

# BOARD OF YOUTH AND CHILDREN'S MINISTRY

Convener: Rev JONATHAN MOXEN

Director: Miss ROSALIND STIRLING

1. The Board of Youth and Children's Ministry continues to know God's blessing in its work for the General Assembly. The task to get alongside congregations in their work to evangelise, disciple, serve and equip the largest people group within the Presbyterian Church is both a challenge and a privilege as this core ministry within our denomination continues to grow.

2. During the past twelve months the Board has sought to develop a strategy for the outworking of the vision of 'covenant based family ministry'. With the appointment of a Young Adults' Development Officer complementing the Youth Development and Children's Development Officer positions, ministry relating to each age group, 0-12, 13-17, and 18-25 is being developed, becoming the means through which the vision of 'covenant based family ministry' is nurtured.

3. The Development Officers' remit of drawing alongside congregations to assist them in their task with the under 25 year olds, seeks to see established a sustainable, Christ-centered ministry in every congregation. Such sustainability grows out of training and resourcing leaders and teachers, resourcing young people to take their place in Church life, envisioning parents and mentoring and encouraging the full time youth or children's staff working in congregations.

4. The development of the Board's work continues through the five General Assembly Committees and their respective working groups. Highlights from the work of each of these Committees demonstrates the means through which the corporate vision is being addressed.

5. The **Training Committee**, through the 'Training Trainers' programme is seeking to make training accessible across Ireland, enabling many congregations to be equipped to carry out effective ministry with the under 25 year olds.

6. The **Ministry Opportunities Committee**, through the Summer Outreach programme, will send thirteen teams this summer to draw alongside congregations, enabling them to do outreach work amongst children and young people within their community.

7. The **Resources Committee** continues to develop the annual Youth and Children's Project. In 2010/11 the project, SAT-7 KIDS, will support a Christian satellite television station in the Middle East. SAT-7 KIDS is the first and only Arabic Christian channel exclusively for children, making the Gospel of Christ meaningful for a generation who need to know the love of God. This exciting project allows PCI children and young people to support Kingdom work throughout the world.

8. The **Events Committee** continues to provide many youth or children's events through the organising function of their working groups, supported by the Youth and Children's Office staff. The Kids' Praise Party Working Group has moved the timing of the event from the weekend at the close of the General Assembly to a Saturday in May, hence supporting the timing of 'year ends' for Sunday Schools. This continues to be an inspiring event for PCI children.

9. The **Research and Education Committee** will pick up the work associated with a resolution that came through the SPUD Youth Assembly: *'to raise awareness within the denomination and among young people themselves regarding the pressures and issues affecting young people during the adolescent years.'* This work will assist many young people across PCI to be better equipped to live healthy lives and be a credible Christian witness in the world.

10. The Board records its thanks to the Rev Steve Stockman for his service as Convener of the Research and Education Committee and wishes him well in his ministry in Fitzroy congregation.

11. The Board records its gratitude to the vast number of volunteer youth and children's leaders and to the growing numbers of youth workers and family workers in local congregations. The many hours of work carried out by these people, who give sacrificially of their time and talents in the service of God, is deeply appreciated. Many congregations could not provide for their youth and children's activities without these faithful volunteers who provide leadership and facilitate programmes that ensure the ministry of evangelism, discipleship and nurture of the young is maintained from year to year.

12. The work of the SPUD Youth Assembly has settled into a rhythm of meeting and bringing resolutions to the Boards and the General Assembly. SPUD has become a crucial element in the life of our denomination, enabling young people to have a meaningful role in the decision making processes of the Church. Through involvement in SPUD, young people move into ownership of the importance of their place in the life of the Church and become an integral part of it, hence ensuring another generation of young adults is not lost to the world.

13. The Board is deeply grateful to those employed to serve the Church though the Board of Youth and Children's Ministry. Miss Roz Stirling, (Director), Miss Barbara McDade (Director of Programmes), and the team of administrative staff, Mrs Lois Gibson (Senior Administrative Officer), Mrs Claire Child, Mrs Janet Maxwell, Mrs Donna Thompson, Mrs Kathy Brown, Miss Pamela Patton, and Miss Liz Harrison. The Board is indebted to Mr David Pattison for his expertise in organising and compiling financial reports.

14. The Youth Development Officer, Mr Graeme Thompson and the Children's Development Officer, Miss Ruth Mitchell continue their work alongside congregations seeking to bring relevant and discerning ministry advice. The Board is indebted to them for their work as it is to Mrs Carol Johnston who has joined this team in the role of Young Adults' Development Officer and Mr Kyle Sampson who continues in his demanding role as Youth and Support worker in Donegal.

15. The Board wishes to record its thanks to the Rev Craig Mawhinney for his work as Training Officer and for all that was accomplished during his time on the Board.

## RECOGNISED MINISTRIES

*The Rev David Stanfield, Centre Director for the Centre for Youth Ministry Ireland, reports:*

1. The Centre for Youth Ministry is the largest provider of Christian faith based training in Youth and Community Work in the UK with over 300 students being taught at five centres. As Director of the Ireland centre I have responsibility as part of the leadership team for the development and delivery of the degree courses being offered. Currently the Ireland centre offers a degree in Youth and Community Work and Practical Theology. The other centres, based in Oxford, Cambridge, Bristol and Birmingham, offer two further courses one for those working in schools and the other focussing on work with children and families.

2. There have been many challenges this year; new validation and endorsement processes; changes to staffing at CYM; and not least the impact of Government cuts in Higher Education which led to a reduction in the number of places we were able to offer for 2009 entry. As a result, as we approach the end of the second year of the centre, we have 19 students in second year and 14 in first year. Thankfully we are able to offer up to 25 places for 2010 entry as the demand for places remains high.

3. The course is practice based with students working in a Christian/Church based context for 14 hours per week as part of the course assessment. They each have a personal practice tutor to support their development and meet regularly in facilitated small groups for professional formation. They are in placements in 25 different congregations (13 Presbyterian, 6 Church of Ireland, 3 Methodist, 2 Baptist, 2 CFC) and 7 other Christian contexts.

4. Since last year the core team has expanded with Sharon McKibbin proving an excellent Assistant Centre Director. Sharon has specific responsibility for Professional Development and is the key contact with placements. Sharon has been working hard to develop better support mechanisms for line managers in placement contexts.

5. The training of students for ministry is a very labour intensive process and a team of 65 people have been actively involved in teaching, supervising and supporting the students this year.

6. I wish to thank a significant number of Presbyterians from across our congregations who have supported the development of this work in the last 12 months through prayer and encouragement as well as those who have worked as module tutors, professional practice tutors or line managers in congregations who have taken students on placement.

*The Rev John Peacock, Community Relations Manager for Youth Link: NI, reports:*

1. Youth Link during the past year continued to develop best practice. This included the launch of a new website, logo and strapline, 'Churches together building excellence in youth work'.

### **Youth Work Training**

2. The demand for accredited training in youth work continued to grow over the past year. Increased numbers of young people, and part-time youth workers from across the four larger Churches participated in OCN (Open College Network) NI Level 1, Level 2 and Level 3 youth work programmes within urban and rural communities and centrally at inter-Church level.

3. The numbers of young people and youth leaders achieving accreditation through Youth Link's programmes not only indicates the high level of participation but is an affirmation of the quality and value of the training offered. The accredited training programmes for young people and adults offer progression and pathways to professional development and qualifications.

### **Peace and Reconciliation Training**

4. Our community is still faced with the huge challenge of moving beyond co-existence to comprehensive reconciliation. The signs are that we are settling for the former which is the easier option but does not build towards a shared and better future. Reconciliation is and remains a generational process which has primarily to do with relationships and not political, religious or cultural ideologies. People are reconciled, not ideological systems. Reconciliation is about the enrichment of diversity and it is a process towards cohesion, sharing and integration. For such reconciliation we require poetic and creative imagination. It is in the context of the larger vision of a reconciliation process that Youth Link locates its strategies and activities.

5. Staff have continued to work in partnership with colleagues across the youth sector in the development and piloting of the new suite of Peace Building and Reconciliation training programmes accredited through OCN NI at Levels 1, 2 and 3. Staff also continue to work collaboratively with Church based youth organisations and groups at headquarter, regional and local level to develop peace building and reconciliation strategies and to embed the principles of equity, diversity and interdependence into organisational policies, procedures and programmes.

6. Youth Link staff have been working with increasing numbers of schools across Northern Ireland to build the capacity of teachers in the areas of peace building, reconciliation and citizenship.

7. During the year Youth Link was successful in securing Peace III funding through the Special European Programme Body to build capacity and social capital within and between communities North and South of the Border, through the delivery of a suite of accredited youth work, citizenship and peace and reconciliation training programmes over the next three years. As a result we have three members of staff working alongside Churches, schools and

communities along the border in Armagh/Monaghan, Fermanagh and Londonderry/Donegal.

8. A highlight of the past year on my work agenda was the 'Up Against the Wall' project. We worked with close to 100 young people and youth practitioners from interface areas across Belfast for 6 months seeking their opinion on the peace walls they lived under the shadow of. This culminated in them gathering at the gates in the peace wall on Lanark Way in West Belfast on Monday 9th November 2009 to mark the 20th anniversary of the fall of the Berlin Wall. The Lord Mayor, Naomi Long, Northern Ireland Commissioner for Children and Young People, Patricia Lewsley and visiting representatives from the US Congress attended the event to listen to the views of young people. The young people were then invited to the City Hall to meet and discuss the issue of 'peace walls' with the Lord Mayor and to explain what they have been doing over the past six months as part of the 'Up Against the Wall' initiative. Lord Mayor, Councillor Naomi Long, said this project was a wonderful example of her vision of 'a Belfast without barriers'. "I value the input and views of young people and in particular those involved in this particular initiative," she said. "They are making a positive statement about how we can all work towards the removal of divisions that sadly still exist in our own city. Their commitment fills me with pride and a determination to work with people like them to create solutions to our problems."

### **Organisational Development**

9. The acquisition and refurbishment of a new Training and Resource Centre is at an advanced stage and will enhance Youth Link's capacity to respond more effectively to the growing training and developmental needs of the faith based youth sector. Youth Link values PCI's support of this venture through YAC's 'The Missing Peace' Youth Project.

10. Crucial also to the work of Youth Link is the Management Committee who offer their considerable skills and experience. From their diverse Church backgrounds and involvement in various sectors of public life they model equity, diversity and interdependence and they support and develop Youth Link's ethos and policies. We very much value the contribution of the Presbyterian members of this board and the leadership of Barbara McDade, as this year's chairperson.

### **Hope for a Shared and Better Future**

11. Northern Ireland's desired future is still a long way ahead. Much difficult work needs to be done by politicians, civic society, educators and faith based communities. All of these sectors and others will need each other to develop working models of partnership and collaboration. Youth Link is committed through its staff, management, programmes and activities to playing its part. In this context Youth Link will seek to build cohesion, capacity and infrastructure in sustainable ways towards peace building and reconciliation.

12. The future will see the development of work on a new site located on the Belfast peace line, where there are huge challenges to be met through community regeneration and the building of social capital. There is potential

therefore for Youth Link to be a significant sign of hope and 'missing peace for a missing generation'.

## **TRAINING COMMITTEE**

1. The Training Committee has been working hard to assess its current work and to bring it in line with the aims of the Board, which are to enable congregations in the development of covenantal ministry with children, young people, adults and families. The work of the Committee has concentrated its efforts in the training of leaders for youth and children's ministry. Future developments will see the work of the Committee expand to include training for ministry with parents, families and young adults.

### **Certificates in Ministry**

2. The Youth Ministry Certificate Course has again been facilitated this year in Belfast and Donegal. The course has run on Monday nights at Union Theological College with 26 in attendance and Thursday evenings in Donegal with 16 participants. A residential weekend has again been central to the implementation of the course.

3. The Children's Ministry Course ran at Union Theological College and Hamilton Road in Bangor with 21 participants attending.

4. The Board continues working in partnership with Union Theological College to facilitate a Graduate Certificate in Youth Ministry.

### **'Building Blocks' Conferences**

5. Two conferences were held on Saturday 14 November 2009 in Dublin (180 in attendance) and Saturday 28 November 2009 at Orangefield Presbyterian Church (280 in attendance). Kathryn Copey was the keynote speaker. Ivy Beckwith, author of 'Formation of Children's Ministry' has been invited to be the keynote speaker at this year's event which will take place on 13 November 2010 in Dublin and 20 November 2010 in Belfast, again at Orangefield.

### **Road Trip Training**

6. Road Trip has been facilitated in 5 different locations around Ireland. This form of regional training will continue to be developed by using more personnel trained by YAC staff and working with congregations who have recently had consultations with YAC staff.

### **Youth Link: NI**

7. Youth Link continues to support and complement the work of the Board. Youth Link staff serve the Board as representatives on working groups and Committees.

### **Training Trevor**

8. Training Trevor was facilitated on Friday 4 September 2009 at Orangefield Presbyterian Church and on Saturday 5 September 2009 at Carnmoney Presbyterian Church with a number of smaller outlying events. The Training Committee was delighted that over 300 people attended the event and received first class training. The Committee has an ongoing commitment to such concentrated periods of training and will discern when the next similar event should be facilitated.

### **Training Trainers**

9. A 'Training the Trainers' programme is currently being developed by the Board. Once qualified, these trainers, having been assessed and validated by the Board, will be used to assist the work of training that is currently delivered by YAC field staff. A similar imitative in children's ministry is being developed.

### **Parenting**

10. Two sessions on parenting were included in the Training Trevor programme in September 2009. In light of this, and subsequent Board discussions the Training Committee has committed to investigating how it can offer more training in parenting and covenant based family ministry.

CHRISTOPH EBBINGHAUS, Convener

## **MINISTRY OPPORTUNITIES COMMITTEE**

1. The Committee continues its work of seeking to provide opportunities for service through Summer Outreach programmes, overseas teams, camps and the volunteer programme.

### **SWIM Programme**

2. The past year has brought in major changes to the SWIM programme. The 'Year Team' aspect of SWIM, whereby four or five young adults were appointed to work within a congregation for a number of weeks, has been brought to an end. The Board, after careful consideration, agreed to redirect the resources that provided for the Year Team into the post of Young Adults' Development Officer. Congregations have expressed deep concern about the loss of young adults to congregational life and have sought assistance from the Board to address this growing need. The SWIM programme however continues to function supporting individual young adults who apply to serve as an intern in a local congregation. The Board supports both young adult and congregation in this process through assistance in the recruitment process, provision of training and pastoral support for those serving throughout Ireland and, occasionally, overseas.

### **Overseas Teams**

3. During the summer of 2010 teams will be sent from PCI to London, Malawi and Romania. In London, team members will work with PCEA missionaries as they seek to build up their work and their contact with the community around them. The Malawi team are specialists in education who will be working alongside Diane Cussick, PCI missionary, to train local early year educators. The Board of Youth and Children's Ministry and the Board of Mission Overseas continue to investigate strategic ways to work together.

### **Camps**

4. In 2010, three camps will take place providing for boys adventure, girls activity and tech camp. The Board continues to investigate the possibility of facilitating a children's camp.

### **Summer Outreach Teams**

5. For many years, the Summer Outreach programme has been a very strategic aspect of the work of the Board of Youth and Children's Ministry. In the summer of 2009, fourteen teams served in congregations throughout Ireland, which provided an opportunity for 244 young people to participate in programmes of evangelistic outreach in the communities within which these fourteen congregations minister. Through activities such as holiday bible clubs, community football tournaments, or teenage coffee bar programmes, both Church and community kids encounter the gospel. Many come to faith through the Summer Outreach programme, while many more grow in their commitment to Christ. The experience of participating in an outreach team is not only an opportunity for team members to serve but also provides a very fertile context for personal and corporate spiritual growth. Many young people testify to the significant role that being part of a PCI summer outreach team has played in their growth as a disciple. In 2010 thirteen teams will serve throughout Ireland.

JOHN FLAHERTY, Convener

## **RESEARCH AND EDUCATION COMMITTEE**

1. The Board of Youth and Children's Ministry continues to recognise the strategic importance of staying alert to the many influences that our children and young people are exposed to in their daily life. Influences and values that often challenge the message of the gospel, or sideline it as irrelevant, a minority interest for a small section of society. Through the work of the Research and Education Committee, the Board seeks to pay attention to these influences and bring insight to the work of the Board in supporting the development and delivery of youth and children's ministry in the local congregation.

### **Research on Young Adults' Place in the Church**

2. Youth Development Officer, Graeme Thompson, continues to be sponsored by the Committee in what will now be PhD research looking at the

place of young adults in the Church, specifically addressing how young adults are kept and nurtured in involvement in Church life. This demanding research will provide important insights to the Church regarding sustainable ministry with young adults.

### **Northern Ireland Life and Times Survey**

3. The Committee received a report from Children's Development Officer, Ruth Mitchell, on the launch of the results of the 2009 Kids' Life and Times Survey. This research is conducted by a partnership between the University of Ulster and Queen's University. The information gathered through this research and the Teenage Life and Times surveys provide very reliable data that has the capacity to inform the work of the Board of Youth and Children's Ministry and the wider Church. A working group has been established under the supervision of Research and Education which will access this information for use in the work of PCI and investigate the possibility of using the survey as a vehicle for research questions that would inform the work of Youth and Children's Ministry. Further work will be carried out by the Committee to locate other research bodies who provide up to date data that would be of use to the work of the Board of Youth and Children's Ministry.

### **Partnering with Canadian Research Project**

4. In September, the Board welcomed Professor Marv Penner from Brier Crest College in Canada to participate in the 'Training Trevor' event. Professor Penner had recently completed a major survey among young people throughout Canada which had great potential within youth ministry work. PCI have been offered access to the research process which may be used widely within PCI.

### **SPUD Youth Assembly Resolutions**

5. The Committee welcomed the resolution from the SPUD Youth Assembly:

*'That the Research and Education Committee of the Board of Youth and Children's Ministry be asked to raise awareness about the pressures and issues affecting young people, both among young people themselves and the wider Church.'*

6. The work of Research and Education during the incoming year will pick up the request coming to them through SPUD. A Working Group of the Committee has been established to progress this. It is anticipated that this group will draw in young people to assist them with their work.

### **Audit of Faith Based Youth Work**

7. Youth Link: NI have been asked to facilitate an in-depth audit of 'faith-based youth groups'. The audit, which will be done professionally, will be funded by the Northern Ireland Youth Council. The Committee welcomed this work as it will serve and inform ministry development within YAC.

### Research and Education Intern

8. The Committee agreed to make a request to the Board for the appointment of an intern to work under the direction of the Young Adults' Development Officer. The Research and Education Committee is aware of the need to source research that has already been done or is taking place. An intern would be an invaluable resource to the work of the Committee to progress this and other projects.

ROZ STIRLING, Interim Convener

## MINISTRY RESOURCES COMMITTEE

1. The work of the Resources Committee seeks to assess how congregations may best be resourced in their ministry with the under 25 year olds. Work continues to seek out suitable materials for use in the nurture and education of our children and young people, alongside the development of specific materials that relate to our Presbyterian context.

### The Website

2. The YAC website has been up-graded, continuing to provide a vital tool for youth and children's ministry personnel in our congregations as well as parents, ministers and young people. The information super highway of www... is now the vehicle of choice for the acquiring of information and accessing resources. This is particularly the case with the under 25s. The Board is therefore committed to having a quality website that is fit for purpose for those working within the YAC ministry area.

### The Youth and Children's Project

3. The annual Youth and Children's Project provides a vital opportunity for our children and young people to participate in mission at home and overseas. Through the raising of substantial funds by our Sunday Schools and youth groups, ministry projects can expand their work or in some instances actually continue to function.

- **2008/09 Project, Treasure Box, Malawi:** £97,000 has been raised to support the Sunday School work of the Livingstonia Synod and the Committee continues to be impressed by the generosity of the Church towards the project. Board of Mission Overseas staff will supervise the distribution of these funds in Malawi. A specialist teachers' team will be going to Mzuzu in Malawi this summer (2010) through the Ministry Opportunities Committee of the Board and the Board of Mission Overseas. Also in the summer of 2010, a youth team will go to Cluj in Romania, developing links made under a previous YAC Project. The Committee is encouraged to see these relationships continue.
- **2009/10 Project, Missing Peace, Nepal and N. Ireland:** Mr Nigel Eves and the Very Rev Dr Trevor Morrow visited Nepal in the spring of 2010 when during their visit they made contact with

those benefiting from this project. The Committee encourages congregations to continue to support the current 2010 project as it seeks to develop reconciliation work at home and overseas.

- **2010/11 Project, SAT-7 KIDS:** The proposed incoming project is in partnership with the Board of Mission Overseas and will focus on SAT-7, a Christian satellite television station run by and for the people of the Middle East. SAT-7 KIDS is the first and only Arabic Christian channel exclusively for children, making the Gospel of Christ known through its work. In the spring of 2010 Children's Development Officer, Ruth Mitchell and Board member, Ruth Elkin, went to Lebanon to visit SAT-7. This is an exciting project and the Committee commends it to the Church as it is launched in September 2010.

### Youth and Children's Workers

4. The Committee is grateful for the work of full time youth and children's workers across our denomination. Graeme Thompson, Youth Development Officer, continues to support the work of these ministry personnel through monthly teaching and training meetings. These are vital opportunities for full time workers to share with colleagues whom they would otherwise have little opportunity to network with. An invitation to join with Methodist Youth Workers in a retreat was very much appreciated and has been recommended to the youth workers. A one day retreat for PCI youth workers is being planned for some time in June.

5. The Board continues to support the General Board's Panel on Ministry regarding terms and conditions for Additional Pastoral Personnel, and encourage both those employed as youth and children's workers, and those employing them, to consider carefully the Panel's findings.

### Youth Centres

6. The Board of Youth and Children's Ministry has continued to manage the three residential centres through the period of transition as agreed by the General Assembly.

- **Guysmere:** In October 2009 the Board of Youth and Children's Ministry had to take the difficult decision to close the Guysmere facility as of December 2009. The centre had accrued a considerable debt in recent years. It was therefore considered prudent to close the centre while the future of the facility is addressed. The Guysmere Re-Development Group and the Steering Committee of the Board continue to consider the way forward. The Church's desire for one centre, as expressed by the General Assembly following the review of the residential facilities, continues to be explored on the Guysmere site at Castlerock, a site which affords the possibility of significant ministry in years to come.
- **Lucan:** Sheltered Housing on the Lucan site is being proactively investigated at present. The Clerk, Deputy Clerk and Mr Lindsay

Conway, Director of Social Service, along with the Director, have been meeting regularly to progress this.

- **Rostrevor:** The congregation of Rostrevor has agreed to take over the running of the centre in line with the General Assembly's resolution, but they have requested more time to prepare. It was agreed that December 2010 be the recommended date for the final handover. The congregation has also requested assistance from the Board on issues such as day to day operations and employment matters, and they will receive full support in these matters.

### **Preparing Youth to be Peacemakers (PYP)**

7. The Reconciliation Working Group has been reviewing the work of PYP, with particular attention being given to how the momentum of PYP is maintained now that the staff post supporting the work has come to an end. Various ways of supporting this work are being investigated, including the possible appointment of an intern to focus on this area.

8. The Committee reminds the Church of two SPUD resolutions that related to peacemaking. One concerning encouraging the Church to continue to seek monies to replace the peacemaking posts and one requesting support for those working in interface areas. This is a major area of concern for PCI's young people; they passionately believe it is ministry in which the Church and the gospel must be seen to be active.

### **Discipleship Resources**

9. The Committee continues to think through how best to make resources for the discipling of our children and young people available to the church.

- **Presbyterianism Course:** This course is at the final draft stage. The Committee plan to make it available through the website and hard copies will also be available from the YAC Office.
- **SPUD:** A resolution from the SPUD Assembly of 2009 and passed by the General Assembly reads: 'That the Board of Youth and Children's Ministry make available further resources and develop training, which equips youth leaders to empower young people both within and outside our congregations in response to the challenges of contemporary culture.'

10. The Committee will continue to consider relevant resources needed to support youth and children's ministry and direct youth and children's leaders as to where to find them. Time and energy will be needed to research the various resources. Work on this will continue in conjunction with the Research and Education Committee.

11. A further General Assembly resolution that was presented through SPUD encouraged Boards to actively include under 25 year olds on General Assembly Committees. In light of the current structure of General Assembly Committees it is difficult to implement this resolution. The Committee therefore

agreed that the Business Board be approached in regard to this. A resolution to that effect is appended.

GRAEME KENNEDY, Convener

## MINISTRY EVENTS COMMITTEE

1. It has been another busy year in the Ministry Events Committee as through the working groups, work continues to deliver a series of high quality events which will impact the lives of the children and young people of PCI, as well as benefitting their parents and leaders. Through these events Youth and Children's Ministry seek to support the work of the local congregation as they evangelise, enthuse, envision and equip those who participate and, consistent with the overall aims of the Board, the goal is to see the establishment of a "generation of those who seek Him" (Psalm 24).

### **Kids' Praise Party**

2. The vision for the Kids' Praise Party, now in its fourth year, is to bring children of primary school age from across PCI together in one venue, in order to promote within each of them the awareness that they are part of a much bigger Church than that which they experience through one congregation. The event is also designed to allow the children to participate in lively interactive praise and to hear the Bible explained to them in creative ways. One significant change in 2010 is in the timing of the event – it was decided to bring it forward to Saturday 22 May in Carnmoney Presbyterian Church, in order to facilitate Sunday School groups, many of whom may have already broken up for the summer by mid-June. This year's theme is 'Walk with God' and the speaker is Karen Webb, a Church Army staff worker and member of the Working Group

### **Youth Night**

3. Youth Night has been arranged for the end of General Assembly week, taking place in Church House on the evening of Saturday 13 June 2010. This event has for many years provided a focal point for young people from all parts of our island to gather for praise and teaching. Dave Dickinson and his band from Carnmoney Presbyterian Church, along with speaker, Andy Croft, who has been deeply involved in recent years in Soul Survivor, head up this year's programme.

### **MAD Weekend**

4. Arrangements are at an advanced stage for 'MAD 12' which is planned for 22-24 October 2010 at the University of Ulster, Coleraine. The unavailability of 'The Diamond' at the university has added some complexity to the planning process this year, but the Working Group anticipates that the use of other facilities on campus will in no way diminish the quality of the MAD experience. One practical effect of these ongoing refurbishments is to reduce the capacity at MAD to 500 this year; the Working Group has put clear policies in place to cope with this, through publicity and setting a maximum number of 36

delegates per group. The Committee is delighted that the speaker at this year's event will be Duffy Robbins from the USA, continuing a long association between the Board and this renowned author and teacher. Once again, Alastair Bennett and his band have been invited to lead the worship at MAD 12.

### **Route 66**

5. A consultative panel was established to spearhead the review of this event with the aim of delivering a similar type of programme in 2011. This group is drawing on the experiences of many who have been involved with Route 66 in the past, as well as the fresh insights of some of the young people who have emerged from the SPUD Youth Assembly process. The Board is concerned to provide a place of nurture and teaching for the young adults within our denomination. The experience of the Route 66 Bible teaching conference during the ten years of the ministry was extremely positive. The consultation process will seek to determine the best means of building on the work already achieved through Route 66.

### **Thanks**

6. The Committee continues to be so aware of God's goodness and guidance and are keen, above all, that the events organised are glorifying to Him. The Committee offers its sincere thanks to the very committed members of its Working Groups, as well as to the hard-working and efficient YAC field and office personnel who greatly assist us in its work.

ANDREW THOMPSON, Convener

## **RESOLUTIONS**

1. That the Report be received.
2. That the General Assembly direct Presbyteries to appoint a panel, including at least two people under 25, to examine the SPUD report on 'Young People and the Church', to consider the appended questions and to report back to the SPUD Working Group through the Board of Youth and Children's Ministry by the end of December 2010.
3. That the General Assembly ask the Business Board to take the appropriate steps to ensure that those under 25 years of age are represented within General Assembly structures.
4. That the General Assembly approve the Youth and Children's Project to support the work of SAT-7 Kids television channel in the Middle East.
5. That the resignation of the Rev Steve Stockman as Convener of the Research and Education Committee be accepted, that he be thanked for his services and that \_\_\_\_\_ be appointed in his place.
6. That a grant of £9,545 be paid from the Incidental Fund to Youth Link: NI.
7. That the Board of Youth and Children's Ministry, with its associated working Committees for the ensuing year, be appointed as follows: