing what God will do in events week 2016!

Follow up & further events

At the end of the events a notice was given advertising the follow up course- a set of sessions on Friday lunchtimes which delved into the UCCF resource 'Uncover John'. This was a short series of studies on particular parts of John's gospel, with a focus on examining the evidence for the life and claims of Jesus and coming to an informed conclusion on what this means for us. We had a number of students turn up each week, and it was a great blessing to begin to build relationships them. Many asked to be kept informed on what is planned for next year, so we are looking forward to seeing how God could grow the seeds that have been planted in them as we move forward.

The other main event carried out before Easter was 'Call a creme egg', in which people texted in questions they had about Christianity and we took them a creme egg along with an answer. The phone was continually buzzing, and it was a long night filled with many great discussions.

Prayer breakfast, brunch, and ending the year

Another area of progress we have seen is in the growth of the weekly prayer breakfast. This is a time where CU members gather to lift up to God our world, our campus, and our own lives, while enjoying bacon and bagels. On top of that we had our first ever prayer brunch, where we

booked out the Union Dining Hall one Saturday morning for an extended time of prayer, alongside a short devotional, some worship, and an even more extravagant breakfast involving fruit and croissants! We know that we can only do what we do through the Lord's strength, so are looking forward to seeing what happens next year as the CU becomes more and more dependent on prayer.

After a busy term of exams, we ended the year with double fun on Saturday 20th June. The rain couldn't dampen the hungry students' desire for burgers, so at lunchtime we gathered in the chaplaincy garden for the end of year BBQ. We enjoyed spending time with members of CMF (Christian Medical Fellowship), and said goodbye to our friends before the long summer ahead. Then in the early hours of the morning a few of us



CU & CMF members enjoying food at the end of term BBQ, despite the miserable weather!

Summoned the energy to serve tea and coffee to students at the after party following summer ball. It was a fantastic way to serve them and practically demonstrate Jesus' love, and we praise God for the many great gospel conversations had that night.

CU members wide awake at 4:30am after serving at the Union after party



How to support us

Prayer

The most important thing you can be doing to support the work of ICCU is praying for us! Here are some prayer points to help:

- Thank God for all he has done and blessed us with this year– the growth of Skeptical, a fantastic events week, and numerous conversations had with friends about Christ
- Pray for the new Christian freshers, that God would be growing a passion for mission in their hearts over the summer, and that they would quickly settle in and get involved when they join in October
- Lift up fresher's week to the Lord, asking that the CU would have a large and active presence amongst all the other things put on by the Union, and that God would be at work in all of our events
- Pray that CU members would passionately live and speak for Jesus over the next year, to strive towards fulfilling the CU's mission to give every student at Imperial an opportunity to hear and respond to the good news of Jesus Christ

Financially

We are extremely grateful for the financial support provided by ICCU alumni and local churches, and if you feel that this is a way that you may want to partner with us, please email cu@ic.ac.uk about making a donation. Thank you.

ICCU wishes you a restful and enjoyable summer, and thanks you for your continued prayer for, and interest in, our work of making the gospel known at Imperial. We always love to hear from ex-members, so whether you simply want to make contact again after a long time, or would like to find out more about what is going on, please feel free to drop us an email at cu@ic.ac.uk. Thank you for taking the time to read this, and God bless.

For this is what the Lord has commanded us: "I have made you a light for the Gentiles, that you may bring salvation to the ends of the earth." Acts 13:47

