



Church of Ireland Youth Department

General Synod Report 2025

MEMBERSHIP

Executive

<i>President</i>	The Most Rev Patricia Storey
<i>Chairperson</i>	Mrs Brigid Barrett
<i>Treasurer</i>	Mr Edward Hardy
<i>Secretary</i>	Mrs Judith Peters

Miss Valerie Walker

Central Board – Executive (above) and:

Rev Peter Ferguson
Rev Alan Breen
Miss Sally Siggins
Rev Martin O’Kelly
Rev Canon Malcolm Kingston
Mr Andrew Watson
Rev Canon Nicola Halford
Rev Peter Blair
Rev Lindsey Farrell

Co-options

Mrs Brigid Barrett
Mrs Hilda Connolly
Mrs Claire Hinchliff
Mr Nathan Kingston
Miss Hannah O’Neill

Standing Committee Representatives

Miss Harriet Wilkinson
Mr Edward Hardy

National Youth Officer

Mr Simon Henry

Youth Ministry Development Officer (Southern Region)

Mr Luke Hawkins (commenced August 2024)

Office Manager

Mrs Barbara Swann

Executive Summary

The CIYD team consists of a National Youth Officer, Mr Simon Henry, and a Southern Regional Development Officer, Mr Luke Hawkins, who commenced in August 2024. They are both provided with administration and communications support by our Office Manager, Mrs Barbara Swann.

CIYD frames their work through their Strategic Plan 2022-2025, alongside engagement and support from The Department of Children, Equality, Disability, Integration and Youth (ROI) and the *National Quality Standards Framework* - a process of self-evaluation and continuous improvement in refocusing its role and areas of ministry for the future.

Developments of note in 2024 were:

- All Island Youth Ministry Audit Survey – This was a considerable piece of work for our staff as we sought to assess the current landscape of youth ministry provision post COVID across the island.
- The continued success & engagement of the *Young Leaders In Ministry Fund*, established to celebrate the 150th anniversary of the Act of Disestablishment and to support Church of Ireland Ministry in the future, for young people aged 15-25 years actively involved in church life.
- NEXT STEPS – A bursary fund to significantly encourage the number of young people and current youth leaders to undertake 3rd level qualifications and development within the wider youth ministry sector, supported by the Priorities Fund.
- CIYD National Youth Forum meeting in January, the 3rd of a 3-year cycle focusing on mental well-being and faith & church.
- Missional Generation partnership – VR (Virtual Reality) and AR (Augmented Reality) resources including 3 days of seminars and workshops at Summer Madness & youth leader care box giveaways
- Partnership with the Mind Matters & Action Mental Health to provide mental health training to young people and youth leaders.
- Prayer Journal – Linking in with CIYD's A Day of Prayer for the Church's Ministry with Young People, the Sunday before Advent, this free journal was created in partnership with Missional Generation.

CIYD ACTIVITIES IN 2024

All our activities continued to support and develop youth ministry with key stakeholders.

Youth Ministry Leadership: Support and Development

In partnership with dioceses, and in response to their specific needs, CIYD organised regular training and support events for those involved in youth ministry in a paid (full-time and part-time) or volunteer capacity. These events were tailored to the needs and contexts of each region.

- The 'Connect' programme - Partnering with the Irish Methodist Youth Department, continued throughout 2024 with relevant training for youth workers and volunteers. This included looking at the landscape of youth ministry 'cross Ireland with Mr Andy Hickford, Pastoral Care training with The Big House Ireland and our "Connect Christmas" event in December with lunch and a Christmas Communion led by Bishop George Davison of Connor Diocese.
- Annual Youth Workers' Retreat - We had our annual retreat for youth workers in Ibiza, linking in with the work of 24/7 Prayer to go out on to the streets and pray for people and assist them practically. We also had daily bible study lead by Rev Adrian Green, who until recently was the Anglican priest in charge on the island. Thanks to Adrian, his wife Linda and Miss Gemma Barclay of 24/7 Prayer Ministry for their warm welcome and facilitation facilitated by the Diocesan staff team in the Diocese of Manchester – it was great to spend time away together with like-minded folks and see evangelism at work in hard places.
- Summer Madness - The festival continues to thrive at its new home on the grounds of the Portglenone Monastery, Co Antrim. Numbers were very encouraging from the majority of our dioceses, and it is heartening to see young people together worshipping and learning more about Jesus. Our National Youth Officer, Mr Simon Henry, was also a host on the mainstage platform at worship sessions each

day with the CIYD venue very active with a programme of seminars each day focused on digital discipleship opportunities.

- Winter Madness - CIYD was involved with supporting this Saturday evening event in Dublin & Glendalough Diocese in March, with a packed church at Holy Trinity, Rathmines and our National Youth Officer Mr Simon Henry on hosting duties.

Engagement with Young People

Whilst most of the work of CIYD seeks to resource Youth Leaders and to be available to assist in Youth Ministry Programmes, where guidance is appreciated and where participation is sought, the organisation is also keen to assist directly with diocesan youth programmes.

- National Youth Forum - This annual event, which gathers young people from each diocese to be a voice for affecting change in the church, took place with encouraging attendance from all over the island and led by Bishop Michael Burrows for our opening plenary and facilitation by Ms Susie Mapledoram (Youth Officer for Diocese of Manchester) in the third of a 3 year cycle focusing on young people, mental health and their faith journey.
- Summer Camps - Throughout the summer months our full-time staff supported Diocesan summer camps and events.

Diocesan Support

CIYD is heavily involved in supporting Youth Leaders, both employed and volunteer, in the work that they do with young people across both the Northern and Southern Regions. They have also worked to raise the profile of youth work in the wider church. This has been done in a variety of ways:

- Direct work with Dioceses - CIYD staff supported a range of Diocesan events and weekends, resources etc as well as working with certain Dioceses on strategic development and supporting DYOs in their role.
- DYO Gathering - CIYD hosts an annual retreat for Diocesan Youth Officers, facilitated by Innovista Ireland in November, in Mount St Annes, Portlington.
- Day of Prayer 2024 - This well-established Day of Prayer for young people and youth ministry, on the Sunday before Advent, continues to be popular with a resource book available in print and download. It can be used in lots of other ways to develop prayer opportunities in young people, groups and services. In 2024 we were able to offer free copies of another print run of our 'Prayer Journal' for young people to compliment the current resource.

Resource Development and Communication

CIYD like to be available for recommending and providing resources for youth leaders and clergy in a wide range of areas related to youth ministry.

- Youth Ministry Audit Survey - This was a considerable piece of work by staff in terms of production and promotion, especially as we were down one staff member for much of 2024. The last survey of its kind was completed around 2008, and the landscape of youth ministry has changed dramatically in that time. We had a positive response rate from parishes and the results are now available on our website and will hopefully challenge, inform learning and shape strategy for future youth ministry both nationally and locally. Huge thanks to our staff, Executive & Central Board members, Diocesan Youth Officers, and all involved in the important promotion of this survey. Thanks also to Mrs Olive Good for her assistance and support with the findings of the survey.
- 'I Believe' - This Confirmation resource continues to prove popular with both clergy and young people alike and merited a recent reprint. The resource has been written with the content of the Church of Ireland Confirmation Service in mind and refers to elements of the Apostles' Creed, The Ten Commandments and the Church Catechism. It is a 12-week course examining essentials of our faith and offers interactive activities to enhance the learning experience for candidates.

- ‘Missional Generation’ - VR (Virtual Reality) and AR (Augmented Reality) resources, including leaders care box.
- Prayer Journal - This very popular resource for young people was reprinted this year to link in with our annual Day of Prayer for young people and youth ministry and quickly disappeared from CIYD shelves.

National Quality Standards Framework

This process involves self-evaluation of the organization based on various criteria laid down by the Department of Children, Equality, Disability, Integration and Youth.

Representation and Collaboration

CIYD staff and Central Board members continued to represent the Church of Ireland on committees of the following organisations: -

- Church of Ireland Board of Education (ROI & NI)
- Church of Ireland Council for Mission
- The Board for Ministry with Children and Families
- Department of Children, Equality, Disability, Integration and Youth
- National Youth Council of Ireland Board - Special Orgs, Equality and Inclusion Network & Membership Review Committee
- Summer Madness Main-stage committee and seminars teams
- Youth Link NI Council – at present the partnership is being explored
- ‘Together’ Youth Leaders Forum
- Education Authority (NI) Regional Advisory Group

CIYD ACTIVITIES IN 2025

Our staff team continue to work closely with Diocesan Youth Officers and key stakeholders in each Diocese so that CIYD can better complement the work of each Diocese and seek to establish new initiatives and links where appropriate.

Youth Ministry Leadership: Support and Development

- Southern Region - Bespoke training events will continue to take place both to support existing youth leaders and to equip upcoming leaders as well as collaboration with diocese in seeking missional opportunities.
- Northern Region - Regular training days are planned for the year ahead with our ‘Connect’ programme in partnership with the Irish Methodist Youth Department. A youth workers’ retreat is planned for May to Liverpool linking in with the Diocese of Liverpool and some of their clergy.
- Summer Madness - CIYD will be running the Connect Café as usual and hosting breakfasts and a seminar stream for youth leaders, developing our partnership with Missional Generation. CIYD is also involved in shaping main stage and seminar streams at committee level as well as having our National Youth Officer, Mr Simon Henry, as one of the mainstage hosts.
- CIYD Youth Forum - CIYD’s annual Youth Forum in 2025 will have a focus on young people in schools, sharing their faith story experiences effectively and tools for evangelism with others outside of church & church life.
- Pancakes & Prayer - For 2025, CIYD will collaborate with Bishops’ Appeal and the Fields of Life charity to engage young people and churches in fundraising efforts, prayer focuses and mission awareness regarding on going work in South Sudan schools.
- Schools Ministry - CIYD will have a focus on schools and chaplaincy ministry in the Southern Region to maximise training opportunities and potential for faith growth within our schools.

Development and Communication

- Churches working together – Northern Region - Under new Education Authority (NI) funding streams and criteria, denominational youth departments are actively looking at new ways of working together to benefit faith development in young people across the region, as well as becoming individual Regional Voluntary Youth Organisations to the benefit of funding for parishes and groups on the ground.
- Holy Habits - CIYD aims to launch a youth group bible study resource in 2025.
- Instagram - CIYD will continue to focus on our account - **ciyd_insta** – in 2025 to improve communications with relevant stakeholders and agencies and to promote our own work resources.

National Quality Standards Framework

The NQSF process will continue with the implementation of a Continuous Improvement Plan for those involved in working for and running the organisation.

Representation and Collaboration

CIYD staff and Central Board members will continue to represent the Church of Ireland on committees of relevant organizations.

DIOCESAN REVIEW:

Armagh

The Youth and Children's board of the diocese (known as AYAc, Armagh Youth and Children) has continued to serve the diocese faithfully across 2024. It was with real regret that the AYAc 'overnight' for teenagers (January 2024) had to be cancelled due to unforeseen circumstances. However, the Easter dawn service saw c. 300 worshippers meet to celebrate the Risen Christ, a joyous occasion.

The Youth and Children's board across 2024 has recruited new members, bringing experience and new skills into this ministry. The AYAc board itself has also begun to focus not just on diocesan wide events but on how best the knowledge and experience of the board members might be used in regard to local youth and children's ministry initiatives. Across 2024 a number of parishes began (for example) to take on 'Messy Church' worship with the support of the committee.

At the time of writing this report, the AYAc board are busy in organising the annual AYAc 'Big overnight'. Twenty-four hours of fun, faith and fellowship for parish youth groups. The diocese is very grateful that Mr Simon Henry of CIYD will be the guest speaker. August 2025 (DV) will see members of the board lead a diocesan group of young people to Romania with Habitat for Humanity. An excellent opportunity for those aged 16+ to serve families in need of adequate housing.

The Flourish Initiative

The Archbishop's 'Flourish Initiative' continued to become more established across parishes in the Diocese of Armagh across 2024. It was very encouraging seeing local volunteer teams (including children and young people) within the initiative develop their own projects, share ideas and information with each other and both identify and seek funding for on-going 'creation care' ministry. The initiative saw the 'Big Bulb' plant launched in October 2024 alongside every parish been given a native oak sapling to plant. A video of Flourish Initiative projects can be found at www.armagh.anglican.org

The Vocations Roadshow

Volunteering of course is central in the how the local Church engages in ministry and mission. To this end, the Diocese of Armagh across three evenings focused on vocations to ordained and lay ministry including youth and children's ministry. Much was learnt from these occasions and the on-going need to share God's call to serve across all generations.

Networks update

The Church of Ireland Youth Department continues to offer a range of Youth Leader training days and opportunities for Diocesan Youth Officers to gather for teaching, prayer and worship. These occasions provide a strong link with colleagues and issues across the Church. Opportunities for young people to meet such as at Summer Madness and the annual Youth Forum and are also gratefully appreciated alongside annual funding

from CIYD. It is also worth noting that CIYD resources such as the ‘Young person’s Prayer Journal’ and the ‘I Believe’ confirmation pack have seen a strong uptake across Armagh diocese.

CASHEL, FERNS & OSSORY

Again 2024 was a very encouraging year for diocesan youth ministry and we are delighted that we have had nearly a full year with the Rev Ger James as our DY0 for Cashel, Ferns & Ossory.

In March we held a very large diocesan confirmation retreat in Newtown school. 80 confirmation candidates joined together from across the diocese for three days of worship, games, Laser tag, roller blading, wall climbing and a lot of fun. Worship was led by Canon Nicola Halford who focused on particular topics relevant to those who are preparing for Confirmation such as prayer, the Church and how we serve God by serving others. On Sunday morning we joined in the Palm Sunday service with Christ Church Cathedral, Waterford and we were warmly welcomed by Dean Bruce Hayes and the congregation there.

In July, we returned to Gurteen Agricultural College for our diocesan residential summer camp. After the success and popularity of last year we decided to extend the week to include a junior weekend for young people in 3rd, 4th and 5th class, and we were delighted that we had Ms Carolyn Good who is our CFO Children’s and Family Ministry Volunteer join us for our junior camp.

We had roughly 80 young people attend Gurteen for the Junior camp weekend and 40 young people for the Senior camp. We are sincerely grateful to Rev Canon Nicola Halford, who was our chaplain and led our worship for the week. It is our hope that this time away in Gurteen will help to deepen the young people’s commitment and encourage them on their faith journey.

The large diocesan events held in our diocese are organised by the Bishop’s Youth Advisory Group. This group of youth workers and clergy meet approximately four times a year to plan and implement our diocesan youth programme as well as offer each other support and ideas for parochial youth ministry.

CONNOR

This was another incredible year for Youth Ministry in Connor Diocese. From new parishes joining in our Diocesan events to young people leading for the first time in their parish and in the diocese.

During Summer 2024, we ran our Diocesan Sub Camp at Summer Madness and our annual Youth Mission Event, Streetreach. We were encouraged to see so many parishes be involved in Summer Madness this year where the Diocese was able to provide catering and other support during the 5-day event in Portlengone. Christina Baillie was also one of the hosts on Main Stage.

This was the second year of our partnership with Grouped Parishes of Ballyrashane & Kildollagh, the Grouped Parishes of Ballintoy & Dunseverick with Rathlin Island, Oxford, and St Patrick’s Coleraine & St Andrew’s Ballysally for Streetreach. During the event we ran a 2-day kids club in Ballybogey, outreach work in Ballysally and the surrounding rural communities and even in a range of practical ways including graveyard clean ups! The event finished with a large Family Fun Day at St Andrew’s Ballysally which engaged with the community for their following Holiday Club the week after. The team of around 30 participants did fantastically as they displayed Christ’s love in their teams.

We were delighted to have a range of speakers at our Launch Training in September hosted in St Patrick’s Ballymena which encouraged and developed the leaders within our local parishes across the diocese. Thank you to SUNI, Big House Ireland, and Rev Ross Mungavin for sharing so many insights, resources and tips with their youth leaders.

‘Connor Takes The Castle’ was delighted to welcome the National Youth Officer, Mr Simon Henry, to share from the book of Daniel with us in October when over 130 attended this youth weekend. This event included 4 Bible Teaching Sessions, time for worship and activities like Karaoke, Laser Tag and outdoor games from Salt Factory Sports. An encouragement for the diocese was how the young people stated that the sessions and

worship were a ‘highlight’ for them, with some coming to faith for the first time and others growing deeper in their relationship with Jesus over the course of the weekend.

In December, we hosted ‘A Very Connor Christmas’ in Church of The Good Shepherd, Monkstown when we shared in a range of activities and a time of worship together!

In August 2024, our Diocesan Youth Officer, Mrs Christina Baillie, moved on from her role and we wish her all the best in her new role at YFC NI. We were excited to welcome Mr David Armstrong to Connor in January 2025 as he takes up the role of Diocesan Youth Officer.

Connor Youth Council would like to thank CIYD for their continued support of youth ministry within Connor Diocese as we inspire a generation to explore faith & grow in their relationship with God.

CORK, CLOYNE & ROSS

The Cork Diocesan Youth Council had another busy year in 2024. In February, the young leaders, youth leaders and ‘old’ leaders had a Leaders Retreat Weekend in Killarney with Mr Simon Henry as the guest speaker. A great, well needed, break was had by all.

In March, the Confirmation Retreat weekend in Bandon took place. It is a great weekend for the young people to meet the Bishop and clergy.

Easter arrived soon after and CDYC ran a Pilgrimage Walk, which ended up in St. Michael’s Church, in Blackrock. This also coincided with Bishop Colton’s 25th Anniversary as Bishop of Cork, Cloyne & Ross, so he very kindly offered to take the Eucharist Service to finish the pilgrim day out and to mark the occasion, as well as our usual day trip to Oysterhaven Outdoor Pursuits Centre.

In July, the Diocesan Youth Officer, Ms Hilda Connolly, brought three leaders to help in the CIYD Connect Café at Summer Madness – a great time for young people to gather to learn more about God and worship together.

After summer, we held a residential in the Carhue Centre in Bandon with the new CIYD Southern Region Youth Ministry Development Officer, Mr Luke Hawkins, as guest speaker.

We also had a very energetic soccer tournament in November, with plenty Ronaldo’s and Messi’s turning up!

In December, we visited the Marina Market in Cork and headed to Fota to the Wonder lights show on a very wet Saturday evening. Nothing ‘dampened’ the spirits of our young people, despite being wet and cold!

We have lots more planned for 2025, and the Cork Diocesan Youth Council are still going strong!

Clogher

As a diocese we have been working very hard this year to re-ignite youth ministry in each of our parishes, and to engage with our young people. Our uniformed organisations across most parishes are strong, and youth clubs and youth fellowships are growing. We are so grateful to all clergy, youth leaders and volunteers who work tirelessly with our young people as they journey in life and faith.

In September of 2024 we successfully renewed Clogher Diocesan Youth Council, with a new chairperson, Rev Lindsey Farrell. It has been so encouraging to see the enthusiasm and creativity of this team of both clergy and lay people from across the diocese, and indeed from both jurisdictions. We have had a few meetings since September and had plans in place for an Advent youth event in early December. Unfortunately, given the time of year, a number of our young people were unable to attend due to commitments elsewhere and the event had to be cancelled. We were all very disappointed but did not let this dampen our enthusiasm for too long!

After Christmas we began planning our next youth event in Monaghan, to engage with our young people in what we hope will be an active and fun way. We have more plans later in the year for another event to tie in with the end of the summer school term.

Our grants programme has also continued to run throughout the year, and we had a very good number of successful applications in 2024. Another opportunity to apply for summer grants will open later in the Spring. Although our diocesan youth events have had a bit of a rocky start this year, we are keen to build on this great diocesan team and to channel that enthusiasm into youth engagement that will grow and deepen as we move forward. We are grateful to Bishop Ian Ellis for his unwavering support.

We also continue to pray for all of the families within the diocese, giving thanks for our young people and their desire to know and learn more about our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. May God continue to bless our work as we grow in faith together.

DERRY AND RAPHOE

Our first group of young people who participated in our Young Leader's Training programme in 2024 have now had their graduation service, and it was a very special evening to have the support of their families, parishes and Bishop Andrew in St. Augustine's church. The service was planned by the young people, and it was a beautiful evening to celebrate their hard work and achievement. We have had the privilege of watching these four become firm friends and grow in their confidence and enthusiasm to keep serving God in their home parishes and further afield. Our hope is to repeat this programme in 2025.

We've had our own calendar of events throughout the year including two Confirmation days, a group attending the CIYD Youth Forum, our DRY Weekend in Gortin Activity Centre, exploring how Jesus is there in every part of our life, and attending Summer Madness. Once again, we were able to provide school leaver packs for parishes to hand out to young people who were leaving school, either for university, college or work.

Alongside all of these we've had 'Freedom', our monthly youth event held in the Waterside, Londonderry run in partnership with Exodus NW and the Methodist church. This is open to any young person of secondary school age, and we have seen friendships form and flourish, and faith grow. It has been a constant throughout the year, running on the second Saturday of the month from October to April. We've had amazing turn outs with individuals and youth groups travelling from all areas. It's wonderful to hear of groups incorporating dinner as part of the night, sharing food and talking together.

Our new event ran at the start of October, and we called it *Big Restart*, with the aim of bringing together youth groups restarting after the summer break. We booked the 'Full Aerial Challenge' at Oakfire Adventure, which is a mix of harnessed tree top crossings and zip lines. It was a huge success, with a mix of participants and some adults supervising from the ground. The feedback from this has been very positive and we hope to repeat it again next year.

It's our hope that throughout 2025 will see more growth in the lives of young people, their families, churches and leaders. In all that we have planned going forward, we pass everything to God and the work of the Holy Spirit, remembering the message of Ephesians 3:20 *"Now to him who is able to do immeasurably more than all we ask or imagine, according to his power that is at work within us"*.

DOWN AND DROMORE

January started with a group of five youth workers joining me at the *Growing Young Disciples* Conference in Birmingham. This was an excellent week, considering our place in the world as image bearers and how we teach the theology of the image of God to our young people. We were delighted to host Rico Tice at one of our youth evenings - Rico's input was focused around evangelism with a group of 70-80 young people at Holywood Parish. A group from Down and Dromore also attended the annual all island CIYD Youth Forum, a huge thanks to youth workers Mr Jack Wilson (St Johns Moira) and Mr Andrew Watson (Ballyholme Parish) for attending with young people.

February saw the commencement of an OCN Level 2 in Youth Work being delivered in the Diocese. This was for those involved in leadership in youth and children's ministry. This was delivered with eight youth/children's workers/volunteers across the diocese, this ran up until Easter. A huge thanks to Mr Simon Henry & the CIYD team for funding support around this course.

March saw the return of our annual youth weekend. We were delighted to have 182 people in attendance at Castlewellan Castle - one of the largest groups that we have brought to the castle in a number of years. Mr Danny Roberts from Logos Ministries International was our speaker along with a number of onsite activities that ensure everyone had an excellent weekend. We had a gathering of our Children's and Youth Workers at the end of March at St Patricks, Drumbeg, with input from Ms Megan Hannah from Kintsugi Hope.

April saw one of our youth nights at St Mark's Dundela, with Br Andrew McCartney from Open Doors UK come and speak for us and widen our perspective of the global church. This has 40-50 young people in attendance.

June/July was busy as we organised our food marquee at Summer Madness. This fed 150 young people and leaders from across the diocese who were in attendance at Summer Madness. July and August were when we ran our annual diocesan camps, we had 150 young people and leaders along at The Kilbroney Centre, Rostrevor, to engage in bible teaching, praise, activities and prayer. This was a powerful time and very significant for everyone who attended.

In **September**, DDYC hosted two children's and youth training nights. One was posted in Banbridge, and the other was hosted in Ballybeen Parish with Mr Mark Moorehead (Scripture Union NI) and Rev Marty Gray (Minister in Knock Presbyterian Church) addressing the attendees each evening. This was supported with training brought by the DDYC team.

At the end of **October**, we had our annual weekend at the Kilbroney Centre. We had 70 young people and leaders attend, with Dr Matthew Winning as our speaker on the book of Ruth. This was supported with activities and social time. Between September and December 'SERVE' returned - Down and Dromore's young leadership development programme. This was delivered with a group of ten young people, with a celebration evening being hosted at Holywood Parish at the end of November.

Our Christmas youth night was hosted in St Brendan's Parish, with a focus on prayer and carols. A huge thanks to all the volunteers and supporters who have enabled these events to happen throughout the year across the Diocese. We pray for Gods continued blessing into 2025.

DUBLIN AND GLENDALOUGH

Mission Statement

To see all church communities in Dublin & Glendalough full of young people who are actively developing and growing in their faith in God.

10 Years of DGYC!

2024 marked 10 years of DGYC and we spent the year celebrating God's work that we have had the privilege to be part of. We could not let this milestone pass without a Service of Celebration in Christ Church Cathedral in September. We gave thanks for God's hand in youth work in the past, we shared stories of testimony and celebration, we sang songs of praise, we shared some pizza, played games and we prayed over the future.

DGYC Internship – Coming Sept 2025

It will come to no shock to anyone who is involved in youth or children's work to hear that there is a national shortage of youth workers. We want to play our part in solving that problem, so we are really excited to have officially launched our Internship Programme which is now open for applications. The DGYC internship is for 18–25-year-olds and will be focused on faith and personal development of the intern, all while being involved in local church-based youth and children's work. More information can be found at dgyc.org.

Events and Resources

We are aware that most of the faith-based youth work is run by volunteers in a local context, so we try to provide resources and events to support that important work. These range from training events to worship evenings, to youth groups and sourcing and producing resources.

It was awesome to be able to collaborate with Summer Madness and to host Winter Madness in February 2024. We packed out the venue! Youth groups travelled from all around Dublin and Glendalough to attend, as well as groups from Belfast, Limerick and Galway, and a group from Down and Dromore. Next year's date is 8th March 2025, and we can't wait!

We were pleased to be able to support the OneYouth Conference in in November, where St Catherine's welcomed young people from many churches around Dublin for an evening of fun, fellowship, testimony and worship.

As part of our 10-year celebrations this year we purchased and distributed 500 copies of 'Luke: An Eye-Witness Account', which we handed out at Winter Madness and to multiple youth groups, school Christian unions and confirmation groups.

In May we ran another successful 'Moving Schools' event, helping 6th class students and their parents with the move to secondary school.

Approximately 65 people from Dublin and Glendalough attended Summer Madness in Portglenone in July. It was also great to have some of our teenagers and young adults attend CIYD's MOVE, and to be able to support this 5-day event in Clongowes College, Kildare.

The DGYC committee would like to thank the Dublin and Glendalough Diocesan Council for continuing to support youth ministry, and to CIYD for their invaluable support, resources, wisdom and fun.

KILMORE, ELPHIN & ARDAGH

Across Kilmore, Elphin and Ardagh we are slowly seeing new youth initiatives emerging, as God has drawn workers and volunteers into our diocese. This year we welcomed Ms Marian Edwards, former DYD, back into the diocese, working with YFC Ireland in partnership with local parishes in Longford. She's been building relationships locally, facilitating Youth Alpha in local schools, and helping with local youth groups. She has also started a 'Wake Up Deborah' prayer group, with local women praying for young people across the Longford area. We're thankful for para-church organisations like YFC, who in supporting the work of Marian and Mr Claudio Barguena in Sligo, help enhance youth ministry across our diocese.

In Sligo, Ms Lizzie Kron has been interning with Sligo Centre of Mission. She has been helping lead Youth Alpha in local schools, retreat days for secondary students, school assemblies and youth groups in Bundoran, Manorhamilton and Calry. We are also thankful for the support of Miss Hannah O'Neill; while working in Sligo Centre of Mission as Pioneer Evangelist, she has brought considerable skills and experience to pioneering youth work across the diocese. On the Kilmore side of the diocese, considerable investment has been placed in appointing Rev Mark Smith into the role of chaplain on a part time basis in Cavan Royal School. We look forward to hearing how this valuable ministry impacts students. Parishes across the diocese continue to be faithful in creating environments for young people to explore faith and be discipled. In the summer several parishes took young people to youth camps including 'Intents' and 'MOVE'.

Grants continue to be available for parishes to support them in youth ministry and we are very thankful for the ongoing funding from CIYD which helps us offer these. We'd also like to take this opportunity to welcome Mr Luke Hawkins to the role as Youth Ministry Development officer for the Southern Region and we look forward to working with him in the years ahead.

As we engage with young people on the ground, we are increasingly noticing an anxious and lonely generation. Whilst this is a challenge, it also presents our parishes with tremendous opportunity to care for and be

community for these young people. In many ways, youth work has never been easier in our diocese, as young people willingly travel to engage in faith-based youth groups and discover the love Christ has for them.

MEATH & KILDARE

During summer 2024 Meath and Kildare Diocese took over 30 young people to Summer Madness. This was the first time many of these young people had attended the festival and they particularly enjoyed the worship in the Big Top, as well as the Bible teaching. A number of our young people also attended the alternate venue for morning and evening worship, and they found the quieter, more relaxed pace a really attractive prospect. The Dioceses supported two holiday Bible Clubs during the summer, one in Naas and the other in Kells. Both groups had about a dozen children of national school age, but also a further half a dozen teenagers who served and helped to lead activities. The theme for both clubs was ‘Run the Race’, and we learnt what it means to follow Jesus.

Throughout the Dioceses, we have youth groups running in Tullamore and Navan alongside Confirmation classes in multiple parishes. Our DYO, Mr Luke Hawkins, left his post in August following his appointment as the new Southern Region Development Officer for CIYD – we wish him every success in that new role. Some youth work has continued at Wilson’s Hospital School since his departure, with the appointment of an acting Chaplain.

TUAM, LIMERICK & KILLALOE

The dedicated volunteer committee of UDYC Tuam, Limerick & Killaloe successfully organised a diverse 2024 programme of day, weekend, and weeklong events, fostering faith and community while supporting the spiritual growth of children from age eight to young adults in their mid-twenties.

The following were some of the key highlights from 2024:

- The incredible young people who fully engaged in every aspect of the programme made the events truly special. Seeing joyful faces, reading positive feedback, and hearing heartwarming stories from families was rewarding.
- Representation at the National Youth Forum organised by CIYD and inputs from Diocesan representatives.
- Attending Winter Madness at Holy Trinity Church, Rathmines in Dublin.
- Exploring the length and breadth of the new united diocese by hosting events across the region.
- Working closely with Bishop Michael Burrows to organise and execute a very memorable Confirmation Follow-Up Weekend in Birr Outdoor Education Centre, Co. Offaly in October.
- Our Multi-Activity Day for 3rd–6th Class children featured engaging drama workshops led by *Play it By Ear*, creating a fun and interactive experience.
- Our Praise & Pizza worship night at St. Mary's Cathedral united everyone for an evening of faith, music, and community - special thanks to Mr Luke Hawkins from CIYD for his exceptional efforts in bringing it all together.
- We were delighted to host our first *Taking a Leading Role* event in some time, providing valuable training for new leaders.
- Our dedicated team of volunteer leaders and committee members who continue to give up their time to help create these memorable events.

UDYC of Tuam, Limerick & Killaloe remains deeply grateful for the ongoing support of individuals, families, parishes, the diocese, CIYD, and the wider community.