

SUINSPIRE

NEWS & UPDATES FROM
SCRIPTURE UNION IRELAND



2020 | ISSUE 8



SU Ireland

CO

Your Word
is a lamp unto my feet,
a light on my path.

Psalm 119:105



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WELCOME

A NEW DECADE FOR SU IRELAND

It's hard to believe that Sharon and I have been with SU for 4 years living and working at Ovoca Manor. Back in 2016 we were so privileged to be given the opportunity to lead the work here and never did I think that today I'd be writing the opening welcome of Inspire magazine as the National Leader of this wonderful organisation.

In this edition of Inspire, as well as sharing about some of SU's work over the last 12 months, we have invited our friends from different organisations to share about their ministry and how we partner together. Of the many things to be thankful for I am most thankful for the deepening of our relationships and connection with these and other partner organisations. This has been one of the most fulfilling and uplifting parts of the last year and will be evident as you read on further.

In 2019 Scripture Union Ireland had direct contact with over 10,000 young people through our camps

& schools work and over a hundred thousand more worldwide through the distribution of our resources such as NUA. At the start of a new year, a new decade and a new season for SU, we have a great sense of anticipation as we see God doing a new thing. SU volunteers, supporters and staff have invested heavily to create these opportunities for ministry to happen, so as we navigate the future all we can do is put our faith in the Lord, prepare as best we can and step out of the boat. It helps that we're excited about it!

One big change we have made is to restructure our team in preparation for the future.

'And no one puts new wine into old wineskins; or else the new wine bursts the wineskins, the wine is spilled, and the wineskins are ruined. But new wine must be put into new wineskins.'

Mark 2:22.

Our camps and schools work have been amalgamated under the field ministries banner, Darren Bourke steps into the new role of Field Ministries Team Leader. The field ministries team will be responsible for our camps and schools ministries. Jonny Somerville will lead our new Resources & Communications department. He will be responsible for curating SU's resources and will continue to develop Bible content and training materials to support the field ministries and those we seek to equip.

As the SU leadership team, we are tasked with influencing the direction of our ministry, encouraging joined up thinking across our various ministry strands, setting an example of teamwork and collaborative effort and most importantly demonstrating servant leadership.

I hope that as you read on you will be filled with the same anticipation and excitement for what God has next for SU Ireland. Please pray for our team and for our wider family of volunteers, supporters and partners that we would continue to press into the good things that God has for us.



Gareth Lynch
SU National Leader

We are very grateful to all who have supported SU Ireland throughout the years. Whether it has been prayer, volunteering or financial giving, your support has been vital to the running of SU Ireland and all of our work.

We would like to invite you to partner with us as we step into this new decade. We hope you are as excited as we are about the plans God has for us and ask that you would consider becoming a regular supporter, financially contributing to the work of SU Ireland.

If you desire to give a one-off gift, we have a number of funds which you can support:

***SU General Fund
SU Field Ministries Fund
SU Resources Fund
Ovoca Manor Development Fund
Send a Camper to Camp Fund***

You can give online by visiting scriptureunion.ie/give or email info@scriptureunion.ie for more information.

THANK YOU!



Subscribe.

Stay up to date with our latest News and Events by subscribing to SU Ireland through our website or follow us on social media.

Connect.

Get in touch if you would like to receive free future editions of Inspire for your congregation or friends and family.

Support.

You can support us in many ways through volunteering opportunities, prayer and financial donations.





BE

PART

PRAY. VOLUN



Find opportunities to get involved in term time or during the holidays, at the beach or at a residential event. There's plenty of choice and loads of different ways to get involved.

Volunteers have always been at the heart of SU Ireland, giving of their time and commitment.



T OF
NTEER. GIVE.

SU

We are looking for people who share our vision to get involved in working with children and young people all across Ireland.



SCAN ME

SUINTER

2019 / 2020



Hey, I'm Chad. I'm 20 years old and I'm from Cape Town, South Africa. I moved to Ireland with my parents and two younger brother's in 2016. When I arrived in Ireland my family almost instantly got involved in church, youth groups and Scripture Union camps like CSSM and RAW.

As the years passed I became more involved in Scripture Union. I was attending camps and then began to volunteer to lead on camps so that I could grow and develop my leadership skills. After I completed the leaving certificate I was invited to help lead retreats at Ovoca Manor which was a blessing without me even knowing it. I had decided to take a gap year but had no plans set in stone for the year, so doing something that continually challenged me helped me to focus in on what it is that I'd like to start doing.

In March 2019, when I decided to start planning my summer and the year to follow I applied for the SUI Internship. Throughout my gap year I was encouraged by my friends and my parents to do the Internship so that I could not only live independently but also grow independently in my faith.

While I am passionate about my faith I'd like to use it practically through my other passions of sports coaching, mentoring and counseling. This year I hope to grow in faith to a point where I am able to productively mentor sports teams in schools.

My most memorable moment on the internship so far was watching a group of lads on a retreat demonstrate team work through the tricky challenges we had prepared for them.

Hey Ya'll! I'm Kailey. I am 22 years old and I'm from Amarillo, Texas. From a very young age I knew I either wanted to be a missionary or a nurse. When I graduated High School, I knew that God was calling me to ministry. After graduating from Bible College I volunteered in my local church for 1 year until God said it was time to go!

The youth of Ireland have always been very close to my heart as I have previously done mission trips and summer camps in Waterford and Enniscorthy. SU intrigued me because they work across denominations uniting churches with the message of Jesus, the simple gospel.

I loved all the opportunities I got during the autumn to minister to so many young people and share the love of Jesus. I also benefitted from all the connections I made and the time given to develop my relationship with God.



Hi, I'm Emily. I am 19 years old and I'm from Lurgan in Northern Ireland. After finishing school at 16 I've worked a few jobs trying to find not just where I want to be but also where God wants me to be. After a few months on a potato farm in Denmark I researched this internship.

I've been coming to Ovoca Manor for most of my life, from Easter Camps to Family weeks. It has impacted my Faith in so many ways and I'm super excited to see how God will use me to impact schools and teens this year.

Throughout this internship I am hoping to grow in my walk with God and trust his plan for my life. I would like to continue to say 'yes' to more opportunities this year that push me out of my comfort zone.



SUI INTERN

2018 / 2019



Hello my name is Jack Martin and you may remember me as being the Scripture Union Ireland Intern for 2018/2019.

I learnt many new things from taking part in the internship program, like how to speak confidently in front of large groups of people, sharing my life story and also learning to interact well with the group we were working with. This led me to finish the internship gaining a lot of confidence and experience in youth ministry.

One of my fondest memories during the internship was near the end of my year when I had the privilege to be asked to share with a young teen about God and pray with them as they wanted to commit their life to Him. This really opened up my eyes and through this experience I saw how much I had grown from my first to my last day as an SU Intern.

I truly believe that each day of the internship not only made me a better person but a better follower of Christ. There are so many aspects of the internship that helped me grow in my faith and realize that youth ministry is my true calling in life.

Thank you to everyone I worked with throughout my internship year and thank you Scripture Union Ireland for being a huge part of my life!

**WOULD YOU
LIKE TO BE
AN SUI INTERN?**

To find out more log onto
scriptureunion.ie/internship



CHRISTIAN UNION LEADERS
WEEKEND AWAY

4TH - 6TH SEPTEMBER 2020
BOOK ONLINE AT SCRIPTUREUNION.IE

COST: €50 VENUE: OVOCA MANOR Y14TE27

SU RESOURCES



A NEW DECADE AND THE DEFINING OF A NEW DEPARTMENT FOR SU IRELAND.

In recent years we have benefitted from the very generous support of donors to produce resources that serve youth ministry both for schools and churches. We are fully committed to continuing this work and creating relevant resources whilst also reviving innovative resources from past SU workers. We'll take you on a tour of the new, the renewed and the coming soon of SU Resources!



VOKE APP // NEW

Our commitment to helping young people find their way on the faith adventure inspired us to create the NUA Film Series and has recently led SU to partnerships which serve young people in the digital realm. Last year we teamed up with Jesus Film in the USA to develop an app which uses the NUA Film Series as the basis for faith conversations.

Developing an interactive app is a massive undertaking. Jesus Film have the vision and resources to develop it and we have the right kind of content with NUA, it's been a very effective and exciting partnership.

We believe that nothing substitutes face-to-face connection but also recognise that digital opportunities can't be ignored in the current age. Young people are online, so discipleship needs to be available there too. Scan below and join the adventure.



GUARDIANS OF ANCORA // NEW FOR IRELAND

Guardians of Ancora is a world-class digital game. It's a virtual world that 8 to 11 year-olds can enter and a place where Bible stories come alive.

SU Ireland are now an official partner and we're excited to help spread the word and get Irish young people engaging with the scriptures through this resource. Check out the SU website for more info.



SHINE // NEW FOR IRELAND

SHINE is a 3 week video resource designed to equip young people to share their faith at school. It's a resource that has been produced annually for over a decade by a collaboration of Scripture Union's in the UK along with Crown Jesus Ministries and Logos Ministries. We at SU Ireland joined the team last year to help produce the videos and we're focusing on using the resource to equip Christian Union's in Irish schools.



In conjunction with this we are re-launching the Christian Union Leaders Weekend Away (Spark) 4th - 6th September 2020. This year's theme for both the videos and the leaders weekend is 'Influence'.



IT'S YOUR MOVE & LUKE THE BOOK // RENEWED

As we continue to develop this new department of SU Ireland and launch exciting new projects we also want to renew some of the quality resources that were produced by past SU staff and volunteers.

It's Your Move is an ideal resource to help young people transition from primary to secondary school and Luke The Book is a useful resource to spark family Bible engagement in the home.

We also hope to redevelop the Pentecost Project to help primary school aged children engage with the work of The Holy Spirit.



WATCH THIS SPACE

SU RESOU



NUA FILM SERIES // CURRENT

Since launching NUA (14th March '17), we have had an incredibly successful 2.5 years both here in Ireland & around the world. Approximately 350 Irish schools have adopted NUA as part of their religious education curriculum and over 400 different Irish churches and youth groups use NUA as part of their outreach & discipleship programmes.

NUA is being used around the world in places like the USA, Canada, the UK, Finland, Malaysia, Singapore, New Zealand and Australia. We have partnered with

international streaming hubs like Rightnow Media and Heritage Films to extend its reach. We have recently partnered with Jesus Film (CRU), Orlando, to make NUA available through their innovative APP platform (Voke) to help young people share their faith. So far NUA has been translated into French, Spanish and Finnish. In early 2020 NUA will be ready in Portuguese, Korean and Russian. We are eternally grateful for the financial support of our donors and supporters to help NUA reach its full potential..



URCES



NUA: ORIGINS // NEW

We are excited to announce that NUA: Origins has completed its filming days and is now in the final editing stage. We will be holding a big launch event in Dublin on April 21st 2020.

All welcome! *(details at the back)*

NUA: Origins has been developed for 11-14 year olds and aims to provide a learning environment that empowers young people to engage with Jesus and explore His call on their lives. It aims to encourage them to remain and participate in their local faith community at a crucial juncture in their lives.

We have called it NUA: Origins because of the cultural fascination with superheroes origins stories. We love

to find out the back story of people's lives. Host's Jonny, Sarah and Eric, during 8 short films, will share the origins of their own faith journeys whilst encouraging the viewers to explore or begin their own.

EPISODE GUIDE

Masterpiece - Our Identity

Worth - Jesus's Sacrifice

New Beginnings - Resurrection

Connection - Prayer

Story - The Bible

Guide - The Holy Spirit

Belong - Church

Journey - Discipleship

NUA

"IT'S SUPERB! I'VE USED IT WITH OUR 6TH FORM STUDENTS AT MY CHURCH. THEY LOVED IT. THE CONTENT IS SUPERB. IT HAS DEPTH AND AT THE SAME TIME IT IS HIGHLY ACCESSIBLE."

YOUTH PASTOR

FIELD MI

SCHOOLS

There is much that I am excited about as we step into this new chapter for SU Ireland. Schools work (residential, day, primary & secondary school retreats) can to varying degrees be very much a seed sowing and flash in the pan type ministry as we meet students once and never again. Camps perhaps have seen more fruit yet more often than not cater to young people who are already plugged into a church or who come from christian homes and have a support network.

Our aim with the amalgamation of these various ministry strands under the field ministries banner is that we can cultivate joined up thinking which we hope will allow us to be a part of multiple opportunities to impact a young person through school, camps and supporting church and youth work in their local community. We also want to raise up and disciple leaders from within SU field ministries and within communities and be a part of their mission rather than them being a part of ours. The SU resources team will develop content and aids to support with this mission.

Luke 10:2 talks about 'the harvest being plentiful but the workers being few' perhaps wrongly we have been looking for these workers to help us gather the plentiful harvest. With this new team and direction we have altered our perception to see that there are many workers out there and we want to be an organisation that equips and assists them to gather the harvest. SU and the field ministries team will be intentional about seeking more opportunities to work collaboratively with organisations, communities, parishes and local churches to equip and support their mission to local young people.

At SU Ireland we have seen the value of including local people, organisations, churches, parishes to assist on retreats & camps who can be a contact point in a young persons community when they return.

A good example of this is Clare Murray and Coolnagreina who you will read about later on in this Inspire. Clare is a wonderful speaker and has helped with SU school retreats on a number of occasions, at the end of 2019 Clare joined us and delivered some

great retreat sessions with a school from Greystones and was also able to share about and invite them to the Youth Cafe at Coolnagreina providing these young people a link back into their local community, post retreat.

Please pray for all of us involved in this work, it is rewarding, but it is demanding. Pray that we take this where God wants it to go. Also pray for more opportunities, open doors and people feeling a heart to get involved. If this is something you're excited about and want to get involved or want us to assist you with getting something started in your area please get in touch.

Darren Bourke - Field Ministries Leader

Darren Bourke steps into the role of Field Ministries Team Leader and is tasked with building SU's Field Ministry team to grow and develop our camps & schools work. This team will be intentional about seeking opportunities to get the local church, parishes & communities involved in the faith journeys of young people in their areas. Currently the Field Ministries Team consists of Darren Bourke, Eric Hughes, Mark Murray, Chad Tanner, Emily Deane and a soon to be appointed Administrator.

Residential School Retreats

If there is one thing you can expect when working with young people is to expect the unexpected. You can never guarantee what will happen. Which is part of the excitement of working with students. This year has been exactly that, a mixture of change and excitement.

Working with young people from primary and secondary schools, boarders, day pupils, public schools and private schools we have seen every type of young person walk through the door. It is such a special opportunity to share how God has impacted our lives and how he can change theirs.

One particular student was like many before her and called herself an atheist and was vocally sceptical about the concept of God & faith. On arrival she was greeted by one of our volunteers offering donuts to all the students, this immediately broke the ice and decreased her wariness. Throughout the retreat we had the usual mix of games, talks and bible engagement and discussions, reflections, prayer spaces, drinking tea and cleaning dishes. At the culmination of the retreat we debriefed with the students and listened to the feedback of their experience. One particular student told us that she called herself an atheist on arrival but after the time on retreat she had seen what being a follower of Christ is all about. She said she was now excited to explore her own beliefs about faith and God. This was a special turn around in less than 36 hours.

This year I have been particularly thankful for all the volunteers that make the SU ministry happen. They are the backbone of what we do. Special thank you to previous and current Interns and Dave Donnelly who did an amazing amount of work for us as ministry volunteer last year.

Darren Bourke (writing from his previous role as retreat coordinator at Ovoca Manor)



FIELD MI



Ministry Volunteer: Dave Donnelly

I came to Ovoca Manor in January of 2019 as a Volunteer to help support the School Retreat work at Ovoca Manor. Previously I had been studying Economics in UCD but didn't feel like it was a suitable fit for me. I left UCD after a semester and I worked full-time, travelled and volunteered my summer with SU. After that summer I knew ministry was more than just a hobby for my summer break, but instead, something that meant more to me. I had no expectations. I wasn't sure what I could offer SU as a college dropout. But I began to settle into a rhythm I started to see how my time as a 'Ministry Volunteer' would be spent.

I was working closely with Darren, as a part of the Manor retreat team and Eric, as a part of the schools retreat team. I also got the opportunity to work alongside a cluster of different volunteers, and of course, SU's infamous intern, Jack Martin. I spent time

creating content and running workshops, but mostly I spent my time talking to young people and trying to love them well. When asked about how I think back on my six months with Scripture Union my answer is always two fold, it was a hard six months, nursing my wounds and confronting stuff within myself was a big challenge, but doing it alongside day to day ministry was something that put me to work in a way I hadn't experienced before. In saying that, what I remember most was the learning I experienced about who God is and who I am. My time with SU allowed me to do that surrounded by incredible people that welcomed me as I was and invited me into something that was bigger than myself.



MINISTRIES



In-School Retreats

In 2019 we explored the theme: 'Words Matter'. The book of James tells us that our words have the power to build up and to tear down, and young people today can truly struggle with this.

They can hear words everyday which encourage them, from a parent, coach or teacher, they can also hear words that tear them down. Sometimes of course that voice is an internal one, sometimes our worst criticism comes from ourselves.

As I have traveled the country visiting over 100 schools I have met young people who truly struggle with how they view themselves. Just as I wear glasses to see clearly we all look at ourselves through a different lens. More often than not the lens young people look through is that of other people's opinions.

As part of our retreats we looked at where the power of words comes from, and saw that usually these words only have the power we give them. In looking at the story of Punchinello from Max Lucado's

'You are Special' we explained that when we come face to face with He who made us we learn that we are all special in our own way.

We've all had a box of quality street in our houses over christmas, imagine if that box was filled only with the blue coconut! That would be great for some and awful for others. Life is just like that, it's the variety that makes it interesting, it is our differences that make the difference.

As I have shared these truths with students up and down our island the response has been amazing. One student wrote in an end of day reflection 'I now know that I am special in my own way'. It is such a blessing to be part of a ministry that brings this hope to young people. Please pray that God will continue to open up these doors for us.

Eric Hughes
Field Ministries Team

FIELD MI



CAMPS

Thanks to our courageous volunteers SU facilitated 9 weekend camps and 6 week-long camps at Ovoca Manor in 2019. Outside of Ovoca Manor Greystones CSSM ran for the 123rd year and Dun Laoghaire CSSM for its second. We are so thankful to the local churches and parishes in Greystones and Dun Laoghaire for making these missions possible. SU also supported Youth for Christ running sports camps at three locations in the Midlands.

We welcomed 340 school children from 9 different schools to our Weekend Adventure Camps. Our memory verse for each weekend was Hebrews 12 v 1 "So let us run the race that is before us and never give up. We should remove from our lives anything that would get in the way. And we should remove the sin that so easily catches us". Our prayer for these children is that during these weekends they experience God and learn truths that they will carry with them for the rest of their lives. Most of these camps are run by volunteers from the same areas as

the schools attending. For many of us SU staff and volunteers, camps have been a huge part of our faith formation and so it is really important and special for us to see young people learn about God, worship Him and experience Him. Most SU camps for 2020 are now live to book on the SU Ireland website. Check out our new booking system which we hope you will find much more user friendly. We have added an extra family week this year which will be specifically aimed at families with primary school aged children. We will also be running a weekend in early September for secondary school Christian Union leaders!



Message from Emma Fawcett - (Former Camps & Volunteer Manager) After four and a half years with Scripture Union I am moving on from my role as Camps and Volunteer Manager. It has been a wonderful few years getting to minister alongside our amazing volunteers to run these camps

and to ensure that God's name is being declared. I have had the pleasure of teaching children about Jesus, praising God's name together, sharing in a lot of laughter and sometimes a lot of tears, I have washed more dishes in Ovoca Manor than I possibly have in the rest of my life, we have shared in worship nights, learned action songs, zip-lined, sung around bonfires and prayed together. It has been a great few years and thank you to everyone who has attended these camps and the leaders I have worked alongside for being faithful to ensuring that God is number one in everything that we do!

We are truly grateful for Emma's leadership of the Camps and Volunteers ministry over the last number of years and for the structure and practises she put in place that will be integral to the development and growth of our Field Ministries into the future. We trust she will be blessed in her future endeavours.



We also said goodbye to Liana Forsyth last Easter after two years as our Camps and Volunteer Administrator. She will be missed and we are so thankful to her for all of her hard work and dedication during her time with SU.

WELCOME ERICA ANDERSON

We were delighted to welcome Erica to the SU team last April. Erica will be responsible for all of our Vetting and Volunteer administration.



STORIES

WELCOME MARK MURRAY

I have recently joined the SU family as part of the Field Ministries Team. I live in the beautiful seaside town of Greystones with my wonderful wife, Clare, so my new commute to work is just a short journey over Bray Head. I have been involved with various SU activities over the years, particularly with Greystones CSSM, and I am very excited to be working for an organisation that I love and respect. I worked for a church for 4 years before taking up this role, but I am looking forward to some new adventures and challenges with SU.

As part of my new role, I am excited to be able to come alongside such dedicated individuals to offer whatever support I can. I am also looking forward to building new relationships and forging new connections across Ireland – in schools, in local churches and in many different communities. We want to equip and empower people in various contexts to effectively reveal the message and mission of Jesus in the place they call 'home', and I am incredibly inspired by the stories I am already hearing about how God is moving and shaking things in our country.

As I begin this new season, and as I continue to explore what God is up to in this moment, I am encouraged and inspired by Isaiah 43:19: "Look! I'm doing a new thing; now it sprouts up; don't you recognize it? I'm making a way in the desert, paths in the wilderness." I hope to be able to tell many stories in the months to come of all the new things that God has been doing.



OVOCA M



We enter into a new decade with excitement and a sense of anticipation as we see God's direction for SU and Ovoca Manor's part in that. It's been four years since we moved on site at Ovoca Manor and became part of the SU family. Our love for this place and the work of SU, grows each year. Gareth's new role as National Leader allows him to continue to oversee the ministry at Ovoca Manor, while Sharon continues to take responsibility for overseeing the operations side, in a more defined role.

The Operations Team (Cleaning, Maintenance, Catering, Groundskeeping) is growing and they work very hard keeping the place in order. We welcomed Órla Kelly to the team last November as our full-time Accommodation Assistant. Órla keeps the accommodation looking clean and fresh, we would be lost without her!

Some of the standout events of 2019 included Follow The Star, which is our biennial live Nativity for local

schools and 5 schools took part. We enjoyed doing something different and seeing the excitement on the faces of the 200 children as they came to visit. This year was extra special as our son came with his senior infants class from Avoca National School. Last September we also celebrated 'Gods Provision' with those who had worked and lived at Ovoca Manor, on the 100th anniversary of the completion of construction in 1919, it was a wonderful afternoon and evening of reminiscing and catching up with old friends.

We made some updates to the Manor itself including refurbishment to rooms 105/6/7 and the communal toilets and showers in this area. We are also in the process of painting bedrooms and the main kitchen. Two more toilets were added to the Ground Floor and the chillout/cafe area in the basement has been finished. Also in the Manor we upgraded to waterproof, fire retardant mattresses.

MANOR

Each year we desire to create more opportunities for retreat and prayer at Ovoca Manor. For a number of years now it has been on our hearts to build a Chapel on a secluded part of the property. We have a location set aside for this and if you'd be interested in contributing in some way please get in touch. The additional work and upgrades we do at Ovoca Manor are only possible with your generous support, so if you would like to contribute to our development fund or give towards a certain project go to the GIVE page on our website and follow the link.

**We look forward to welcoming
you soon at Ovoca Manor!**

Sharon, Gareth & the Ovoca Manor Team

Over
8,000
Guests

Over
15,000
Bednights

2019

Over
25,000
Meals

Over
3,000
Students



CHAPEL LOCATION SITE



BASEMENT CAFÉ & CHILLOUT AREA



BUILDING NEW VISION TOGETHER

It was the funnest thing ever meeting Nicky Gumbel in September, the Vicar of HTB in London and founder of Alpha. He was amazed to learn that, in Ireland, there are so many parishes and churches working together to evangelize. For example, in Cork, Glenilen farm had 3 denominations attending Alpha! We have the same experience when schools head to SU's Ovoca Manor to encounter God during a school Alpha course – the church, of many denominations, comes together to serve youth from every background. God has blessed our work so much.

Nicky talked a lot about how beautiful Ireland is and how lucky we all are to live here. Jonny Somerville of SU was doing the filming (just one of the huge collaborations between SU and Alpha Ireland in 2019). Beautiful as Ireland is, we may feel we are beset by challenges for youthwork. I like to quote Band of Brothers: 'We're paratroopers: we're supposed to be surrounded!' It reminds me that,

even if it seems hard to see a big change, Christ has already won the victory – it's our job to keep telling people, especially youth, and letting Jesus change their lives. We have the tools to do it.

I was able to tell Nicky that we have huge co-operation around Ireland in this Great Work of Evangelising young people. We know around 2,700 young people went on a 10-week Alpha Youth course – many coming to Ovoca Manor. Thousands are doing NUA too - more and more churches are seeing the need to engage youth – that's because of our work together – with other great friends helping us, too.

I thank God for the hard-working team at SU – without their inspiration in the field of youth ministry, Alpha and NUA could not work. Ireland is indeed beautiful – and the deepest beauty is God's: he has all of us working with young people so that the church can be filled with young people on fire for Jesus. Now, none of us would complain at being

PHA

surrounded by them...so let's keep at it! I can't wait to see what 2020 will bring. Last year, 5000 people attended an Alpha Course in the Republic of Ireland. Without Alpha and SU's partnership, much of that would not be possible. Praise God for our brothers and sisters, and how they are used in their ministry.

Dominic Perrem

National Director Alpha Ireland

alphaireland.org



COLLABO



MOMENTUM

Over 100 people involved in youth ministry from across the island came for the third Momentum weekend at Ovoca Manor this January. Momentum is a collaboration between several organisations: Alpha Ireland, Archdiocese of Dublin Youth and Young Adults, Christ in Youth, Dublin and Glendalough Youth Council, Innovista Ireland, Scripture Union Ireland and Youth for Christ Ireland.

Together we long to see more young people in Ireland encounter the living Jesus and live lives securely rooted in him, and so we want to equip people in parishes, churches and communities with the confidence, the skills and the connections to invest in young people where they are.

In 2016 tired of lots of talk about the importance of partnership and collaboration a group of us decided it was time to model it and demonstrate it. We recognised that in working together we can achieve far more than the sum of our parts and in some small



way demonstrate what the body of Christ can look like in reality. The vision for Momentum is not for a one-off annual event but to see thriving regional networks of people serving in youth ministry across the island who feel supported, encouraged and resourced all year round. We've seen one such group begin meeting in the midlands to pray together, pray for each other and to share ideas and resources. Our dream is to see groups like this in every province.

Recognising that in serving young people and calling them to follow Jesus, we first of all need to be followers, and it is our life lived with Jesus that is the most powerful demonstration we have we opted for a theme of 'Followers First' at Momentum this year. We aim to inspire and refresh those serving in youth ministry, equip them practically with tools and ideas and also provide space and the opportunity to learn from each other. It is the latter that has led us over the three years Momentum has been running to adapt the programme to make more space for people

to connect, share stories and learn from each other – facilitated by Ovoca Manor’s excellent basement café space! This year we invited Sean and Ana Mullan to speak in our two main sessions on our theme. Ana is a spiritual director and artist and Sean, a former church pastor now runs a social enterprise in the form of Third Space café in Dublin city centre.

Opportunities to practically equip those attending come through workshops and resource sessions led by a range of those involved on the front line of youth ministry. This year we explored areas such as serving your community, authenticity and vulnerability in youth ministry, and getting to grips with the Bible. Our resource sessions got very practical, helping provide ideas and tools for planning a youth group meeting and getting other volunteers involved.

We have so much to be thankful for this year at Momentum, for the many ways we saw God at work. One theme that came through strongly in the feedback from the weekend was the desire for people to connect with others in youth ministry regionally. As a Momentum team this will be one area we will be focusing more attention on in the coming year. Our dream as a planning team is of retirement as people in different regions take up the baton and begin running ‘mini momentums’ in their regions and that in that unity we will see more and more young people from across our island experience life changing encounters with Jesus and live lives that bring God’s kingdom here in Ireland as it is in heaven.

by **Sam Moore**

Sam is the Director of Innovista Ireland. For many years now Innovista has provided leadership training to SU’s Interns and has been a valued partner.

“I’m taking away the importance of building relationships with other churches, collaborating with other youth groups - kingdom perspective”

“I came for encouragement and I’m leaving feeling so thankful and filled afresh. Thank you!!”

“I’m taking away a different outlook on how to serve my community and I can use this now to better and show the people around me what living for Jesus looks like.”

“Coffee and free times were a great way to get a fun break chatting with people or use as reflection and prayer time. The encouragement to participate in prayer appointments or prayer ministry was very helpful. I had never participated in anything like a prayer appointment before and it was an amazing opportunity in a safe space”

MOMENTUM

**Keep an eye on the website
momentumireland.com for updates on the next
Momentum 15th – 17th January 2021**





CHRIST IN YOUTH

CIY is thrilled to launch in Europe with our initial focus being led to work in Ireland. Our mission is to mobilise young people to accept Christ's call to be Kingdom Workers. We believe that young people can actively serve as Kingdom workers in their families, schools and communities – and we look to serve Christ by extending that message of hope and purpose. We believe that God has big plans for young people in the Church and are honoured to call young people to action in Ireland.

From the get go it has been a joy to serve alongside SU Ireland. We have served together in the formation of the Momentum youth worker weekend and partnered in various prayer and retreat gatherings throughout the year. Partnership is of vital importance to us and we believe that God is calling the church together in greater unity in Ireland so that His plans and purposes will come to pass.

MOVE is CIY's summer residential event intentionally designed for 14-18 year olds ... but it's more than just another event. It's an all-inclusive experience that not only provides food, lodging, recreational activities and an age-intentional program, it also aims to provide a spark that leads young people to embrace the Kingdom work they've been called to by a loving God who has created them for a purpose. We require for young people to attend with their youth worker or lay volunteers so that effective discipleship can happen throughout the week and beyond. Last August we ran our first MOVE event in Ireland and it was a great success. God did far above what we thought possible in our first year and we are delighted to say that many young people encountered Jesus in amazing ways! Many of which responded to starting a faith journey with Jesus for the first time. We look forward to running MOVE again this August 3rd – 7th when we will gather youth groups from all over the nation!

CONNECTED is a 3 day retreat where we focus on getting connected back to our first love and also spend time connected with others across Ireland who are involved in youth ministry. We recognise that we can easily get isolated in our own youth work and ministry. We want to prioritise times where we can get away together and learn from each other and celebrate what God is doing across the land with youth ministry. The Irish word 'ceangailte' means joined up together, or tied together. With the emphasis being on a positive bond that is for the long haul. We want Connected:Ceangailte to be a time and space where youth work across Ireland can feel more tied and interwoven together. We believe this happens best when relationships are deepened by spending quality time with God and quality time with each other in prayer and worship.

PRAYER NIGHTS: We believe that prayer is the foundation of youth ministry. In partnership with local churches, youth ministries and networks we want to commit to praying for the youth of Ireland. To facilitate this we gather people to pray at various times throughout the year. Our next Prayer Nights will happen on the 11th of March and the 27th May in St Catherines Church, Thomas St. Dublin 8. All are welcome to join us as we gather to pray for God to do a new thing amongst the youth of Ireland.

We are delighted to be collaborating with Scripture Union to reach young people in Ireland together. If you would like to learn more about CIY's work in Ireland and globally, please visit ciy.com/ireland

Johan van der Flier
Associate Director CIY Ireland



CONNECT



It has been a dream of YWCA Coolnagreina for quite some time (over 10 years!) to repurpose one of our buildings as a space for young people. This place seems to be a sort of hub for teenagers – whether it's to play volleyball in the summer or hang out during CSSM, cuddle round a fire for Bible study or play a game of pool in the winter, there is always something going on for young people in Coolnagreina. The board, staff and particularly Jonathan and Lisa Ellis, the managing couple, have long hoped for the opening of a café-style space for these teenagers to hang out in.

We are finally at that point, with the completed redevelopment of our road front property, 'Coolen'. It has been beautifully refurbished and fitted out as a fantastic café space, with a meeting room upstairs overlooking Greystones Harbour. The vision of the Youth & Community Space is to provide a space in Greystones for young people where they are welcome, valued and safe. We believe that young people are precious to God, and we see a need in our community to reflect that value by providing somewhere for them to call their own. So far, we have already held several café-style events for local teens, with a regular drop-in and much more in the pipeline! Thanks to some locals and neighbours who have volunteered, we

can begin these in the next few weeks. As we gain momentum and more volunteers, we will extend our opening hours and the scope of what we can provide. We are looking forward to how Scripture Union can partner with us in this respect, particularly thinking ahead to CSSM this summer. Being a YWCA centre, our hope is also to engage and empower young women in their faith, human rights and leadership, and we are excited to see how this can be achieved in the future!

A Steering Group, made up of local people of faith, were recruited last year to lead this project forward. Their prayer, support, passion and determination have been a gift to me as I lead the continued development of this space. We are so grateful for the kind donations of both guests and friends of Coolnagreina, and for those who have supported us in prayer and encouragement along the way. God has continually provided for every need and surprised us in lots of ways.

Clare Murray
YWCA Youth &
Community Space
ywca.ie



A CHALLENGE FOR EVERY CHRISTIAN

Dirk van der Flier
SU Chairperson



“Enter by the Narrow Gate”. Traditionally this verse was used to illustrate how hard it was to enter the Kingdom of God, often referencing that “with man it’s impossible, but not with God...” (Matt 19)

Of late, I have felt challenged to pursue the “narrow way” and not the “broad way”. Particularly I am challenged to try to see ‘the God’ and ‘the good’ in others, and in situations that I encounter. It can take considerable effort to try find the God and the good in situations which we find uncomfortable or even disagree with. It can be easy to dig in our heels, argue our case and build divisions. That is “the broad way” and it is not helpful.

God’s call to unity is not a call to all of us thinking and believing the same. That would be considered conformity, and a drive to conformity will usually end in argument and division. We can win the argument and lose the relationship. God is relentlessly pursuing relationship with all of us and the work of the Holy Spirit keeps us connected to the source of our peace, joy and true satisfaction. Our job is to join in this endeavour.

Unity happens where we can recognise and embrace differences in belief and culture and still walk together in spirit, building on what we agree on and being open to learn from each other. This is the “narrow way” and the fruits are good and lasting.

This is a challenge for Scripture Union in our desire to see God move amongst the young people of Ireland. We must prayerfully try to adapt to our ever-changing environment and culture, endeavouring to present the “Good news Message that God has for His people” in a way that builds bridges and not walls.

It is very encouraging to see the super work that is being carried out by our volunteers, staff and friends through our many camps, schools work and the wonderful materials and resources which our teams have produced in NUA and NUA: Origins. **We sincerely thank all our friends and supporters for such generous prayer and support and we look forward to what God has in store for 2020.**

Let us all try to stay connected to what God is doing in our time, join Him in His work and pursue the narrow gate!

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