

## **U.C.C.F. (Universities & Colleges Christian Fellowship): the Christian Unions**

Ever since the 1920's students have formed Christian Unions aiming to live and speak for Jesus in universities and colleges. Working in partnership with local churches, these Christian Unions are led by students and supported by UCCF Christian Union Staff Workers. They are non-denominational, welcoming students from different backgrounds, denominations and church traditions, and exist to give every student on campus an opportunity to hear about Jesus. As the son of one of our parishioners writes:

*My three years at university fellowshiping with other believers was a pivotal time in my walk with the Lord (2015-2018). I learned that you cannot live life with Jesus on your own, and that it is through Christ's collective Body that His Kingdom advances. During my time in London, my Christian Union shared stories of Jesus working in its members' lives, ministered to partygoers at our local university club night and saw people encounter and give their lives to Jesus in miraculous ways. Memories of God moving will stick with me for years to come.*

*Nowhere is prayer for unity more important than in Christian Unions across this country. The greatest threat to our witness was theological division that went against Jesus' prayer in John 17. Young student minds that are trying to grasp the truth in a post-modern, subjective world desperately need a solid, firm foundation in the person of Jesus and connection with His people. "They will know we are Christians by our love" is the refrain I pray will ring out across campuses in this country - as students grow to love God, one another and all those the Lord brings into their path. I hope you can join me in praying that, too.*

The changing face of student life sees many students affected by debt, loneliness and pressure. Increasingly few of these students have any church background, biblical knowledge or Christian faith. Some are hostile to the church but are surprisingly open to thinking about Jesus. Today's student world is an unparalleled opportunity to share the good news of Jesus with a spiritually hungry generation. Many future leaders in government, business, the arts and professions who will influence the next generation as parents, teachers and role models are students today.

Evangelistic meals, special events and missions/events weeks provide a focus for personal evangelism; nearly 40,000 students attend these events each year. CU carol services are among the biggest events on campus, some drawing over 3,000 students. Over 1 million gospels have been given by students to students since 1990 through Christian Unions. Thousands of students are hearing about the message of Christianity and hundreds are coming to faith each year through the work of UCCF's 20,000 CU members. Let us support them with our prayers and gifts.