

Imperial College Christian Union Christmas Newsletter 2016

We are pleased to share with you through this newsletter how God has shown His faithfulness through the past term.

We hope that you may find reading this encouraging and join us in praising God for who He is and what He has done!

Freshers Week 2016

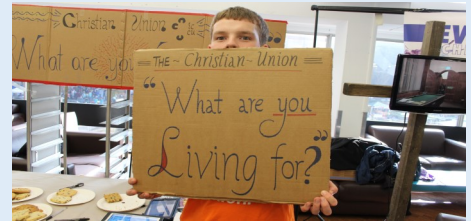
Just before the new academic year started, returning members gathered for a “Re-fuel” meeting to catch-up with and encourage each other for the year ahead. In sharing, praying and partaking of good food together we were mutually reminded of our mission as a CU and energized for the upcoming Freshers’ Week.

As freshers settling in started mingling in various pub events, looking out for them through Club Mission proved instrumental in making the CU’s presence and mission known. The care didn’t end with the night—on Thursday we welcomed them in the morning with a Hangover Breakfast too! During Freshers’ Fair, we were pleasantly surprised at the number of people who turned up genuinely interested in what we did as a CU. At least 90 people signed up on the mailing list then, and even more through the week!

During the three lunch-bars that week we also looked at topics such as the meaning of university life, success and explored how Christianity was relevant all these. At the International Afternoon Tea we welcomed a number of international freshers, many of which we could befriend and engage, if not put at ease towards coming for our events.



Jolly helpers at the freshers’ fair stand, with board of post-it



The theme of our Freshers’ Fair stand, presented by Peter



Hangover Breakfast draws a crowd of eager freshers

Our first weekly “HUB” meeting saw an impressive number of new faces, which we were immensely heartened to see. Having seen a number of beloved seniors graduate in the summer, we praise God for answering our prayers and bring in plenty of freshers into the CU.

It goes without saying that we are humbled and thankful to see God working through Freshers’ Week. Despite facing numerous complications in confirming venues for Skeptic, God showed His faithfulness and we never had to cancel any of the events we planned!

Skeptical

In Skeptical this term, we began by looking at how the Bible can say meaningful things about world issues around us, with topics ranging from the American Election to the Black Lives Matter movement. Following this, we had a series devoted to the Problem of Evil, since we find that many students struggle with the idea of theodicy. Speakers from local churches and from the Oxford Centre for Christian Apologetics came to speak on different aspects of this difficult topic. It was great this term to see many new non-Christian regulars around, with average attendance now at around 45. Our most popular talk had 70 people listening to Andy Mehigan of Westminster Chapel’s story of his turn from staunch atheism to a devoted Christian faith whilst at University. Thank God for guiding us through such these tricky topics and pray that people will keep thinking about what they have heard and be drawn to learn more next term.

Club Mission

In Club Mission we aim to show Christlike love to fellow students at the bar, through chatting over tea and biscuits at the booth, and give a helping hand when they need it. This term we’ve been able to help lots of people in their need and have had some great conversations about our faith. Thank God for the many Uncover Johns and event flyers handed out, for smooth organization, and that the Union was pleased to accommodate us. Please pray that we could follow up any conversations, Uncovers and flyers, that people will continue to respond, and for God’s continued help in the next year!



Blur photo, but minds keen for the Gospel

Globe Café

Globe café aims to put us into greater contact with the international community at Imperial by providing a space for them to gather, make friends and explore various world cultures, while receiving opportunities to hear the Gospel and read the Word with CU members. This term we featured countries such as Canada, Singapore, Nigeria and India, while conducting a series of brief studies providing overview of the Bible narrative. We have seen regulars from the previous year return, as well as some new regular attendees, and although the numbers vary over the weeks and term-periods, it is heartening to see their willingness to read the Word with us in groups. Please pray for that people will continue to come, especially for the Bible studies, desire to know Jesus more and come to believe in His name.

Weekend Away

In November we headed just out of London for the excitement of our annual Weekend Away. This year, the Korean Christian Fellowship joined us together with the CMF. Jonty Allcock joined us to teach us about John 17, through which we were inspired by the joy of the Son in making the Father known, to love and serve Him in unity and in make Him known as a CU. Harnessing our collective creativity in a brainstorming session, we generated ideas on how we could reach out to the Imperial community better during Events Week 2017. It was also amazing building relationships and having fun together as family united in the Gospel, through board-games, quizzes, dodgeball championships, and of course the famed crumble song!



Discussion Session



Group Selfie!



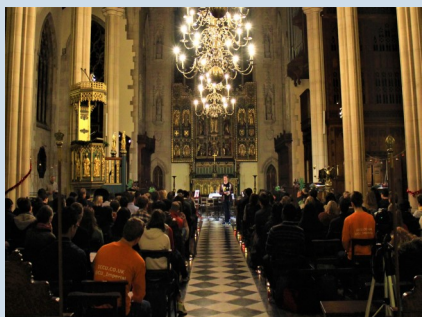
Crumble song demo



Dodgeball ice-breakers

Carol Service

In December we held our annual Christmas Carol Service at the Holy Trinity Church near school in collaboration with CMF, the Korean Christians, Christians from the Royal College of Music and the Gospel Choir.



Commencement of the Carol Service

We had a blessed time working together in preparation for this event, each understanding the value of sharing the true purpose of Christmas with the some 120+ people that came along. In between hearty traditional carols Jonty Allcock gave a challenging gospel talk, which we could then discuss about over festive snacks and mulled beverages.

This year we tried setting up a dedicated stall for Uncovers, where people could ask questions, receive Uncovers and chat. The good conversations had there were encouraged us to do something similar in future.

The event went amazingly well overall, and we will be praying for God to work in the hearts of all those who have come this Christmas.



Refreshments and conversation post-service



A job well done for the music team



The Uncover stall up and running

Cookie for a Question, Ponder for a Pie

Cookie for a Question is when we set up a booth and hand out free cookies to people willing to stop and ask us a question about Christianity. This term we had two such events, the first shortly after Freshers week to keep people thinking, and the second on the day before the carol service with a festive twist of mince pies instead of cookies! We handed out around 75 cookies/mince pies per event. Whether deep or superficial, we are thankful for all the conversations that we've had, as well as the opportunities for members to experience sharing their faith in this context. Please continue to pray for those who have asked questions, that they may continue to be curious of the Gospel and seek to know more.

Follow-up

This term we ran a discussion group wherein people interested in exploring Jesus Christ's claims could do so through the 'Uncover John' resource, and continue any discussions they may have had on the faith. Despite the small group size, we are thankful for a faithful attendee who seemed to appreciate the studies and Christ more. We also praise God for a seeker who came along for the last study on Christ's resurrection has since been coming along to church! We pray the Spirit to keep these individuals growing in Christ, that God would call more people and guide us in attract more people to the group after CU events, and for the Spirit to open eyes and magnify Christ in their hearts.

Plans for the upcoming term

With Autumn past, we turn our attention to our upcoming Events Week from 6th—10th Feb 2017, where we will concentrate our efforts in sharing the Gospel at Imperial. Our main theme this year is "Satisfied?", through which we hope to show that Christ provides in fullness beyond imagination. We aim to show that Christianity is reasonable through talks on science and Bible reliability, relevant to the reality of a broken world through talks on God and suffering, and finally provoke thought on the nature of finding satisfaction in life. We are planning a mixture of events, such as a potluck dinner and a Ceilidh!

We would greatly appreciate your support in prayer for this endeavour, that God will bless our efforts and provide the speakers, rooms, financial resources and manpower for these tasks, and work powerfully in the hearts of all individuals to come and believe.

Supporting us in Prayer:

In every effort we seek to trust in God and commit to Him our work through prayer. Summarized below are the things that we will be entrusting God with this upcoming term, and we hope that you can join us in prayer for them as well.

- Thank God for placing us in an international institution such as Imperial, and for the freedom of the CU to proclaim the Gospel to people who may have never heard it before.
- Thank God for prevailing over various challenges that threatened to disrupt our plans, and providing for us at every juncture.
- Thank God for answered prayers in bringing many keen freshers into the CU this year, and pray that they may continue to grow in faith and love for Christ during their time in Imperial, and similarly grow increasingly courageous to speak of Christ.
- Thank God for people who have come to hear, ask, and respond to the Gospel this term and pray that God will sustain all follow-up efforts, set the Spirit in their hearts and draw them closer to Him.
- Pray for the Events week next term, that God will guide the planning and execution and that the committee will be putting God first in their hearts as they work and that through it all God will be glorified.
- Pray that God will stir up the hearts of students in Imperial, no matter if critical or apathetic to the Gospel, to come for events and that they may find life in Christ.
- Pray that CU members may be revitalized physically, mentally and spiritually over break and that God will sustain them in the Spirit with the passion to live and speak for Christ over the next term.

Supporting us Financially:

We are immensely grateful to all the financial support we have received from the ICCU alumni and local churches. If you willing and able to support us in this way, please email us at cu@ic.ac.uk about making a donation.

"And Jesus came and said to them, "All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you. And behold, I am with you always, to the end of the age.""

-Matt 28:18-20

Wishing everyone a Blessed Christmas and New Year!

