

## Fellowship of Christian University Students

### PRAISE & PRAYER REQUESTS – JANUARY/FEBRUARY 2016

#### *Praise the Lord*

As we begin another year we remember and thank God for the myriad ways in which he has been faithful to us personally and as a ministry in 2015. Our hearts are refreshed and we look forward in faith to our journey in the universities of Sri Lanka in 2016.

- Sushmitha Thayanandan, a recent Law graduate, attended the US mission conference, Urbana 2015, in December. It was a new and wonderful experience for her to spend time worshipping God with those from around the world. She was particularly touched by the stories of those who endure faithfully despite much hostility and persecution. We pray that her faith would be further strengthened as she continues to reflect on her experiences and discerns what God is calling her to do in the coming years.



- The FOCUS students in the universities around the country sought to witness to the hope and joy of the Christmas message through various ways in December. Read more about the various events at <http://www.focus.lk/2015/12/29/christmas-in-the-universities/>
- The FOCUS Council met for the first time this year on 2<sup>nd</sup> January. We are thankful for our brothers and sisters who give of their time and experience to help govern the ministry in God-honouring ways.
- The FOCUS staff team met together on 12<sup>th</sup>-13<sup>th</sup> January to pray, envision and plan for the year. We are thankful for the diversity of the staff team and the commitment to model and serve as channels of God's grace in the universities.

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#### *Prayer Requests*

- Please pray for Paheerathan as he gives leadership to the pioneering efforts around the country. In the last week of January he will travel to Sabaragamuwa University and then to the Eastern University in the first week of February. Further pioneering activities are being conducted in the Rajarata and Sri Jayawardenapura Universities and in the medical faculty in Ragama and the South Asia Institute of Technology and Medicine. Please uphold the various graduate volunteers who are helping in these activities as well as the students in each of these universities.
  
- Kolitha Dissanayake is helping to uplift the ministry among the Sinhala-speaking students in the universities. A small group of committed graduates and students have been formed and they will meet in February to discuss issues that are relevant to the Sinhala-speaking Christian. Kolitha is also engaged in writing his 3<sup>rd</sup> book on the theme of helping the Sinhala-speaking Church to develop a Christian mind. The Sinhala translation of ‘*Your Kingdom Come*’ by Dr Vinoth Ramachandra is also due to be published in the next few months.
  
- New batches of students have started to enter the universities. Please pray for them as they adjust to their new environment and face pressures that they may have not encountered before. Please pray that students in the Christian fellowships will be able to befriend the new students and serve them lovingly. Students in the University of Colombo Christian Fellowship have put together a booklet containing important and useful information about the city to help the students who are coming to Colombo for the first time. We hope to produce similar booklets for students at the universities at Jaffna and Peradeniya respectively.

#### **Be updated about what is happening in the ministry...**

- Join the prayer group – send an email to [sanjayan@focus.lk](mailto:sanjayan@focus.lk)
- Find us on Facebook – <https://www.facebook.com/groups/17916250038/>
- Check out our website – <http://www.focus.lk/>

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- A teaching programme on “Rest and Reflection in a Frenzied World” will be held on **23<sup>rd</sup> January** at the FOCUS office. Please pray for Sanjayan Rajasingham who will be leading the discussion.
- The Graduate Christian Fellowship (GCF) Committee will be meeting in the last week of January to finalize their plans for 2016. The GCF Conference will be held from 16<sup>th</sup>-19<sup>th</sup> July 2016. Please pray for Savithri Sumanthiran and the rest of the committee as they plan for this conference and other GCF activities.
- The Young Graduate Reading Group will meet on **28<sup>th</sup> January** to read, discuss and reflect on various books and articles from a Christian perspective. They are currently reading “*23 Things They Don’t Tell You About Capitalism*” by Ha-Joon Chang.
- The FOCUS National Student Conference will be held in Jaffna during the New Year holidays in April. Members of the National Student Executive (NSE) hope to travel to Jaffna on **30<sup>th</sup> January** to meet with students at the Jaffna University and plan the conference. Please pray for safe travel and a sense of partnership as the students come together to plan the logistics of the conference.

The FOCUS staff team will be meeting in Kandy on **25<sup>th</sup>-26<sup>th</sup> February** to plan the sessions and the speakers for the national student conference. Please keep them in your prayers.

- Sanjayan Rajasingham is working to help students of FOCUS imaginatively engage the university with the gospel. Please pray for him as he seeks out the main apologetic concerns present in the university and helps Christian students to develop relevant evangelistic material. The NSE is also in the process of developing a discussion paper on the nature of the university to share with the student unions and administration. The Council of FOCUS hopes to produce a policy paper on Higher Education in the coming months which will be used as a basis for discussion with relevant authorities.
- Please pray for Menura Perera, who will rejoin the staff team in February after his exams. We continue to pray and search for permanent staff, especially female staff workers to serve on the staff team.

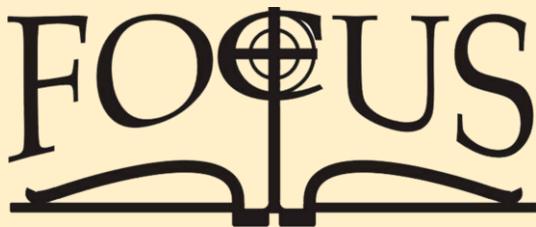
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- A retreat for student Christian leaders will be held from **20<sup>th</sup>-22<sup>nd</sup> February**. Please keep the resource persons in prayer as they help the students recognize the joys and struggles of Christian leadership in the university.
- FOCUS hopes to organize 2 public conferences during 2016 as part of our emphasis on helping the Sri Lankan Church reimagine the relationship between our faith and our work. The first of these conferences will feature the Engineering sector while the next conference will address issues that are prevalent in the Legal arena. The conferences will most likely be held in July and September 2016. Steering committees have already been formed for each of these conferences and we hope to finalize the programme and book the venue by the end of February. Please pray for this new initiative.
- FOCUS will re-launch its newsletter/magazine under the title '*Captive*' based on the ideas present in Colossians 2:8 and 2 Corinthians 10:5. This 6 monthly publication will feature thought provoking articles on contemporary issues as well as news and reflections related to the FOCUS ministry in the universities. We hope to publish the first edition during the month of February.

*We thank you for your continued partnership with the FOCUS ministry.*

**Give to the FOCUS Ministry...**



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#### *Overseas*

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Type "**FOCUS – Sri Lanka**" in the text box