



Church of Ireland Youth Department

General Synod Report 2026

MEMBERSHIP

Executive

<i>President</i>	Most Rev Patricia Storey	3/3
<i>Chairperson</i>	Mrs Brigid Barrett	3/3
<i>Treasurer</i>	Mr Edward Hardy	3/3
<i>Secretary</i>	Mrs Judith Peters	3/3

Miss Valerie Walker 3/3

Central Board – Executive (above) and:

Rev Peter Ferguson 1/3
Rev Alan Breen 2/3
Miss Sally Siggins 1/3
Rev Martin O’Kelly 2/3
Rev Canon Malcolm Kingston 1/3
Mr Andrew Watson 3/3
Rev Canon Nicola Halford 1/3
Rev Peter Blair 2/3
Rev Lindsey Farrell

Co-options

Mrs Brigid Barrett 3/3
Mrs Hilda Connolly 3/3
Mrs Claire Hinchliff Neill 3/3
Mr Nathan Kingston 3/3
Miss Hannah O’Neill 2/3

Standing Committee Representatives

Dr Harriet Wilkinson 0/3
Mr Edward Hardy 3/3

National Youth Officer

Mr Simon Henry 3/3

Youth Ministry Development Officer (Southern Region)

Mr Luke Hawkins 3/3

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. 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 Education 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 2025 were:

- Pancakes and Prayer Lent Project – CIYD teamed up with Bishops’ Appeal and charity Fields of Life to encourage all our youth groups & schools to take part in Pancakes and Prayer, a special initiative focussing on several schools in South Sudan within the Dioceses of Ibba and Maridi. We asked groups to pray throughout Lent for the students, teachers, and the wider communities of two schools in South Sudan who are part of the Fields of Life Thrive programme to enable children to have a school meal. But also encouraging each group to run a special fundraising initiative at some point during this period. It was an enormous success across the island with just under £/€ 10,000 being raised for the schools.
- 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.
- Before You Finish Breakfast – a new assemblies resource for workers and volunteers alike who visit schools, in partnership with Tearfund Ireland.
- 250th Anniversary celebration service for Sunday Schools in Church of Ireland in partnership with Children & Families Ministry.
- CIYD all Ireland National Youth Forum meeting in January.
- 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
- Gaming for God – a spin off with our work with Missional Generation, young people in a number of parishes held gaming events in order to reach younger children with the gospel message.
- Partnership with the Mind Matters & Action Mental Health to provide mental health training to young people, youth leaders and parents
- Online Prayer campaign & FUEL Advent - linking in with CIYD’s annual Day of Prayer for the Church’s Ministry with Young People, the Sunday before Advent, this 2nd run of the Advent version of our bible reading resource.

CIYD ACTIVITIES IN 2025

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 organized 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 2025 with relevant training for youth workers and volunteers. This included “Valuing Volunteers” with Mr Andy Hickford, mental health awareness training with Action Mental Health, Young People and AI technology, Prayer Brunch, and our “Connect Christmas” event in December with lunch and a Christmas Communion led by Rev John Alderdice from the Methodist Church in Ireland.

- 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 leaders – resources, interactive technology & with mainstage speakers sharing. Our venue also launched a fresh resource inspired by passionate teens from Mullingar! Helping young people to respond to climate change with prayer, practical action, and faith. The resource offers creative activities and spiritual insights to help youth leaders empower their communities in faith-filled environmental care across Ireland. For the first time, CIYD facilitated the travel of Dioceses from the Southern Region by coordinating a marquee and catering. We had a number of Churches and young people come to the festival for the first time, and several became Christians.
- 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.
- Online Training - CIYD responded to feedback by providing regular and relevant training for young people, volunteer leaders, parents, clergy and youth workers alike. Areas covered included: Chaplains' training, Youth Mental Health Introduction for Parents, Youth Mental Health First Aid, Resilience workshops for teens, CITI training with Ordinands, Training for parents on teenagers with anxiety, suicide prevention training, Parents session on exam stress, Parents session on body image & disordered eating, and Bible engagement training.

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 organization 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 effecting change in the church, took place with encouraging attendance from all over the island and led by Bishop Adrian Wilkinson for our opening plenary and facilitation by Ms Susie Mapledoram (Youth Officer for Diocese of Manchester) and Mr Mark Wells (Bible Society NI) with a focus on how we live out our faith in the school arena and be a living testimony for our Christian faith to others.
- Summer Camps - Throughout the summer months our full-time staff supported Diocesan summer camps and events. Mr Luke Hawkins spent the week at Gurteen College with a group from the United Diocese of Tuam, Limerick & Killaloe going through the Youth Alpha Course.
- National Ploughing Championships - CIYD's increased presence at this event led to engagement with roughly 4,000 young people with lots of free giveaways, resources and lots of interesting faith conversations.

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 DYO's in their role.
- DYO Gathering - CIYD hosts an annual retreat for Diocesan Youth Officers, facilitated by Innovista Ireland in November, at Mount St Annes Retreat Centre, Portarlinton.
- Day of Prayer 2025 - 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. For 2025 we developed a social media prayer campaign. Our 10 Prayer Videos produced a

major uplift across our social media channels. Total views increased from the week before which was 2,192 to 7,006 - a rise of 219 %. Individual Prayer Reels generated 5,370 views, averaging around 450 views each. Engagement more than tripled, and non-follower visibility almost doubled (from 18.8 % to 35.2 %). In short, the daily prayer-focused Reels significantly expanded our missional prayer reach, strengthened engagement within community, and drew new audiences into the CIYD network.

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.

- Before You Finish Breakfast - A brand-new resource for 2025 created by Tearfund Ireland and CIYD for Six Assemblies featuring Bible studies and faith-based content and social justice themes such as immigration and climate change. Designed for Secondary Schools, but also suitable for older primary pupils.
- '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 10 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, Eco Gen — a fresh resource inspired by passionate teens from Mullingar! Helping young people to respond to climate change with prayer, practical action, and faith. The resource offers creative activities and spiritual insights to help youth leaders empower their communities in faith-filled environmental care across Ireland and was launched at Summer Madness.
- 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.
- Fuel Advent - back by popular demand for the season, this Advent resource encourages regular Bible readings habits for young people and for them to engage actively with God's Word.

National Quality Standards Framework

This process involves self-evaluation of the organization based on various criteria laid down by the Department of Education & 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 2026

Our staff team continues 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. An all-island youth workers’ retreat is planned for April to Rome led by Canon Daniel Nzum.
- 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 2026 will have a focus on young people’s understanding and engagement with prayer and the Bible and building confidence in these areas.
- Pancakes & Prayer - For 2026, CIYD will again 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 as well as special school services. This includes facilitating school retreat days at St. Patrick’s Cathedral, Dublin.
- New Strategic Plan - At General Synod in 2026, CIYD will launch its new strategic plan. This has been put together with input & feedback from clergy, volunteers, youth leaders & young people from across the island.

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.
- Digital Detox - CIYD aims to launch a brand-new resource based around young people’s social media habits and their faith.
- Instagram - CIYD will continue to focus on our account - **ciyd_insta** – to improve communications with relevant stakeholders and agencies and to promote our own work resources.

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 remains central in the support and development of local parish youth and children’s ministry. The annual AYAC “Big Overnight” (March 2025) saw circa 35 young people and adult leaders participate in a 24-hour packed overnight (including a visit to the Todd’s Leap Activity centre, Ballygawley). It was a delight having Mr Simon Henry of the CIYD as our guest speaker and whilst everyone was tired on the journey home it was with a sense of gratitude to God for His blessing and presence. The Easter Dawn service (April 2025) organised by the Youth and Children’s Board saw (circa) 250 worshippers attend an early morning Communion service at which Archbishop John McDowell presided. Many thanks to the AYAC Board and all volunteers who ensured the smooth running of this beautiful worship service.

AYAC trip to Romania with Habitat for Humanity (August 2025).

Led by Canon Kingston (St. Mark’s Armagh) and Ms Victoria Eveson (St. Nicholas, Dundalk) a team of 11 young people and volunteer leaders from the Diocese spent a full week in Romania supporting Habitat for

Humanity in building homes for those most improvised. The young people and leaders under the excellent supervision of Habitat Romania, fitted stud walls, laid flooring and plastered external walls of a home for a Romanian family. Whilst the work was physically demanding, the whole experience of serving those less well off, meeting local Christians and bonding as a team was a huge blessing for the participants.

Diocesan Youth praise night (September 2025)

Following a hiatus of a few years, it was a genuine joy seeing almost 90 young people and leaders take part in a Diocesan wide youth praise night led by Youth and Children's Board of the Diocese and with our guest speaker Rev Rodney Blair encouraging all to deepen our walk with Christ. It is hoped that Diocesan youth praise events will become a regular feature for parish youth groups across 2026.

Training and development work across the Diocese

Across 2025 a number of training opportunities have occurred in support of Youth and Children's ministry. In January 2025 a very well attended workshop facilitated by "The Big House" and the Southern Trust's Bereavement Officer Mrs Laura Creaney in regard to "Understanding a young person's or child's experience of bereavement". March 2025 also saw a workshop held in Cookstown by the Diocesan Mental Health Working group in regard to the "Bereavement Journey", a series of support evenings for all living with bereavement. In May 2025 a "Pop-up" Zoom training in terms of "Running a Holiday Bible Club" saw 5 to 6 parishes take part led by Ms Rachael Murphy of the CFM Board.

2025 also saw an evening's training session in regard to "Volunteer recruitment and retention" being delivered which was widely appreciated. It was a real encouragement (in partnership with CIYD) seeing a full cohort of Youth mental health practitioners trained from a range of parishes and youth work contexts across October 2025.

Parish youth and children's ministry

The basis of all Armagh Diocesan youth and children's ministry is in one-to-one parish support. Being out and about with local parishes in regards God's mission to and with young people, children and families is a genuine privilege and joy. This work is fluid and a mixture of responding to ministry support requests and bringing ideas, resources and initiating conversation. No one day is the same and parish support and engagement is varied and rewarding. The on-going support of CIYD is hugely appreciated in this ministry and the expertise and passion of the small but dedicated CIYD team has a real impact across many young lives in the Diocese of Armagh.

CASHEL FERNS AND OSSORY

We had a number of large diocesan youth events in 2025, and we are thankful that these events have been so well supported by the young people and their families in this diocese. There is great sense of family within our diocese, which we hope to continue building as we move forward. I must pay tribute to the adult leaders, both clergy and lay, who give up so much of their time and energy in planning and delivering these large-scale youth events.

Bishop's Youth Advisory Group

The youth workers and clergy meet around three or 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. Thank you to Carlow Union of Parishes for the use of the Church of Ireland Community house, who are always obliging to host the meetings and allowing us the all-important cuppa!

CIYD Youth Forum 2025

The all-island Church of Ireland Youth Department Annual Youth Forum took place on Friday 31st January 2025 through to Sunday 2nd February 2025 in Dromantine Retreat Centre, just outside Newry, Co. Down, gathering young people from all corners of Ireland to come together in faith and CFO were represented by some of our Youth at the Youth Forum. This year was extra special as the guest speaker to start the day off on Saturday morning was our very own Bishop Adrian Wilkinson. Bishop Adrian spoke to us on how life was like a square box, and that each side of the square represented different areas of our life; Friends, Focus,

Fulfilment and Faith. Ms Susie Mapledoram, who came a long way from the Diocese of Manchester, lead some sessions alongside Mr Mark Wells (Bible Society NI) Also on Sunday we had CIYD's President Bishop Pat Storey (Meath and Kildare) pay us visit, wrapping up events and shared her journey of faith with God and boosting young people moral as they went back to their families, schools, parishes and dioceses, encouraging them to have an active faith.

Diocesan Confirmation Retreat 2025

We had a very good diocesan confirmation retreat in Newtown school from Saturday 12th April – Monday 14th April 2025. We were delighted that 45/50 confirmation candidates along with youth workers and clergy from across our diocese were able to come together for the weekend.

We are very grateful for the enthusiasm and friendliness of the confirmation candidates who all participated fully over the three days. During the weekend we had regular worship gatherings and talks, led by Canon Nicola Halford who focused on particular topics relevant to those who are preparing for confirmation. Canon Nicola spoke to the young people about prayer, the Church and how we serve God by serving others. We joined together singing worship songs and taking part in prayer activities. On Sunday morning we joined in the Palm Sunday service with Christ Church Cathedral, Waterford and we were warmly welcomed by Bishop Adrian, Dean Bruce Hayes and the congregation there.

Sincere thanks to all the adult leaders who assisted on this weekend, and of course Bishop Adrian who popped his head in to say hello to our young people. We are sincerely grateful to all our volunteers who give up their time to help in this very important ministry.

Diocesan Summer Camp 2025 in Gurteen Agricultural College

We returned to Gurteen Agricultural College in July for our diocesan residential summer camp. For both Junior Camp and Senior Camp after both showing that they are hugely popular. We had approximately 48 young people attend Gurteen for the Junior camp weekend and 36 for the senior camp. Our timetable was full of games, challenges, tournaments, arts & crafts, and much more.

Worship is an important aspect of our camp and each evening we gathered for some time of prayer, worship songs, bible readings and talk. We are sincerely grateful to Rev Arthur Barrett (Rector of Killanne / Killegney Union of Parishes), who was our chaplain and led our worship for the week. He used the theme Come Just As You Are. Using the song "Come Just as you are to worship" as our anthem for the weekend and 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 in a positive and gentle way.

Huge thanks to the leadership team and we were so grateful to have our junior leaders - Mr Cian Rothwell, Mr Darragh Murphy, Ms Katie Clearly, Ms Poppy Walshe, Ms Rebekah Clegg and Mr Ben Smyth. Growing youth leaders for our diocese is another important and vital aspect that such residential camps help to do.

Canon Nicola, it was very much noticed that you were not among us this year and we send your every blessing and a speedy recovery.

Youth Clubs and Youth Workers

There are a number of youth clubs around our diocese, holding regular youth club meetings over the past year and we hope that this will continue to grow. If you have a Youth Club in your parish, please contact our DYO, Rev Ger James. I would love to know and more importantly I would love to pop over to say hello to your young people. dyo.cfo24@gmail.com.

CLOGHER

2025 has been a busy and blessed year for young people across Clogher Diocese. Our newly formed youth council has gained huge momentum, and we have a fantastic team of volunteers that work tirelessly to support our young people. In February of 2025 we held our first Youth Social in St. Patrick's Church Hall in Monaghan. It was so encouraging to see so many young people in attendance from many parts of the diocese.

This momentum continued with another event in October of 2025 at the Share centre. Our young people from all corners of the diocese gathered together and took part in bush craft skills, archery, combat corps and climbing wall. New friendships were made and old ones strengthened. Our leaders worked together to ensure that all young people had a wonderful time, and we are very grateful to our Bishop, to our youth leaders, parents, neighbours and friends who encourage our young people to support these events.

God is working in the diocese and we see that clearly in the numbers attending our events and indeed looking ahead for more!

As a youth council we also supported a number of parishes across the diocese with youth grants, both in late Spring and in the Autumn. A variety of youth events are taking place and are in the planning. As a council we also provided resources from 'The Big House' for young people within every parish across the diocese, ensuring that we are reaching as many young people as possible.

The future is bright, God is moving, and we are looking forward to another busy year in Clogher!

CONNOR

2025 was a year of change for Connor Youth, as the Diocese welcomed David Armstrong as the new Diocesan Youth Officer in January. During this season of transition, Connor Youth experienced a number of encouraging highlights that continued to build momentum across the diocese.

In June, Connor Youth once again hosted a sub-camp at Ireland's largest Christian youth festival, Summer Madness. Around 180 young people and leaders from 12 parishes across Connor attended and made use of the sub-camp. Alongside providing space for meals, the sub-camp offered opportunities for young people to connect with others from Connor churches and for leaders to disciple their groups through shared conversations. A highlight of the week was the annual Bishop's Barbecue, where Rt Rev George Davison and clergy served food to young people and leaders.

In September, Connor Youth gathered at Castlewellsan Castle for the annual residential weekend, Connor Takes the Castle. Approximately 100 young people and leaders took part in Bible studies led by Rev Peter Blair, exploring what life in Jesus means through John's Gospel. The weekend also included a wide range of activities, such as silent discos, sports, archery, and rock climbing. Following a blessed weekend in 2025, plans are already underway for the next Connor Takes the Castle on 2–4 October 2026.

Throughout the year, Connor Youth also hosted three youth nights in Ballymena, Christ Church Lisburn, and Portglenone, alongside a training night in Antrim in partnership with Growing Young Disciples, equipping youth workers and volunteers to reach Generation Z with the gospel.

It's been a great year for Connor Youth and huge thanks to our amazing Youth Council for their dedication and support.

CORK, CLOYNE & ROSS

The new year started off with a visit to Fota Wildlife Park for an educational tour.

A visit to the Zookeepers area to see where the food is prepared for the animals and a meet and greet with the giraffes in their shed was also had. In February, we took a group to Airtastic in Little Island to the Inflata Park and Arcade.

Another very busy and successful Confirmation Weekend was had at the beginning of March. Everyone gathered on the Friday eve in the Carhue Centre in Bandon, where activities, workshops and lots of fun had been planned for the evening. Everyone attended the Bishop's Confirmation Morning in Ashton school on Saturday morning and a trip to Airtastic afterwards for bowling and food before heading home.

The Easter event took place on Saturday with a trip to Smugglers Cove for a run around the Rebel Rampage and the Tubing with pizza after! The day finished up on the Warren Beach with Dean Cliff Jeffers and Rev

Michael Kenning for a Eucharist Service. In June, the annual 6th class day out in Oysterhaven was on the agenda - plenty of muddy activities were held in the morning before heading out on the water kayaking in the afternoon.

It was back to Summer Madness with 4 leaders to help out in the CIYD Connect Café during the summer. In September, the troops were rounded up for a visit to Footgolf in Kinsale and with a game of Nerf Wars to finish before a feed of pizza.

In October, we launched our Youth Initiative Project. Giving parishes the opportunity to apply for a grant from CDYC by submitting a proposal of events, budgets and adequate leaders. We will offer training and support to any groups who have been successful.

The Advent Youth Service was held in St. Fachtna's Cathedral in Rosscarbery in November with Rev Eugene Griffin as our guest, speaking on the theme of Darkness into Light.

The year finished up with a trip to Cork to Mahon Point Shopping Centre for some Christmas shopping before heading to Winterlee for some Christmas Markets and Ice-skating.

And not forgetting our Youth Leaders Christmas Dinner at the Talbot Hotel in Ballincollig. We have lots more planned for 2026 starting off with the Bishop's Confirmation morning with loads more activities to follow!

DOWN AND DROMORE

2025 was another busy year for young ministry across parishes in Down and Dromore, supported by various diocesan initiatives including leadership training, discipleship groups, support days and various youth events and residential camps.

To help train leaders we ran our 'FORGE' year-long leadership course and 'SERVE' short-term course, and we were pleased to start our first 'Anthem' worship leading training for young people.

We also trained around 20 new leaders for summer camps. Leadership training evenings were held for volunteers in youth and children's ministry and a prayer breakfast for our youth and children's workers. Approximately 590 leaders were also trained in Safeguarding.

Our events included the 'Big Diocesan Youth Weekend' for 130 in February, regular 'Saturday Night Live' youth worship nights and hosting a venue at Summer Madness for around 15 of our youth groups who came to the diocesan marquee for their food. The rest of the summer saw record attendance at our 3 Summer Adventure Camps with around 130 young people and 40 leaders involved.

Sadly, at the end of the summer we lost the amazing staff that made this all possible! Our Youth Officer, Josh moved on to a parish role and both Janine (Young Adults) and Millie (Children's Officer) moved on to other roles as well. They are greatly missed.

In October we ran a discipleship weekend for around 50 older teens and then finished off the year with a youth Christmas worship celebration in Hillsborough for around 100 young people and leaders.

DUBLIN & 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.

This work is focused on supporting parishes - the clergy, youth workers and young people - in encouraging and developing the faith of our young people as well as organising events centrally.

DGYC Internship

We were delighted to welcome Molly and Nana in September 2025 as DGYC Interns. Since then, they have been working with local parish youth and children's work, and assisting Emma, our DYO, in diocesan work. The main focus of the internship is the interns themselves, so we started off the year with training, and have continual development opportunities throughout the year. The interns have been an absolute blessing in DGYC's, and local church work!

Our applications are now open for 18-25 years old for 2026/27. The Internship is focused on faith and personal development; all while being involved in local church.

Events and Resources

The majority of faith-based youth work is run by volunteers in a local context, so we 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. We aim for dgyc.org to be an online hub of resources.

It was an honour to be able to collaborate with Summer Madness and to host Winter Madness in Dublin once again, and we're encouraged to see busloads of young people travel to this event.

We joined with other dioceses and CIYD this year in running a joint marquee at Summer Madness. This was a real blessing to our groups and allowed 3 new groups from Dublin and Glendalough to attend.

DGYC would like to thank Diocesan Councils for continuing to support youth ministry, and to CIYD for their invaluable support, resources, wisdom and fun.

DERRY AND RAPHOE

We ran two Diocesan Confirmation days to bring parishes and young people together to meet with others on the same journey. We explored more of Jesus' miracles, ministry and message, and Bishop Andrew met with the young people. Our diocesan representatives attended the CIYD Youth Forum, where they were able to meet and discuss with young people from the whole Church of Ireland.

Our annual diocesan youth weekend – "The DRY Weekend" – saw a record number of young people attending. We went to Gartan Outdoor Education Centre, outside Letterkenny, for a weekend of friendship, outdoor activities and exploring the book of Psalms during our teaching time.

Summer Madness was a huge success with our diocese again, seeing young people signing up to attend after coming to the DRY Weekend. Working in partnership with other diocese to share resources and spaces is always hugely beneficial to leaders, and to allow the young people to meet those from other dioceses.

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. We had our second Big Restart event, to help bring groups together after the summer break. This year we visited Todd's Leap, after a reschedule due to storms.

Our year ended with our Young Leaders Training programme running for its second time. The young leaders have been working hard using the Serve programme and now we're planning their graduation service.

KILMORE, ELPHIN & ARDAGH

The past year has been one of encouragement and growth in youth ministry across the Diocese of Kilmore, Elphin and Ardagh. We give thanks for God's faithfulness and for the opportunities provided for young people to encounter the love of Jesus in meaningful and transformative ways.

A significant development has been the expansion of the diocesan intern ministry. Through diocesan support and grants, €5,500 was invested in resourcing interns who have contributed actively to schools' ministry, parish youth work, and diocesan events. Their work has included facilitating lunchtime faith groups, running school retreat days, and supporting mission initiatives, while also helping to nurture future leaders for the Church.

Youth Alpha has played a particularly important role within schools, especially among Transition Year students in both Sligo and Longford. The course has provided a welcoming space for young people to explore questions of faith, with evidence of deepened discipleship and increased confidence in sharing faith with peers.

Larger youth gatherings remain central to youth ministry, with groups attending events such as Move and Intents, where young people engage with scripture, worship together, and respond to God's call.

We are grateful for the ongoing support of CIYD, partner organisations, and local youth leaders. Looking ahead, developing a more sustainable financial structure for youth ministry is a priority, ensuring good stewardship and long-term growth.

MEATH & KILDARE

2025 saw many great new things in youth ministry in Meath and Kildare. In November, a new youth group – Grounded – was launched in Mullingar. Grounded is a collaboration between Church of Ireland, Presbyterian and Christian Fellowship Churches and seeks to give young people rooted foundation in Christ.

Every Friday 20-30 young people meet for fellowship, games, and Bible study, with a worship service being held on the last Saturday of the month.

We are really excited to see where God will take Grounded in 2026, and we are planning on going to Winter Madness, CIYD Youth Forum and Summer Madness.

Another 'new' thing was the return of the National Ploughing Championships to Tullamore in September. The Diocese handed out more than 2000 cups of tea, including to many young people who came to our tent. CIYD were with us, but many of the young people spoke to Diocese members, prayed using our prayer stations, and rested on our comfy sofas. They brought an incredible energy and atmosphere to the tent and the Ploughing as a whole.

Elsewhere, the Diocese took more than 20 young people to Summer Madness 2025, with the spiritual conversations going on into the night. Wilson's Hospital School continues to be a valuable pillar of the Church of Ireland ethos in the Diocese, with weekly prayer sessions and Christian Union.

This year also saw Harvest and Carol services, with a special service for 1st years held in All Saints' Mullingar.

TUAM, LIMERICK & KILLALOE

The dedicated volunteer committee of U.D.Y.C. Tuam, Limerick & Killaloe delivered a varied and engaging 2025 programme of day, weekend, and week-long events that fostered faith, friendship, and community, supporting the spiritual growth of young people throughout the year.

Throughout the year, we enjoyed a range of Day Trips, Summer Camps, and a memorable Junior Weekend, welcoming a wonderful mix of new and returning young people. Their enthusiastic engagement made each event special, and it was deeply rewarding to see joyful faces, receive positive feedback, and hear encouraging stories from families about the impact of these experiences.

We were grateful to have representation at the National Youth Forum organised by CIYD, offering valuable input from across the dioceses. Winter Madness at Holy Trinity Church, Rathmines in Dublin was another highlight, providing an opportunity for worship and connection with the wider youth community. As we continued to grow within the new united diocese, we were delighted to host events across the region, meeting young people and volunteers throughout its length and breadth.

Summer Madness was a particular encouragement, especially the Southern Region Hub, where shared worship and meals ministry with other dioceses strengthened connections through CIYD support.

Our Summer Camps were a standout moment of the year. Junior Camp focused on the theme “*That’s Who I Praise*”, led by Andrew O’Brien, while Senior Camp followed the Alpha Youth programme, led by Luke Hawkins from CIYD. The Junior Weekend also provided a joyful space for faith, friendship, and adventure, enriched by worship reflections from Dean Diane Matchett.

We were encouraged by the growth of our junior leaders and were delighted to host our second *Taking a Leading Role* training event. We remain deeply grateful to all who supported the programme behind the scenes throughout the year.