

● 2017 issue 5

inspire

News & Updates
from Scripture Union Ireland

Your word is a lamp
unto my feet.
Psalm 119 v 105

Farewell to Jude
Over a decade with
Scripture Union &
Authentic Youth

Scripture Union's
New Look

Newhua
film series

Meet Scripture Union's
New Team Members

Meet our two
New Interns

"I love seeing this next generation
grow up with a love for Jesus"
SU Volunteer Gracemarie



SCRIPTURE
UNION IRELAND



nuo

A FRESH PERSPECTIVE ON FAITH

A film series
that tackles the tough questions about Christianity

8 episodes

4 countries

50 locations

30 contributors

9 training videos



LAUNCHING FEBRUARY 2017

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welcome

‘Surely the Lord is in this place’

Genesis 28:16

In recent months, I had the privilege to be part of conversations where people shared about the impact the ministry of Scripture Union has had in their lives and their families, particularly relating to camps or retreats at Ovoca Manor.

It was hugely uplifting at a gathering of leaders of Family Week Camp to hear the powerful spiritual impact this family week has had over the past 20 years and how Ovoca Manor had become a special place, a sacred place or indeed a spiritual home.

At a planning meeting for the Ember Team Programme, where some 20 schools participated in three residential Faith and Leadership programmes this year, I was greatly encouraged to hear Anna Maloney the Diocesan Adviser say, ‘Ovoca Manor is the Home of Ember’!

A new member of our SU team Eric Hughes reminded me recently that Ovoca Manor was like his spiritual home!

It is amazing how God is using this place and space to provide opportunities for thousands of children, young people and families who, like Jacob at Haran, stay and rest a while and have a powerful encounter with the living God. Many come to Ovoca Manor like Jacob and soon realise and experience that, Surely God is in this place ...and I did not know it’.

“Surely God is in this place ... and I did not know it”

We praise God for the significant growth in the mid-week retreats which have seen an 80% increase this year with almost 40 schools and over 1800 students.

To follow up these areas of faith based engagement with these thousands of young people SU has developed, under the leadership of Jonny Somerville, an exciting new professionally produced Film Series called NUA which is an inspiring feature article in this year’s magazine.

You will also read about all the changes in the staff team and be introduced to many new ‘faces’ who are excited about serving God and reaching the youth of Ireland with the life changing message of Jesus.

SU'S NEW LOOK

Scripture Union Ireland are thrilled to introduce you to our new look.

Our Chief logo combines the well-known Scripture Union lamp with a modernised flame.



The different ministry departments have also been adapted to this new look. Displaying a family of individual flames in bright colours reflecting the diversity within Scripture Union Ireland.



Finally, my heartfelt appreciation to all the SU Staff Team, Council Members and all our Volunteers and you our supporters for all your prayers and support and without whom this ministry would not be possible.

Yours in Christ

Jim Donnan
General Director



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To keep in touch with all our latest news and events, log on to www.scriptureunion.ie and subscribe to our regular e-newsletters and prayer diary, and 'like' Scripture Union Ireland's Facebook page.



subscribe

If you would like to receive future editions of Inspire, please email your name and address to info@scriptureunion.ie

We would also be very grateful if you felt able to distribute copies of this magazine amongst your congregation, friends and family - for additional copies please email info@scriptureunion.ie

Our family of flames continues to represent and reflect our scripture based tagline;

'Your word is a lamp unto my feet.'

Psalm 119 v 105

We have also launched our new look website and we invite you to visit

www.scriptureunion.ie and have a look around at our exciting, developing ministry.





Jude's Farewell

Over a decade with SU & AY

The year is 2005 and I'm walking through the grounds of Ovoca Manor the day Family Week was finishing. Jude Trenier approaches me, 'Jude, we're starting a gap year with SU. What would you say about joining us?'

That was the start of my journey as a working member on the SU team. One year as intern, followed by two years working alongside Scott Evans and then eight years running AuthenticYouth's school retreat programme and internship.

"Throughout my 11 years there have thankfully been more highlights than challenges."

Throughout my 11 years there have thankfully been more highlights than challenges. I've had the opportunity to travel to various places around the world. I went to Russia to run a kids club for a church, to Lesotho to build a play ground for an orphanage, to India with TLM, hiked the Four Peaks, went to Surf camps, lots of other camps, a week walking the Camino and camping on an Island somewhere in

Roscommon. The day-to-day work however is where

I've spoken to so many young people around Ireland. This happens during retreats that allowed me to engage in some fantastically deep discussions that, on reflection have helped solidify my own faith.

Contemplating on it all I have known that God had His hand in it all. I never felt 'called' to do this work and often struggled to know I was the right person to do it. I see now that God worked through Jude Trenier's gentle nudge and as the years went on I was able to use my gifts in ways I never thought I would.

Without being asked a simple question 11 years ago, I wouldn't have had the privilege and opportunity to talk about God's gift of love to thousands of students year after year.

Scripture Union has been in my family for much longer than I've been a staff member. I will be forever indebted to my parents who provided a safe place for me to know and love God, especially through camps. I feel very much at home with SU and for the love, support, prayer and growth, I will be forever thankful.

Thank you to all of you, mentors, parents, leaders, campers and fellow staff who've created an environment for me to grow into the woman I am today.

Jude Barry



catch up with the
2015/16
interns

Anna, Josh and James finished with SU at the end of May. They had been with us since August living at the Manor and working on all school retreats both activity based as well as in school.

Every year brings a different challenge with new ways of working with a different set of interns. These three entered an environment that is rather alien to most, and a lot of expectation is placed on them to grow, learn, develop and deliver on our different ministries within SU. These three were fantastic!!

From the beginning there was a hunger to learn, each in their own way. They woke early and drove to schools, they brought a school group up Glendalough in the hailstones (see pic). They spent long days working with students who didn't want to hear about God but to just have fun. Ultimately we spent the year together learning about each other and where God fits in our lives (and special thanks to Emma for joining

us on team days). They gracefully worked with us and had understanding through the changing of staff at the Manor. And came out of the internship as people who have grown personally, in their character, talents and with God.

Where are they now? James went from the internship year to America to serve on various camps. He is now studying a portfolio course in IADT while working and living in Dublin before entering his main course next year. Josh served at SU camps during the summer and is now studying criminology & social studies before hopefully going into social care at DIT next year.

Anna ended her year doing one of our Weekend Adventures and is now doing a nail technology course in Blackrock.

I (Jude) personally want to thank them for their year of service and their willingness to learn. My prayer for them is that they know God even more and continue to walk in His way since doing this year with SU.

Jude Barry

OUR NEW Interns



Laryssa Goerzen

Laryssa is 20 years old and has come all the way from Canada. She has attended college for Creative Writing, and has spent the last few years working as a camp counsellor for Camp Squeah in British Columbia. She is outdoorsy and has a passion for hiking & camping.

We asked Laryssa what her expectations for the year were and she said:

"I expect to see God in creation I have never experienced. I expect to make lasting friendships, to meet people who will be my mentors, to become a part of the community. I expect to get out of it what I put into it, and I expect to put in a lot. I expect to have the time to focus on God as I have never done before"

Ruairí Ó Brolchain

Ruairí is 20 years old and from Co. Roscommon. He is quite sporty with an interest in Rugby, Soccer and Tennis.

He is no stranger to Scripture Union "Ovoca Manor has always been a significant place to me I have gone to various camps over the years and have some amazing memories of the place".

We asked Ruairí what his expectations for the year were and he said:



“I would like to come away from the internship having furthered my faith and grown my interpersonal skills. I feel the Climbing Wall Award will be a valuable stepping stone in a possible career in the outdoors. I would like to imagine that I would make lasting friends with the SU Team and have a memorable year”

Are you between
18-25
and looking to **serve**
for a year?

**We may have the
opportunity you've
been looking for.**

Scripture Union has run an internship programme for the past decade and in 2016 we initiated a new Internship based at Ovoca Manor.

Our internship programme is based in an environment that encourages study of the bible and prayer, our aim is to help deepen your faith and teach you to share it with others in 1-2-1 and group settings.

A large part of the Ovoca Manor internship is adventure based and professional training is provided. The training you will receive will provide you with the skills and accreditation required to work as a professional instructor in rock climbing, high ropes courses, and also to develop your interpersonal skills in a group and leadership setting and to share your faith with others while participating in outdoor adventures.

If you think this may be for you then contact the Ovoca Manor Team Leader Gareth at gareth.lynch@scriptureunion.ie to discuss the 2017 intake.

5000+
RESIDENTIAL
GUESTS

81%
INCREASE IN
OVERNIGHT
MIDWEEK
RETREATS

16
SCRIPTURE UNION
RUN WEEKENDS/
HOLIDAYS/
CAMPS

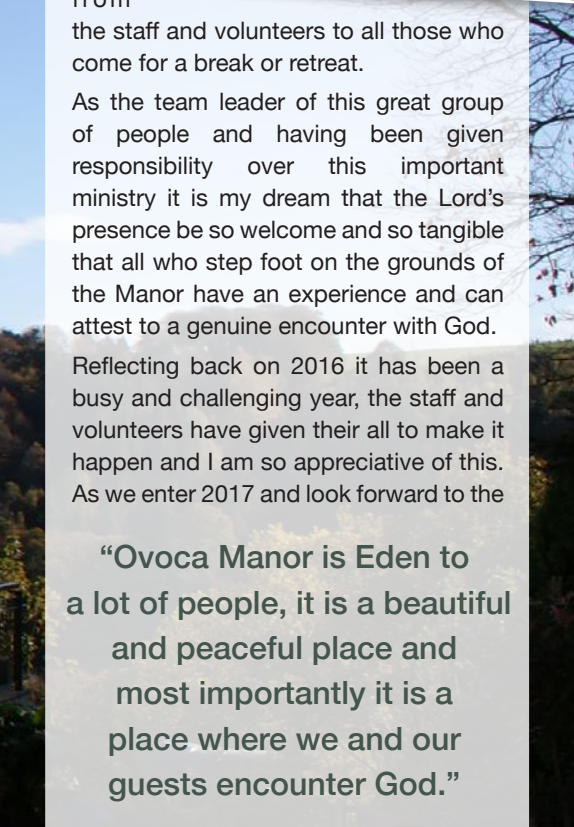
42%
INCREASE IN
MIDWEEK RETREAT
PARTICIPANTS

UPDATE FROM OVOCA MANOR

2016 has been a year of change, in March centre manager Nathan Norris along with his family left the Manor for pastures new and I took up the post of Team leader along with my wife Sharon and son Levi. There has been much change at the Manor over the last two years but its purpose as a tool to share the love of Christ is the constant.

When we moved to the Manor back in March I was struck by the beauty of the grounds as the seasons transitioned from winter into spring. You and I may not be able to enjoy the Eden that we read about in Genesis but the grounds of the Manor in spring come pretty close to any equivalent we may hope to experience.





During this time of year the greens & browns of the evergreen foliage take a back seat to the technicolour show of the Daffodils, Rhododendrons and Clematis whose vines are covered in delicate white flowers. Eden was a paradise, we know that on the third day of creation God separated the water from the land and planted the earth, yet later on in Genesis 2, God specifically planted Eden, the Garden in the east, for the Man he had formed in his image, a personal paradise planted with all types of trees and plants that were pleasing to the eye and some that provided food.

This is all lovely, who wouldn't want to live in a paradise with no cares or worries. God could have stopped there and Adam and Eve would have been two happy people living out their existence. There was however one thing that made the paradise better and that was that God came into the Garden, walked and interacted with Adam and Eve. In Eden Adam and Eve encountered God, their paradise was not only a beautiful place with all they physically needed, it was also a place where they met with God and had a relationship with Him.

Ovoca Manor is Eden to a lot of people, it is a beautiful and peaceful place and most importantly it is a place where we and our guests encounter God. It does not just happen that people have an encounter with God, God must be invited in. In order for this environment to exist and for there to be the genuine and tangible presence of God to encounter with, we as the Team at Ovoca Manor are very deliberate about living prayerful Christ centred lives. Our motivation is to see Christ touch the lives of people who come to the Manor



from the staff and volunteers to all those who come for a break or retreat.

As the team leader of this great group of people and having been given responsibility over this important ministry it is my dream that the Lord's presence be so welcome and so tangible that all who step foot on the grounds of the Manor have an experience and can attest to a genuine encounter with God.

Reflecting back on 2016 it has been a busy and challenging year, the staff and volunteers have given their all to make it happen and I am so appreciative of this. As we enter 2017 and look forward to the

“Ovoca Manor is Eden to a lot of people, it is a beautiful and peaceful place and most importantly it is a place where we and our guests encounter God.”

new life that spring brings we have an excitement about what God is going to do in lives this year through the work of Ovoca Manor and Scripture Union and we look forward to welcoming you at the Manor. Many thanks to all the team and volunteers

Gareth Lynch – Team Leader
gareth.lynch@scriptureunion.ie

Hi Everyone,

We are Gareth, Sharon and Levi Lynch. We feel so blessed and privileged to have been entrusted with the responsibility of leading the ministry at Ovoca Manor through this new phase and to carry on the great work of Nathan and Fiona Norris and Herbert and Jean Harper before them. Our move to the Manor was an unexpected stepping stone in our lives and one that was truly laid out for us by the Lord.

Since our arrival we have settled into our new home on site in the beautiful surroundings of the Vale of Avoca.

“It is a busy place, nearly always buzzing with activity...”

...and we are comfortably slipping into the fast paced rhythm of Manor life.”We have felt so welcome into the Scripture Union family by staff, volunteers and friends of SU. We have enjoyed experiencing the great array of camps and activities that SU provides at the Manor. We have been particularly inspired by the servant hearts of the young volunteers many of whom give up much of their holidays to help out and lead on camps. We look forward to continuing these relationships with all we welcome at the Manor and to developing new ones in the local community.

We have a heart for equipping individuals to be a Christ like influence in their community. In Ron Hutchcraft’s book ‘battle for a generation’ he talks about the U.S. life-saving service and their stations, places of refuge and preparation. The author notes that ‘never in the history of the life-saving service did a drowning person come to the door of the station asking “would you please rescue me?” in every case someone had to leave the safety of the station to go out and save lives.’ We believe the Lord wants to grow this part of the ministry and see more and more equipped individuals being sent out into the local community and beyond to bear witness to the life changing power of Jesus.

As we look forward into 2017 we have an excitement about what God will do this year. We ask for and appreciate your prayers throughout this year for ourselves, the staff, volunteers and for all the endeavours we undertake.

Gareth, Sharon & Levi





WORKING AS PART OF THE TEAM AT OVOCA MANOR – CATHERINE CONNOLLY THE CHEF

Catherine is originally from Roundwood Co. Wicklow, over the years her cooking skills have been enhanced by an array of creative courses. Catherine was approached in November 2010 by the Management at Ovoca Manor and asked to become the Manors' official caterer. Catherine was noted for her professional manner and delicious food when she was hired independently by a Ladies group from south Dublin that November.

Catherine has been part of the Scripture Union team for the past 7 years. She really enjoys working at the Manor and being part of the team. "There is a good bond between the staff and management, everyone works hard together". Some of her favourite dishes to make are "Beef Stroganoff, Green Thai Curry and Orange Panacotta dessert".

Catherine has cooked for a multitude of groups during her time with Scripture Union. All bring their own unique requests and challenges. Catherine's biggest challenge is "Getting the food out on time and ensuring everyone gets fed". One of her best memories has been catering for Family week, She says

"I love how Scripture Union has created an environment that promotes family time and networking"

She also really enjoys Woodlands Academy Retreats where she can interact with the students during their cake making activities.

Catherine will be including new additions to the catering menu for 2017 and would like to introduce a tailor-made baking/cake decorating workshop as an activity for any group.

**For more information email
ovocamanor@scriptureunion.ie**

Claire Devaney:

New SU Children & Community Worker

My name is Claire and I recently began working with Scripture Union as the new Primary Schools and Community Ministry Leader. I'm from Dublin and for the past two years I've been working as a Secondary School Teacher, teaching Irish and Religion.

Prior to teaching, I was busy studying, majoring in Theology. Being appointed the new Primary Schools Ministry Leader was a real confirmation for me and a realisation that all the training and studies I had completed in the past were now being called to use. I realized in the madness of it all that, God has a plan that is much greater than my own.

One could say, I'm pretty new to the SU family as I never had any real experience of SU, CSSM, or even Camps until very recently. The warm welcome I received from both staff and campers helped me very quickly to settle in.

Among the many things I will be working on throughout this year just to name a few will be, "Dynamite" a new Confirmation Programme, Godly Play, It's Your Move Programme, and I will also be helping out with the FaithFest gatherings.



My own experience of being a child and from my experience working with children, I have become aware of their brilliant minds, their receptivity to the truth, their special sensitivity, their attentiveness and closeness to God.

"With a very clear sense of Gods calling, along with an immense sense of gratitude and joy I begin my work as the new Primary Schools and Community Ministry Leader"

Having been given the opportunity to see how I can help primary school aged children to grow in their relationship with God and to walk this journey with them is a privilege for me.

Claire Devaney
claire.devaney@scriptureunion.ie

Eric Hughes: New SU Youth & Community Worker

Hello my name is Eric Hughes and I am the new Youth and Community Worker for SU.

For the past five years I have been the full time youth worker for Adelaide Road Presbyterian Church in Dublin. I have volunteered for SU on many camps over the years, Ovoca manor has often been a second home for me. It was there that I met my wife Kate, as well as many lifelong friends. Last year Kate and I welcomed our daughter Olivia and we can't wait to bring her to her first SU camp.

I started with SU on the first of November and I am looking forward to carrying on SU's fine work in schools around the country, as well as beginning new ministry ventures and partnerships. Going forward I hope to strengthen our relationships with schools around Ireland, so that we can have a greater impact on the young people of Ireland. I hope to partner with and resource

local communities in order to help young people grow in their faith and influence their local communities. Authentic Youth finds itself in a rebuilding phase, as we seek to have continuing relationships with the young people we encounter. I would ask that you pray for myself and my family as we begin this new phase in our lives, as well as for the work that lies ahead.

...wake up and look around. The fields are already ripe for harvest. John 4:35

Eric Hughes
eric.hughes@scriptureunion.ie

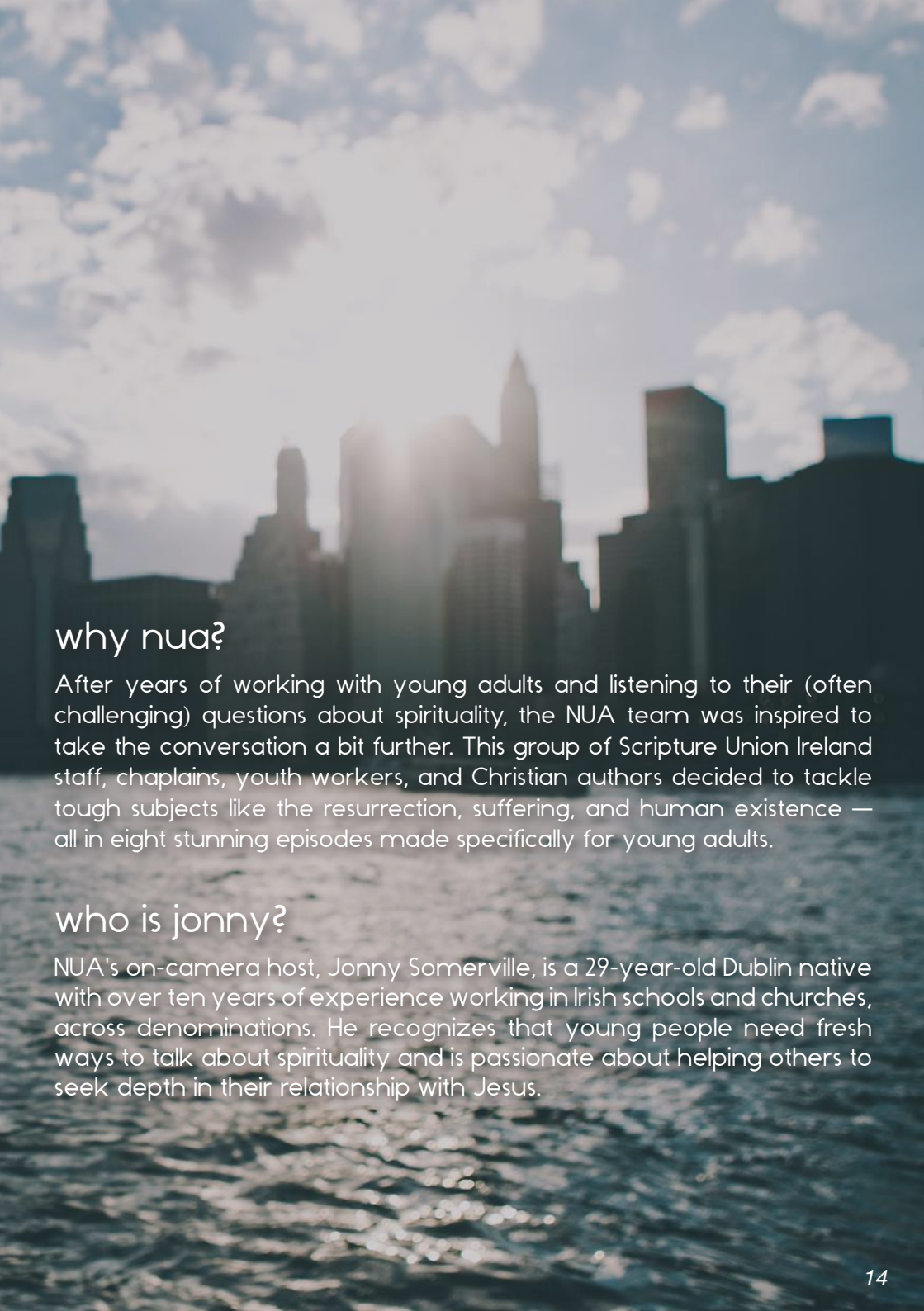


nuo

A FRESH PERSPECTIVE ON FAITH

NUA is all about exploration: it's a film series that encourages questions, acknowledges doubt, and offers an engaging perspective on the Christian faith.

www.nuafilmseries.ie



why nua?

After years of working with young adults and listening to their (often challenging) questions about spirituality, the NUA team was inspired to take the conversation a bit further. This group of Scripture Union Ireland staff, chaplains, youth workers, and Christian authors decided to tackle tough subjects like the resurrection, suffering, and human existence — all in eight stunning episodes made specifically for young adults.

who is jonny?

NUA's on-camera host, Jonny Somerville, is a 29-year-old Dublin native with over ten years of experience working in Irish schools and churches, across denominations. He recognizes that young people need fresh ways to talk about spirituality and is passionate about helping others to seek depth in their relationship with Jesus.

who's nua for?

The NUA scripts were reviewed and critiqued by Catholic and Protestant clergy, youth workers, parents, religion teachers, and young professionals. With completed scripts, the team set off, traveling the world to capture moments that will spark fresh conversations about the story of Jesus.

The NUA Film Series and accompanying materials were created with multiple uses in mind:

For Youth/Student & Parish Workers:

Whether in a church, youth group or college campus, the NUA series is an entertaining, thought-provoking activity and teaching tool.

Educational Curriculum:

NUA was also designed to work as a curriculum supplement in an educational setting. Teaching guides include lesson plans, suggestions for classroom activities, discussion topics, and additional recommended resources.

A Follow-On Resource:

At Scripture Union Ireland, we're engaged in youth work through school retreats, camps, and adventure activities. In addition to developing healthy relationships, we hope to give young people the space to learn, discuss, and question what they believe — so we created NUA. We've also been long-time partners of Alpha Ireland, whose Youth Film Series is a dynamic introduction to the Christian faith and the person of Jesus and often leads to more and even tougher questions. NUA gives our youth a chance to dig deeper and continue this important faith journey.

the nua series:

Episode 1 - How Did We Get Here?

Episode 2 - Jesus: Fact or Fiction?

Episode 3 - What About the Resurrection?

Episode 4 - What was Jesus Really Like?

Episode 5 - Why Do I Like Jesus, But Struggle With Christians?

Episode 6 - How Can You Say That God is Good?

Episode 7 - Has the Church Caused More Harm Than Good?

Episode 8 - What's Jesus Got to Do with Me?



SU CAMPS 2016-17

2016 has been another busy year in the life of Scripture Union's camps ministry. We have seen 6 x Weekend Adventures for primary schools, 4 x Parent and Child Weekends, 2 x Easter camps for 10-18 year olds, 1 x Family Week, 3 x Summer Camps, 2 x Trips to the Camino, 1 x CSSM in Greystones and 1 x Overflow Young Leaders training weekend. During the course of this time we have made new friends, been reunited with old ones, laughs have been shared and sometimes even tears!

“In the midst of all of the madness (at times) we have had the privilege of sharing the Gospel with all of the 1469 campers we crossed paths with this year.”

For the first time all of our Weekend Adventures focused on the same theme and worked from the same material. We journeyed through the story of Noah's Ark together and explored the idea of God as a rescuer, how He rescued Noah and his family and how that story continues through the Bible by sending Jesus to rescue anyone who asks. These camps could not run without the amazing support and teams made up from local churches who make the connection with the schools and work with the children throughout the rest of the year.



Easter is always a really special time in the camps calendar as it gives an opportunity mid school year to encourage the children and teenagers in their faith. This year we revamped Easter Camp for all secondary school aged students and Ken Gibson brought us on a journey through the Gospel of John. Jude Barry was our speaker for our booked-out 10-12's Easter Camp and the children learned the importance and power of prayer over the week. This week also produced one of the best dance parties that has ever been witnessed in Ovoca Manor!

Our summer kicked off in July with 2 weeks of Greystones CSSM. Our theme was “Let's Go” and at each morning beach service we went on an adventure, exploring different types of journeys in the Bible.

We looked at the stories of Joseph, Moses and Ruth just to name a few and our prayer for the week was that the people attending CSSM, or even those passing by, would discover something new about Jesus and want Him to be part of their life journey. We are so grateful to the community in Greystones for allowing us to invade their beautiful village each year and the Holiday Club group were thrilled to make an appearance on the Happy Pear snapchat feed! We rolled straight from CSSM into our week long camps in Ovoca Manor with 13-15's camp, Family Week, 10-12's Summer and RAW. Teams of amazing volunteers ran brilliant camps during the summer; we had

We gave away
over 600

'Luke the Book' DVDs
to our primary school
aged campers
in 2016.

Let's hope
that's 600
households
learning
more about the
Gospel.



Did you
know that any
leftover food
from camps was
donated to local
foodbanks?

zip-lines, outdoor cinemas, lip-sync battles, hikes, pampering afternoons, talent shows, fancy dinners, beach trips, crafts, raft-building, team building games, quiz nights and bonfires. We found the best speakers we could find to provide Biblical teaching and had wonderful worship sessions. We are thankful for God's provision over the summer and for the blessing of the location of Ovoca Manor.

**"We place high values
on family here at SU and
throughout the year we run
4 weekends for parents and
children as well as a week for
all the family in the summer."**

We love to create a space where all the family can explore life and faith together. These are in such high demand that we are looking to expand in 2017 so keep an eye on our camps brochure for some new camps!

Finally we were able to bring 2 groups to Spain to walk the final 110km of the Camino de Santiago. The walk is steeped in spirituality and it is impossible to partake in the pilgrimage and not to spend time with God. We had Bible studies together, walked together, ate together and helped each other along the way. One of the highlights of

the first trip was partaking in Taize prayer in Santiago de Compostela with people from different nationalities and the moment of seeing people arrive at the Cathedral for the first time at the end of the pilgrimage is quite special to witness.

**"2016 saw over 19 camps,
1400 campers and
5000 breakfasts!"**

None of this could have been possible without our dedicated 300 volunteers who have planned, prayed, invented games, looked after children, made food, cleaned toilets, led Bible studies, cared for and shared their lives and faith with others this year. It is an amazing thing to be able to share Christ with others and I am so grateful to all of those who do so with us here at Scripture Union.

So thank you to everyone who inputted into these camps and lives this year and we can't wait for 2017!

Emma Fawcett
emma.fawcett@scriptureunion.ie



**Do you
have a tent**
you no longer use
and could donate to us?
Contact Emma
if so...



THE CAMINO

experience

And it's one more step along the way we go! In August 2016 Scripture Union facilitated an adult group to complete part of the Camino for a week in Spain and what an adventure this turned out to be.

We were a group of five adults from different backgrounds and parts of the country including Dublin, Wicklow, Kilkenny and Carlow. We shared a commitment to complete the journey and a belief in God to guide us through (with the steady guidance of Gareth!). In many ways this was an exceptional life learning experience; sometimes life can present challenges but you have to have faith to place one step in front of the other. And there will be times of celebration ahead. Learning how to walk with God is always an adventure.

We walked approximately 25km per day, with one longer walk of in and around 30km. We discovered quickly that it was easier to walk early in the day ahead of the midday

heat, getting up one morning at 4am. The walking was through gorgeous countryside with sunflowers, pretty little villages and farms allowing time to take in the detail of the world. Some of the group got a few blisters, aches and pains, but we all got there in the end even if it meant walking sideways for a bit! We always arrived sweaty and thankful to the different hostels each night where lots of other Camino walkers would also be resting their walking sticks.

Arriving in Santiago was really very special. It is easy to see how many people find it a deeply moving and religious experience. It is simply a relief to arrive safe and whole. We were lucky to catch the incense burning at the Cathedral de Santiago and the Irish nuns for a chat. As we walk out our own journeys coming home you can nearly hear the faint whispers of encouragement 'Buen camino' as was the friendly custom along the way. Have a good journey!

Jean Orr

For more information on the Next Camino Experience contact SU Camps and Volunteer Manager emma.fawcett@scriptureunion.ie



TESTIMONIAL: GRACEMARIE

I grew up going to family week. Every summer we would make the long anticipated and actually long journey (as you may have heard, it's a long way to Tipperary) to Ovoca Manor. Family week was not only the highlight of my summer but has also been a big part of my faith journey.

Now that I live in Dublin and I'm all grown up (sort of) this past year I've been able to volunteer at a variety of camps and adventure weekends like 10-12's, CSSM and even my old favourite family week! I worked with ages from 10-18 and can honestly say I thoroughly enjoyed every minute of it. I love being around the enthusiasm of young people and am constantly amazed at the energy that they have, from waking me up at 5 in the morning because they thought it was 8, to knocking on their doors at bedtime because their whispering has turned into very loud chattering and laughing.

“I love seeing this next generation grow up with a love for Jesus...”

...and I'm so privileged to be able to serve in this way. I have a true passion for camps ministry which is due to the massive impact camps have had on me and my faith growing up and the role they continue to play in my faith today. I have learned so much from being a leader on both residential camps and at CSSM.

As a leader you become part of a group of people who all have these different skills and personalities who are able to work together and gel as a team. It can be a very intense experience, but over a

short period of time you can see how we are all the body of Christ, and when we come and work together something really special happens. There were countless times when we would come together as teams to pray and then be able to really see our prayers being answered, whether it was the weather staying dry, the safety of the children during activities or being able to see God really moving in their lives. It is such a privilege to be able to be used by God and witness what He is doing in the lives of each of these children and teens.

Being a leader at these camps has given me a chance to step out of my comfort zone and do things that in any other circumstances I wouldn't usually do. Camp gives us all a chance to step out and grow in our faith and our skills. While at camp I been given the chance to stand up and speak about Jesus, dress up like a banana, have water fights and play messy games. Now, to be very honest I do try and avoid messy games as much as possible, there is something about having eggs and beans in your hair that just doesn't appeal to me... but it is all part of the camp experience. Going to camps also keeps me hip and cool. I got to learn what “dabbing” is, even though I still don't fully get why these young people are so obsessed with this thing I can only describe as some sort of ‘dance move’, so maybe it doesn't keep me that hip after all. Overall, I am so happy I can be involved with all of these camps and I hope to continue for as long as I can!

*At Scripture Union Ireland our volunteers are the most important part of our team – we simply could not achieve a fraction of the things we do without the help of over 300 people, who give of their time so generously because they love the Lord and wish to serve Him. Our volunteers come from all walks of life, bringing their own unique gifts to support the work of Scripture Union and the Christian Church in Ireland and Internationally.

If you would like to volunteer with Scripture Union Ireland log onto www.scriptureunion.ie for further information.

uniting

Families, Children, Youth & Individuals

We have had an amazing time together and will treasure our memories.

Mother and Son Camp

It really was a wonderful weekend - a time to pause and reflect on the essential and real treasures in life.

Parenting Camp

The best memory of us all together was on our retreat this year, sitting around the campfire chatting, eating hotdogs, while Ms. De Bhál ran around with her phone asking for song requests. That was the first overnight trip that we all had together, including the girls, and probably one of our best ones, and that's saying a lot considering the trips we've been on over the years: Scotland, Wales, Carlingford, Glendalough, and even climbing Mt. Kilimanjaro

**Vice Captain 2015/16
St. Conleths College Dublin 4**

Thanks for going the extra mile and making us feel so at home in every way.

Ladies Retreat Coordinator

Everything about RAW is just awesome and makes you want to come back.

Teenager at RAW Camp

Recently a group of us went to Ovoca Manor on a day trip and we had such a fantastic time. Every one of us really enjoyed it and all would love the opportunity to go again.

Mark, Adventure Day Student

I really enjoyed the retreat in Ovoca Manor. The activities were appropriate to our age group and gave us time to reflect and challenge ourselves as well as providing a great way of strengthening relationships with friends. The talk on the Monday night was inspiring and overall, the time away helped to give me a better understanding of God.

6thYear Student, Blackrock College



THE GOSPEL AND CARE
OF OUR COMMON HOME

ECUMENICAL BIBLE WEEK 2016

Ecumenical Bible Week is an exciting and successful interdenominational Bible focused venture which is now in its fourth year. The two Archbishops of the Dublin Dioceses have given their full support to this initiative which has received very broad support by the leaders of all the main Christian Churches. There is a representative grouping from many denominations and fellowships and an Executive Planning group which Scripture Union attend.

It includes parish based events around Dublin and surrounding areas. and its primary emphasis is to set aside a week to focus on the Sacred Text, we all have in common, the Bible, and its relevance for today's society.

For 2016 the topic dealt with the Christian approach to caring for our common home and a Biblical perspective to the crisis of the environment. There was debate, talks, celebration, music and lots of participation.

A special Opening Family Event was

ECUMENICAL BIBLE WEEK 2016 FEATURED 45 EVENTS, ACROSS 13 LOCATIONS

IN DUBLIN, KILDARE AND WICKLOW,
WITH OVER 40 PRESENTERS.

organised by Scripture Union and this launch event took place on Sunday 15th May 2016 from 3pm to 5:30pm in Dundrum Methodist Church.

It was an All Age Family event and it attracted approx. 70 parents and children

The basic format was an All Age session with songs (Without Walls Band), Prayer, Bible Story with Puppets (Operation Mobilisation Creative Arts team) and Drama by Parabolos Drama group followed by interactive and scripture related workshops.

Participants then went to their selected workshops on

Godly Play – Rosemary Lavelle & Cora O Farrell

Prayer Spaces – Annette Evans

Crafts – OM Team

Scripture Meditation – Siobhan Tighe

It was a wonderful celebration for all and a fitting launch to this year's Ecumenical Bible Week.

In 2017 events, will be held to focus on the 500th Anniversary of the Reformation. This is a great opportunity as churches and communities to reflect on the Sacred Text we all hold in common the Bible.

The Ecumenical Bible Week 2017 will take place from Sunday 4th June - Sunday 11th June with a host of events around the greater Dublin area and beyond. For more information visit www.bibleweek.ie

THE PENTECOST *schools project*



This event now in its fourth year as part of Ecumenical Bible Week in the greater Dublin area. This project involves a graphic illustrator and children's author Alan Nolan visiting the schools to carry out a series of workshops based on the story of Pentecost (Acts 2) and create a class comic from this. Every class designs and narrates their own comic and a winner is chosen who then receives a copy of their comic for every student in their entire school. There is a celebration, display or art work and presenting of prizes.

This is the fourth year to run this hugely successful interactive Bible engagement project for Primary age children mainly from 4th class. This year three schools from the Ballyfermot (DEIS) and Chapelizod areas participated this year.

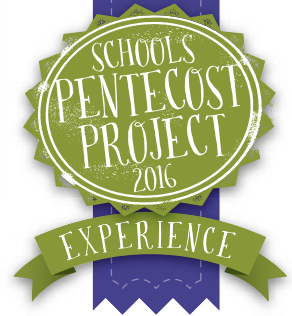
- St Ultans – Cherry Orchard (2 classes)
- St Gabriel's – Ballyfermot Lower (1 class)
- St Lawrence's Church of Ireland – Chapelizod (Mixed classes)

In all approx. 110 students participated.

This project could not have happened this year without the amazing support and

practical help and coordination undertaken by Jane Mellett the PPW for Ballyfermot area. Also the work done by Alan Nolan the author, illustrator etc was great. Alan with support from Jane delivered 5 sets of workshops run over three months from March to May in all three schools. He facilitated the students in designing and creating their comic books based on Acts 2 the Pentecost story. He also compiled all this art work and produced it in a format ready for printing by Ross Print.

The Celebration and Prize Giving Evening was such a highlight and was held in St



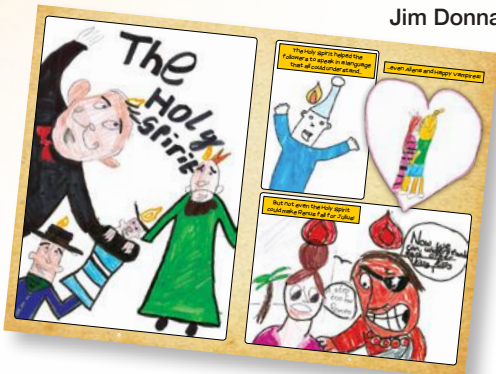
Ultans Parish Church and was attended by the participating students, their teachers and parents. It was great to see many of the local clergy and representatives from the Diocesan Offices (Rosemary, Veronica) and Scripture Union Council. It was a great example of a faith based project linking the school and local parishes/community.

The winning school was St Lawrence's Church of Ireland and St Ultans won the winning cover. The evening was coordinated by Jane and opened with songs and an overview of the project and video of the workshops

There was great excitement when the winning school was announced and Jim Donnan and Alan Nolan presented all the children with Certificates.

Over 100 people participated and it was a joy to see the excitement of these young people and the appreciation of their parents and teachers.

Jim Donnan



FROM A TEACHER'S PERSPECTIVE

“

The Pentecost Project has been one of the most engaging and exciting educational experiences the pupils of 4th Class in St. Gabriel's PS have ever taken part in. From day one Alan's kind and amusing manner kept the girls so entertained they didn't realise how many beneficial skills they were learning. Overall, I couldn't express in words how truly blessed we feel to have been chosen to take part in this excellent project. On behalf of us all in St. Gabriel's, I want to thank Alan, Jane and the Dublin archdiocese for giving us this incredible and unforgettable opportunity.

In particular, I want to thank Jim Donnan and Scripture Union for developing and coordinating this wonderful project and for funding the cost of the workshops and publication of the comics

”

Ms Aoife Colohan

4th Class Teacher, St Gabriel's Ballyfermot

EMBER SCHOOLS

LEADERSHIP AND FAITH PROGRAMME



What is Ember?

The Ember Programme is a Faith & Leadership training programme for students at senior level in secondary schools. The programme is a collaboration with the Catholic Archdiocese of Dublin Education Secretariat and Scripture Union. The students are trained to become mentors for incoming students at junior level and to be faith leaders in their schools. The three-day residential training takes place in Ovoca Manor in May and August/September each year.

The Programme

The programme is advertised among senior students who are invited to apply for the programme. All applicants are interviewed and a selection is then made. The students who are chosen undergo a training programme. This training programme covers the areas of faith reflection, communication skills, listening skills, assertiveness skills, group dynamics, group management and many other skills that are necessary for the students to develop if the programme is to be successful.

But the training is also about challenging these young people to look at themselves, to believe that they are worthwhile and that they have a special contribution to make. The Inspiring Scripture verse is from 2 Timothy, *"Fan into flame the gift of God that is within you for God did not give us a spirit of timidity, but a spirit of power, of love and self-discipline"*. Our aim is to help the young people exercise their faith and to be inspired by the Christian message of love and service to others.

"Our vision is to create a group of leaders within schools who will be an example of faith in action, striving to make a difference in the lives of those around them."

After their training the students return to their schools as fifth and sixth years and each is given responsibility for a number of incoming first years. Then the task is to ensure the smooth transition of these young people into the school and to be able and available to assist them in any way necessary during their first days in secondary school.

After this the Ember team meet regularly and work to find opportunities to be an example of faith in action within themselves, the school and the wider community. Students have organised Prayer Services, Prayer Spaces as well as social action initiatives. A number of teachers in each school

PARTICIPATING SCHOOLS

The following schools have taken part in Ember Programme for 2016/17:

1. Loreto Secondary School, Balbriggan (8 students+1 teacher)*
2. Loreto College, Crumlin (8 students+1 teacher)
3. Dominican College, Wicklow (10 students+1 teacher)
4. Presentation College, Terenure (8 students + 2 teachers shared the time away from school for training)*
5. St. Aidan's CBS, Whitehall (6 students + 1 teacher)*
6. St. Tiernan's Community School, Balally (5 students + 1 teacher)*
7. Killinarden Community School (6 students + 2 teachers)
8. Tallaght Community School (10 students + 2 teachers)
9. St. Colmcille's Community School (8 students + 2 teachers)
10. Mount Anville Secondary School, Stillorgan (*2 very brave students who hope to expand the potential applicants for next year + 1 teacher*)*
11. Mount Sackville Secondary School, Chapelizod (11 + Catherine + 2 teachers who came down to Ovoca for a day each)
12. Loreto College, Foxrock (6 students + 1 teacher)
13. St. Mary's College, Rathmines (10 students + 2 teachers)
14. Rosmini Community School (5 students + 1 teacher)
15. Catholic University School (9 students + 1 teacher)
16. St. Mary's Holy Faith Secondary School, Glasnevin (10 students + 1 teacher)
17. Holy Child Sec School, Killiney (8 students + 1 teacher)*
18. Confey College, Leixlip (12 students + 1 teacher)*
19. Pobalscoil Neasain, Baldoye (5 students + 1 teacher)*

** denotes new schools who have joined for the first time this year.*

volunteer to act as overseers of the programme. They organize the day to day running of the programme and provide any in-school assistance or back-up that is needed. Anna Maloney the Diocesan Adviser and a member of the Ember Planning Team which includes representatives of Scripture Union, visits the Ember Teams on a monthly basis to provide advice and encouragement.

This wonderful collaboration is now in its fifth year since Scripture Union started this exciting collaboration with RC Diocesan Education Secretariat and it is so exciting how God has blessed this programme starting with just five schools and now we have three residential at Ovoca Manor in May, August and September with some 20 schools and approx. 150 students and their teachers.

Jim Donnan



Creating an environment for an encounter *with* God!



What do we hope to achieve through our ministry? This is a question often asked.

So with all the work that we do with young people, what's the answer? Is it about transferring information ABOUT GOD or creating an opportunity to ENCOUNTER WITH GOD? *Ideally we do both.*

We can spend a lot of time trying to persuade someone, or convince them with FACTS and KNOWLEDGE of the bible and their need of God in their lives. This can often almost form an argument style, right/wrong discussion, leading to a yes/no response. This is not always fruitful.

Real growth or **transformation** happens when a person **meets with God**. This often happens in ways we do not recognise or expect.

“A young boy on his first camp is disciplined for something he has done. It's the 1st time he has been disciplined without Anger or Rage. Something happens in his heart....he realises God is not an angry God, but a LOVING GOD. We realise “God has been at work for years, knocking at the door of his heart”. The door opens! and a change has occurred “GOD IS KIND”. Transformation has occurred and this young man has made a step forward on his journey with God.

Sometimes we need to create a safe supportive environment, to feel among friends!

God allures us into the wilderness that He might meet with us. This sounds good but can be an unpleasant experience. We are stretched when we do not understand what is happening, and we become afraid.

Real growth occurs when we are forced to really TRUST, to reach out in the dark with just enough light for the next step.

We don't have the answers, and for a lot of life's experiences, answers can be hard to find. Some information about God can be helpful, but if we have all the answers, there's no mystery, no stepping into the deep water.

But when we make a step of faith, God always makes a step toward us.

This is the exciting part of Scripture Union's ministry, to have the privilege of being part of 'God at Work' in people's lives.

So, it's with much appreciation that we can thank our dedicated volunteers and staff for

“But when we make a step of faith, God always makes a step toward us.”

all their work in creating a SPACE for people to MEET GOD.

Looking forward: To aim at being conscious of God being at work in every person we come in contact with, and being open and available to join in that work.

Dirk Van Der Flier - Chairman

SU FUNDING

Scripture Union is a non-profit charitable organisation and runs a variety of services and programmes. We are often only able to provide these services through the assistance of numerous volunteers and through financial donations, either once-off or ongoing.

We are very grateful to all who have supported Scripture Union Ireland throughout the years.

Whether it has been financial gifts, prayer or volunteering, your support has been vital to the running of Scripture Union Ireland and all its departments.

If you are interested in financially Supporting Scripture Union Ireland, then log onto www.scriptureunion.ie to find out more about the following financial support opportunities.



General Fund



Camps and Missions



Youth and Community



Children & Community



Ovoca Manor Development Fund

At Ovoca Manor there are always ongoing small, medium and large developments. If you'd be interested in supporting us generally or supporting an individual project, then get in touch with the OM Team Leader - Gareth Lynch gareth.lynch@scriptureunion.ie



Send a camper to Camp

By financially supporting this fund you will provide a child, teenager, individual or family the opportunity to attend a Scripture Union Ireland Camp, who may not otherwise have the means to do so.





**OVOCA
MANOR**

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Team Building

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Retreats & Faith Talks

