

# Student Conference 2025 – programme

31 January to 2 February 2025

Yarnfield Park Training and Conference Centre, Staffordshire

## A Celebration of Limitation

If you're not 'busy' are you even doing life properly?

Ultimately, busyness means living at our limits—and those limits can feel restricting. So, we use time, energy, money, and technology in a constant effort to overcome our limits. Those we can't overcome we fight, those we can't fight, we're told to accept. Which is all rather like a patient receiving a cancer diagnosis: 'I'm sorry to tell you, but you're limited'.

But what if human limits aren't a bug, but a feature of our humanity? What if learning to live well in God's world actually means learning to love our limits as our (unlimited) God's (limited) creatures? That's what we'll spend some time considering this weekend, with help from the wisdom of Ecclesiastes, and the glory of Christ.

### Bio:

Matt originally studied medicine in Newcastle and worked around the Northern Deanery. He has been a medical registrar, then a pastor and seminary tutor and is now CEO of the Universities and Colleges Christian Fellowship (UCCF). He is married to Anika, who is also a former doctor, now working as a pastoral counsellor. They have 6 children aged 15 to 9 and a slightly mad Labrador, aged 4.

## PRICING STRUCTURE

### CMF MEMBER (including members discount\*)

£130 Early bird rate Limited to 250 bookings made ON or BEFORE Friday 3 January 2025

£160 Standard rate 251<sup>st</sup> booking onwards made ON or BEFORE 3 January 2025

£170 Late booking rate Booking made ON or AFTER Saturday 4 January 2025

### NON-MEMBER

£175 Standard rate Booking made ON or BEFORE Friday 3 January 2025

£190 Late booking rate Booking made ON or AFTER Saturday 4 January 2025

## PLANNED PROGRAMME (TBC with Team and ML)

### FRIDAY 31 JANUARY 2025

1800 Registration opens

1930 Dinner

2030 Introductory session – Knighton Suite

2130 Icebreaker (Optional) / staff meeting

## **SATURDAY 1 FEBRUARY 2025**

0730 Morning Activities  
0730 Breakfast (served until 0840)  
0900 Bible Address 1 - Matt Lillicrap  
1030 Coffee  
1115 Seminar 1  
1230 Lunch  
1345 Free time  
1600 Main session 2 - Matt Lillicrap  
1715 Seminar 2  
1830 Dinner  
1945 Seminar 3  
2100 Evening activities

## **SUNDAY 2 FEBRUARY 2025**

0730 Morning Activities  
0730 Breakfast (served until 0900)  
0930 Main session 3 - Matt Lillicrap  
1030 Coffee  
1115 Seminar 4  
1245 Lunch  
1400 Celebration and praise  
1500 Conference ends

## **SEMINARS**

### **1. Celebrating limitations**

Matt will be further unpacking his main talks during this seminar

### **2. Relationships**

We invest our time and energy in so many different directions; study, career, hobbies, health... Yet at the end of life, the thing that most people are usually the most grateful for (and have the most pain around) is relationships. We are all in relationships with friends, colleagues, siblings, partners, parents, etc. We are all constantly absorbing messages from the world about which relationships matter, how to make them 'work', what should we expect from them etc. How is our understanding of relationships changed by the fact that we are followers of Jesus? This is not a dating seminar about how to find the 'perfect' spouse (though we can certainly touch on that!) Rather it is an invitation to reflect and question together how we can all, regardless of 'relationship status', grow in the image of the Triune God who IS love and have relationships that flourish.

**Daniel Porter** is an ophthalmology registrar based in Wales. He loves telling people about the goodness of God, particularly around the topics of relationships and sexuality. He joined a CMF reading group as a second year and participated in CMF's Global Track. He loves meeting people from different cultures and learning languages.

**Phoebe Owen** is a Consultant in Rehabilitation Medicine in Derby and is part of CMF's Every Nation Collaborative. She is married to John, and has 7-year-old twins, and a 5-year-old.

### 3. Is God a cosmic consciousness?

The idea that God is a cosmic consciousness is advocated by contemporary thinkers such as the psychologist Jordan Peterson and neuroscientist/psychiatrist Ian McGilchrist, and is receiving increasing traction amongst those who believe there is more to the universe than mere matter. What are the strengths and weaknesses of this idea and how might we engage with it from a Christian perspective?

**Jim Paul** is currently the director of the English branch of L'Abri Fellowship, an apologetics community in Hampshire. Before this he was a palliative care doctor working in London.

### 4. Being a biblical leader in healthcare

As a medical or nursing professional you will be a leader in healthcare. Your only choice is whether you will lead intentionally or unintentionally, positively or negatively. The seminar will consider what the Bible has to say about why we should lead; how we should lead, and how we can avoid the pitfalls of being a leader.

**Dr Nick Land** is a retired Medical Director and Psychiatrist. He continues to have a range of leadership roles including leading an Anglican 'Fresh Expressions' congregation, being a Church Commissioner and being Chair of Members for a Multi-Academy Trust.

### 5. Medicine/Nursing - a vocation or just another job?

Join us to look together at how God views our work and what we do. We will be delving into the sacred/secular divide, looking at the bible through the lens of our work and hopefully share thoughts and battles of life from the perspective of healthcare in 2025.

**Sue Holcombe** is an ANP in breast and currently working in Swansea and St Helen's Breast Units.

**Chris Holcombe** is a Breast Surgeon and Lead Clinician in Swansea Breast Unit who has been working in the NHS for many years.

### 6. How to thrive (and not merely survive) as an FY1

'It was the best times and the worst of times.' Whilst Charles Dickens didn't write these words with 21st-century junior doctors in mind, he nonetheless aptly summarises what the FY1 experience can feel like. You're finally a doctor, saving lives, earning money, loving life. But you're also loaded with new responsibilities, new expectations, new challenges – and sometimes lives can't be saved. How can you make the most of the opportunities afforded to you in FY1 whilst navigating the trials that will inevitably come your way? How can you thrive for the glory of God and not just survive? Join us as we

explore this issue together. Bring your questions and concerns, your hopes and fears, and by God's grace, we'll all help each other to make the most of our junior years.

**Paula Busuulwa** is a junior doctor and the Chair of CMF Junior Doctors' Committee

## 7. Praying with Jesus

The disciples asked Jesus how to pray - and he told them and showed them. In this seminar we will explore prayerful ways of being with God in the warp and weft of everyday life at medical school. We will consider ways of talking and listening to God; ways of meditating on God's word; ways of being still and knowing the God who is our God.

**Rhona Knight** is a retired GP and church minister, currently serves as a theological educator, pastoral supervisor and spiritual director. She is a retreat leader, and a member of the College of Chaplains at Launde Abbey. She is the author of a number of books on discipleship and spirituality.

## 8. End-of-life care and ethics

What does our culture say about death and dying, and what does the Bible say? What is holistic, palliative care and what difference does being a Christian make? How can we speak into the debate about assisted suicide? Come along with questions, thoughts or if you've never thought about this important topic before - we'd love to discuss it with you and help one other become better equipped to live and speak for Jesus in this area.

**Sally Barker** BIOG MISSING (if nothing ... is a junior doctor in London)

**Esther Hughes** is a clinical nurse specialist in palliative care

## 9. AI in healthcare - a Christian perspective

In an age where technology is rapidly transforming every facet of our lives, healthcare stands on the brink of a revolution. Artificial Intelligence (AI) promises to enhance diagnostics, personalise treatment, and streamline patient care. Or so ChatGPT told me when I asked it to plan me this seminar! In our time together we'll consider how to think and act with Christ-like wisdom in an age of AI and emerging technologies.

**Susan Marriott** is CMF Head of Public Policy. She previously trained as, and worked as, a GP in and around Cambridge. She has also undertaken theological training and is currently enjoying bringing together both these strands working for CMF.

## 10. Thinking of going somewhere? Developing foundations for the Christian life at home and overseas

We will be exploring our calling and how we manage for the long haul - at home or abroad.

**Fi McLachlan** is head of CMF Global with a background of involvement in healthcare management and mission.

**Tristan Kawalek** currently works as a military FY1 in the Queen Elizabeth Hospital, Birmingham where he was a student. As a student, he was involved with CMF at a local and national level, and is now on the CMF Global Track course where he is seeking to explore God's call for global mission.

### **11. Managing Money - kingdom resources in an uncertain world**

Money is never far from the headlines, whether over the UK economy, funding of healthcare, strikes over pay in the NHS, or student debt. How we handle it will affect our personal, professional and spiritual lives. We will explore the general principles that scripture sets down regarding money, and apply these to both our student context, and to how we manage finances in the future. Do come prepared with questions ...

**Laurence Crutchlow** is is CMF Associate Head of Student Ministries and a GP in London.

### **12. Breakthrough friendship**

What does the Bible say about friendship? Do you ever feel frustrated at Christian friendships that can feel superficial and more like a social media post? Do you long for more meaningful connections? We will be discussing practical points on how we can address these challenges and form 'breakthrough friendships', whilst considering the implications of limited time as medics. This seminar aims to help us think more deeply about how we can be building one another up whilst striving together towards Christ.

**Chris Borges Da Silva** is a junior doctor and Associate Head of Student Ministries at CMF.

**Andrew Khakhria** is a third-year medical student at King's College London

### **13. Can we trust the Bible?**

How was the Bible put together, and on whose authority? Is it accurate, and historically reliable? What about manuscript variants and translations? Even then, how do we apply it to contemporary issues of faith, ethics and lifestyle?

**Mark Pickering** is CMF Chief Executive and a secure environment GP. He loves delving into the background and history of the Bible. Having done that for over 30 years, he is more confident than ever that it is incredibly trustworthy!

### **14. The why, how and you of CMF on campus**

Come along to explore the why and how of creating Jesus-centred healthcare community on campus and the part that events, activities and you, yourself can play. We will be honest about challenges, learn from what has worked well and share ideas to inspire and help one another to live and speak for Jesus as healthcare students.

**James Tomlinson** is a GP based in Birmingham, is a former student leader, current Medical School Link, former Catalyst Team Leader and is now Head of Volunteers and Networks for CMF.

### **15. Build a life you don't need to regularly escape from**

In *The Message*, Jesus' words from Matt 11:29-30 are paraphrased as 'Walk with me and work with me – watch how I do it. Learn the unforced rhythms of grace. I won't lay anything heavy or ill-fitting on you. Keep company with me and you'll learn to live freely and lightly'. NHS data shows that in 2023, nearly 7 million (6.88) days were lost due to stress-related illness from nurses and health visitors. Leaving us asking, have dangerous stress levels been normalised in our workforces? In this interactive seminar we will be asking, 'What did Jesus' healthcare ministry look like?' Come and dig into some of the

'unforced rhythms of grace' he modelled such as submission, Sabbath and solitude, as well as hear practical advice on how to implement them from professionals further along in their careers. Our prayer is that we'd all be able to build lives of work and rest where we thrive, not just survive.

**Bex Lawton** has been practicing as a paediatric nurse for 19 years in Oxford and is CMF Head of Nurses and Midwives (N&M)

**Gemma Griffiths** has been a qualified midwife for ten years, specialising in birth trauma, and is our N&M Staff worker.

## **16. Knowing our Calling and Purpose**

How do I fit into God's big plan for the world? Does he have a special role for me? How do I discover God's plan for my life? What factors should I be considering? How can I identify his voice more clearly and discern his will? How do I weigh up the pros and cons in major life decisions? What challenges should I expect along the way and how do I negotiate them?

**Andrew Jackson** is the new CMF Head of Student Ministries, having started in August 2024. He also continues to work as a GP with a special interest in Sports & Exercise Medicine and was at medical school at Nottingham University.