

church
of ireland 
youth
department

CIYD
STRATEGIC
PLAN
2026-2029



Don't let anyone
look down on
you because you
are young, but
set an example
for the believers
in speech, in
conduct, in love,
in faith and
in purity.

1 Timothy 4:12



INTRODUCTION



I AM DELIGHTED TO LAUNCH CIYD'S NEW STRATEGIC PLAN. AS PRESIDENT OF CIYD, I WATCH WITH GREAT ADMIRATION AS YOUTH LEADERS ALL OVER THE CHURCH OF IRELAND, INSPIRE, TEACH, AND PASTOR THOSE IN THEIR CARE - FROM YOUTH CLUBS, TO YOUTH FELLOWSHIPS TO DISCIPLESHIP GROUPS, AND FROM DERRY TO CORK.

Volunteers and leaders take on the joy and responsibility of mentoring diocesan young people. I want to thank sincerely too, our wonderful Diocesan Youth Officers who make it all happen.

As we move forward to equip and inspire our young people and young leaders, we are grateful for the wisdom and guidance of our CIYD staff, Simon, Luke and Barbara.

Ultimately, all that we seek to do is to create and nurture a living faith in our younger church members, and together, to bring glory to our God. I truly wish CIYD every blessing into the future.

+PAT



RESEARCH

The CIYD Strategic Plan was informed by hours of interviews, focus groups and feedback with young people, youth leaders, church leaders, parents, teachers and other stakeholders from across the island of Ireland.

In 2024, CIYD carried out an audit of youth ministry across the Church of Ireland. 288 parishes replied to the survey, representing 68% of all parishes. This was the first audit since 2008 and was intended to assess the impact of Covid-19 on youth ministry. The key findings of this audit included:

- More than 6,000 young people are part of parish youth ministry, supported by 1850 volunteers and 42 paid youth workers, most of whom are part-time.
- There are more than 200 Uniformed Organisations across the Church of Ireland, reaching more than 6,500 young people.
- Since 2008 the number of parishes offering Sunday youth work has declined by 22.3%, but the number of volunteers has declined by 44.4%.
- 60% of parishes have some form of youth work.
- 70% of parishes held Confirmation services in the previous 12 months.
- 25% of parishes have a link with their local secondary school, this is higher on average in the Republic of Ireland, compared to Northern Ireland.
- Parishes still express the need for support in starting and developing youth work, but the need for training in recruiting and maintaining volunteers has emerged as a crucial need.

Several other research reports were considered in this strategic plan. The Praxis 'Young Adults & Faith' report (2025) found that 49% of churchgoers aged 18-25 considered leaving church, with the lack of other Christians their own age given as the main reason. The same report found that 99% of those young adults surveyed cited 'Church Community' as the most fundamental thing to their faith development and their continued attendance at Church. 96% cited Bible teaching as integral to their faith. 'Influencers: Peer to Peer Evangelism in the UK' a joint report by the Church of England and several organisations, found that appetite for sharing faith with friends is actually quite high amongst Christian teenagers (71%) though significant barriers remain, with not knowing answers to questions (38% of respondents) and friend disinterest (36%) being the most common obstacles.



We are seeing signs of the 'Quiet Revival' on the island of Ireland. Alpha saw a 100% increase in the number of Alpha Youth Courses being run between 2022 and 2025, and CIYD's presence at the National Ploughing Championship in 2025 attracted more than 4000 teenagers. It is an exciting, though complicated, time to be involved in youth ministry.





MISSION STATEMENT:

To engage, equip and empower the Church of Ireland, its youth leaders and its young people to grow in Christ, nurture lifelong faith, and sustain transformative youth ministry across the island of Ireland.

The Church of Ireland Youth Department, is directed by the Church of Ireland General Synod, to be responsible... 'for the development and co-ordination of Church of Ireland youth ministry.'

As such, for the period of 2026-2029, the Church of Ireland Youth Department's key aims will fall under the following headings:



1. EQUIPPING THE CHURCH IN CHRISTIAN YOUTH MINISTRY AND YOUTH WORK PRACTICE.

2. EQUIPPING YOUNG PEOPLE FOR A LIFE OF FAITH.

3. ENGAGING WITH VOLUNTEERS, YOUTH WORKERS AND CHURCH LEADERS TO SUPPORT THEIR YOUTH MINISTRY PROVISION AND NEEDS.

4. ENGAGING YOUNG PEOPLE WITH CHRIST-CENTRED YOUTH MINISTRY.

5. EMPOWERING THE CHURCH OF IRELAND AS A DENOMINATION TO CARRY OUT EFFECTIVE YOUTH MINISTRY.

6. EMPOWERING YOUNG PEOPLE TO TAKE THE LEAD IN THEIR SPIRITUAL LIVES AND IN THEIR CHURCHES.



VALUES

Central to the Church of Ireland Youth Department is our commitment to the Christian faith as articulated by the Church of Ireland and the Apostles' Creed. In addition to this CIYD is committed to being an organisation that:

- **Prays** constantly to see Jesus transform the lives of young people across the island.
- **Serves** young people and those that work with them.
- Works in **Partnership** with other organisations, especially across the Church of Ireland.
- Seeks to **Integrate** into the whole faith journey of the individual, through partnership with the Board for Ministry with Children and Families, Boards of Education, the Church of Ireland Theological Institute and others.
- Protects the young people and adults we work with through thorough adherence to **Safeguarding** and health and safety practices in all that we do.
- Places a high value on the contribution and role of the **Volunteer** and those who work with young people.
- Seeks to **Listen** to the voice of young people, youth leaders and others and to **Represent** the voices of young people at all levels of the Church of Ireland.
- Is committed to developing through **Relationship** with individuals and other organisations.
- Ensures that its ministry is **Appropriate** to the variety of contexts across the Church of Ireland.
- Is, and is seen to be, **Equitable** in its treatment of others & recognises the breadth and depth that exists across the Church of Ireland and values this inherent **Diversity**.
- Committed to producing relevant, appropriate, creative and theologically deep **Resources**, making the best use of the skills available.
- Support and **Disciple** the **Faith** of young people, regardless of background, context, or life path.
- Endeavours to **Communicate** with others in a manner that is clear, appropriate and regular.
- Continues to **Financially** support youth ministry across the island, and to seek new sources of funding.



KEY **AIMS**

1. EQUIPPING THE CHURCH IN CHRISTIAN YOUTH MINISTRY AND YOUTH WORK PRACTICE



PRIORITY AREAS

TRAINING

- For staff, parents, youth workers, volunteers, clergy, church leaders, and school chaplains.
- At Parish, Diocese, Regional and National Level.
- In person and on Zoom.
- Working with other agencies to deliver accredited and informal training, including: Youth Link NI, Scripture Union, Bible Society, Alpha, 24/7 Prayer, Action Mental Health, Irish Methodist Church & many more.
- Particular focus on volunteer training and support.

RESOURCES

- Printed and Digital resources.
- For youth ministry in all contexts including churches without existing youth ministry.
- Able to be used independently by volunteers or clergy.
- Produced in-house or through partner organisations such as Missional Generation.

OBJECTIVES

- Provide relevant and accessible training for volunteers, especially for new volunteers, on a range of topics including safeguarding and Bible handling.
- Provide relevant and accessible training for parents which encourages and equips them with both spiritual and secular knowledge and skills to support their children in their faith journey.
- Hold regular training sessions for paid youth workers and leaders, including Diocese Youth Officers.
- Support Dioceses in the raising up and training of new youth volunteers, including recognition of their continued service.
- Maintain and deepen relationships with other Church of Ireland organisations such as Children's and Families Ministry, Pioneer Ministry, Church of Ireland Theological Institute and Continued Ministry Education (Curates) in order to produce training and resources.
- Continue the regular production and circulation of effective resources including Fuel, I Believe and Prayer Journals.
- Work with young people, youth leaders and external organisations to identify and provide new resources for use in Youth Ministry. These should include Bible-reading and prayer resources, and may even include whole courses for use by youth groups.

SUCCESS CRITERIA

- Growth in both breadth and variety of training courses, including a deliberate pathway for volunteers.
- A greater sense of support and equipping by all youth leaders, including youth workers, DYO's and especially volunteers – assessed by regular communication with all youth ministry providers in the Church of Ireland.
- An increase in the number of volunteers at Parish and Diocese level.
- A growing uptake in printed and digital resources by Dioceses, Parishes and young people – with relevant and useful feedback from all users to better steer future resources.

SCRIPTURE

'Each of you should use whatever gift you have received to serve others, as faithful stewards of God's grace in its various forms.' 1 Peter 4:10

CASE STUDIES

LEADERS IN TRAINING PROGRAMME - CORK, CLOYNE AND ROSS DIOCESES

The Cork Diocesan Youth Council recognised the potential in a group of young people and their desire to be youth leaders. We designed a QQI Level 5 course, with the YMCA aimed for young leaders (16yrs+), current youth leaders and for anyone who had interest in youth work. The course entailed eight weekly full day sessions covering several different aspects of youth work: dynamics of the youth work relationship, active listening, spiritual formation, the concept and practice of signposting and much more. This culminated in the group planning their own youth session.

Hilda Connolly, DYO in Cork, Cloyne and Ross Dioceses

'Completing the Leaders in Training course was a really meaningful experience for: it helped to boost my confidence and encouraged me to step outside my comfort zone in a really positive way. I also made lifelong friends through the course who I still bounce



ideas off to this day. The course gave me a real toolbox of resources, skills, and ideas that continue to support me in youth leadership and ministry.'

*Nathan Kingston, Youth Volunteer,
Cork, Cloyne and Ross Dioceses*

CONNECT DAYS - CIYD

Four times a year, CIYD provides Connect Days. These are whole day training and networking events, currently held in Newry. They see more than 40 different youth workers and Church leaders from across the island meet to discuss their work and share ideas. Every Connect Day has a training theme, which is often provided by attendees themselves at previous events. Over the last few years, training at Connect Days has included: the use of AI in youth work, teenage mental health, 'youth ministry that lasts' and a prayer breakfast.

'I find myself refreshed and enthused by CIYD Connect training days, and they are a staple in my diary. The opportunity to meet with other youth workers, discuss ideas, share the highs and lows of youth ministry, encourage and pray for each other and receive top-tier training.'

*Youth Worker,
Down & Dromore Diocese*

EQUIP TRAINING - CONNOR DIOCESE

Equip Training events are a new fixture in the Connor Youth yearly programme, offering regular opportunities for individuals in churches across the Diocese to share insights into youth ministry and to engage with new ideas and training. These are designed to help the local

church grow in its evangelism and discipleship, covering a range of relevant topics, from the foundations of youth ministry to specific areas that equip volunteers to speak to the challenges young people face today.

'It is my hope and prayer that through these training events, volunteers will feel equipped in how they serve in youth ministries but also that the wider church body would be encouraged to play a part in raising up a generation of young disciples, who will go on for Jesus into their adult lives.'

*David Armstrong,
DYO in Connor Diocese*

PARENTS' TRAINING - CIYD, ACTION MENTAL HEALTH, ARMAGH DIOCESE, DUBLIN & GLENDALOUGH DIOCESE

Responding to a need from DYO's, CIYD has begun to explore training for parents. This has begun with online training in youth mental health for parents led by Action Mental Health and in Youth Mental Health First Aid led by Armagh Diocese. The need then arose for parents in the Dublin area to have more Christian input into their parenting. Dublin & Glendalough Youth Council arranged an evening discussion surrounding the TV show Adolescence and Crinken Church have led an Alpha Parenting Course with support from CIYD and Alpha Ireland.

'Very practical, with tips to put into practice right away (even beyond dealing with teenagers!) Having it via Zoom made it much easier to make time for.'

*Parent from Dublin
& Glendalough Dioceses*

2. EQUIPPING YOUNG PEOPLE FOR A LIFE OF FAITH



PRIORITY AREAS

RESOURCES

- Relatable and useful resources for young people.
- To develop all areas of their faith including: Bible reading, praying, evangelism, discipleship, going to Church, establishing regular 'quiet times', serving and leadership.
- Printed and digital, individual and group resources.
- Can be used by young people in Churches ranging from no youth ministry to weekly ministry.

OBJECTIVES

- Continue to work with young people, Parishes, Schools, Dioceses, and external organisations to identify and meet the developing resources needs of our young people.

- Regularly produce and circulate resources around the Church of Ireland, taking particular care to ensure that they reach those Churches without youth ministry, youth volunteers or even incumbents.
- Develop specific resources for young people with neurodivergence and specific educational needs.
- Pursue bespoke Confirmation class resources, including I Believe, to support clergy and leaders.
- Provide a range of innovative resources for young people across age ranges and stages in their faith journey, from discovering and questioning faith up to discipleship and leadership.
- Utilise the support of other organisations in producing resources for young people, including: Children's and Families Ministry, Missional Generation, The Big House, Youth for Christ, Alpha, Scripture Union and more.



- Provide and promote general and seasonal resources for youth groups, such as Pancakes and Prayer.
- Host and support group meetings between young people in isolated Churches and areas over Zoom.

SUCCESS CRITERIA

- Growth in breadth and quantity of resources sent out to young people, Parishes and Dioceses.
- Feedback from young people on the usefulness of a resource and new needs as they emerge.
- A greater awareness of CIYD and the resources we can provide.

SCRIPTURE

‘So then, just as you received Christ Jesus as Lord, continue to live your lives in him, rooted and built up in him, strengthened in the faith as you were taught.’ Colossians 2:6-7

CASE STUDIES

PANCAKES AND PRAYER - KILKENNY COLLEGE, CASHEL, FERNS AND OSSORY DIOCESES

The Kilkenny College Christian Union (CU) participated in the Pancakes and Prayer Lent Campaign, an initiative designed to combine fundraising with spiritual reflection during the Lent season while supporting charitable work focused on education and nutrition in developing regions. The CU sold pancakes throughout a week of Lent around the school to raise money for Fields of Life - achieving a substantial donation to support schools in South Sudan. Pancakes and Prayer was a meaningful Lent activity for the whole school, and especially the CU who spoke in assemblies and raised awareness of Fields of Life across the school.

‘Overall, the CU’s involvement in the Pancakes and Prayer Lent Campaign demonstrated thoughtful planning, clear communication, and meaningful



community engagement, showing how student-led initiatives can have both local and global impact.'

*Rev. Bronwyn Nortje, Chaplain,
Kilkenny College*

PRAYER JOURNAL - CIYD AND MISSIONAL GENERATION

CIYD are now into the third print run of our Prayer Journal. We have produced and circulated over 3000 copies of this 18 page journal which contains various ideas and prompts to help young people to pray. Designed for us by Missional Generation, the Prayer Journal has proved immensely popular across the island with Churches, youth groups and schools handing them out to young people. The journal can be used by individuals, or as part of a wider group.

'The Prayer Journal helps me to pray, it inspires me with new prayer ideas and reminds me to do it!'

*15 year old from Meath & Kildare
Dioceses*

ALPHA COURSE AND LIFE ON PURPOSE - CIYD AND ALPHA

The new Youth Alpha Series is an incredible resource for allowing young people to discuss and question the Christian faith in a safe and supportive environment. CIYD, with the support of Alpha, has begun to roll this new course out across the island in partnership with Churches, Schools and Dioceses. Some Parishes in the Republic of Ireland are even supporting local (non C of I) schools in delivering this course to their students. A second Alpha resource is Life on Purpose; this four-week course for teenage Christians explores the

challenges, virtues and responsibilities of living life as a Christian. CIYD has successfully hosted this course over zoom with isolated teenagers across the southern region.

'It's a fun and casual youth group experience that really lets you feel and understand Gods will for us in our lives.'

*17 year old from Life on Purpose
feedback form*

'Here in Sligo, we have run Alpha in three local secondary schools with TY students, and also in the ATU in partnership with the Christian Union and Chaplaincy. It's been a great tool in engaging ecumenically across the town, as well as being able to facilitate important conversations about life and faith. One unchurched young person spoke of how Alpha helped them see that Church could be a place for them to belong and community of support for them. Running Alpha courses has strengthened our relationships with local schools and opened doors to further engage with students through retreat days.'

*Hannah O'Neill, Pioneer Evangelist
in Sligo Centre of Mission, Kilmore,
Elphin and Ardagh Dioceses*



3. ENGAGE WITH VOLUNTEERS, YOUTH WORKERS AND CHURCH LEADERS TO SUPPORT THEIR YOUTH MINISTRY PROVISION AND NEEDS



PRIORITY AREAS

CONSULTATION

- Regular meetings with youth leaders at Diocese, School and Parish level, both paid and voluntary to understand their needs and concerns.
- Regular communication with external groups and uniformed organisations, such as Praxis and the Girls' Friendly Society, to understand the wider needs of young people and youth ministry.
- Formal and informal conversations with all youth ministry providers.
- The seeking of feedback after every major event in order to improve and refine the support, training and resources we provide.
- Facilitate regular conversations within and between Dioceses to review and plan youth ministry.

SUPPORT

- CIYD staff often speak, or provide other assistance, at Parish, School and Diocese events.
- Meet with Parish and Dioceses, especially Youth Councils, to support and advise their youth ministry.
- Annual retreats for youth leaders and DYOs to support and refresh them physically and spiritually.

- Particularly support and encourage volunteers.
- Mailing lists for DYOs, school Chaplains, youth leaders and volunteers across each Diocese and Parish.

OBJECTIVES

- Continue the regular meetings and retreats with DYOs and youth leaders including Connect Days, DYO retreat, Chaplains' Days and leaders retreats, as well as informal conversations.
- Regularly collect and assess feedback from young people, volunteers, youth leaders, parents, clergy, DYOs and others.
- Liaise with other research organisations such as Praxis and the Bible Society to understand and incorporate their research into our own policies, as well as carrying out our own research.
- Set clear policies on youth ministry and ensure that these are communicated to all youth ministry leaders at Diocese and Parish level.
- Deepen communication and relationships between CIYD staff and youth ministry volunteers and leaders on the ground in order to provide superior support.
- Continue and develop the support provided by CIYD staff to Parishes

and Dioceses involved in youth ministry such as Confirmation Days or Summer Retreats.

- Increase awareness of CIYD across the Church of Ireland so that isolated clergy, volunteers, or vacant parishes can access our resources too.
- Provide space for conversations between youth leaders, volunteers and external organisations to equip leaders for youth ministry in an ever-changing world.

SUCCESS CRITERIA

- A greater awareness of the needs of young people and youth ministry providers through informal conversations, formal meetings, and written feedback.
- Greater support for volunteers, including a policy for raising up and engaging volunteers.
- A larger understanding of CIYD by the wider Church of Ireland and affiliated organisations.

SCRIPTURE

'And let us consider how we may spur one another on toward love and good deeds, not giving up meeting together, as some are in the habit of doing, but encouraging one another.'

Hebrews 10:24-25

CASE STUDIES

UNITED DIOCESE YOUTH COUNCIL - TUAM, LIMERICK AND KILLALOE DIOCESE

The United Diocesan Youth Council of Tuam, Limerick and Killaloe has greatly benefited from the support of the Church of Ireland Youth Department (CIYD). CIYD Youth Officers have brought inspiring and meaningful messages while leading worship at our events. During the joining of the two dioceses into one United Diocesan Youth Council, CIYD has been a vital partner. The support of the CIYD Youth Officers has been invaluable in bringing youth work in the dioceses together and inspiring our leaders. Their guidance and compassionate support, offering encouragement and understanding when it was most needed, have strengthened the work and mission of UDYC.

Valerie Walker, member of UDYC



YOUTH COUNCIL SUPPORT - DERRY & RAPHOE DIOCESE

We run our Young Leaders Training programme on alternate years, working with 16-18 year olds through the SERVE programme and other useful topics to equip them with new areas of learning. These young people have either already been in a variety of leadership roles, taken up new ones or expanding on what they were already doing. Supporting these young people as they learn lifelong skills and understand the value of Christian leadership is a fantastic part of our Diocesan work.

*Claire Hinchliff, DYO
in Derry & Raphoe Diocese*

CHURCH OF IRELAND SCHOOL CHAPLAINS SUPPORT GROUP

CIYD supports Church of Ireland School Chaplains in the Republic of Ireland with meetings every term, including an in-person gathering every year. The aim is to provide support to these vital but scattered youth leaders through peer support, prayer and targeted training sessions. These have been delivered by a range of organisations including: Tearfund, Alpha, Prayer Spaces, Cumann Gaelach nEaglaise, the Benefact Trust, and Youth for Christ. The group also works together with CIYD staff to produce new resources and to meet the arising needs of Church of Ireland Schools such as Mental Health Awareness.

'Being new to the role of school chaplain, the group has been immensely helpful for me both in terms of providing ideas and

resources and also support and encouragement. I thank God for it!'

*Rev. Mark Smith, Chaplain of
The Royal School, Cavan, Kilmore,
Elphin and Ardagh Dioceses*

DYO RETREAT

Every year CIYD hosts a retreat for Diocese Youth Officers. These pivotal individuals act as the links between CIYD and Parishes and Dioceses. The retreat always includes spiritual, personal and professional reflection whereby DYO's can reflect on the successes and needs of youth ministry in their local context and crucially share these reflections with CIYD. One of the reasons that CIYD has begun training for parents is because of feedback from a DYO retreat. These retreats also provide valuable rest and encouragement to vital staff members in Church of Ireland Youth Ministry.

'The DYO retreats are always special, they create a place of sanctuary and a time of fellowship and connect the DYO's across the island of Ireland, allowing us to share and support one another. This all begins with breaking bread together with The Holy Eucharist, followed by workshops and laughter.'

*Rev. Ger James, DYO from Cashel,
Ferns and Ossory Dioceses*



4. ENGAGE YOUNG PEOPLE WITH CHRIST-CENTRED YOUTH MINISTRY



PRIORITY AREAS

EVENTS

- Parish, School, Diocese, Regional and National events.
- For a range of ages including 11-14, 14-18, 11-18 and 18-25.
- Regular meetings or one-off larger events, day or multiple day events.
- Vital in beginning and developing the faith journey of young people.
- Support for Parish and Diocese leaders attending National events.
- Creatively think about new means of gathering, including Zoom and more regional events in order to meet the needs of young people and to engage them in events.
- Continually self-reflect, and incorporate feedback, to develop relevant and engaging Christian events, including the voices of young people.
- Investigate and develop events for the 18-25 age group.

OBJECTIVES

- A continued flourishing and growth of annual events such as Summer Madness, Winter Madness and Youth Forum.
- A development of youth events at Parish, Diocese and Regional level, including retreats and confirmation days.
- A resurgence in weekly or monthly local parish events.
- More young people able to attend events because of individual and group funding.
- A greater awareness of CIYD and Diocese events across the Church of Ireland including for 18-25 year olds.
- Continue in the planning, funding and supporting of large scale All-Ireland events including Summer Madness, Winter Madness and Youth Forum.
- Support Parishes, Schools and Dioceses in holding their own regular or occasional events such as youth fellowships, youth groups, mission trips, Confirmation retreats and Summer retreats.
- Hold events for schools in collaboration with Church of Ireland schools and other organisations such as St. Patrick's Cathedral and Youth for Christ.
- Provide financial support for young people to attend these events, including grants to individuals and to groups for transport and other costs.



SCRIPTURE

'I am the vine; you are the branches. If you remain in me and I in you, you will bear much fruit; apart from me you can do nothing.' *John 15:5*

CASE STUDIES

GATHERED - CONNOR DIOCESE

Gathered - A Partnership Ministry is a Pioneer Ministry Project, in partnership with seven parishes, which exists to 'gather' young people and young families to help them discover the love, joy and life only found in Christ by becoming lifelong disciples of Christ.

The parishes worked collaboratively and noticed that young people were scattered around their parishes yet have no place to gather. Part of Gathered's role is to provide Gathered

Youth (A Weekly Youth Discipleship Group with a focus on belonging, fun and Jesus) across the parish areas to engage with young people who are part of the parishes but also those with little or no connection to church. Gathered currently hosts 2 Gathered Youths each week allowing young people to engage with Scripture for themselves.

Jonny Diamond - Pioneer Minister of The Gathered, Connor Diocese

SUMMER MADNESS - CIYD AND SUMMER MADNESS

For nearly forty years, Summer Madness has held an annual Christian Youth Festival in Northern Ireland featuring some of the best Christian speakers and musicians from across the globe. At present, more than 3000 young people attend the festival every year from across the island. CIYD is an integral part of Summer Madness with staff involved on the main stage, in our Connect Café (providing refreshment, resources and training for leaders) and supporting the festival financially. In recent years CIYD has also subsidised the cost of transport for Church of Ireland groups coming from the Republic of Ireland, and has now begun to provide subsidised catering and a Marquee for those groups too.

'Summer Madness has an incredible community and fellowship atmosphere. I love coming back every year to meet old friends, make new ones, and grow deeper in our faith together.'

Robert from Moira, Down & Dromore Dioceses

ALL IRELAND YOUTH RETREAT

CIYD is committed to hosting an all-Ireland retreat for older young people (aged 16-18) during the early months of the year. The aim is to allow young people from across the island to meet, worship, learn and pray together in order to build bonds across Dioceses. These retreats give us the opportunity to listen to young people and to give them a relaxed setting to meet other people their own age and to reflect on their life path.

‘Some of our young people have made significant changes to their lives based on conversations at earlier CIYD retreats’

*Claire Hinchliff, DYO in
Derry & Raphoe Diocese*

YOUNG ADULTS' GROUP - MULLINGAR, MEATH & KILDARE DIOCESES

Our Young Adults Suppers take place once a month in the Rectory. These evenings are for 18-30 year olds, and we can have anywhere from 2-13 in attendance. The young folk who are away at college seem to appreciate the opportunity to reconnect with old friends who have stayed local. Each evening begins with dinner around the kitchen or dining room tables, and the meal is followed by a bible study discussion. The discussions around the Bible passages have been really insightful and interesting, and useful in helping us all understand Christ and his story of salvation better.

*Rev Ian Horner - Mullingar Union of
Parishes, Meath & Kildare Dioceses*



5.

EMPOWERING THE CHURCH OF IRELAND AS A DENOMINATION TO CARRY OUT EFFECTIVE YOUTH MINISTRY



PRIORITY AREAS

FUNDING

- A range of funding to individuals, Parishes, and Dioceses, for general youth ministry, or for specific events such as Summer Madness.
- To meet the needs of the Church of Ireland including the Young Leaders in Ministry grant and the Next Steps Grant (for third level qualifications).
- Acquiring funding for CIYD from the Irish Department for Education and Youth, Representative Church Body and other sources.
- Supporting Parishes, Schools and Dioceses in obtaining funding from other organisations such as the Benefact Trust or the RCB Priorities Fund.

ADVOCATING

- Raising the profile of young people and youth ministry in the Church of Ireland through regular advocacy and annual events such as the Day of Prayer for Young People.
- Maintaining communications and relationships with wider youth organisations such as the National Youth Council of Ireland and the Education Authority (NI).
- Providing a voice for young people at all levels of the Church including Parish vestries, Diocesan Synods, and General Synods.

- Incorporating young people into wider church life through Parish, Diocese and National events and leadership.

INSPIRING

- Providing examples of youth ministry across the Church of Ireland.
- Raising awareness through multiple media streams including Instagram, Facebook, TikTok, Church of Ireland Gazette, Diocese Magazines and presence at Synods.

OBJECTIVES

- Continue to provide funding for a range of youth ministry projects, and for individuals.
- Maintain existing funding and seek other avenues of funding for CIYD.
- Sustain communication with young people, Parishes and Dioceses to better utilise our financial resources on the needs of Youth Ministry.
- Support Parishes, Schools and Dioceses in obtaining funds for Youth Ministry.
- Bolster the image of young people throughout the Church of Ireland with continued events and advocacy, whilst always seeking unreached areas. This will range from General Synods to Dioceses without DYO's and Parishes without either young people or incumbents.

- Raise awareness of CIYD nationally through events such as the Ploughing Championships.
- Develop greater engagement with ministry for 18-25 year olds amongst Parishes and Churches with support from young people, young adults and Parishes themselves.
- Evolving awareness of the needs of 18-25 year olds, and how to support them, within CIYD, Dioceses, and Parishes.

SUCCESS CRITERIA

- Sustained funding to CIYD and down into Dioceses, Parishes and individuals.
- A greater depth and breadth of funding to and from CIYD in order to meet the developing needs of young people and Youth Ministry.
- A larger awareness of young people, their voice and their needs, across all levels of leadership in the Church of Ireland.

SCRIPTURE

'Then Jesus came to them and said, 'All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age.'

Matthew 28: 18-20



CASE STUDIES

DEVOLVED FUNDING - CIYD

CIYD provides Devolved Funding for each Diocese in the Church of Ireland, awarded annually. Each Diocese receives (need figures) and the money must be used on youth ministry, with a maximum of 50% going towards staff costs. Across the Church of Ireland this money has been used in a myriad of ways, from transport costs, to subsidising the cost of residentials, to providing books for Confirmation candidates.

‘With such a dispersed group of young people across the Diocese, and the increasing cost of transport, we couldn’t do youth ministry without financial support from CIYD - thank you!’

Youth Volunteer in Meath & Kildare Dioceses

FUNDING FOR YOUTH GROUPS - CLOGHER DIOCESE

For a number of years Clogher Diocesan Youth Council have offered funding to local parishes and youth groups to support youth ministry, youth outreach, mission work for young people and one-off initiatives. We offer funding annually in the Autumn, timed so that youth groups can plan for the year ahead. The Diocese also offers funding in late Spring in the hope of encouraging and supporting Summer initiatives. Parishes and youth groups have been able to purchase equipment, plan day trips or do training that previously may not have been possible. These funding opportunities are particularly

useful for smaller parishes, who have limited resources, but still have a drive to do Youth Ministry.

‘I didn’t realise this was available! This will allow our Confirmation class to continue to meet even after classes have finished!’

Youth volunteer, Clogher Diocese

DAY OF PRAYER FOR YOUNG PEOPLE - CIYD

Every year the Church of Ireland holds a Day of Prayer for Young People. This is always on a Sunday, and churches are encouraged to incorporate young people into their services and youth ministry into their prayers of intercessions. CIYD raises awareness of this through a social media campaign in the week leading up Sunday, and by circulating prayers for young people and youth ministry which can be included in services.

‘In November it was great to mark 250 years of ministry to children in the Church of Ireland and pray for our young people across the Island.’

Rev. Ian Horner, Rector of Mullingar Union of Parishes, Meath & Kildare Dioceses



6.

EMPOWERING YOUNG PEOPLE TO TAKE THE LEAD IN THEIR SPIRITUAL LIVES AND IN THEIR CHURCHES



PRIORITY AREAS

FUNDING

- Providing funding to individual young people from the Young Leaders in Ministry Fund and Next Steps grants.

SUPPORTING

- Providing pathways for young people into leadership and lifelong Church membership.
- Encouraging Parishes and Dioceses to provide opportunities for young people to serve and to build confidence in their faith.

OBJECTIVES

- Continue to provide training, resources, events and funding to young people to support them in their faith development.
- Provide opportunities for young people to explore and express their faith, for example through Youth Forum.
- Support Parishes and Dioceses in integrating young people into wider Church life through structured discipleship, service and involvement.
- Aid Parishes and Dioceses in providing positive Christian role models for young people.

- Facilitate and encourage the development of 18–25s ministry across the Church of Ireland as a ‘stepping stone’ to the wider Church involvement of young people.
- Recognise the wide range of skills and callings of our young people, and provide pathways which do not automatically lead to being a youth or church leader.
- Develop policy and advocacy for those young people who wish to have a greater role in Church leadership.

SUCCESS CRITERIA

- A greater awareness from young people of their pathways through the Church of Ireland.
- A wider and greater spread of applicants to the Young Leaders in Ministry and Next Steps grants.
- Growing confidence from Parishes and Dioceses in discipleship and 18–25s ministry.

SCRIPTURE

‘Therefore, since we are surrounded by such a great cloud of witnesses, let us throw off everything that hinders and the sin that so easily entangles. And let us run with perseverance the race marked out for us, fixing our eyes on Jesus, the pioneer and perfecter of faith.’ Hebrews 12:1-2

CASE STUDIES

DUBLIN & GLENDALOUGH YOUTH COUNCIL INTERNSHIP PROGRAM

Our internship is focused on personal development, immersion in church and faith community, and living out faith through serving in youth and children’s work. We have witnessed God’s hand of blessing upon the communities our interns have worked with, and we have seen them grow in their faith, gain leadership confidence, and they have positively impacted their young people. The impact a 19/20 year old can make in a local church can be incredible, if given the chance and support.

We started the DGYC Internship as a response to the national shortage of youth workers; we wanted to provide a platform where young adults can experience working in ministry, while also being supported, and ministered to, encouraged and resourced.

Emma Fawcett, DYO in Dublin & Glendalough Dioceses

‘The DGYC internship has had a huge impact on me! Because of this, I’m able to impact other young people in the church. I’m more capable than I originally thought I was, and being

able to work closely with the DGYC team and my rector has allowed me to start new projects and plans. Another benefit that I found was being placed in a Christ centred community! My faith was bound to deepen and grow. I’ve loved getting to work with the teenagers, and consider a career path I’d never thought of before.’

Molly Clarke, Intern in Dublin & Glendalough Dioceses

YOUNG LEADERS IN MINISTRY AND NEXT STEPS

The Young Leaders in Ministry fund grants up to £1000/€1000 to any one individual to support their development as a leader in the Church of Ireland. This can be used towards funding an internship, a mission trip, a leadership course, or attendance at a conference or other Christian event. The Next Steps grant is specifically reserved for third level course of benefit to the Church of Ireland. These can include youth work or theological degrees.

‘The money was great! It took pressure off us and helped us focus on the trip, what we can do and what we can learn!’

A member of Kill O’ the Grange Youth Group who received YLM funding for a mission trip. Dublin and Glendalough Dioceses

‘In 2023, I was completing my final year of University studying a BA (Hons) in Applied Theology with Youth & Community Work (JNC) at Moorlands College and applied for The Next Step Funding with CIYD. This provided me financial support to allow me to finish and graduate from this degree further assisting my future

role within the Church of Ireland as a newly commissioned Pioneer Minister-in-Training.'

Jonny Diamond - Pioneer Minister of The Gathered, Connor Diocese

LEADERSHIP PATHWAYS - DOWN & DROMORE DIOCESES

Within the Diocese of Down and Dromore, developing young leaders is core and central. A regular and central part to our diocesan strategy around this is enabling young people to be filtered into leadership at Diocesan level with support from the DYO and other leaders. This enabled young people to practice

skills of small group leading, leading activities from the front, leading games and being put in charge of young people with other older leaders there to guide and support. At our Big Diocesan Weekend and our Kilbroney Camps we have seen young leaders being given the opportunity to lead and develop their leadership potential and skills. At both of these events there are opportunities for young leaders to be mentored and encouraged by older leaders in both their leadership and in their spiritual lives.

Joshua Thornbury, Family Ministry Pastor at Hillsborough Parish, Down & Dicoeses



GOVERNANCE



The Church of Ireland Youth Department is a constituent part of the Church of Ireland. As such, we fall under the oversight of the House of Bishops, General Synod and Representative Church Body.

Within these overarching structures of governance and finance, CIYD has its own autonomy as an organisation. CIYD is governed by an Executive which includes a Chairperson, a Bishop, a Treasurer and CIYD staff. This Executive then reports to the CIYD Central Board which includes representatives from every Diocese including clergy, volunteers, paid youth workers and DYO's.

CIYD is committed to being an organisation which:

- Abides by all statutory requirements imposed upon us by the Church of Ireland and the secular governments of the nations where we operate. This includes, but is not limited to, compliance with auditing, insurance, legal, equality, safeguarding and child protection obligations.
- Communicates with and supports our partner organisations, Dioceses and Parishes in compliance with the above regulations where required.
- Is transparent and has due regard for all areas of governance.
- Possesses a clear reporting structure for all staff, executive and board members alongside a culture of collaboration and communication at all layers of the organisation.
- Reports annually to the General Synod of the Church of Ireland.
- Constantly reviews the needs of staff and the requirements of wider Youth Ministry to ensure adequate staffing levels.
- Supports its staff with all the resources and encouragement necessary for them to achieve the aims of the organisation.
- Continually assesses and appraises our performance and implements reforms and remediation where necessary.
- Regularly analyses, adapts and communicates our strategic plan to all stakeholders.
- Is committed to the responsible use of all resources entrusted to it by the Church of Ireland and any other invested body.
- Has appropriate regard for equality at all levels of the organisation and Youth Ministry.
- Seeks the renewal and refreshing of Youth Ministry across the island of Ireland.
- Endeavours to strengthen the faith of young people in Jesus Christ across the island of Ireland.

PARTNER ORGANISATIONS



The work of CIYD would be impossible without the partnership of many other organisations.

These are listed below.

CHURCH OF IRELAND ORGANISATIONS

- All Church of Ireland Secondary Schools
- All Diocesan Councils, Synods and Youth Councils
- Board for Children and Families Ministry
- Boards of Education ROI & N.I.
- Boys and Girls Brigade
- Church of Ireland Gazette
- Church of Ireland Press Office
- Church of Ireland Safeguarding Department
- Church of Ireland Theological Institute
- Continued Ministry Education (Curates)
- Cumann Gaelach nEaglaise
- General Synod of the Church of Ireland
- Girl's Friendly Society
- Mind Matters
- Church of Ireland Priorities Fund
- Pioneer Ministry
- Representative Church Body

NON-CHURCH OF IRELAND ORGANISATIONS

- 24/7 Prayer
- Alpha Ireland
- Benefact Trust
- Bible Society N.I.
- Bible Society ROI

- Christ in Youth
- Christian Aid
- Church Army
- Fields of Life
- Gideons
- Irish Methodist Church
- International Justice Ministries
- Love for Life
- Missional Generation
- Missional Youth Church Network
- NUA films
- Praxis
- Prayer Spaces in Schools
- Roots Resources for Churches
- Scripture Union
- Stand By Me
- Summer Madness
- Tearfund Ireland
- The Big House
- Youth for Christ
- Youth Link NI

SECULAR ORGANISATIONS

- Action Mental Health
- Department for Education and Youth (RI)
- Education Authority (NI)
- National Youth Council of Ireland



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**Where there is
no guidance the
people fall, but
in abundance
of counsellors
there is victory.**

Proverbs 11:14



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