

# CHURCH MATTERS

# FRESHERS' WEEK 2008

Why talk about church in preparation for Freshers' Week?

As Christians we're part of the body of Christ, the church. It should be massively important to us. We need to be committed to a local church. So the start of the year seems as good a time as any to bring it up...

But we also need to help Christians arriving at university to get involved in church too. They'll be following us (quite literally until they learn the way!) – we need to lead by **example**, and also by **enthusiasm**.

So here are 3 church-related challenges...

## Get settled

If you've been 'looking around,' make a decision, and don't faff about going back.

## Get stuck in

Avoid 'the balcony.' Don't just have a CU meeting in church! Spread yourselves out.

**Challenge:** talk to one (old) person you don't know each week.

## Get serving

Don't just be a **consumer** – aim to be a **contributor**. Can you help out on a Sunday morning? *But*, remember you're serving the church by being in the CU!

Meet four people who will arrive at Reading this week...

**Keen Kevin** – he's been a Christian for years. He is convinced of the truth of the gospel and is excited about the opportunity to share it with others.

**Shaky Sharon** – she loves Jesus, but she is fuzzy on the details. She's never really had to explain what she believes and why.

**Nominal Nigel** – calls himself a Christian, but it makes no difference at all to his life.

**Atheist Amanda** – she's convinced that there is no God, and she has no plans to give him any thought at Uni.

It might seem like a good idea to just concentrate on having socials and meeting people in Freshers' Week.

**Why would that be bad news for Kevin, Sharon, Nigel and Amanda?**

**What's the alternative?**

**RUCU**

**uccf:thechristianunions**  
making disciples of Jesus Christ in the absent world

## MAKING THE MOST OF FRESHERS' WEEK - GARETH'S TOP TIPS -

### 1. Pray

Pray for Freshers. Pray that Christians would live and speak for Jesus while they're at Uni. Pray that non-Christians would trust Jesus with their lives.

### 2. Make Real Friends

It's easy to be superficial in Freshers' Week - make an effort to really love people. Aim for friendships that will last the **whole year**, not just one week.

### 3. Join a Society

You're never too old to join societies, and now is a great time to sign up. In a society you have a ready-made connection with people, and lots of people will be new.

### 4. Spot the Cliques

Cliques are bad. Find them and kill them! You might feel comfortable in a group of friends, but look for outsiders and welcome them in. Be like Jesus and put other people's needs before your own (see Philippians 2v4).

### 5. International Students

International students find it even harder to feel at home and get involved, yet we can ignore them the most. It's estimated that 11 out of 12 international students leave Britain without a single British friend. Make an effort to talk to international students and make them feel welcome.

### 6. Feed a Fresher (or three)

Food is a great ice-breaker. Why not cook for some freshers who sign up for CU? You don't need to be a culinary genius, pizza will do. Invite a few round together (it's less scary).

### 7. Remember Friends You Already Have

With all the talk of Freshers, it can be easy to forget the friends you had last year, maybe from your hall or course. How can you stay in touch with them? Could you have a Freshers' Week reunion of your old flatmates?

### 8. Church

Christians at university need to get settled into a church as soon as possible – bad habits develop quickly. And you need to help them to do it (more on this later...).

**What practical things are you going to do to make the most of Freshers' Week?**

**What dangers do you need to be aware of?**