

"EACH SUMMER I AM HUMBLLED BY HOW GENEROUSLY GOD POURS OUT HIS SPIRIT AND LOVE."

Lorraine Wylie
DEEP IMPACT



"A WHOLE-LIFE MISSION THAT IMBUES EVERY FIBRE OF OUR BEING WITH THE GOSPEL"

Kieron Lynch
FREE



"THE FAITHFULNESS OF TRANSFORMED LIVES..."

Robbie & Ruth Burns
WHAT HAPPENED TO YOUR LOT?



IFES Ireland

REVIEW '09

DIRECTOR'S REPORT

Worry about the future is widespread and life today feels fragile. Yet as followers of Jesus Christ, we give praise to God our heavenly Father for 'in his great mercy he has given us new birth into a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ... and into an inheritance that can never perish, spoil or fade' (1 Peter 1:3ff). How robust and certain is the gospel of Jesus. How enduring is God's word in this world and how we must set our hope fully in God's grace as we live and speak for Him!

What we really value in our lives is shown by what we ultimately commit the whole of our lives to. The same is true for us as a student mission. As IFES World celebrates more than 60 years of gospel ministry in what is now a fellowship of student movements in 152 countries, they have set a goal of doubling the number of students involved to over 1 million within 20 years. To achieve this, they have reaffirmed three core commitments which will support and surround every aspect of IFES life and ministry.

The first is Scripture engagement, where through personal bible study, deep theological reflection and careful bible teaching, we become believers who wisely apply biblical truths in our lives. We build on the foundation of Christ the 'living stone'. The second is Community, bringing people together from a variety of church backgrounds and nations, uniting for the sake of the gospel. We are living stones being built together for gospel ministry. The third is Prayer, being dependant on God, seeking his help and direction in everything.

It is important to live with these clear commitments if only to avoid that devastating yet familiar slide where one generation, having fought for these commitments, is followed by the next generation which merely assumes them, to be followed by the next generation which denies them. And so we focus on the scriptures and the cross of Christ without

HEADLINES FROM AROUND THE ISLAND

UCC – The CU has grown considerably in the past few years and is making an impact on campus, with 'Grill a Christian' and 'A Question of Faith' evenings proving successful.

apology. These are our core convictions. We strive to avoid defining ourselves around the edges of the evangelical world, by constantly focussing on the non-negotiable elements of the Christian faith. Only with such commitments can we be in a strong position to engage with the diversity that is presented to us on campus, as we seek to see students transformed by encountering Jesus.

Our commitments expressed in our evangelism

We continue to hear of students becoming Christians around the island, including several from overseas. One student declared in the middle of a CU meeting that 'this gospel is really great - but I want my friends in class to know!' The work among international students in Dublin with the IFES InterAction team is really growing. Two staff workers, Kieron and Peter are currently being trained by IFES Europe to be university evangelists, whilst Hollie (staff worker in Belfast) is involved in the IFES evangelistic bible study programme with Becky Pippert. Meanwhile, plans are coming together for an all-Ireland campus mission called FREE, and we continue to encourage and equip students to confidently proclaim the gospel and demonstrate its power and hope through our changing lives of loving obedience to God our creator.

HEADLINES FROM AROUND THE ISLAND

WIT – *Adopting an open-as-possible-doors policy has meant having CU meetings around a table in the canteen, and resulted in four or five new students coming along to bible studies.*

DIT – *Students have taken the initiative to do questionnaires on campus and write articles for the campus magazine.*

TCD – *Students have come to faith at the Alpha course and CU weekend.*

Our commitments expressed in discipleship

We long to see this transforming work of God in our own lives and in the lives of students, and God's word is at the heart of this transformation. How encouraging it is to see the CUs at Queen's and at the University of Limerick studying Romans. David Montgomery, teaching from Acts at this year's Joint Colleges weekend enthused students to see mission as it has always been. They also heard veteran university evangelist, John Chapman, summing up the gospel with the words of Acts 17:3 – 'Jesus is the Christ', one who comes as rescuer and ruler. Stranmillis CU ran PURE, a course developed to explore the biblical teaching on sex and relationships. Ken Simpson (Australian IFES movement) gave a biblical overview of mission at Missio Dei - our national conference, and we look forward to Pete Lowman speaking on biblical leadership from 1 Samuel at e:con - our leadership conference. When we engage with God through scripture, God speaks; hence the dynamically powerful nature of biblical ministry.

Our hopes for the future expressed in prayerful dependence

Last summer we discovered a large funding deficit, primarily as a result of exchange rate fluctuations. Thankfully, through a prayerful emergency appeal, our situation has stabilised, although we still face the challenge of encouraging supporters to give regularly. Even though we do face uncertain days, we have decided to press ahead with the appointment of a third staff worker for the Dublin region. The finances for this will come from money already pledged and set aside for this project. We will also be reducing our admin staff by one post, as we seek volunteer help to cover this work.

Of course these changes affect real people. We said farewell to Patrick Boland last August and will say farewell to Sam Moore, who leaves after 9 years as part of the IFES Ireland Relay and staff teams. We congratulate Sally and Stephen Patty on the birth of Joshua; Steve Skinner on his marriage to Lisa; and Peter Kenny on his engagement to Meabh. We welcomed Kieron Lynch to the team in September and we will be seeking a new

staff worker, new Relay workers and InterAction team members and some volunteer office help, for the year ahead.

Please continue to pray and support us financially. Why not encourage others to partner with us in this gospel ministry to students? By praying for CU groups, the 'FREE' gospel project, staff, our conferences, short-term mission teams and for resources to support these ministries, we express our dependence on God, the source of our living hope and provider of a secure and wonderful future.

Adam Jones

WORKING WITH SMALL CUS **RACHEL GILMORE & HOLLIE STEELE**

The Magee campus of the University of Ulster was originally a training college for the Presbyterian Church in Ireland which perhaps explains why Magee Christian Union is one of the oldest CU groups in the British Isles. Changes within the college itself, not to mention the politics surrounding the city of Derry/Londonderry, have meant that in recent years the group has struggled with small numbers and a low profile on campus.

Magee CU has benefited greatly from the creation of a full-time North West Staff Worker post in 2001, enjoying more consistent input from IFES Ireland and more opportunities for members to attend national conferences and regional training events. From a struggling 5 or so members five years ago to a more steady 20 this year, the group is growing in confidence and understanding of their strategic position in the student world to share Jesus with those around them.

There is also a new link being explored with a small group of Christians meeting at Letterkenny Institute of Technology, with a view to offering them support and training in the coming years.

University of Ulster Belfast CU continues faithfully, and now has very devoted leaders and a regular attendance of around ten. This year they have committed themselves to studying Nehemiah and developing a greater sense of community and belonging within the CU itself. The challenge however is to hold this in tension with the CU's purpose

of sharing Christ with students on their campus - a campus which holds much beauty and creativity but also many challenges to the gospel.

There are great aspects to being a small CU: greater sense of community among members, more flexibility and creativity in programmes, less temptation to hide away in a Christian sub-culture on campus... However, being small in number also brings challenges: a sense of isolation, the burden of trying to emulate what bigger CUs achieve and on-going worries about future leadership. In working alongside small CUs we are constantly reminded that God's work is not determined by numbers but by faithfulness to him, obedience and love, and so where these three things abound 'God will add to their number each day those who are being saved'.

In an ever strengthening partnership, IFES Ireland and small CUs are working hard to reach campuses with the gospel and God's mission is advancing and bearing fruit. Please pray for the encouragement and perseverance of students in small CUs all over the island as they think about how best to use the resources they have to reach their own specific context with the gospel. Pray that they would have courage of heart, conviction of belief and an ever deepening knowledge and love of their Lord.



DEEP IMPACT LORRAINE WYLIE

'It changed my life!' they repeated, as they said their goodbyes. As an organisation committed to seeing lives transformed we believe that summer teams are a key way to fulfil our vision. Moldova, Ukraine, Slovakia, Ireland, Peru... just some of the countries IFES Ireland have taken teams to in the past. Each time students have come to know more of God and each time lives in these places are blessed. What more could we ask for?

I have been involved with the Encounter team (based in the Republic of Ireland) for 8 years, both as a participant while at university and more recently as a leader. Each summer I am humbled by how generously God pours out his Spirit and love, drawing students and staff deeper into him. One student said "It brought me closer to my Saviour... my Father". The Encounter programme encourages students to face their own beliefs and doubts about who God is and submit them to who God truly reveals himself to be in scripture. It also encourages students to face the truth about what they are building their identity on and seeks to help them find life and identity only in who they are as beloved children of God, so that the Gospel has room to transform every area of their life. The most beautiful part of watching students discover more of who they are in Christ is not only seeing that they are blessed but that this discovery always moves them outward, becoming a blessing to others. This is the bigger picture of Encounter. We want students to be involved in advancing God's kingdom in Ireland in a way that flows from within them. Our prayer is that they would be propelled by the love of God to bring Christ to the world around them. Here's what they said:

"By understanding and building my identity in being a child of God I have been freed to love people around me better."

"It has given me a renewed excitement for scripture and evangelism."

"I have a vision for what God's kingdom is truly supposed to look like."

Summer teams do not just have an impact then and there. One of the most astounding things I have discovered as I look back over the years is that students who have been part of summer teams tend to be those who go on to invest more deeply in their campus, continue to grow in their faith, lead more effectively, and live more authentically. Their lives have been transformed in such a way that they become people who are transforming agents in their campus, society and the world.

Are you willing to become part of this transformation? This year IFES Ireland are once again providing opportunities to grow and serve on summer teams. God is at work - do you want to join in on what he is doing? Check out the teams at www.ifesireland.org and play your part by supporting, praying or going.

"LIVES HAVE BEEN TRANSFORMED IN SUCH A WAY THAT THEY BECOME PEOPLE WHO ARE TRANSFORMING AGENTS IN THEIR CAMPUS"



Lorraine Wylie
Staff Worker, Dublin

HEADLINES FROM AROUND THE ISLAND

UUJ – The CU are sending a team to work cross-culturally in London as a means of better equipping students to reach the growing number of international students on campus.

FREE KIERON LYNCH LOOKS FORWARD TO THE GOSPEL PROJECT



Kieron Lynch Staff Worker, Dublin

“So Kieron what’s next for you?” During 2008 I was often asked that question. The answer was I didn’t know. I was finishing my job as an Outreach Worker for a church in Belfast and my wife Esther was expecting our first baby. Having moved from Meath to Belfast in 1994, the next step proved to be a big one. I was offered a job as a staff worker with IFES Ireland in Dublin, Finn was born a few days later, and by August we had moved to Dublin. Why go through so much upheaval? The strategic nature of student ministry in Ireland drew me in.

The vision of IFES Ireland is to see students transformed by encountering Jesus, transforming their campus, society, and the world. This is a bold and broad vision, one driven by the gospel

HEADLINES FROM AROUND THE ISLAND

UUC – Strong partnerships have been built with local churches to work with international students. This has resulted in students being ‘adopted’ by local families, and some coming to faith as a result.

FROM THE BOARD

I begin with sincere thanks for the wonderful response to our recent appeal. The change in relative worth of the pound and euro hit our funding very negatively last year, as most of our income is in pounds and most of our expenditure is in euro. It is always humbling to be at the receiving end of answered prayer and we praise God for your generosity. Thank you!

More important than your financial giving is your continued prayer. A key focal point for 2009/2010 will be the ‘FREE’ Gospel Project, bringing Mark’s gospel to students around Ireland. An early step on my own journey to faith was the receipt of a Gideon New Testament in my first term at UCD, at a time when neither my family nor I had ever owned a bible. This little gift changed my life, hence my enthusiasm for this mission.

Quite a few Board members have reached the end of their term and we are actively engaged in appointing new members. Please pray for us as we seek to properly balance the board with our appointments. This is an important task as the board is charged with the ultimate stewardship of our organization and our Vision, Mission and Values. Indeed, this academic year began with a renewed emphasis on our strategic mission as an organization, with the Board spending a day reaffirming our support of these principles.

Finally, we ask that you would use the IFES Ireland Prayer News as a regular part of your prayer life. We realize that without prayer our effectiveness will be very limited. Please covenant with us as we support staff and students around Ireland.

Brian Callan (Chair of the IFES Ireland Board)

FINANCIAL SUMMARY 2008

The figures summarised here are based on the audited accounts for the year ended 31st August 2008 of IFES Ireland (NI) Trust and IFES Ireland (ROI) Trust. (This summary excludes any income or expenditure related to 6 Ormond Drive, Swords.)

The past year has been a difficult one financially, with the decrease in value of sterling against the euro the main factor in the deficit generated. We are thankful to God for the response to our emergency appeal in October which offset this deficit (the income generated by that appeal is not included in these figures).

We are grateful to all who continue to partner with us prayerfully and financially. Thank you. Please continue to pray that more people would begin to give regularly and that initiatives such as 'Plant a seed' (our new legacy pack) and 7-4-7 (encouraging students to give towards a seventh campus staff worker) will bear fruit and allow us to build a wider and more stable support base. This will enable us to grow the campus-based team and so inspire and equip more students in Ireland to follow Jesus.

itself. Because all the authority in heaven and earth is in the possession of the risen Lord Jesus, we have confidence that as we proclaim the gospel our vision will be realised. New disciples will be made who revel in obedience to Jesus (Matthew 28:18-20). This mission is at the heart of our movement, a whole-life mission that imbues every fibre of our being with the gospel.

In light of these convictions we are thrilled to announce the Gospel Project due to be launched in September 2009. This initiative using the gospel of Mark is simply entitled 'FREE'. Each Christian Union involved will decide for themselves how to best promote and distribute the copies of Mark's gospel on campus, student to student. For some this may simply be one Christian student asking their friend to read a biography of the life of Jesus with them over a coffee; for others there will be a more structured series of events organised to which they can invite their friends. As staff we will be involved in equipping the students to reach their campus as effectively as possible. The Gospel Project has been thoroughly prepared. 400,000 gospels have been produced by UCCF for the British Isles and beyond, and planning manuals, bible studies and publicity are all available free of charge online. This foundational work allows busy students to easily latch onto the project and make it their own.

As I write, two passages of scripture are prominent in my mind. The first emphasises the role each Christian student has to sound the Gospel to their friends:
"“Everyone who calls on the name of the Lord will

be saved.” How, then, can they call on the one they have not believed in? And how can they believe in the one of whom they have not heard? And how can they hear without someone preaching to them? And how can they preach unless they are sent? As it is written, “How beautiful are the feet of those who bring good news!”... Consequently, faith comes from hearing the message, and the message is heard through the word of Christ.’ (Romans 10:13-15,17)

Of course not every student will be preaching, but we do pray they will have beautiful feet, bringing the good news to their fellow students by whatever means appropriate.

The second reminds us of the utter sovereignty of a God whose purposes may not be thwarted and whose word will prevail:

‘As the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways and my thoughts than your thoughts. As the rain and the snow come down from heaven, and do not return to it without watering the earth and making it bud and flourish, so that it yields seed for the sower and bread for the eater, so is my word that goes out from my mouth: It will not return to me empty, but will accomplish what I desire and achieve the purpose for which I sent it.’ (Isaiah 55:9-11)

I distinctly remember the first time the word of God was put into my hands - it changed my life forever. Pray with us that this project will galvanise the Christian students in their faith and that it will also produce a bountiful harvest of new disciples.

WHATEVER HAPPENED TO YOUR LOT? ROBBIE & RUTH BURNS REFLECT ON YEARS OF INVOLVEMENT WITH IFES IRELAND

The 10th annual reunion of former CU members from Trinity College took place in Belfast at the start of January. That gathering of over eighty graduates brought to mind Dr. Oliver Barclay's book, 'Whatever happened to the Jesus Lane lot?' published by IVP in 1977, as the reunion provided an answer to our reflections before the event – 'Whatever happened to the TCD lot?'

Anglican bishops, Presbyterian moderators, national school principals and teachers, secondary school teachers, world class academics, medical and clinical practitioners,

lawyers, leaders across the spectrum of our various churches, parents who have by example passed on the faith to children, bible college lecturers, successful businessmen who have maintained their Christian values, some who have ventured overseas to share the gospel in other cultures, some caring for aging parents in demanding situations... All these were in the mix at the reunion and what impressed us was the sense of joy and liveliness in so many of their lives as they thanked God for their salvation and commitment to serve him over the years. Not all the stories were happy ones but the faithfulness of transformed lives stood out as we shared life's experiences.

When serving as the first full-time Travelling Secretary in the late sixties, the CU in TCD was the only one in the Republic of Ireland formally enjoying fellowship with other like-minded evangelical Christian students through Inter Varsity Fellowship (latterly UCCF and now IFES Ireland). There was however an increasing number of isolated students in Irish universities and colleges interested in studying and putting into practice the teaching of the Bible. The large

HEADLINES FROM AROUND THE ISLAND

Stranmillis – *A highlight has been the PURE course through which God was at work challenging students not just in the area of purity but also in all their relationships with others and with God.*

UCD – *Christmas questionnaires created many opportunities to speak to students about Jesus. The CU was encouraged and excited by the experience and their Carol Service was well attended by non CU members.*

INCOME	£		
Gifts (individuals)	162,875		
Churches	35,526		
Trusts	17,400		
For IFES	24,187		
Tax (Gift Aid)	38,268		
Other	2,025		
Total	£ 280,281		
EXPENDITURE	£		
Salaries	210,738		
Travel	26,161		
Training	4,742		
Student Conferences	1,930		
Communication	10,909		
Office	4,800		
Promotion	7,745		
Fees	5,824		
To IFES	28,132		
Miscellaneous	6,306		
Total	£ 307,287		
Deficit	£ 27,006		

Exchange rate of 0.75 as per average 2007/08

IFES Ireland

21 Ormeau Avenue,

BELFAST BT2 8HD

t: 028 9024 2100

e:email@ifesireland.org

49 Hillside, Greystones,
Co. Wicklow

t: 01 2872207





numbers of students in Queen's and Stranmillis CUs provided encouragement to some smaller groups, where there was nevertheless strong commitment (for example the students in Magee Theological College studying for the Presbyterian ministry). Most of these smaller groups and individual students were in the north but in some of the mainly Catholic universities in the south God was stirring individuals to grapple with the application of the truth of the bible to their lives. The 'new' University of Ulster was just starting at Coleraine; some individual Dominican contacts were established in UCC and UCG (now NUIG); DCU and UL were just beginning as the National Institute for Higher Education. The CUs had to start from scratch in each of these locations. It was an exciting challenge.

After marriage in 1969 we moved to Dublin in order to respond quickly to late night weekend telephone calls to be in Cork for a Monday lunch hour bible study, and to reinforce Inter Varsity Fellowship's commitment to support the fledgling growth of the movement in Ireland. Over the last forty years we have seen enormous transformation in the lives of many who make up God's church in Ireland today. There have been many developments and much growth since those days, when most evangelical Christians knew each other personally.

In the early seventies small teams of graduates went to Cork, Dublin and Maynooth for further study and to support the growth of new groups in these places. Graduates from those groups are now leading various churches. A Presbyterian theological student went to UCD. A year later as leader of the Christian group he invited a Presbyterian minister and a Catholic priest to a debate on the Holy Spirit. That led to the first prayer group in Kimmage paving the way for the charismatic movement in the seventies. The growth of new churches from the eighties has been underpinned by graduates who saw the need to relate the teaching of the bible to a new culture that was emerging in Ireland with a more European multi-cultural and materialistic emphasis. Scripture Union was re-established in the south in the seventies and many students have served on camps and missions leading to very significant growth in second-level schools work, which in turn has strengthened the third-level Christian witness. Lone Christian lecturers were appointed to strategic positions in some of the smaller colleges and helped establish bible study groups that led to the personal conversion of students who in turn have remained faithful to the transformation that God has brought to their lives.

It is unfair to isolate particular individuals while reflecting on forty years of third-level ministry but perhaps other reunion groups could meet to further encourage all who have remained faithful through the stresses and strains of a changing Irish society and as a witness to the academic establishments to the enduring faith of the 'nutcases' who joined the CUs. Whatever happened to your lot?

HEADLINES FROM AROUND THE ISLAND

Dublin – *A Muslim student has deeply encountered God and is continually coming to understand more and more of Him.*

UL – *A 'Grill a Christian' event in a student bar opened up many conversations about following Jesus.*