



THE CENTRE FOR
**THEOLOGY
& COMMUNITY**

URBAN LEADERSHIP SCHOOL

Summer School Internship 2015

Equipping a new generation of Christian leaders

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Summer Internship 2015

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Finish Monday 27th July 2015



theology-centre.org

THE CENTRE FOR THEOLOGY & COMMUNITY

CTC is an independent charity based in east London. **We equip churches to transform their communities – through the practices of community organising, theological reflection and prayer.** The work of the Centre grew out of the participation of a growing number of local churches, of different denominations, in community organising with London Citizens. We work with a growing range of churches – including long-established congregations as well as new church plants. We believe churches in deprived and diverse areas have a vital role to play in the transformation of their communities, and of our wider society

London Citizens is part of Citizens UK and is an alliance of over 200 grassroots faith and community groups acting together for social change. Recent achievements include winning over £100 million for London's lowest-paid workers through the Living Wage Campaign and 'people's guarantees' on pay, affordable housing and local skills training for the 2012 Olympics.

CTC has six core values:

- We are committed to **the flourishing of local congregations and their communities.** Christians are called to be 'present and engaged' in every neighbourhood. We exist to help local churches engage with their communities faithfully and effectively.
- Our main focus is on congregations in areas of **economic deprivation and of religious diversity.** We believe these to be a gift, not a burden, to the wider Body of Christ.
- We believe Christianity requires and makes possible transformation in both our **individual lives and the social order.** We therefore want to help churches to engage in works of mercy, take action for social justice and share their faith with others.
- **We seek to foster trust and understanding across denominations and faiths.** We believe this is best initiated through action on local issues of common concern, without evading the need for honest conversation on issues of genuine difference and disagreement.
- **We seek to root our action in listening.** Prayer and face-to-face engagement with our neighbours are both vital if the church is to respond to what God is already doing.
- **We are committed to mutuality,** for it is at the heart of our Triune God. We do not want to do for others what they can best do for themselves. We and our partner churches are committed to being blessed by, as well as blessing, both our neighbours and the wider church and world.

THE URBAN LEADERSHIP SCHOOL

The Urban Leadership School (ULS) is an exciting new project of the Centre for Theology & Community. The school offers a range of programmes for those wishing to explore leadership in church-based community organising. We offer summer a year-long internship, as well as day conferences and seminars.

At the core of each programme is our mission to help Christians to effectively engage with local communities through theological reflection and community organising. Through the ULS, the Centre for Theology & Community is committed to equipping a new generation of Christian leaders from a diverse range of backgrounds who can help the church to work with its neighbours for social transformation.



THE SUMMER INTERNSHIP 2015

The Summer Internship is a four week programme offering training in church-based community organising, theological reflection and spiritual exploration. We welcome applicants over 19 years of age, from all parts of the world and from all Christian backgrounds. This is a challenging but rewarding programme where interns are encouraged to explore how churches and Christians can act for justice, mercy and faith sharing through community engagement.

In 2014 interns said their experience of the programme was *“transformational”* and had *“fundamentally reshaped my conception of what leadership is”*.

Another said *“the last four weeks have been some of the most formative, challenging and inspiring weeks of my life”*

This year, the programme will look very similar to the time tested formula experienced by interns over the last nine years. After the initial week of community organising training, spiritual and theological reflection our interns will work on a community organising project deep within the diverse and deprived areas of east and south-east London. Supported by an experienced Christian minister and supervisor, interns will become involved in a local congregation. They will learn how relationship building can make powerful changes within local communities by working for social justice and ‘congregation development’.

Interns will work towards a final event, ‘action’ or campaign. In previous years interns have spearheaded a campaign to save a playground and, with a Pentecostal church, they have made local streets safer for young people. Interns have built up a Roman Catholic churches youth work and helped secure a local ban on payday loan adverts through the Just Money campaign.

Spirituality

Developing our faith and spiritual resources is crucial if we are to participate in mission. Helping local congregations to engage with their local community or struggling for social justice becomes dry and lifeless if it is not rooted in our relationship with God. Indeed our ministry is strengthened and informed through our reading of scripture, our prayer and worship.

It is for this reason we place spiritual development at the heart of our internship experiences. All interns will meet for daily prayer, we will read the scriptures together and explore new patterns for prayer and spirituality. We are fortunate to have the resources of the CTC Chaplain as spiritual companion, she will bring a depth of knowledge and insight as well as lead us in our spiritual journey throughout the month. Many of our previous interns have said how helpful and sometimes challenging they found our spiritual development programme.

Outcomes from the Summer School Internship

Our internships are becoming nationally recognised for the experience and skills offered to participants. After completing the summer internship, some participants have joined a CTC year-long internship programme. Others have used their internship experience to acquire



further placements with national and international NGOs. A CTC internship often leads to greater responsibilities in a participant's university, church or career. By the end of the programme interns will have been part of God's mission in some of the most deprived areas of London, they will be better equipped for service and leadership in the church, and have excellent skills in communication, theological reflection and community organising.

One Christian leader and intern supervisor for the July 2014 internship said *"our intern encouraged the congregation to look at themselves in new ways, and she motivated the church to adapt new approaches with children and young people"*

Another supervisor said *"our intern made an extremely useful contribution to the Just Money campaign during his internship". "They provided the capacity needed to kick things off.....they have certainly set us off on the right footing"*.

Practicalities

The summer internship is full time with interns being required to work a full week including evening engagements. They will be embedded in their congregation, attending worship each weekday morning and the main Sunday worship. In addition, interns will attend community afternoons and bible study mornings. We encourage interns to keep a personal journal and they will be asked to report on their reflections and work at the end of the first and second week. A short final report at the end of the placement will also be produced.

We will provide accommodation for interns in carefully selected homes close by their congregation placement. Interns already living in East and South-East London will not require our accommodation. All interns will receive £100 per week for their food and travel expenses.

Details regarding internship fees can be obtained from the school Director. There are a limited number of bursaries available for applicants whose financial situation would otherwise prevent them from accessing the programme, but we do encourage applicants to seek financial support from the university, trust funds and home church.

We welcome applicants of all ages and we are actively seeking a rich diversity of background, nationality and Christian denomination. Applicants are encouraged to discuss their interest with their parish priest, pastor, church leader, chaplain or someone experienced who can help them discern their future. The application form can be found at the CTC website. Once we receive your initial application, the Director will contact you to discuss the next step.

Requirements

The summer internship is a high-energy and at times quite demanding experience, so applicants should have high levels of motivation, speak English well and an ability to relate to a wide range of people. We welcome interns who are ready to work hard, become involved, meet with and engage with local people and willing for their faith to be challenged.



Previous Interns



Daniel took part in the summer programme last year because he wanted to see how a Christian community could effectively push against injustice. He wanted to understand how society can be changed. He also wanted fresh experiences to help discover new direction in his life.

Daniel worked with the Salvation Army in Stepney, helping to develop their Employment Plus programme. The programme sought to provide specific support for those in the area seeking employment, and so his work involved talking to people to find out the employment-related issues they faced, and linking up with local schools, faith groups and employment services to meet their needs.

Daniel describes his time in Stepney as *“a wonderful opportunity to meet people from many different backgrounds facing many different issues”*. *“It has given me a greater sense of what we share as people, and increased my understanding, and respect for, human dignity. I am now more willing to speak up for and work against injustices”*.

He will be returning to Oxford to continue his studies and his final term as Common Room President. He says *“I have learnt so much from the internship programme which I now want to put into action”*.



Cheriel decided to join the summer programme because she wanted to learn community organising skills and get a feel for what it meant to be really involved in the life of a local community. She worked on congregational development in Lower Clapton, which involved meeting with church members and local residents encouraging people to take steps to bring greater life to the church and to explore how the church could better serve the needs of the community. *“I learnt how to get plugged into a community, how to identify key leaders and how the right questions can help build relationships with others”* She is now preparing to move to Japan and plant churches there, *“I will be using the skills I learnt in the summer to get involved in my local community in Japan and see things change for the better”*.



Pastor Kwame, from the House of Faith Pentecostal church, is dedicated in unleashing the potential of young people and is involved in political discussion in Ghana and UK. He joined the summer programme and helped a local Anglican church develop their Just Money campaign. He said *“although I am already in a leadership position in church the summer internship has sharpened my leadership skills, it has enabled me to engage with various people from different backgrounds”*

