

# NEWSLETTER

May 2025



UIC

## Dear CIY Partner

Thank you once again for your continued and generous support of CIY. We hope this newsletter encourages you with the impact CIY is having across Ireland/Europe, and the amazing opportunities we feel God is laying before us.



# NEW STAFF

In August 2024 we said a sad farewell to Johan van der Flier, who was such an amazing catalyst to help CIY pioneer in Ireland and beyond. Johan spent 6 years with us at CIY and has moved on to work in his family's business. We celebrated and thanked him well for all that he gave to the mission here in Ireland.

As a result, we have now been able to employ two new members of staff, as regional workers in Ireland, to help us grow the work right across the island. Stephen Byford (East Regional Worker) and Hannah O'Neill (West Regional Worker) started with us in March 2025. They are both passionate about young people and have come with considerable experience of youth ministry within an Irish context. They have hit the ground running and we are already seeing the relational impact they are having on the ground.

STEPHEN



HANNAH



# PROJECT-Y

**We are so excited to share that we have placed our first Youth Worker as part of Project-Y!**

We have been working with Discovery Church, in Galway, for approximately 18 months to get to this very exciting stage. To put this in context – as one of the biggest cities in Ireland, Galway did not have a single youth worker employed by any local church. That alarming statistic has now changed! Thiago Prago started full-time employment with Discovery Church just after Easter. We are so excited to see the impact he will have with the young people, both in Church, and also with those he and



**THIAGO**



his team will impact outside the Church walls.

We are also at the stage of advertising for our second youth work position through Project-Y. We have been working closely with ReCentre Church to help develop an exciting role for youth ministry in Sligo. Our aim is to have 4 or 5 youth workers placed in 4 or 5 different Churches by the end of 2025. We now feel we are in a strong place to make this a reality this year.

# CONNECTED

Our Connected retreats aim to create space to re-engage with Jesus and if you were to speak to those present, words such as “refreshing, affirming, challenging,” and “significant” would definitely be mentioned. This January we were back in Aviemore, for our third Connected Retreat in Scotland. It has been encouraging to see this gathering grow, with 46 youth workers participating this year from all over Scotland, including Orkney and Lewis islands.

Over the three days we considered the nature of God and the gentle call to ABIDE in Him. It was a deeply impactful time, that underlined the dignity and purpose of Christ we each carry. As always, we are grateful to the team that help us run this retreat so well - our prayer team, our friends in SU, and Andy Hickford and Sam Rae who led us with teaching and worship.



# WIDER EUROPE

As part of CIY we have a vision to try and help support the local Church and grow our work with young people in other regions of Europe. We continue to explore relationships and opportunities with other youth ministry organisations and discern tentative next steps. This involves sitting on the European Youth Ministry Network committee and speaking at The Lausanne Young Leaders Gathering.

**Your support and prayers are making a huge impact in what we are trying to do in Ireland and wider Europe. We simply could not do, what we do, without your generosity and support. Thank you for standing with us, praying for us, encouraging us, and supporting us so generously.**

# PRAYER POINTS

**New Staff** – Please pray for Hannah and Stephen as they settle into their new roles. Please pray that God would use them powerfully to encourage young people, leaders and Churches all over Ireland in their walk and pursuit of Jesus.

**Project-Y** – Please pray for Discovery Church in Galway and specifically pray for Thiago. Pray for wisdom and discernment as he starts and to build quick rapport with young people and volunteers in and around the Church. Please also pray for ReCentre Church and for great applicants to apply for the next Project-Y placement in Sligo.

**Europe** – As we focus more strategically in Europe we want to invest in the right relationships. Please pray for discernment around invitations and opportunities that best serve our vision at CIY. Please pray that God would give us clarity on the relationships and locations we should invest our time in.